

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Breastplate of Judgment

Exodus 28:15-21,29

And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, thou shalt make it.

Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof.

And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones, the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row.

And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.

And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper; they shall be set in gold in their enclosings.

And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet: everlong with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment on his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.

The Magic Square that the high priest wore on his breast was placed over the heart, life center of the body and the light of the spirit within it. At that illumined center were focused powers of the twelve zodiacal Hierarchies.

Concerning this aspect of the Breastplate, Philo Judaeus, the Jewish Hellenistic philosopher, makes the following observations: Then the twelve stones in the breastplate, which are not like one another in color and which are divided into four rows of three stones in each, what else can they be emblems of except of the circle of the zodiac? For that also is divided into four parts, each consisting of three animals, by which divisions it makes up the seasons of the year, Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, distinguishing the four changes, the two Solstices, and the two Equinoxes, each of which has its limit of three signs of this zodiac, by the revolutions of the Sun according to that unchangeable and most lasting and really divine ratio which exists in numbers. For all the changes of the year and the seasons are arranged by well defined and stated and firm reason; though this seems a most extraordinary and incredible thing, by their seasonal changes they display their undeviating and everlasting permanence and durability. And it is said with great correctness and exceeding beauty also, that the twelve stones all differ in their colors, and that no one of them resembles the other; for also in the zodiac each animal produces that color which

is akin to and belongs to itself, both in the air and in the earth, and in the water; and it produces it likewise in all the affectations which move them, and in all kinds of animals and of plants.

Christian writers of early centuries declared the stones of the Breastplate were capable of reflecting answers in color to questions put to them. Their language key was as follows:

Subject Matter:	Stone:	Color:	Tribe:	Sign:
Seasonal Productivity	Emerald	Green	Issachar	Aries
Military	Ruby	Red	Gad	Taurus
Mental condition	Marble	White	Simeon	Gemini
Rains; women	Chrysoprase	Green	Benjamin	Cancer
Royalty	Sardonyx	Red-Yellow	Judah	Leo
Harvest; gleanings	Jasper	Mixed Colors	(Dinah)	Virgo
Neighboring Nations	Opal	White-Purple	Asher	Libra
Disease; plagues	Agate	Brown-Gold	Dan	Scorpio
Prophecy	Amethyst	Purple	Joseph	Saggitarius

Land; cattle	Serpentine Black	Sea Green	Napthali	Capricorn
Hopes, personal and national	Lapis-Lazuli	Blue	Reuben	Aquarius
Secret Organizations	Crystal	White	Zebulun	Pisces

The names of the jewels in ancient Hebrew, their English equivalent, together with the astrological correlation are as follows:

Hebrew:	English:	Sign:
Odem	Bloodstone, ruby, and Sardius; red jasper (dom, meaning "blood").	Aries
Pitdah	Green stone or topaz: the ancient peridot or chrysolite.	Taurus
Bareketh	Carbuncle; also marble (barak, meaning "to flash")	Gemini
Nophek	Chrysoprase, emerald	Cancer
Shoham	Sardonyx	Leo
Yash'pneh	Jasper	Virgo
Leshem	Ligure, opal	Libra
Shebo	Agate	Scorpio
Achlamah	Amethyst	Sagittarius
Tarshish	Beryl	Capricorn
Shoham	Sappirstone; the modern	Aquarius

	sapphire	
Yash'pneh	Jacinth or crystal, later the diamond	Pisces

The astrological correlations in the jewel pattern appear as follows:

First Row: Sardius-Aries; Topaz-Taurus; Carbuncle-Gemini.

Second Row: Emerald-Cancer; Sapphire-Aquarius; Diamond-Pisces.

Third Row: Ligure-Libra; Agate-Scorpio; Amethyst-Sagittarius.

Fourth Row: Beryl-Capricorn; Onyx-Leo; Jasper-Virgo.

The first stone, wherein were focused the forces of Aries the first sign, and Mars, its ruler, was red in keeping with the blood of the lamb (Aries), the symbol of the dispensation for which pioneers of Moses' day were making preparation.

The second stone was a topaz, the ancient chrysolite. In hue it resembled an emerald. This is Earth's planetary color and is predominant in nature when the rays of Taurus envelop the planet. With this color are associated mysteries concerning life (Taurus) and its polar opposite, death (Scorpio).

Next comes a carbuncle, a white crystal, symbol of the translucent spirit resurrected from a body of decay. This is the new name spoken of in Revelation.

The fourth stone, an emerald or chrysoprase, carries the forces of Cancer and its ruler, the Moon. It is a guardian ray against impurities and vice.

The fifth stone is an onyx or sardonyx, often referred to as the royal stone. It bears the amalgamated powers of Sun and Moon. It focuses the forces of the Summer Solstice when the Sun passes from Cancer into Leo, uniting the principles of Water and Fire. This is the season when transmutation processes take place in all nature. It is particularly favorable, therefore, for furthering those processes in the body of man. Mystic legends say that magical powers invested in the Seal of Solomon were inscribed upon a sardonyx.

Jasper, the sixth stone, was declared to carry the healing power transmitted by Raphael, the Star Angel of Mercury, ruler of Virgo, sixth sign. Virtues attributed to Jasper are health, strength, courage and wisdom. The Egyptian Initiate-Teacher, Thoth-Hermes, is said always to have worn this gem of magic power.

The seventh stone, the opal, in its many hues, is like the rainbow that bridges heaven and Earth. Belonging to Libra,

it embodies qualities that make for discrimination and right choice.

The agate relates to Scorpio. Its many bands of color suggest the undulating movements of a serpent. The Hebrew name for agate, shebo, means to glitter; also to take prisoner. This is what the lower forces of Scorpio have done to all humanity: made them prisoners for a time to sense life.

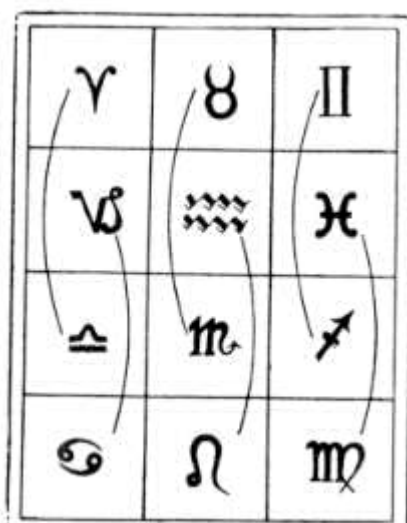
The ninth jewel is an amethyst, a purple stone of royal station. It is a talisman for warding off evil sensations and distorted appetites. It relates to Sagittarius, the mind which when unilluminated, is in danger of leading men into evil.

Next comes a greenish-black stone, a beryl or serpentine. The forces of Capricorn and its ruler, Saturn, are operative in this. It carries the mystery of the green sea (Capricorn's opposite sign, Cancer). Ancients used the stone as a charm to protect its wearer from the bites of poisonous snakes and insects. Egyptians employed the stone in making scarabs, so extensively worn and deeply revered by the people.

The eleventh jewel was a sapphire or lapis-lazuli. Pliny called this the Stone of Heaven, and declared it to be the one upon which Moses engraved the Ten Commandments. Consonant with its zodiacal sign, Aquarius, it is associated with friendship.

The twelfth and last stone was a jacinth. This glistening white jewel is said to bestow that wisdom which comes from the long cycle of experience while journeying through the twelve zodiacal Schools that conclude with Pisces.

There is also discoverable in the pattern of the Breastplate a design revealing orderly evolutionary processes as these are marked by the Sun's precession through the twelve signs of the Zodiac.



Reading from upper right to left, the first sign is Gemini, the second Taurus, the third Aries, the fourth Pisces, and so on. The evolution of the race proceeds under the dominant influence of one sign after another. At one stage the keynote was struck during the Sun's precession through Gemini. That note prevailed not only during the two thousand years that the Sun was passing through this sign, but until humanity was ready to have another keynote struck. When that time came the keynote was sounded

when the Sun by precession passed through the next sign, which was Taurus. Thus the race passed in turn through the Gemini phase of existence; next the Taurean; and then in sequential order, the Arian and the Piscean.

A reference to the diagram will make it clear that the order of the successive ages and the pairs of signs under which those ages go forward is present in the Breastplate pattern. It is but one of many evidences pointing to the cosmic symbolism embodied in the jeweled, four-square adornment of the high priest in the sanctuary of the Most High.

— ***Corinne Heline***