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Fashion a Breastplate for Making Decisions **28:15-29 and 39:8-21**

Fashion a breastplate for making decisions DIG: What other duties of the high priest do you see here, especially in the bearing of the names of the sons of Isra'el? How would this elaborate breastplate help Aaron's decision making? How were the precious stones similar to those in Revelation?

REFLECT: When God Almighty says you are one of His jewels, how does that make you feel? In what ways do you shine for Him? In what ways do you reflect His light? If you lived your life like one of His jewels, how would it change your life?

The fourth piece of clothing, the breastplate, was the most important and most costly of **the high priest's** clothing. All his other clothing was merely a background to it, because it pointed to the very heart of **Jesus Himself**. It was best described as a vest, all be it a very beautiful one, that went over **the ephod**. It was attached to the front of it and was made of the same material, **of gold, blue, purple and scarlet yarn and of finely twisted linen**. **The breastplate** was about nine inches **square and** was **folded double** to form a pouch, open at the top, where **the Urim and the Thummim** were placed (**28:15-16, 38:8-9**).

Although beautiful, the purpose of **the breastplate** was functional, contributing to some of the duties of **the high priest**, who was considered to be a mediator between **ADONAI** and the people. On the one hand, he was to bring some of **the sancity, glory and splendor of the Eternal One** to the people. But on the other hand, **he** was to represent sinful mankind to **YHVH**.



Mounted on the front of **the breastplate** were **four rows of precious stones**, three in each row. Each **of the stones** was **engraved** with **the name of one of the twelve sons of Isra'el**. There is no comparison between the kinds of **stones** listed here with those that will decorate the foundations of the city walls in the New Jerusalem (**Revelation 21:19-20**). **In the first row there shall be a ruby or sardius (NKJ), a topaz and a beryl. In the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and an emerald. In the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst. In the fourth row chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper.** The first and the last **stones**, the **sardius** and **jasper**, also describe **the Lord's** appearance as **He** sits on **His** throne in heaven (**Revelation 4:3**). Moses was commanded to **mount them in intricate gold settings (28:17-21, 38:10-14)**. Just as **the breastplate stones** bear the names **of the twelve tribes of Isra'el**, so the foundations of the New Jerusalem will bear the names of **the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Revelation 21:14)**. Although the two lists are not identical, in each case the precise identification of a few of **the stones** is uncertain. Further research will perhaps clarify the nature of one or more of the unknown **stones** and possibly bring the two lists into closer agreement with each other.⁶²⁶

God tells us that we are **His jewels. They will be mine, says ADONAI Almighty, in the day when I make them My jewels (Malachi 3:17 NKJ)**. We are very precious to **Him**, so precious that **He** paid a very costly price for our redemption, the price of **His** one and only **Son**. Every beam of light from the Sh'kinah glory that fell upon **Aaron**, fell upon the names of the tribes of **Isra'el**. And **the Father's** smile upon **His** beloved **Son** also falls upon **His** bride; for we have been accepted and loved by **Him**. In **His** eyes we are identified with **Jesus, crucified with Him, risen with Him and seated with Him in heavenly places (Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:1-4; Ephesians 1:3)**.⁶²⁷

The breastplate was firmly fastened to the **ephod** over **the high priest's** heart by means of four **braided chains of pure gold, like a rope**. It was not to be loosened or removed in

any way. **Two** of the **chains** were slipped through **the gold rings at the upper corners of the breastplate** and attached to the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front. The other two braided chains were slipped through **two golden rings** at the lower corners of the breastplate just above the waistband. The rings of the breastplate were tied with a blue cord, connecting it to the waistband so it would be firmly attached to the ephod (28:22-28, 38:15-21).⁶²⁸

Whenever Aaron entered the Holy Place, he wore the names of the sons of Isra'el over his heart, on the breastplate of decision, as a continuing memorial before ADONAI (28:29). Having the breastplate of decision over Aaron's heart is mentioned three times here, because it pictures **Jesus** standing at the right hand of **God** interceding for us. **God** not only carries us on **His** shoulders, the place of power and ability, but **He** carries us on **His** breast. We are engraved on **His heart**. **He** loves us! This is a picture of **His** love for us.⁶²⁹

In the TaNaKh, **ADONAI** revealed **Himself** to **His** people in a variety of ways. **He** revealed **Himself** through many mighty acts, such as the creation, the plagues on Egypt and the dividing of the Red Sea. **He** also gave **His** people a divine Word. This was done both orally, such as the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, and in written form, such as the Book of the Covenant. Often, **God** employed prophets to speak **His** Word to **His** people. In addition, **God** revealed **Himself**, and the future, through the means of dreams (**Genesis 41:1-37**). The casting of lots was a common means of receiving revelation in the Hebrew Scriptures. Gideon even laid out a fleece so that **God** would make known to him **His** will (**Judges 6:36-40**). There were other methods as well by which **God** revealed **His** will.

Today some believers are often quite troubled by these various means by which **God** spoke to the righteous of the TaNaKh. They want to know if **ADONAI** speaks in these ways today. And, if not, why not? Or, if **He** does, does **He** speak to each one of us in these ways? Are these methods still applicable to the community of believers today? The writer to the **Hebrews** answers these questions in the very opening passage of his book when he says: **In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe (Hebrews 1:1-2)**. The author is pointing out that the fullness of **revelation** is now complete with the coming of **Jesus Messiah**. No further **revelation** is needed. **He** is the final **revelation**.⁶³⁰