

# MYSTIC LIGHT

## *The Breastplate of the High Priest*

**T**HE AVERAGE STUDENT of occultism little realizes the wealth of truth and esoteric knowledge contained within the Bible. For many years, lives possibly, he has studied this great Book only from the literal or the historical angle. This mistake the world is slowly making right, and there is now coming into the hearts and minds of students a greater desire to understand the mysteries contained within that ancient tome, the Book of Seven Seals. The wealth of symbolism it contains is practically boundless, and the only limit to the student of the Bible is that imposed by his own lack of understanding of great cosmic principles.

In this article we shall briefly consider the Breastplate of Aaron, the high priest of the Tabernacle, and first of all we shall read the description of it as given in the twenty-eighth chapter of the book of Exodus:

“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, shalt thou make it....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 inclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of

JUDAH SARDIUS	ISSACHAR TOPAZ	ZEBULUN CARBUNCLE
REUBEN EMERALD	SIMEON SAPPHIRE	GAD DIAMOND
EPHRAIM LIGURE	MANASSEH AGATE	BENJAMIN AMETHYST
DAN BERYL	ASHER ONYX	NAPHTALI JASPER

Tribe and stone correlation from Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible

### *The Breastplate of Righteousness and Prophecy*

*An oracle of great power; this pectoral consisted of a frame of embroidery inset with twelve stones of substantial weight, each in a socket of gold. It was held in place by special golden chains and ribbons. The stones had the mysterious power of lighting up with Divine glory.*

Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet; every one 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 upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.”

When we start to study the mystery of the Breastplate, we are at the very height of the wisdom religion, for we can safely say that no student has ever entered the presence of his Lord with the twelve jewels in his spiritual Breastplate, reflecting the light of the Shekinah's glory. There are two great characters in the study of the Old Testament:

Moses the law giver, and Aaron, the high priest. In Moses we find the development of the mind; to him were given the tablets of the law. In Aaron we find the spiritual counselor of the ancient Israelites. In many of the great mystery schools we find the Letters A. U. M. used as the symbols of the “lost word.” When we realize that Aaron or A represents the heart and Moses or M represents the mind, we can better understand why the world was lost when the U, which in ancient symbology, represents a hook, was removed, and why man must wander upon the surface of the lower worlds until he is able to unify these two great principles within himself.

In the ancient Hebrew there is no U, but instead the letter Vau is used. The meaning of this letter is that of a hook to hang things upon or to fasten things together with. Man standing in the center of the evolutionary scheme like the sacred lily of the ancients, is the Vau or the hook, the letter lost from the word by the death of the builder (the fall of man), the uniting link, who must in himself join his higher and lower natures, the A and the M, in the spiritual marriage of the Sun and Moon.

Most students are acquainted with the literal explanation of the Breastplate of Aaron, which symbolizes the mystic path as opposed to the mind path of the Tablets of the Law; so in this article we shall study the Breastplate only from the spiritual or esoteric angle.

First of all, it is important for us to consider the setting in which the twelve sacred stones are placed. The Bible tells us that the Breastplate was made of gold, of blue, of purple, and of scarlet, and of a fine twined linen. These different materials represent the bodies of man in which are set the stones or centers of his spiritual nature. The twined linen is the purified physical body; the gold is the vital body; the scarlet is the transmuted desire body; the blue is the spirit; the violet, which is a combination of blue, the higher, and of red, the lower, represents the link of mind, and is the color of Mercury, which the Rosicrucian student knows is the symbol of thought.



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*Moses Consecrates Aaron  
The first High Priest wears the energy-focusing breastplate.*

The ephod is the covering of the back and breast worn by the priest, and is fastened at the shoulders by two large onyx stones set in gold, representing the two poles of nature. They also correspond to Jachin and Boaz, the pillars of the Temple. The ephod is gathered at the waist by a heavy girdle, which in the case of the priest is of pure white linen, while the high priest’s girdle is beautifully embroidered in colors. The Breastplate is worn upon the front of the ephod fastened by golden cords and chains.

It is well known that the twelve stones represent the twelve signs of the zodiac or the twelve great celestial Hierarchies which focus their influence upon man. The stones on the Breastplate are divided into four rows of three. The four rows signify the four elements (earth, fire, air and water) and the four Hebrew letters of the sacred name (tetragrammaton).

They also stand for the four basic principles of the human body—hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon. There are three stones abreast, which stand for the cardinal, fixed, and mutable signs.

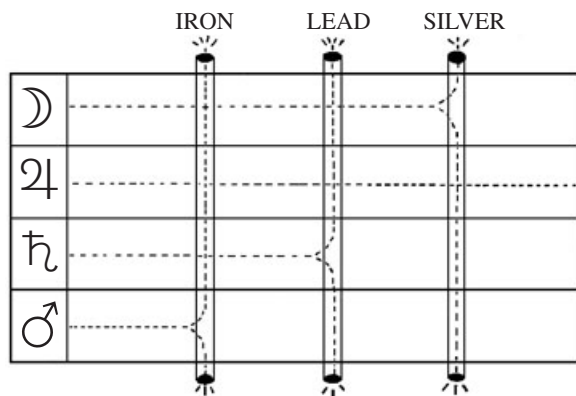


Figure 1

Each of the stones was inscribed with the name of one of the twelve tribes. It is the same in man: each of the twelve stones or centers has a key or rate of vibration which connects it with its external color ray in the cosmos.

In Figure 1 we see three poles, one made of iron, one of lead, and one of silver. These form three of the twelve poles which receive celestial rays. The great Hierarchies which are working upon man are surrounding him and this planet at all times with their vibrations and rays. These vibrations can only be received by substances attuned to them. Thus we see that silver attracts the vibrations of the Moon, while those of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, although passing through and around the same pole, are not drawn to it, nor do they exercise any influence upon it. It is the same with Mars, whose vibrations are attracted to iron but not to the other metals. Jupiter responds only to tin, and Saturn is drawn only to lead. Analogously, the ray centers in many are like receiving stations; if they are not attuned to their respective currents in the cosmos, the individual does not receive any force through them.

Man is slowly bringing himself into harmony with the various forces of nature. Every time he perfects one of these adjustments, he places another jewel in his Breastplate. The so-called bad aspects of a horoscope and the inharmonies of life are nothing more nor less than maladjustments, while

so-called evil is good gone astray or misapplied. The planets continue to shed a neutral ray. They were called by the ancients one-eyed gods. These same neutral rays exert either constructive or destructive influences, according to the adjustments of the receiving poles. There are very few people who have developed more than one or two jewels in their Breastplates, and the result is that they are receiving an unbalanced celestial influx. If they continue to play upon single strings, they will eventually become deranged by allowing the stronger powers to become domineering, while the weak grow weaker.

The first duty of the student is to make a mental and spiritual analysis of his character, and instead of going through life doing the things that are easy for him, thus over-developing certain organs, he should do the things in which he is not proficient and in that way build up the centers that are now asleep. The twelve stones are all of the same size and shape, and it is not until all of the forces of nature work upon man equally that he will be able to become the high priest of the tabernacle.

The first act in the making of the Breastplate is to remember that it must be constructed of the best that we have; that only perfect stones may be used,

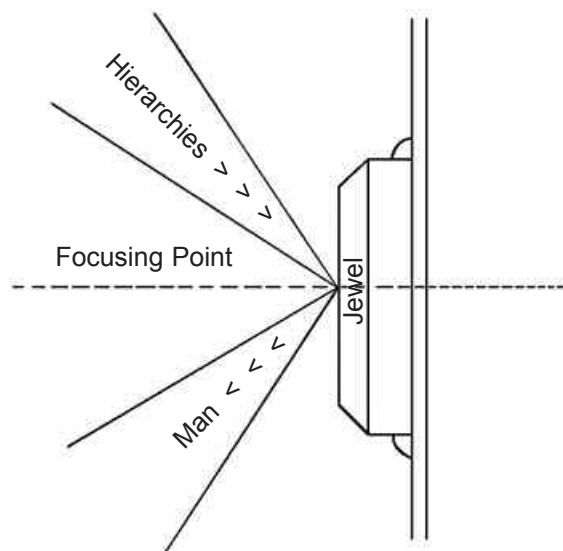


Figure 2

and that the student can only construct these jewels by developing within himself the conditions suitable to them. This is done by education and spiritual development of only the highest and best

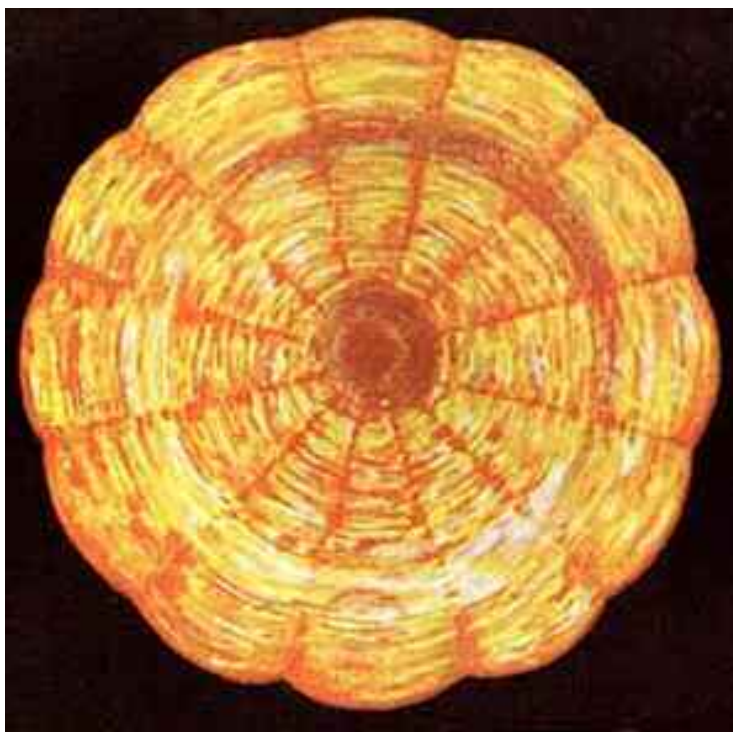


kind. There are many ways by which this may be done, but the only sure one is through a life of altruism, service, and brotherhood. While there is one stone missing from this Breastplate, man cannot enter the presence of his Lord.

Now let us consider how the priest of the tabernacle uses the Breastplate which he has made. First of all it reflects the light of the Shekinah and allows him to see in the Holy of Holies where all is dark until these stones, through polish, reflect the light. We see in Figure No. 2 how the stones serve as reflectors and are objects against and through which the Hierarchies focus their power, each upon its respective stone. These stones, in turn, reflect their gathered power to those whom the priest is guiding. Man is a sun in the making. The physical sun, as the occultist knows, is a reflector for the two spiritual suns behind it. Zodiacal energies are focused through the sun whose rays impinge on man directly and through the agency of the planets. In the same way, the Adept or Initiate, who is a high priest, reflects through the channels which he has developed, the powers which he has gathered from the cosmos. In this way men are slowly becoming *suns* of God, and the twelve stones are the reflectors through which they spread the light to those below them.

It is also by reverse action that the Lord sees reflected in these stones the states of consciousness reached by the twelve tribes. In like manner the spiritual centers in man show his position in evolution. The twelve stones symbolize the twelve convolutions of the brain, the development of which is individualizing man and differentiating him from the animal. Taking the heart of the priest as the Liberator, we find that the twelve stones are the twelve Elder Brothers that conceal him, and through whom his light radiates in twelve different colors, representing the twelve mystery schools—the seven lesser and the five greater.

The Bible says, “Thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim.” These stand for the two poles of existence, which we understand as spirit and matter. The Urim and



*While the human heart is the sun of the seven “planetary” ductless glands (Heline), its desire body counterpart has a twelve-petaled form which is related to the twelve gems of the breastplate worn over the heart. The twelve-petaled rose windows in Gothic churches refer to the heart (fourth occult) center as the work of the Earth (fourth Period), as the Jupiter (fifth) Period shall focus on the throat (fifth occult) center by which the living word shall create etheric beings.*

Thummim of the Hebrews are the same as the Yin and Yang of the Chinese. It is said that various combinations of these two principles make all things. This we realize to be true, for we know that all things are made of various combinations of spirit and matter. The Urim and Thummim were used for purposes of divination by the Hebrews, who believed that their various combinations functioned as the voice of God. The esoteric student realizes that the maladjustments of spirit and matter manifesting in his daily life constitute undeniable directions by which his life should be regulated.

As the student goes through life let him realize that every temptation mastered and every purification of his body adds luster to the stones in his spiritual Breastplate, and brings closer the day when he shall also become a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, who reflects to all who need them the powers of the spiritual Hierarchies through the living Breastplate of his own soul. □

—Manly P. Hall