

28:29-30

“So Aaron Christologically, only Jesus can be the high priest and do what is said here, but I don’t want us to forget about three men in Numbers 16 who didn’t want to admit that there was but one man to do this job. **shall bear the names of the sons of Israel** Notice how he breaks down the nation and gets specific to at least some degree. The High Priest could have had “Israel” on a placard, but he did not. We are thought of as individuals. **on the breastplate of judgment over his heart**, Maybe these are the onyx stones engraved with the **names** (39:6-7)? It seems doubtful since these stones in the **breastplate** are multicolored and likewise engraved (39:14). There are many, many, words that could have been used here (chest/breast/bosom), but instead, **heart** is chosen, and as in the case of the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army is translated “depths.” **when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually.**
30 And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the ⁹Urim and the Thummim,

As regards divination (seeking the will of God by some sort of physical action), the breastpiece’s pocket was the holding place for the divination stones, the Urim and Thummim (“lights” and “darks”⁴²⁴). How were these used? There are three strong possibilities: (1) A number of light and dark stones were contained in the pouch. When, in faith and with prayer, the high priest asked God questions, he would then pull out stones one by one to give answers, a light stone perhaps indicating yes and a dark one indicating no (or vice versa). (2) Only two large stones were in the pouch. Each time the high priest had a question for God on behalf of the people, he reached in and found one. Its color told him, as above, the answer. Then he replaced the stone and reached again for a new answer. This seems unlikely since it would have been all too easy for the priest to have a fairly good sense of which of the two stones was where in the pouch. (3) Two or more stones were in the pouch, shaped something like dice, with alternating sides or faces colored light and dark. These were pulled from the pouch, “thrown” as dice are thrown, and examined to see which colors came “up.”¹

The explanation is somewhat fanciful, that the names on the shoulder-stones indicated that the people were a burthen to him, while those on the stones of the breast-plate, being upon his breast, indicated that he bore them affection. The breast and the shoulder were probably chosen as being conspicuous and honourable positions.²

⁹ Lit. *Lights and the Perfections*

⁴²⁴ Because of the similarity of *tummîm* to *tāmîm* (“truth,” a noun in the usual masculine plural form used for abstract concepts), some commentators over the years concluded that the names of the stones were “Light” (*’ûrîm*, also a singular abstract in the masculine plural formation) and “Truth.” The original meaning appears, however, to have been “lights” and “darks.”

¹Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 612.

²H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Exodus*, vol. 2, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 287.

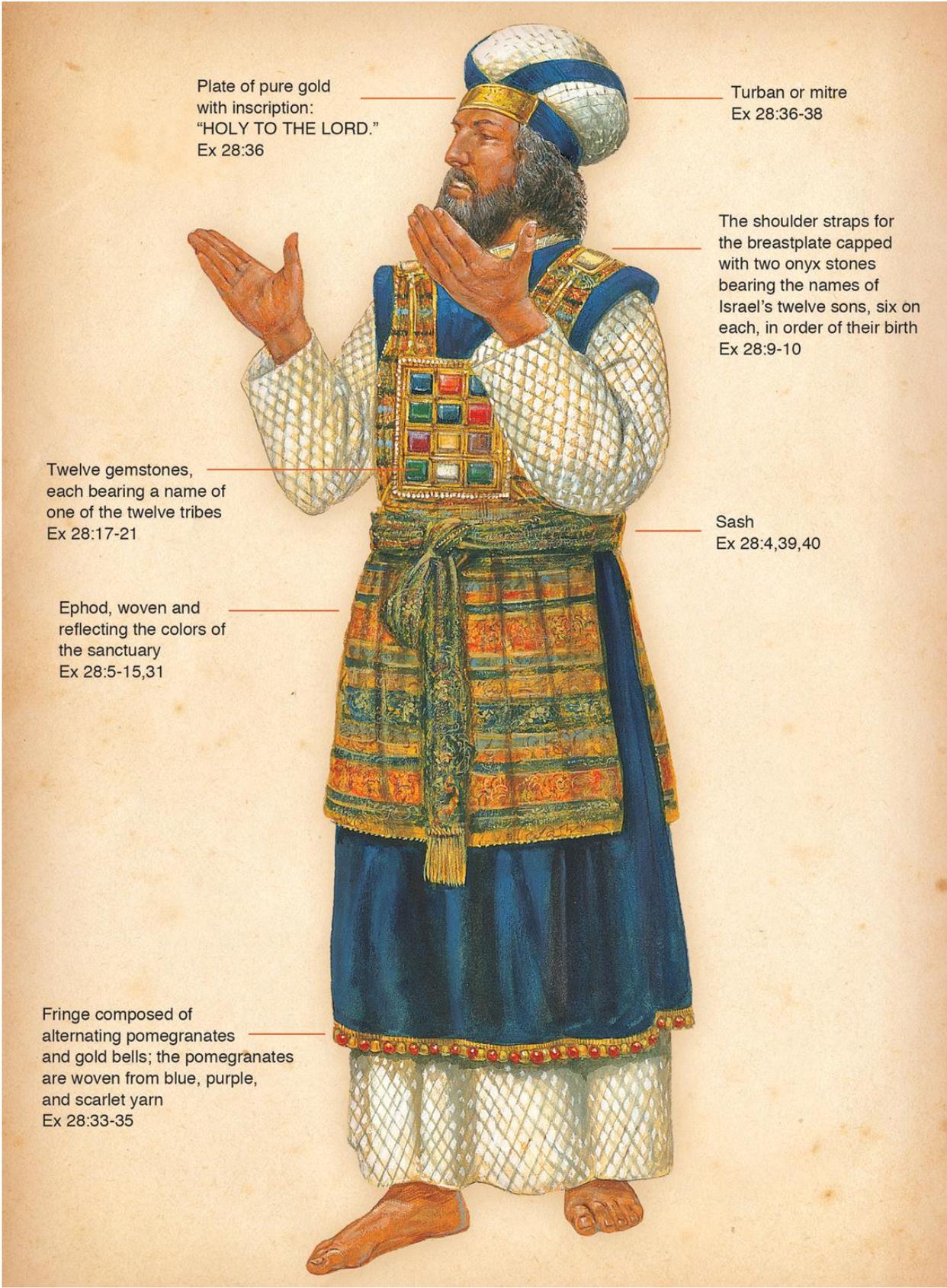


Plate of pure gold with inscription: "HOLY TO THE LORD." Ex 28:36

Turban or mitre Ex 28:36-38

The shoulder straps for the breastplate capped with two onyx stones bearing the names of Israel's twelve sons, six on each, in order of their birth Ex 28:9-10

Twelve gemstones, each bearing a name of one of the twelve tribes Ex 28:17-21

Sash Ex 28:4,39,40

Ephod, woven and reflecting the colors of the sanctuary Ex 28:5-15,31

Fringe composed of alternating pomegranates and gold bells; the pomegranates are woven from blue, purple, and scarlet yarn Ex 28:33-35

and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Twice in two verses, then, we have this terminology used by God. Romans 3:21-22 speak of the righteous Jesus Christ and its finding in the law. Jesus, as we know, is the perfect High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16). He is literally **before the LORD continually**. The presence of this High Priest and that High Priest is a reminder to God of the people and the cost paid by blood for this High Priest to **bear the judgment** of the people.

God's people deserve to be before God on the heart of Christ. We are to come boldly (Hebrews 4:16). To be otherwise is to be a billionaire living on the street. He "ever lives" (7:25-26) and bids us come (4:16). Since we have names in a book (Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:11-15), it could be that our names are on His garments as well in Heaven, and that they are the names we have in that book. Think of the ramifications of being able to lose one's salvation. Shall our names be blotted from the etchings on the Heavenly High Priest?