

# Exodus 28:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

Twelve precious stones in four rows adorn the breastplate, each representing a tribe of Israel. The variety of stones (sardius/ruby, topaz, carbuncle/emerald, etc.) shows God values diversity within unity—each tribe unique yet all part of one people. The Hebrew **אֶת** (even, stone) connects to Christ the cornerstone (Psalm 118:22, 1 Peter 2:6). These set stones prefigure believers as 'living stones' (1 Peter 2:5). Four rows suggest universal representation; three stones per row points to Trinitarian completeness.

## Historical Context

These twelve stones were among the ancient world's most precious gems, making the breastplate extraordinarily valuable. The priest literally wore a fortune close to his heart, demonstrating the infinite worth of the people he represented before God.

## Related Passages

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding yourself as a 'precious stone' set in Christ's priestly ministry affect your self-worth?
2. What does the diversity of stones (different colors, types) teach about unity within Christ's body?

## Interlinear Text

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וְתַּثַּל אֹתָם	בְּזַהֲבָבְךָ	מִלְּאָתָה	אֲבִינָה	אַרְבָּעָה	בְּתַשְׁבָּבָבְךָ	אֲבִינָה	וְתַּתְּבִּل אֹתָם
And thou shalt set	H4390	in it settings	H4396	of stones	H68	even four	H702
						row	H2905
						of stones	H68
וְתַּתְּבִּל אֹתָם	אֲדֹם	פָּטָה	וְבָרָקְלָתָה	וְתַּתְּבִּל אֹתָם	אֲדֹם	וְתַּתְּבִּל אֹתָם	וְתַּתְּבִּל אֹתָם
row	H2905	shall be a sardius	H124	a topaz	H6357	and a carbuncle	H1304
						row	H2905
וְתַּתְּבִּל אֹתָם							
this shall be the first	H259						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 28:13** (Parallel theme): Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

**Proverbs 8:11** (Parallel theme): For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.