

Exodus 28:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel:

Analysis

Two onyx stones engraved with the tribes' names—six names per stone, arranged by birth order. Engraving suggests permanence; these names aren't written but carved into stone. Birth order indicates that God remembers each tribe's history and origin. The high priest bears this permanent record on his shoulders (strength). Christ bears our names permanently—not temporarily remembered but eternally engraved. We are 'graven upon the palms of His hands' (Isaiah 49:16).

Historical Context

Onyx (שֹׁהַם, shoham), a semi-precious stone with layered coloring, was valuable and durable. The engraving required skilled craftsmen to carve the names without breaking the stone—permanent yet delicate work.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does 'engraved' (versus written) names teach about the permanence of Christ's remembrance of you?

2. How does God's remembering your 'birth order' (personal history) encourage you?

Interlinear Text

וְלָקַחְתָּ	אֶת	שְׁתֵּי	אֲבָנֵי	שֹׁהַם	וּפְתִיחַתָּ	עֲלֶיהָ
And thou shalt take	H853	two	stones	onyx	and grave	H5921
H3947		H8147	H68	H7718	H6605	
שְׁמֹת	בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל:				
on them the names	of the children	of Israel				
H8034	H1121	H3478				

Additional Cross-References

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.