

# Exodus 39:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they set in it four rows of stones: the first row was a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this was the first row.

## Analysis

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The first row—sardius (סַרְדִּי, odem, red stone), topaz (תִּטְּבָה, pitdah, yellow-green), and carbuncle (בָּרָקֶט, bareqet, emerald)—begins the twelve stones representing Israel's tribes. Each stone's unique color and character symbolizes tribal distinctiveness within covenant unity. The sardius/ruby's blood-red hue may represent Reuben (firstborn); topaz's golden glow suggests divine light; carbuncle's green brilliance evokes life. Together, these precious stones teach that God's people, though diverse, form a unified, costly treasure. Revelation 21:19-20 echoes this imagery in the New Jerusalem's foundations.

## Historical Context

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Identifying ancient gemstones with modern equivalents is challenging, but the Hebrew terms indicate precious, colorful stones. The stones' arrangement in four rows of three may correspond to the camp arrangement in Numbers 2, with three tribes per side of the tabernacle.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How do twelve distinct stones in one breastplate illustrate unity in diversity within the church?
2. What does God's people being represented by precious, not common, stones reveal about believers' value to Him?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּמְלֹאוּ	בּוּ	אַרְבַּעַה	הָטוֹר	אֲבֵן	הָטוֹר	אֶדְם
And they set	H0	in it four	row	of stones	row	was a sardius
H4390		H702	H2905	H68	H2905	H124
פְּטָדָה	וּבְרָקִית	הָטוֹר	הָאֶחָד:			
a topaz	and a carbuncle	row	this was the first			
H6357	H1304	H2905	H259			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 28:21** (Parallel theme): And the stones shall be with the names of the children of 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.