

Exodus 39:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

Analysis

The second row—emerald (נֹפֶךְ, nophek), sapphire (סַפִּיר, sappir, lapis lazuli), and diamond (יָהָלֹם, yahalom)—continues the spectrum of colors and brilliance. Sapphire's deep blue recalls heaven's glory (Exodus 24:10); emerald's green suggests life and growth; diamond's hardness and clarity symbolize enduring truth. Each tribe has God-given identity and worth; none are interchangeable or expendable. The high priest bore all twelve constantly, teaching that Christ's intercession encompasses every member of His body, none forgotten or neglected (John 17:20).

Historical Context

Lapis lazuli (sapphire) was highly prized in the ancient Near East, imported from Afghanistan. Its deep blue with gold flecks resembled the night sky. The presence of such costly imported stones demonstrated that nothing was too valuable for worship of YHWH.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What assurance comes from knowing Christ bears every believer individually, not just 'the church' generically?
2. How does each stone's unique beauty illustrate that believers have distinct, God-given identities within the body?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה	הַשֵּׁנִי	נִפְךָ	סַפִּיר	וְהָיָה:
row	And the second	an emerald	a sapphire	and a diamond
H2905	H8145	H5306	H5601	H3095

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 28:18 (Parallel theme): And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

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.