

Exodus 39:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.

Analysis

The third row—ligure (לְשֵׁם, leshem, possibly jacinth/amber), agate (שְׁבָוֵת, shevo), and amethyst (אַחְלָמָה, achlamah, purple stone)—continues the prismatic display. Amethyst's purple hue connects to royalty; agate's banded patterns suggest covenant layers; ligure's warm glow may symbolize God's favor. The breastplate's twelve stones form a miniature representation of the twelve tribes, teaching that the high priest bore the entire covenant community constantly before God. This anticipates Christ's headship over His church—He knows, loves, and intercedes for each member individually.

Historical Context

The twelve stones likely corresponded to the twelve tribes in birth order (as in v. 14), though the exact correlation between specific stones and tribes remains debated. The diversity of colors and types emphasized that each tribe had distinct identity within covenant unity.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the high priest bearing twelve distinct stones challenge individualism in modern Christianity?
2. What does Christ's knowledge of each 'stone' in His breastplate reveal about His personal care for you?

Interlinear Text

וְאַחֲרַת־הַשְׁלֵישׁ וְבַעֲתָר וְשָׁבַע וְלִשְׁמָן

row **And the third** **a ligure** **an agate** **and an amethyst**

H2905

H7992

H3958

H7618

H306

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