

Exodus 39:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work.

Analysis

Beating gold into thin plates and cutting it into wires (לַעֲשׂוֹת, la'asot, to work) demonstrates painstaking craftsmanship for God's glory. The gold threads woven throughout the ephod illustrate divine presence permeating priestly ministry—gold signifies deity, the fabric humanity. This prefigures the incarnation where deity and humanity unite perfectly in Christ. The 'cunning work' (חֹשֶׁב, choshev, artistic design) teaches that worship of the holy God demands our finest skill and utmost care, not casual or careless offerings.

Historical Context

Gold working was highly developed in the ancient Near East, but Israel's artisans learned Egyptian techniques during their sojourn. The use of such elaborate metalwork for worship, rather than idols, redirected pagan craftsmanship to glorify YHWH alone.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does the painstaking gold work teach about the care and excellence God deserves in worship?
2. How does gold woven through fabric prefigure the mystery of Christ's two natures in one person?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּבְרָקֵעוּ	אֶת	פָּתִי יָ	הַזָּהָב	וַיִּקְצֹץ	פְּתִילִים	לַעֲשֹׂת
And they did beat	into	thin plates	the gold	and cut	it into wires	to work
H7554	H854	H6341	H2091	H7112	H6616	H6213
וְ	הַתְּכָה לָת	וְ	הָאֲרָגָם	וְ	וְ	תוֹלַעַת
H8432	it in the blue	H8432	and in the purple	H8432	H8438	
	H8504		H713			
הַשָּׁנִי	וְ	הַשֵּׁשׁ	מְעֵשֶׂה	חָשָׁב:		
and in the scarlet	H8432	and in the fine linen	work	with cunning		
H8144		H8336	H4639	H2803		

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