

# Song of Solomon 5:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

## Analysis

**His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl** (yadayv geliyley zahav memulaim batarshish, (יָדַי גָּלִילִי זָהָב מִמְלָאִים בְּתַרְשִׁישׁ)—the beloved's hands are compared to gold cylinders (seals or rods) set with beryl (tarshish, (תַּרְשִׁישׁ)—precious yellow or golden-brown gemstones. This imagery celebrates strength, value, and beauty. Hands represent action and work—the beloved's deeds are precious and powerful.

**His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires** (me'ayv eshet shen me'ulepheth sappirim, (מֵעַי אֶשֶׁת שֵׁן מַעַלְפַת סְפִירִים) describes the torso as carved ivory decorated with sapphires—white strength adorned with blue beauty. Ivory represented purity, luxury, and strength; sapphires represented royal value and heavenly glory. The beloved combines strength (gold hands, ivory body) with costly beauty (beryl, sapphires). Christ's works (hands) are infinitely valuable, and His character (body) combines pure strength with royal glory.

## Historical Context

Gold jewelry set with precious stones indicated royalty and wealth. Beryl (tarshish, (תַּרְשִׁישׁ) stones were valuable yellow-golden gemstones. The beloved's hands as gold rings set with beryl celebrated both strength (gold) and beauty (jewels). Ivory was luxury material imported from Africa or India—used in royal furniture and decorations. Solomon's throne was covered with ivory overlaid with gold (1 Kings 10:18). Sapphires were royal gemstones—appearing in the high priest's

breastplate (Exodus 28:18) and in visions of God's throne (Exodus 24:10; Ezekiel 1:26). The beloved's ivory body overlaid with sapphires combined pure strength with royal, heavenly glory. Early church fathers saw Christ's "gold hands" as His creative and redemptive works—infinitely valuable. The "ivory body with sapphires" represented His incarnation—divine glory (sapphires) united with pure humanity (ivory). The Reformers emphasized Christ's works as perfectly righteous—His obedience credited to believers. The Puritans taught meditation on Christ's specific works—creation, providence, redemption—as fuel for love.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What specific "works" of Christ (His gold hands with beryl)—creation, miracles, redemption, intercession—do you find most valuable and compelling?
2. How does Christ's combination of pure humanity (ivory) and divine glory (sapphires) assure you that He perfectly represents both God and humanity?
3. In what ways do Christ's hands—His works, His touch, His activity—bring beauty and value into your life?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּ יָדָיו	יְמִלָּא	בְּתַרְשֵׁשׁ	מַעַיִן	נְשָׁת
<b>His hands</b>	<b>rings</b>	<b>are as gold</b>	<b>set</b>	<b>with the beryl</b>
H3027	H1550	H2091	H4390	H8658
וְיָדָיו	מִמְלָא	בְּתַרְשֵׁשׁ	מַעַיִן	נְשָׁת
<b>ivory</b>	<b>overlaid</b>	<b>with sapphires</b>		
H8127	H5968	H5601		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 24:10:** And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

**Isaiah 54:11:** O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

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