

The High Priest's Garments

When the Children of Israel made the Tabernacle, they also made special clothes for Aaron, the older brother of Moses, who was going to be the High Priest. First, an outside garment was made called, an "ephod." It was something like an apron. It was made from gold, blue, purple, scarlet and white linen. The gold was real gold, hammered into thin plates and then cut into wires. These wires were worked into the blue, the purple, the scarlet and the white linen. They made shoulder pieces for this ephod so it would be joined together over the shoulders. They made a girdle, or belt, of the same colors to go around the High Priest's waist.

On the shoulders of the ephod they fastened two beautiful onyx stones in settings of gold. On these stones they carved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel—six names on each stone.

Next, they made a beautiful breastplate of the same colors as the ephod. It was about eight inches square. They set precious stones in settings of gold on this breastplate. There were twelve of these stones in four rows—three stones in each row. On each of these precious stones was the name of one of the tribes of Israel. There is a little picture of the breastplate on the next page. The kinds of stones and the names of the tribe on each stone were like this:

Ruby <i>Reuben</i>	Emerald <i>Judah</i>	Ligure <i>Gad</i>	Beryl <i>Zebulon</i>
Topaz <i>Simeon</i>	Sapphire <i>Dan</i>	Agate <i>Asher</i>	Onyx <i>Joseph</i>
Carbuncle <i>Levi</i>	Diamond <i>Naphtali</i>	Amethyst <i>Issachar</i>	Jaspar <i>Benjamin</i>

The breastplate was used by the High Priest whenever he spoke to the Lord. He would ask the Lord a question, and the Lord would answer by flashes of light coming out of the stones. For this reason, the breastplate was called the "Urim and Thummin"—or the "Lights and Perfections." The flashed of light would not come from all of the stones at once, but from one or more at a time. The High Priest knew what each stone meant, so he could read the Lord's answer in the flashing of lights. Sometimes the Lord would speak with a living voice while He gave the flashes of light.

This breastplate was fastened at its four corners by blue ribbon to four gold rings in the ephod. The ephod and the breastplate were the holiest of the High Priest's clothing. Underneath the ephod the High Priest wore a robe. It was woven all in blue. There was hole in the middle of it with a band around it so it would not rip and could be pulled over the head. Around the hem of this blue robe were embroidered pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet. A pomegranate is a round, red fruit. Between each pomegranate there was a golden bell—all the way around the hem of the robe. This means that when Aaron, the High Priest walked into the tabernacle, the people could hear the sound of these bells as he moved around.

Then they made a coat of fine linen, with a woven design, to be worn inside the robe. They also made a mitre, or headdress, of linen and breeches, or pants, of linen. Last of all, they made a plate of pure gold and wrote up on it "HOLINESS TO THE LORD," and tied it with blue ribbon to the mitre, or headdress, of Aaron.