

Part 3 – Instructions for the Tabernacle

Exodus 25

7 Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.

We now come to the next items God requested be willingly given to Him from the children of Israel for the building of His Tabernacle. And we see that he wanted precious stones for the ‘ephod’ and the ‘breastplate’. An ‘ephod’ is #646, probably of foreign derivation that meant a *girdle* but, specifically it means: *the ephod or high-priest's shoulder piece*. It was likely a piece of clothing worn outside the robe and kept in place by the ‘shoulder piece’ and a ‘girdle’; the shoulder piece is what the priest’s breastplate was attached to. Exodus 28 gives us more details on the ephod and we’ll see that it was made of blue, purple and scarlet threads along with fine linen and was embroidered in gold thread with ‘cunning work’. The ephod was likely held together by a girdle of similar workmanship, sewed onto it and had two shoulder pieces that crossed the shoulders and were apparently fastened or sown to the ephod in the front. It’s uncertain whether the ephod covered the back or only the front. We’ll also see that the purpose of the breastplate was to provide a ‘place of judgement’ wherein the ‘Urim and Thummim’ were kept (Ex 28:15, 30).

Now, in the ephod and breastplate were to be stones, which have spiritual significance, even to us *today*. However, it is a bit difficult to figure out today exactly what stones were used. Some of the references to stones in the Bible are to gems whose names are obscure and whose identity is uncertain (such as ‘adamant’ or ‘ligure’). And even the etymology of the Hebrew words provides little help in determining the names of the stones. For example, the first-named stone of the Breastplate is the Hebrew word 'odem (pronounced as: o'-dem). It’s #124 and it simply means: *redness*, i.e. *the ruby, garnet, or some other red gem*. So... which ‘red’ stone is being spoken of? The root meaning doesn’t help much because it simply means: *to show blood (in the face), i.e. flush or turn rosy* (#119). Further, some of the names given are to stones that are of words foreign derivation; such as the tenth (beryl), which is from a foreign word #8659 that means ‘Tarshish’. So, the word itself does not give us *any* clue as to the nature of the stones.

And even consulting various translations of the Hebrew Scriptures does not add much clarification. The oldest translation of the Hebrew text is the *Septuagint* (a Greek translation of the third century B.C.); but, it’s not always consistent because it translates different Hebrew words by the same Greek word. It is thought by some that the original Breastplate (made under the direction of Moses) may have been lost when Nebuchadnezzar sacked the Temple. This is a very likely possibility because 2 Kings 24:13 tells us that “*he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said*”. Certainly, the breastplate (made of gold and precious stones) would have been of great value so one would think this would have been something the Babylonians would have spoiled. Because of this, many scholars think that a new Breastplate was made in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 2:63, Neh 7:65) but, they had such difficulty with obtaining such phenomenal

gemstones that others were substituted for them. This possibility may help explain the serious differences between the lists given by the Septuagint and the Book of Exodus. Thus, we find that something more than a knowledge of the Hebrew is required before we can reach a reasonable conclusion as to the nature of the stones.

Therefore, it is wise to look to other ‘ancient authorities’ concerning the stones used in the Breastplate. There’s the ancient writer ‘Josephus’, who wrote his famous history in the first century A.D... But, because of inconsistencies (and even some mistakes), information from that source is not always helpful. Then there is also *Theophrastus* (370-287 B.C.) whose treatise “*Concerning Stones*” is a description of gem stones and minerals known to men of that age. The other is *Pliny the Elder* whose “*Historia Naturalis*” was published in 77 A.D. And while the information given by these two men is valuable, there still are some difficulties with the works because both describe (under the same name) many gem stones which are known to differ entirely from one another.

However, even with the difficulties, the search to find the truth of what gemstones were really used in the Breastplate is not hopeless. One can seek the available sources and find a general consensus of the different versions and (along with other available aids) come to fairly firm conclusions, although not definite. This is exactly what E. Raymond Capt did and he published his findings (and conclusions) in a short booklet called “The Gemstones in the Breastplate”. This booklet gives an *excellent* study on the gemstones and draws reasonable conclusions as to what the stones might actually be. While we don’t normally promote books in these studies, an exception is being made here simply because it’s so difficult to find information about this subject and Capt does a pretty good job explaining his studies, research and conclusions and for this reason, we think it would be beneficial for all those interested in the gemstones of the Bible to consider reading the book. But, as always, it is up to each one of us to study to show ourselves approved, as 2 Tim 2:15 reminds us. Take the information given and make sure to compare it to the Bible, *always*, for God’s Word is our *everlasting* standard (John 17:17).

Keeping this in mind, the following chart is an ‘educated guess’ as what the stones in the Breastplate were and the tribe was assigned to. The following diagram gives the tribe’s name, the stone, the color and a picture of what the stones might *possibly* have looked like, laid out (from right to left in birth order). Below that is an image with just the stones laid out. Please keep in mind that, while these conclusions are a ‘good guess’, they are not, ‘set in stone’!

TRADITIONAL STONES OF THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL			
<u>TRIBE</u>	<u>STONE</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>PICTURE</u>
Reuben	Carnelian	Blood Red - translucent	
Simeon	Peridot	Yellowish Green	
Levi	Emerald	Green	

Judah	Carbuncle	Almandite Garnet	
Dan	Lapis Lazuli	Sparkling - Blue	
Naphtali	Crystal	Sparkling - Clear	
Gad	Jacinth	Fiery, Yellow	
Asher	Aagte	Banded Colors	
Issachar	Amethyst	Midern Amethyst	
Zebulun	Citrine	Yellow – Clear	
Joseph	Onyx	White and Brown layers	
Benjamin	Plasma	Green - Translucent	

Breastplate Stones of Israel's High Priest		
		
		
		
		

Something else that needs to be pointed out (and *never* forgotten) is that these stones were in no way 'mystical'. They did *not* have magic properties nor healing powers. God's Word specifically outlaws any form of mysticism or communication with the other dimension other than through what God's Word permits...

*10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,
11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.*

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deut 18:10-12

From the days of Moses God gave us His Written Law. When Israel was a young nation, they were to go to the priesthood to communicate with God and to learn of Him. While the Bible does speak of a “Urim and Thummim” that were kept in the Breastplate of the High Priest (Ex 28:30, Lev 8:8), they were not ‘necromancing’ as some suggest. Instead, they provided to the priesthood a clear cut ‘yes or no’ answer. However, there is little written about them. Some think these were stones that were either color coded or engraved somehow to provide a ‘yes or no’ but we simply don’t have enough information from Scriptures to know for sure exactly what they were because there’s no record in the Bible of God instructing Moses to make these. However, from a few Scriptures (Judges 1:1-2, 20:18-28, 1 Sam 10:20-22, Numbers 27:21, Ex 28:15,30) we can glean that the Urim and Thummim were used at critical moments in the history of God’s people when special divine guidance was needed. However, the last time (aside from Ezra and Nehemiah’s time when they were rebuilding the temple) the Urim and Thummim are recorded is at the time of David in 2 Sam 5:19. Thus, it appears that the means of communicating with God in this way ceased when the people demanded a ‘man’ king for it was then that He began to speak to the people through prophets, Samuel (of course) being the first. Further, we are specifically told that the way to communicate with our Heavenly Father has changed since His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, came to die for our sins...

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Heb 1:1-3

And how does Jesus ‘speak to us’ today?

*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.***

John 6:63

*Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth***

John 17:17

*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of **the Spirit, which is the word of God:***

Eph 6:17

While our Heavenly Father certainly gives us an ‘unction’ from His Holy Spirit at times (1 John 2:20), the Holy Spirit will *never* contradict God’s Word (the Bible). How He speaks to us *now* is mainly through His Written Word. Any true pastor or preacher of God will not teach traditions of man, he (or she) will teach God’s in entirety (Old and New Testaments, chapter by chapter and line by line). So, while these precious stones were important, they were never meant to be worshiped. They are important for us to study today because (like everything in the Tabernacle) they have symbolic meaning for spiritual truth. But, what is the spiritual significance of stones?

*9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
11 For **other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**
12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, **precious stones**, wood, hay, stubble;
13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.
1 Cor 3:9-17*

Here, the Holy Spirit (through Paul) clearly explains that the stones are representative of the spiritual Temple Jesus Christ is building, which is the Kingdom of God – the eternal governmental Administration which is righteous and un-corruptible. The stones, therefore, for this Temple are not physical but spiritual, because it is our very soul that will house the Holy Spirit of God. Acts 2:32-33 explains that Jesus is now at the right hand of God and is in charge of giving out the Holy Spirit of God to those who believe, trust, love and serve our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. The giving of the Holy Spirit is how Jesus is building His Holy Spirit. Just as a stone refracts light, so too we refract the Light of Jesus Christ, which is the Word of God. Consider the following information about stones...

*Much of a gemstone's perceived beauty lies in the performance of **how light reflects and refracts throughout the stone.** Reflection is the amount of light that bounces off the surface of a gemstone and is returned to the eye. This is the “sparkle” of a gemstone. **Refraction is how the gemstone bends the light in different directions, separating white light into its spectral colors.** This is called dispersion, and is the “fire” of the gemstone. Transparent and translucent gemstones each have their own refractive index, which is a numerical indication of their dispersion. The higher the R.I. of a gemstone, the more dramatic is the dispersion. In addition to reflection and refraction, many gemstones have unique properties that allow them to display*

amazing special effects with light, adding greatly to their appeal. Nearly all optical phenomena are totally dependent on how the gemstone is cut.

When the Holy Spirit (the Light) is given to a person, it flows through that person and they reflect the Light (the Word of God) given to them and it then shines to other people (whether they like it or not!). This is why Jesus told us we are *the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid* (Matt 5:14). True Christians are New Jerusalem in the making. Also note (from above) how, the dispersion (how the stone reflects or refracts the light) is called the ‘fire’ of the gemstone and each stone has their own ‘refractive index’, meaning they are all uniquely refract the Light in their own way and the way they are cut depends on their reflectivity. This is amazingly symbolic of how each individual person has their own unique way of reflecting the Light of Christ. As Paul tells us...

*4...there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.
6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*
1 Cor 12:4-7

So, the spiritual significance of the stones used in the Tabernacle (and Temple) of God is the fact that it explains the way God’s Holy Spirit shines through us and helps others ‘see’ the Light (truth) found only through, Jesus Christ. Our ability to reflect the Light of Jesus Christ is why we are likened to stones...

*5 Ye also, as **lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.
6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.
7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner;
8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.
9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:
10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*
1 Peter 2:5-10

Verse 5 declares that we are to be ‘lively stones’ which, together, build up a spiritual house. This spiritual Temple (through our many gifts given by Jesus Christ, 1 Cor 12, Mth 25:13-29) is now the true ‘holy’ priesthood and therefore, we now offer *spiritual* sacrifices to God, by Jesus Christ (through knowledge, faith and belief in Jesus Christ). The word ‘**lively**’ here is #2198 and

means: **to live** (literally or figuratively). It's translated in the KJV as - life (-time), (a-) live (-ly), quick. This is the same word found in Heb 4:12, which says: *For the word of God is **quick**, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Indeed, it is the Word of God that makes our very soul come to life when His Words soak into our mind and permeate our thought process. And also, when His Words saturate the inner being of our heart, convicting us of sin and bringing us to repentance. And over time, with sincere and diligent study, His Words will truly change our heart; cleaning it more than we ever thought possible. Those who struggle with addictions (sin) *of any sort can be healed if they sincerely commit themselves to understanding God's Word through daily study with sincerity* – it truly takes studying God's Word *ourselves* for it to soak in. And everyone has addictions when they first come to Christ... many pick them up even though they think they know Jesus Christ, just because they don't actually study His Word. The world has a way of corrupting us if we don't take a spiritual bath every day to get our mind and heart clean. *Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me* (John 13:8). *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you* (John 15:3).

Now, what are the spiritual sacrifices we are to offer now that blood sacrifices are done away with (Col 2:14, Eph 2:15)? The spiritual sacrifices our Heavenly Father truly wants are things such as: *thanksgiving* (Ps 50:7-15, 107:11, 116:17, Jonah 2:9, Amos 4:5), *praise* (Ps 54:6, Jer 17:26, 33:1) and *righteousness* (Deut 33:19, Ps 4:5, Heb 13:15). As we've learned before, God does not want blood sacrifices; He truly never has wanted rituals and ordinances. They were instituted by God, through Moses, only as a *shadow* (a means of teaching His children about – Col 2:17, Heb 8:5, 10:1) of Jesus Christ (Gal 3:24-25). God wants our sincere love. And He equates love with *obedience*.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Rom 13:8-10

God's Law was given to us for our good (Deut 10:13, 1 Tim 3:16-17, 1:5, 8), not to keep us from having fun. Life is so much better when we learn how to keep God's Word *from the heart*. And we can only learn how to do this when we study His Word (the Bible) *sincerely* and soak it into our mind and heart. Absorb God's Word as your body absorbs water and food. It's truly what our soul needs to live. That's why we're called *lively* stones. When God's Word (and Holy Spirit) are in you, *He makes your soul come alive*, and that's what builds Him a spiritual house (1 Pt 2:5). If you have not yet experienced a change of heart, keep digging daily into His Word and sincerely evaluate your thoughts, desires and true intentions of your heart. Learn what God's Word says about them and work hard to cut the sin out. This is not an easy process and it takes a while. It

takes perseverance, sincerity and determination daily and even moment by moment at times! But the Holy Spirit will cleans your heart and mind IF you stick with it. Perseverance is what makes the Gospel Armor *effective* (Eph 6:18).

Moreover, just as the breastplate was to be put on the heart of the High Priest (Ex 28:30), so likewise are God's chosen people (yea, *all* His children, Acts 10:34) upon the heart of our eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ (Heb 2:17, 4:14-16, 5:8-10, 7:24-28, 9:11, 25, 10:21) and to this day He still makes intercession for those who accept Him (John 14-17, Rom 8:24-39).

Now, in Mk 13:2, Jesus promises to pulverize *all* the stones of the physical Temple that are still standing, when He returns. That's why Jesus tells those who are there to run for the hills instead of staying in the corrupt city (Mth 24:16). Why? Because that is where Satan (the antichrist) will be and that's who Jesus Christ is coming to depose when He returns. You see, Satan IS the '*abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place*' (Matt 24:15, Mk 13:14, Lk 21:20, Daniel 9:27) that Jesus warned would come shortly (five months) before He would return. The desolation IS Satan himself, coming down to earth (after he is kicked out of heaven, Rev 12) and sitting in Jerusalem (in the Temple) and claiming to be the Messiah of the world. Paul explains this *very clearly* in 2 Thess 2. So, we must also thoroughly understand the 'lively stones' Jesus is using to build His Temple are not physical – they are *spiritual*. The 'lively stones' are all those who truly accept and believe in *Jesus Christ* (and only Jesus Christ), which means the *Word of God, the Bible*. So, should also be on guard for those who speak of building a physical Temple in Jerusalem and 'reinstating' blood sacrifices there... for this is a blasphemous insult against our dear Savior, Jesus Christ. He died for our sins once and for all (Heb 10:10) and therefore, blood sacrifices should never be performed again. NO ONE is excluded from needing to accept the salvation from Jesus Christ – there is NO other means (no 'separate' salvation) to salvation than through Jesus Christ – the Jews are NOT excluded from needing to accept Jesus Christ! (John 14:6).

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Matt 24:4-5

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Matt 24:11

Let no man deceive you with vain words...

Eph 5:6

Let no man deceive you by any means...

2 Thess 2:3

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

1 John 3:7

*17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; **and avoid them.***

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Rom 16:17-18

We have been warned. In order to be the ‘lively stones’ of God’s true Temple, we **must** study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness (2 Tim 2:15-16).

Now, one more Scripture must be pointed out before we move on and it concerns the precious stones that will comprise the beloved city of NEW Jerusalem. Consider the following in regards to what we have learned about the stones of God...

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:1-2

What is this ‘bride’ (New Jerusalem) adorned with? You guessed it, precious stones...

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

*11 Having **the glory of God:** and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;*

*12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, **which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:***

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

*14 And the wall of **the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.***

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

*19 And **the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones**. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;*

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
Rev 21:9-22

In the breastplate, there were 12 stones – one stone for each of the tribes of Israel. In New Jerusalem, the foundations of the wall of the city are ‘adorned’ with all manner of precious stones – this is symbolic of His loyal servants who love and obey Him. They make up the ‘foundation’ for His righteous Government in New Jerusalem. And, even before the eternity, Jesus will rule with them during the 1000 years of teaching (Rev 20). This is why Paul stated that: *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ* (1 Cor 3:11). He went onto explain...

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Eph 2:20-22

This explains how we will be the ‘lively stones’ of New Jerusalem! Our Heavenly Father is explaining (through symbology) how He is building a righteous Government (headed by Jesus Christ) that will never, ever be done away with...

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.
Ps 45:6

*The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and **his kingdom ruleth over all.***
Ps 103:19

*Thy kingdom is an **everlasting kingdom**, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*
Ps 145:13

*Of the increase of his government and peace **there shall be no end**, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice **from henceforth even for ever**. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

Isa 9:7

For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

Isa 60:12

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Rom 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

1 Cor 4:20

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor 6:9-10

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

*11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the **everlasting kingdom** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

2 Peter 1:10-11

Yes, indeed, the Kingdom of Jesus Christ is everlasting. The question is, will you be in it? *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates* (2 Cor 13:5-6).

So, along with precious metals, God also asked Israel for very precious fabrics, skins and wood that all have great spiritual significance to us even today. These were similar to the riches were given to Joseph (Gen 41:42) and Daniel (Dan 5:7, 16, 29) for serving in the governments of their time. These are also the kinds of things found in Rev 18 and Ezekiel 27, which explains what Satan's worldwide (wicked) government will be full of. These physical riches are valued in both God's Government and Satan's. However, there is a very large difference - *the way you get them*. To get riches by fraudulent means, is what leads to spiritual corruption, as happened to Satan in the first earth age (as Ezek 28 reveals). [Study this further in the special study: **Exalted, The Inside Scoop** <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/192?single>].

As this chapter reveals, our Heavenly Father wants us to willingly give Him spiritual sacrifices such as: thanksgiving (Ps 50:7-15, 107:11, 116:17, Jonah 2:9, Amos 4:5), praise (Ps 54:6, Jer 17:26, 33:1) and righteousness (Deut 33:19, Ps 4:5, Heb 13:15). He candidly reveals what He really wants from us in Scriptures such as: Isa 1:11-17, Amos 5:21-24, Mic 6:6-8, Jer 7:21-23, Ps 40:6-8, Hos 6:6, Prov 21:3. However, He does *not* want blood sacrifices but *spiritual* sacrifices, *for to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry* (1 Sam 15:22-23).

One last note: the Companion Bible [<https://t.me/BestStudyBible/6>] has a note that points there are fifteen objects (in verses 3-7) God said to gather for the Temple and that all numbers connected with the Tabernacle are multiples of five. Five in Biblical numerics means: *grace*. And it is grace (unmerited favor) that we are seeking when communing with God, is it not?

We'll pick this up in Part 4...

AMEN.