

The means or method by which God communicated his will in answer to inquiries by the Hebrew high priest. In the instructions given to Moses respecting the robes of Aaron, it is said, "Thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgement the Urim and the Thummin, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually., EXOD. 28. 30.

No intimation is given anywhere in scripture as to what the URIM and THUMMIM were. The name signifies "lights and perfections", and evidently refers entirely to their use.

Josephus says that they were simply the twelve precious stones of the breastplate discovering by an extraordinary lustre the Divine approval of any matter on which the high priest made enquiry.

Epiphanius and Suidas suppose that they comprised a diamond of extraordinary lustre <sup>and</sup> ~~the~~ beauty in addition to the twelve stones, indicating approval by extraordinary brilliance.

Procopius and others concur substantially with Epiphanius and Suidas, but suppose that there were two extraordinary stones for the Urim and the Thummin. CYRIL is inclined to think that the words Urim and Thummin were engraven on two precious stones or on a plate of gold in the breastplate, and others that they were embroidered in the cloth of the breastplate immediately above and below the rows of the twelve stones.

A rabbi of the name of Solomon believes that the Urim and the Thummin consisted of the name JEHOVAH engraven on a plate of gold.

Gesenius and others imagine that they were figures in the form of seraphim placed in the inner cavity of the breastplate.

Spencer maintains that they were two little golden figures enclosed in the breastplate as in a purse, and giving responses with an articulate voice.

Numbers 27.v21.

And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgement of URIM before the LORD: at his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.

Deuteronomy 33.v.8.

And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou did'st prove at Massah and and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of ~~Merib~~ MERIBAH.

Ezra. 2.v63.

And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not set of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim.

Nehemiah. 7.v.65.

Repeat as of Ezra. (above).

#### THE EPHOD.

An official garment of the Hebrew High Priest.

It consisted of fine linen, coloured with blue, purple & scarlet, & ornamented with gold.

One part of it was suspended over the back, another part was suspended over the breast & downward, the two parts being united at the shoulders with plates containing two onyx stones, engraved with the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Either a plain kind of ephod or some garment similar to it and bearing the same name was worn by other persons than the priests.

References to garments:— 1 Samuel 18 v 14      2 Samuel 6 v 14.

Job 29 v 14.      Ezekiel 26 v 16.

Le Clerc supposes that they were a great collar of precious stones suspended round the high priests neck and hanging over his breastplate, and he imagines that this might be imitated from an ornament called TRUTH which was suspended by a golden chain round the neck of the chief officer of justice in Egypt.

Jahn is inclined to think that they were three stones carried loose in the bag of the breastplate, one inscribed with the affirmative, another inscribed with a negative, the <sup>other</sup> without any inscription, and that the high priest, when consulting them, simply drew out one of them by way of lot, and thus got an affirmative to his inquiry or a negative or no answer according to the particular stone he drew.

Such a variety of opinions and conjectures simply shows that nothing is known as to what the Urim and the Thurrim really were.

Only their uses are known, and these were exalted and certain, involving as surely a communication of the divine will as a message by the prophets

See NUMB. 27. 21. DEUT. 33, 8. 1 Samuel 28. 6. EZRA 2. 63. NEH. 7. 65.

Some think they were in use before the time of Moses, or at least before the making of Aaron's breastplate, and most think that they ceased to be used at the superseding of the tabernacle by the temple, or about the beginning of the reign of Solomon. The high priest alone could consult them, nor could even he consult them on any question excepting one which concerned the public welfare and the common interest of the twelve tribes, and when consulting them, he arrayed himself in his pontifical garments and breastplate, went into the holy place, stood close before the veil but did not go within it, and then stated his question and received the answer. Many persons think that the answer came to him, not from the breastplate itself, but from the SCECHINAH between the cheribum.