

Chapter 1 : Urim and Thummim | Free Online Biblical Library

Saul also consulted the Urim and Thummim in 1 Samuel , but he didn't get the answer he was looking for. Later, David received clear direction after consulting the ephod on attacking the Amalekites (1 Samuel , and 1 Samuel). The Urim and Thummim are mentioned in Nehemiah when they were rebuilding the wall and returning to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity.

Jerome , and in the Hexapla. According to his theory the Hebrew words use a pluralis intensivus to enhance their apparent majesty, not to indicate the presence of more than one. In the version of this passage in the Masoretic Text , it describes Saul and Jonathan being separated from the rest of the people, and lots being cast between them; the Septuagint version, however, states that Urim would indicate Saul and Jonathan, while Thummim would indicate the people. In the Septuagint, a previous verse [6] uses a phrase which is usually translated as inquired of God, which is significant as the grammatical form of the Hebrew implies that the inquiry was performed by objects being manipulated; scholars view it as evident from these verses and versions that cleromancy was involved, and that Urim and Thummim were the names of the objects being cast. According to classical rabbinical literature , in order for the Urim and Thummim to give an answer, it was first necessary for the individual to stand facing the fully dressed high priest, and vocalise the question briefly and in a simple way, though it was not necessary for it to be loud enough for anyone else to hear it. He remained with David, and became priest of the party of which he was the leader 1 Sam. Meanwhile, Zadok, of the house of Eleazar, had been made High Priest. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia Abiathar was deposed from office when he was deserted by the Holy Spirit without which the Urim and Thummim could not be consulted. The interpreters he described as a pair of stones, fastened to a breastplate joined in a form similar to that of a large pair of spectacles. Smith later referred to this object as the Urim and Thummim. In , Smith said that the angel Moroni , who had told him about the golden plates, also told him about the Urim and Thummim, "two stones in silver bows" fastened to a breastplate, and the angel intimated that they had been prepared by God to aid in the translation of the plates. Only Oliver Cowdery is claimed to have attempted to use them to receive his own revelation. Although Urim and Thummim itself is emblazoned across the open book pictured on the Yale University coat of arms , Lux et Veritas appears below on a banner. Thomas Mann has elaborated greatly on the definition of this term in Joseph the Provider, the fourth book of his tetralogy Joseph and His Brothers. One of the stones is black, which is said to signify yes, and the other is white, said to signify no; a significance applicable when the stones are asked an appropriate question and drawn from a bag. The king himself had removed the stones from his shining golden breastplate. In the television series Dig , the breastplate that is a part of the mystery is said to be the breastplate of the High Priest of the Temple in Jerusalem and used to communicate with God. The Tablets of Destiny had to rest on the breast of deities mediating between the other gods and mankind in order to function, while the Urim and Thummim had to rest within the breastplate of the priest mediating between God and mankind. Marduk was said to have put his seal on the Tablets of Destiny, while the Israelite breastplate had a jewelled stone upon it for each of the Israelite tribes, which may derive from the same principle. According to some archaeologists, the Israelites emerged as a subculture from within Canaanite society, and not as an invading force from outside, and therefore it would be natural for them to have used similar religious practices to other Semitic nations, [5] and these scholars suspect that the concept of Urim and Thummim was originally derived from the Tablets of Destiny.

Chapter 2 : What were "Urim" and "Thummim"? | For What Saith the Scriptures?

After the captivity of the Israelites in Babylon, the Urim and Thummim disappeared and were never mentioned again. The Urim and Thummim were a foreshadowing of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who called himself "the light of the world," and who became the perfect sacrifice (1 Peter) for humanity's sins.

You can download the audio here: [Urim and Thummim PDF](#). Urim and Thummim shewed to be made by Art, and are the same with the Universal Spirit, corporate and fixed. By Paracelsus Translated into English by R. Turner The Truth seems buried, because it brings forth little Fruit; but it is great, and prevaileth, to make all things manifest so far as is possible for men; for in common sense and reason, all agree in mysteries never: For if we consider wherein the Celestial and Terrestrial Bodies agree, we shall finde something objective in the inferiour Bodies, whereby they communicate their Celestial Vertue and Influence; which prefigent Art doth imitate, to produce a glorious substance of connexed Forms, and of Cleerness, Vertue, and Beauty beyond expression. The Mathematicians say, The Celestial Influences do hold and govern every natural Body, and by many unities collect a quantity subsisting without shadow: That Urim and Thummim, which were given in the Mount, cannot be proved that they are the potential from the Creation, may appear; for they were substances, whole Name and Essences did predicate each other, being convertible terms, the Name and Essence one: It is likely they were before the Law given; for the Almighty God commanded Noah to make a cleer Light in the Ark, which some take for a Window; others, for the arching and bowing of the upper Deck, a Cubit: Therefore some of the Rabbins say, The Hebrew word Zohar , which the Chaldee translate Neher, is not found in the Scripture, but in this place: Other Hebrew Doctors say, It was a precious Stone hanged in the Ark, which gave light to all living Creatures therein. This the greatest Carbuncle could not do, nor any precious Stone that is only natural. But the Universal Spirit, fixed in a transparent Body, shines like the Sun in glory, and gives sufficient Light to all the Room to read by: And whereas Tubal-Cain is said to be a perfect Master of every Artificer in Brass and Iron, which some hold, doth contain the whole and perfect decoction of the Metallick Vertue, wherein the Central Vertue is most abundant, and makes the happy more admired, who walk in the midst of the Stones of Fire; For where there are two things of one Nature, the chief is to be understood: Therefore in the mention of Fires, pure Fire is preferred. Some think, that Urim and Thummim were not Artificial, because they are said in the Text to be put in the brestplate, but not to be made: Also, it is said, The Artist takes impure Spirits, and by Sublimation, Nature and Art, cleanseth them into bodies pure and fixed: Now that these perfections have their beginnings from two Lights, both the Text and the ancient Philosophers make plain; but ignorance and the matter of the Elements are the Iron Gates, which must be cut in pieces, before the invisible be made visible. For the natural Urim and Thummim, the Philosophers affirm, what they have seen and done: The end is directed to invent works in Gold, Silver and Brass; which is not to be understood according to the sound of words, but according to the intent of all Distillation, to extract the inward part, and manifest the central vertue: The Sun and Moon are as the Parents of all inferior bodies and things, which come nearest in vertue and temperature, are more excellent: But these men had the spirit of Bezaliel, and made these natural, spiritual Bodies: Others say, That if they have once finished this Art, and should live a thousand yeers, they might give what they will, and when they will, without danger of diminution; as a man that hath Fire may give to his Neighbour without hurt to himself. Marcus Vasso said, There was much more mysteries in the Flamines Ceremonies, then they understood. Vesta signified pure Earth, and internal Fire: Earth undergoeth the name, and so doth Fire: Thus is shewn forth in a work done by Fire, The mighty Vesta, and her pure Attire. Philosophy is nothing but the study of Wisdom considered in a created Nature, as well subject to sense, as invisible, and consequently material; and Wisdomes central Body is the shadow of Wisdomes central Essence; and the moral Interpretation can never exclude the real effects from ocular demonstration: The Rabbins hold every natural beginning to be either matter, or cause of the matter, viz, the four Elements. But here beginnings must be well understood; for there are beginnings of Preparations, and beginnings of Composition, and beginnings of Operation: But because the greatest things are not done by strength, or habit of fingering; as also because the intellect doth so far excel the sense: Now therefore we must

take the Key of Art, and consider the secret of every thing is the Life thereof: Life is a Vapor, and in Vapor is placed the wonder of Art: This Vapor is called, The vegetable Spirit, because it is of degree of heat with the hottest Vegetable; and being decocted till it shine like brightest Steel, you shall see great and marvelous secrets, not by the separation of Elements by themselves, but by predomination and victory of that pure Fire, which like the Celestial Sun enters not materially; but by help of Elemental Fire, sends forth his influence and impression of form. Here we must observe difference of perfections: Therefore we must take heed what we understand by Gold, whereof there are three sorts, Vulgar, Chymical, and Divine; which is therefore so called, because it is a special Gift of God. The Theosophists are perswaded, by exact diet, and by certain form of prayers at certain times, to obtain the Angel of the Sun to be their Guide and Director. The Philosophers advise to take the like matter above Earth, that Nature hath made under the Earth: Others, to search the most precious treasure from a vile thing: Others affirm Azoch and Ignis to be sufficient for this high perfection: All which being diverse in Nature, are potential in one composition: This is the Key that made the pure clear Fountain, and of it was made himself; the fair Woman so loving the red Man, she became one with him, and yielded him all glory; who by his Regal power, and sovereign Quality, reigneth over the fourfold Nature eternally: Although pure Manchet be made of the finest Meal, yet Wheat is not excluded; and so Bread is said to be of the second and neerer causes, rather than the remote: After we fell from unity, we groan under the burden of division, but three makes up the union; first temporary, and afterwards eternally fixed. He that knoweth a thing fully, must know what it was, is, and shall be; so to know the several parts of a successive course, is not a small thing, neither is the honor little in the right use of the Creature. Air turned into Water by his proper mixture, becomes Wood; and the same Wood, by Water, is turned into a Stone. A Spring in Italy called Clytinus, makes Oxen white that drink it: And the River in Hungary, turns Iron into Copper. What excellency things may attain by habitual vertue, or what power when Nature and Art make one perfection, who is able to express? If you desire by Art to have a thing of admirable sweetness and odor, you will take a substance of like quality, to exalt into such excellency: As the Celestial Bodies give no Tincture, yet they are most abundant in Tincture. Air is cause of Life; Mercury is coacted Air, Ethereal, and truly Homogeneous, which doth after a fort congeal and fix: Therefore those are the fittest subjects to make the most precious perfume in the world: Some observe not just difference between Liquefaction and Solution: And although one Vessel is sufficient to perfect the Infant in the Wombe; yet Nature hath provided several breasts to nourish it, and different means to exalt it to the strength of a man. How Gold should be burnt, which the Fire cannot consume, is questionable, but every exaltation of this sovereign Spirit, adds a tenfold vertue and power: The Truth of every thing is said to be his incorrupted Nature; for nothing shall rest eternally visible at the last fire, but that which is of pure vertue and essential purity. And it seems the Prophets esteem of these Stones of Fire: Therefore let modesty allow that possible, whereof he understands not the termination and degrees: To obtain the Treasures of Nature, you must follow Nature onely, who gives not the like time to every Generation; but as the Mare hath ten months, the Elephant three; or as some say, nine yeers, and fifty, before conjunction: Be patient therefore in a work of Nature; for thereunto onely is promised Victory; and the chief errors in Art are haste and dulness. The first beginnings of Transmutation or Naturation, is the smallest measure of pure Sulphur, with both Riches and Honor in the left-Hand, and length in the right. In natural Generations the form prepares the matter, yet there are precedent Preparations. The beginnings of Transmutation must be distinguished: Beginnings of Preparation, in the well of Tears, doth qualifie the coldness and dullness of the crude disposition, and tame and subdue the fearful quality of swift flying, and changeth the colour of this eternal Liquour, turning the inside outward, and adding heat by the internal Sulphur of the Homogeneous Body, which is by means of changed Water, because Water by Water, can onely be extracted; yet it is excluded in the conclusion: Beginnings of Composition are those inward Operations and Changes, that follow after that scalding deluge, which by mixing with fixed Sulphur doth dissolve the stubbornness of this Urne; and by help of the external heat, the internal Sulphur is excited by Operation, and purifieth the substance but onely to a pale whiteness, more hurtful than profitable to the Body of Man: Again, Sulphur must be distinguished: By knowledge hereof, even meer natural men have believed the Resurrection, become sober, temperate and patient; not doubting: This hath caused men justly to condemn all Cementations, Calcinations, and

Citrinations; being enlightened with the glorious object, which is as cleer as a Christal Looking-Glass. Reviving Sulphur is the secret of secrets, and the glory of the whole world, and onely proper to such whom the Creator hath apted by way of natural disposition; for they do not onely mortifie, but purifie a pure body, quickning it with the same essential form; and are said to make a spiritual Body, because there is no corruption to resist the Spirit; but the bodily Nature, being wholly subject, is, with the Spirit, eternally fixed in a transparent Body shining as the Sun. Therefore the conclusion must be understood of the second, and not of the first: A Synod of Philosophers adviseth us, in seeking the treasures of Health and Riches, we should shew affection to Justice and Prudence; like Solomon, asking Wisdom, Riches were given to him as advantage. Let us search therefore celestial Vertue, which is the centre of all things; so will it be easie to manifest the sovereign Spirit of Health and Riches: Crude Mercury is originally a vapor from cleer Water and Air, of most strong composition coacted; or Air it self, with a Mercurial Spirit by Nature, flying, Etherial and Homogeneous, having the Spirits of heat and cold; and by exterior and interior heats, doth congeal and fix. Also Gold is a fixed Fire, or mature Mercury, and may be made more volative then Mercury; but onely by divers Mercuries made. Of Mercury is Nature set on work, the fixed Body loosed, the vegetable Sulphur created, and the universal Spirit fixed. For the Authority of the ancient Writers, Divine and Natural Reasons, assure us, this, and no other is the true course to manifest those Lights, wherein the Creator hath heaped up vertue and power. Instruments of divers strings make sweet harmony, if they be well tuned: The Artist his intention is to agree contraries. They exclude Gold and Mercury from the creation of the Stone. Because their crude matter is from the destruction of the exterior form. They say, The vertue of Elements is their materials. Right in respect of their beginnings upon pure bodies. All their secrets spring from one vile thing common to rich and poor. Precious things corrupted, are most vile; and Science is common to rich and poor, and hath much use of Calcination or Dust. No Metal is required to the making of the Stone. As no part of man to the making of man. One thing, one Glass, one Furnace is sufficient. True, when two things of one kinde are apted and conjoynd. Out of one Root proceeds white and red. Even as Male and Female from one Womb. The Stone is vegetable, animal, and mineral. Here we may remember the Bishop of Otrecht, who lost his life for discovering his secret. Why should we prevent the highest distribution, who hath not made knowledge hereditary, but wrapt things in secret, that we might difference things in being, and in being and use? Nature is even jealous of her supremacy, and abhorreth to see the sensible before the intellectual Treasures preferred. This shews the beginning and end of Art, *Lux fata est justo cum rectis animo latitia*: Mark what ye sow, for such is your harvest. Light is sown on pure Earth; and some Grain begins to put forth Ears at three joynts, some at four; but the Ear never buds until the joynts be grown. And what vertue this knotting or fixing gives, consider; for by Meditation you may see; by feeling you may know; by knowing, ye delight; by delighting, ye adhere; by adhering, ye possess; by possessing, ye enjoy the Truth:

Chapter 3 : NOT YOUR ORDINARY BIBLE STUDY: URIM & THUMMIM - NYOBS

The King James Bible uses the terms "the Urim and the Thummim" (Exodus ; Leviticus), "Urim" (Numbers ; 1 Samuel), "thy Thummim and thy Urim" (Deuteronomy), and "Urim and Thummim" (Ezra = Nehemiah). As you will notice, these objects are usually spoken of as a pair in Scripture.

And David said to Abiathar the priest And David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I pursue after this band? Shall I overtake them? How did the Holy Spirit speak to him? What role did prophecy play? The exact nature of the Urim and Thummim is unknown, although some scholars speculate that they consisted of a pair of flat, marked stones used by the priest as sacred lots to determine the will of God. Wilt thou give them into my hand? Though this sounds almost like a prophetic word, it is explained adequately as a "yes" answer given by the Urim and Thummim. However, we see occasions on which the answer cannot come from casting a lot. Saul is chosen king by lot, but the word, "Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage," is clearly prophecy, probably through Samuel 1 Samuel We observe another striking example of prophecy combined with the sacred lot when David asks the Lord whether his troops should attack the Philistine army spread out before them. Apparently the Urim and Thummim gave a negative response, but here a word of prophecy comes forth, giving detailed battle plans far beyond the scope of any lot: And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then bestir yourself; for then the Lord has gone out before you to smite the army of the Philistines" 2 Samuel 5: Except for pagan divination e. How are we to seek specific guidance today? Just as the Urim and Thummim were superseded by inquiring by prophets in the Old Testament, so lots became obsolete after Pentecost. Neither do we discover in the New Testament any encouragement to go to inquire of a prophet for personal guidance, as people had inquired of seers and prophets in the Old Testament 1 Samuel 9: Though New Testament prophets sometimes bring a word of personal prophecy Acts Indeed, if God had not already directed Paul to proceed to Jerusalem despite the dangers Acts Our primary means of inquiry today is of God Himself through the Spirit, not through intermediaries. It is surprising that David, despite his anointing by the Spirit 1 Samuel By the indwelling Spirit we have direct access to inquire of the mind of Christ 1 Corinthians 2: If we are quiet before the Lord, His direction is often a gentle "yes" or "no" spoken to our spirit. A "yes" might be a deep peace or a "nudge". A "no" can be a "check" of the Spirit, a lack of peace, or a closed door. For major life direction, however, it is wise to confirm our guidance through counsel with trusted Christian leaders. Very often we receive no answer at all. This calls for patience, trust, and continued waiting on the Lord. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are cited from the Revised Standard Version. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Moody Press, , II, Other scholars suggest that this ephod containing the Urim and Thummim may have been a solid object such as a box cf. McGraw-Hill, ET , pp. Even though Abiathar, who possessed the ephod and sacred lots, had escaped to safety with David, Saul still must have had access to a set of Urim and Thummim; 1 Samuel Rowley, The Faith of Israel Philadelphia: Westminster Press, , pp. If the Septuagint version of 1 Samuel See discussion by Joh. Dommershausen, "goral," in Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, eds. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, tr. Eerdmans, ET , II, If Urim and Thummim were two marked stones which were cast, a "yes" might be both up, a "no" both down, and "no answer" one up and one down. Abingdon Press, , II, f. Few other commentators even notice that this is prophecy. Near the close of his life David inquires of the Lord at the threshing floor of Ornan later, the Jerusalem temple site. His inquiry is now accompanied by sacrifice to atone for sin 1 Chronicles In fact, the use of mechanical means for divination in our era of the Spirit can be extremely dangerous e. The verb "have called" is in the perfect tense, indicating that God had called Paul and Barnabas to this mission work in the past, and that the call was still in effect when the Holy Spirit now indicated that the time to go out had come. A single copy of this article is free. Do not put this on a website. See legal, copyright, and reprint information. We respect your privacy and never sell, rent, or loan our lists.

Chapter 4 : Urim and Thummim - Encyclopedia of The Bible - Bible Gateway

Answer: The Urim ("lights") and Thummim ("perfections") were gemstones that were carried by the high priest of Israel on the ephod / priestly garments. They were used by the high priest to determine God's will in some situations.

The exact nature of the Urim and Thummim is unknown, although some scholars speculate that they consisted of a pair of flat, marked stones used by the priest as sacred lots to determine the will of God. Wilt thou give them into my hand? Though this sounds almost like a prophetic word, it is explained adequately as a "yes" answer given by the Urim and Thummim. However, we see occasions on which the answer cannot come from casting a lot. Saul is chosen king by lot, but the word, "Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage," is clearly prophecy, probably through Samuel 1 Samuel We observe another striking example of prophecy combined with the sacred lot when David asks the Lord whether his troops should attack the Philistine army spread out before them. Apparently the Urim and Thummim gave a negative response, but here a word of prophecy comes forth, giving detailed battle plans far beyond the scope of any lot: And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then bestir yourself; for then the Lord has gone out before you to smite the army of the Philistines" 2 Samuel 5: Except for pagan divination e. How are we to seek specific guidance today? Just as the Urim and Thummim were superseded by inquiring by prophets in the Old Testament, so lots became obsolete after Pentecost. Neither do we discover in the New Testament any encouragement to go to inquire of a prophet for personal guidance, as people had inquired of seers and prophets in the Old Testament 1 Samuel 9: Though New Testament prophets sometimes bring a word of personal prophecy Acts Indeed, if God had not already directed Paul to proceed to Jerusalem despite the dangers Acts Our primary means of inquiry today is of God Himself through the Spirit, not through intermediaries. It is surprising that David, despite his anointing by the Spirit 1 Samuel By the indwelling Spirit we have direct access to inquire of the mind of Christ 1 Corinthians 2: If we are quiet before the Lord, His direction is often a gentle "yes" or "no" spoken to our spirit. A "yes" might be a deep peace or a "nudge". A "no" can be a "check" of the Spirit, a lack of peace, or a closed door. For major life direction, however, it is wise to confirm our guidance through counsel with trusted Christian leaders. Very often we receive no answer at all. This calls for patience, trust, and continued waiting on the Lord

Chapter 5 : Urim and Thummim

It would, however, be entirely consistent with what we know of the cultic background of Israel, if the Urim and Thummim were precious oracle stones, which had come down from the Patriarchs, and which God was now officially incorporating into His people's worship.

It consisted of a robe to which was attached to an apron-like garment called an ephod. In a pocket of the breast-piece were two items called the urim and thummim. The urim are mentioned a grand total of four times in the Five Books of Moses and only three more times elsewhere. The thummim are found three times in the Five Books, twice elsewhere. The first two mentions, Exodus As we go through the references, note the recurring theme of talking with God. Not until 1 Samuel There Saul, the first king of Israel, tried to communicate with the Lord after disobeying Him. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 3, chapter 8, section 9 Whether or not Josephus was right about the system, the question arises: Derivation Due to the sparseness of these scriptural references, it is difficult to get at the derivation of urim and thummim. There have, however, been many attempts. Thummim is related to a group of words, including tawm, tome, and tawmim, all of which are said to derive from the root tmm. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends, Faulkner, Dictionary of Middle Egyptian. Also see Koehler and Baumgartner, et. Similar words in ancient Assyrian and Babylonian bear out the communicative notion. There the primary meaning of the word zakaru long noted as a relative of Hebrew rests in the idea of communication. In the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary there are six basic meanings: Gelb, Landsberger, and Oppenheim, eds. I could also demonstrate that there are Egyptian words with similar meanings, and in Talking With God I do. I make that point because understanding of the original meanings of words became unclear or forgotten over time leading to the traditional translations we know today. The Bible is indicating that the priest wore the ephod as a sort of portable walkie talkie for communicating with the Lord when they were away from the main communication device, the ark of the testimony. The urim and thummim, deriving from the ideas of light and completion respectively, were the on and off switches. The urim would turn on the stones in the ephod to communicate by signal, and the thummim would turn them off when communication was finished. To learn more about Talking With God: The Radioactive Ark of the Testimony. Isaacs, order your copy at TalkingWithGod.

Chapter 6 : Ways of Discovering God's Will – Christian Articles

Here's probably the best word on the Urim and Thummim. It's a couple of paragraphs from Dr. Bruce Waltke's excellent book (which I highly recommend), entitled, "Finding the Will of God" (pp.): "The priest could use the urim and thummin to determine God's will in a particular situation.

And Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole congregation. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim. According to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance. Wherever the lot falls for anyone that shall be his. According to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit. The name is used when God confronts Israel with warnings of judgment or promises of blessings. Thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek; Then he forsook God who made him, And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. ASV Josephus 3. Therefore there was a tendency to doubt the validity of their findings; thus their non-use. ESV 1 Maccabees 4: Josephus 3. This has appeared a wonderful thing to such as have not so far indulged themselves in philosophy, as to despise Divine revelation. Yet will I mention what is still more wonderful than this: Of which things we shall further discourse on a fitter opportunity; but I will now go on with my proposed narration. The Works of Flavius Josephus Hebrews Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. God wants us to come to the Him, the Creator for answers not to a creation. In the multitude of counselors, there is wisdom. Because of them I can stand on their shoulders and see further that I otherwise ever could have.

Chapter 7 : Talking With God » Urim and Thummim

the Urim and Thummim are 2 precious stones placed in like a pouch on the breastplate of the high priest's garment, which has the 12 precious stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. The Urim and the Thummim are called the means of judgment -- "judgment" in the sense of making decisions.

VSS, which clearly did not understand the terms. The two are mentioned together in Exodus. Since the definite article is used in Heb. The varying renderings of the VSS show that no valid tradition of their meaning had survived to their time. Hence it is pointless to record the various guesses of their meaning, both ancient and modern. If one accepts the LXX text of 1 Samuel. Hence it is generally assumed that they were two almost identical stones, perhaps gems. Some think they were two flat objects. Others see in the pl. On the other hand Saul 1 Sam. The foregoing is based on the supposition that Eng. VSS are correct in their rendering of Exodus. It involves identifying Urim and Thummim with the breastplate of judgment or its jewels. This has found support in the fact that neither in Exodus Samaritan, which obviously did not make the identification, tried to meet the argument by interpolating both passages in the required manner. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan though not receiving its final form until c. But Josephus, linking them with the breastplate Ant. This view was further developed in the Talmud. Though a few modern Jewish scholars, e. Hertz, still favor the identification with the breastplate, though they have dropped the fanciful Talmudic trimmings, the majority have abandoned it. The divergencies in Jewish tradition itself, and the clear indications that the ancient VSS had no real tradition to guide them suggest that very little regard should be paid to these and similar fancy views. One of the difficulties is uncertainty whether Urim and Thummim were used in certain cases, where lots were drawn or cast, e. It is possible but by no means certain. It certainly seems clear that they were not used for the apportioning of the tribal portions Josh. It is clear from Ezra 2: While Ben Sira mentioned their past existence with respect. This turning away from them is illustrated by 1 Maccabees 4: Though the Talmud has theoretical discussion about the use of the Urim and Thummim, there is clearly no expectation of their restoration. The statement is met more than once that they ceased after the death of the former prophets. This is not to be deduced from their nonmention under the monarchy, for the OT is not given to stressing the everyday. More important is the increasing stress on prophetic oracles. The reason for their dropping out of favor may be indicated by a comparison of 1 Samuel. The importance of the ephod. Its oracular power came from the Urim and Thummim. The ephod was still with David, when Saul had marched to his death at Gilboa 1 Sam. How then had Saul been able to consult the Urim and Thummim 1 Sam. When this became plain, it reinforced certain already existing tendencies and doubts. For those living at a distance from the central sanctuary such a method was linked with much inconvenience and could even be impossible. Without the presence of Abiathar with the ephod David would have been excluded from this form of divine guidance. Jesus Ben Sira showed real spiritual understanding, when he placed knowledge of the law on the same level as, or on a higher level than, Urim and Thummim. This was also the reason why the rabbis were not really interested in them. For the Christian, with his knowledge of the indwelling Holy Spirit, this feeling will be even stronger. But if, even in the Christian dispensation, God is prepared to give the person just beginning his Christian life guidance by methods which may seem strange to those who know His will better, how much more to Israel in the days of its spiritual childhood. Note that it is never suggested that Moses had to make use of them. This is the most likely reason why we are told so little about them. Recent suggestions may be found in R. XII, p. XIV, 67 seq.

Chapter 8 : Acts Study | Urim and Thummim; Knowing God's Will " Part 1

The final use of lots in the Bible was to determine God's choice of an apostle to replace Judas Iscariot (Acts ; cf. 1 Samuel). Just as the Urim and Thummim were superseded by inquiring by prophets in the Old Testament, so lots became obsolete after Pentecost.[8].

We all desperately want to know about the future and we want to be able to ask God for direction and have him plainly give it to us. In our first session we will attempt to describe these objects and how they were used by the Israelites. Then in our second session we will try to apply it to our own walk with God. The breast piece was folded double to make a pocket or pouch around the heart. Inside this pocket or pouch were placed two objects, the Urim and Thummim read Exodus The Hebrew meaning for these words is interesting, also. Scholars speculate about how they were read and actually used. Also, it has been suggested that perhaps they were different colors such as black and white, with the same type of scenario for getting an answer. What is interesting though is that they were often used in time of crisis to determine the will of God. They trusted God to reveal his will to the High Priest through this decision making breast piece and objects. There are several stories in the Hebrew Bible where the Urim and Thummim were used. Joshua, in Numbers Joshua knew when to stay and when to go by consulting the Urim and Thummim. Saul also consulted the Urim and Thummim in 1 Samuel Later, David received clear direction after consulting the ephod on attacking the Amalekites 1 Samuel The Urim and Thummim are mentioned in Nehemiah when they were rebuilding the wall and returning to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity. A question arose as to who were eligible to become priests, since all family records had been lost Nehemiah 7: In these verses the men were told to wait until the priest could use the Urim and Thummim. There are many other examples in the Bible where, although not specifically mentioned as the Urim and Thummim, lots were cast to make important decisions. It is very important to note here that only the high priest was allowed to consult the Urim and Thummim, and only in matters of great concern to the public good, and in instances where men could not possibly know the answer. The answer was not considered just a matter of chance, but God giving his judgment, his decision as to what to do.

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words do suggest that he understood the Urim and Thummim to be a means of discerning God's decision in matters about which the leaders could not decide because of the lack of information.