

Retrieved 3/13/13 from <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/6574-gems> .

Ring-Stone.

- (12) יָהָלוֹם (but see No. 6; "yahalom" should replace "yashefeh"): in Septuagint "beryl," but more frequently "onyx"; Vulgate "beryl," probably, as in Josephus, due to a transposition of 11 and 12; Targ. Onq. אֲנִיזִי; Yer. i. the same, preceded by אֲנִיזִי; just as in Yer. ii.; Ex. R. אֲנִיזִי; Onqelos' "panther-stone," a "yellow, light-flecked stone," may render the "yashefeh" (ἰάσπις, jasper), but the other Targumim use the word which frequently denotes pearls and precious stones in general. "Yahalom" might very properly be translated by a general term, as its identification was involved in doubt. The diamond, because "the hard stone" (yahalom, from חָלַם, "to be hard," "to hammer"), has been suggested, but the art of cutting diamonds is of a much later date, and the list of stones in use among the ancients fails to name it. Nor does onyx occur early enough to look for its being known among the Hebrews of Ex. xxviii. All that may be safely said is that this was a hard stone, probably used in the making of whole rings ("onyx" = Assyrian "unḳu" = "ring"), according to Myres; therefore the Assyrian "elmeshu," the "ring-stone." This is Benjamin's stone.