

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.**
(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)*

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New Jerusalem #22. Crystal-Clear Jasper Stone

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Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. (Revelation 21:11 NASB)

(4) And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God.... (6) For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone....” [Isaiah 28:16] (1 Peter 2:4, 6 NASB)

(5) You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood (9) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession [Exodus 19:5-6] ... (10) for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. [Hosea 1:6, 9; 2:1, 23] (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10 NASB)

In Scripture, the word *stone* is used as a metaphor referring to Christ and His body, which is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, a dwelling of God in spirit (Ephesians 2:21-22). If you have not figured it out by now, this is New Jerusalem.

The earthly temples associated with the ancient nation of Israel, especially the temples built in Jerusalem, were made of stone and wood, but God’s celestial temple is made of living stones, that is, of a people conformed to the image of the Son of God, *the* precious, choice, living Stone. Further, the stone also is used as a metaphor for Christ’s kingdom that has begun to and will fully crush all the kingdoms of men, which are summed up and typified as **Mystery Babylon, the great city** (Revelation 18). Daniel saw it as **the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth** (Daniel 2:35 NASB). Thus, we call **the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ** (Revelation 11:15) **the Stone Kingdom**.

The builders of the earthly Jerusalem and its temple, who were called to be the kingdom of God on earth, rejected the very Stone of God. They not only rejected God’s Son but also refused to place Him as the corner stone of God’s kingdom on earth; consequently, they have been disqualified from inheriting the Stone Kingdom in the coming eon. As further prophetic proof of this rejection, it is a fascinating fact that the Great Pyramid of Egypt is missing the top stone. The good news is that Zechariah prophesied of the bringing forth of **the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it”** (Zechariah 4:7).

Much could be said about the jasper stone in relation to New Jerusalem, but let us look at four points.

First, the English word *jasper* is of Persian origin and literally means “lord of treasure.” This reminds me of the Lord’s teaching on His kingdom: **“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also** (Matthew 6:20-21 NASB). The Lord is our true treasure, and His life is summed up in New Jerusalem, our heavenly treasure.

Second, the jasper gem is green in color. It is a green precious stone.

Green speaks of life. For example, plant life is green, and it provides sustenance and oxygen for mankind. Thus, there is not only life in this stone, but life comes forth from it as well. We could say that it is life, or more explicitly, it is the life of the One who was dead but is alive forevermore (Revelation 1:18). It signifies **resurrection and immortal life**, and ultimately, **the restoration of all things**.

Green speaks of God’s covenant. After the flood, God covenanted with the earth that He would not destroy it through a flood ever again. As a sign and a remembrance of His covenant with the earth, God

placed a bow in the cloud (Genesis 9:11-17). We assume this was a multi-colored rainbow; however, it may have been a bright-green color like an emerald, as revealed in John's Patmos vision.

(1) After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven.... (2) Immediately I was in the Spirit [in spirit]; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. (3) And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. (Revelation 4:1-3 NASB [CV])

When he was snatched away in spirit, John beheld the throne of God, which speaks of ruling and judging according to the divine law of God, which is signified by fire, which is red in color. It is called **the fiery law of God** or **the law of fire** (Deuteronomy 33:2 ASV/KJKV/LITV). Both Daniel and John saw the fire of God coming forth from the throne; Daniel saw a river of fire proceeding from the throne to judge as the court sat and books were opened (Daniel 7:9-10), and John saw the river of fire proceeding from the Great White Throne to form a lake of fire to judge as books were opened (Revelation 20:14-15). They saw the same throne and judgment. Jesus Himself links the law (will) to fire in the parable of the judgment of the slave who knew his **master's will** (law) but did not act upon it. In relation to the master's will, Jesus declared: **"I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled"** (Luke 12:47-49). In other words, the master's will or the law of God is likened to fire, which, again, is red in color.

Returning to John's vision of the throne, the One sitting on the throne appeared like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance. Sardius is thought to be the precious ruby stone, which is red in color. The rainbow was like an emerald in appearance, which signifies a bright-green color. Thus, the One on the throne is likened to both green and red, and the rainbow is likened to bright green. Based on the color of sardius, the One on the throne is seen as judging according to the divine law (fiery law) of God. But, on what basis will God judge? Will He judge with cruelty and seek vengeance through destruction? The answer is in the color green, which not only signifies life and God's covenant with the earth but also how God will judge. He will judge in mercy. Green speaks of mercy, which leads to life.

Green speaks of in judgment there is mercy. God will judge, but in judgment there is mercy! Habakkuk cried out: **In wrath remember mercy** (Habakkuk 3:2). Paul declared: **For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all** (Romans 11:32 NASB). And the Lord has promised: **"For you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."**

The rainbow around the throne of God is a reminder to God of His covenant with the earth and all mankind that His judgment is not for destruction, but for correction. He will judge, but in His judgment is mercy, for He is **the Savior of all mankind** (1 Timothy 4:10) and **wills all men to be saved** (1 Timothy 2:4). God has purposed to be all in all new, and, in His mercy and love, He will be.

Third, jasper was the last gem of the high priest's breastplate (Exodus 28:20), but it is the very essence of New Jerusalem and the first stone in its foundation (Revelation 21:19). This is a fulfillment of Jesus' word that **the last shall be first, and the first last** (Matthew 20:16; 19:30; Mark 10:31). The first high priesthood according to the order of Aaron (Levi) has been made obsolete and replaced with a new priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7). New Jerusalem is this new order.

Fourth, the jasper stone is crystal clear, which means that it is perfectly transparent with no flaw or blemish. This speaks of the divine nature of God, the life of God that is absolutely clear, perfect, and true in every respect, barring none. There is nothing hidden in this city of crystal-clear jasper stone, which means that New Jerusalem has no mixture, no falsehood, no contradiction, no imitation, no deception, no lie, no abomination, and no darkness in her whatsoever. She is absolutely perfect life!

She is the mystery revealed, the wife of the Lambkin, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, holy and blameless (Ephesians 5:27). New Jerusalem is perfect, and the judgments that come forth through her are perfect. She is the standard (law) by which all in heaven and on earth will be ruled and judged (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). She is the complement of the One whose appearance is like jasper and sardius. She is costly, having been purchased by the blood of the Lamb, and a brilliant manifestation of the mercy of God and His unconditional love based on His new covenant in and through His Son.