The Shepherd Stones

1Sam. 17:40—*And he took his staff in his hand, and* ***chose*** *him five smooth stones out of the brook, and* ***put*** *them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.*

Gen. 49:1—*And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.*

*2—Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.*24—*But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)*26*—The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.*

The Shepherd is the Stone of Israel and the stones are true believers,

* All that He is we must become (being)
* All that He has for us we must do (obeying)

1Peter 2:4 –*To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,*

John 17:4—*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

2Tim. 4:7—*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

Acts 13:36*—For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:*

22*—And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

1. The Order of the day.
2. Choose and Put
3. Chose of choice men and put them in place.
   1. Being a choice
   2. Being chosen from the choice men

Act 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for **he is a chosen vessel unto me**, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

2Sam. 10:9 When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the **choice men** of Israel, and **put** them in array against the Syrians:

**This choice is not our own**

2Sa 10:7 And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.

Luke 14:7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

1. Not one excuse should be given

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

1. Many excuses given why they can’t make it, but

Lu 14:24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Zec 4:7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

Enemies think to stop this building, yet Zerubbabel will lay the highest stone of it, and bring it to perfection, so that all the godly will rejoice, and pray to God that he would continue his grace and favour toward the Temple.

Ezra 3:10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12 But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: 13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

Ps 118:22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Mt 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Mr 12:10 And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

Lu 20:17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

Ac 4:11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Eph 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

1Pe 2:4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

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.

Pr 17:8 A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

Zec 3:9 For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

A stone to be reckoned with

Mt 21:44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder

Lu 20:18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

Isa 8:14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

18—Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Jg 20:2 And the **chief** of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword.

“the **chief** of all the people”—Are the Cornerstones of the nation

Able to handle their weapons— “four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword”

Able to present themselves in the assembly

Able to be at war

“presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God”

“in the assembly “ came together by the consent and agreement, as it were, of one common heart, fired with a holy zeal for the honour of God and Israel.

All as one man, so unanimous were they in their concern for the public good.

Heb.11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

1Pe 2:10 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.

⇒ Judah was assigned leadership of Israel and appointed to be the line of the very special promised seed, the Savior of the world

⇒ Joseph, given the double portion of the birthright that usually went to the firstborn son; that is, Joseph received the inheritance which included a double portion of the promised land. The first two sons were to receive an equal portion with the other sons of Israel. Joseph himself was not personally assigned a part of the inheritance, but his two sons each received an equal share. Thus Joseph was represented in his two sons.

The prophetic blessing that is pronounced upon Joseph is very descriptive. the prophecy refers to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

1. Joseph was to be like a fruitful vine sitting near a spring that has fruitful branches climbing all over a wall

Genesis 49:22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

This is a picture of fruitfulness. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were to bear large numbers of people and strong leaders. As an example, these two tribes produced such leaders as Joshua and five of the fifteen judges of Israel: Gideon, Abimelech, Jair, Jephthah, and Samuel.

1. Joseph was, however, to be harassed and hated by his enemies

Genesis 49:23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

The attacks against him would be like an archer shooting at him with bitter hatred and hostility. History would later show that Ephraim and Manasseh, along with Judah, would have to bear the major thrust of the opposition against Israel.

1. Joseph was to stand firm and steady. God was to make him strong

Genesis 49:24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) 25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were to be like bows that would stay firm, and God was to make their arms strong so that they could just keep on letting the arrows fly against their enemies. Again, history has shown that the two tribes, especially Ephraim, were often victorious in battle.

But note why: because of God. The descendents of Joseph were to be made strong and victorious because of God. This fact is stressed five different times. Five different names or titles are given to God declaring that the strength of Joseph's descendents was due to God and to God alone.

a. *The mighty One (God) of Jacob* ([Genesis 49:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A24)): God had strengthened Jacob time and again. Jacob had sometimes been weak, but when he called upon God, God had strengthened him. Therefore, he knew that God—the mighty God—would strengthen Joseph and his descendents.

But there is more here. Note that God is "the mighty God of Jacob." This is personal: Jacob had a personal relationship with God, a very close relationship. He knew God personally: walked and talked with God and experienced the strength of God day by day. Jacob had such a close relationship with God that Scripture often refers to *the God of Jacob*, especially in the Psalms and Prophets.

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge....The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" ([Psalm 46:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+46%3A7), [11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+46%3A11)).

How he sware unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob" ([Psalm 132:2-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+132%3A2-5)).

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" ([Isaiah 2:3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+2%3A3), cp. [Isaiah 29:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+29%3A23); [Isaiah 41:21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+41%3A21); [Isaiah 49:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+49%3A26); [Isaiah 60:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+60%3A16); [Micah 4:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mic+4%3A2)).

b. *The Shepherd* ([Genesis 49:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A24)): this is a picture of God as the Guide, Provider, and Protector. The Shepherd would guide, provide, and protect Joseph and his descendents. This is the first time God is called *The Shepherd* in Scripture.

 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" ([Psalm 23:1-4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+23%3A1-4)).

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" ([Isaiah 40:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+40%3A11)).

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" ([John 10:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A11)).

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" ([Hebrews 13:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A20)).

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" ([1 Peter 2:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+2%3A25)).

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" ([1 Peter 5:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Pe+5%3A4)).

c. *The Stone* or *Rock of Israel* ([Genesis 49:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A24)): this is the picture of God as the *Foundation and Support* of life. Jacob (Israel) had built his life upon God: he had made God the very foundation and support of his life, and God had held him up and given him a sure and lasting foundation. His life had been built upon God; therefore, God was going to fulfill His great promises to him. God was going to allow him-his life, the building and structure of his life—to endure forever and ever. And God was going to do the same thing for Joseph. This, too, is the first time God is called *the Rock* or *Stone* in Scripture.

 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" ([Deut. 32:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+32%3A4)). For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" ([Deut. 32:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+32%3A31)). There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God" ([1 Samuel 2:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+2%3A2)).

"The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation" ([2 Samuel 22:47](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+22%3A47)).

"For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?" ([Psalm 18:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+18%3A31)).

"Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit" ([Psalm 28:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+28%3A1)).

"He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved" ([Psalm 62:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+62%3A2)).

"But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge" ([Psalm 94:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+94%3A22)).

d. *The God of Jacob* or *the God of your father who helps you* ([Genesis 49:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A25)): God had always helped Jacob. Time and again Jacob had faced problems, sometimes terrible circumstances, but God had helped him through them all. The personal relationship between God and Jacob is again being stressed. The God of Jacob was the true God; therefore, He was able to really help Jacob. Joseph was following the God of his father; therefore, the true God would really help Joseph and his descendents.

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him" ([Psalm 28:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+28%3A7)).

"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" ([Psalm 40:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+40%3A17)).

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" ([Isaiah 41:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+41%3A10)).

"Let your conversation [behavior, conduct] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" ([Hebrews 13:5-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A5-6)).

e. *The Almighty* (El Shaddai) ([Genesis 49:25a](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A25)): this name stresses that God is the God of all might and strength, the true God of heaven and earth. He is the God who can do all things for His people. The almighty God is, therefore, the One who will strengthen Ephraim and Manasseh against their enemies.

4. But Joseph will not only be strengthened against his enemies; he will be richly blessed with three things:

⇒ with the blessings of heavenly rain and fertile soil ([Genesis 49:25b](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A25)).

⇒ with the blessings of springs and streams ([Genesis 49:25b](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A25)).

⇒ with the blessings of many offspring or descendents ([Genesis 49:25c](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A25)).

5. But even that is not all: Joseph was to be blessed above all his brothers ([Genesis 49:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+49%3A26)). Jacob declared that he had been blessed above his own fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Therefore Joseph, as the recipient of the birthright, was to be blessed above all his brothers. Jacob actually called out for his own great blessings to rest upon the head of Joseph, for the great blessings he had known to be experienced by Joseph.

**Thought 1**. The blessings that God pours out upon His true follower are unlimited. To stir thought, just a few are listed here.

1) There is the blessing of the necessities of life.

**"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (**[**Matthew 6:33**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+6%3A33)**).**

**"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (**[**Psalm 68:19**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+68%3A19)**).**

2) There is the blessing of joy.

**"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and [that] your joy might be full" (**[**John 15:11**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+15%3A11)**).**

3) There is the blessing of health.

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" ([Exodus 23:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+23%3A25)).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" ([Isaiah 53:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+53%3A5)).

4) There is the blessing of all provision.

**"**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over" ([Psalm 23:1-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+23%3A1-5)).

5) There is the blessing of spiritual fulness.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" ([Malachi 3:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mal+3%3A10)).

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" ([Ephes. 3:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eph+3%3A19)).

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" ([Ephes. 5:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Eph+5%3A18)).

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" ([Col. 1:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Col+1%3A9)).

Ehud the second judge, and Saul the first king, were of this tribe; and so also in the last times Esther and Mordecai, by whom the enemies of the Jews were destroyed, were of this tribe. The Benjamites ravened like wolves when they desperately espoused the cause of the men of Gibeah, those men of Belial, Jg 20:14. Blessed Paul was of this tribe (Ro 11:1; Php 3:5); and he did, in the morning of his day, devour the prey as a persecutor, but, in the evening, divided the spoil as a preacher.

This was to be a contentious tribe. Though Benjamin stood high in his father's natural affection, he did not dare for that reason to invent a blessing for him, but speaks the word of the Lord neither less nor more. To fight from morning to night is a sorry business, unless it be against sin.