



REVELATION 39 – WHO'S ON THE THRONE?

Dr. Leon L. Sanders

Revelation 4:3-4

THE DIFFICULTIES: THE STONES

- Historically, scholars cannot agree on which modern gems should be assigned to Bible labels; often making arbitrary assignments based on their beliefs – These appear as *guesses*
- Difficulties Correlating Ancient Labels with Modern Gems
 - *Ancient people's knowledge and technology differ from ours; correlating labels to gems is difficult at times*
 - *Archeology has not clearly linked some ancient labels with discovered gem artifacts to correlate with modern labels*
 - *Bible translators do not consistently correlate from text-to-text modern gems with Hebrew-Greek labels; creates confusion*
- We will limit ourselves to letting John define his descriptive terms within Revelation
 - *John begins this section using gem terminology*
 - *John closes Revelation using gem terminology more descriptively in describing New Jerusalem*
- With such limited understanding, we can only make general observations; attempts to make these metaphors *walk on four legs* may force meanings not in Scripture leading to errors: Historical problem

THE DIFFICULTIES: THE HERMENEUTICS

- Unfortunately, due to the high degree of ambiguity, many scholars resort to Allegory to understand the meanings of these gems
 - *Allegorical interpretation: Arbitrarily assignment of meanings according to the interpreter and not according to the writer; i.e., this becomes eisegesis, reading one's own beliefs into the Bible: This varies wildly from one time period to another*
 - *Scripture interprets Scripture: Exegesis, searching for God's meaning from Scripture as taught by the Spirit (1Co 2:14)*
- Occam's Razor: Allowing the simplest common denominator meaning to guide one's understanding; i.e., think horses not zebras when *hearing* hoof beats {Medicine} {Unless one lives in Africa}
 - *This does not mean ignoring other Scriptures in building our understanding*
 - *This does mean to look for the obvious before searching for the miraculous; or ridiculous*
- Gem usage gives us clues to understand the metaphor(s) as the writer's readers would have understood: Think 1st century understanding vice 21st century guessing: Ignorance

THE STONES: JOHN'S USAGE



Crystal Clear Jasper



Sardine Stone

- John describes the character of the One who sits on The Throne via these two gems:
 - *Jasper {ἰάσπις, iaspis}* – Modern jasper is greenish, though colors vary, and not translucent; however, when John uses this term to describe New Jerusalem's appearance, this gem is clear; it cannot refer to modern Jasper: Diamond (Re 21:11)
 - *Carnelian {σάρδινος, sardinos}* – This gem is consistently described as reddish throughout Scripture and the ancient world giving us an unambiguous understanding; also seen in New Jerusalem's foundation (Re 21:19-21)
- John's metaphoric insight into the identity of this Entity:
 - *Diamond {ἰάσπις}*: Clear, hard and immutable: Immutable holy righteousness (Ja 1:13-18)
 - *Carnelian {σάρδινος}*: Blood shed by Christ, Righteous One for Unrighteous; foundation of Salvation (Ro 5:6-11; 1Pe 3:18)
- **No One** has ever seen The Father {Spirit and Truth} (Jn 1:18; 4:23-24)
 - **Christ** declared, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Christ is the very Image of the Father (Jn 14:8-9; Col 1:15)
 - This is Christ, 100% God, sitting on the Father's Throne given to Him; answer to His prayer: We see His Glory (Mt 17:1-6; Jn 17:5, 24; He 1:5-13)

THE PROMISE: THE RAINBOW {IRIS}

- Because of Christ's faithfulness unto Death, The Iris {Rainbow} surrounding The Throne is emerald {green} denoting peace with the Father via the Son (Ro 5:6-11)
 - Satan before his Fall reflected the holiness of Father-Christ as well as coming peace: Multicolor Iris (Ex 28:12-15)
 - When Satan fell, he lost this privileged position and his luster; he mistakenly craved the perceived authority of The Throne but disregarded the mercy also inherent in Christ which would make a Way for sinners to receive Peace (Ex 28:16-17)
 - Symbol of his former position given to Man on Earth as a Promise of Mercy; but this Rainbow does not touch the Earth, half a circle, hinting at a future Promise to come to complete the mercy cycle; Christ's Paschal Sacrifice (Ge 9:8-17)
 - Every rainbow is a promise to Man but an affront to Satan of what he lost and the judgment to come (Re 20:10)
- How were the gems arranged: Inside to Outside: Glory – Carnelian – Diamond (Hypothesis)
 - Christ always displayed the Glory of the Father in word and works; all created beings **failed** (Jn 14:10-11)
 - When Christ leaves The Throne to sit in New Jerusalem, He is The Light, of the Father, for New Heavens-Earth (Re 21:23-25)

CHRIST SITS ON THE THRONE: IMAGE OF FATHER FOR ALL TO SEE

- This passage fulfills *first fruit* peek of how we will see Christ throughout eternity future
 - *Diamond – Immutable Righteousness which He shares with those who believe via clarity of the Gospel* (Jn 17:20-23; Ja 1:17-18)
 - *Carnelian – Without Blood the New Covenant would not be possible; thus, both are exhibited equally* (He 9:22-28; 10:5-10, 14-18)
 - *Emerald – Impossible to approach Christ except through the Peace He procured by His Blood and Holiness* (Ro 3:17; Ep 2:13-18)
- Peace is Cardinal virtue of the New Covenant; exhibited by the uniting of Jew – Gentile: 24 Elders
 - *Twelve Elders represent True Jews {Saved}: Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel who saw The Throne in Holiness* (Is 6:4-5; Ez 1:26-28; Da 7:9-10)
 - *Twelve Elders represent First Fruit {Church} believers: Apostles, Paul, Stephan, You, Me, etc.* (Mt 16:16-18; Ac 9:1-19; Ro 10:9-10)
 - *All are one body in Christ sharing His glory around Father's Throne in answer to Christ's Prayer* (Ro 10:11-13; Ga 3:23-29; Col 3:11)
- New Jerusalem is not simply Church {First Fruit} but **BRIDE OF ALL** the saved (Re 21:1-7)
 - *Gates – Represent Twelve Tribes of Israel {True Jews}* (Re 21:12-13)
 - *Foundation – Twelve Apostles: Living Stones of whom Christ is the Cornerstone holding ALL together* (1Pe 2:4-10; Re 21:14)