

# Brick or Stone

*Two spirits at work!*

*by*

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## Brick or Stone

### Introduction

There are two spirits at work in the world today and one has been from time immortal and one came into the world when pride raised its ugly head.

One spirit wants to make all people confirm to the image of a 'brick' and the other spirit wants to change all people into the image of a 'stone'.

The Word of God says: "Be not conformed to this world" that is, the ways of the world or be a brick.

~Romans 12:2~ but become a lively stone or rock ~1 Peter 2:3-10~:

"If so be you have tasted the Lord is gracious.

To whom coming, as unto a **living stone**, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Ye also, as **lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

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,

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.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show

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forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;

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.” ~1 Peter 5:4-10~

**Rock** is a naturally formed solid collection of one or more minerals and it is where stones come from.

Stone normally refers to trimmed or engineered rock and used by man in construction of some sort, usually as discrete **individual** blocks. Plus these blocks are no longer part of a larger cohesive rock mass originally formed within the Earth.

In common use a stone may refer to any small piece of rock possibly polished or weathered that is laying on the Earth's surface. A good example is the pebbles on a beach.

An **ROCK** is a large **mass of stone** that formes a cliff or peak, as well as broken pieces of such masses.

Sometimes the Bible uses the word “rock” figuratively to speak of God and Christ. As Rock, God is the Creator (Deut. 32:18), His people’s strength ~Deut. 32:4~, His people’s defense and refuge ~Psalm. 31:2-3; 94:22~, And His people’s salvation ~Deut. 32:15; Psalm. 89:26~. In the New Testament, Christ is the Rock from whom the Spirit of life flows ~John 4:13-14; 1 Cor. 10:4~, The foundation of the church (Matt. 16:18) And its cornerstone ~Eph. 2:20~.

Rocks abounded in the rough terrain of Palestine, especially in the central highlands. Some had specific

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names, including “the rock of Oreb” ~Judg. 7:25~ And “the rock of Etam” ~Judg. 15:8~. They used huge rocks to build the walls of fortified cities.

Rock is mineral matter of variable composition, consolidated or unconsolidated, assembled in masses or great quantities in nature, caused by acts of heat or water. It is stone in the mass or a stone of any size.

**STONE** is a hardened, granite-like mass formed from soil, clay, and minerals.

A stone is a particular piece or rock, as a boulder or piece of agate. It is a piece of rock quarried and worked into a specific size and shape for a particular purpose as paving or building stone.

The soil of Palestine is rough and rocky. The most common stones were limestone and flint. Because wood was scarce in Israel they built city walls, houses, palaces, temples, courtyards, columns, and streets of hewn stone.

The many stones cleared from fields provided the people with excellent weapons against their enemies.

Besides their practical uses, they used stones for sacred, spiritual purposes. They also built memorials from large stones to mark an unusual event. Stone mounds also marked graves. Small, smooth stones occasionally became a part of the Israelites' idol worship.

Surrounding pagan cultures apparently influenced the Hebrew people and they believed in sacred

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meteorites. While the Gentiles believed that meteorites talked and served as protection from evil, the Israelites often dedicated them to God but did not worship them as heathen nations did.

In a figurative way, stones imply firmness and strength, as well as insensibility and hardness “Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” describes best the stone’s symbolism for Christ as the strength and foundation of Christianity. The references to the cut stone from the mountainside show that some interpreted them to represent Christ and the church.

“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,” ~ 1 Peter 2:7

“All precious stones are transparent, or at least translucent. One may conclude that the substance that formed it is of the same transparency. No matter how finely pulverized no amount of mixing of their elements in the solid-state can produce them. So they must have been in the condition of either gases or liquids.

Direct fusion sometimes produces Precious stones or by crystallization in an excess of their melted substance. Or the direct intervention of heat causing their elements to pass off a vapor can produce them.

Some stones form amid a solution of which water was one of the basic elements.

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One can find some precious stones in those portions of our globe subjected to high temperatures. Then again one can also find them in those areas that have never supported such a temperature.” (JJ Kent, Inc. Precious Stones Guide Vol. 2)

The emerald is the rarest of all precious stones and considered by some to be even more valuable than the diamond. Compared with other precious stones the emerald in its occurrence in nature is unique, you can find it in the **rock** in which formed. Unlike diamonds, sapphires and rubies, it never occurs in gem gravels.

The earliest known locality where people found emeralds was in Upper Egypt near the coast of the Red Sea. However Columbia, South America has the best stones. One can also find these jewels in the United States in the state of North Carolina.

Diamonds form under tremendous heat and pressure. These conditions exist 150 km to 200 km beneath the earth's surface, where the temperatures are extremely high ranging from 900° C to 1300° Centigrade. For millions of years, carbon atoms deep in the earth's upper mantle became exposed to these extreme conditions. As a result, these atoms combine in their cubic molecular form and ultimately become diamond crystals.

During volcanic eruptions, diamond crystals eventually make their way to the earth's surface through pipes and channels. These pipes or channels contain the

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magma from the volcano, which rises along with the diamonds and deposit them on the surface. Then someone finds the primary deposit of diamonds and mines them. The earliest volcanic pipes have Kimberlite which is a **blue rock** and the most common host of diamonds.

The spirit of the brick and the spirit of the stone are in a battle for the control of all mankind and it is up to every one to recognize what and who they are and to make a choice.

There is the 'spirit of the brick' that wants to control all men. It says conform to a common set of rules and standards and loose your individuality that God has given to you.



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### Spirit of the Brick

Webster defines a brick as “any block or bar having **a similar size and shape** a rectangular block of clay mixed with sand and fired in a kiln or baked by the sun, then used in building construction.”

It was a common building material in the ancient world and was usually rectangular in shape and composed of clay or mud along with other ingredients such as straw or sand.

The sun can bake the bricks and other methods are firing in a kiln or oven that produces greater strength and hardness. Fired bricks were most common in Roman times, although some made them earlier, especially in Mesopotamia.

Slaves shaped the earliest bricks by hand then later with wooden molds. Brick making involved several stages of operation. A good clay source was absolutely necessary; then sifted and mixed to the desired consistency by adding water. Generally they added straw as a temper that acted as a binder for poor clays and prevented warping and cracking during the drying process. Following this, they shaped the bricks and then left them to dry. They often inscribed the bricks with an inscription.

They are similar, conformed, and act in accordance or harmony that comply and conform to rules.

Conforming is to act in accord with the prevailing standards, attitudes, practices, etc., of society or a group: One has to conform, to succeed in this world.

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One must become similar in form, nature, or character to be in harmony or accord.

There is a spirit in the United States and the World that is pushing all to conform to its standards and rules.

Embodying that spirit is such words and movements as Communism, Socialism, Liberalism, Progressivism, Liberation theology, Mohammedanism or Islamism, State Capitalism, New Age movement, Occultism, Global Warming, Conservation the Green Movement, Denominationalism, Legalism, and Purpose Driven Life, to name a few.

They are all trying to confirm the individual into a 'brick' molded by their rules and regulations and thus controlled in every aspect of their lives.

This spirit has been in the world since the great deceiver, Satan or Lucifer rebelled against God and said: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north~" ~Isaiah 14:13~

Pride wants to control or have power over all things. Pride is excessive belief in one's own abilities that interferes with the individual's recognition of the grace of God. It is the sin from which all others arise.

Pride sometimes called Vanity and medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas said of Pride "inordinate self-love is the cause of every sin ... the root of pride is found to consist in man not being, in someway, subject to God and His rule."

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The Pride of our leaders in this country want to control and have power over every aspect of our lives and turn us into robots or bricks that conform. This spirit saw one of its first manifestations on this earth in a land in the Middle East.

## The Tower Of Babel

"Now the whole earth had one language and few words. And as men migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there."

"And they said to one another, "Come, let us make **bricks**, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

"And The Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of men had built. And The Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

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"So The Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth and they left off building the city." ~Genesis 11:1-8 RSV~

There was a leader over them called Nimrod who was a "mighty one on the earth"—a skilled hunter-warrior who became a powerful king. He is the first mighty un-godly person mentioned in the Bible.

Notice God says in Genesis 11:6, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them."

God realizes that when people unify in one purpose they can accomplish impossible feats, both noble and ignoble.

To build, the people used brick instead of stone and tar instead of mortar. They used "man-made" materials, instead of more durable "God-made" materials. The people were building a monument to themselves, to call attention to their own abilities and achievements, instead of giving glory to God.

Nimrod understood that if one could unite a people in a single purpose and make them conform to his rules and regulations they could accomplish impossible things.

That same spirit is alive and well in the world today and we see it manifested in every aspect of our lives. Health Care a single payer system plan and all will conform. It is distributing wealth where every individual has the same amount of money. Thus the

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bricks look alike, act alike, dress and speak alike, then conformed to the image of the spirit than loves control and power.

Nimrod was a very persuasive leader and his father was Cush and “Nimrod: began to be a mighty one in the Earth and his kingdom was Babel. He and his kingdom foreshadow the coming Antichrist and his city. He led the first organized rebellion on earth against God.

He was a mighty hunter before the LORD which has nothing to do with hunting animals, but rather refers to his opposition to the Lord. He “hunted” them down, possibly even killing those who worshipped Jehovah; consequently, Babylon has always stood for every false religion, every false doctrine, and every false way. That’s why Revelation refers to it as “the great whore ... the mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth” ~Rev. 17:1, 5~

And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel or Babylon and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” ~Genesis 10:8-10 JSM~

The term "before the LORD" can mean that Nimrod was greater than God to the people in the kingdom of Babel. Nimrod was one of the first to have pride and to think he was better than everyone, including God.

The Jewish Historian Josephus relates the story: “NOW the sons of Noah were three,—

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Shem, Japhet, and Ham, born one hundred years before the Deluge (flood).

These first of all descended from the mountains into the plains and fixed their habitations there. Then they persuaded others who were greatly afraid of the lower grounds because the floods and so scared to come down from the higher place, to venture to follow their examples.

Now the plain in which they first lived they called Shinar. God also commanded them to send colonies abroad, for the thorough peopling of the earth,—that they might not raise seditions among themselves, but might cultivate a great part of the earth, and enjoy its fruits after a plentiful manner: but they were so ill instructed, that they did not obey God; for which reason they fell into calamities, and were made sensible, by experience, of what sin they had been guilty; "for when they flourished with a numerous youth, God admonished them again to send out colonies; but they, imagining the prosperity they enjoyed was not derived from the favor of God, but supposing that their own power was the proper cause of the plentiful condition they were in, did not obey him.

Nay, they added to this their disobedience to the divine will, the suspicion that they were therefore ordered to send out separate colonies, that, being divided asunder, they might the more easily be oppressed.

Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of

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Ham, the son of Noah, - a bold man, and of great strength of hand.

He persuaded them (sounds familiar) not to ascribe it to God as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness.

**He also gradually changed the government into tyranny,**— seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but **to bring them into a constant dependence upon his power.**

He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers!

**Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod,** and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God: and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains nor being in any degree negligent about the work: and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it and it grew very high sooner than anyone could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was.

It was built of burnt **brick** cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water.

When God saw that they acted so madly he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not

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growing wiser by the destruction of the former sinners (in the flood); but he caused a tumult among them, by producing in them divers languages: and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another.

The place where they built the tower is now called **Babylon**; because of the confusion of that language which they understood. In the Hebrew it meant Babel or Confusion.

The Sibyl also makes mention of this tower, and of the confusion of the language, when she says thus: — "When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven; but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave everyone his peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon."

But as to the plain of Shinar, in the country of Babylonia, Hestiaeus mentions it and he says thus: — "Such of the priests as were saved took the sacred vessels of Jupiter Enyalius, and came to Shinar of Babylonia."

Nimrod became the king because the people had gone into a survivalist state of mind and they started operating from conformity. They became naturally inclined to support someone who was a mighty hunter because of that.

Nimrod wasn't a scientist, a wise man, an intellectual, a town planner, an engineer or anything like



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that. He was a hunter possibly a great orator or organizer and that is those qualities that people liked.

Nimrod was the first leader that was in charge of an army and every leader that has existed since has been in charge of an army.

Think of any leader we have had throughout history and most have been warlords. Nimrod was the prototype leader and the kingdom of Babel was the prototype of all civilizations that we have had since then.

The kingdom of Babel was the first hierarchical society as well, which is another symptom of people operating from their flesh consciousness.

There is no record of this founder of idolatry, the first dictator and prototype of the Anti-Christ despot's death but assuredly he did die and is in outer darkness.

### **Pharaoh in Egypt**

The next instance of a despot requiring people to make bricks was the time the Israelites were held captive in Egypt. The story can be found in Exodus chapter five.

The story of how the Israelites got to Egypt can be found in Acts 7 (NKJV) as told by Stephen to the Jews.

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“Stephen said, “Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran.

God said to him, “Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.”

Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession and to his descendants after him.

But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.

“And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,” said God, “and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.”

Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs.

And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and his entire house.

Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no

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sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh.

Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people.

So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.

But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt until another king arose who did not know Joseph.

This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live.

At this time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. He supposed that his brethren would have

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understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.

And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, “Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?”

But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?’”

Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons.

And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai.

When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him.

The Lord said, “I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

And Moses trembled and dared not look. Then the LORD said to him, “Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.”

Stephen was stoned to death for this story as he was a stone not a brick.

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They eventually found themselves in the hands of a Pharaoh that knew not Joseph and in Exodus 1:6 the story is told.

“All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt already).

And Joseph died all his brothers, and all that generation. But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, “Look, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and *so* go up out of the land.”

In Exodus 5 we see that – “Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”

And Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.”

So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days’ journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.”

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Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get back to your labor."

And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are many now, and you make them rest from their labor!"

So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, **"You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick** as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it. For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it, and let them not regard false words."

And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh: 'I will not give you straw. Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.'"

So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw.

And the taskmasters forced them to hurry, saying, "Fulfill your work, your daily quota, as when there was straw."

Also the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, "Why have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before?"

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Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, “Why are you dealing thus with your servants? There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us, ‘Make brick!’ And indeed your servants are beaten, but the fault is in your own people.”

But he said, “You are idle! Idle! Therefore you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.’ Therefore go now and work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks.”

And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in trouble after it was said, “You shall not reduce any bricks from your daily quota.”

Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them.

And they said to them, “Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

The Pharaoh according to many authorities was Menephthap, the son and successor of Rameses II. History records that he was a weak individual, but, because of certain events, had an exalted opinion of himself as most despots do.

Some historians say that he was a battle mastermind not unlike Genghis Khan or Ash from Pokemon. They say he led a monstrous victory against forces from Libya and referred to as “Sea People.” It is assumed

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that Aquaman was involved... and they slaughtered mercilessly.

He was obviously not content with the battle, which lasted a mere six hours. Needing more bloodshed or symbolism, he proceeded to methodically cut off the members of over 13,000 men. Returning home, he brought the entire bounty of “severed heads” with them, presumably creating the freakiest confetti parade in history.

This pharaoh like all leaders throughout history tried to make the people comply and be uniform in every aspect of their lives with his total control. The spirit of the brick is behind every empire down thru the ages until this present time. There have been roughly 216 empires through the ages and all but one was authoritarian with an Emperor, King, Queen, Dictator, Pharaoh, and sometimes they call themselves President such as Russia.

Authoritarianism is a form of social organization characterized by submission to authority. It is opposed to individualism and democracy. In politics, an authoritarian government is one in which political power is concentrated in a leader or leaders, typically unelected by the people, who possess exclusive, unaccountable, and arbitrary power.

Any form of government that ends in an ‘ism’ falls into that category.

All ‘isms’ want to do one thing and that is control the people. The Bible calls it ‘the doctrine of the



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Nicolaitanes' in the Book of Revelation which God hates. The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes found in Revelation 2:6, 15 Nicolaitanes means "laity-conquerors or a gathering of people. The same spirit that controls their people has also evaded the church

All of the 216 Word Empires except **one** so far to date has had that spirit ruling and the exception has always had those that wanted to implement that spirit and are on the verge of accomplishing those evil practices of conformity or the spirit of the brick.

The **one** present empire called the United States of America is well on its way following that same 'spirit of the brick'.

The next brick empire after Egypt that stands out is the Babylonian Empire.

## **Babylonian Empire**

Babylon is Akkadian "babilani" which means "the Gate of Gods" and it became the capital of the land of Babylonia.

The name Babel in the Bible means "confused" (Gen 11:9) and throughout the Bible, Babylon was a symbol of the confusion caused by godlessness.

The name Babylon is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Babel. Our old friend Nimrod and his spirit of the brick continued on in that empire and it was where the Jews were held captive for 70 years. The empire became a symbol of power, materialism, and cruelty.

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The empire began around 2000BC and ended 539 BC or roughly fifteen hundred years in 500 year stages.

One of the great rulers in this time period who had become a legend in Babylonian tradition was Nebuchadnezzar I who ruled from 1125-1104 BC and did a great deal of building both in Babylon and other Babylonian cities using the 'spirit of the brick' of course. He protected the plain and made Babylonia very prosperous.

Then there came Nebuchadnezzar II: 2 Kin 24:13-14 "And Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house. He cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land."

He ruled from 634 – 562 BC and he messed with God's people and tried to make 'bricks' out of them but the empire was conquered just 23 years after his death. He continued his father's work of reconstruction, aimed at making his capital one of the world's wonders.

The bridge across the Euphrates is of particular interest, in that it was supported on asphalt covered brick piers that were streamlined to reduce the upstream resistance to flow, and the downstream

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turbulence that would otherwise undermine the foundations.

Nebuchadnezzar's construction activity was not confined to the capital. He is credited with the restoration of the Lake of Sippar, opening a port on the Persian Gulf. Plus he built the Mede wall between the Tigris and the Euphrates to protect the country against incursions from the north.

These undertakings required a considerable number of laborers; an inscription at the great temple of Marduk suggests that the laboring force used for his public works was most likely made up of captives brought from various parts of western Asia.

The empire was conquered by The Greek Empire in 331 BC.

### **The Greek Empire**

It came to power in 331B.C. with Alexander the Great as its head. Alexander conquered all the territory that had belonged to both Babylon and Persia, along with India. When Alexander died at the age of 32, his empire was divided into four parts, each of four generals taking a share: Ptolemy (Egypt), Seleucus I (Syria and Persia), Lysimachus (Asia Minor), and Cassander (Macedonia).

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Alexander is considered the greatest military genius of the ages. He became the measure against which generals even to this day compare themselves. Military academies throughout the world still teach his tactical exploits.

The ancient Greeks had no doubt that they were 'one people'; they had the same religion, same basic culture, and same language the 'spirit of the brick' was alive and well in that empire. Power was in the hands of the aristocracy as a whole, and away from a single individual.

They had an oligarchy form of power structure in which power effectively rested with a small segment of society distinguished by royalty, wealth, family ties, or military control. The word oligarchy means to rule, to govern, to command. Such states are often controlled by a few prominent families who pass their influence from one generation to the next.

The 'spirit of the brick' was stronger in the next vicious empire called the Roman Empire that conquered the Greeks.

### **The Roman Empire**

The empire was a civilization that grew out of a small agricultural community, founded on the Italian Peninsula as early as the 10th century BC.

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It was located along the Mediterranean Sea, and centered at the city of Rome, it became one of the largest empires in the ancient world and possibly of all times.

In its centuries of existence the Roman civilization shifted from a monarchy to an oligarchic republic to an increasingly autocratic empire. It came to dominate South-Western Europe, South-Eastern Europe/Balkans and the Mediterranean region through conquest and assimilation.

It began with a monarchy where all political power is absolutely lodged with an individual, known as a monarch or single ruler such as a king or queen.

That form of government was replaced with a republican form of government. It is a form of government where the people or some portion thereof retained supreme control over the government, and in which the head of government is not a monarch.

The word "republic" is derived from the Latin translated as "a public affair". But it was not a pure republic but an oligarchic republic where power effectively rested with a small segment of society distinguished by royalty, wealth, family ties, or military control.

The word oligarchy is from the Greek meaning a few to rule, to govern, or to command. It is often controlled by a few prominent families who pass their influence from one generation to the next.

**Does any of that sound familiar to those of us that live in the greatest Republic in the history of**

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**the world?** The Roosevelt, Bush, or Kennedy families are a few names who seem to govern the Republic of the Unites States of America.

Oligarchies have been tyrannical throughout history, being completely reliant on public servitude, can you say 'bricks', to exist.

Although Aristotle pioneered the use of the term as a synonym for rule by the rich, for which the exact term is plutocracy; but oligarchy is not always a rule by wealth, as oligarchs can simply be a **privileged group**, can you say élites, congress or possibly the government czars.

They do not have to be connected by bloodlines as in a monarchy maybe just a graduate from one of the elite schools in the east.

The comparison between the United States and Roman Empire is uncanny. The American Republic is on a parallel path with Rome.

The Roman system was based on annually elected magistrates and various representative assemblies were established. A constitution set a series of checks and balances, and a separation of powers.

The most important magistrates were the two consuls, who together exercised executive authority and military command. The consuls had to work with the senate, which was initially an advisory council of the ranking nobility, or patricians, but grew in size and power.

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Each was born out of a monarchy – USA from Brittan.

They both have an eagle as the national symbol

Each has a great military power - strongest power during their time.

Both have an executive branch.

Both have a senate.

Both have a legislative branch.

Both have a two-party system.

Both have a constitution – Roman's not written and the USA's are written down.

Both republics became rather corrupt, due to disagreements between parties.

Both have corrupt political alliances - like the US and the oil companies or unions

The Roman government was a representative democracy, which had representatives from the nobility in the Senate and representatives from the commoners in the Assembly. Two branches divide governmental power and they voted on various issues.

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Many Roman political thinkers liked democracy and the Roman Statesman, Cicero, was one. Cicero suggested that all people have certain rights that should be preserved. He and other political philosophers of the time taught that governmental and political power should come from the people

Both had a Planned Parenthood.

Both were a center of knowledge for the world during their time.

Both inhabited by slaves and Christians.

Both had great sporting events.

The Roman Empire was totally controlled by the 'spirit of the brick' and the U.S.A. is well on its way in of becoming under the same control of that spirit.

There are many Empires that have the same spirit and governments down through history and are now in existence such as China, North Korea, Cuba, Russia to name a few. Take a look at their culture as there is no individualism and they all look alike, dress alike, live alike, and have a ruling class.

The World is now heading for the last World Empire of the Brick.



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### **One World Government or Beast Empire**

This last final empire under the control of the most evil leader that ever existed called the Anti-Christ.

Civilization has gone a full circle and has ended back at the Tower of Babel. The 'spirit of the brick' will be compounded greatly during this last empire.

The leader of this empire or One World Government will come out of the same area as the Tower of Babel resided.

The "New York Times" international edition, October 11, 1990 opined, "Under President Saddam Hussein, one of the ancient world's most legendary cities has begun to rise again. More than an archeological venture, the new Babylon is self-consciously dedicated to the idea that Nebuchadnezzar has a successor in Mr. Hussein, whose military prowess and vision will restore to Iraqis the glory their ancestors knew when all of what is now Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and Israel was under Babylonian control."

An article from Grace to You 'Babylon is Fallen part 3' states: "Saddam Hussein in his passion to be the modern Nebuchadnezzar who was the original ruler of the Babylonian Empire had a desire to be what Nebuchadnezzar was. And what was Nebuchadnezzar? Well to redemptive history, Nebuchadnezzar is known as the destroyer of Israel and the conqueror of the world, and that's what Saddam Hussein desires. He is, as a part of his desire to fulfill a

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modern-day role of Nebuchadnezzar, rebuilding the symbol of the ancient power of Nebuchadnezzar, namely the city of Babylon. And it is, says Saddam Hussein, the symbolic center of his anticipated world empire.

As of February, 1990, **over sixty million bricks** had been laid in the reconstruction of by Saddam Hussein. His name was inscribed on some of them, at the exact site of the ancient city. He has reconstructed the southern palace of Nebuchadnezzar, a theater, many temples, the throne room of Nebuchadnezzar, the Ishtar Gate. He plans the Hanging Gardens. In fact, he's made an offer of \$1.5 million to any Iraqi who can design the Hanging Gardens."

Mr. Hussein was before his time and lost his head when they hung him. But there is one coming that is terribly wicked and is probably now in the world who will rule the One World Government with the spirit of the brick the world has so longed for.

Notice once again that 'bricks' play a role and are just a metaphor for making all men conform and be uniform in all aspects of living.

**Then there is the 'Spirit of the Stone' symbolizing the individual and is the answer to the spirit of the brick.**

## Brick or Stone

### Spirit of the Stone

“And they said one to another, Go to, let us make **brick**, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for **stone**, and **slime** had they for mortar.” ~Genesis 11:3~

“The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn **stones**.” ~Isaiah 9:10~

The answer to the coming final ‘brick ruler’ is to turn to God:

“And this **stone**, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that you shall give me I will surely give the tenth unto you.” ~Genesis 28:22~

“And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire **stone** and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.” ~Exodus 24:10~

“The **stone** which the builders refused is become the head **stone** of the corner.” ~Psalm 118:22~

When building the house for God the Israelites were told:

“And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe or any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” ~1 Kings 6:7~

The Temple was built out of stone and had a flat wooden roof made from imported cypresses and cedar.

The stones were cut with such precision that mortar was not used to get a good fit between the stones.

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Some of these stones weighed over 50 tons and required special transportation techniques

Houses and roads were also built of stone and stone houses built hundreds of years ago are securely holding heavy cement constructions which were added in modern times to accommodate larger families

The road were built on bedrock, to provide a firm base for the fill then a filler consisting of larger stones which was eventually covered with a layer of smaller stones and earth. Finally a pavement consisting of large rough stones was laid closely with the flat sides up so as to make a reasonably smooth surface for traffic. In later periods roads were paved with fairly small stones

There have been special stones throughout the ages and these individuals made a difference in their time and for eternity. They had the Spirit of the Stone and would not conform to the spirit of the brick.

“Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper **stone**, clear as crystal;” ~Revelation 21:11~

The following are all ‘special stones’ that never would conform to the image of a ‘brick’.

Therefore thus says 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.” ~Isaiah 28:16~

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“Therefore thus says 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.” ~Isaiah 28:16~

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ** himself being the chief **corner stone**;” ~Ephesians 2:20~

“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.” ~1 Peter 2:6~

**Jesus Christ** is the corner stone and most precious of all the stones.

“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God” ~Rev 21:10~ “And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper (a precious stone of several colors): and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.” ~Rev 21:18-20~

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## **Old Testament Stones**

**Abel** the second son of Adam and Eve a shepherd, brought to the Lord an offering “of the firstlings the best quality of his flock. In the New Testament, Abel is described as a man of faith, who “offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain” (Heb. 11:4) so Cain his brother murdered him.

**Enoch** by faith walked with God during a time of increasing wickedness. When he was 365 years old he was taken directly into God’s presence without experiencing death and would escape the punishment that came upon the world. The flood destroyed the ‘spirit of the brick’ during his son and grandson’s time. He would not conform to the world and its way.

**Noah** lived at a time when the whole earth was filled with violence and corruption. Yet he did not allow the evil standards of his day to rob him of fellowship with God. He stood out as the only one who “walked with God” as was true of his great-grandfather Enoch. Noah was a just or righteous man. The Lord singled out Noah from among all his contemporaries and chose him as the man to accomplish a great work. He definitely did not conform to the ‘spirit of the brick’ as he was a ‘precious stone’ that lived by faith.

**Abraham** was called a friend of God and called the father of all who believe by faith. He was one that did

### **Brick or Stone**

not follow the crowd but was faithful to the calling of God.

**Sara** the wife of Abraham through faith received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age of child bearing.

**Jacob** wrestled an Angel and had his name changed to Israel. The Lord said, “Your name shall be called no more Jacob meaning deceiver or supplanter, but Israel a Prince of God: for as a Prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed.” ~Genesis 32:28~ He definitely was a ‘stone’ and a very special one at that.

**Joseph** was sold into slavery by his brothers and rose to an important position in the Egyptian government. He would not become a brick in Pharaohs Empire but remained a special stone.

**Moses** refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter and led the Israelites out of Egypt. He was a leader so inspired by God that he was able to build a united nation from a race of oppressed and weary slaves.

**Rahab** was a harlot of Jericho who hid two Hebrew spies, helping them to escape, and who became an ancestor of David and Jesus. ~Josh. 2:1–21; 6:17–25; ~Matt. 1:5~

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Rahab's house was on the city wall of Jericho. Rahab, who manufactured and dyed linen, secretly housed the two spies whom Joshua sent to explore Jericho and helped them escape by hiding them in stalks of flax on her roof. ~Joshua 2:6~

**Gideon** a young man from an otherwise the tribe of Manasseh was chosen by God to free the people of Israel and to condemn their worship of idols. God told him to keep only 300 men out of 22,000 to defeat the enemy and he obeyed and won the battle with God's help.

**David** the second king Israel, ancestor of Jesus Christ is best known for his killing of the giant Goliath. He used one smooth stone to kill the giant but as the story is told he picked up five stones. He was not only going to kill the giant but Goliath had four brothers and David was planning on wiping out all five of them. He surely was a precious stone.

**Samuel** was the earliest of the great Hebrew prophets after Moses and the last judge of Israel. When he was a child, he heard the voice of the Lord speak to him at the shrine in Shiloh. As an adult, Samuel played an important part in uniting the tribes against the growing threat of the Philistines and the spirit of the brick.



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**Isaiah** the famous Old Testament prophet who predicted the coming of the Messiah and the author of the Book of Isaiah according to verbal history was walking around in his study when he heard God's voice.

"Whom shall I send?"

Then Isaiah said, "Here am I; send me!"

God answered, "My children are trouble-some and sensitive; if thou art ready to be insulted and even beaten by them, thou may accept My message; if not, thou wouldst better renounce it."

Isaiah as a good lively stone accepted the challenge and said, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"

For this saying various legends relate, "Fearing King Manasseh, Isaiah hid himself in a cedar-tree, but his presence was betrayed by the fringes of his garment, and King Manasseh caused the tree to be sawn in half.

Another legend states that, "When Isaiah fled from his pursuers and took refuge in the tree, and the tree was sawn in half, the prophet's blood spurted forth.

**Jeremiah** the Prophet was called was called to be a stone while he was still in the womb and yet as a teenager the Lord said to him.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

Jeremiah answered "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth."

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But the LORD said to him, “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ for you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I *am* with you to deliver you. Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.”

He was called by God to the prophetic office during the darkest days of Old Testament history. Since his primary message was that of judgment, he was rejected by the many and received by the few. Because of his immense sorrows over the sinful people of God, he has been called “the weeping prophet.

Like many great men, Jeremiah was despised in life, but applauded in death and he suffered more than perhaps any other prophet in the Old Testament.

**Ezekiel** a prophet of a priestly family that was carried captive to Babylon in 597 B.C. when he was about 25 years old. He was married to a woman who was “the desire of his eyes”. One of the saddest events of his life was the death of his wife. The prophet was told that on the very day he received this revelation, his wife would die as the armies of Babylon laid siege against the holy city of Jerusalem. Ezekiel’s sadness at the death of his wife was to match the grief of the people at the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was commanded not to grieve her death; he was to steel

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himself for this tragedy even as God's people were to prepare themselves for the death of their beloved city. He was married to a woman who was "the desire of his eyes" (24:16). One of the saddest events of his life was the death of his wife. The prophet was told that on the very day he received this revelation, his wife would die as the armies of Babylon laid siege against the holy city of Jerusalem. Ezekiel's sadness at the death of his wife was to match the grief of the people at the destruction of Jerusalem.

He was commanded not to grieve her death; he was to steel himself for this tragedy even as God's people were to prepare themselves for the death of their beloved city (24:15–22).

He saw the glory of God depart from the Jerusalem Temple because of the people's worship of other gods. Later he saw a vision of dry bones coming back to life as a sign that God would give new life to the people. The last visions in his book describe an ideal Temple and the return of God's glory to Israel.

**DANIEL** means God is my judge and was a prophet during the period of the Captivity of God's Covenant People in Babylon and Persia.

Daniel was a teenager when he was taken from Jerusalem into captivity by the Babylonians in 605 B.C. He was in his 80s when he received some of his major visions. In more than 60 years of his life in Babylon, Daniel faced many challenges. But in all those years, he grew stronger in his commitment to God.

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Since its earliest days of the Church born on Pentecost after the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus tens of thousands of Christians have been killed for their faith and following are the most notable martyrs.

### **Early Church Stones**

**Stephen** whose name means "crown" was one of the first seven deacons of the early church and the first Christian martyr. In the Book of Acts of the Apostles he was tried by the Sanhedrin for blasphemy against Moses and God and spoke against the Temple and the Law. While on trial, he experienced a vision in which he saw both God the Father and God the Son:

"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

He was stoned to death by an infuriated mob encouraged by Paul of Tarsus. His final speech was presented as accusing the Jews of persecuting prophets who spoke out against their sins:

"Which one of the Prophets did your fathers not persecute, and they killed the ones who prophesied the coming of the Just One, of whom now, too, you have become betrayers and murderers."

**Simon Peter** the Apostle whose name means "stone, rock" and it was during his first meeting with Jesus that Jesus named him Peter. Peter was to become the first Apostle ordained by Jesus in the early church.

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Jesus said of him, "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." He was going to build His Church on the revelation that Peter had, "That Jesus was the Christ the Son of the Living God." (Matthew 16:16)

According to Tetullian an early Christian author said, "Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he had desired to suffer." This is why an upside down cross is generally accepted as a symbol of Peter, who would not have considered himself worthy enough to die the same way as his Master.

**James** the son of Zebedee one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus was martyred at the age of 44. He was one of only three apostles whom Jesus selected to bear witness to his Transfiguration. He also was one of the three that accompanied Jesus when He healed the daughter of Jairus and he was also with Him in His agony in Gethsemane. He was beheaded in Judea by King Herod Agrippa I.

**Philip** was one of the twelve apostles of Christ and a native of Bethsaida in Galilee. According to the Gospel of John, Philip met Jesus beyond the Jordan River during John the Baptist's ministry. Jesus called Philip to become His disciple. Philip responded and brought to Jesus another disciple, named Nathanael or Bartholomew. Philip is usually mentioned with Nathanael.

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Before Jesus fed the five thousand, He tested Philip by asking him how so many people could possibly be fed. Instead of responding in faith, Philip began to calculate the amount of food it would take to feed them and the cost.

There is reasonable certainty that he lived for many years as a bishop, and died in great honor. Polycrates an early Christian bishop said that Philip was one of the great "lights of Asia." As Judas was the treasurer and took care of their financial matters, Philip was the one who was responsible for seeing to it that they always had food. Philip means horse lover.

Tradition relates that 30 years after the crucifixion, Philip went to Britain and founded the church at Glastonbury to which Joseph of Arimathaea brought the Holy Grail, the cup used at the Last Supper. That sounds more like a fairy tale but that's the way traditions go. Something must have happened to the Holy Grail. Who knows?

Philip is said to have done missionary work in Phrygia, Scythia and Parthia and labored diligently in Upper Asia, suffering martyrdom at Heliopolis, Phrygia. He was scourged, thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified in AD 54.

**Matthew** whose name means "gift of the Lord," and we know from his trade that he delighted in the gifts of others as well. He was a tax collector who worked in or around Capernaum under the authority of Herod Antipas. In Jesus' day, land and poll taxes were

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collected directly by Roman officials, but taxes on transported goods were contracted out to local collectors. Matthew was such a person, or else he was in the service of one. These middlemen paid an agreed-upon sum in advance to the Roman officials for the right to collect taxes in an area. Their profit came from the excess they could squeeze from the people.

But when Jesus came upon Matthew, he was a man who could scarcely be viewed with little but contempt by the human eye; the divine insight of Christ, however, saw in this man which he beckoned to his service that spark of greatness invisible to the rest of the world. It is doubtful that Matthew himself was aware of what lay dormant in him that was to place him in the forefront of Christianity.

Jesus was traveling on the Mediterranean Damascus road when he came upon Matthew who was stationed there. Standing at a lake near the city of Capernaum, Matthew's gaze met the Lord's and Jesus spoke to him, uttering only two words: "Follow me."

Matthew preached the Gospel for many years after the death of Christ, traveling throughout the Holy Land and finally meeting a martyr's death at the hands of pagans in Ethiopia. His final verse is his epitaph. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Tradition tells that he died in the year 90 AD under the reign of Domitian probably in Ethiopia. The Western tradition holds that he was martyred, by a

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sword or perhaps a spear, though the exact method is not revealed in the ancient history of martyrs.

Death by the sword seems to be accepted manner of death as most western Christian symbolic representation features Matthew holding his Gospel as well as a sword a symbol of his martyrdom.

**Mark** the author of the Gospel of Mark was one of the Seventy Apostles of Christ, and the founder of the Church of Alexandria.

According to the Coptic church, Saint Mark was born in the city of Cyrene in the Pentapolis of North Africa which is now Libya.

Tradition also says that he returned to Pentapolis later in life, after being sent by Saint Paul to Colossae and served with him in Rome and from Pentapolis he made his way to Alexandria. When he returned to Alexandria, the pagans of the city resented his efforts to turn the Alexandrians away from the worship of their traditional pagan gods. In AD 68 they placed a rope around his neck and dragged him through the streets until he was dead.

**James the Son of Alphaeus** was also one of Jesus' twelve apostles. He is often identified with James the Less and commonly known by that name in church tradition.

He is rarely mentioned in the New Testament, but he is sometimes identified with James the Just, an important leader in the New Testament church. He is



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clearly distinguished from James, son of Zebedee, another one of the Twelve Apostles.

His death is recorded in the writings of Josephus, Eusebius, and Jerome. When Festus, the governor of Judea, died, Nero replaced him with Albinus. About the same time, Herod Agrippa II replaced the Jewish high priest Joseph with Ananus. After Festus died and before Albinus had arrived in Judea to replace him, the new high priest decided to pressure James the Less to deny that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God.

The Jewish high priest asked James to stand on the Temple wall and speak against Jesus to the crowds which had gathered in preparation for the Passover.

James instead spoke in favor of Jesus as the Christ; many heard him and many were converted. So the Jewish religious leaders threw James down from the Temple wall. Yet he did not die from the fall, so they began to stone him. Still he did not die from the stoning, so a man took a fuller club used to beat out clothing and clubbed him to death.

**Andrew** was at first a disciple of John the Baptizer along with John the Theologian. When the Forerunner pointed out Jesus as the Christ, they both became His disciples. Andrew took his brother, Saint Peter, to meet Jesus. He is called the Protokletos (the First Called) because he was the first Apostle to be summoned by Jesus into His service. Andrew and his brother Peter made their living as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. Both men became Apostles, and while Peter

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symbolically came to represent the Church of the West, Andrew likewise represents the Church of the East.

According to Hippolytus he preached to the Scythians, modern day Georgia, and Thracians, modern day Bulgaria, and was crucified, suspended on an olive tree, at Patrae, a town of Achaia Greece.

Tradition and Josephus relates that he was a diligent preacher of the gospel and had brought many people to faith in Christ. When Aegeas the governor heard about this, he came to Patras to put an end to the Christian movement there. To do this, he enforced a legal requirement that everyone worship the Roman gods by making sacrifices to them. Andrew immediately decided to resist Aegeas and went to address him directly.

“It would be wise for someone who judges men,” he said, “to know the One who is his Judge—the One who lives in heaven. And once you have known Him, you will worship Him, since He is the One true God. In so doing, this judge of men will turn his mind away from false gods and blind idols.”

These words from Andrew angered Aegeas, “Are you the same Andrew that overthrew the temple of the gods?” he demanded. “Are you the same Andrew that goes around persuading men to believe in superstitions which Rome has abolished? I have been commanded to put an end to such teaching.”

Andrew replied by saying that it was indeed a fact that the Roman authorities did not understand the truth.

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“The Son of God came from heaven into the world for man’s sake,” he said, “He taught us that these idols you honor as gods are not only not gods, but are actually cruel demons. They are enemies to mankind, and they teach people nothing except things which offend God. As a result, these people fall into all kinds of wickedness, and when they die, they have nothing to offer to God but evil deeds.”

The governor was not pleased by what Andrew had to say. Instead, he commanded Andrew to quit teaching and preaching these things immediately. If he refused, he would be fastened to the cross at once.

But Andrew did refuse to change his mind and replied to the threat of crucifixion by saying, “I would not preach the honor and glory of the cross if I feared the death of the cross.”

The sentence of death was pronounced, and Andrew was taken away to be crucified for denying the religion of the Roman gods and would not conform to the image of a brick.

Crucifixion was such an especially cruel and painful death that men who faced it often lost their minds from fear. They would frequently faint when they saw the cross but he didn’t even pale. Instead, out of his deep love for Christ, he spoke these words that strike the heart like sparks of fire.

“O cross!” he declared, “O cross most welcome and long anticipated! I come to you with a willing mind, with joy and desire. Since I am a follower and a student

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of the One who died on you, I have always loved you and sought to embrace you.”

And so Andrew gave his life for the love of Christ.

**Bartholomew** and according to Hippolytus, Bartholomew preached in India:

He preached to the Indians, to whom he also gave the Gospel according to Matthew, and was crucified with his head downward, and was buried in Allatum, a town of the great Armenia [modern day southern Georgia].

Eusebius, in his Church History, confirms the ministry of Bartholomew in India, and adds an eye witness account:

Tradition per Eusebius of Caesarea's Ecclesiastical History states that after the Ascension, Bartholomew went on a missionary tour to India, where he left behind a copy of the Gospel of Matthew. Other traditions record him as serving as a missionary in Ethiopia, Mesopotamia, Parthia, and Lycaonia.

He is said to have been martyred in Albanopolis in Armenia. According to one account, he was beheaded, but a more popular tradition holds that he was flayed alive and crucified, head downward. He is said to have converted Polymius, the king of Armenia, to Christianity. Astyages, Polymius' brother, consequently ordered Bartholomew's execution.

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**John** the brother of James and son of Zebedee was one of the few disciples that did not die a cruel death, but of "old age".

Eusebius a early historian discusses the reason that John wrote his Gospel:

"Matthew and John have left us written memorials, and they, tradition says, were led to write only under the pressure of necessity...And when Mark and Luke had already published their Gospels, they say that John, who had employed all his time in proclaiming the Gospel orally, finally proceeded to write for the following reason. The three Gospels already mentioned having come into the hands of all and into his own too, they say that he accepted them and bore witness to their truthfulness; but that there was lacking in them an account of the deeds done by Christ at the beginning of his ministry."

According to Hippolytus a 3rd-century theologian, John was banished by Domitian to the Isle of Patmos, and later died in Ephesus:

John, again, in Asia, was banished by Domitian the king to the isle of Patmos, in which also he wrote his Gospel and saw the apocalyptic vision; and in Trajan's time he fell asleep at Ephesus, where his remains were sought for, but could not be found.

**Thomas the Apostle**, the doubting Apostle, is best known for disbelieving Jesus' resurrection when first

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told of it, then proclaiming "My Lord and my God" on seeing Jesus.

Traditions link him with spreading the gospel in southern India where a local king and many people were converted. One tradition relates that after questioning the apostle the king condemned him to death in AD 72. Anxious to avoid popular excitement, "for many had believed in our Lord, including some of the nobles," the king ordered Thomas conducted to a nearby mountain, where, after being allowed to pray, he was then stoned and stabbed to death with a lances wielded by angry soldiers.

### **Sixteenth Century Stones**

**William Tyndale** just before being strangled and burned at the stake, cried out, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

He was a 16th century scholar and translator who became a leading figure in Protestant reformism towards the end of his life. He was the first to translate considerable parts of the Bible into English, for a public, lay readership.

In 1535, he was arrested by church authorities and jailed in the castle of Vilvoorde outside Brussels for over a year. He was tried for heresy, strangled and burnt at the stake. The Tyndale Bible, as it was known,

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continued to play a key role in spreading Reformation ideas across Europe.

### Seventeenth Century Stones

**John Brown** (1627–1685), also known as the **Christian Carrier**, was a Protestant Covenanter from Priesthill, a few miles from Muirkirk in Ayrshire, Scotland. He became a Presbyterian martyr in 1685

Brown's cottage home was the meeting place for a society of Covenanters. Several families came across the broad moor on Sabbath morning, and remained till evening. Sometimes they traveled both ways at night, for fear of the Dragoons. The day was spent in prayer, reading the Bible, singing Psalms, and conversing on doctrines of redemption. This society continued to meet until Brown and other members were killed by the authorities.

In 1685, Brown was executed by Graham of Claverhouse outside his home in the presence of his wife, Isabel, and two children. Brown had refused to swear that he would not take up arms against the king (as he had done before), and to take the Oath of Abjuration: "I do hereby abhor, renounce and disown in the presence of Almighty God, the pretended Declaration of War lately affixed at several parish churches, in so far as it declares war against his sacred Majesty, and asserts that it is lawful to kill such as serve his Majesty in Church, State, Army or Country, or such

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as act against the authors of the pretended Declaration now shown to me."

**Franco de Franco** an Italian that was sentenced to death in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth on religious grounds. He is one of very few victims of the religious intolerance in this country, besides e.g. Katarzyna Weiglowska, and Iwan Tyszkiewicz.

Franco originated from western Friuli which belonged to the Venetian Republic; he spent his childhood and youth there. He came to Poland with his father who became administrator of the Wieliczka domain. Later he worked as civil servant at the Wieliczka Salt Mine under supervision of his paternal uncle Pietro de Franco. Because of his paternal uncle was a devout Catholic and probably only after his death in 1603 Franco approached Protestants in Krakow.

He adopted Calvinism and became its ardent supporter. In order to promote this faith amongst his countrymen, he returned to Italy. However, he was soon arrested by the Inquisition in Brescia. After 9 months he managed to escape from the prison. He reached the German Lutheran countries, and on 10 September 1605 enrolled (as Francus Franchi Italus) in the Wittenberg University. He earned his living by teaching the Italian language and dances. Frankfurt on the Oder was also a place of his studies. In May 1608, he moved to Dresden, where was arrested for unknown reasons. Then he left for Leipzig, where he made acquaintance with Samuel Piątkowicz, a Calvinist



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student from Vilnius. This relationship caused Franco's return to Poland, and he settled in Vilnius. He commenced the missionary action amongst the local Italian colony there.

On 2 June 1611 (then Catholics celebrated the Corpus Christi), Franco attended the religious service in the Vilnius Calvinist church, during which minister Andrzej Chrzastowski sharply criticized Catholic religious ceremonies as idolatry. Then Franco spoke to the Corpus Christi procession: You poor blind, you are making the enormous idolatry, when you worship the wafer and you are praising it [...] Give the glory back to God who is in heaven, and stop the idolatry, neither don't bestow the divine glory on terrestrial things!<sup>[1]</sup> Franco was attacked and beaten by the crowd.<sup>[2]</sup> The royal preacher Piotr Skarga and the papal nuncio Simonetta participated in the procession, and witnessed Franco's action.

Franco was imprisoned. Samuel Piątkowicz became Franco's solicitor. During his trial Franco urged the bishop "to stop deceiving people, and ordering to bow before idols, but to deliver the pure word of God".<sup>[2]</sup> In order to avoid such propaganda, the bishop ordered to empty the courtroom of outsiders. Catholic officials accused Franco of a conspiracy to kill the Queen, the royal prince or the bishop. Even after torture Franco did not confess to such conspiracy.<sup>[3]</sup> Many Polish–Lithuanian Protestant noblemen stood up in Franco's defence, but Calvinist magnates Radziwiłł did not support him because of his low descent. The Franco's

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case was referred to the Pope, and Piotr Skarga personally interfered to obtain a death penalty

### **Nineteenth Century Stones**

**Che Kam Kong** was killed because of his belief in Christianity in China in 1871 in Poklo, Guangdong. He is regarded by some to be one of the first martyrs among Protestants in China. Che Kam Kong visited Hong Kong in 1865, and in 1866 became a Christian.

He proselytized extensively over the next five years, allegedly bringing about the conversion of over a hundred people in Poklo.

Town elders, concerned with this abandonment of tradition, warned Che to stop, yet he refused. He was kidnapped and tortured in 1871 in an attempt to force him to give up his beliefs.

He is said to have declared, "You may kill my body but you cannot destroy my soul".

He was taken outside the city gates and killed; his body was cut up and thrown into a nearby river.

**George N. Gordon** a Canadian missionary to the Pacific Islands was born to Scottish parents near Alberton, Prince Edward Island in Canada.

In 1848 he was converted to Christianity and began distributing Bibles and religious tracts. In 1850, he attended Presbyterian Theological Hall in West River, Nova Scotia. Gordon began his missionary work in

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Halifax City Mission where he would minister to the poor about the gospel of Christ.

He arrived on the coast of Erromango, an island near Vanuatu, in the Pacific Ocean, in June 1857 to evangelize among the natives. About forty natives of Erromango were converted to Christianity.

In March 1861 sandalwood traders intentionally exposed the natives to measles, and Gordon spent most of his time caring for them. Two children of one of the island's chiefs had died in his care, and the chief thought that he had put a spell on his children; he banded together a group of warriors and killed both George and his wife on May 20, 1861.

**Bernard Mizeki** an African Christian missionary and martyr was born in Inhambane, Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique).

In January 1891, Bernard accompanied the new missionary bishop of Mashonaland, George William Knight-Bruce, as a lay catechist among the Shona people in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). He was sent to work in the Marandellas (Marondero) district among the Nhowe people, and settled in the kraal of Mangwende Mungati. Bernard built his home there, and took people who wanted to learn into his home to teach them the gospel. In March 1896, Bernard married Mutwa (later 'Lily'), a granddaughter of the Mangwende and a Christian convert.

During the Matabeleland Rebellion, Bernard Mizeki was murdered outside of his home. While missionary

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workers were being ordered to safety, Bernard felt that his absent bishop's orders to stay could not be overruled.

On the night of 18 June 1896, he was dragged from his home and stabbed. Mutwa found him still alive and went for help. Before she could return, she and others reported seeing a great white light all over that place, and a loud noise "like many wings of great birds". Bernard's body was then found to have disappeared.

Mchemwa, a son of the Mangwende and an ally of the witch doctors, was later found to be responsible for Bernard's murder and the removal of his body, as well as the destruction of the mission settlement there.

**Robert Warren Stewart** born in March 1850 in Dublin, Ireland.

He first went to China spending his time training the native schoolmasters and catechists, and his wife was put in charge of a school to train native Bible women. Their educational work, however, was interrupted by the Wu-shih-shan Case of 1878, which resulted in the burning down of the Theological College and the expulsion of the English Mission from the city proper.

He suffered severely from dysentery in China. In 1891 he went home for a furlough and was redeployed by the C.M.S. Committee to accompany Eugene Stock on his Australian tour, after which he visited India and returned to China via Canada fully restored in the autumn of 1893

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On August 1, 1895, he was brutally murdered in Kucheng Hwasang by a sect known as the Vegetarians during the Kucheng Massacre, together with his wife and two children plus seven other missionaries.

### **Twentieth Century Stones**

**Bartolomé Blanco Márquez** was born 25 November 1914 in Pozoblanco, Córdoba Province, Spain. He was orphaned as a child, and raised by a family with whom he worked. He was an excellent student, studying under the tutelage of a Catholic religious order. He also served as a lay teacher of the gospel, and at 18 was elected youth secretary of Catholic Action in Pozoblanco.

On 18 August 1936, he was imprisoned while on military leave for refusing to be recruited in the government's armed forces against Franco's military rebellion of July; on September 24 he was moved to a prison in Jaen. There he was held with fifteen priests and other laymen; judged, condemned to death and shot on October 2, 1936, charged with refusing to serve in the army in time of war.

During his trial, he remained true to his faith and his religious convictions. He did not protest his death sentence and told the court that if he lived he would continue being an active Christian.

The letters he wrote on the eve of his death to his family and to his girlfriend Maruja show his profound faith.

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“May this be my last will: forgiveness, forgiveness, forgiveness; but indulgence, which I wish to be accompanied by doing them as much good as possible. Therefore, I ask you to avenge me with the vengeance of a Christian: returning much good to those that have tried to do me evil.”

According to documents supporting he went to the site of his execution barefooted, "in order to be more conformed to Christ."

He kissed his handcuffs, surprising the guards that cuffed him. He refused to be shot from behind.

“Whoever dies for Christ should do so facing forward and standing straight. Long live Christ the King!” he shouted as he fell to the ground under a shower of bullets

The list of those that would not conform to the image of a brick seems to be endless and the reader can find many listed at:

<http://20thcenturymartyrs.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.companysj.com/news/martyrs20.html>

What drove these people to resist the pressure to become a brick and that pressure turned them into precious stones. The twentieth century had its many precious stones as 45.5 million of the estimated 70 million Christians who have died for Christ did so in this century.

Manche Masemola a sixteen-year-old was killed by her own parents in 1928 for converting to Christianity.

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Esther John, a Presbyterian evangelist, was killed by a Muslim fanatic in Pakistan in 1960. Wang Zhiming, a pastor and evangelist, was killed in China in 1972 during the Cultural Revolution. Janani Luwum was assassinated in 1977 during the rule of Idi Amin of Uganda simply for being an Anglican archbishop.

Millions of Christians were killed by Communism. In China, estimates run as high as 50 million total lives lost, while the Soviet Union claimed another 25 million. The Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky said that Communism typically killed as many people in a day as the Inquisition killed in all the centuries of its existence.

In Rwanda 200 priests, sisters, bishops, seminarians, and laymen gave their lives for refusing to renounce the gospel and accede to the genocide.

Ri Hyon Ok was executed in June 2009 in North Korea for distributing bibles he and tens of thousands of Christians have been killed for their faith.

“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” ~Rev 6:9-11~

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**The Lord will “Judge” and “Avenge”** all those precious stones – “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a



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stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” ~ Matthew 25:31-46~

All of those recorded above would not conform to the spirit of the brick and many of them lost their physical lives as they would not conform. They were made from stones that came from deep within the earth and not as bricks that are made from surface material. Their voices will be heard for evermore.

“And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said unto all the people, **Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spoke unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.**” ~Joshua 24:25-27~

The Lord told the Pharisees that the very stones were prepared to give their testimony.

“I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” ~Luke. 19:40~

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Many throughout the ages have spoken out and have become lively precious stone. These last days will require many to do the same.

### Become a STONE

God's Love is revealed in John 3:16:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

God loves all mankind and it will make life full, complete, and abundant now and for eternity.

Man is Sinful in Romans 3:23:

*Since all have sinned and are falling short of the honor and glory which God bestows and receives.*

All are only human and no one is perfect. The truth is that all are separated from God because He is Holy.

Sin has a Penalty see Romans 6:23:

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

If one continues in sin, it will lead to spiritual death and separation from God forever. There is an alternative and that is to receive God's free gift of pardon from sin and then inherit life everlasting.

Christ paid the penalty the Apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in Romans 5:8

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*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

One does not have to live a 'good life' and do charitable acts before God will love them. He loves all even in their sins and He sent Christ to die in their place that they might be reconciled to Him.

Salvation is a free gift in Ephesians 2:8-9:

*For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

God's grace is free and one does not need to work for it. That Grace is his underserved favor and all one has to do is to receive the gift. If they believe with all their heart that Jesus Christ died for them then their sins will be forgiven.

Christ is at your hearts door.

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20)*

Not only did Christ die for all but he also wants to save the individual. Picture Jesus Christ standing at the door of your heart, which is your emotions, intellect, and will. If you will only invite Him in then He would come into your heart and life.

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We must receive Him - John 1:12:

*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

- If you will receive Christ into your heart:

- If you will pray to God then tell him that you trust His Son Jesus Christ:

- If you believe that Jesus died in your place and He paid the penalty for your sins:

You will become a born-again child of God.

If you will follow the following prayer, it will start you on a personal relationship with God through the Cross of Jesus Christ.

“The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ~Romans 10:8-10~

Invite Jesus Christ into your heart and pray the **Prayer of Commitment.**

***I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness.***

***I believe that Christ died in my place, paying the penalty for my sin:***

***I am willing to turn from my sin:***

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***I now invite Jesus Christ to come into my heart and life as my personal savior:***

***I am willing, by God's grace, to follow and obey Christ as the Lord of my life.***

My Personal Decision;

On the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, I  
\_\_\_\_\_received Jesus Christ as my personal  
Savior.

Angels are now rejoicing as he saw your name written down in the Lambs Book of Life in Heaven. His fellow Angels sang songs of rejoicing over the one sinner who had just came to repentance.

*And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whatsoever works an abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.* ~Revelation 21:27~

*Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.* ~Luke 15:10~

Now rejoice when you read what the Bible says in Romans 10:13.

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

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When you received Christ your sins were forgiven (Colossians 1:14); you became a Son of God (John 1:12); you were made heir to all of God's blessings (Romans 8:16-17); and you now possess everlasting life (John 3:16).

**Congratulations --**

**You are now a PRECIOUS STONE!!**

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