

Chapter 4 – Judah and the Emerald

Emerald is the fourth stone. **Emerald (5306)**: (nophek /no'-fek/) a bright or rich green gem (taken from Heb. word meaning to glisten or shine)¹. It is the fourth foundation stone of New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19).

Symbols in the stone

The color **green** symbolizes life.

Symbols in the order of the stone

Four is the number that refers to the world, the whole earth (e.g. the four corners of the earth in Rev. 7:1); it also represents the rulership of lights over the earth and the division of light from darkness (Gen. 1:14-19).

Observation: Saints are children of light and day (citizens of God's kingdom) and are spiritually divided from the children of darkness (unbelievers)(see Eph. 5:8; 1 Thes. 5:5). God's heavenly light shines in our hearts (2 Cor. 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:19) and just like the physical heavenly lights rule the earth, we will one day rule the earth with Christ (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:6).

Facts about Judah

- ▶ He was Jacob's fourth son.
- ▶ He was born to Leah, Jacob's less preferred wife.
- ▶ Leah named him Judah (praise) because she praised the Lord for showing her favor over Rachel (Gen. 29:31, 35).

Jacob's prophecy over Judah

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee." (Gen. 49:8)

This is the foretelling of Judah's reign over Israel. Reuben was removed from being the favored son to receive the birthright because he defiled his father's bed by sleeping with his father's concubine. This opened the door for Judah to prevail above his brothers (1 Chron. 5:2). He is blessed with power & strength over his enemies.

This prophecy can also be viewed as a parallel meaning, testifying to the fact all of God's children bow down to Jesus.

"Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: ..." (Gen. 49:9a)

Judah is like a young lion full of strength and prowess, easily able to overcome its prey.

¹ Strong, p. 79.

The term *gone up* (5927): (alah /aw-law'/) means to ascend, exalt, or excel.² As each prey is defeated, the lion (Judah) is strengthened and becomes more skillful, allowing him to excel to stalk larger prey.

This prophecy also refers to Christ. After Jesus died and descended to the lower parts of the earth, taking the keys of death and hell (his prey), he went up to heaven (Eph. 4:8-10).

“... he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?” (Gen. 49:9b)

The stooping and couching of a lion means that he has returned from devouring his prey. Having devoured the prey, it is time for him to rest and to be left alone. Anyone who stirs him up will regret having done so (see Num. 24:9). This refers to the fact that Judah and Jesus are conquerors who cannot be defeated, so stirring them up is futile. Through Christ, we inherit the ability to conquer our foes (Rom. 8:37).

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” (Gen. 49:10)

The *sceptre* (*scepter*) is “the official staff of a ruler, symbolizing his authority and power.”³ Judah was designated as ruler and lawgiver for Israel and would not cease to have someone to take the throne until the coming of Shiloh. Shiloh is a synonym for *shalom*, or peace, and refers to our Prince of Peace, Jesus.

From Judah came the chief ruler, Jesus Christ (1 Chron. 5:2; Mic 5:2; Matt. 2:6). The people of the world will eventually be gathered to him (see Rev. 21:24, 26).

“Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:” (Gen. 49:11)

A foal is an ass’s colt. They were young beasts of burden. The vine symbolizes fruitfulness, abundant blessings, and the Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 40:9-13; Ps. 128:2-4; Jn. 15). If we connect ourselves in humble submission to the Lord to do works for his glory (as his beasts of burden), especially in our youth, we will be fruitful both spiritually and naturally (cf. Lam. 3:27).

The wine is the joy of the Lord (Ps. 104:15) which gives strength to the saints (Neh. 8:10). When we render faithful service to God, we are rewarded with joy in abundance; our spiritual garments of righteousness are bathed in joy.

This prophecy may also refer to Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass’s colt, since he is figuratively referred to as the vine (John 15).

“His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.” (Gen. 49:12)

The literal meaning of this statement refers to a man’s eyes being red when he is drunk

² Ibid., p. 88.

³ Lockyer, p. 956.

with wine. Nevertheless, as saints we are not to be drunk with wine, but filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Symbolically, Judah is to be filled with the Spirit and controlled by him just as a drunken man is controlled by wine. As natural wine affects a man's natural eyes, so the spiritual wine of the Holy Spirit would affect Judah's spiritual eyes.

Milk symbolizes blessings, fruitfulness, abundance, and the word of God (Ex. 3:8; Is. 55:1; 1 Pet. 2:2). Judah would not only be filled with the Spirit, but filled with God's word.

Application: For me to have the same benefits as Judah, I must be filled with the Spirit and God's word.

Moses' prophecy over Judah

“And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.” (Deut. 33:7)

It was prophesied that the Lord would hear Judah's voice. This was fulfilled through the prayers of David, Solomon, other kings from Judah, and ultimately Jesus Christ.

Application: My desire should be for God to hear me, having the confidence that through his grace he will answer me.

Judah would be brought to his people in the sense that he would be accepted as ruler over them. Ultimately, it is a prophecy of the coming Messiah who would be brought to his people to save them.

His hands were sufficient for him, which reflects willingness to work, creativity, and strength. Whatever he put his hands on to accomplish, God would bless it, causing it to prosper. Through the righteous kings of Judah, there was deliverance from enemies because their hands were skillful in battle; they were creative in designing and building the temple through David & Solomon. The hands of Jesus were sufficient in performing miracles.

Application: We should pray that God, after hearing our voices, will make our hands sufficient in doing his will and in fulfilling our godly desires.

Application: Whatever we do, even if it's the same old routine and menial tasks, should be done to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31)

God would be a help to him from his enemies. The Lord preserved the righteous kings of Judah from all their enemies when evil rulers of surrounding nations rose up against them. Jesus displayed his power over enemies such as sin, hell, death, and devils in his life, death, and resurrection.

Application: God has given me help against the same enemies Jesus conquered.

Summary of ideas & characteristics represented by Judah and the emerald: We have new life in Christ; the gospel message is for the whole world; God's heavenly light shines in our hearts—hence, we are divided from spiritual darkness; people from all tongues and nations will become believers; we will one day reign with Christ; we live a life of praise to the Lord; joy

dwells in us; our lives bear good fruit and abundant blessings for God's glory; we are conquerors through Christ; saints are to be filled with the Spirit and the word; God hears our prayers; the Lord makes us sufficient for the works he calls us to do.