

Chapter 8 – Asher and the Agate

The eighth stone is **agate (7618)**: (shebuw /sheb-oo'/) from a root meaning *to flame* (prob. used to describe the sparkle of the gem); *flaming*.¹ It is a type of quartz that has fibers “with bands or patterns of various colors.”²

Symbols in the stone

This stone sparkles as if it were a flame of fire. Flames are symbolic of God’s power and presence (Ex. 3:2; Acts 2:3), his judgment against sin (Is. 66:15,16), and the purging of the Holy Spirit (Is. 4:4). Judgments of God would also include his insight into the intents of a person’s actions and their inward character (Rev. 2:18,23).

Diversity of colors symbolizes being highly favored (Gen. 37:3; 2 Sam. 13:18; Ezek. 17:3).

Symbols in the order of the stone

Eight is the number of circumcision (Gen. 17:12).

Application: Believers must have circumcised hearts (Rom. 2:29; Phi. 3:3; Col. 2:11) which means they at some point have godly sorrow for their sins that leads them to repentance.

Eight is also the number of cleansing and sanctification (Lev. 14:23; 2 Chron. 29:17; 1 Pet. 3:20,21).

Facts about Asher

- ▶ He was Jacob’s eighth son and the second from Zilpah, Leah’s maid.
- ▶ His name means “happy and blessed.”
- ▶ Leah was happy at his birth because the women would consider her blessed since she continued to have offspring through Zilpah.
- ▶ The tribe settled in the northernmost region of Israel between Naphtali and the Mediterranean Sea.

Jacob’s prophecy over Asher

¹ Strong, p. 111.

² Lockyer, p. 569.

“Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.” (Gen. 49:20)

Here are a couple of definitions to help us understand this verse:

- ▶ *fat* (8082): (shamen /shaw-mane’/) fig. rich, plenteous.³
- ▶ *dainties* (4574): (ma’adannah /mah-ad-an-naw’/) a delicacy or pleasure; delight.⁴

Asher was destined to be rich agriculturally so that a lot of food would come from that region. Unfortunately, they never conquered all of the heathens inhabiting their land, which led to them eventually losing control of it.

The men of Asher were known as “choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes.” (1 Chron. 7:40). They were always ready to defend Israel’s honor in battle (Jud. 6:35; 7:23; 1 Chron. 12:36). They yielded much delight to Israel with their agriculture and their warriors.

Application: Our happiness and blessedness comes from knowing the Lord has saved us from our sins. Consequently, his word becomes our spiritual food that he gives to us in abundance. As we read, study, meditate, and obey it, we become enriched spiritually (i.e. spiritually fat) in accordance with his love growing in our hearts not only on earth, but especially in heaven where our true riches are stored. This leads to us producing results as a royal priesthood for God that bring him great delight.

Moses’ prophecy over Asher

“And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.” (Deut. 33:24-25)

Asher would be blessed with having many descendants to pass down a godly heritage for following generations. The word *acceptable* has the idea of being a delight or a good pleasure. Therefore, this portion of the prophecy is directly tied to Jacob’s prophecy for Asher and, as previously mentioned, Asher was a delight to the nation of Israel.

Feet are symbolic of one’s lifestyle, or walk. The land of Asher was full of olive trees from which they got their oil. Oil is symbolic of God’s anointing, the presence of the Holy Ghost. Essentially, Moses encourages Asher to be covered by the Holy Spirit in his walk.

Shoes are symbolic of the manner in which one carries out his lifestyle. Iron and brass symbolize the persistence in exercising authority and power to carry out righteous judgment against ungodliness (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 19:15; Mic. 4:13; Rev. 2:18). Asher was to be known as a

³ Strong, p. 118.

⁴ Ibid., p. 69.

tribe whose manner was to use their God-given authority and power to carry out righteous judgment against evil. As I mentioned above, they did this in Jud. 6:35, 7:23, and 1 Chron. 12:36.

Asher's strength was destined to be as great as their days. As long as they would be in existence, they would always be strong.

Application: Believers should have joy in bringing up children if they can have them so they can raise up a godly heritage to affect the world. They must be open to having spiritual offspring as well by sharing the gospel. If someone believes through them they should help raise them to spiritual maturity by spiritual guidance.

Christians are to be a delight to other saints. We are to make sacrifices for the good of our brothers and sisters whether that sacrifice requires time, godly counsel, or material goods. When we sacrifice for them, it is to be done in a spirit of love.

Our lifestyle should reflect a mindset of seeking God's face and submitting to the direction of the Holy Spirit. We are partners with God in this walk. He has bought us with a price and we are not our own. The Lord is supposed to order our steps in whatever way pleases him. The manner in which we live under God's anointing is that we are prepared at all times to exercise the God-given authority and power to carry out God's judgment against ungodliness that rears its ugly head in our midst, whether we are in or out of church (2 Cor. 10:6). Of course, we must exercise this in our own lives first, judging ourselves so we are not judged by God (1 Cor. 11:31,32).

It is God's desire for us to have enough strength (spiritual and physical) to carry out what pleases him as long as we are here on earth. Therefore, "[l]et us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

Asher & the agate represent the following: Power of the Holy Spirit; the high favor of God; righteous judgment; cleansing; sanctification; happiness (joy); godly pleasure; delight (to the saints and in the Lord); valour; hunger for God's word; passing down a godly heritage; being led by God's Spirit; strength that endures.