

Precious Stones
1 Peter 2:4-8
September 6, 2026

Here we are again worshipping in the wild! What a great place to ponder again the splendor of God's creation that we might glorify its Creator. Today, we're going to do that by considering one of God's foundational creations. Say rocks. While there are many types of rocks we often take all of them for granite. :) Please open your Bibles to I Peter 2.

One day in June, we talked about rocks and minerals in Creation Camp and so some of this might be a repeat for our middle schoolers, but hopefully it will be meaningful to them as well. Rocks are one of the most basic components of Creation and one from which we all benefit in many ways. Chances are you probably have something on your person or very near your person that came from a rock or mineral, and chances are you probably already ate something this morning that had rocks or minerals in it. Think for a moment of different things we get from rocks and minerals or ways that we use them. Now tell the person beside you. If we had a pad, we could list them, but somebody count how many uses we come up with. Now shout some of them out.

Gravel, roadways,
Iron- steel—buildings, cars, Anything made of metal—braces,
gold, Jewelry, space, rings, necklaces, etc
silver- wiring, electronics, jewelry, etc
copper- pipes, wiring, roofing, coins
tin- rooves, containers,
diamonds, jewelry and industrial
Aluminum-cans, cars, airplanes, wiring, etc
Titanium- joints, space tech, golf clubs, Bike frames, Dental implants and crowns. Heart valves & stents. Surgical Tools:
Nickel
Building Materials—cinderblocks, dry wall, nails, hammers, rebar, concrete
Heat-coal, and electricity
Recreation-rock climbing
Glass
Coins
Paints
Art-Mt. Rushmore, Sculptures,
Landscaping
Quartz—watches, computers, etc.

Talc powder/ Make up
 Birthstones
 Flooring - tile and etc. Marble
 Fertilizers/Lime
 Cereals, anything else with added minerals and/or Salt,
 Gypsum-white bread, some cheeses, most toothpaste, ice cream. Wall board, etc.
 Bluestones – Stonehenge (that have musical abilities-ODB
 Collectors- many rockhounds- I've got a collection- Diane Pence-
 Tombstones

How many did you get? According to the Mineral Information Institute, it is estimated that in our lifetime, each of us will use 805 pounds of lead, 3600 pounds of aluminum, 28,000 pounds of salt (including road salt and table), and 32,800 pounds of iron, or 16.5 tons. (nails, cars, etc)

There are also many cultural connections to rocks. Can you think of the name of a place that uses the name of a rock or a mineral? Tell someone sitting beside you. Someone count as you shout out---

Flatrock church/rd	Boulder, CO	Stonewall Jackson,
Nickel Mines, PA	Rocky Top TN	Granite County
Goldvein, VA	Stonehenge	Pebble Creek
Tombstone, Ariz	Mine Mountain	Rock Creek Parkway
Rocktown	Stoney Creek	Silver City, NV
Seneca Rocks, WV	Graveltown Rd	Rocky- the boxer

Speaking of cultural impacts, here in Shenandoah County, iron production used to be a major industry as is obvious from furnaces such as Elizabeth, Van Buren, Boyer, Caroline, Liberty, Columbia, etc. Our rocks made the Shenandoah Valley the Silicon Valley of the 1800s. Today, our quarries like Carmeuse and Flatrock produce lime that is used for agriculture, plaster, asphalt, as well as steel, glass and paper production. Sadly, wars are raging today in Africa and elsewhere over rare earth minerals, precious stones, that are used for our cell phones, computers, and all other types of electronics. We also remember the war in Sierra Leone 20 and 30 years ago over blood diamonds. Some very precious stones.

In spite of man's greed, rocks are a very good gift from God, amen? Of all the things God made, rocks must be some of His favorites for He made tons of them :). There are over 5,000 different minerals which are the ingredients from which an infinite variety of rocks are made. How Great is our God! Rocks and stones are mentioned 462 times in the Bible not including gold, silver, or bronze. The very first mention is in Gen 4:22 where it tells us that that one of Cain's descendants, Tubal-Cain, forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. And although they aren't mentioned specifically in Genesis 1, God obviously laid rocks down when He created the earth.

Many more rock layers were laid down during the Great Flood, the evidence of which we can see driving through roadcuts where the rock layers bend, bow and even zigzag. This obviously happened when the rocks were still wet sediment before they dried out, because we know that rocks don't bend, they break. Many scientists tell us that rocks are millions of years old but they also told us it took that long for diamonds to form which can now be made in a matter of days. If man can do that, how long do think it might take God? And if He created Adam and Eve as adults, could He not also create an adult earth with adult rocks? How great is our God!!

In the Grand Canyon and at various places all around the world, you can see the Great Unconformity which is where rocks from the flood lay right on top of rocks from creation. Some scientists who don't believe the Bible's timeline say there are up to a billion years or more of rocks mysteriously missing. Mysteriously. It seems as though layers of rock were eroded away before the new ones were laid down. Oh, you mean like a great flood when trillions of cubic feet of sediment were laid down all over the earth in a very short time?

Besides Tubal Cain and his iron tools, besides Creation, can you think of some other examples of rocks and stones in the Bible. Tell someone. Shout them out.

- 10 commandments
- Boundary stones
- God brought water from a rock – twice. Fountains from the rocky mountains.
- They stoned Stephen and others- we're hoping not to get stoned today in **any** sense of the word.
- Most buildings- Solomon used white limestone to build the Temple that stood for 400 years. Houses, city walls (Jerusalem, Jericho, Lachish, Hazor, Megiddo, etc.)
- David killed Goliath with a smooth stone.
- Standing Stones used to celebrate important leaders, victories, or events Shechem
- Priestly ephod had 12 gemstones. Precious stones. And Urim and Thummim
- Jacob's pillow
- Jesus' tomb - The Rock came out of a rock!
- Many more

So we could choose many passages for today, but the most logical one comes from 1 Peter 2. If you are able, please stand as we read beginning in vs 4. As you come to him, the living Stone — rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 7 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," 8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message — which is also what they were destined for.

Say living Stone. Stones aren't alive so this is unusual! In my Bible, Stone is capitalized in this passage. I wonder who Peter is talking about? Say Jesus. You remember that Jesus changed Peter's name to rock. But Peter now realized that he was just a tiny pebble compared to the Monolith, The El Capitan, the Halfdome of Jesus Christ. Jesus is this Living Stone. He is the chosen and precious cornerstone. The cornerstone, of course, is the most important critical stone of a building. The walls depend upon it and if the cornerstone crumbles, so will the house built on top of it. But Peter is quoting Isaiah 28:16 where it says, "So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a **tested** stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed." A tested stone means it can withstand the weight of the church built upon Him. It has surpassed the Heavenly Engineer's load bearing specifications and is a **sure** foundation. Say sure. A solid foundation! He shall not be moved!

We sometimes sing that great old song, Rock of Ages. Jesus of course is that Rock which Isaiah also writes about in 26:4, where he says, "Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal." They say diamonds are forever, but one day they will burn. Jesus, however is the eternal Rock! The Rock Everlasting! Jesus is our Cornerstone, our Solid Rock, our Rock of Refuge. Psalms refers to God as our Rock 21 times. Why? Rocks are solid. Rocks endure. Rocks don't rot. Rocks aren't eaten by bugs. Termites break their teeth on them. Rocks don't readily burn. Rocks are dependable. Not like sand or wood or straw. And Jesus, you'll remember, told us that if we build our life on Him and His teachings, we will be like the wise man who built his house on the rock. Jesus, His teachings, God's Word are dependable. They are solid and sure! They will never wash away no matter how bad or high the floods get! He is our Rock!

Friends, we need a rock. Life is hard. My daughter's coworker lost her four month old baby this week for no apparent reason. A good friend of mine had their spouse leave them high and dry for another person. Jobs go south, friends betray. Cancer knocks. Tests loom. Floods come. We need a rock. Jesus didn't say if the floods come, He said WHEN! We need a solid rock. A sturdy and secure and eternal rock. And praise God we have one! His oath His covenant His blood, support me in the whelming flood! When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay!

Peter further describes this cornerstone as having been originally rejected by the builders, the masons, but later it was chosen as the capstone, the keystone, or the cornerstone. The most important stones in the whole structure! The Jews had a legend that those who built the temple had rejected a rock that was later chosen to go at the very pinnacle. This is referred to Psalm 118. Although the Jewish leaders who thought they were building God's Kingdom rejected Jesus, He became the Head of the corner, the most important part of the entire structure, and He still is! How can He be both

Cornerstone and Capstone? He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last! That's how!

But Peter also says those who trust and believe in Jesus, the Living Stone, become living stones themselves built into this great house of God! A great spiritual house, not a lifeless building, but a living organism elsewhere referred to as the Church! The Living Stone breathes life into His followers, who then also become living stones as parts of His living church! So not only is Jesus the Living Rock, He enables us to be stones in His church He is building, and as the Master Mason, He places each of us exactly where He wants us. We may fight against Him, but He will build His church! And the gates of hell will not prevail against her! When we resist Him, He may have to take His mason's hammer and chip away those parts of our will that oppose His. It is painful, but the Master builder has a Master Plan and in His Master's wisdom, He has a place for each of us.

There's one other part of this whole rock thing I don't want us to miss. Three times in this brief passage, Jesus is called a precious stone. Say precious. What comes to your mind when you hear precious stone? We usually think of diamonds, emeralds, rubies, or sapphires. They're called precious because they are worth lots of money. They are finely cut and highly polished and placed in gold settings for rings, earrings, necklaces, or even crowns. The CTF Pink Star diamond brought \$71.2 million when it was sold in 2017. Precious indeed. But the Cullinan Diamond, which is the largest rough gem-quality diamond ever found and weighing over 3,100 carats (almost 1½ lbs!), has an estimated value of over \$2 billion. I decided not to buy that for Nancy's engagement because it was just too gaudy. Some precious stones are considered so precious they are priceless. And yet, the precious Lord Jesus Christ far surpasses any and all of these.

In fact, Revelation 21 describes the city, the setting, built to house this most precious of Stones. It says in vs 19-20, "The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst." And those are just the foundations! Of course the streets are paved with purest gold! Yet all of that pales in comparison to the most valuable part of heaven. They are all precious stones for the most Precious Stone! The most exquisite Gem of all: Jesus Himself! Oh, how beautiful to see Him face to face! The most precious of any Stone! The most Solid Rock! The most enduring! The most dependable! The most useful! The most valuable! The most eternal! How great is our God?

Is He precious to You? Peter says that if we fail to recognize His value and preciousness, He becomes a stumbling stone to us, one that will cause our certain downfall if we reject Him. Is He precious to you? Or have you been rejecting Him? Do so no longer! Oh my friends, don't reject Him! I read this past Tuesday about a man who

discovered a rare 2.29 carat yellow diamond in the Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas. It was lying out in the open and he had mistaken it for worthless mica as apparently had many others also. It was rejected. Passed over. Unvalued. We don't know what it's worth yet, but it perfectly reminds us of Jesus. Rejected. Passed over. Unrecognized by many, but worth far more than any and all earthly diamonds and precious stones. Don't reject Him!

As we look around at God's creation and see everywhere rocks of all sizes shapes, may they remind us of the Most Precious Stone, the solid Rock and may we receive Him as our Rock of refuge and salvation, as our saving stone, and cherish Him above all else.

Prayer

During song of response, come up and get a rock to remind you of the Solid Rock!