

Precious Living Stones

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Today we will see how God has called us to be a special treasure - precious living stones that He is building into His new holy temple, and He expects us to also help build others into part of that temple too!

New King James Version	New Living Translation
<p>Malachi 3:1 NKJV - "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.</p> <p>Malachi 3:2 NKJV - "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap.</p> <p>Malachi 3:3 NKJV - He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.</p> <p>Malachi 3:4 NKJV - "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years.</p> <p>Malachi 3:5 NKJV - And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien--Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts.</p> <p>Malachi 3:6 NKJV - "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.</p> <p>Malachi 3:7 NKJV - Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the LORD of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'</p> <p>Malachi 3:8 NKJV - "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings.</p>	<p>Malachi 3:1 NLT - "Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.</p> <p>Malachi 3:2 NLT - "But who will be able to endure it when he comes? Who will be able to stand and face him when he appears? For he will be like a blazing fire that refines metal, or like a strong soap that bleaches clothes.</p> <p>Malachi 3:3 NLT - He will sit like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the LORD.</p> <p>Malachi 3:4 NLT - Then once more the LORD will accept the offerings brought to him by the people of Judah and Jerusalem, as he did in the past.</p> <p>Malachi 3:5 NLT - "At that time I will put you on trial. I am eager to witness against all sorcerers and adulterers and liars. I will speak against those who cheat employees of their wages, who oppress widows and orphans, or who deprive the foreigners living among you of justice, for these people do not fear me," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.</p> <p>Malachi 3:6 NLT - "I am the LORD, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed.</p> <p>Malachi 3:7 NLT - Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "But you ask, 'How can we return when we have never gone away?'</p> <p>Malachi 3:8 NLT - "Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! "But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?' "You have cheated me of the tithes and</p>

Malachi 3:9 NKJV - You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation.

Malachi 3:10 NKJV - Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And **try Me now in this,**" Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:11 NKJV - "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts;

Malachi 3:12 NKJV - "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:13 NKJV - "Your words have been harsh against Me," Says the LORD, "Yet you say, 'What have we spoken against You?'

Malachi 3:14 NKJV - You have said, 'It is useless to serve God; What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts?

Malachi 3:15 NKJV - So now we call the proud blessed, For those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free.' "

Malachi 3:16 NKJV - Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

Malachi 3:17 NKJV - "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "**On the day that I make them My jewels.** And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

Malachi 3:18 NKJV - Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.

offerings due to me.

Malachi 3:9 NLT - You are under a curse, **for your whole nation has been cheating me.**

Malachi 3:10 NLT - Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! **Try it! Put me to the test!**

Malachi 3:11 NLT - Your crops will be abundant, for I will guard them from insects and disease. Your grapes will not fall from the vine before they are ripe," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

Malachi 3:12 NLT - "Then all nations will call you blessed, for your land will be such a delight," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

Malachi 3:13 NLT - "You have said terrible things about me," says the LORD. "But you say, 'What do you mean? What have we said against you?'

Malachi 3:14 NLT - "**You have said, 'What's the use of serving God?'** What have we gained by obeying his commands or by trying to show the LORD of Heaven's Armies that we are sorry for our sins?

Malachi 3:15 NLT - From now on we will call the arrogant blessed. For those who do evil get rich, and those who dare God to punish them suffer no harm."

Malachi 3:16 NLT - Then those who feared the LORD spoke with each other, and the LORD listened to what they said. In his presence, a scroll of remembrance was written **to record the names of those who feared him and always thought about the honor of his name.**

Malachi 3:17 NLT - "They will be my people," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "On the day when I act in judgment, **they will be my own special treasure.** I will spare them as a father spares an obedient child.

Malachi 3:18 NLT - Then you will again see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not."

2 Timothy 3:1 NLT - You should know this, Timothy, *that in the last days there will be very difficult times.*

2 Timothy 3:2 NLT - **For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God,** disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred.

As we read in Malachi, they will not want to pay tithes or give offerings...

2 Timothy 3:3 NLT - They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good.

2 Timothy 3:4 NLT - They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God.

2 Timothy 3:5 NLT - They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

2 Timothy 3:6 NLT - They are the kind who work their way into people's homes and win the confidence of vulnerable women who are burdened with the guilt of sin and controlled by various desires.

2 Timothy 3:7 NLT - (Such women are forever following new teachings, but they are never able to understand the truth.)

2 Timothy 3:8 NLT - These teachers **oppose the truth** just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith.

2 Peter 2:12 NKJV - But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

2 Timothy 3:9 NLT - But they won't get away with this for long. Someday everyone will recognize what fools they are, just as with Jannes and Jambres.

We do NOT need to become obsessed with the evil and wrong in this world.. And be overcome or overwhelmed by it. GOD WILL DEAL WITH IT!

2 Peter 2:4 NKJV - For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

2 Peter 2:5 NKJV - and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;

2 Peter 2:6 NKJV - and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;

2 Peter 2:7 NKJV - and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked

2 Peter 2:8 NKJV - (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)--

2 Peter 2:9 NKJV - **then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,**

2 Peter 2:10 NKJV - and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

2 Peter 2:11 NKJV - whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

We need to beware and take heed that we don't become like them... We need to focus on cleaning up ourselves - with God's help - and using His Holy Spirit to become what He wants us to become!

2 Timothy 3:10 NLT - But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance.

Paul's purpose was to be in God's Kingdom and to share that positive HOPE with others so they, too, could be in it!

2 Timothy 3:11 NLT - You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra--but the Lord rescued me from all of it.

2 Timothy 3:12 NLT - Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:13 NLT - But evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived.

2 Timothy 3:14 NLT - **But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught.** You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you.

2 Timothy 3:15 NLT - You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:16 NLT - All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

2 Timothy 3:17 NLT - **God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.**

Yes, as in Malachi, we are God's special treasure!

Malachi 3:17 NKJV - "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "**On the day that I make them My jewels.** And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

Malachi 3:17 NLT - "They will be my people," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "On the day when I act in judgment, **they will be my own special treasure.** I will spare them as a father spares an obedient child.

1 Peter 2:4 NLT - You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor.

1 Peter 2:5 NLT - **And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests.** Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.

1 Peter 2:9 NLT - But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:10 NLT - "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy."

1 Peter 2:11 NLT - Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls.

1 Peter 2:12 NLT - Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

We are not just plain stones of granite or even marble.. We are beautiful gemstones:

[Exo 39:8-21](#)

Exodus 28:15 NLT - "Then, with great skill and care, make a chestpiece to be worn for seeking a decision from God. Make it to match the ephod, using finely woven linen embroidered with gold and with blue, purple, and scarlet thread.

Exodus 28:16 NLT - Make the chestpiece of a single piece of cloth folded to form a pouch nine inches square.

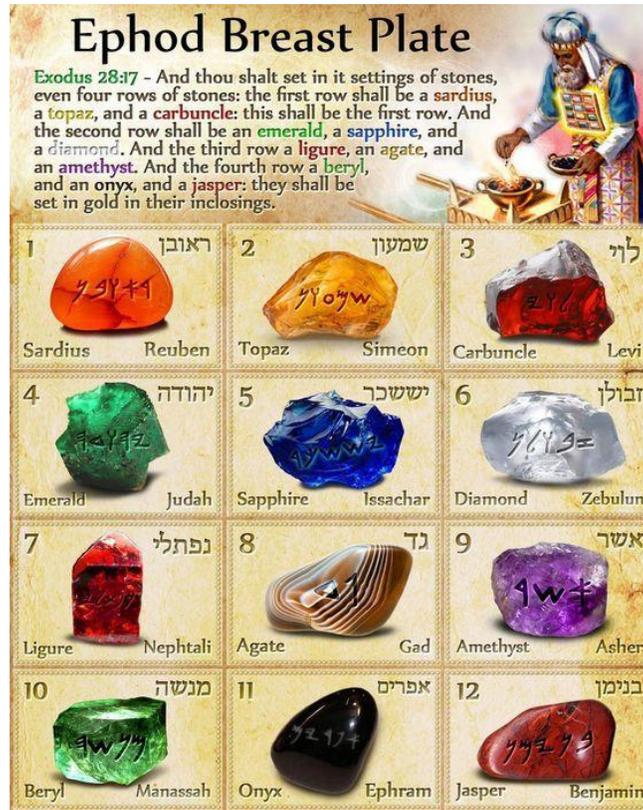
Exodus 28:17 NLT - Mount four rows of gemstones on it. The first row will contain a red carnelian, a pale-green peridot, and an emerald.

Exodus 28:18 NLT - The second row will contain a turquoise, a blue lapis lazuli, and a white moonstone.

Exodus 28:19 NLT - The third row will contain an orange jacinth, an agate, and a purple amethyst.

Exodus 28:20 NLT - The fourth row will contain a blue-green beryl, an onyx, and a green jasper. All these stones will be set in gold filigree.

Exodus 28:21 NLT - Each stone will represent one of the twelve sons of Israel, and the name of that tribe will be engraved on it like a seal.



From <https://mastershouse.org/the-bible/exodus/day-78-the-weight-of-a-ministry>

We are not in this alone, we are to be building each other up and those God calls, helping others to also be part of His family, His special jewels!

1 Thessalonians 5:11 KJV - Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and **edify one another**, even as also ye do.

Romans 14:19 KJV - Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith **one may edify another**.

God gave them His spirit to help them do the work. He has given it to us also!

Exodus 35:10 NLT - "Come, all of you who are gifted craftsmen. Construct everything that the LORD has commanded:

Exodus 35:11 NLT - the Tabernacle and its sacred tent, its covering, clasps, frames, crossbars, posts, and bases;

Exodus 35:12 NLT - the Ark and its carrying poles; the Ark's cover--the place of atonement; the inner curtain to shield the Ark;

Exodus 35:13 NLT - the table, its carrying poles, and all its utensils; the Bread of the Presence;

Exodus 35:14 NLT - for light, the lampstand, its accessories, the lamp cups, and the olive oil for lighting;

Exodus 35:15 NLT - the incense altar and its carrying poles; the anointing oil and fragrant incense; the curtain for the entrance of the Tabernacle;

Exodus 35:16 NLT - the altar of burnt offering; the bronze grating of the altar and its carrying poles and utensils; the washbasin with its stand;

Exodus 35:17 NLT - the curtains for the walls of the courtyard; the posts and their bases; the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard;

Exodus 35:18 NLT - the tent pegs of the Tabernacle and courtyard and their ropes;
Exodus 35:19 NLT - the beautifully stitched garments for the priests to wear while ministering in the Holy Place--the sacred garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments for his sons to wear as they minister as priests."

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Exodus 35:29 NLT - So the people of Israel--every man and woman who was eager to help in the work the LORD had given them through Moses--brought their gifts and gave them freely to the LORD.

Exodus 35:30 NLT - Then Moses told the people of Israel, "The LORD has specifically chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

Exodus 35:31 NLT - The LORD has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts.

Exodus 35:32 NLT - He is a master craftsman, expert in working with gold, silver, and bronze.

Exodus 35:33 NLT - He is skilled in engraving and mounting gemstones and in carving wood. He is a master at every craft.

Exodus 35:34 NLT - And the LORD has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach their skills to others.

Exodus 35:35 NLT - The LORD has given them special skills as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet thread on fine linen cloth, and weavers. They excel as craftsmen and as designers.

It is not easy work.. And to be covered with even beautiful stones takes strength. Even the Saint Edwards Coronation crown weighs 4.9 pounds!

2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT - The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. What a fool you have been! From now on you will be at war."

Isaiah 35:3 NLT - With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands, and encourage those who have weak knees.

Isaiah 41:10 NLT - Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

2 Corinthians 13:10 NLT - I am writing this to you before I come, hoping that I won't need to deal severely with you when I do come. For I want to use the authority the Lord has given me to strengthen you, not to tear you down.

1 Thessalonians 3:2 NLT - and we sent Timothy to visit you. He is our brother and God's co-worker in proclaiming the Good News of Christ. We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith,

2 Thessalonians 3:3 NLT - But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.

Hebrews 12:12 NLT - So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees.

1 Peter 5:10 NLT - In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.

Philippians 4:11 NKJV - Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

Philippians 4:12 NKJV - I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Philippians 4:13 NKJV - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Conclusion:

Let's be diligent to do the work - sharing God's amazing gospel and building up, and edifying those He calls at this time!

John 4:34 NKJV - Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

1 Corinthians 16:10 NKJV - And if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.

Hebrews 6:10 NLT - For God is not unjust. He will not forget how hard you have worked for him and how you have shown your love to him by caring for other believers, as you still do.

Hebrews 6:11 NLT - Our great desire is that you will keep on loving others as long as life lasts, in order to make certain that what you hope for will come true.

Hebrews 6:12 NLT - Then you will not become spiritually dull and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God's promises because of their faith and endurance.