

Elder Vernon Johnson
Colors

White Stone

Rev. 2:17 "And will give him a white stone." While it is true that God's elect are sometimes represented by stones, such as the twelve stones in the breastplate of judgment of the High Priest and in the lively stones in 1 Pet. 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," yet this verse doesn't say that the Lord would make them stones, but rather that they would be given a "white stone." In olden times when an army was taken captive by its enemy, the enemy would have a bag of stones and the soldiers would draw stones to see if they were to live or to die. If the soldier drew a white stone, he would live, but if he drew a black stone he would die. White is the bible color of righteousness, whereas, black is the bible color for sin. Thus, the giving of the white stone indicates that the one who receives it would live, but the one who received the black stone would die. When the Lord's disciples overcome the obstacles to true discipleship, they live in continued fellowship and true worship with the Lord. Contrariwise, those who do not overcome die to the true fellowship and true worship of the Lord. Now we know that none of the elect will ever lose their eternal life, yet they can die to the fellowship of the Lord:

1. Luke 15:24 "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

2. Luke 15:32 "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

3. 1 Tim. 5:6 "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

"And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." There are examples in the scriptures of name changes:

1. Gen. 17:5 "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."

2. Gen. 17:15 "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be."

3. Gen. 32:28 "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

4. Is. 62:4 "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."

5. Acts 13:9 "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him."

6. John 1:42 "And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said,

Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."

A name is used in the scriptures to identify and describe the person it is given to. With each of the name changes above, there was also a change in the individual or group to which it was given. When a person overcomes, a change takes place in his life and he is a changed person as a result. Mk. 8:35 "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Saul was a good illustration of this principle. He was a product of Judaism and he prospered in the Jews religion to the extent that he was the greatest persecutor of the Lord's church up until the day he was struck down on the road to Damascus. Afterwards he was a changed man. He lost his former life to live for Christ's sake and the gospel. When a person overcomes and presses into the kingdom of heaven, he likewise has a change of life, losing his former life, and living his new life in the kingdom of God. While we may not undergo a literal name change, yet we are changed and have a new name that only the one who receives it knows.