White Stone or Black Stone
December 2nd, 2011

“To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” Rev 2:17

Will you be given a white stone? Or, a black stone?

When Aaron cast lots upon two goats as recorded in Leviticus 16, according to tradition the objects used to determine the outcome was a white stone and a black stone. On the white stone there was written "For the Lord". If the white stone was chosen, the goat was sacrificed as a sin offering. If the black stone was chosen, the goat was presented live before the Lord to make an atonement upon it. On the black stone, the words "For Azazel" were written which was the goat to be sent away or banished. Then, that goat carried the sins out into the wilderness.

The two stones, placed in a container were shaken, then the high priest would reach in and pick one stone. Interestingly, for two hundred years before 30 A.D., this same procedure was performed by the high priest. The results always varied from black to white stones being chosen.

Beginning with the Day of Atonement in 30 A.D., which is the year Jesus died and was resurrected, the black stone only appeared in the right hand of the priest. It continued that way for 39 years. Why did the black stone only appear for 40 years? Is it possible this was a sign of God's displeasure with the House of Judah and a warning for them to repent? 40 years later, in 70 A.D., the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed by the Roman Empire.

A Roman custom used in their court system was a white stone and a black stone. If the prisoner received a white stone, he was found "not guilty". If he received a black stone, he was found "guilty". Either way, he knew his judgment.
A white stone was also given to one who returned from war after experiencing great victories. It was his medal of honor.

Kings gave a white stone to those he had chosen to become a citizen in his country.

For the overcomer who is finally returning home from war and having won many great victories, God will give a white stone. For those who were guilty of sin, deserving nothing less than death, once they confess their sins and sinned no more, God will forgive and give them a white stone ... "For the Lord." New citizenship will be granted into that Holy city of God to those whose sins are forgiven.

What choice will you make today? Will you continue on in your ways or will you choose God's way? Will you admit you need a Savior, believe in Jesus Christ and Him risen, and confess your sins?

There was a stone in Jesus day that some of the people rejected. They willingly chose to throw way the white stone and hold on to the black stone. They willingly chose to carry their guilt instead of being acquitted and forgiven of great sin. They rejected Jesus.

Which stone will you chose today? Will you too continue to reject the only God who truly loves you? It can change, you know. Change today. Then, when you finally return from this great battle, victorious, God will give you a white stone, saying ... NOT GUILTY!