

# Isaiah 54:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

## Analysis

**And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.** This verse continues the precious-stone building metaphor, detailing Jerusalem's glorious reconstruction. "Windows" (shimshoth, שִׁמְשׁוֹת) or "pinnacles" of "agates" (kadmah, כַּדְמוֹ, possibly rubies or crystals); "gates" (she'arayikh, שַׁעְרֵיךְ) of "carbuncles" (ekdash, אֶקְדָּשׁ, possibly garnets or glowing stones); "borders/boundaries" (gevul, גְּבוּל) of "pleasant stones" (avne chefets, אַבְנֵי חֶפֶץ, desirable/precious stones).

The accumulation of precious materials emphasizes lavishness beyond practical necessity—this is beauty for beauty's sake, glory for God's glory. Gates, typically functional defensive structures, become artistic masterpieces. The comprehensive scope—windows, gates, borders—indicates total transformation affecting every aspect. Nothing remains plain or common; everything becomes precious.

From a Reformed perspective, this prophesies the glorified church and New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:21 describes gates as individual pearls, walls as jasper, foundations as various precious stones. The transformation from afflicted, storm-tossed condition (v. 11) to bejeweled beauty illustrates glorification—believers transformed from sin-marred to glorified (1 Corinthians 15:42-43). The precious stones may symbolize diverse believers, each unique yet all beautiful, together forming God's dwelling place. This verse teaches that God's redemptive work produces beauty, not merely function.

## Historical Context

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The detailed description of precious stones parallels ancient Near Eastern descriptions of divine dwellings and royal palaces. The Egyptian Book of the Dead describes paradisiacal realms with precious materials. Mesopotamian ziggurat temples incorporated colored glazed bricks creating jewel-like appearance. Isaiah's vision transcends these, promising unprecedented glory.

Archaeological discoveries show ancient use of precious and semi-precious stones in royal and religious architecture—lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, carnelian from India, indicating extensive trade networks. Yet no earthly city matched Isaiah's vision. The prophecy's fulfillment began spiritually (the church as God's temple, Ephesians 2:21-22) and awaits physical consummation in New Jerusalem. Medieval cathedral-builders attempted to embody this vision through stained glass, mosaics, and precious materials, pointing toward eschatological fulfillment.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the vision of future beauty help you endure present 'plainness' or difficulty?
2. What does God transforming 'borders' (limits) into precious stones teach about redemption's scope?
3. How can the church reflect this beauty principle in worship and community life?

## Interlinear Text

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וְשִׁמְתִּי י	בְּדָכָד	שְׁמֹשֶׁת יָךְ	וְשַׁעַר יָךְ	לְאַבְנֵי	אֶקְדָּח ח
And I will make	of agates	thy windows	and thy gates	of carbuncles	H688
H7760	H3539	H8121	H8179	H68	
וְכָל	גְּבוּלֶיךָ	לְאַבְנֵי	נֶפֶץ:		
H3605	and all thy borders	of carbuncles	of pleasant		
	H1366	H68	H2656		

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