

Living Stones 2:4-8

2:4 – Jesus is referred to as a living stone; 5 – saints are referred to as living stones; 6 – again, Jesus is called a choice stone and a precious corner stone; 7 – the stone which was rejected became the cornerstone; 8 – it is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense for the unbeliever. Peter draws from three Old Testament records to set forth this information – Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118: 22; and Isaiah 8:14.

Jesus is the living stone, which is an obvious metaphor since stones are not living.

Matthew 21:23-45 (Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17) While addressing the chief priests and elders who questioned his authority, he baited them in parables to convict themselves and followed with the quote from Psalm 118:22.

Matthew 21:12 & 13 – On the day before the above verses, Jesus had entered the Temple and cleaned it out (note he called the Temple God’s house). Jesus pronounced their judgment and condemnation and perhaps the end of the old covenant. This confrontation seems to be a turning point when the religious leaders decided to kill him.

John 2:13-22 – Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple and alluded to himself as a Temple.

Isaiah 28:16 Alludes to a new Temple in Jerusalem

Matthew 23:37-24:2 Jesus tells of the destruction of the Temple.

Matthew 26:61 – The final false witnesses accused him regarding the destruction of the Temple; then, Caiaphas lost his mind.

2Chronicles 7:1-3 The glory of Yahweh FILLED the Temple. In the time of Ezekiel, the glory of Yahweh was taken away and never returned until the day of Pentecost after Jesus ascended into heaven. In Acts 2:1-4, the glory appeared again, but this time it was not upon the Temple rather on the apostles who were in the Temple.

Ephesians 2:19-22 The habitation of Yahweh today is not a stone Temple but the holy ones.

1Corinthians 3:10-15; Hebrews 3:2-6; Matthew 16:18 The Temple today is made up of Christ the foundation and the people – stones.

Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:19; and Colossians 1:18-20 As the glory of Yahweh filled the Temple today, He fills His new habitation, the church.

Acts 4: 5-12 – The words of Jesus or the holy spirit within made an indelible impression on Peter in that he repeated them here in Acts and later in 1Peter. Important to note is how this metaphor applies not only to Jesus but also to those who reject him. Peter’s use is very appropriate.

1Peter 2: 4

4 – “Coming to Him” hints that all saints now enjoy the great privilege, reserved only for priests in the Old Testament, of drawing near to God in worship.

The sentence contrasts the world’s estimate of Christ with God’s estimate, and warns the readers that while coming to Christ is to side with God, it will mean being opposed by men. “Precious” means highly valued or esteemed, an apt term to describe God’s evaluation of His Son.

5 – The Temple in Jerusalem was commonly called the house of God (almost 80 times in the Old Testament). Matthew 21:13; Mark 2:26; Luke 11:51; John2:14-22

1Timothy 3:15 - but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

We should think of ourselves as the Temple of God, the place of His dwelling. As a living stone of this glorious Temple, how do you want to present yourself? The beauty of this new and living Temple made of people should no longer be expensive gold and precious jewels, but the imperishable beauty of holiness and faith in Christians’ lives, qualities that much more effectively reflect the glory of God.

Exodus 19:5 & 6; Isaiah 61:6; Revelation 5:9 and 10 As priests today, saints offer not the animal sacrifices of the old covenant but spiritual sacrifices:

Romans 12:1 Your life

Philippians 4:15 Financial offerings

Hebrews 13:16 Praise

What we do is aimed at pleasing God. Spiritual sacrifices must be offered through Jesus Christ, for only through him are we qualified to be priests to God or to do anything pleasing in God's sight.

1Peter 2:6 Cornerstone

Job 38:3-6 The cornerstone is the foundation of a building.

Isaiah 19:13 – “The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly; The princes of Memphis are deluded; *Those who are* the cornerstone of her tribes Have led Egypt astray.”

Today, the meaning of “cornerstone” is different. Webster says: “Ceremonial building block, dated or otherwise inscribed, usually placed in an outer wall of a building to commemorate its dedication. Often the stone is hollowed out to contain newspapers, photographs, or other documents reflecting current customs, with a view to their historical use when the building is remodeled or demolished. Originally placed at a corner, the stone may today be placed elsewhere on the facade.”

Quote from Wayne Grudem's book Tyndale New Testament Commentaries

The dwelling place of God (2:5)

“The long history of God's dwelling place among his people finds New Testament fulfillment in the people of God themselves. The glory of God, the visible evidence of his presence among his people, had led the people out of Egypt as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21-22). God's glory had filled the tabernacle under Moses (Ex. 33:8-13; 40:34-38), and had later filled Solomon's temple (1Ki. 8:10-11). But it had departed from the temple, in the time of Ezekiel, because of the sins of the people (Ezk. 10:4, 18-19; 11:23). Of the temple built after the return

from exile God promised that ‘The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former’ (Hg. 2:9), but his glory had never descended to fill it as it had filled the temple under Solomon. The faithful in Israel then waited over 400 years for the fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy, ‘The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple’ (Mal. 3:1).

The fulfillment of his prophecy was witnessed by righteous Simeon and Anna when Mary and Joseph brought to the Jerusalem temple the infant Jesus (Lk. 2:22-38), the Saviour who was ‘the Messiah, the Lord’ (Lk. 2:11, NASB mg. and NIV mg.). His presence was the greater glory of that temple (Lk. 19:47-48), but he also brought its judgment and word of its destruction (Jn. 2:13-17; Lk. 21:5-6), for his own body was the greater and more perfect temple of God (Jn. 2:19-21), the one in whom ‘all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell’ (Col. 1:19). Thus, John could say of Jesus’ life, ‘The Word became flesh and dwelt [literally, ‘tented’ or ‘tabernacled’] among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father’ (Jn. 1:14). In the New Testament Jesus himself is the new and better temple of God, the dwelling place of God among men.

However, after Pentecost, the dwelling place of God is not only Jesus himself, but also his people. He promises to be ‘in the midst’ of them (Mt. 18:20), to be with them always (Mt. 28:20), and says that he himself, together with the Father and Holy Spirit, will dwell within his people (Jn. 14:17, 23). So now in the church age the people of God are the true temple of God, the place where God dwells.

When Christ returns and there are new heavens and a new earth, the temple of God will be the whole earth, for, shining forth from the throne of God in the new Jerusalem, the glory of God will fill the whole earth, and all the nations shall walk by the light of God’s glory (Rev. 21:11, 23-25; 22:5; Ps. 72:19). Then God will be King over all the earth (Zc. 14:9) and the whole earth shall come to worship before God (Is. 66:23). In anticipation of that great culmination of all history, the church even now is given the task of declaring God’s glory among all the nations (1 Pet. 1:9; cf. Ps. 96:13; 108:5; Mt. 5:14-16).”

7 – For those who do not believe Christ (as Psalm 118:22 and Isaiah 8:14 predicted), he is the very stone which the builders rejected a stone that will make men stumble and a rock that will make them fall. In Matthew 21: 42 and Acts 4

the builders were the Jewish leaders who rejected Christ, but now Peter includes all those who reject Christ.

8 – The clear connection between disbelief and disobedience

9 – Isaiah 43:20 and 21; Exodus 19:6

10 – Hosea 1:10

11 – Since we have been given such a high and holy calling, we should abstain from fleshly lusts that wage war against the soul.

12 – Peter refers to all unbelievers as Gentiles because he thinks of all believers as the true Israel.

Verses 11 and 12 form a brief prologue to the second half of the letter and in fact state in summary form what will be explained in detail in 2:13-5:11: saints living in an unbelieving society must avoid sinful desires and continually maintain exemplary patterns of life, so that unbelievers will be saved and God glorified. This is a major strategy for evangelism.

Living In Subjection to Governmental Authorities - 2:13-17

The principle of truth drawn from this section is to obey except when commanded to sin. This is the saint's responsibility toward all forms of rightful human authority, whether the individual Christian agrees with all the policies of the authority or not.

Questions for session 4

1. When did the glory of God fill the Temple _____? When did the glory of God leave the Temple? _____

2. Give a verse that supports that the Temple in Jerusalem was called the house of the Lord. _____

3. The habitation of Yahweh today is _____. Give the verse that supports this truth. _____

4. As a living stones of this glorious Temple, how do you want to present yourself to God?

5. As priests we should offer up holy sacrifices. Name three sacrifices you can offer and verses to support. _____

6. What is the correct biblical understanding of the word “cornerstone?”

7. What does the cornerstone represent to those who reject Christ?

8. Why should we be in subjection to government authority? _____

9. Should we try to overthrow the government if we do not like their policies?

10. Now that you are a priest, do you need to wear robes and funny hats?
