
Into Thy Word Bible Study in 1 Peter

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1 Peter 2: 4-10: The Chosen Stone!

General idea: The previous chapter gave us a litany of what Christ has passionately done for each of us as individuals. Now, Peter takes the argument of what our Lord has done for us to show how we are to be as a corporate collaboration of people in Him. The call is to come to Christ because He is the Living Stone, just as He called us to in Matthew 11:28-30. Here, we have an image of how our Lord is our *cornerstone* and how we as a Church should function, as we are all interlocked, plumed with purpose with our calls, gifts and abilities to one another all in Him (Eph. 4)! Christ is constructing a building of faith and eminence to be His Church made up of the stones of “us” laid upon the foundation of Him. Thus, our faith needs to grow from us personally and then move into our community, so we can interlock with one another, fastened by the mortar of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:19-22).

Peter tells of the incredible transition from the Temple and the priesthood to the Church—foretold, but still inconceivable to the Jewish mindset. Christ is our stone bridge and gives us continuity and purpose. Jesus is the Foundation, Pillar, and Purpose of the Church, and we, as His people, are the church. We are not cold stones that are stationary and which decay; rather, we are living and movable, cemented together as a corporate identity in Him.

Yet, as perfect and precious as our Living Stone is, people do not understand Him and therefore reject Him out of fear of conviction. His way gets in the way of their way (my way), because they want a warrior Messiah, not a Savior and Convictor of their souls. However, when we are in Him, we have no need to fear. He gives us the comfort, protection, and the deep love we need. We, too, are precious in God’s sight!

Our identification as a “corporate” church is not a building; rather, it is a relationship of community, where we are His priests! The entire sacrificial and priestly system, as God directed Moses to set up, is now obsolete. It has been replaced. Its purpose was to point to Christ and get people ready; now, He is here. He is the sacrifice, the Altar, and the Temple, and we are the priests (Ex. 19:1-9). The key is that we have to listen to His Word; we must relinquish our self-absorbed mindsets and focus on Christ as Lord over all.

Vs. 4-8: The Living Stone, our temple, is He who gives us grace and comfort and does not disappoint! How wonderful and comforting to be able to allow Him to be our haven of rest, our continual comfort. At the same time, a warning is given to those who reject the Living Stone. He still gives us His grace—until it is too late and we are called to account. Do not be the one who rejects the Living Stone! Allow your faith to

empower your obedience because obedience is what pleases God; disobedience, from a lack of faith, is detestable to Him!

- *Coming to Him.* This is an image from Isaiah 28:16, as we are chosen and precious in Him. Our call here is to continue to draw near to God! The key issue here is even though we are chosen, in order to be fully accepted, we must have *repented!* Our repentance is a result of our salvation; it comes after His saving grace. If repentance came first, our salvation would have been earned, and we can't earn it (Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 1:17; 3:31- 5:21; 10:14-17; 1 Cor. 1:18-2:16; 15:1-8; 2 Cor. 5:13-6:2; Gal. 2:15- 5:1; Phil. 3:4-14; Eph. 1:3-14; 2:8-9; 1 John 1:9)!
- *Living stone* means the foundation, the source of something, such as a building or a family (Psalm 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16). This means Jesus is the Spiritual Temple. He is the place and focus of worship. It is no longer a building; it is a community in relationship to Him. Jesus was a carpenter in His human occupation and perhaps frequently worked with stonemasons or did masonry, too. Peter picks up this image from the Gospels. Christ is the Stone, our Giver of life, our Source and Foundation for all we are and do (Matt. 21:42; John 1:4; 1 Cor. 3:1-3; 15:45)!
- *Living stones.* The plural refers to our union in Him. This means Christian community and fellowship is a "spiritual house," as we are all in Christ as one and we derive our life from Him. Our identity in Him must affect us personally and publicly, synergizing as a community (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 15:45) that is formed, indwelt, and empowered by the Spirit (Acts 2:33). We are all precious, important, and have a job to do as a moving, living temple, reflecting His love and holiness (John 2:19; Ro 12:1; 1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb 7:26; 10:10).
- *Chosen by God* means people belonging to God for a purpose. Just as Israel was set apart to be priests and missionaries to the world, we too are designated to reach the world (Gen. 12:1-3; Duet 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; 28:9; Isa 43:10, 20-21; 44:1-2; 61:6; Hos 1:6-10; Mal 3:17; Acts 2:11; Rom. 9:25-26; 10:19; Eph 1:4).
- *Spiritual House* refers to the O.T. Temple as God's dwelling place. Here, *house* is more than a building; it is also a legacy, a large family or dynasty such as the "House of Israel." Thus, the Church is God's dwelling place and legacy (2 Sam. 7:5-7, 12-16; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 3:6).
- *Holy priesthood* refers to Exodus 19:5-6. We, as Christians, are now a part of His Kingdom, representatives of Christ, His living Body on earth. Now, as believers, we hold the role of priests too, because we all have the same access to God that, prior to the Cross, only the priests had (Ex. 23:22; Isa. 61:6; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:20; Heb. 2:9; 13:15). Jesus Christ is our only Mediator; we do not need to go to another person—priest or rabbi—or object, but directly to God ourselves (John 14:6).

- *Spiritual sacrifices* means that Christ's work on the Cross—which is "spiritual"—replaces the "material" sacrifices of the O.T. because His sacrifice is complete for us (Psalm 51:16-17; Heb. 8:13; 10:9-18; 13:5; Rev. 8:3). This is called "propitiation." It means that Christ took our place in life and in death because we cannot be saved by our own actions. We cannot rely on our own efforts, skills, personal connections, family background, or our beliefs. Only Christ can wash us clean and declare us righteous, so we are saved from our sins (Eph. 2:8-9). God imputes His righteousness unto us by declaring us righteous because of what Christ has done (Rom. 3:21-26; 5:10-19; 10:3; 12:1). This declaration means we, as the elect, are free from our debt of sin. But, we as debtors are to be witnesses to the lost! We are to respond with our sacrifices of praise (Phil. 4:18; Heb 13:15-16).
- *Acceptable to God.* God accepts us by His sacrifice for our sins (Heb.13: 15-16)! Because of His work, we are complete in Him, we are deeply loved and accepted, and we do not need to have acceptance by any other person or means to be fulfilled (Col. 1:21-22; 2:13-15; James 1:4; 1 John 4:9-11)!
- *Behold I lay in Zion* is a quote from Isaiah 8:14; 28:16 and Psalm 118:22. Here, Christ is the true God and representative of us all. This is an image of how God delivered Israel from slavery to the Promised Land, and how He delivers us from sin, *from darkness to Light*. The same stone they worshiped is the stone they stumbled on because they refused to understand (Rom. 9:30-10:4).
- *Cornerstone.* This was a large stone laid at the foundation of a building to be a "footer," and to "plum" the rest of the building so it was square and secure. This was essential to the structure of the building. These buildings were laid by cut stones, interlocked by gravity and force, and without mortar, all relying and leaning on one another. Without proper stone placement, buildings in the ancient world would not last long or would fall during construction. (Psalm 118:22; Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20). *Chief cornerstone* means the chief, the head of the corner; for our Lord, it means He is our All in All—we can trust in Him (1 Cor. 15:20-28)!
- *Living stones...spiritual house.* Together, these refer to a living, sacred temple, empowered by God to worship God. Some Jewish sects saw themselves as living temples or a new temple, such as the Qumran community that produced the Dead Sea Scrolls. Our dependence must be on Christ, as He is the One who supports us, lifts us up, and houses us in His presence (Ex. 19:6; Mark 12:10-11).
- *Stumble*, meaning disobedient, refers to condemnation and Judgment, because a person is so "self willed" and prideful, he or she is not willing to acknowledge God as his or her Lord.

- *Were appointed* alludes to the total Divine Sovereignty of our Lord; He is in control. This also means we have the responsibility for our faith and actions (Rom. 9:14-24).

The rejection of the world did not diminish Christ and does not diminish those who are in Christ. Our glory and place are far greater than anyone who rejects Him could ever conceive of. Faith in Christ requires our efforts and yielding; such effort is hard for most, and impossible for the person who is self-absorbed and only sees him or her self and will *stumble*. We have to see Christ as our *Capstone* or all we see is what we want—things that fade and become meaningless.

Vs. 2:9-10: In order to do the work of God, we must be the people of God! As Christians, we are chosen by Him to be in Him as His possession in love. He called us out of our darkness into His Light by His mercy; He sets us apart to be holy participants in His Kingdom (Heb. 12:14). Thus, we are called to show this wonderful, incredible place we have in Him to others by our goodness, attitude, and deeds—and, if necessary, with words.

- *But you are* means we are destined, we have a purpose, and we have status before our Lord! This passage is almost a direct quotation from Exodus 19:6; referring to our sharing in God's Covenant, both as Jews and Gentiles. Our identity in Him must affect us personally and publicly, then synergize into a community (Gen. 12:1-3; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).
- *Proclaim*. Peter has already stated our election in Christ in the first verses of the first chapter. Now, he uses it to call us to service because of what Christ has done for us. Our call is to be a joyful, mature, obedient witness with love toward others.
- *Out of darkness* refers to God having redeemed us out of the darkness of sin into the Light of His presence (Isa. 60:21; 61:3; Jer. 13:11).
- *Who once were*. Peter again quotes the O.T.; here, it is Hosea 1:10, 2:23. This means how God reversed His verdict of Judgment upon Israel for their continual disobedience and gave them restoration and the promise of Christ (Isa. 19:24-25; 56:3-8; Hos. 1:6-9; Rom. 9:24-26).
- *The people of God* refers to Israel. Now, it refers to all those in Christ, no matter what their heritage is (Hos. 1:6-10; 2:1, 22-23; Rom. 9:25-26). It shows how God elected the Israelites, they rejected Him, God judged them, and then He restored them. It is all about God's gracious mercy that we do not deserve.

The Living Stone is defined as a dwelling! Dwellings need to be cared for, maintained, preserved, and, of course, used. His dwelling is where we can take rest and comfort out of the "weather" of life, and then regroup, recharge, and go

out into the world with His Word. The incredible news of this is we still remain in His dwelling. When we go out, we are still inside His presence and care! His Living Stone is also the *mobile* Stone; thus, wherever we go, we are still under His shelter and care, no matter where we are or what we face.

The context of this passage is also that of 1 Peter 1:1-12. The theme is that Omniscience and free will go together—beyond our comprehension. Spurgeon said it best: “they’re friends” (Psalm 139)! Here are some thoughts to consider: God knows all things and His understanding is totally comprehensive. All that is in the past, all in the present, and all to come in the future are complete in His knowledge. In addition, His foreknowledge is contingent and interconnected but not moved by all the freely done choices and actions of humanity. Thus, our actions cannot change or move God, and all that we think and do are in His providence. At the same time, His providence does not necessarily cause us to act or respond. We still do so out of our free will. Our free will is in conjunction and in the boundaries of God’s perfect, sovereign will and foreknowledge. Yes, this is a mind blower, but we are not God, nor do we have His omniscience and omnipotent thinking power!

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see [Inductive Bible Study](#)):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me? How am I encouraged and strengthened?
4. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
5. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
6. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
7. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
8. What can I model and teach? What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. If you had to build your own house, what materials would you use and what would you hope it would look like? What if you could “rebuild” your church (building and/or people); what would it look like?

2. Have you ever thought of the church as a corporate collaboration of people in Him? How so? Why not?
3. The Church is made up of stones of “us” laid upon the Foundation of Him. So, how is your church a reflection of this passage? How is your church a building of faith? How could your church be a better building of faith? What could your role be?
4. How is the faith of some Christians like “cold stones” that are stationary and that decay? What causes this? How can you guard yourself from this mindset?
5. How can the precepts of this passage help you become a more joyful, mature, obedient witness with love to others?
6. Why does your faith need to grow in you personally before it can move into your community? What would it mean for you to have a faith that is a “living stone?”
7. Why did people back then reject Jesus? What are the reasons today that people reject Him? How do we reject Him with our behaviors, attitudes, feelings...?
8. What does it mean to you that you are acceptable to God, deeply loved, and complete in Him? How can this mindset enhance who and how you are?
9. How do you feel that you are a priest, a representative of Christ? What can you do more with this call?
10. How can your faith and conviction be strengthened by knowing deeply that wherever you go, you are still under His shelter and care—no matter where you are or what you face?
11. How is Christ the Foundation of your church? What needs to take place so that people will fully realize this? What would your church look like if people did?
12. What can your church do to be more like this passage? For example, how can each person interlock with one another, fastened by the mortar of the Holy Spirit in a healthier way? What would your church look like if this were so? What needs to be done to make this so?