

Lesson 6, EPHESIANS 2:11-22

In chapter 2, Paul has made it clear that all of us were dead in our sins but were made alive through faith in Jesus Christ. This statement included the Jewish people as well as the Gentiles. Remember, “Gentiles” refers to those who are not part of the descendants of Abraham. In other words, they are pagan people who worshiped multiple gods and did not know the Living God of the Hebrews. It is all about grace. With grace comes the good works that God has already designed for each of us so that his kingdom may be built, and He is glorified.

1. Read verses 11-13. Paul calls us to remember where we have come from. List those privileges that the Jews had but the Gentiles did not. What are the details of these Hebrew covenants? See Genesis 17:3-8, Genesis 22:16-18 and Exodus 19:5-6.

2. In verse 14, we see that Gentiles now have access to the Living God through the blood of Christ. Why do you think it is the “blood” of Jesus and not his resurrection or another aspect of his life? See Exodus 24:8, Leviticus 17:11 and Hebrews 9:22.

The relationship between the Hebrews and their Gentile neighbors was one of hostility and suspicion. The ancient historian Josephus says there was in the court of the temple a wall or balustrade, breast high, having pillars at regular distances, with inscriptions on them in Greek and Latin, signifying that strangers were forbidden to approach any nearer to the altar for fear of death.

3. Read verses 14-18. How do these verses reflect what Jesus said in John 14:27? What changes for Jews and Gentiles alike according to these verses?

The Jewish Temple was an extraordinary edifice that was the centerpiece of Jewish life. It was the place where the Spirit of God dwelled with his people. This was accomplished only with an ongoing supply of blood offerings.

4. Read verses 19-22. Compare them to 1 Corinthians 3:9,16 and 1 Peter 2:4-10. Jesus quoted this same idea in Matthew 21:42-44. In the construction of buildings, what is the purpose of the chief cornerstone? How do you relate that to Jesus Christ and your life?

Application: The verses in this lesson speak of “remembering” and “peace”. Remembering your life before you knew the depth of the love of Jesus Christ, how have you now been given peace?

Prayer: Holy Father, we see your path of redemption from the time of Abraham and Moses to today through the blood of Jesus. Help each of us to remember the grace you have shown us through the years. Give us the peace which passes understanding so that during times of trouble we are deep within your arms of comfort and restoration. We ask this in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen.