



**Rocky About Rocks
Rocky, THE Stone and Living Stones
1 Peter 2:4-12**

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1 Peter 2:4–12

“And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by people, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I AM LAYING IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE, AND THE ONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.” This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for unbelievers, “A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF



CORNERSTONE,” and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this they were also appointed. But you are A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation.” (NASB 2020)

Simon Peter, literally, Rocky per the name Jesus gave him, uses stones as a metaphor to teach us, but he applies what was understood by the Jews to be pertaining to YAHWEH, and then he applies it to Jesus. He is discussing what the nature of the church is. We are being built into a “spiritual house” and Jesus is the cornerstone.

In the Bible, it is not unusual to see a metaphor introduced and then developed throughout the Bible. Many of them relate to the local geography of Israel and the experiences of the Jewish people. Many times, to really understand the text, we must take a step back and see the world as they saw it to really understand what is being said and what the metaphor is pointing to.

One of those metaphors we see in the Bible, and it takes some time to develop it, but it runs all the way through it, involves stones.

That makes sense because if you have ever been to Israel, it is a very rocky place.

In fact, Jesus engaged in word play with Simon when he changed his name to Cephas. That Aramaic word means rock. In the Greek, Πέτρος (petros), a stone or rock. I wonder if it led Peter to do a word study of the term. There is one more term as well which we will get to.

Matthew 16:16–18

“Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, **you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (ESV)

Peter makes rather extensive use of this here in 1 Peter 2 and some of it might have to do with this name, Peter, that Jesus gave him when they were at Caesarea Philippi. This all began as part of a Q and A Jesus was doing with His disciples there just in view of the headwaters of the Jordan River and the various pagan Temples to include the one to Pan which had the unique significance of, at that time, to still have the occasional volcanic steam eruption.

The location was deliberate, it was demon central, and Jesus was intentionally going onto Satan’s turf to clearly show He is the beginning of the end for Satan and the gods of the nations.

This chosen location for Jesus to fully display His power later in the week in the transfiguration, was in the north of Israel at the foot of Mount Hermon towards Dan on the south. Mount Hermon is the same mountain that the fallen angels descended to in Genesis 6 and began their reign of rape and terror leading ultimately to the flood.

The non-canonical book of Enoch tells us the location.



Enoch 6:1–6

“And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.’ And Semjâzâ, who was their leader, said unto them: ‘I fear ye will not indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin.’ And they all answered him and said: ‘Let us all swear an oath, and all bind ourselves by mutual imprecations not to abandon this plan but to do this thing.’ Then sware they all together and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. **And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it.**” (Charles and Oesterley 1917, Enoch 6:1-6)

This area became a popular location for their ungodly unholy offspring, we call them Nephilim. Their spirits, once their physical bodies were destroyed in the flood, wound up being referred to what we call demons and yes, the term was used by Jesus in Luke 11:18 implying Satan has authority over them.

The origin of demons in Jewish texts outside the Bible (such as 1 Enoch) is attributed to the events of Genesis 6:1–4. When a Nephilim was killed in these texts, its disembodied spirit was considered a demon. These demons then roamed the earth to harass humans. The New Testament does not explicitly embrace this belief, though there are traces of the notion, such as demon possession of humans (implying the effort to be re-embodied). (Heiser 2015, 325)

More than twenty temples have been surveyed on Mt. Hermon and its environs. This is an unprecedented number in comparison with other regions of the Phoenician coast. They appear to be the ancient cult sites of the Mt. Hermon population and represent the Canaanite/Phoenician concept of open-air cult centers dedicated, evidently, to the celestial gods. (Arav 1992, 159)

Jesus went to this location to have a power confrontation with the fallen ones.

Part of this is being done to get the fallen ones to “encourage” the Sanhedrin to execute Him, but the real intent is a display of His power to His disciples. One of the questions He asks is “Who do people say that I am?” Only Peter steps up and gives a direct answer of what he believes by answering “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” Jesus then responds to Peter.

Matthew 16:17–18

“And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (ESV)

And with that, Peter became Rocky, he did not become Pope Rocky I. “I would suggest there is also an important double entendre: the “rock” refers to the mountain location where Jesus makes the statement. When viewed from this perspective, Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, at “this rock” (this mountain—Mount Hermon). Why? This place was considered the “gates of hell,” the gateway to the realm of the dead, in Old Testament times.

The theological messaging couldn’t be more dramatic. Jesus says he will build his church—and the “gates of hell” will not prevail against it. We often think of this phrase as though God’s people are in a posture of having to bravely fend off Satan and his demons. This simply isn’t correct. Gates are defensive structures, not offensive weapons. The kingdom of God is the aggressor. Jesus begins at ground zero in the cosmic geography of both testaments to announce the great reversal. It is the gates of hell that are under assault—and they will not hold up against the Church. Hell will one day be Satan’s tomb. (Heiser 2015, 284-285)



As Peter continues his thoughts, he is picking up on the usage that Jesus introduced regarding the word normally used for stone, λίθον (lithon from lithos).

“Lithos is a noun meaning “stone” throughout its sixty occurrences. It is a dynamic equivalent for the Hebrew term ’eben. lithos is used both literally and metaphorically. Literal references to “stones” include those in Matt. 3:9; 27:60ff.; Mark 13:2; 2 Cor. 3:7. Precious stones are indicated in 1 Cor. 3:12; Rev. 4:3; 21:11. As ’eben is used metaphorically to refer to Yahweh, so lithos is used symbolically to refer to Christ.” (Stone 2005, 933)

Psalm 118:22–24

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (ESV)

Jesus quoted this Messianic psalm in Matthew 21.

When He does so, it is at the end of the Parable of the Landowner after talking about farmers who were to care for a leased vineyard and then give the owner his share of the profit. Servants were sent to collect, and they were beaten, stoned and killed. So, the landowner sends his son who they then kill. Jesus asked what should be done to those tenant farmers and the Pharisees said they should be eliminated. That is when Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22-23 to the Pharisees, equating them to those builders rejecting the cornerstone.

Matthew 21:42–44

“Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? For this reason I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed.”” (NET 2nd ed.)

Jesus understood what these verses taught and clearly communicated that He is “the stone rejected by the builders who was to become the capstone of all true religion. Those who receive the vineyard are the members of the church, composed of all believing Jews and Gentiles. We are members of that church today if we believe on Jesus.” (Boice 2005, 959)

Peter would first quote this in one of his defenses before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4:11 after he and John were arrested. Peter reinforces that it was the Sanhedrin who rejected Jesus the cornerstone.

Now he quotes from Psalms 118 again. With the name Jesus gave him, he most likely become well verse talking about Jesus with this metaphor. Here he also adds in text from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16.

Isaiah 8:14

“He will be as a sanctuary, **But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.**” (NKJV)

Isaiah 28:16

“Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, **I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily.**” (NKJV)

Peter is announcing to all what the character of this new life winds up doing. Jesus is the cornerstone; He is the beginning of the building we call the church. He is called a living stone and what is being described is the building up of His body the church.



We come to Him as to a living stone. The Greek word προσερχόμενοι (proserchomenoi) means “to move towards, of physical movement come/go to, approach...of approach to or entry into a deity’s presence.” (Arndt, et al. 2000, 878)

The use of this word shows us the privilege we now have that before was only for the priests. “All believers now enjoy the great privilege, reserved only for priests in the Old Testament, of ‘drawing near’ to God in worship.” (Grudem 1988, 103)

But there is no longer the requirement to be in a specific physical location. We simply come directly to Him.

The sense of the word used here, when coupled with “are being built up” conveys the sense that as we come to Christ, not once but continuously, He is the source of life, our source of life as well and is alive. We first come to Him in salvation, but then as we realize we are standing upon the foundation He supplies; we continue coming back to Him, being built up in Christ. This is not a once and done deal. He is alive and we are because of Him, so we continue to come to Him.

We come to Him and realize that He alone is the source of life (John 6:68).

When you come as a sinner and fall on that stone, you are broken. However, in your brokenness that stone becomes a foundation for you, and that is your salvation. However, if you reject that stone, you are not through with the stone. Daniel, in his vision, saw a “stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet” (see Dan. 2:34). That is the stone of judgment which will come to smite the earth. This stone symbolizes Christ. He also will be the stone of judgment to this earth. What a picture of the Lord Jesus is given to us here! (McGee 1997, 690)

We come to Him as to a living stone, one that the nation did indeed reject. He was here the first time to achieve the goals of the Father and provide for our salvation. And because He has done so, we, after we have come to Him, are now also living stones since we are part of that living organism known as the body of Christ, the Church. We have continuing fellowship with Him.

The world rejected Him, but God has chosen Him. If you have been rejected by the world and turned away, when you come to Christ, you are now His. You are valued by God, rejected by the world, but who really cares because we now are part of Christ.

Romans 8:31–39

“What, then, are we to say about these things? **If God is for us, who is against us?** He did not even spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. **How will he not also with him grant us everything? Who can bring an accusation against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies. Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died, but even more, has been raised; he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us. Who can separate us from the love of Christ?** Can affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: Because of you we are being put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep to be slaughtered. **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (CSB)

Insecurity abounds in the world today. But in Christ, we are being built up as a spiritual house. He is the one doing the building and you are now more secure in His love than anything else in the world.

In Christ, we are secure. The most secure structure of the day was one made of stone with a solid cornerstone providing a foundation that means the structure will remain solid and in place. As we are



being built up, one stone on top of another, we are not only a spiritual house, but we are in one in which lives a holy priesthood.

1 Peter 2:4–5

“And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by people, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (NASB 2020)

We are the priests being talked about here. You see, we not only make up the church, but we all serve in it as well. There is no such thing as going along for the ride Christianity. For us to operate fully as the body of Christ, that means all of the parts must function for ministry to take place. Paul talked about this in his letter to the church in Corinth. They had developed some idea that the only spiritual gifts worth having were those which were showy. As we operate together as the church, we are each exercising that gifting provided to us by the Holy Spirit and only when we ALL are serving, do we achieve the goal He has set out for us as His church.

1 Corinthians 12:4–26

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. **There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.** To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. **It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.** The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and **God has put each part just where he wants it.** How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.” In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.” (NLT)

We all have jobs in this priesthood. None of us are to be on the sidelines.

All believers are priests (cf. 1 Peter 2:9; Heb. 4:16; Rev. 1:6) and need no mediator other than Jesus Christ to approach God directly. Such priestly service requires holiness (cf. 1 Peter 1:16, 22). Praise to God and doing good to others are spiritual sacrifices that please Him (Heb. 13:15). (Raymer 1985, 845)

All of us, as living stones and priests, are also qualified to offer ourselves as “living sacrifices.”



Romans 12:1–2

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God’s mercy, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship.** Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (NRSVue)

What does a living sacrifice look like?

The first thing we must realize is so simple, but so neglected by many. A living sacrifice is something that we cannot do solo. It implies that we are an integral part of this spiritual house and serve the Lord and others through our life and daily sacrifice to Him. Sacrifice is in the context of the Body of Christ. It is imperative for us to be in fellowship with other believers; success in the Christian life depends on being with brothers and sisters. Lambo does not exist, we are sheep.

It is the practical outworking of presenting our bodies to Christ each moment of every day. It means a sacrificial use of our gifts to reach others and serve others.

We may be tempted to think that this kind of sacrifice is only for people like Paul or other full-time Christian workers who give themselves wholly to the work of the Lord. But the New Testament makes clear that no one can belong to Christ who does not give himself fully as a sacrifice to him. (Barclay 2018)

Why does Peter and Paul talk about this? Because they have the same issue every day that we have. When we come to Christ, we are saved, but because the sin nature does not die a natural death. We have issues.

The sin nature hangs on and clings to us trying to exert itself in all we do. We want to walk and do life in the Spirit. But have you noticed that everyday seems to be an ongoing struggle as we do battle with the world, the flesh and the devil.

As we are fellowshiping and allowing ourselves to be built up in Christ; implying others are ministering to us as we minister to them, we find ourselves beginning to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Here is the thing, they are acceptable, think a pleasing aroma to God. He sees His kids being faithful and obedient, and He is further pleased as we engage in this through worship of Jesus Christ.

Lots of times, we think that spiritual sacrifices are only involved in worship. This is not a limitation that Peter sees. Yes, it is offered up to God, but it can also be social conduct. Our faithfulness is reflected in all avenues of life.

Spiritual sacrifices include service to others, loving on others, crying with others, sharing Christ with others and even rebuking those who have sinned to restore them. Everyone immediately things “giving.” That is part of it, but not the whole story. You see, Jesus died on the cross for you and me, He gave everything, how can we not do the same?

1 Peter 2:6–8

“For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I AM LAYING IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE, AND THE ONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.” This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for unbelievers, “A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE,” and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this they were also appointed.” (NASB 2020)

There should be no doubt as to who our Chief Cornerstone is. Jesus is the foundation for the church.



When the church throws Jesus out, then the question has to be asked, what foundation are they building on? Peter reminds us that Jesus is the cornerstone. We build only on Him. He is the foundation stone of Isaiah 28 as well as the cornerstone of Psalm 118.

In verse 7, we learn that Jesus is also the chief stumbling stone as revealed in Isaiah 8. Those who reject Jesus, stumble over him. He becomes their rock of offense.

But for those who do not stumble over Him, we are provided four ways showing just how privileged we truly are.

1 Peter 2:9

“But you are A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;” (NASB 2020)

In contrast to those who have stumbled over Jesus and rejected Him. Those of us who are living stones being built up into a spiritual house are described as God’s people four ways.

If you have studied your Bible, these terms will sound familiar as they were used in connection with Israel. But this is in regards to the church.

Before getting into this, which is being presented to us by the Apostle to the Jewish and Gentile church, we need to remember, God is not done with His people the Jews. There is a form of Theology going around, it is called Replacement Theology. We do not hold to this.

When you hear or read someone stating the the church now has possession of all the promises that once belonged to Israel and all they have left are the curses, that person is teaching from the framework of replacement theology.

“Most forms of Replacement theology say that when the Jewish people failed to accept Yeshua as the Messiah, they forfeited all the blessings of the Old Covenant, and what remains to them as a people is only the curses.” (Stern 1988, 36-37)

Wrong. Oh, and Genesis 12:3 is still operative as well. From Paul.

Romans 11:25–29

“For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: **A partial hardening has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.** And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion; he will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” In regard to the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but in regard to election they are dearly loved for the sake of the fathers. **For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.**” (NET 2nd ed.)

When the rapture of the church takes place, the clock that has already ticked down 69 weeks of years, but has been on hold for 2,000 years, starts ticking again. It went to hold when Messiah was cut off, killed (Daniel 9:26).

When a peace treaty is cut between the Antichrist and Israel for seven years (Daniel 9:27), the clock begins ticking again. In the New Testament, there is a book, Revelation, that details much of the activity taking place once that treaty is signed. Jesus talked about an event 3 ½ years into the treaty period which He called the Abomination of Desolation (Daniel 9:27b, Matthew 24:15).



At a point in time, very soon, possibly today, the church is taken from the planet. This is called the rapture of the church. When that takes place, the church is no longer here but with Him just as He promised in John 13. It is at that point, the Lord goes back to dealing with His people, Israel. The clock has once again started and the 70th week begins. All the promises He made to Israel are still on the table.

Because of their rejection, they have opened the door to the mystery of the church. So called because it is not revealed as reality until He refers to it when renaming Peter (Matthew 16:18).

Israel had been chosen by God and promised to be a kingdom of priests. They still are chosen by God, but the realization of that is yet to come (Romans 11:1), and we see that in the Millennium they will indeed be a kingdom of priests, just review some of the detail Ezekiel reveals after chapter 40.

But we are told that the church is a chosen γένος (genos). There are three words that could have been used, ethnos (nation), laos (people) but here he uses genos, "a relatively small group with common ancestry, family, relatives." (Arndt, et al. 2000, 194)

"...when used more narrowly genos can also connote family or lineage, appropriate to those born from God (1 Pet. 1:3, 23)." (Keener 2021, 138)

We are chosen as part of His family, and we are also priests, it is who we are. Christians simply naturally worship and do so from anywhere proclaiming Him. We are a holy ethnos, a holy nation because of Jesus. As such we offer spiritual sacrifices. We are His own special people (laos), alluding to Isaiah 43:21.

Isaiah 43:21

"They are the people I made for myself, and they will sing my praises!" (GNB)

All four of these things are seen in this new family, this new nation of born-again believers joining together in holiness proclaiming His praises, showing forth the glory of God in His greatness, His wisdom, His justice, His love, His strength. We are truly imagers now of the King. These four privileges, chosen, royal priesthood with each one being a priest, royal heirs and holy members of God's kingdom, constituting a holy nation, not a national group, and we have the privilege of being beneficiaries of God's mercy.

1 Peter 2:9–10

"But you are A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY." (NASB 2020)

Before we came to Jesus, we too were in darkness, but He has called us out of that darkness of our life without Jesus into the light of what we see ourselves becoming as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit in each of us.

As believer priests, we are to live in such a way that the world looks on and knows we are no longer the same. We are not part of this planet anymore. We are not of this world, and it is obvious because first, we love each other. We were not part of His people, we were lost and groping around in the dark. But now, because of Jesus, we are being built up into a spiritual dwelling and are now the people of God. We are part of His family, adopted kids of the King and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. As we gather together, we are brothers and sisters, and this is foreign to the world. We are the fulfillment of the picture given by Hosea to the northern kingdom in Hosea 2:23.



Hosea 2:23

“Then I will plant her as my own in the land. I will have pity on ‘No Pity’ (Lo-Ruhamah). I will say to ‘Not My People’ (Lo-Ammi), ‘You are my people!’ And he will say, ‘You are my God!’ ” (NET 2nd ed.)

There, Hosea was speaking about the ultimate restoration of Israel and how this was reflective of the grace of God. Paul also used this picture from Hosea

Romans 9:25–26

“As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’ ” “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’ ” (ESV)

“God will not allow this broken relationship to remain so for ever; he looks forward to a day when those who at present are not his people will once more be his people, and when those who at present have no claim on his kindly feelings will once more be the objects of his compassion. What Paul does here is to take this promise, which referred to a situation within the frontiers of the chosen people, and extract from it a principle of divine action which in his day was reproducing itself on a world-wide scale. In large measure through Paul’s own apostolic ministry, great numbers of Gentiles, who had never been ‘the people of God’ and had no claim on his covenant mercy, were coming to be enrolled among his people and to be the recipients of his mercy. The scale of the divine action was far wider than in Hosea’s day, but the same pattern and principle were recognizable. Through the Gentile mission, in lands where the people of God had once been unrepresented, there were now many believers who were acknowledged as ‘sons of the living God’ (verse 26, quoted from Hos. 1:10). (Bruce 1985, 195)

As those who had been lost and not part of His people, His family, we have been shown the mercy of God and personally experienced His grace and now, we are the people of God having experienced His mercy and grace.

1 Peter 2:11–12

“Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation.” (NASB 2020)

As believers, followers of Jesus Christ, we are no longer of this planet. Our real home is now heaven, that is where our future lies, not on this lost planet. Our future lies in the service of the King. As foreign resident aliens here on this planet, we no longer should allow ourselves to be sucked in by what it has to offer.

Have you noticed, that when we live for Christ, we are rejected by the world. They do not want to see us even suggest what our life is like in Christ in the forum of public opinion. We are not entitled to an opinion since we have disavowed any and all allegiance to this planet. We should expect rejection.

Knowing that and expecting that, we are still called to honor Christ in all of our interactions with those in the world. You see, we will be slandered and accused of all sorts of things which should always be false. The problem, there are those who name the name of Jesus who do not act like it.

We are called to not be like the world in interactions with the world. By doing this, by reflecting a Biblical worldview and lifestyle to the world, it winds up being a sermon not in words, but in action.

Those who desire to slander and lie about you see how you reacted to them. You loved them rather than hated them. You didn’t retaliate, when you had every reason to do so. And now, they are trying to figure



you out. I spent several years working in Texas with another manager who did everything she could every day to get me fired. I never retaliated, but instead, helped her team and her on multiple occasions.

The day before she left the company, she sat down and went over a short outline of everything she had done to me and after the outline said, but you never retaliated. Why?

I was able to tell her why. I have no idea if she came to Christ, but she did know the truth. This is why Peter closes out his thoughts on this with this: "...they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:12b, NASB 2020)

They started off, just as you and I, in the dark and lost. But trying to figure you and me out, they could not understand why we do not act like them. And they see the clear signs of our foreign presence and ongoing foreign activity because we continue to gather and encourage each other. The Holy Spirit uses that and as they observe, they too come to a point in their life where God visits them, and a decision must be made. For Jesus, or not. Because of how you and I have chosen to live and not retaliate, they chose to glorify God, meaning, your actions were the gospel to them on two legs and they come to Jesus.

Where do you stand with Him?

Romans 3:21–24

"But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."" (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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