

2.21.21 ~ 1Peter 2:1-10, A People Who Have Received God's Mercy...

In the beginning, God came and visited Adam and Eve in the Garden; He walked and talked with them. However, after they sinned against Him, the intimate relationship that humankind had once known with God was over, and it would only be reconciled (Genesis 3:15) in the future, through God's One and Only Son.

Isaiah (700 B.C.) said God would again come to earth, this time He would come in the flesh of a baby boy, born to a virgin; He would be called "Immanuel" because He was God in human flesh, and He would be given the Hebrew name Yeshua, in Greek, Jesus [Deliverer or Savior], because He would save those who believe in Him, by dying for their sins, according to Scripture; then He would be buried, but on the third day He would come out of the tomb alive, according to Scripture; He would then show Himself to His followers for 40 days, after which He would ascend back to the right hand of the Father in heaven; who would send the Holy Spirit to indwell and seal everyone who believes in Jesus Christ, through a spiritual birth into God's eternal family, as children of God.

All this has happened just as God said it would, and the Bible tells us that God will again live among His people, but this final time He will bring all those who belong to Him to be where He is.

John 14:2-3, "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also."

1Thessalonians 4:15-17, "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."

Revelation 21:1-4, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is among men, and He will live among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.'"

What a magnificent future Christians have to look forward to: our eternal home will be with God. But until that day comes (at least 1007 earth days away) we have plenty to keep us busy here on earth, as God completes His Church by adding new

members to this spiritual body of which Christ is the Head. God will use every obedient believer to proclaim Jesus Christ, so others will be saved.

Read 1Peter 2:1-3... Notice (**verse 1**) "therefore," this is a transitional word that points us back to the content of the previous chapter, where we are told why we are to put "aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander."

See **1Peter 1:3**, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." **14-16**, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written: 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.' **22-23**, "Since you have purified your souls in obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brothers *and* sisters, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God." **25**, "'The word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word which was preached to you."

If you are born-again into God's family, you are not to live as you did when you (**Ephesians 2:1-3**), "were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

Peter says (**1Peter 2:2-3**), that we should "Long for the pure milk of the word." "Long for" is translated from an imperative Greek verb that means, "to desire" or "to crave." Newborn babies cry out for their mother's breast milk, and once they have tasted it, nothing else will satisfy them, because it alone contains all they need to grow and develop in those early months of their life; but it is not just the milk the baby long's for, it is the closeness, the flesh on flesh, the bonding during those times a baby is nursing from its mother's breast.

Those who have sampled the Lord's loving kindness, will continue to crave the sustenance and seek the fulfillment that only God's Word provides (**Psalms 19:10**), "They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb," (**Psalms 119:33-35**), "Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall observe it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law And keep it with all my heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it."

Back to **1Peter 2:4-8...** Jesus Christ (**John 14:6**) is the only way to, the only truth of, and the only life from, God; and although He is rejected by men, He is the only propitiatory sacrifice that is acceptable to God.

Why is that? Well, because He is (**John 1:29**), "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (**Revelation 1:8**), "The Alpha and the Omega," "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty," and (**Revelation 1:17-18**) "He is the first and the last, the living One who was dead but is alive forevermore."

The first part of **1Peter 2:7** tells us that those who believe in Christ consider Him to be precious; the last part of **1Peter 2:8** tells us that those who reject Christ, those who are offended by what God's Word says about Him, stumble to their own doom and are ultimately crushed [divinely judged] by this stone that they have rejected.

Jesus is the "cornerstone" [quoted from **Psalms 118:22**], lit. *Head of the corner, or Chief cornerstone*. The chief [head of the corner] or cornerstone [is the large foundation stone which supports every part of the structure, every stone in the building is oriented to it]; and that is exactly what [or Who] Jesus Christ is to God's kingdom, God's people, God's church; everything God is aligned to Him and rests upon Him, as the NT tells us:

In **Matthew 21:42**, Jesus said to the Jews, "Have you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone the builders rejected has become the Chief cornerstone.'"

In **Acts 4:11-12**, Peter said to the Jews, "He [Jesus] is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief corner stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Ephesians 2:19-22, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."

The Church [the Body of Christ] is God's dwelling place on earth; every believer is said to be a member of God's household, the church of God, the body of Christ. **1Corinthians 12:12**, "For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ." **14**, "For the body is not one member, but many." **18**, "But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." **20**, "But now there are many members, but one body." **27**, "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it."

God Himself selects, shapes, and sets every stone in the precise location He has determined, and so, the church of God is in a continual state of construction, and will be so, until Christ returns to get us; for every believer is a "living stone"

being added to the house of God. Every true believer is a member of this living spiritual body, of which (**Colossians 1:18**), “[Christ] is the head.”

Back to **1Peter 2:9-10**... We were chosen by God, called out of darkness into His glorious light, purchased by Christ's own shed blood, that we may proclaim God's message of love and hope, in this godless world.

Peter says here (**1Peter 2:9a**) that Christians are a *chosen race* (**Deuteronomy 7:6**), “For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”

Before the world was made God determined that, out of all the people on the earth, He would have a people of His very own who would love and honor Him and (**1Peter 2:9b**), they would be a *royal priesthood* because they believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, of whom (**Revelation 5:9-10**) proclaims, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth,” (**Revelation 20:6b**), “they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”

Peter says (**1Peter 2:9c**) Christians are a *holy nation*. What does that mean? *Holy [hagios]* means separate or set apart; *and nation [ethnos]* means people, specifying an ethnic group (a people with similar characteristics), not based on skin color, stature, or language, but on spiritual birth into a living hope, made effectual through the Holy Spirit, by believing in God's Son.

1Peter 2:9d says we are a people for God's own possession, we belong to God, He owns us, for we have been purchased by the shed blood of God's Son.

Titus 2:14 says, it is “Christ Jesus who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”

At the moment of genuine saving belief, the Holy Spirit indwells you, marking you (**Ephesians 1:13-14**), “after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in [Christ] with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.”

In the last part of **1Peter 2:9**, the sovereign reason for God's grace and favor is stated, so that, “you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

As representatives and witnesses of God's marvelous grace, our main purpose is to proclaim [to *make known that which is otherwise unknown*] the message of forgiveness for sins and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

1John 1:5-7, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Back to **1Peter 2:10**, where Peter concludes this section saying, "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." Wow! How quickly we forget that before repenting of our sins, believing in Christ, and following Him, we were without hope, doomed to an eternal hell.

Ephesians 2:1-7, "you were dead in your trespasses and sins... ..and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 5:8-10, "You were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord (for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth)."

We all deserve the penalty of death [eternal separation from God] because we are sinners, but God has granted us forgiveness and eternal life through His Son.

Jesus said (**Matthew 5:7**), "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy," (**Luke 6:36**), "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," (**Luke 6:38**), "For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

As a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people who have received God's mercy, being called out of darkness into God's marvelous Light, so that we might proclaim the message of Christ; as Christians, we, out of all the people on this earth, should be merciful toward others, just as God has been toward us, for we have received God's sovereign and eternal mercies through Jesus Christ: crucified, resurrected, and coming again.

Pastor Mike
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