

## **The Glory and Grace of God's House, and Its Precious Foundation Stone (Eph 2:19-21)**

*Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on June 26, 2011*

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*<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, **and are of God's household**, <sup>20</sup> having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone**, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a **holy temple in the Lord***

In the original language, the clear theme of this passage is "the house of God."<sup>1</sup>

Outline:

1. The Foundation of God's House (1:19-20)
2. The Formation of God's House (v. 21)
3. The Function of God's House (v. 22) – THESE LAST 2 FOR NEXT TIME

We're going to spend most of our time on the foundation, which is only appropriate because it's the vital part and start of any house. God's house in the NT sense begins at foundation-level, first story of the house (end of v. 19) that v. 20 says is *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets*. Who are they and in what sense are they the foundation? Officially the apostles were the 12 personally called and commissioned by Jesus, given signs and wonders, and who were eyewitnesses of the risen Christ. Their foundational role in the church is marked eternally in the New Jerusalem's foundation stones (Rev. 21). Paul was not one of the original 12 but he became an apostle in a special way by a special appearance of the resurrected Christ who called him as an apostle.

Who are these "prophets"? I believe this verse refers to NT prophets (compare 3:5, 4:10-11).<sup>2</sup> The prophets had ceased for over 400 years, even the rabbis of the time between OT and NT recognized this, but now God has given His final revelation in the NT of Christ, the church, in the complete Word. Before God's revelation was completed, prophets were the spokesmen for God. They had the gift of prophecy (supernaturally God-given revelation to tell forth God's truth and/or foretell future events). Apostles and prophets of NT received direct revelation from God and wrote down all we needed to know – how firm a foundation we saints of the Lord is laid for our faith in His excellent Word.

The NT church history book, the book of Acts is "The Acts of the Apostles" and the first description we read of the first church in Acts 2:42 is: "*they devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching.*" Hebrews 6:1 speaks of the "*foundation of repentance from dead works and faith toward God ...*" – that's what the Apostles taught: turn from your sins, repent of your own works which can never save you, and trust in the Lord. The NT prophets taught the same, beginning with John the Baptist (Matthew 3). Repentance, the gospel, is the foundation of our faith.

If you haven't repented yet, you're not a part of God's house yet. You're not in His family if you haven't repented and trusted Jesus, renouncing all self-reliance and self-righteousness. Repent of self and sin, take up your cross to follow Him as Lord, not trusting any work you do to save you, trust only His finished work on the cross. The hymn says, this firm foundation is "for you who for refuge to Jesus has fled." Flee the wrath to come, flee to Jesus alone in faith.

If you look at Ephesians 2:20, the foundation analogy continues to the cornerstone, or what could be translated “foundation stone.” It is Christ who is the foundation stone that every other part of the foundation and building depends upon. Paul as an Apostle did see himself in a sense laying a foundation in teaching, but he explained “*no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus*” (1 Cor 3:11). The apostle’s teaching *was Christ*. He is the foundational truth laid by the apostles and prophets in NT

So is the foundation Christ or the Word the apostles and prophets wrote? Christ *is the Word* (Jn 1:1). Scripture is *the word of Christ*. It’s just as accurate to say Jesus is our foundation as it is to say the NT or the Bible is. The NT is the teaching of Jesus applied, the bedrock of Christ the church was built on (Mt 16:18). He used Peter and the apostles to lay the foundation by preaching Christ. In v. 20 the Greek grammar is emphatic that Jesus *is HIMSELF the chief cornerstone*, i.e., Christ alone the church’s foundation-stone.<sup>3</sup>

I want to take some time to develop this theme of Christ as Stone in relation to God’s House. I love to study and see things in their redemptive-historic flow (i.e. how they fit in the plan of redemption God unfolds over time). I love to preach Christ as the point of all Scripture and I want to teach as Christ taught in Luke 24, showing how all things pertain to Him. So let’s take a ride together today that starts like some roller coasters do, giving you a view of a lot of territory as you climb to the top, then plunging to depths and heights. We may go a bit faster than usual and cover more ground than we usually do in a sermon, but I hope some of the high points of Scripture on this theme will thrill our hearts and make our spirits soar toward heaven. So put on your thinking caps, hold onto your Bibles, buckle up, and keep your feet inside at all times.

Let’s start in Genesis 28. Many of you know the story, Jacob/Israel is asleep in a field with a stone for a pillow, and in a dream he sees a ladder or staircase to heaven, angels going up and down, and the Lord stands above it and says He will give Israel and the Israelites this land and will bless all nations of the earth through them (v. 14)

<sup>17</sup> *He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! **This is none other than the house of God**, and this is the gate of heaven.”* <sup>18</sup> *So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took **the stone** that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top.* <sup>19</sup> *He called the name of that place Bethel [“house of God”] ...* <sup>22</sup> *This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God’s house ...*

This isn’t the first time one in Abraham’s family saw the Lord and chose a stone to dedicate a place of worship, a place where God’s glory from heaven came down to earth to meet with his people and promised to bless all peoples on earth through His house or altar.

- God first appeared to Abraham in the Promised Land in Shechem (Gen 12:7) and Abraham builds a stone altar to Him there, the first true place of worship ever erected in the Promised Land that God promised to give to him and his seed along with spiritual blessings not just for Abram’s household/family but for all families on earth.

- Abraham’s son Isaac also has God appear to him, re-affirming the promise, and Isaac also builds a stone altar for worship (26:24-25)

But the house of God would not be where man decides, not even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...not Bethel (Jacob), Beersheba (Isaac), or Shechem, later Sychar/Samaria (Abraham). It would not be their choice of stone or choice of place that would be *the house of God*.

God would reveal to later descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob where His house would be and the stone that God had chosen, that many of the Jews would reject and stumble over, but others would see as precious. Look at Genesis 49. Jacob would later realize the Lord didn't *need our stone*, The Lord *is our stone*.

In Genesis 49:24 Jacob describes God: "*But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel)*"

...

"Mighty One/God" is a familiar title of God/Messiah (Isaiah 9:6). "Shepherd" is also a familiar title of the LORD (Psalm 23) and of the Messiah Jesus (John 10, "I AM the Shepherd"). But of all the titles of God and Messiah in the OT that we're familiar with, the one most Christians are not as familiar with is "*the Stone*." The fact that Jesus is a stone and a certain kind of stone is actually referred to in the NT, I think more than just about every other title of the Messiah. Of all the images for Messiah, this is one of the most repeated, and one most of us are most unfamiliar with, so I want to spend some time on this "Stone" in relation to the Messiah.

The context of v. 1 if you look back there is a prophecy by Jacob to his sons of coming days. In v. 10, he prophesies about Judah's line: "*The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet [kings in his line], Until Shiloh comes [the King], And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*"<sup>11</sup> "*He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine ...*"

Shiloh is a title for the Messiah-King, from a Hebrew word related perhaps to *Shalom/peace*, also linked with Messiah in Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:5, etc. The ancient Jewish Talmud says *Shiloh* is a name for Messiah. The oldest Jewish commentary also takes it that way.<sup>4</sup> This ruler would one day have obedience from all peoples of earth and would one day "come" (deity attributes but feet on earth?).

Genesis 3:15 had already revealed a Messiah. The promises of the seed of Abraham (Gen. 12ff) also pointed ultimately to Messiah, the NT says. Before Jacob died, Israel the father of the 12 tribes, he had come to understand that the LORD he'd seen at the top of the ladder years earlier, He would one day actually descend all the way down to earth ... and this coming Lord wouldn't *need our stone*, the Lord would *be our stone*, as v. 24 calls Him, the mighty *Stone of Israel*.

One writer explains: 'God Himself, not Jacob, would select the Stone. God would also anoint His Stone [as Jacob tried to do the physical one. God] too, would set His Stone in His own designated house [not where Jacob said] – in the future, in the fullness of time – in the divinely ordained life and ministry of Jesus.'<sup>5</sup>

But where? Go back to Gen. 22, offering of Isaac. Father Abraham so loved God that Abraham gave his only begotten son of promise, Isaac, his own son as a sacrifice on a stone altar to please God.

Isaac must have been wondering “father, why have you forsaken me?” as his father who he had experienced nothing but love for till then is about to do the unthinkable, to give up his only begotten son, trusting God’s promise, provision and power to resurrect the dead.

God in v. 13, by grace through faith, allows instead a sheep as a substitute offering in the place of his son, and then v. 14 says this: *Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided*

It’s a vivid picture of Jesus, future son of Abraham, and His Father who so loved the world He provided His only Son as our sacrifice. Hebrew *Moriah*. That word appears only one other time in the OT. Years later, David would have a special appearance from God at this same location, and would say: “*This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar ... for Israel*” (1 Chron. 22:1). David would not build it, but he would begin the process for his son of promise.

‘God led David to the place, leading for three days as God had previously led Abraham for three days. Strategically, God led David to the exact place where He had led Abraham centuries before. Second Chronicles 3:1 uncovers a three-word goldmine: “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem *on Mount Moriah*, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place David had prepared ...”

Moriah – the place where God appears ... On Moriah: God will prepare (literally, “see”) for Himself a lamb (Gen. 22:8).

Abraham named the place “The LORD will provide.”

As it is said to this day, both proverbially and prophetically “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided” (Gen. 22:14).

Moriah ... where God will provide for Himself a lamb.

Moriah: the place where God will provide for us.

Moriah: the place where the Lord appeared to David (2 Chron. 3:1), becomes the Temple mount God chose to inhabit ...’<sup>6</sup>

Isaiah prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, but he also spoke of the temple that would be rebuilt with this massive stone as the foundation for His house, the temple, a literal stone with a spiritual significance, a stone the builders would inspect to accept or reject.

The house of God man destroyed ... God’s grace would rebuild:

Isaiah 28:16 “*thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am laying in Zion **a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed.** He who believes in it will not be disturbed.*”<sup>17</sup> “*I will make justice **the measuring line** And righteousness **the level** ...”*

Peter O’Brien explains that this text ‘reflected current building practice in which the laying of the cornerstone marked the beginning of the foundation (Jer. 51:26; Job 38:6). The builder could then use it to determine the “lie” or line of the building.’<sup>7</sup>

Job 38:5-6 “*Where were you when I laid the ... foundation? Who marked off its dimensions... Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone... NIV*

One scholar defines *cornerstone* as “the primary foundation-stone at the angle of structure by which the architect fixes a standard for the bearings of the walls and cross-walls throughout.’ In fact, in Isa 28:16 it is called a testing stone or literally “a stone of testing.” It is that stone by which every other stone in the foundation and the superstructure must be measured. Thus, the building of the new person, the church, must be in conformity to the cornerstone, Christ Jesus ... he is the one by which all things are measured. The cornerstone was the most important stone in the whole building. All other stones were to be in line with it. Christ himself is the living cornerstone and the apostles and the prophets who make up the rest of the foundation needed to be correctly aligned with Christ. All succeeding believers are built on that foundation, causing their lives to be measured with Christ.”<sup>8</sup>

Look at Isaiah 28:16 again in light of Christ as our cornerstone:

- “a stone, a tested stone” (the Messiah was tested in the wilderness, tempted by the devil: “command this *stone* to become bread,” and from the temple, Satan basically says “jump off, for it is written ‘you shall not strike your foot against a *stone*,” ... Christ tested, tempted in every way, and proves He is the stone, He is the bread, He is the King
- Isaiah also speaks of a “*costly cornerstone*”—King Solomon spared no expense when he designed the temple foundation

1 Kings 5:17 *the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with cut stones.’*

One greater than Solomon has come. Christ, the greater Son of David and greater Stone was cut, paying a greater price of costly sacrifice that heaven’s King commanded. 1 Cor. 10:4 calls Christ *the spiritual rock which followed* [Israel in wilderness]. Daniel 4 calls Messiah a stone, not made with hands of man, a stone that will put an end to man-made kingdoms in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, a stone establishing a kingdom that will never come to an end, the Messianic Kingdom of the Rock of Ages. Zechariah 3 describes the Stone in the temple as all-seeing and a stone that will atone for the sins of His people in one day.

The temple’s earthly stone and priest pictures a greater Stone and Priest, the Messiah! Zechariah 6:13 says of this Messiah: “**Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne ...**<sup>15</sup> *“Those who are far off* [Hebrew phrase for Gentiles, non-Jews, like in Eph 2] *will come and build the temple of the LORD.”*

But the temple was already built before Messiah came. What is he talking about? Another kind of temple, the temple of Eph 2:21 (also 1 Cor. 3, 2 Cor. 6, and other places), a new house of God that Jesus would build, including far off people like us, a spiritual building, a church, with Christ as cornerstone and foundation.

Now turn to Ps 118. At the high point of Israel’s annual worship at Passover, Jews from all over would travel to the Jerusalem temple and this Psalm was sung by faithful Jews as a Passover tradition. It may be that as they came into the temple gates with thanksgiving in their hearts and into His courts with praise, they sang esp. v. 19:

*Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the LORD.*<sup>20</sup> *This is the gate of the LORD; The righteous will enter through it ...*

...<sup>24</sup> ***This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.*** <sup>25</sup> ***O LORD, do save*** [this is the Hebrew word “Hosanna” that Jews shouted when Jesus came through the gates of the temple at the start of the week of Passover, riding on a donkey, a colt, through the gates of the temple while people shout v. 26]

...<sup>26</sup> ***Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD*** [i.e., the temple]. <sup>27</sup> ***The LORD is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.***

Jesus *had given them light*, as this verse says, but the Jewish leaders bound Him later in the week, on Passover he was bound by men and led as a lamb to the slaughter the very day physical lambs were also. He was bound as “the festival sacrifice” of v. 27, as the NT says, “Christ is our Passover.” Their cries “Hosanna” (save) may have been meant by many as “save us from the Romans,” but He did save *from sin* all who trusted in Him as the Lamb of God. This Stone of Israel had to be rejected first by her leaders to fulfill v. 22: *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.* <sup>23</sup> ***This is the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.***

Jesus, the stone of Israel, the cornerstone of a new house/building, comes riding into the NT, declaring He is the spiritual foundation-stone or bedrock that His new people and community are to trust in

- **Matt 7:24** “*Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock ... it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock [“on Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand ... Christ is made the sure foundation”]*
- **16:18** “*upon this rock [who He is, Christ, son of God] I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.*

In Matthew 21, Jesus comes through the gates of the temple, and they’re singing Psalm 118, “Hosanna in the highest”

<sup>12</sup> ***And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple*** ... [He comes into the temple to the tune of Psalm 118 and drives everyone out of the temple, as Mark explains, he cleaned house and says basically “not in *My house*”!]

The leaders in v. 15 were indignant about the “Hosanna” shouting, but if voices kept silent, even stones would cry out for the Stone.

...<sup>42</sup> ***Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’?”*** <sup>43</sup> ***“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.*** <sup>44</sup> ***“And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.”***

<sup>45</sup> ***When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them.***

<they might be stone-hearted, but they weren’t stupid!>

Now look at 23:38, His last words to Israel’s leaders in the temple:

<sup>38</sup> “Behold, **your house** [i.e., temple] *is being left to you desolate!* <sup>39</sup> “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me **until you say**, ‘*BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!*’ ” [i.e., truly say, in faith in Jesus; future Israel will see Him come again when they do]

Jesus won’t come to Jerusalem again “until” the day its people have faith in Messiah. God says of His sovereign grace in Zech. 12:10 “*I will pour out on the ... inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn...*” (before His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, they will look in faith, repent for crucifying the Messiah at His 1<sup>st</sup> coming... but in Mt 24 Israel rejects their Stone, and He rejects their temple)

**24:1** *Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.* <sup>2</sup> *And He said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”*

All those stones would be removed. Christ the Corner-Stone would remain spiritually. Christ leaves that temple and is done with that temple. It’s coming down, but Jesus is going to build a new temple as He promised in John 2: *He’ll rebuild it in 3 days, but He was talking about His body*, John’s gospel says. The body of Christ was going to be built as the new house of God – the imagery of Eph. 2, the building begun with his apostles and prophets, and including us

- Eph 2:15 “... *in one body, through the cross* ...”
- 2:20-21 says the church has “*Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone...to become a holy temple in the Lord.*” (NIV)

All the prophecy and imagery was coming to a head on that week.

Greg Harris writes that what Jesus said in Matt 23:39 was ‘the third time in three days that a section of Psalm 118 had been publicly quoted. Even more important, this was the third time that Peter and John had heard for themselves this Messianic psalm during Passion Week, as the drama unfolded before their eyes.

But this was not the last time ... Luke 22:8 records that Jesus selected Peter and John to prepare the Passover ... Taking the lamb to the Temple to be slain was the most critical element in the Passover preparation ... As the multitudes assembled for the sacrificing of the lambs, the massive Levitical choir sang [Psalm 118] ...the entire congregation repeated verses 25-26 after them:

*O LORD, do save* [“Hosanna”], *we beseech You ... Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD ...*

Peter and John also heard – and this time sang – Psalm 118 as they stood in the Temple court sacrificing their own Passover lamb ... This was the fourth time that Peter and John had heard Psalm 118 quoted that week, but there was one more ... After the meal, they sang Psalms 115-118, all done in accordance with the ancient prescribed order ... at their “last supper” before leaving the room (Matt. 26:30) ... Psalm 118:22-29 would be one of the last things verbally communicated before the unspeakable suffering of Christ ... [they] sing Psalm 118 – and leave the room for Gethsemane...’<sup>9</sup>

Now fast forward to Acts 4, where Peter who had Ps 118 ringing in his ears unforgettably from those events, wants to make sure the religious leaders of Israel have that passage ringing in their ears:

Acts 4:5 *On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;*<sup>6</sup> *and **Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas*** [same characters in Jesus' trial weeks before] ...<sup>7</sup> *When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?"* [instant replay of what they had asked Jesus during Passion Week, and Peter replies, look at v. 10] ...<sup>10</sup> *let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, **whom you crucified**, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health.*  
<sup>11</sup> ***"He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.*** <sup>12</sup> ***"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."***

Turn to 1 Peter 2 in closing. "Who do you say that I am?" Jesus asked Peter once and upon His correct confession of Christ's identity, Jesus said "... upon this rock I will build My church..."

Peter never forgot the Scriptures of the rock, the stone, Isa 28:16, esp. Ps 118 he heard sung when Jesus rode to the temple Sunday, and then the same Psalm quoted by Jesus to the Jewish leaders, and sung by the Levitical choir during Passover preparation, and while he and Peter sacrificed their lambs they repeated the words, and as they went out from the temple to their Passover supper they all sang those words with Jesus before He went out to be the Lamb of God who would make a new temple, a spiritual house, His church:

1 Pet 2:4 *coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,*<sup>5</sup> *you also, as living stones, **are being built up as a spiritual house*** ... [v. 6 quotes the "precious cornerstone" prophecy, v. 7 repeats Ps 118 that Peter knew well:]  
<sup>7</sup> *This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,"*

In the NKJV, v. 7 says "To you who believe, **He is precious.**" The OT adjective *costly cornerstone* is often translated *precious*, like Proverbs 3:15: "more precious than jewels, nothing you desire compares" – one modern song says "Lord, you are more precious than silver, Lord you are more costly than gold, Lord you are more beautiful than diamonds, nothing I desire compares with You."

*Precious* is used of God's attributes in Psalms: "how precious is your lovingkindness, O God" (36:7), or in one of my all-time favorites, 139:17 "how precious are your thoughts to me, O God" Lam 4:2 "precious sons of Zion, worth their weight in fine gold." In Zech. 11:13 the Lord uses this word for "that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." It means to prize, value, esteem. We are to prize Christ, value Christ, treasure Christ, esteem Christ as worthy, weighty, precious, priceless, incomparable, magnificent.

To believe in Christ truly is to find Him precious. Saving faith is not mere acknowledgment, it includes also affection, appreciation, adoration, attaching importance to. We all praise what we prize. Jesus said, “*where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*”

Christ is to be our costly stone, foundation, support of our hearts, our massive, magnificent, monumental, immovable Rock of Ages.

Christ is made the sure Foundation, Christ the Head and Cornerstone;  
Chosen of the Lord, **and precious**, Binding all the Church in one ...

Isaiah 8 said many would stumble over this stone, a stone that for some would be a sanctuary if they would believe and see beauty and value there, but many others would stumble and be offended. You can't get around this stone, it's too big to ignore. You either trip over it, or you trust it. You either disobey or delight in Christ. I hope this journey through the Word of Christ has made the work of Christ more precious, powerful, beautiful and wonderful to you.

Taste and see Him as good, as v. 3 says, see and savor Jesus Christ. Crave for His Words like v. 2 says. Come to Him as a living stone, like v. 4 says, as a precious cornerstone. May Jesus be always the foundation of this church and all we do. May He be the foundation for all your life, your stability, your strength, your solid rock, your immovable immutable refuge. End of v. 6 says “*He who believes in Him will not be disappointed.*” And Peter also says believers all have a part in the house Christ is building, and we are a part of the house ... that's all introduction to what we'll pick up on next time, our vital part in the building of God's new house and temple.

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek root for house (*oiko*) is repeated 5x in Greek text:

v. 19 “God's household” (adjective from root *oikos*)

v. 20 “built” (verb *oikodomeo* with prefix *epi*)

v. 21 “the whole building” (noun *oikodome*)

v. 22 “built together” (verb *oikodomeo* with prefix *sun/syn*)

“dwelling” (noun *oiketerion* with prefix *kata* = abode/home)

<sup>2</sup> Some have thought OT prophets, but:

1) the word order lists first the apostles Christ called and then the prophets (you would expect the reverse if he was speaking of prophets from thousands of years ago: “prophets then apostles”)

2) Eph 3:5 uses the same words a few verses later: *which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets* [clearly NT]...

3) 4:10-11 lists same words in same order and says it was after Christ's resurrection/ascension that He gave these (NT prophets)

<sup>3</sup> Some writers have suggested rather than foundation-stone the image is the capstone or stone at the very top corner of a building, but that's based on later writings than the NT, and is different than how the ancient Jews in Qumran and the rabbis understood this word's OT background. In this immediate context, the building is not yet completed for a stone at the top; Paul says it is still being built up higher (v. 21-22). Plus v. 20 is talking about the foundation first, before it talks about the rest of the building rising up from the foundation in v. 21-22. In parallel passages the cornerstone is described as what the people stumble over or trip over, which would have to be the stone on the ground, not the peak or pinnacle of the building where no one walks. Also, since before NT times and to this day, the stone under the temple is called “the Foundation Stone” (matching the imagery of v. 21). For more on that, see Greg Harris' book below.

<sup>4</sup> William Varner, *The Messiah*, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Greg Harris, *The Stone and the Glory: Lessons on the Temple and Presence of God*, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 40-41.

<sup>7</sup> Peter O'Brien, *Ephesians*, p. 219.

<sup>8</sup> Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, p. 407, citing W. Watkiss Lloyd, and Bengel.

<sup>9</sup> Harris, 113-16.