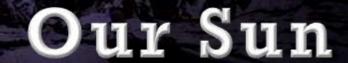


HIS Wonderful Light

Fearfully & wonderfully made
Genesis 1:16 on the 4th DAY
God made two great lights;
greater light to rule the day,
lesser light to rule the night:
He made the
STARS also





OUR Sun fuses about 600 millions tons of hydrogen into helium every second

Converting 4 million tons of matter into energy every second

Sun has enough to burn steady for several billion more years

Sun will increase in density over billions of years

Turning into Red Giant, eventually engulfing the orbits of Mercury, Venus, & Earth

1 Peter 2

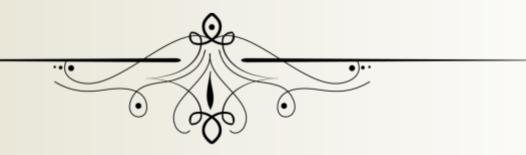
- 1-3 Spiritual Milk Mature ... to Grow Up
- 4-8 Spiritual House Living Stone, Holy Priesthood
- 9-10 Spiritual People CORNERSTONE of a

Chosen People,

Royal Priesthood,

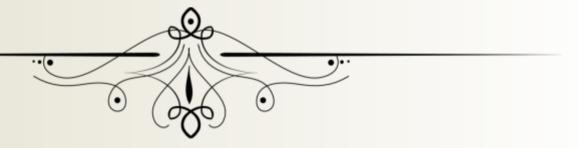
Holy Nation—

God's Special Possession

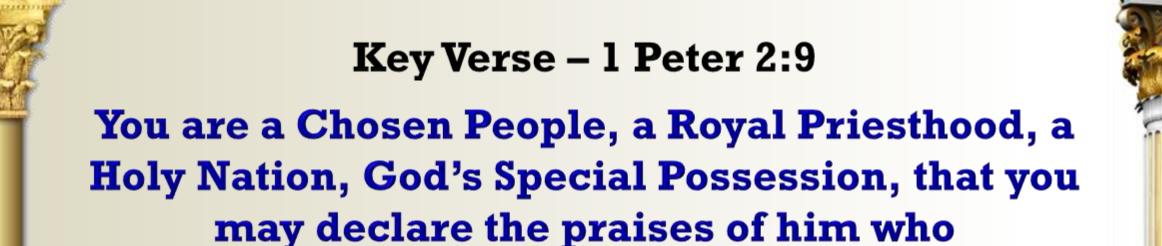


You are a Chosen People, a Royal Priesthood, a may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his

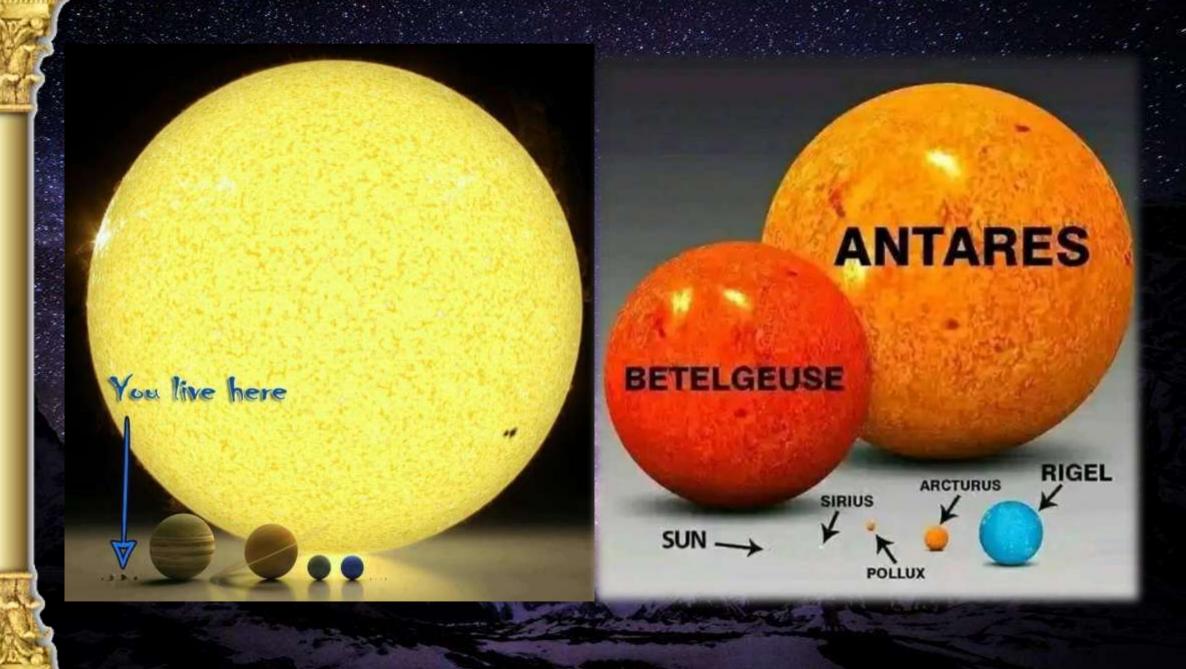
WONDERFUL LIGHT



"Chosen People"—pinnacle, even the top of the mountain that Peter takes us in 2:1-10









HIS Wonderful Light

- Meet the BOSS, Largest Structure in the Universe
- Wall of Galaxies 1 billion light years across
- BOSS = Baryon Oscillation Spectroscopic Survey
- International effort to map galaxies
- * 830 galaxies into 4 superclusters connected by filaments of hot gas
- 4.5 to 6.5 billion lightyears away
- BOSS is 2/3 bigger than previous record holder, Sloan Great Wall, discovered in 2003



ANTARES

He made the Stars ALSO

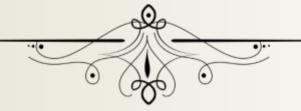
Please ... selah ... pause ... take a breadth
Sometimes, the most PROFOUND things are the MOST SIMPLE
Define Loyalty? ... Sure, but definition does compare to the

Experience of Loyalty

1 Peter 2:9's divine words MEAN more WITH Peter's back story

You are a CHOSEN People, a ROYAL Priesthood, a HOLY Nation, God's SPECIAL Possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his

WONDERFUL LIGHT





I Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk – Mature ... to Grow Up

- ¹ Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.
- "Therefore" based on chapter 1 ...
- 1:1-12, Based upon our Salvation, secured by God's power
 - ✓ based upon the Church that God foreknew ...
 - ✓ that was made possible by the Resurrection of Christ
 - a salvation inheritance when Christ returns
 - ✓ a Living Hope ... Therefore, upon that Hope
- 1:13-25, Based upon the our GIRDING up the Loins of our Mind Lacing up our Boots for Action
 - upon our **LOVING** one another **DEEPLY** from the **Heart**RID yourselves of ALL Malice, Deceit, Hypocrisy, Envy, Slander

I Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk – Mature ... to Grow Up

400 Miles

¹ Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

Other than Acts 1-12 & 15
on Peter & Acts 13-28 Paul
& Paul's letters prior to
A.D. 63 – we know LITTLE
on churches in Galatia & Asia Minor

Acts 12, Peter is freed from prison, goes to Caesarea c. A.D. 42

Acts 15, Peter at the Church Council in Jerusalem, A.D. 48

By c. A.D. 63, Peter writes from Rome, having travelled for 15 years with NO NEWS until 1 + 2 Peter

CYRENAICA

I Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk – Mature ... to Grow Up

¹ Therefore, RID yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

Rome

Two Perspectives: "RID yourselves" of

1. Former Pagan Lifestyle ... 2. Current Tendencies in A.D. 63

we know little of the A.D. 63 churches in Galatia & Asia Minor



Surely "malice, deceit, envy" are struggles in every age ...

More of a struggle

in some ERAS than in others



I have the PERFECT answer

Become a DOG!

While a bit funny ...

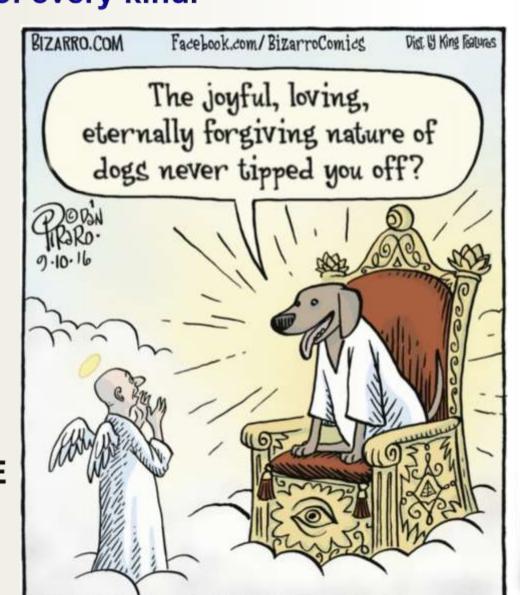
You've seen the Animal Kingdom Many animals act better than

MANY HUMANS

RID yourselves of ALL of MALICE etc., etc., etc., etc.,

You KNOW Peter could give MORE

ALL of us KNOW to do this



Proof – Henry – waiting patiently in the rain for a biscuit



Then, Henry after a biscuit



no envy, and totally devoid of slander.

Notice: Malice & Deceit, singular other 3 are PLURAL

Oh ... the world MARKETS these well

Malice—ill will, desire to harm others
... the stuff of too many movies

Deceit—CIA specializes in it, companies base marketing on it

Hypocrisies—who is inoculated against?

Envies—Sales count on it

Slanders—like gossip, daily news,

comedians make millions!

Millions & millions off of ALL of these



Sunday School teacher was teaching five- and six-year olds

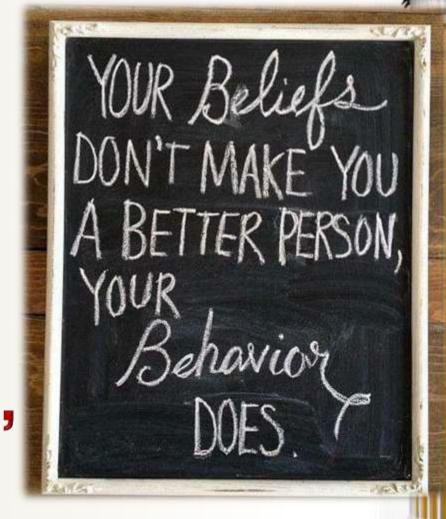
After explaining the Ten Commandments & to "honor your Father and Mother"

The teacher asked, "Is there a command that teaches us how to treat our

BOTHERS & SISTERS?"

In the back, little Johnny perked up,

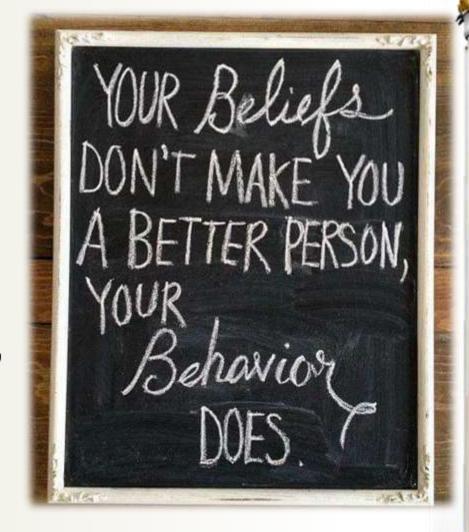
"Thou shalt not KILL!"



For the Christian and the Honorable
In very many respects, we do measure
the BEST of us by those who
Sincerely ...
in honest humility ...

DO succeed in RIDDING themselves of the worst parts of these

The best of us do NOT hold malice long, do not deceive, are not hypocrites, do not envy much and we truly do not slander



But in 1st Century Asia Minor & Galatia In A.D. 63 ... without a New Testament With only scattered news ...

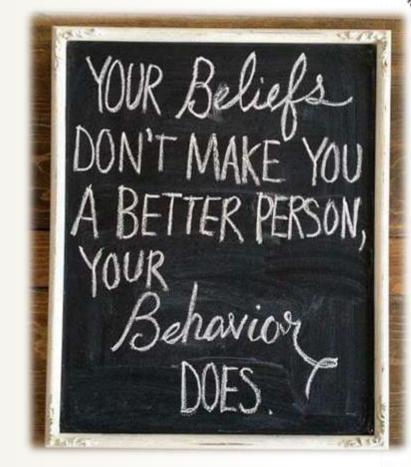
Yet, with the best representatives, i.e.,

- with the one and only Apostle Paul
- with the Walk-on-Water Peter the Rock

They had some GOOD teachers ...

Yet, all in all, they STILL had few writings and NO full New Testament





I Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk - Mature, to Grow Up

2-3 Like newborn babies, **CRAVE** pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is GOOD.

In a similar light as

1 Cor. 3:2 & Heb. 5:12-13 where "SPIRITUAL MILK" is metaphor for elementary Christian teaching

Odes to Solomon, collection of 42 poems, A.D. 78–100, few copies extent ... with few lines referring to "milk"

"A cup of milk was offered to me, and I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness."

"I was carried like a child by its mother; and he gave me milk, the dew of the Lord. And I grew strong in his favor, and rested in his perfection." I Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk – Mature, to Grow Up

2-3 Like newborn babies, CRAVE pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

You know there was no Gatorade in A.D. 63

No Coke, Pepsi, Sprite ... no "bottled" anything!

Water, Wine and Milk ... and "strong drink"

FRESH MILK was a STAPLE then ...

I've known people who grew up on FRESH cow's milk

They CANNOT stand pasteurized-homogenized milk

"Crave" is imperative, a command

The emphasis here is on





- 2-3 Like newborn babies, CRAVE pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.
- ✓ No matter how old you are this applies
- ✓ No matter how wise a Christian you are this applies
- ✓ No matter how mature "in Christ" this applies
- ✓ This is not about BEING a baby ... it's about the "CRAVING" babies have for their mother's milk
- ✓ Babies only NEED one thing to survive ...
- ✓ If they have Milk, they can survive, grow, flourish
- ✓ Milk elixir of the young life, preferably baby's Mother's Milk

2-3 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Further-furthermore ... if you are NOT craving it

- ✓ You are NOT wise ... NOT mature
- ✓ Will NOT grow ...
- ✓ In fact and truth, with NO CRAVING, you'll starve!

The **MILK** here is the **WORD** & **MERCY** of God See the last part of the verse ...

"now that you have tasted that the Lord is good."
So good, that ... see what else God has done

2 Peter 2:4-8 Spiritual House – Living Stone, Holy Priesthood

4-5 As you come to him, the Living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Powerful verses ... sublime verses ...

"Sublime" means: very beautiful, causing strong feelings of admiration, wonder; lofty, exalted in thought, expression, manner; of outstanding spiritual, intellectual, or moral worth

Sublime verses STACK extraordinarily metaphor upon metaphor Verses ranked among several dozen other passages as among

those that are **Supremely Sublime** ...

2 Peter 2:4-8 Spiritual House – Living Stone, Holy Priesthood

Review: Crave pure spiritual Milk ...

THE Living Stone ... we Living Stones built into a Spiritual House.

followed by ...

⁶ For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious CORNERSTONE, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

from Psalm 118:22

7-8 Now to you who believe, this STONE IS PRECIOUS.

But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the CORNERSTONE," and,

"A stone that causes people to stumble & a rock that makes them fall." ... stumble because they disobey ... destined for.



Apostle Paul said, 1 Corinthians 3:11

For no one can lay any FOUNDATION other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:19-21

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also

members of his household, **BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION** of the apostles and prophets, with

Christ Jesus himself as the CHIEF CORNERSTONE.

In him the whole **BUILDING**is joined together and
rises to become a **HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD**.



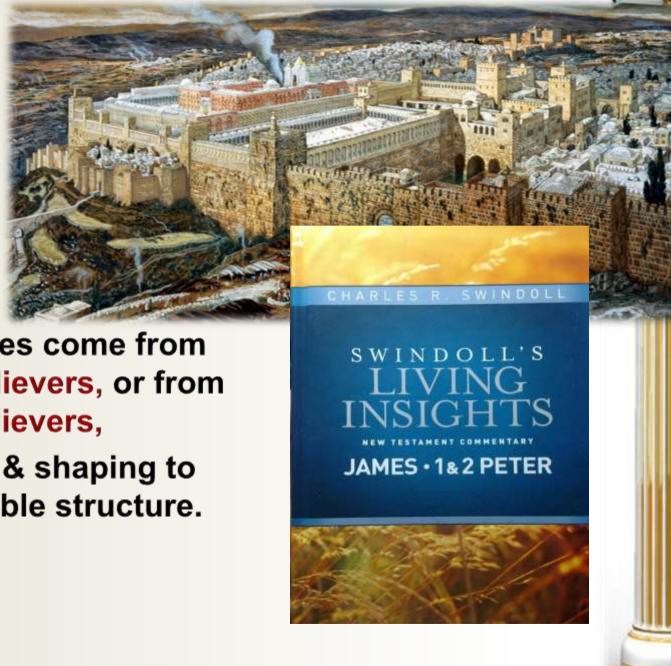
Charles Swindoll, in his Living Insights commentary reminds us how they quarried New Stones, yet also reused Old Stones, reshaping them to fit.

Living Stone—

Swindoll noted whether stones come from

- ✓ New Quarries, Gentile Believers, or from
- ✓ Old Buildings, Jewish Believers,

they BOTH require chiseling & shaping to fit them into a unified & stable structure.



Ignatius, A.D. 25-108
3rd Bishop of Antioch
following St. Evodius following St. Peter

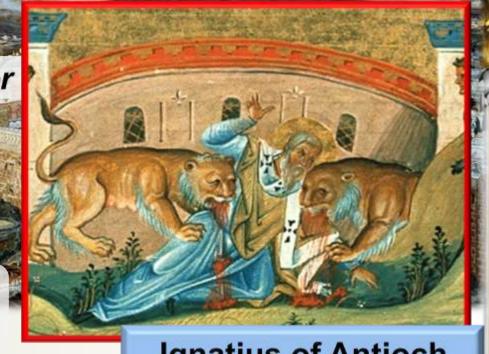
Student of Apostle John

Martyred in A.D. 110 in Coliseum respected Church Father

aka, Ignatius Theophorus, God-bearing aka, Ignaius Nurono, Fire Breather

Church Father Ignatius said, "You are stones of a temple, prepared beforehand for the building of God the Father,

hoisted up to the heights by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, using as a rope the Holy Spirit."



Ignatius of Antioch torn by lions from the *Menologion* of Emperor Basil II c. A.D. 1000 huge liturgical book 430 color illustrations

2 Peter 2:4-8 Spiritual House – Living Stone, Holy Priesthood

4-5 As you come to him, the Living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house

Powerful verses ... sublime verses on the Living Stone

The Living Stone that is the Cornerstone

See Peter's passion, his art ... he stacks metaphor on metaphor, Peter is building, too, upon Christ & Paul

- ✓ Christ said he was a the vine ... we are the branches
- ✓ Paul said Church is built upon Christ, we are his body on earth Peter looked at the Herod's Temple in Jerusalem ...

THEN Peter becomes a world traveler through Turkey to Rome

From Herod's Temple in Jerusalem, Peter travelled through Cappadocia, Galatia, Pontus, Bithynia and Asia ...

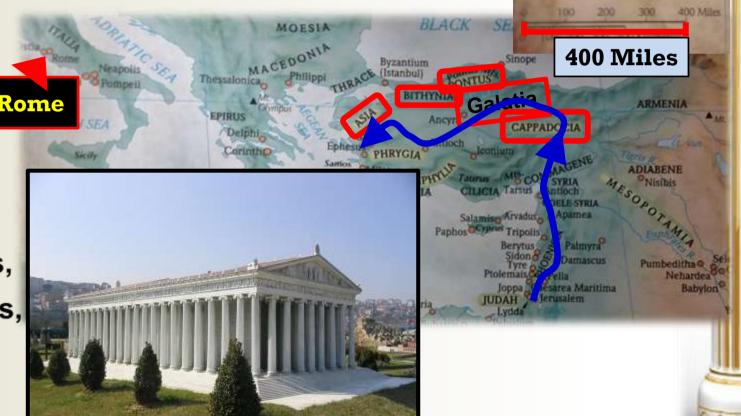
What did Peter see for his 1,000-mile journey to Rome

He almost certainly set sail from Ephesus, one of the greatest ports of the ancient Aegean Sea

In Ephesus, he MUST have seen the great Temple of Artemis or of Diana of Ephesians

daughter of Leto & Zeus twin of Apollo—

goddess of the wilderness, of the hunt, of wild animals, goddess of fertility.



Or, in Ephesus, Peter could have seen the Temple of Isis – there was large Egyptian population there



Sailing from Ephesus, he could have travelled to Corinth, brief OVERLAND journey to another boat – Nero started a canal, but he never finished it



Peter 2:1-3 Spiritual Milk – To Grow Up

After Corinth, in the Gulf of Corinth, he would have passed by Delphi ... famous for the oracles dispensing wisdom ... to Rome

At Rome, he landed at Portus, large artificial harbor on the north side of the north bank of the Tiber and travelled by paved road throughout that magnificent city



Temples, palaces, commerce, the likes of which PETER had NEVER seen before







From Rome, or "Babylon" as Peter closes in chapter 5 ...

The Living Stone with us Living Stones

metaphor upon metaphor – Christ the Vine, Christ the Body – followed by ...

⁶ For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and **PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE**, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

7-8 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the

CORNERSTONE," and, "A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

"A stone that causes people to stumble ..."

Stumble like Israel did ... so did the Jews in the New Testament Crystal Clear ... What God had planned, Israel had rejected ...

John 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again."

Picture was clear and remembered, after arresting Jesus, the Chief Priests repeated Jesus' words in accusation:

Mark 14:58, "We heard Him say,
'I will destroy this man-made temple,
and in three days I will build
another without hands."

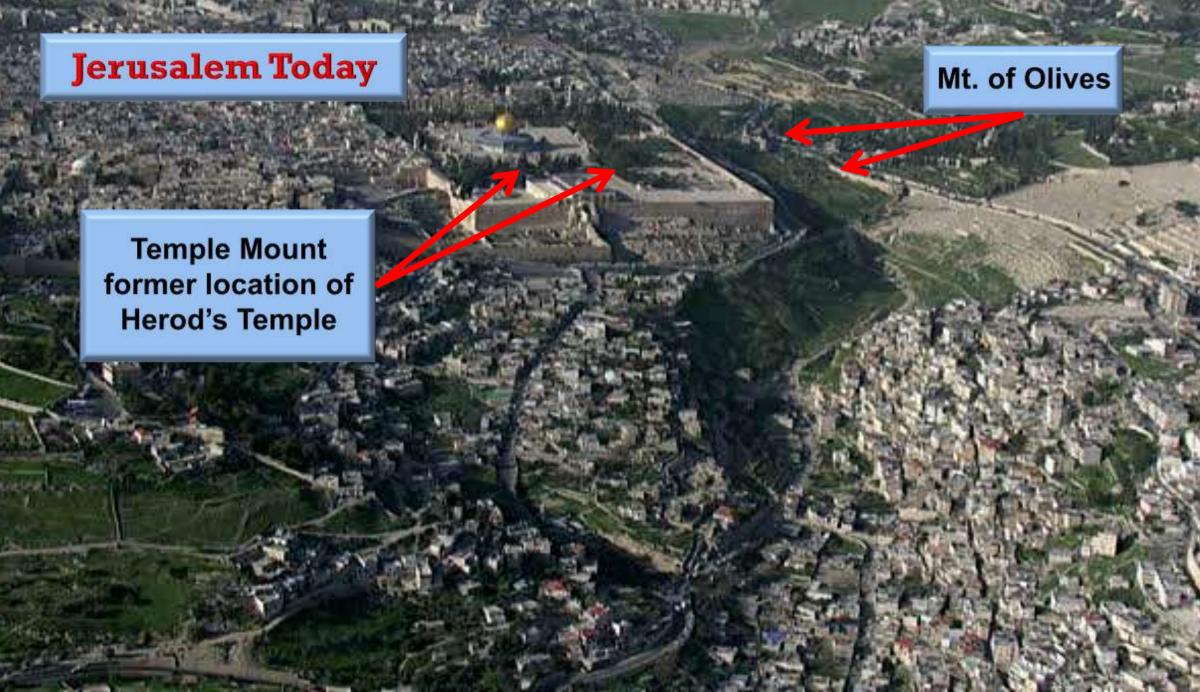


⁶ "I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen & **PRECIOUS CORNERSTONE** and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

In Peter's eye, and Jews, when one thought of **CORNERSTONE**, they saw Herod's Temple, grandest edifice in Jerusalem Some remember it being built ... or their fathers describing it When they walked by it, they saw the huge stones that made the foundation of the **Temple Mount** ...

The Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 as the Romans crushed the last of the Jewish rebels ... but some stones remain TODAY

The Living Stone is Christ, and we are Living Stones too Look at Jerusalem, even TODAY you can see vestiges, some remnants of its former GREATNESS



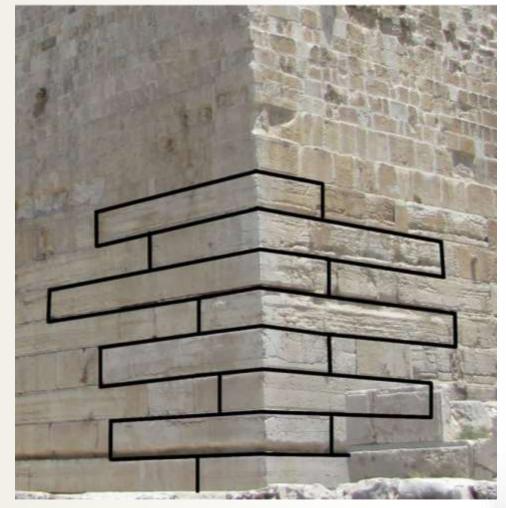




The Cornerstone

Ashlars SW corner Temple Mount Some weigh 80 tons 40 x 8 x 3.5 feet, interlocking





Cornerstones – LONG History

Nebuchadnezzar Cuneiform Cylinder 8.25" x 3.25"

Auctioned by Doyle, of New York, auctioneers and appraisers of fine art In 2014 it sold for \$605,000 ...

Nebuchadnezzar Destroyed 1st Temple 587 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar rebuilt temples all over Babylonia ...

Sippar, occupied since 2,500 B.C., was already 2,000 years old when Jerusalem was razed in 587 B.C>



Translated in part:

E-barra, the radiant abode of the gods ... which had long ago fallen into disrepair in Sippar....

I found its old cornerstone....

Over its old cornerstone I laid its foundation.

I erected E-barra as it was of yore and completed it. I caused it to shine like the bright day.

Living Stone is ALSO the Cornerstone

metaphor to metaphor – Christ the Vine, Christ the Body – followed by ...

"Stone the builders rejected has become the **CORNETSTONE**," and, "A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—

which is also what they were destined for.

From the imperative Crave Milk as a newborn baby

To THE Cornerstone ... and we as Living Stones

The Church is the edifice built from, around, upon the Cornerstone

The Church ... we are the Living Stones that form the Church

MISS Christ ... you stumble, FALL ... they don't make it

Crave Milk like a baby ...

Living Stone built upon the Living Cornerstone

For What ... to what end ...

⁹ But you are a Chosen People, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, God's Special Possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his WONDERFUL LIGHT.

10 Once you were NOT a people, but NOW ... People of God;

... had NOT received mercy, but NOW ... MERCY

Supremely Sublime STACKED metaphors ALL point to us being

God's Special Possession into His Wonderful Light



Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)

On this passage waxes poetic on the LIGHT of relationships

We come to know their thoughts, to feel their tastes....

There is a mysterious sympathy...
Heart springs toward opening heart,
and soul speaks to soul,

And speaks so largely that the poor tongue cannot in an hour interpret a single glance.

He who made the heart, and knows where its ... flowers are, does NOT NOT ask for the poorest ... of our nature,

but for the best.



Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)

Aim of the N.T. is not to teach the government of God over the Universe, but the

Special Personal government of Christ's heart over every human heart that will receive Him.

The gospel would pierce the opaque views of nature,

or break down the middle wall of separation, and so bring us to God that we shall FEE

that He is OUR GOD

Cornerstone is Christ ...

Matthew 16:16

Peter confessed, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God."

Matthew 16:18

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this ROCK I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

2nd use ROCK is feminine—CHURCH

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee



Church NOT built on Peter

Confession of Christ that is the Rock

Christ is the Cornerstone, the Rock that saves

Let's look closer at a clear metaphor in John

You know John 3:16
For God so loved the world ... that
whosoever believeth ... everlasting life.

John 3:16 is the glory ... the fact ... the quintessence of Gospel

But what comes BEFORE is the "How to"

And Salvation CANNOT be easier

John 3:14-15

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be

lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.



How easy?

Just look up ... SAVED

Look up ... believe ... and you HAVE IT ALL

Eternal Life

Cannot be Easier!

Supremely Sublime movement from

"NOT being a People"
to the highest of all, to being
"THE People of God"

A world of brutal pagan influence ...

Hellenized and developed by the vast Roman Expansion ...

Those in Asia Minor GREW up without God, believed the preaching of the Gospel, were saved ... "tasted that God is good"

CHURCH was born in Asia Minor ... now Peter writes to them

To explain WHO they really were, to encourage them in the FIRE

Peter writes to STRENTHEN their IDENTITY & their HEART



"NOT being a People"
to the highest of all, to being
"THE People of God"

Peter clarifies who they are

IN CHRIST—the CHURCH

Who are they?

They are LIVING ... GROWING ... BUILDING ...

Invisible in this World ... made visible by metaphor

Growth in the HEART ... visible by CHARACTER, HONOR, VIRTUE

Salvation Secured ... to be Fully Revealed at Christ's Coming

Supremely Sublime movement from

"NOT being a People"
to the highest of all, to being
"THE People of God"

Because of WHO they are,
CHURCH are now aliens here

Because of WHO they are, they are citizens of two cities

Here on earth, Visitors ... there in heaven, Eternal Residents

As pagan Gentiles, they had nothing, were lost, in darkness ...

As Christians, they are a NEW PEOPLE, in the LIGHT



Of all the layers of meanings ...
We are NOT a alone ... No Lone Ranger
No Lone Ranger in the Church





We are not in this
ALONE

You do not do church ALONE

A Great Cloud of WITNESSES has gone before you and me!

Somethings just get sweeter with age I've mentioned before how much of the Bible is "Adult Special" ...

sure children can enjoy too

... yet, the sauce gets better with age

George Beverly Shea passed away in 2013 at 104 – he sang in Billy Graham Crusades

Since I started for the Kingdom Since my life He controls Since I gave my heart to Jesus

The Longer I Serve Him, the Sweeter He Grows

The more that I love Him, More joy He bestows
Each day is like heaven, My heart overflows
The Longer I Serve Him, The Sweeter He Grows



Supremely Sublime movement from

"NOT being a People"

to the highest of all, to being

"THE People of God"

Sheese, was a miracle in my life in 1975 ...

Then in 1985 ... after a mere ten years of travel ... sweeter

Then in 1995 ... after surviving many an ambush, crossing several weak rattling bridges ...

that miracle was confirmed SWEETER in 2005

Then, as 2015 passed into 2025 ...

The longer I serve HIM, the sweeter HE Grows



Supremely Sublime
DIVINE creation from

"NOT being a People" to the highest of all, to being

"THE People of God"

You & I understand TODAY much better what happened in your heart was a



Resurrection from DEAD

New Birth into a Divine Kingdom, God's Kingdom
Something NEW, the prophets & angels LONGED to see
Christ, the Living Cornerstone ... with you as Living Stones
On earth, the Called, the Chosen, the Special Possession ...

The Church

