

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Lesson 08

Chapter 2:11-15, The Study The Temple Appointments, P-1

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Chapter 2:1-10 LESSON 7 - REVIEW **The Church As The Temple Of Christ, Part-1**

Recap:

The Church As The Temple of Christ, 2:1-22
The Temple Architecture, 2:1-10 (Lesson 07)

THE INTRODUCTION

The Chapter as a whole is labeled "The Church **As** The Temple of Christ." In the last lesson we covered the first half of chapter 2 labeled "The Temple Architecture," and that took us as far as verse 10, with a brief look at verses 11-12.

We are the Temple of Jesus Christ and we have Jesus Christ as **the foundation of this Temple** and He indeed is the "**Corner Stone.**" In building structures, the corner stone is exactly a square. It is set in a prominent corner of the foundation – before any of the building is constructed. It is from this square stone that the straight paths of the sides can be visualized and laid. Distances are measured from the front outside corner, and angles are judged using the perfect square of the corner stone.

It is Jesus, our Lord, who **sets the standard** for building **His Church** – Like the Temple in the future -- Perfect, Holy, Steadfast, Alive, and Living for Him – All to the Glory of God The

Father who has put all things under His (Jesus') authority and submission.

Imagine this Temple of Christ, the Church, with one of **our** personal names on each block that builds the entire structure. **We** are His Church.

We looked at MacCorkle's rendering of the Chapter's outline. There he focused upon the first 10 verses of Chapter 2 as presenting the "Temple Architecture" as being made up of three kinds of humans: The Spiritually dead; the Spiritually Disobedient; and the Spiritually Desirous (of everything other than the Lord God). We found out that God is the contractor building this structure we call "The Church," and that He worked out His wrath against these humans through the great wealth of His grace and the great power of His love for them – through the substitutionary sacrifice of His only, born as a human, Son, Jesus. We also found that this new structure work was absolutely guaranteed through God's amazing Grace, seeing that non of the work is actually done by any of His "Called" workers. This structure is entirely a "New Creation."

We also took a very brief look at the first two verses we'll be studying next.

LESSON 8
Part 1 of 2 - The Temple Appointments, 2:11-18

- 1. A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12**
 - a. The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11
 - b. The Covenant Aspects 2:12
-

2:11, THE STUDY

A Study in Contrasts, 2:11-12

a. The Ceremonial Aspects, 2:11

End of Chapter 2:1-10 gave us:

"For we (believers) are His (the Father's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

(2:11, Mac)

For

which reason,

keep in mind

that you were

formerly **Gentiles**

in terms of the flesh,

being called uncircumcision

by those called circumcision:

(that was) made by hands in

the flesh,

(2:11, NASB)

Therefore

remember, that

formerly you

who, the Gentiles

by birth and

called "uncircumcised"

by those who call themselves "the circumcision"

(that done in the body by the hands of men)

Commentary:
Remember - You Were Excluded

This set of verses starts with Paul's familiar expression, "Therefore..." Chapter 2:4-10 (earlier studies) highlighted The Father's works such that "The Father might show His grace" (2:7). He then noted that the works of Man are NOT involved in that process (2:9), it is instead, "the gift of God" (2:8).

That paragraph ends with "We are the Father's workmanship - In Christ" - and that we were made to DO the FATHER'S good works (2:10).

"THEREFORE, REMEMBER"

As Paul addresses the Ephesian church he addresses largely Gentiles, and it is time to remind them of just who they were before their belief in Jesus.

Gentiles by birth

Paul brings up their non-Hebrew heritage. The Gentile was not born into an Hebrew family. Paul makes mention of "circumcision" as that was the sign that God gave to the Hebrews, through Moses and the Law, that would show them as Hebrews. Paul takes circumcision "off the table" as the symbol of sanctification. Other cultures also practiced circumcision, but for the Hebrew male it was for a "sign." It was a ritual marking upon him that was supposed to remind him that he belonged to God, had a circumcised heart (a heart cut-out and set aside for God) and was a member of a covenant community. The very physical act of circumcision was performed by another man and not by God. We should see in this that the circumcised heart was also man's business. It would have to be man who circumcised his heart and not God.

Those of this Jewish community called the gentiles the "uncircumcised." This was a negative term to them as it implied that the Gentile did not have a circumcised heart, did not belong to the covenant community, and outwardly demonstrated that by the lack of physical circumcision. Oddly enough, it was the vast

majority of the Jews who did not have the circumcised heart for God, as that was what led them into captivity in the first place. They believed that following the Law of Moses made them "holy," and had forgotten God.

"For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Galatians 6:15).

There are seven things Paul pointed that Gentiles, historically suffered in these following areas:

- 1 They were Gentiles, not Jews
- 2 They were considered the "Un-circumcision" by the Jews
- 3 They were separate from and without the promised Messiah, Christ
- 4 They were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel
- 5 They were strangers of the covenants of the promise
- 6 They had no hope (Those things that were future for Israel)
- 7 They were without God (He had made His covenant with the Children of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob)

Because of these disabilities they were "far off."

2:12, THE STUDY

A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12

The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11

b. The Covenant Aspects, 2:12

2:12 [MAC]

because in that season

you were separated from Messiah,

[**you** were] excluded from Israel's State, and

[**you** were] ignorant of the covenants based upon the

promise,

[**you** were] not possessing any hope, and

[**you** were] without God's help

in the world-system.

2:12 [NASB]

[**You**] remember that at that time

you were

separate from Christ,

excluded (Alt., "alienated") from citizenship in Israel and

foreigners to the covenants of the promise and

without hope and

without God

in the world

THE COMMENTARY

This means more than that they (we) were **heathen, destitute** of the knowledge and expectation of the Messiah. As Christ is the **only** redeemer of men, and the **only** mediator between God and man, to be **without Christ**, was to be **without redemption** and **without access to God**. To possess Christ, to be in Him, is the **sum of all blessedness**; to be without Christ makes you **all** evil.

As the heathen were not included in the covenant God made with His people, they held **no possession** of the promise and **no part** in the execution of which that covenant secured. Their condition was therefore most deplorable. They had nothing to hope, because they were shut out of the covenant of promise. The

promise of God is the only foundation of hope, and therefore those to whom there is **no promise**, have **no hope**.

And having no hope of redemption, the great blessing promised, they were, in the widest sense of the word, **hopeless**. They were moreover **without God**. This meant that they were atheists, in so far that they were destitute of the knowledge of the true God, and served those who by nature were not gods. Jehovah was not their God; they had no interest in Him, they were without Him. They stood outside of that community which belonged to God, who knew and worshipped Him, to whom His promises were made, and in the midst of whom He dwelt. In every point, therefore, their condition as heathen afforded a melancholy contrast to that of the true people of God, and to that into which they had been introduced by the Gospel. Their alienation was from God and his covenant.

"(therefore,) **REMEMBER**" (as in Verse 11)

Separate from Christ

Paul calls upon the Ephesians to "**remember**" this list.

1. Separate from Christ, unable to be with Him or in Him.

The Gentiles did not have the advantage of being a part of the "Nation of Israel." Two thousand years earlier God loved a man named Abram who trusted God and as a result God called him to be the "Father" of many nations. God made promises to Abram, his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob that would ensure the longevity of both the Nation of Israel and its land. That family line became the Hebrew people, and they became the family line of the Messiah. God was with those people in a special way that he was not with the other nations of the world - the Hebrew were His people, and He dwelt among them. So, therefore, the Gentiles were **not** "in the covenant family" of God and His Son Jesus the Christ.

2. Excluded, Gentiles were not citizens of Israel.

The Gentile was "excluded" by the Hebrew people. Paul says in the Book of Romans, "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard?" (Romans 10:14). This is the condition the Gentile was in, and because they were not "children of Abraham," the Hebrew people (the Jews) excluded them from participating in their lives and religion. Some, very few, were allowed to join with the Jews through the process of proselytism, where a Gentile joined with the nation in the worship of the One True God - but even then, the Gentile was never given full citizenship (belonging).

3. Foreigners to the covenant of Promise, no blessings promised except general.

The Gentile world would be blessed by God through the nation of Israel but would not receive any promises of blessings directly from God.

4. Without hope, no hope of being a member of "God's people."

The "Hope" of the Hebrew was the Messiah who was to come and free the Nation from sin, evil, and death. Then the establishment of His Kingdom would be upon the earth. But there was no mention of the place of the Gentile in that plan - except always separate from the Hebrew.

5. Without God, they did not worship the God of the Jewish people.

The Gentile world, as a rule, never embraced the One True God. God had His Gentile priesthood (Melchizedek for example) but as a rule the Gentiles became "a law unto themselves" (Romans 2:14). They simply did not worship Jehovah ("there is no god but Caesar").

6. They were "in the world," with No god but impotent idols.

Our modern phrase for this is, "**Anything but God.**"

"Circumcision made with hands"

It should be noted that the specific part of "the Covenant" that Paul was addressing was the Mosaic covenant of Law. It was the main barrier causing the hostility between the Jews and the Gentiles. Wrongly, the early church was called upon by the Judaizers to include the "customs of Moses" (the Law). The Apostles fought this intrusion to Christianity.¹

¹ See Acts, Chapter 15

2:13, THE STUDY**The Temple Appointments 2:11-18****A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12**

The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11

The Covenant Aspects 2:12

A Study in Combinations 2:13-18**One New Position, 2:13****2:13** [MAC]**But right now,**

in Messiah Jesus,

you

who were formerly far away

have been brought nearby the **blood** of Messiah.**2:13** [NASB]**"But now**

in Christ Jesus

you

who formerly were far off

have been brought nearby the **blood** of Christ."**THE COMMENTARY****BUT NOW!**

Paul leads off this sentence with that transitional conjunction "**But**" and emphasizes it with the immediate "now." He's emphasizing the "back then VS. **now**" aspect of this truth. The "but" defines that this is a change from that past.

Back then - you Gentiles were far away from God.

But now! - you Gentiles **have been brought near, as the Jews had been before.**

There was a time when the people of Israel were brought near to God and He dwelt among them. But now, through the Blood of

Christ, the **Gentile believer** has been brought "near" to God. Paul makes it clear that the "Gentiles" that he is referring to are **believers** when he calls them "you Gentiles," not just any Gentiles, but "**you**" Gentiles - members of the **Ephesian Body of Christ**.

How you **feel** about the Christ (God) does not enter into this discussion. You can "**feel**" close to God, and many non-believers **feel** "close to God," but you may not GET close to God without being "**IN**" **the blood of Christ** (the Blood of the New Covenant), being "IN" Jesus The Christ. One must be a "**God Believer, in Christ**" in order to BE close to God. When that happens, it doesn't matter how you "**feel**" about it. Once you are a member of the Spiritual Body of Christ - **you belong**, and you **ARE** close to Christ, close to God.

God met the 7 Gentile sufferings,(separation, exclusion, etc., Verse 12) and racial hatred through the death of Christ. Upon that basis, God has brought about a great model of union, namely, the Church. This proved to the world what His love and grace could do.

There are two separate truths here: the **available** reconciliation and the **actual** reconciliation.

First (the availability of salvation)

These seven sufferings were removed at the cross for all Gentiles and thus God was able, through the cross, to **reconcile the world** to Himself and make salvation **available** to all who would **believe**.

Second (the actuality of salvation)

The nature of the offer requires that the anyone desiring the salvation that God has offered, through the death of His Son Jesus on the Cross, would evaluate God's offer and **believe**, henceforth becoming **reconciled** to the demands of God. At that point God would be reconciled to the individual, and the individual

would be reconciled to God, and **through the act of belief** be **proclaimed righteous, acquiring the offered salvation.**

The picture here is that the Jews before the cross were "near" to God in **external** relationship in that through the covenant they had, the sacrifices, the blood of atonement, and could get to God by the one step of **faith**; whereas Gentiles had no sacrifices, no blood of the atonement (etc.) and, ceremonially and externally, were "afar off. " It was very unlikely that they would become "proselytes of the gate" and get in (Proselyte, Gk. "One who has come over").

2:14a, THE STUDY**The Temple Appointments 2:11-18**

A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12

The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11

The Covenant Aspects 2:12

A Study in Combinations 2:13-18

One New Position, 2:13

One New Mediation 2:14a**2:14** [NASB]

For

He (Jesus) Himself
is our peace,

2:14 [MAC]

For

He [Jesus], and no other,
is our peace.

THE COMMENTARY

Verse 14 begins with the word "For." This indicates that an explanation "for" a change from being "far away," to "made near." The rest of the verse tells us of this change.

He (Jesus) Himself is our peace, our mediator, our propitiation. "The cross has rendered God propitious (Gracious) toward the unsaved as well as toward the erring saint (1 John 2:2). The fact that God has borne all sin renders God propitious (Luke 19:13; Hebrews 2:17). Now, God does not have to be asked to be propitious (graceful and forgiving), because He has become so through the death of Christ."²

Douglas McCorkle reminds us that Christ is not just the peace maker - but He is peace itself (MacCorkle, Douglas, God's Special Secret - a commentary on the book of Ephesians, p. 85)

² Unger, Merrill F., New Unger's Bible Dictionary, Moody Press, Chicago, 1988

2:14b, THE STUDY**The Temple Appointments 2:11-18**

A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12

The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11

The Covenant Aspects 2:12

A Study in Combinations 2:13-18

One New Position, 2:13

One New Mediation 2:14a

One New Grouping 2:14b**2:14b** [NASB]

He [Jesus]

made both categories [into] one organism and
destroyed the barrier of the dividing wall of hostility,

2:14b [MAC]

and (He) having in His crucified flesh dissolved the hostility, that
is, having broken down the middle wall of separation,

THE COMMENTARY

Verse fourteen brings in the image that represents the truth of
the tearing down of the "dividing wall."

After King David, his son, King Solomon, built the first "Temple of
The Lord" using the Tabernacle as his "image" for the building.
The inner temple was for Jews only. Outside the entrance to the
inner temple was a walled-off area known as the Courtyard of the
Gentiles. It was in this area that the money changers, animal
inspectors, animal retailers, and a mixture of Gentiles and Jews
doing business. However, no non-Jew was allowed to enter the
main part of the Temple.

In Jesus's time, "the dividing wall of the barrier," (the first outer
court of Herod's temple, a stone barrier enclosing the inner court,
shoulder high, with a sign "No Gentile allowed within under
penalty of death." This sign was upheld by Jewish and Roman
Law. The outer court was the place of the money changers and
animal inspection and sales. It is this stone embattlement that

divided the courtyard between the inner temple and the outer Gentiles that is the symbolic object that the death of Christ "tore down."

The imagery here is not that of the inner veil that split in two at the death of Christ. While the meanings are similar, the imagery here concerns the joining of the two peoples and not the removal of the barrier into the Throne of God and the Mercy Seat of Christ.

Isaiah 56:3-8

Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people." Nor let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." 4 For thus says the LORD, "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, 5 To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, And a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off. 6 "Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, To minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD, To be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath And holds fast My covenant; 7 Even those I will bring to My holy mountain And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." 8 The Lord GOD, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares, "Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered."

2:15, THE STUDY**The Church As The Temple Of Christ, 2:1-22**

The Temple Architecture, 2:1-10 (Lesson 07)

The Temple Appointments 2:11-18

A Study in Contrasts 2:11-12

The Ceremonial Aspects 2:11

The Covenant Aspects 2:12

A Study in Combinations 2:13-18

One New Position, 2:13

One New Mediation 2:14a

One New Grouping 2:14b

d. One New Mankind, 2:15

Verses 15 and 16 are tied together, but we'll deal with each one separately for this study.

2:15 [MAC]

(Jesus)

having rendered inoperative the law of commandments
expressed in ordinances,

He purposed

by this action

to create the two parties

into one new mankind,

in Himself —

thus making peace,

2:15 [NASB]

(Jesus)

by abolishing

in His flesh

the enmity

which is the Law with its commandments
contained in ordinances,

His (Jesus') purpose

in Himself

was that

He might make (Lit., "create")

one new man out of the two,
thus, establishing peace, and....

THE COMMENTARY

By Abolishing - in His flesh

How did this happen? The Death of Christ accomplished this. Upon His death God is satisfied with the individual based upon that individual's free choice to Love God instead of self. The manner of love must be through believing Jesus Christ. Notice the wording here, "believing Jesus Christ," not just "believing IN Jesus Christ." For belief in Christ is implied in believing Jesus Christ. Faith is the process of believing the promises God has made that all culminate IN His Son Jesus.

It is easy to believe in Jesus, even the devil does that. But believing what Jesus said, and what God has said concerning Himself and His Son is an entirely different matter.

As an example: when Abraham was called of God - a gentile (for there was no Hebrew or Jewish nation at the time). When God said pick-up your stuff and move to this other city, Haran, where I will lead you - Abraham picked-up his stuff and moved to this other city where God led him. Abraham BELIEVED God. When God spoke, Abraham listened and was obedient to God, he believed that God was who He said He was, and that if God said, 'Pick-up your stuff and move over there,' Abraham believed that God had that right to ask him of this, and Abraham obeyed God, because he Believed Him.

Because Christ would eventually (speaking from the time of Abraham) die on the Cross (paying the price for sin and sins against God), God was able to witness Abraham's BELIEF and PROCLAIM Abraham RIGHTEOUS. Paul speaks of the enmity brought forth with the institution of the Laws that God gave Moses. He, Paul, says that the Law can only bring judgment and death, especially when ultimately the Law says that every offense is a Capital offence. Since man cannot live by the Law, he

becomes an enemy of God's Law (The very character of God Himself).

With the death of Christ that "enmity" is abolished for those who believe that which is defined as belief (believing Jesus Christ). This "belief" is now extended to both Jew and Gentile.

Why? In order that God may now consider not only the believing Jew as righteous, but also a believing Gentile - One New Mankind, which is neither Gentile or Jew but a member of the Body of Christ.

**HOMEWORK:
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

*Chapter 2:1-15, The Study
The Temple Appointments, P-1*

**LOOK AT THE QUESTION AND IGNORE THE ANSWER...
THEN STUDY THE ANSWER!**

(2:11)

"Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands—"

Q-1 What is the "Therefore" there for?

A-1 Makes us remember - that it is The Father's Grace that has placed us into the Body of Christ, and that it was a simple gift from Him.

Q-2 Who are the "uncircumcised?"

A-2 The Gentiles.

Q-3 Why?

A-3 Because God gave the "sign" of circumcision to the Children of Jacob, through Isaac, through Abraham, but not until the time of the giving of God's Law by Moses at Sinai.

(2:12)

"remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

Q-1 What were the characteristics of the "before Christ" Gentile?

A-1 Separate from Christ, Excluded from Israel, No Covenant, No Hope, Without God.

(2:13)

Think About This:

Therefore: Saved by God to demonstrate His grace and accomplish His good works

remember you were called uncircumcised
 separate
 excluded
 without hope
 without God
 in the world

The Holy Buts: But Now

In Christ
 brought near

FOR

He is our peace
 He made the two one
 He destroyed the barrier
 He abolished the Law
 His Purpose

to create one new man out of two, making peace
 in one body to reconcile the two

The cross put the hostility to death

The Tabernacle and the courts

He came and preached peace to far and near (both)

FOR

through Him we have access - by one spirit

Consequently - no longer foreigners
 no longer aliens

BUT

citizens - with God's people and God's household

built on Foundation of Apostles and prophets,
 and Christ Himself - the Keystone
 He is central figure - the whole thing is a temple
 in the Lord
 similarly you too are being built
 as a dwelling
 in which God lives, by His spirit. Romans 9:1-

(2:13)

"But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

Q-1 What two words tell us that something has changed in the Gentile believer's relationship to God?

A-1 "But, Now"

Q-2 What two phrases describe that change?

A-2 "Once you were far away," "have been brought near."

Q-3 Through what agency did this take place?

A-3 Through the Blood of Christ.

(2:14)

"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,"

Q-1 In the context of the verse... How is Jesus Christ our peace?

A-1 His blood removed the "dividing wall of hostility" between the Jew and the Gentile believer.

Q-2 Can you describe how John 3:16 relates to this verse?

A-2 The death of God's Son on the Cross brought about the reconciliation of God to the World. Both Jew and Gentile now had

equal opportunity, without the issue of sin, to be reconciled with and to believe in Jehovah.

(2:15)

"by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,"

Q-1 How could one be saved while the Law ruled?

A-1 As long as the law was the standard no man could be saved - the law could only condemn - sin had to be atoned for the Jew awaiting redemption.

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The Writings of Douglas B. MacCorkle

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Jeremiah 18:15
"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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