

BFF470 The Cornerstone of Gods House

Scott: Welcome to the "Building Faith and Family" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood here. Still feels like summer even though it's fall.

Scott: I always love fall, but then it actually becomes fall and it rains, which is what it's doing today. I'm like, "Oh, yeah. I forgot about this part of fall."

Steve: Yeah. We're getting that tomorrow, hopefully. We need it. Our creek almost dried up.

This podcast is a continuation in our series on the stone, the rock. If you're like me, it takes time to learn a new concept. It involves a lot of review and rethinking.

I'm still edified as I was looking at these scriptures. As you know, during most of our podcasts, we read God's word. It grows on me how important it is that we stay in the Bible.

This idea of staying in Scripture is reminiscent of John 15, where we are commanded to abide in His word. Abide means to pitch your tent and dwell there.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your Word. Thank You that You not only sent Jesus to be the word made flesh, but You gave us Your word. You gave us, for thousands of years, all these men of God who have spoken, inspired by the Spirit. It's a cohesive message. It's deep.

Sometimes we feel like even as much as we've delved into it, we're only scratching the surface. Give us insight today into Your Word afresh, and write these words on our heart so that we can be different, not inspired momentarily.

I pray that as we expose ourselves to the living, inspired, immutable, unchanging Word of God, that we'll be changed more into the image of Christ. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Let's go over our words a little bit today. I used the word pitch your tent and dwell, probably because I've been studying this and it's very real to me. The tent in the wilderness was called the tabernacle.

Tabernacle can mean a tent, but it can also be a verb, which means to dwell. In some versions, particularly the King James version, it talks about God tabernacling with His people, or dwelling with His people. Tabernacle and dwell.

You have to study the roots because sometimes the word tent and tabernacle have a couple different roots, but I want us to think about that concept. The tabernacle is not only a place where God dwells, but it also means to dwell.

We're going to first get a glimpse into God's heart, which I hope I haven't said this so much that we have lost the beauty of it. Exodus 29:43-46 (Speaking of the tabernacle) "There, I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by My glory. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar.

"Aaron also and his sons, I will consecrate to serve me as priests. I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. They shall know that I am Jehovah their God, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them. I am Jehovah, their God."

This is God's heart. He wants to be near His people. He doesn't want to be way up on the mountain. He wants to be in their midst.

God doesn't want to meet me only when I'm walking, or when I'm in church, or when I'm especially seeking Him. He wants to be with me when I'm walking my pups, when I'm working in my office, He wants to be near me, wants to be near all of us.

One of the unique times when God drew near to a person is Chapter 28:11-12, "Taking one of the stones of the place, he (Jacob) put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. He dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the Earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. Behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. Jehovah is in this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Chapter 28:18-19, "Early in the morning, Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel."

There's a connection, which we're going to see in a couple of these passages. There's a connection between God wanting to dwell with us, God being with us, and the Stone.

The Stone was the key piece in this passage about the "Gate of Heaven" and the "House of God." In Hebrew, the word "El" means God, and house is "Beth." House of God is Beth-El.

The house is where somebody dwells and lives. This is a special place, and the key component was the Stone. Jacob recognized this. He took the stone. He set it up. He poured oil on it. People don't pour oil on rocks that you find in the wilderness. This was a specific act of anointing.

Notice this language in Psalm 27:4-5, "One thing have I asked of Jehovah, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of Jehovah and to inquire in His temple. In the day of trouble, He will conceal me in His tabernacle. In the secret place of His tent, He will hide me. He will set me up on a Rock."

Note the Rock, the house of Jehovah, the secret place of His tent, the tabernacle.

The word Bethel is used 65 times. I looked it up the other day. It's all through the Old Testament. Now I hope that when our listeners read their Bible, they notice how many times Bethel appears.

This is the house of God, and it's a tabernacle, or tent. He also says, "And He will set me up on a Rock." Psalm 118:19-23, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them, and give thanks to Jehovah. This is the gate of Jehovah, the righteous shall enter through it."

"I thank You that You have answered me and have become my salvation. The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. This is Jehovah's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes."

Now something's a little bit different. Yes, it's the gate of righteousness or the gate of Jehovah. As I read those verses, I remember that no one can come to the Father except through the Son. Jesus is the way. He is the Door.

When I read gates of righteousness, and gate of Jehovah, the way to the Father with God on the top and angels up and down, I'm thinking, "This is Jesus."

In Genesis 28 we also have the stone. Putting these together we see this same stone has become the cornerstone. Cornerstones are the key stone when you build the foundation of a house.

Note Matthew 21:42, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." Acts 4:12. "This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone."

There's more to these verses, and I'm going to tuck another thought in here to be faithful to scripture, even though I have not fully comprehended all that is transpiring. Isaiah 8:13–15, "It is Jehovah of hosts Whom you should regard as holy, and He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. Then He will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Many will stumble over them, then they will fall and be broken. They will even be snared and taken."

My tendency is to focus on the positive aspects of the stone being Christ and the stone as the cornerstone of the house of God. However there is also the concept of a stumbling block, and a rock of offense, which is also a part of this truth.

We know that Jesus was rejected by the builders. He was cast aside. He did not get the royal reception that was worthy of Him. The cornerstone can be a wonderful thing for those of us that have embraced Jesus, but if you haven't, it can be a stone of offense and a stone of stumbling.

Let's continue to build here. In Ephesians 2:20–22, "We are His house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. The chief cornerstone is Christ Jesus Himself 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 place for God by the Spirit."

Our understanding of the Stone keeps growing. We have had to read between the lines when we're reading the Old Testament. It doesn't say Jesus. It says house of God. It says cornerstone. It says stone.

However Paul declares the chief cornerstone is Christ Jesus Himself. This house that He's building and is growing into a holy temple. We're being fitted and built into this place, but it's not any place. It's a dwelling place. It's a tabernacle for God by the Spirit so that God can live among us.

1 Peter 2:4–8 is a powerful passage. I read this a lot, and I'm going to continue reading it a lot. There's so much packed in here. "Coming to Him as to a Living Stone, which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God.

"You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

For it stands in scripture, 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame, so the honor is for you who believe.

"But for those who do not believe, the Stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do."

We see the wonderful holiness and nearness of God through Christ, which is a blessing to those who believe, but for those who have not believed, those who have rejected him, he's a rock of offense. I need to hold that thought in my mind.

2 Corinthians 6:16, "We are the temple of the living God. As God said, 'I will make My dwelling place among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'"

This is what God had on his heart way back in Exodus 19. This is something that has always been on His heart. He is committed to us. His love is steadfast, not fleeting. It's unchanging. He says, "I am going to work a work in their midst, and I'm going to send My Son to accomplish it, and He's going to save His people. He's going to transform them," and then we become God's temple. Then He makes His dwelling place among us and walks among us. It's beautiful.

Let's examine the New Testament word for tent or tabernacle. The root word is skene, S-K-E-N-E, and skenos, which means tent or tabernacle. As I studied, I noticed that Paul and Priscilla and Aquila were skenopoios, which is tentmaker. The verb is skenosis. Another word from the same root, is skénopégia and it's for the tabernacle or the feast of tabernacles, the feast of booths.

Now we're going to go to Revelation 21:1–3. We started in the Old Testament, Genesis, then we read Exodus, we've read all these verses that establish our foundations, our beginnings, and now we are in the telos, the end, Revelation.

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new Earth for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place/tabernacle of God is with man. He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God.'"

Earlier in Revelation, these same words are used in a beautiful way. This is in the seventh chapter. One of the elders addressed me saying, "Who are these clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know."

He said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Therefore, they

are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple. He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them with His presence."

If you look at that verse, which I looked at it in four or five translations, some say He'll spread His tent over them, some say He will spread the tabernacle of His presence, but He will spread His tabernacle over them with His presence.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore. The sun shall not strike them nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

This is what He does when He spreads His tent, His tabernacle, over us with His presence. A verse that many of us know, and are very familiar with, may have a new insight now, John 1:14. "The word became flesh and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of an only begotten of a Father, full of grace and truth."

All right, Scott. I don't envy you now having to respond, but this is why you get paid the big bucks.

Scott: I'm astonished, again, I go back to what you were first talking about, and it's all through Scripture, how God wants to be with us.

Steve: Amen.

Scott: Every other religion, it looks like God wants – whatever their version of God is – wants us to be lowly and worship Him from afar or whatever. From the beginning of the Bible, you get God wanting to walk with Adam in the cool of the day.

Throughout this study of building the house, it's like He's literally building a temple out of His Son and us to be together with Him. It is astonishing when you put it all together like this. I'm in awe.

The contrast between the precious cornerstone and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame, is what my translation says in 1 Peter 2. That phrase always catches my heart because I think the devil is trying to shame us all the time.

Steve: Absolutely.

Scott: The idea of never being put to shame when you trust in Him. Then the contrast between that and the stone the builders rejected is the rock that makes them fall. You see it happening. I see that in people currently, and even some that I'm praying for that hopefully they won't stumble ultimately, but it's so powerful.

Steve: Amen. If I can put it this way, I've wondered why this is so sometimes a little bit -- I don't know if difficult is the word -- but it's hard to compass because you've got about four different thoughts here that we're trying to pull together.

We like linear, this is A, this is B. If we believe, we receive, things like that. Here you have a picture, as we've seen all through scripture, of God's heart wanting to dwell with us. We also have this unique, which He calls chosen and precious, physical demonstration of His presence, a stone, the rock, the cornerstone.

I think we're a little bit more comfortable with cornerstone because we've heard it so much. It's all through the New Testament, but when we tie it together with this stone

that He set up and anointed and this stone, which was not only the gate of heaven, but it was the house of God, Bethel.

Then this same stone is becoming the cornerstone to build the house of God, the Bethel, except we're a part of it now because of what the stone has done for us. The stone is built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.

Steve: This stone, this house of God, it ties the whole Bible together. It says in Revelation 21, which I stopped before I got to it, but it talks about the holy Jerusalem coming down.

It has 12 gates, at the gates 12 angels, and of the gates, the names of the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel inscribed, and on the east, three gates, etc. The wall of the city had 12 foundations, and on them were the 12 names of the 12 apostles of the lamb.

There is so much that comes together here, and the key piece is Christ. Christ is the cornerstone. Christ is the one Who came to tabernacle among us so that we can tabernacle with Him. Amen.

Father, thank you for these nuggets, these chosen and precious insights into your word. Thank you for your big heart that wants to dwell with us and dwell in our midst. Thank you for making a way, Jesus. Thank you for taking away our sin. Thank you for paying the penalty for our sin.

Thank you for assuaging the wrath of God and restoring us to communion with the Father so that we can, like angels, ascend and descend. We can come close to you and you can come close to us. Thank you.

We worship you, and we commit these truths that we've heard to you today into your good spirit's hands. Reveal them to us when we need to have them revealed, but as Scott said, help us to get the message that you are committed to drawing near and dwelling with us. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith and Family podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@Gmail.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.