

Ephesians 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 —

Paul encouraged his readers to take the truths expressed thus far in this epistle, use them as a backdrop, and consider, at least for a short time, their state before they knew Christ—“*Therefore remember, that formerly you.*” The specifics of what they were to remember regarding their past are not stated until verse 12, so keep this in mind.

The Gentile believers at Ephesus are referenced as “*Gentiles in the flesh,*” a phrase emphasizing their physical distinction. (“*Flesh*” must be interpreted in context due to its different meanings in Scripture. Verse 3 is an example. There we found that “*flesh*” refers to the sinful habit patterns stored in the brain—the brain being a piece of flesh.)

To comprehend the depths of Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:11, we must realize that an unbelieving Jew perceived himself as right with God because: (1) he was a descendant of Abraham and, therefore, part of God’s chosen people—the Jews (2) he was part of the nation that had received the Law (3) he had been circumcised. The average Jew perceived all or any of the above as having secured his salvation. Paul, in Romans 2:17—3:8, refutes this thinking by teaching that a Jew is lost until he repents of his sin and accepts Christ as Savior. The “*Gentiles in the flesh*” (Ephesians 2:11) were different from Jews in that they were not physical descendants of Abraham, nor were they part of the nation that had received the Law of Moses, neither were they circumcised in their flesh. To the ill-informed Jew, the Gentiles were nothing more than trash—a totally worthless people. Unsaved Jews even called the Gentiles “*Uncircumcision*”—a word of contempt in Paul’s day.

Romans 4:11 communicates that physical “*circumcision*” was both a “*sign*” and a “*seal.*” “*Circumcision*” was a “*sign*” in that every time a Jewish male saw someone circumcised, or was reminded of his own circumcision, he was to remember that God’s righteousness is bestowed upon those who repent and believe while depraved. It was a “*seal*” in that circumcision cannot be undone. It proved that once God bestows righteousness to those desiring salvation, they cannot become unrighteous. Thus, physical circumcision was an outward sign of an inward transformation. “*Circumcision...of the heart*” is (and has always been) the issue (Romans 2:28-29; Galatians 5:6; 6:15). For this reason, Paul refers to the unbelieving Jews as “*the so-called ‘Circumcision’*” (Ephesians 2:11). Their circumcision was “*performed in the flesh by human hands,*” an act incapable of giving them a right standing with God.

Ephesians 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.

remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, (2:12a)

Paul communicates in verse 12 what the believers at Ephesus were to remember concerning their “pre-Christ” days. During that time they were “*separate from Christ.*” This statement goes much deeper than their having been lost and without Christ. Paul is referring to their lack of knowledge of the Messiah as Gentile unbelievers. At least the Jews looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, even though their sin and resulting blindness caused them to reject His offer of salvation. The Gentiles wandered aimlessly without purpose or hope. They worshiped a host of pagan deities in the midst of their depravity—none of which brought peace, joy, or eternal

life. These Gentile believers had a wealth of reasons to be grateful for what the Father had done through Christ.

excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, (2:12b)

“*Excluded from*” can also be interpreted “alienated from” or “be a stranger to.” The Gentiles were aliens and strangers to “*the commonwealth of Israel.*” “*Commonwealth*” is taken from a Greek term which can also be interpreted “citizenship” (as in Acts 22:28). Since a commonwealth is “the people of a nation or state,” the phrase, “*commonwealth of Israel,*” refers to God’s special relationship with His chosen people, physical Israel—He being their Head, Ruler, and King.

To understand the significance of God’s special relationship with Israel, we must go back as far as the Garden of Eden. Jehovah has always been the sovereign Ruler over the earth, but He delegated a stewardship to Adam and Eve—that of caring for His creation. A true theocracy was established, a theocratic kingdom where God ruled with man having dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26). This arrangement flourished until Adam and Eve declared their independence through sin. They, in fact, exchanged the theocratic kingdom for a kingdom controlled by Satan himself (2Corinthians 4:4)—God’s chief enemy.

God later began rebuilding His theocratic kingdom through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—Israel, the Jewish people. Jehovah desired to rule as head over Israel much the same as a king rules over a people. For the good of the theocracy, He appointed leaders who could accept or reject His ultimate authority (patriarchs, judges, kings, etc.). The Scriptures record Israel’s rebellion against God’s instruction and her eventual rejection of the Messiah (Who had been expected since Genesis 3:15). God will eventually bring His theocratic kingdom to full fruition through His Son (Genesis 49:10), for Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:2-3) when Christ rules as “*King of Kings and Lord of Lords*” (Revelation 19:11-16) during the Millennium (Revelation 20:4). Only then will the unconditional promises made to Abraham and his descendants (such as in Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:18), King David (in 2Samuel 7:10-16 and 1Chronicles 17:11-15), and the Jewish nation (in Deuteronomy 30:1-10 and Jeremiah 31:31-34) be fulfilled. Jesus will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, ruling as King over the whole earth, making certain that every unconditional promise made to the Jewish nation is fully realized and maintained.

God gave Israel His Law, His love, His covenants, in fact, everything she would need to live abundantly. He gave these blessings to no other nation (Deuteronomy 4:7-8, 32-34; Psalm 147:19-20; Romans 3:1-2). Thus, Gentiles are excluded (alienated) from this commonwealth so long as they reject Christ. However, when they exercise personal repentance and faith while depraved, they enter into some of the blessings associated with these Jewish covenants. Don’t misunderstand. The covenants themselves remain the possession of the Jewish people. Therefore, the church, made up of Jews and Gentiles, does not fulfill the unconditional covenants promised to the physical Jewish nation. These unconditional covenants will not be fulfilled in the truest sense until the Millennium—when Christ, a Jew, will rule as King over the Jews sitting on the throne of David (2 Samuel 7:10-16; 1 Chronicles 17:11-15). In fact, the entirety of the land promised to the Jews in Genesis 15:18 will not be under their control and occupation until the Millennium. Consider as well that every Jew who enters the Millennium will be born-again/saved (as a result of exercising personal repentance and faith while depraved), fulfilling the unconditional covenant God gave Israel in Jeremiah 31:31-34 to the max:

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the

covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, “declares the LORD. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. “And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

This fulfillment will occur at the end of the Tribulation, for every Jew who survives that traumatic season will accept Christ and be ushered into the Millennium.

Some of this subject matter cannot be absorbed without a basic knowledge of end-time events. If you had difficulty following, know that understanding will come later as you dig deeper into God’s Word.

God revealed Himself to the Jewish nation and chose her as His people for the specific purpose of bringing the Messiah into the world and taking the news of His coming to the Gentiles. She was not chosen in the sense that God elected every Jew to be saved, for many Jews have died who rejected God’s offer of salvation. Salvation for a Jew is the same as for anyone else—through the depraved repenting and exercising faith in Christ, the “seed” of Genesis 3:15 (Galatians 3:16). Only then does God grant new life (2Corinthians 5:17).

and strangers to the covenants of promise, (2:12c)

Gentiles were “strangers” to what God had revealed to the Jews (mainly because the Jews had failed to take the good news of the Messiah to the Gentiles—Israel’s original calling). God had first made an unconditional covenant with Abraham, the Father of the Jewish nation, promising to bless him and multiply his offspring (Genesis 12:1-3). God would, in fact, bless “all the families of the earth” through Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). This unconditional covenant held God responsible for fulfilling its conditions regardless of Abraham’s response. The Messiah, Jesus, Who is a Jew, brings this covenant to fruition. Additional unconditional covenants came later, such as the Palestinian covenant (Deuteronomy 30:1-10), the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:11-16; 1 Chronicles 17:10-14), and the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34)—each of which were based on the Abrahamic covenant. The covenant of Law (God’s covenant with Israel established at Mt. Sinai in Exodus 20) came after God’s promise to Abraham (Galatians 3:17-19), but was conditional (obedience brought blessings, disobedience brought curses). Paul doesn’t seem to reference this covenant in Ephesians 2:12, when he says, “the covenants of promise.” He, more than likely, is referencing the Abrahamic covenant along with the three additional unconditional covenants—each of which had as their foundation the Abrahamic covenant.

having no hope and without God in the world. (2:12d)

Before hearing the good news of Christ, the Ephesian believers (in comparison to Israel) had “no hope and” were “without God in the world.” Remember, the Jews had received God’s covenants, circumcision, and were descendants of Abraham—the father of the Jewish nation. They had a definite advantage over the Gentiles. Yet, Christ is the only “hope” for anyone, regardless of nationality (1Timothy 1:1). Thus, some Gentiles (such as Rahab and Ruth) placed faith in Israel’s Messiah (the “seed” of Genesis 3:15) prior to His First Coming.

Because Jesus is God (Hebrews 1:8), and the only “way” to the Father (John 14:6), as long as these Gentile readers were without Christ they were “*without God*” (Ephesians 2:12d). Sadly, they were “*without God in the world*”—“*without God*” in a world controlled by Satan (2Corinthians 4:4) who possesses no truth (John 8:44), whose ideas, plans, and schemes bring certain destruction.

Ephesians 2:13—But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

The Gentile believers at Ephesus, in fact all Gentiles who make up the body of Christ, were “*formerly...far off*” (Ephesians 2:13)—as confirmed later in Ephesians 2:17, a quote from Isaiah 57:19. Why? They had not received what Israel had received from Jehovah—the special privileges mentioned in Romans 9:4-5:

who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 9:4-5)

Remember, however, that although the Jews had received these special privileges, repentance and faith in Jesus as Messiah were required before God bestowed salvation. As mentioned earlier, no Jew is right with God due to ancestry, circumcision, or being part of the nation that received the Law. This truth adds insight to Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 2:13:

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13)

The Gentiles, through faith in Jesus, have access to the Father anytime they like—a privilege no unbelieving Jew has possessed, even the unsaved Jews who offered sacrifices under the Law (Hebrews 9:1-10). No unsaved Jew has the same privileges as a saved Gentile until he repents of his sin and accepts Christ as Savior. An incredible transformation transpires, however, once a Jew sees his need for Jesus—a topic addressed in the next few verses.

Ephesians 2:14—For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,

King Herod’s temple, the second temple built in Jerusalem, existed in Paul’s day. The first temple, King Solomon’s temple, was destroyed by Babylon (2 Kings 25:8-9—586 BC) but rebuilt during the days of Ezra (Ezra 6:14-15). Herod refurbished this second temple magnificently, which caused the disciples to point out the temple buildings to Jesus (Matthew 24:1). Herod’s temple was completed only a few years before Titus (a Roman general) destroyed it in A.D. 70.

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, in 60-62 A.D., a wall served as a barrier between the Court of the Gentiles and the remainder of the temple. A notice was posted to insure that no Gentile ventured past this wall. The notice, which was discovered by excavators in 1871, stated:

“No man of another nation to enter within the fence and enclosure round the temple, and whoever is caught will have himself to blame that his death ensues”
(*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1994).ⁱ

Both Jews and Gentiles gathered in the Court of the Gentiles, which formed a square of 750 feet. The money changers of Jesus' day conducted business in this location, selling oxen, sheep, and doves for sacrifices. Jesus cleansed this area in both John 2:13-16 and Matthew 21:12-13.

The previous input allows us to properly interpret Paul's words of Ephesians 2:14. First, Jesus gave Jews and Gentiles the opportunity to enter into a peaceful relationship with the Father. Second, He provided a way for Jews and Gentiles to live peacefully among themselves. Jews and Gentiles have always been unsuccessful in maintaining a peaceful relationship, as secular history records. Israel's constant conflict with the Arab nations is just one example. The descendants of Ishmael (Abraham's son through Hagar—a Gentile) have warred against the Jews for centuries (as God promised in Genesis 16:12), and the war continues today. Only "*in Christ Jesus*" (Ephesians 2:13) can the enmity be put to rest, "*For He Himself is our peace*" (Ephesians 2:14). Therefore, once a Jew or Gentile accepts Christ as Savior, he is placed "*in Christ Jesus*" (Ephesians 2:13), where "*both groups*" are made "*into one*" (Ephesians 2:14). This truth explains why Paul wrote to the Galatians:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

Ephesians 2:15—by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, (2:15a)

Every barrier ("*all enmity*") between God and man, as well as every barrier between man and his fellow man (be he Jew or Gentile), was abolished in Christ's "*flesh*" (body)—a truth that applies to every New Testament believer. Let's expand this thought.

When Jesus experienced physical death, the veil of the temple (which was His body—Hebrews 10:19-20) was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50-51)—symbolizing that access into God's presence is constantly available to believing Jews and Gentiles who live during the church age. Hence, New Testament believers become "*priests*" (Revelation 5:9-10) who can approach God any time they like (Hebrews 4:16). Under the Mosaic Law, "*the Law of commandments contained in ordinances*" (Ephesians 2:15), the high priest (and only the high priest) could enter into God's presence just "*once a year*" (Hebrews 9:6-7). But these ordinances, along with everything else that separated the Jews from the Gentiles, were abolished through the cross. Jesus did away with this ceremonial Law (all aspects of the Law, in fact) to free New Testament believers to live "*under grace*" (Romans 6:14). All of this change came about through the death of Christ's "*flesh*" (Ephesians 2:15), or body.

We, as New Testament believers, are no longer "*under Law*" (Romans 6:14). This fact is settled for all eternity. But Romans 8:3-4 teaches that as we are led by God's Spirit we find that the requirement of the Law (the requirement of the moral Law) is fulfilled in our experience. Thus, what was unattainable through attaching ourselves to the Law in our lost condition is realized through being led of God's Spirit (as we live free of the Law), because the Holy Spirit will never lead us to do anything in violation of the righteousness associated with the Law!

that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, (2:15b)

Not only did Christ's physical death (coupled with His resurrection) end the enmity brought on by the ceremonial Law, but it also serves as the avenue through which believing Jews and Gentiles are made "*into one new man*" (Ephesians 2:14-15). Paul wrote in 2Corinthians 5:17:

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2Corinthians 5:17)

The New Testament believer becomes a totally new man because the old man (Adamic nature, old self, sin nature, dead spirit—all synonymous terms) inherited from Adam is crucified (eradicated) the moment he repents and believes. The person he used to be is crucified (eradicated) through the avenue of Christ's "*body*" (Romans 6:6; Romans 7:4; Galatians 2:20). Consequently, when Jews and Gentiles become "*new*" creations (2Corinthians 5:17) in Christ, peace replaces enmity in previously volatile relationships and unity prevails. (Diagram 8 in the Reference Section might be profitable to review at this time.) As was stated earlier:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

Ephesians 2:16—and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, (2:16a)

Both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God through Christ's "*body*" offered on "*the cross.*" We determined earlier that the sin nature (Adamic nature, old man, old self, dead spirit) inherited from Adam is responsible for condemning unregenerate man to hell—not his acts of sin (Ephesians 2:3). For man to be reconciled to God, be he Jew or Gentile, the sin nature must be eradicated. Based on Romans 6:6, Romans 7:4, Ephesians 2:14-15, and Galatians 2:20, Christ's body is the avenue through which this eradication occurs—and the New Testament believer is forever reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:16). (Consult Diagram 8 in the Reference Section for additional input as to how we could have died in Christ.)

Even though the Jews originally received the Law, the Gentiles are also under the Law so long as they are unbelievers. This truth is confirmed in Romans 7:4 where Paul, while writing to Gentiles (Romans 1:13), states:

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ,... (Romans 7:4)

Paul also wrote to Gentiles in Galatians 3:24:

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:24)

Paul, in writing to Timothy, confirms that all the lost (both Jews and Gentiles) live under the Law:

realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane,

for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, (1Timothy 1:9-10)

Because the epistle to the Galatians was written to Gentiles, the unbelieving Gentiles were under Law like the Jews. According to Romans 7:1-4, the only way Jews or Gentiles, who being married to the Law, can be released from the Law, is through death:

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God. (Romans 7:1-4)

Thus, the death and eradication of the “old self” (Romans 6:6) is what frees New Testament Jewish and Gentile believers from the Law so both can be “joined” to Christ (Romans 7:4) once repentance and faith are exercised while depraved:

knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; (Romans 6:6)

by it having put to death the enmity. (2:16b)

“It” refers to the cross. “Enmity,” unlike its usage in verse 15, largely refers to the “enmity” that exists between God and unregenerate man—not just the enmity that exists between the unredeemed Jews and Gentiles. Our “enmity” with God was forever eliminated (through the cross) when we accepted Christ as Savior, for only then was the source of our “enmity,” the Adamic nature (old man), eradicated. Faith in Jesus (and God’s resulting gift of salvation) also allows the enmity between the Jews and Gentiles (addressed in depth in verse 15) to be removed, for after the cross, believing Jews and Gentiles are placed into one body—the body of Christ (Ephesians 2:16a). Once in Christ, any disunity between Jews and Gentiles is a direct result of sin, not a result of the previous barriers that existed under the Law.

Ephesians 2:17—And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;

On the basis of faith in Jesus’ perfect sacrifice, both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:16). Therefore, during His First Coming, Jesus, the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6), “preached peace” (Ephesians 2:17; John 14:27; 16:33). He came into the world as God’s “mediator” to restore “peace” between God and man (Romans 5:1; 1Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15). Even in announcing His birth, the angels perceived Him as providing “peace” (Luke 2:14). He “preached peace to” those “who were far away” (to the Gentiles) and “peace to those who were near” (to the Jews)—Ephesians 2:17. In other words, He desired that any man, be he Jew or Gentile, experience “peace” with the Father through Himself.

Ephesians 2:18—for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

According to *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, the Greek word from which we get “access” can be defined as:

A leading or bringing into the presence of, denotes access, with which is associated the thought of freedom to enter through the assistance of favor of another. (Vine, 1996)ⁱⁱ

Jesus is “*the door*” (John 10:7-9) and “*the way*” (John 14:6) through which we (once we repent and believe while deprived) partake of the Spirit and enter the Father’s presence, God being “*spirit*” (John 4:24). Only through the Spirit of God can man be placed into Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), and into the Father (John 14:20), after accepting Jesus as Savior. So, Paul stated:

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, (Romans 8:15-16)

As God’s children, who possess His Spirit, we can approach the Father through the Son any time we like:

Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

Ephesians 2:19—So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household,

Through Jesus, the believing Gentiles at Ephesus were “*no longer strangers and aliens*” (Ephesians 2:19). In fact, they were “*fellow citizens with the saints, and...of God’s household*” (Ephesians 2:19). They were also citizens of “*heaven*” (Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 2:6). These same truths apply to us today. Interestingly, “*saints*” (Ephesians 2:19) in this case refers to all Old and New Testament believers, all of whom are members of God’s “*household*” (Ephesians 2:19), the “*household of the faith*” (Galatians 6:10). Note: Old Testament believers were not forgiven (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 10:4, 11-12) nor made into saints (made perfect) until Jesus died (Hebrews 10:10; 12:23). Neither did they go to heaven until Jesus’ ascension, but dwelt in “*Abraham’s bosom*” (Luke 16:19-31) until that glorious event. All Old Testament believers were (and are) members of “*God’s household*” (Ephesians 2:19), “*the household of the faith*” (Galatians 6:10). All New Testament believers are also members of “*God’s household*” (Ephesians 2:19), “*the household of the faith*” (Galatians 6:10). However, only New Testament believers make up the church, the body of Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33), which began in Acts 2.

Ephesians 2:20—having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

As confirmed earlier, Old Testament believers are not part of the church age. The church, made up of all the redeemed since the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), is “*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone*” (Ephesians 2:20). The “*apostles*” were men trained by Jesus over an extended period of time. The “*prophets*” were

those equipped with the message of the apostles during the formative years of the church. These “*prophets*” are also mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 and will be covered there. “*Christ Jesus,*” as “*the corner stone*” of “*the foundation,*” is the main support of the structure that the foundation undergirds—the reference point from which every measurement is calibrated, the stabilizing factor that unifies the entire building. (For more input concerning Jesus as “*the corner stone,*” read Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11, and 1Peter 2:6-7.) Therefore, the church has a firm foundation.

Ephesians 2:21—in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

The “*building*” (Ephesians 2:21), the church that the “*foundation*” of Ephesians 2:20 supports, is being built at the present time. In fact, it was “*being fitted together*” (Ephesians 2:21) in Paul’s day and continues “*being fitted together*” today. This “*building...is growing into a holy temple in the Lord*” (Ephesians 2:21). Thus, the foundation, which consists of the apostles, prophets, and Christ Jesus the corner stone, supports “*a holy temple.*” The stones “*being fitted together*” to form this structure are believers who have accepted Christ since Acts 2. The stones, in other words, are those individuals who make up the church. This truth is confirmed in 1Peter 2:5, where we read:

you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1Peter 2:5)

Ephesians 2:22—in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

The believers at Ephesus were “*being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit,*” and so are we. In fact, every member of Christ’s body (the church) has had the awesome privilege of being placed, as a “*living*” stone (1Peter 2:5), within the temple wall. This temple houses the Holy “*Spirit*” (Ephesians 2:22). This temple, as confirmed earlier, is also the body of Christ and part of the Father’s family. In other words, God’s “*masterpiece*” (the church) spoken of in Ephesians 2:10 is addressed here.

ⁱ Orr, James, M.A., D.D. General Editor. (1915). Entry for ‘Gentiles, Court of the’. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. <http://www.studydrive.org/encyclopedias/isb/view.cgi?n=6655>.

ⁱⁱ Vine, W.E.; Unger, Merrill F., White, William Jr. (1996). *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*. Thomas Nelson. Nashville, TN. Used by permission. All rights reserved.