

**Series: EPHESIANS: THE CHURCH EMPOWERED**

**Title: Becoming the Temple of God**

**Text: Ephesians 2.11-22**

**Date: Oct 6, 2024**

## **Introduction**

### **THERE IS A WALL THAT SEPARATES US: NO HOPE**

#### **Ephesians 2.11-12**

*<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— <sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

#### **Without God in the World**

- Jews and Gentiles:
  - From Adam to Sinai – all humanity with a promise.
  - Sinai – a template and place-marker for what a people of God looks like.
  - From Christ on...
- Separated and alienated from the commonwealth:
  - Those who were in the commonwealth and those who are not.
- Stranger to **covenants and promise**:
  - Covenants and promises to and for the people of God.
- No hope.
- **Without God in the world.**
  - Some people believe in God, but they believe He lives in heaven and has nothing to do with this world.
  - **In that way, a person can still believe in God and be without God in the world.**
- Separated by a wall of hostility –
  - The law of Moses
  - **Covenants and promises**
  - **Being the people of God**

The contrast to this is in v 19.

## **Eph. 2:19**

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...*

- They were separated
- They were alienated
- They were strangers
- They had no hope

But now they are no longer that, but are called saints, fellow citizens, and members of the household of God.

What happened? Between verses 11 and 12, to verse 19, something happened. What was it?

## **HE BROKE THE WALL OF HOSTILITY: TWO BECOME ONE**

### **A Wall Between Us Horizontally – broken by Christ**

#### **Ephesians 2.13-15**

*<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he himself is our **peace**, who has made us **both one** and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of **hostility** <sup>15</sup> by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself **one** new man in place of the **two**, so making peace...*

Now in Christ we are brought together as one man (one person)

- Before Sinai
- At Sinai –
  - creation of a people, creation of a tabernacle, creation of a cost price that must be met to access God
- After Christ the hostility is broken and we are made ONE

### **He broke the wall – What wall?**

AGAIN, A wall of hostility

- **The law of Moses**
- **Covenants and promises**
- **Being the people of God**

How did he do this?

- **by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances**

## **Understanding “by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances”**

What does it mean?

Does it mean the OT is abolished? The Law of God is abolished?

### **Is the Torah abolished? NO**

**Jesus –**

#### **Matt 5:17-20**

*<sup>17</sup>“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

**Paul –**

#### **2 Timothy 3:16**

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*

#### **Romans 3:31**

*Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.*

So the Law is not abolished.

### **So what does it mean?**

#### **Three options**

#### **Option 1 – The law in ordinances is for the Jews – not the Gentiles**

- If this is the case then Paul’s writing to the gentiles regarding the law should not be there are meaningless
- If this is the case, why are we addressing the need to break down the wall of hostility if the law has no bearing on non-Jews?
- The heart of the law of God has been shown from Adam forward. Even before after Sanai. And is written on the hearts of all mankind

**You are NOT US!!!!!!**

## **Option 2 – The commandments in the ordinances discussed are only the additions made by rabbis**

- It is not the Torah as written, but the additional decrees that have been laid over the centuries by rabbis in the Mishnah
  - The Law, abolished, is **“in ordinances”— that is, “in the letter”— and is established in the spirit.**
- 
- Notice that the word “law” is qualified by the constructions “of commandments”
    - The word here rendered “ordinance” (dogma) properly means “a decree.” (τῶν ἐντολῶν) and **“expressed in ordinances”** (ἐν δόγμασιν).
  - The misuse of Torah - Man-made orders

### **Examples**

#### **A special people – Only Jews**

##### **Acts 11:2-3**

*<sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, <sup>3</sup> “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”*

##### **John 3:16a**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...*

#### **Gentiles not eating with Jews - book of Jubilees**

(This was not an OT book)

##### **Acts 10:28**

*You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.*

#### **Literal wall that separated Jews and Gentiles**

- Josephus: a death sentence on Gentiles who crossed this wall.
- There a place around the tabernacle for the Gentile – there was a place at Solomon’s temple for the Gentile – you can come to God.
- Yom Kippur covered the sins of the people and the nations

## **Option 3 - The entirety of the law is for all and must be fulfilled**

- The law is present
- The cost is clear
- The temple is pure

- Sacrifice is needed

“To abolish” = **“to supersede by something better than itself”**

- This is done through fulfillment.
- Everything within the law and the penalties are still in play, the sacrifice must be paid.

Therein lays the answer to how the wall is broken down.

**In Christ we find the fulfillment of the law**

**The price was paid**

**A Wall Between Us Vertically – broken By Christ**

**Ephesians 2.16-18**

*<sup>16</sup> and might reconcile us **both** to God in **one** body through the cross, thereby killing the **hostility**. <sup>17</sup> And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For **through** him **we both** have access **in one Spirit** to the Father.*

Those far and near – peace to / peace for

- He brought us near 13
- He is our peace 14
- He breaks and kills the hostility 14, 16
- He create one 15
- He reconciles us to God 16
- He offers the peace 17
- He gives access to God by One spirit 17

**We are redeemed from the law because He died to the law**

- The blood of Jesus his death results in a reconciliation with God by breaking down the wall and abolishing the law.

**Ephesians 1:7**

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace...*

**We are released from the law because we died to the Law**

**Rom 7:4-6**

*<sup>4</sup>...you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. <sup>5</sup> For while*

*we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. <sup>6</sup> But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.*

### **Gal. 2:19-21**

*<sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.*

- The calls for death and punishment – it has been paid –
  - In Christ's death and in your death.
- Righteousness is in Christ and not through the law.
- The law is not the way to rightness before God –
- Jesus' death, Jesus' blood.

### **The Law has been fulfilled – the sacrifice to cover the sins the law declares**

- That price is paid upon the cross, the blood, and righteousness of Christ.
- The whole law as a way of being right with God is superseded and accomplished in the sacrifice that was paid.

### **Isa. 57:17-19**

*<sup>17</sup> Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry, I struck him; I hid my face and was angry, but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart. <sup>18</sup> I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners, <sup>19</sup> creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him."*

### **This was planned – it is the fulfillment**

### **The nature of ONENESS**

- In Christ making one new person making one body – the Body of Christ

### **Eph. 1:22-23**

*<sup>22</sup> And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body...*

### **One Body – the Church**

- We need each other. We need unity

### **Eph. 4:15**

*...the whole body, joined and held together*

- Headship of Christ is implicit in Christ

### **Eph. 3:6**

*Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ*

### **Eph. 5:29-30**

*<sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body.*

- It is not individual – the Church is the Body together.

How? In Christ (in Himself) and In One Spirit - He created the One person v15

- He calls 1000s and now millions ONE person – Unity: He sees ONE person, ONE body, ONE building
- In Christ, all hostilities, barriers, racism must come down.
- **By the blood** – verse 13 – *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (...through the cross – v 16)*
- **By breaking down hostilities.**
- **By abolishing the law.**

**Create ONE new people.**

- Hostility is put to death.
- By preaching peace to those far and near.
- The Spirit gives us access.

The great outcome - **ACCESS TO GOD**

## **HE IS MAKING US A DWELLING PLACE FOR GOD: A HOLY TEMPLE**

### **Ephesians 2.19-22**

*<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

- **Made members of His household**

- Fellow citizens with saints 19
- Members of household of God 19
- Built on a foundation of apostles and prophets 20
- Joined together into a holy temple in the cornerstone 21
- Being built into a dwelling place by the Spirit 22

**Galatians 4:4-5**

*<sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

**Made into a Holy Temple**

**1 Peter 2:4-5**

*<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, <sup>5</sup> you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

The wall of hostility was the temple and its Law-driven path toward righteousness and reconciliation through death and sacrifice.

Now, through Christ, in Christ, by Christ; His blood, death, the cross; the price has been paid and the law of that time is not shifted into the law in our hearts that WE become the temple. He is the cornerstone that holds the temple together – we being joined together.

We are the Tabernacle; we are together the church.

**Challenge**

I will rejoice that I am included in the promises of God.

I will not create walls of hatred with others.

I will not walk in hostility with others.

I will live as the habitation of God and not simply seek a visitation from God.