

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"God's Habitation"

Ephesians 2:19-22

Introduction

1. In relation to Jewish heritage and blessing, the Gentiles are utterly bankrupt (vv. 11, 12). They stand before God and men deficient in five major areas of concern (v. 12).
2. Paul reports that "in Christ" the tragic condition of the Gentiles has been changed (vv. 13, 14). Now Gentiles are "high" and "one" with the Jews. The barriers between these national entities have been broken down in our Lord Jesus.
3. With barriers removed, it is concluded that Christ is our peace (v. 14), Christ made peace (vv. 14, 15), and Christ preached peace (v. 17). Both Jew and Gentile have access to God the Father through God the Son by God the Holy Spirit (v. 18).
4. Out of all the above, Paul concludes that all believers (Jews and Gentiles) are now in three new situations. Look at them:

1. THE NEW POLITICAL ARENA v. 19 -- NATION

a. Negatively

The negative "no longer" notes what Gentiles were.

Two are listed:

1) Strangers. This is the same word used earlier (v. 12).

2) Foreigners. The Greek word means a sojourner.

It means one who dwells near or by, but not in a place (Acts 7:6, 29; 1 Pet. 2:11).

b. Positively

"Fellowcitizen" is only found here in the New Testament. It is the opposite of the above two words. It means a Gentile is now part of the "commonwealth" (cf. v. 12). But this is "with the saints." This is a blessed enrollment in a new register.

2. THE NEW DOMESTIC ARENA v. 19 -- FAMILY

Here is a statement noting that the fellowship of believers is of the closest and warmest kind. This relates believers more intimately than the previous figure. There civil concepts are in view; here the home is dominant. The word "household" is only found in the New Testament three times (here; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:8). But beyond the relationship of believers, this phrase notes the blessed personal relationship of believers to God the Father. It is His household. All earthly family distinctions are wiped out "in Christ." All believers are now brothers and sisters.

a. Foundation v. 20

This figure is not a denial of another (1 Cor. 3:11). Rather, it is complementary. Here Christ is the cornerstone and the foundation consists of apostles and prophets. The order here is important, for it maintains the dispensational distinctive of the New Testament prophet (cf. 3:5; 4:11; Acts 15:32).

b. Cornerstone v. 20

Two times in the New Testament this word occurs (here, 2 Pet. 2:6). Structurally, this stone was at the angle of the building by which a standard was fixed for the bearings of the walls and cross-walls. He is the bond and unity of the structure.

c. Building vv. 21, 22

1) Fitly joined. The link with Christ is patent. There is no other way to understand "in whom." Hence, union with Christ brings a certain blessedness in building. The first of these is expressed by the word "fitly framed together." This is one compound word in Greek only used here and in 4:16. United with the cornerstone, the several parts are also united one with another so as to constitute a well compacted whole.

2) Grows wholly. Now the figure changes to what suits a living organism. Being present tense, the idea suggests that with each new part being inserted, it becomes a fitted part of the living whole. Marvelous.

3) Building together. This word is only found here in the New Testament. It means various persons are builded together. It suggests there are a variety of materials used. What an amazing activity by God.

Note: The result of all the above construction is twofold:

1. An Holy Temple. The word used for "temple" means the Holy of Holies. This is the product and it is "in the Lord." So God gets out of His activity a center of worship in Himself.

2. An Habitation of God. The thought here is of God permanently abiding. Here is God abiding in the total whole. Elsewhere He abides in the individual (cf. 3:17). So the goal of the building process is a matchless place for His worship, praise, and dwelling. This can only be "through the Spirit."

Conclusion The positions of Jew and Gentile are evident (vv. 19, 20): new nation, family, building. God's building process reckons to bring about a masterful structure in compactness, size and spirituality as each new believer is added to it.

*Near, so very near to God
Nearer, I cannot be;
For in the person of His Son
I'm just as near as He.*

*Dear, so very dear to God
Dearer, I cannot be;
For in the person of His Son
I'm just as dear as He.*