

# Rejected by Men, Accepted by God Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Open your Bibles up to 1 Peter chapter 2. We're going to read the same verses that we covered last week! And try to go in a little bit deeper and a little bit further with what we began to see last week and see if we can't glean a little bit more from the Word about how we're supposed to handle the Old Testament, how we're supposed to think about the Old Testament, and how in light of what Peter does with the Old Testament here, what are we supposed to think about ourselves?

So I'm going to start reading in verse 4 and read all the way down to verse 10. So I want you guys to stand together as we read. Peter writes, As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men, but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 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.

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. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

[ 1 : 43 ] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Father, take this Word by the power of your Spirit and make it come alive for us. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen. I told you last week that the Old Testament is a book that is about Jesus, and it is for us.

So the Old Testament is not a book of a bygone era. It's not a book that we kind of just need to read to get a little bit of background so that we can get to the good stuff in the New Testament. The Old Testament is about Jesus Christ, and it is written for us.

And I pointed you to some verses that we've already covered in 1 Peter 1 to prove that point, where in chapter 1, verse 10, we read this, Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicated when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

So the prophets of the Old Testament were seeking to know when are the things that we are predicting going to happen? They understood and they knew that these things were about and fundamentally had to do with Christ, with the Messiah.

[ 3 : 12 ] So they were talking about Jesus. And then verse 12, it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but you in the things that have now been announced to you. So that not only is it about Jesus, but the words of the prophets are for us.

They're for people who live now, today, during the New Covenant era. So the Old Testament is not a book to be ignored. It's not a book to be set aside. It is a book to be mined for treasures so that we can see Christ more clearly and so that we can be challenged in our walk with Christ.

And then we see that, we saw those principles applied by Peter as he interprets the Old Testament for us here in verses 4 through 10. And last week we focused on what Peter says about Jesus rather than what Jesus says in this passage about us.

And so this week we're going to shift our focus from seeing what Peter reveals to us from the Old Testament about Christ to seeing what Peter reveals to us from the Old Testament about us. But you have to see, first of all, the connection between those two things.

Because the Old Testament is for us precisely because it is about Jesus. If the Old Testament is not about Christ, if it's not Christ-centered, then it's not for Christ's followers.

[ 4 : 31 ] And so let me remind you real quickly of the two things we saw last week that Peter reveals about Jesus from the Old Testament. The first thing that I said is that Peter assumes that Jesus is God Himself.

I said that because there are two Old Testament passages that refer to God Himself, refer to Yahweh, Jehovah, in their original context, that Peter has no problem applying to Jesus here in this passage.

The first one is a little harder to spot because you have to look up in the previous verses. But you can see in verse 4 where it says, As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men.

As you come to Him. Come to whom? The Lord mentioned in verse 3. If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good, which is a reference we saw to Psalm 34, in which the Lord there is Yahweh. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good, says the psalmist. And now Peter says, If you've tasted that the Lord is good, and as you come to Him, and then he identifies to Him later on as Jesus Himself, rejected by men, but in the sight of God, chosen and precious.

[ 5 : 43 ] So there, Peter identifies Jesus as the Lord of Psalm 34. That's who He is. And He doesn't argue for it. He simply assumes that that's the case. He does the same thing a little bit later on in verse 7 when He quotes from Isaiah chapter 8.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. It's obvious here in this passage that Peter says that the stone here is Jesus. But when you read in Isaiah chapter 8, God identifies Himself as the stone.

He is the stone that the builders rejected. So part of Peter's theology that he doesn't argue for here, that he just assumes because he's taught it over and over, and he knows that the other apostles have taught this over and over, is that Jesus is divine.

He is the God who has revealed Himself in the Old Testament. So that was the first thing that we saw last week. The other thing that we saw is more fundamental to understanding the rest of this passage.

And that is that I said last week that Jesus is the embodiment of what we call the remnant principle in the Old Testament. So throughout the Old Testament, you have the nation of Israel that is at times obedient, but most of the time disobedient to God's Word.

[ 7 : 04 ] And so God will over and over, He will judge Israel, and Israel repents, and then He blesses Israel, and then they fall into sin again, and He judges them, and they repent, okay? But you have this thought running through the Old Testament, particularly in the prophets of the Old Testament, that though Israel might be disobedient, and though the nation as a whole may come under God's judgment.

So, for instance, the nation came under God's judgment when Babylon marched in and took most of the people captive and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. They were decimated. They were in ruins.

And yet in the midst of all of that trouble, God had a remnant. There was a people within the people that God was hanging on to. And they were His chosen remnant.

And what I said to you last week is that Jesus is the fulfillment and the embodiment of that remnant principle within the Old Testament.

He is the remnant. He is, in a very real sense, Jesus is Israel. Now, let me, because that's so important for seeing what Peter is going to say about us this morning, I want to camp out a little bit more today on that statement.

[ 8 : 18 ] Jesus is, in a very real sense, He is Israel. He is, and in Him is found the fulfillment of the promises made to Israel. I want to just remain on that for a bit because everything else that we're going to say about this passage won't make sense unless that thought is really fully connected and formed in your mind.

So I want to give you two examples, one directly from the Old Testament and one from another place in the New Testament where the Old Testament is referenced to show you that. So first of all, I want to show you this from the book of Isaiah.

So you just hold yourself, your place there in 1 Peter, and I want you to turn all the way back to Isaiah chapter 42. Now, between Isaiah chapter 42 and Isaiah chapter 53, there are a number of what we call songs that were really sort of poems in the middle of the book.

And theologians call these various songs that are scattered throughout these chapters, 42 through 53, they call them the servant songs of Isaiah.

And the reason why they call them that is very simple, because all of these songs are either addressed to or they are about someone who is called the servant of the Lord.

[ 9 : 35 ] And so if you begin looking first, the first servant song is found in Isaiah chapter 42. In verse 1, we read this. It says, Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights.

I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations. And then if you move down to verse 4, it says, He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth and the coastlands wait for his law.

That's the end of the song. So there's this idea in Isaiah 42 of a servant of God. And here it looks like an individual. It seems like a particular individual.

My servant, my chosen, I have put my spirit upon him. He will do this. He will do that throughout the song. So there's this servant that Isaiah predicts is coming.

God's servant, God's chosen one. And he's coming and he's going to bring justice. He's going to establish justice in all the earth. And he will not grow faint. He will not stop. He will not rest until that work of establishing justice in the earth is done.

[ 10 : 43 ] That's who the servant is. But if you pay close attention to the words in verse 1, he's referred to as my chosen in whom my soul delights. He says, I'll put my spirit on him.

Does that sound at least a little bit familiar to you? Because if you read in the Gospels the account of Jesus' baptism, at Jesus' baptism, these words are referenced.

It's not word for word, but they're referenced where Jesus is called my son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased or in whom I delight.

And then the Spirit of God comes and rests upon Jesus at that baptism and empowers him for ministry. There's no doubt that all of the Gospel writers saw this servant of Isaiah 42 as being Jesus himself.

Jesus is the servant who will come and bring justice to the earth. But then something strange happens because if you keep reading through these various servant songs, something strange happens.

[ 11 : 45 ] The next one is found in chapter 44. It's the same servant that he has in mind. It doesn't change, but something is different. Chapter 44, verse 1.

But now hear, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. Thus says the Lord who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you.

Fear not, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. So here in chapter 44, it's the same servant. It's the chosen one of God. It's the servant of the Lord.

And yet here, that servant is Israel. Jacob is a term for Israel. Then he's called Israel. Jeshurun is another term for Israel. So in chapter 42, it's an individual who's going to bring justice into the earth whom the Gospel writers identify as Jesus.

But in chapter 44, it's the entire nation of Israel through whom God will work. And then you have another individual in the last servant song, the one that we are most familiar with because it's quoted so often in the New Testament and applied to Jesus.

[ 12 : 50 ] But Isaiah 52 and 53. Start at the end of Isaiah 52 and verse 13 where he says, Behold, my servant shall act wisely.

He shall be high and lifted up and shall be exalted. And then you move down to verse 3 of chapter 53. It's all the same song. There's no break here. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

As one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquity. We know that that's Christ because the New Testament several times quotes from this very song and says that it's Jesus.

And even if you didn't have the New Testament telling you that, it would be obvious. Who else bears the sins of God's people? Who else is wounded for our transgressions but Jesus?

[ 13 : 53 ] So, Isaiah 42. There's an individual servant whom the gospel writers identify as Jesus who will bring justice to the earth. Isaiah chapter 44.

The servant of the Lord is the entire nation of Israel. Isaiah chapters 52 and 53. We're back to the idea of an individual servant of the Lord. So, which one is it?

Is it a single individual or is it the nation as a whole? Well, in between those passages there's another servant song in chapter 49.

Isaiah chapter 49. And if you listen carefully, it's very interesting the way that things are worded here. Isaiah chapter 49 verse 1.

The beginning of the song. Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb. From the body of my mother he named my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword.

[14:55] In the shadow of his hand he hid me. He has made me a polished arrow and in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

So, verse 3. The servant is Israel. And yet, move down to verse 5. And now, the Lord says, He who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him and that Israel might be gathered to him.

That's strange because in verse 3 the servant is Israel and in verse 5 the servant is going to bring Israel back to God. So, who is this servant?

Who is this servant that on the one hand can be referred to as Israel and yet on the other hand is going to redeem Israel? Who is this servant who in chapter 42 is going to bring justice to the earth? Yet in chapter 44 is the nation of Israel as a whole. Who is it? It is an individual who in himself represents and embodies the nation of Israel.

[16:05] Which explains why when you get to the New Testament places like, say, Galatians where Paul refers back to the promise made to Abraham. Abraham, Abraham the father of the nation of Israel.

The very promise in which Abraham is told he will have many descendants. This is the promise of a nation for Abraham. You will have seed Abraham has promised.

And yet Paul refers to that very promise and says the seed that Abraham was promised is Christ. It doesn't seem like that in Genesis.

It seems like the seed is all of Israel and yet Paul is perfectly comfortable saying the seed is Jesus because it's both. Initially the people of Israel, Abraham's descendants had a mission set before them and yet they failed because they're sinners.

They're unable to do what God has called them to do. They are unable to do as God promised Abraham that his seed would be a blessing to all the families of the earth. They cannot do that.

[17:15] And so Jesus comes as a descendant of Abraham as a member of Israel and he takes upon himself all the responsibilities of the entire nation and embodied within him is the hope of the nation.

Embodied with him is the responsibility of the nation to bring blessing to the entire world. Jesus is the servant who is Israel.

There's one example for you. Let me give you one other. This one's a little quicker, a little bit shorter but if you turn over to the gospel of Matthew there's an interesting phrase in Matthew chapter 2 in the middle of the story about Jesus' birth and we're familiar with the story because we hear it every Christmas and yet there's a little portion of the story that a lot of times we just sort of skip over or we read through it quickly and don't pay much attention to it.

But you know in the middle of the story of the birth of Christ there are a few appearances of an angel to Joseph to lead and guide Joseph and protect the baby Jesus. Well at one point an angel comes to Joseph and tells Joseph listen you need to take Mary and the baby to Egypt and the reason for that is obvious in the context of the story.

Herod is about to come to Bethlehem with his soldiers and he's going to kill all the children all the babies and so God warns Joseph through an angel to take Jesus down to Egypt so that Jesus will be protected.

[18:41] And yet if you read through that portion of the story in chapter 2 verse 15 there's something interesting. It says that this that going down to Egypt God sending Jesus through Joseph down to Egypt this was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet out of Egypt I called my son.

that's a quotation from Hosea chapter 11 verse 1 and in Hosea chapter 11 the prophet Hosea is looking back upon God's redemption of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt in the Exodus

event.

So Hosea 11 verse 1 is about God saving the nation out of Egypt and yet Matthew here says that that phrase out of Egypt I called my son is ultimately about Jesus.

What is Matthew's point? Well you could say that Matthew just doesn't know how to read very well and he doesn't know how to interpret things very well and he's just pulling random sentences and phrases from the Old Testament and applying them to Jesus.

Or you could read the entire gospel of Matthew and you could see that throughout this gospel Matthew paints a picture of Jesus as the fulfillment of everything promised to Israel as the embodiment of all the responsibilities laid upon Israel.

[ 20 : 11 ] Matthew's not playing fast and loose with Hosea 11 1. Matthew's bringing it out so that he can show us listen Jesus is Israel.

Israel came out of Egypt Jesus came out of Egypt Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years Jesus is driven into the wilderness by the spirit for 40 days over and over a pattern throughout the gospel of Matthew Jesus is Israel now if you don't understand that principle and if you don't see it then these verses that we're looking at this morning in 1 Peter chapter 2 will not make a whole lot of sense to you they will not you will either breeze past them and assume that they're for somebody else to figure out another day or you will think that Peter Peter doesn't know the Old Testament Peter doesn't know how to handle the Old Testament but Peter is working off the exact same assumption that Matthew works off of the exact same assumption that Isaiah works off of when he writes the servant songs that in Christ all the promises made to Israel are fulfilled now that is key because what we see here in 1 Peter is a step two in the process of identifying Israel under the new covenant step one

Jesus is in a very real sense Israel step two those who trust in Christ are united to Jesus by that faith and they therefore become a part of true spiritual Israel I'll show you what I mean if you just read through this passage you'll notice over and over that that believers are thought of as being connected to Christ so that what is true about Christ in many senses is also true about believers what belongs to Christ belongs to us who've trusted in him it starts there in verse 4 as you come to him Jesus a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious you yourselves like living stones so Jesus is the living stone and now those of us who have come to Christ are also living stones and then he says that you are being built up like a spiritual house which is a phrase that refers to the temple yet in the gospels

Jesus identifies himself as the temple John says in John 1 14 that the word became flesh and tabernacled among us reminding us of the early stages of the temple in which it was more of a tent a tabernacle Jesus became the temple the tabernacle of God among his people which is why Jesus says to the religious leaders that you will tear down this temple and in three days I will rebuild it and then we're told in the gospels that Jesus was talking about his own body Jesus viewed himself as the true temple of God so Jesus is the living stone and we become living stones in him Jesus is the true temple we are collectively together as as believers as we come together we are being built up are to be a holy priesthood Jesus is according to the book of Hebrews the ultimate final high priest he's greater than all the high priests of the old testament and yet now here we are a holy priesthood we are to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to

God Jesus according to Hebrews is the high priest who offers up himself as a sacrifice so we are like Christ! living stones we are like Christ a priesthood we are like Christ offering sacrifices up to God over and over and over in these verses Peter is identifying us and saying your connection to Christ means that what Christ is in the embodiment of Israel is also true of those who belong to him so that what we see in the New Testament is not that Old Testament Israel is replaced by a completely new group called the church what we see is that Jesus the true Israel is joining new people bringing in Gentiles into the people of God it's not a forgetting of Israel and a replacement of

[ 25 : 05 ] Israel it is real true Israel it is the remnant grown through the Gentile nations that's not something unique to Peter that's not something unique to the gospel writers it's everywhere so if you look in Romans chapter 9 for instance we see this principle at work in Romans chapter 9 where Paul is lamenting the fact that the vast majority of the Jewish people have rejected the gospel and have rejected Christ but he's not simply lamenting it he's explaining why is that the case why is it if Jesus is the Jewish Messiah that the vast majority of the Jews of Paul's day had rejected Jesus in Romans chapter 9 verse 30 he says this what shall we say then the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it that is a righteousness that is by faith but that Israel who pursued!

who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law why because it were based on works listen to what he says now about the Jews they have stumbled over the stumbling stone as it is written behold I'm laying in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame the very same passage that Peter quotes the very same passage that Peter applies to Christ so Paul and Peter are saying essentially the same thing here Christ has come and the reason that the people of God now are composed primarily of Gentiles is because the Jewish people have stumbled over the stumbling stone but there's more verse 11 of chapter 11 he says so I asked did they stumble they stumbled over Jesus did they stumble in order that they might fall by no means but rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles so is to make

Israel jealous now if some of the branches were broken off and you although a wild olive shoot were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree do not be arrogant toward the branches in other words the picture that Paul paints is that the Jewish people stumbled over Christ who is the stumbling stone and yet in their stumbling and in their disbelief God's people were not erased from the world it was through their stumbling that the Gentiles then were enabled to come in faith to Christ and then he uses another metaphor he mixes it up it's not only the stumbling stone metaphor but the metaphor of the branches and he says if you picture true spiritual Israel or if you picture Abraham as the vine he says the vast majority of the Jewish people the ethnic descendants of Abraham have been broken off they didn't believe in

Jesus they stumbled over the stumbling stone but now in their place Gentiles have been grafted in we have been grafted in and now all that belongs to the vine belongs to us because we are now part of the vine which is true spiritual Israel this explains why in Romans chapter 9 verse 6 Paul says not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring in other words for Paul and for Peter as well what makes one a true Israelite is not your physical descent from Abraham there is one true Israelite and his name is Jesus Christ and you get to be grafted into Israel if you trust in him but if you stumble over him you have no part in Israel this is immensely important for us to understand our place in God's workings and dealings throughout history but more than that it's not just our place in history it's understanding what God has given to us and what he has done for us so that when you come to the end of our passage here in 1st Peter

Peter again returns to his focus upon what does this mean for us what does this mean for God's people what does it mean if Christ is the stone over whom people have stumbled and in whom others have believed if Christ is that stone if Christ is true spiritual Israel if Christ is the embodiment of the remnant principle then what does that mean for us who have believed in him and he tells us in verses 9 and 10 I want you to pay close attention to these phrases we're going to look at each one of them he says first of all he says but you you have believed you have trusted in Christ you are a chosen race every one of these phrases in verses 9 and 10 comes from the Old Testament but you are a chosen race this comes from Isaiah chapter 43 where God speaks of Israel as his chosen people and in the Greek translation of the

[ 30 : 38 ] Old Testament which Peter is probably quoting here and which his readers would have been familiar with it doesn't say chosen people it uses the word that Peter uses it says chosen race so that the people of God now are what Israel once was under the old covenant Israel was a chosen people and a chosen race they were but that's no longer the case under the new covenant now whoever trusts in Christ the true Israel has become a member of that chosen race we are really a chosen race race is an issue for us is it not the concept of race the concept of ethnicities that people look different and come from different backgrounds and have different cultures it is a major problem in our society whether we want to admit it or not whether we would like to pretend that it's gone or that it should be gone it's still a major issue for us it's in the news every single day we feel it all around us it's constant yet the Bible has much to say about that and what the Bible has to say about race is that there are there are more there is more than one race there is it's a reality there are two races there's a chosen race there's everybody else and in

Christ in Christ all ethnic and racial distinctions become secondary I'm not saying that they disappear they don't disappear because in the book of Revelation we see the song sung by the angels of Christ who has redeemed people from every tribe tongue people and nation so that even the heavenly host is able to see visibly and audibly through the languages that they hear that there are all kinds of different people redeemed by Christ I think that in the new heavens and new earth I

will probably still be pasty white there's a pretty good chance of that okay and Hayward will still be darker than me and Jeremiah will be darker than me I think there will be some correspondence between our bodies now and our bodies then it's not that those things are gone but in Christ they are not ultimately relevant they are not we look everywhere for a solution to racism we look to education programs and we look to all sorts of money and grants from the government to set up this program and to do that and we try all these we say we need to do these things and we need to say these things to our children and we need to teach things this way and we need to make reparations in all these different ways and maybe some of those things can make some headway in some ground but the solution is found only in

Christ and when we recognize that in him we are a singular chosen race if we're in him what matters is not your cultural background what matters is not your pigmentation what matters is you are either in Christ or you are outside of Christ and what matters concerning the people that you confront every day in your life they are either in Christ and they are your brother or sister or they are outside of Christ and they need to hear the gospel that's it that's all that matters he says a lot more than that we are a chosen race he says we are a royal priesthood that is that is probably out of all the statements that he makes here that is probably the most significant in terms of understanding who we are in relation to old covenant Israel because Peter is drawing directly from language in the Old Testament that derives from Exodus chapter 19 in fact I want you one more time to turn to Exodus we are going to turn to one other Old

Testament passage in a bit but I want you to turn to Exodus 19 because it is so so important of course in Exodus chapter 20 we have the Ten Commandments but in Exodus chapter 19 the people have come to Mount Sinai where they are going to receive the Ten Commandments and this is such a significant passage because this is in an official way this is the beginning of the nation of Israel prior to this they have simply been the descendants of Abraham at one time nomads in the land of Canaan and then for 400 years Hebrew slaves in Egypt they are consistently in fact referred to as Hebrews the Hebrews before this point consistently and yet now after the covenant ceremony that's going to take place here at Mount Sinai they will be Israel the people of God God's nation and in the midst of this ratification of the existence of the nation of Israel we read this in chapter 9 verse 5 he says now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant you shall be my treasured possession among all the peoples for all the earth is mine and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation that should sound familiar because

Peter says we are a royal priesthood a holy nation and a people for his own possession all three of those phrases are found right here at the founding of the nation of Israel and most significant among them I think is this idea of Israel serving as a royal priesthood of course Israel had a priesthood the Levites one of the twelve tribes were to serve Israel as the priests and yet there was a very real sense in which God expected the entire nation to serve as priests for the rest of the world so that you had the priests within Israel who mediated between God and the nation on behalf of the nation and then you have the nation as a whole who mediates between the world and God so that Israel was supposed to be a people who took God's word out to the nations that was their purpose that was their goal to be a blessing to all the families of the earth they were to be the mediators between

[ 37 : 17 ] God and the world Peter says that's our task now oh sure there's one mediator between God and man ultimately Christ Jesus is the real true mediator but who brings people to Christ that's our task that's our job and it's not only ours individually I think Peter has in mind us collectively just as just as Moses in Exodus had an idea had in mind that Israel as a whole was to be a kingdom of priests not just individual priests doing a kingdom of priests and we are a royal priesthood we together function as priests we together bring the gospel to the world that's why we're here that's that's why the church exists we are God's priesthood in the world now and we have a task in fact he tells us very clearly what that is you're a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light that's the purpose of the priesthood why has

God made us a priesthood why has he made us into a holy nation why has he made us his own possession so that we might proclaim his greatness and his worth to the people around us we of course cannot do that and we cannot serve as a priesthood unless we are in fact a holy nation unless we are in fact different from and distinct from the people in the world around us when you read through the old testament particularly the first few books of the old testament you will notice

quickly that it is filled with laws law after law after law and when you try to read through the old testament it sometimes becomes a burden because you think why all these details of what they could eat and what they couldn't eat and what they could wear and why do they have all of these details and fundamentally distinct from the nations around her so that the nations in Canaan would look and see that there's a difference between God's people and us that there's an obvious real difference they live in a completely different way from the ways in which the rest of the world live and that's true even for those who are no longer under those laws we are to be a holy nation!

Our lifestyles the way that we live the way that we interact with people if we're going to serve as a priesthood and proclaim his excellencies to them we're going to have to be a set apart holy people so that there's a reason for them to pay attention to what we have to say why listen to someone go on about the greatness of the one they claim is the defining person in their life who orders their life when their life looks no different than your life why listen to them there's no reason we can only function as priests if we are at the same time a holy set apart people for God showing to the world that we belong to him that we are his unique possession our lives are not our own they don't belong to us we don't determine our destinies we don't decide what we do tomorrow we don't decide where we move and what we don't decide all of those things we belong to him and he decides those things and we follow his leadership and we submit everything to him only when that's true about us will be an effective priesthood in the world one more thing though that

I want you to see here from this passage he says in verse 10 he says once you were not a people but now you are God's people once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy now it seems initially as if Peter is simply saying you Gentiles used to not be a part of the people of God but now you are a part of the people of God and you used to not be recipients of mercy and now you have received because you were Gentiles and cut off from the promises and that's true that is what Peter is saying but he's!

[ 41 : 59 ] more than that Hosea here and if you read in Hosea chapter 1 you don't have to turn there this time let me just read it to you the book of Hosea is a strange book it is a book in which God calls his prophet to do some very strange things and here in chapter 1 verse 6 there's a strange call that God gives to the prophet and to the wife of the that is his wife the prophet's wife she conceived and bore a daughter and the Lord said to him to Hosea call her name no mercy that's a terrible name to give to your daughter but call her no mercy for I will have no mercy on the house of

Israel to forgive them at all but I will have mercy on the house of Judah and I will save them by the Lord their God I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war horses or by horsemen so God is saying there's a part of the people kingdom in the north I'm not going to give them mercy so name your daughter no mercy as a sign to them that they get no mercy but in the midst of that I will save my remnant down in the south in Judah verse 8 when she had weaned no mercy she conceived and bore a son and the Lord said call his name not my people for you are not my people and I am not your God that's harsh that's hard yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered and in the place where it was said to them you are not my people it shall be said to them children of the living God and the children of Judah and the children of

Israel shall be gathered together and they shall point for themselves one head and they shall go up from the land for great shall be the day of Jezreel so say to your brothers you are my people and to your sisters!

you have received mercy the message here is that God is saying I am bringing an unbelievable judgment upon my people so much so that they will be counted as not my people and they will look as though they have not received any mercy but out of them I will save a people and to those people whom I save and I rescue and I deliver to those people you will say you are now my people and to those people you will say you have now received mercy and Peter says to us believers under the new covenant once you were not a people now you're God's people once you had not received mercy now you've received mercy the fulfillment of the promises made to Israel seen now here in all those united to Jesus by faith one of the incredible things when you begin to see this you begin to think it is it is a wonder that God ever chose

Abraham and his descendants in the first place that's a wonder it is an even greater wonder that God should deem now under the new covenant to make us Gentiles a part of his covenant people

you and I come from a people because to my knowledge there aren't any Jewish people among us maybe there are but to my knowledge there aren't so it doesn't matter whether your descendants are from Europe or Asia or Africa or wherever they may be from all of us come from people who for thousands of years were idol worshippers for century upon century most of those cultures at some point in time were sacrificing children on altars to false gods cut off Paul says from the covenant promises of Israel and yet now in this age a people and the recipients of mercy and not only from a historical standpoint but look at your life think of your own life you don't deserve the mercy that you've received you don't deserve to be a part of the people of God and sometimes you might feel that and know that sometimes we feel that and know that to the point to where we think

[ 47 : 07 ] I cannot be a part of God's people I can't look at the list of things that I've done I can't be a part of God's people I think of 1 Corinthians chapter 6 where Paul lists sin after sin after sin all sorts of immorality all sorts of things things that we would put on the list of these are the big sins and then he comes to a conclusion and he says and such were some of you but now now you've received mercy such were some of you it can be said of every person who trusts in Christ once you were not a part of God's people but now you are a part of God's people once you had not received mercy and now you have received mercy you're on one side of that either you're still outside of God's people because you haven't trusted in

Christ in which case you need to put your faith in him and receive his mercy and become a part or you are a part of God's people in which case you need to rejoice because the true Israel had to bear in himself not only the weight of Israel's failures but the weight of the sins and failures of everyone whom he would adopt into the family and people of God and it becomes when you understand and when you begin to see with more clarity who you are in Christ and because of Christ it becomes a motive and a means of worship let's pray so much here in your word to mine and to think about and to chew on I pray though that we would above all else that we would walk away from this passage our time spent here in 1

Peter with grateful hearts with a renewed sense of excitement for what it means to be a part of your people and so we ask you now to receive the worship that we offer up to you to receive it as an acceptable sacrifice a pleasing sacrifice through our Lord Jesus Christ it's in his name that we pray amen