

- 2) The Lord's promise that David's son would build His house had its first point of fulfillment in the *incarnation*. In the person of Jesus, the promise of an everlasting divine dwelling among men found its preeminent realization in the conjoining of deity and humanity (Colossians 1:19, 2:9).

But even as all things find their terminus in Him, so also, all things under His redemption have their source and life in Him. Jesus has erected God's sanctuary by taking on our humanity, but now He is extending that building by *communicating His own consummate humanity* to Adam's race. As Zechariah prophesied, the Branch is the sole builder of Yahweh's house, but He is doing so in connection with the labors of those who have come to Him (cf. 6:13, 15, with Matthew 16:13-18, 28:18-20).

- c. The third facet of the formation of sacred space in Jesus Christ is closely related to the second. Christ is the builder of the true sanctuary, but He is building it upon Himself as its *foundation*. This reflects, again, the fact that everything subsequent to Christ's redemption presupposes and stands upon it. Whatever the particular aspect of the new creation or its form or extent in the present age, it is "in Christ."

- 1) As with the preceding two considerations, this one is equally a matter of promise and fulfillment:

In a psalm of praise and celebration commemorating Yahweh as the sure refuge and point of deliverance ("salvation") for those who trust in Him, the psalmist introduces a rejected stone that Yahweh makes the *chief cornerstone* (118:22-23). He then associates the "day of salvation" with the Lord's assignment of the stone as the "head of the corner" and calls for rejoicing and gladness in it (v. 24, cf. vv. 19-22). Furthermore, he indicates that Yahweh was sending this stone in His own name (v. 26).

The association of *messianic* and *stone* imagery is perhaps most pronounced in Daniel's prophecy. There, as part of his interpretation of one of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, Daniel spoke of an uncut stone that was to destroy the kingdoms of the world and then grow to become a mountain – representing an everlasting kingdom – filling the whole earth (2:36-45).

This imagery, in turn, reflected earlier prophetic content set forth by Isaiah. He, too, spoke of a mountain – the mountain of the Lord that is His dwelling place – becoming the earth's prominent feature such that all the earth's inhabitants would come to know Him and worship and serve Him at His everlasting sanctuary (2:1-4). Later, Isaiah specifically associated that phenomenon with the coming of the Davidic Branch. By virtue of His presence and work on the Lord's behalf, the knowledge of Yahweh would "*cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.*" The Abrahamic promise of universal blessing was to be realized in David's Son (11:1-10); He would serve as the foundation for Yahweh's true kingdom and its fullness.

And like the psalmist, Isaiah also spoke of a stone appointed by Yahweh – a stone rejected by some but a refuge for others. So it is that the context for introducing this stone was the prophetic promise of divine *judgment* on the one hand and divine *deliverance* on the other (ref. 8:11-15, 28:16).

At that time desolation and exile were impending for both Israel and Judah because they had refused to listen to Yahweh and keep His covenant. Yet Judah's rulers believed and promoted the idea that destruction would not come (28:1-15). They had sought refuge in the "rocks" of falsehood and deception, but the Lord was going to raise up a *true* stone such that all who fled to it for refuge would indeed find security and peace.

Parallel to this, Yahweh insisted to the king of Judah that he and his nation were deluded in their hope of finding security in earthly alliances. The house of David would stand intact, not because of natural powers, but because of *Immanuel* – because of the Lord's presence and commitment to His covenant with David (7:1-16). As with Israel to the north, those who sought refuge and security in an earthly "rock" would be undone; to them Yahweh would become "*a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*" But to all who believed and trusted His word of promise and sought refuge in Him, He would become a true and secure sanctuary (8:1-15).

From the beginning, the Lord presented Himself to Israel as their rock (Deuteronomy 31:30-32:44). He was their sure refuge and place of deliverance and security. This being the case, it was fitting that the messianic Servant became associated with this same imagery. In His great day of salvation, Yahweh would fulfill His role as His people's "rock," but He would do so in His chosen and precious stone – the stone that would then become the chief cornerstone for the true sanctuary (alternatively, the sacred "mountain" that would grow to fill the whole earth). Sacred space was to find its fulfillment and fullness in the Stone.

- 2) As expected, this important Old Testament imagery was picked up by the New Testament writers and applied to Jesus of Nazareth. They understood that, if He were indeed the Christ, He must be Yahweh's precious cornerstone. But more than simply making the connection themselves (Acts 4:1-12; Ephesians 2:19-20; 1 Peter 2:4-8), they recorded Jesus' own claim to that identity (Matthew 21:33-44). He is the "*stone of stumbling*" in whom men realize "rising" or "falling" as they either look to Him in faith or seek other "rocks of refuge" (cf. Romans 9:30-33; Luke 2:34-35).

But more than the place of safe and secure refuge for men, Jesus is the *chief cornerstone* – the Living Stone upon whom Yahweh's sanctuary is being constructed. He is building His Church upon Himself as the *Lord's Christ* (Matthew 16:15-18) and the *Last Adam* (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).