

SJM, 8th June

Living Stones

1Peter 2 v2-5, 9-12

Psalms 100

Mark 12 v28-34

Jesus himself renamed Simon, Peter – Cephas, the rock, so it should be no surprise that Peter uses the imagery of stones in his teaching.

1 and 2 Peter were written mainly to Jewish Christians in exile so much of what Peter drew on was traditional Jewish beliefs and scripture. He quotes from Psalms and Isaiah in this section and those reading it would have understood the living stones to be the nation of Israel.

But then Peter introduces a new concept – that of the foundation stone being Jesus himself, the Christ, the Messiah, the chosen one: ‘the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’; ‘a rock to make men stumble.’ Imagery showing that God isn’t abandoning Israel, that Jesus isn’t cancelling the Jewish heritage - but fulfilling it.

Peter’s picture of this new church is of a living, spiritual house with Jesus as the foundation and each of us is now a stone in that building.

- None of us is complete in ourselves.
- One individual stone is not a temple.
- One individual stone is not a wall.
- We are built together.
- We are in community.

It is right that we should be dependent upon each other, supporting each other and bearing one another up. We are not a pile of rubble, hastily dumped and disordered. We are called to love our neighbour as ourselves because that is what God does. We are created to be interdependent on each other and on our creator.

So because we are chosen, royal and holy, let’s build something beautiful in order that we may truly ‘declare the praises of him who called (us) out of darkness into his wonderful light.’