



Who is Yeshua the Messiah?
Part 23: The Metaphors, Part 2 (The Rock)
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{NOTE: The actual oral sermon and video recording may vary significantly and even materially from these notes, but this “transcript” gives you a general idea of the direction of the message.}

{Title slide—1} Shabbat shalom, brothers and sisters. We’re in Week 23 of our sermon series, “Who is Yeshua the Messiah?,” and today’s message is going to continue exploring some of the remaining “metaphors” the LORD’s prophets incorporated into Scripture that align with our understanding of Yeshua’s identity as God. We’ve already covered several word pictures that point to Yeshua throughout this series, and I invite you to go back and review them. Just last week we detailed how Yeshua is the Angel of God who redeemed us from our sins and appeared to many of the saints of Old face-to-face, instructing them according to God’s righteousness and leading them according to the Way of God. The Angel is the image of our invisible God who came in the flesh to teach us the Word from His own mouth, to die without sin for the atonement of our iniquities, and to rise up to where He was beforehand at the right hand of God to intercede for us and make a way back to Him in His eternal Kingdom. We’re not going to get through all the remaining metaphors I wanted to cover today—it’s going to take a bit more time than I had previously thought. But that’s OK; this pulpit belongs to the LORD and so I pray His will be done. That being said, today’s message is going to focus on one more symbolic motif expressed in several forms, which emphasizes Yeshua’s role as the foundation and the culmination of God’s Holy Kingdom. Yeshua is the Rock—the Firm Foundation on which our salvation and instruction rests, from which flow the waters of eternal life. He will ultimately carry us back with Him into His Kingdom, which is the Holy Mountain of God that endures forever. As always, there is simply too much to cover on this topic, so today’s plan is to present an overview to guide you as you pick up the Word and study on your own. Let’s get to it.

{Next slide—2} To get us started then, please listen closely to the following statement: Yeshua is the Rock. He is the foundation of God's eternal Kingdom and God's eternal temple, He is the one who holds everything up and the one who holds everything together. He is our strong tower of protection and the solid ground from which we can fight and win every spiritual battle. From our Rock comes the waters that sustain us and help us to bear fruit, despite what is going on in the world around us. Yeshua is also the stone that will destroy every earthly kingdom and every worldly idea. And He is now growing into the Holy Mountain of God that will fill the whole earth and replace everything wicked with what is righteous, just and good. In Yeshua, all of God's people will eternally dwell, and all who oppose Him will be consumed. With that being said, let's lay some groundwork by reading 1st Corinthians 3:11, where the Apostle Paul wrote, "for no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Messiah Yeshua." Within the context of this statement, Paul was referring to the foundation for the Temple of God that will stand eternally in God's Kingdom, but He was also urging all followers of Messiah Yeshua to build our lives upon the LORD. Implied is a greater mystery; that God's Kingdom is at hand, right here and right now for us to embrace, and yet it is also an eternal dwelling place—not of this world—where God's chosen people will forever be with the LORD. And so, we have a choice to make: We can either build upon Yeshua—not just upon the concept of His identity as our LORD and our God, but also upon what He taught us to do—and our spiritual lives will endure, or we can build our lives on other things—worldly riches, fame, pride, fleshly pursuits, doctrines of men, our own self interests, and so on, and our spiritual lives will be washed away into the oblivion of eternal death. There is no doubt concerning the dichotomy of this Truth. In other words, there is no grey area; this is black and white.

{Next slide—3} My favorite sermon ever given can be found in the Gospel of Matthew—chapters 5-7. It's the best record of Yeshua's "Sermon on the Mount," which explained everything we need to know about how to live in this world and how to prepare for eternity. I want to take you to the very last words of the message that Matthew recorded—the "conclusion of the whole matter"—because this passage wonderfully expresses the underlying point we all need to understand. According to Matthew 7:24-25, Yeshua said this: "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the Rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the Rock." Now, in order to completely understand this parable, we obviously have to study all of Yeshua's sayings, because according to what we've just read, Yeshua's sayings are going to sustain us even in the midst of the worst tribulations imaginable. That being said, we ought to conclude that studying and

applying Yeshua's sayings and their foundation in the Tanakh (Old Testament) ought to be the primary focus of our lives. For the purpose of our study today, we're going to summarize Yeshua's sayings using the Legacy Standard Bible (LSB) translation of Revelation 14:12, which reads: "Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Yeshua." We persevere through every metaphorical rain storm, flood, hurricane, tornado, and wave by establishing our lives on the Truth that Yeshua is God who came in the flesh to save us from our sins, and because we believe He is the One who saved us, we ought to obey God's commandments according to the words and example that Yeshua provided. If our lives reflect our complete faith in this firm foundation, we cannot be moved. In Psalm 62:1-2, David wrote: "Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved." Please allow this assertion for now: David wrote about Yeshua, his LORD and His God, his Rock and his salvation, his defense and the foundation that held Him steady, despite the many trials and tribulations that he faced. From David, then, we learn that the troubles of this life will certainly shake us, but we can rest in our salvation despite them and not fall away when we remain firmly established upon Yeshua. But what does it mean to be firmly established upon Yeshua? Before we move on, it's important to point out a recurring testimony of two found in all Scripture that presents itself within Yeshua's parable. He said: "Whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them" will endure until the end. James wrote similarly in James 1:22: "Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." The Hebraic understanding of our faith is established on a testimony of two: We can't just hear the Word of God, but we also have to obey it. We can't just hear that Yeshua is God, we also have to live in a way that proves we believe it. Yeshua said in John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." The greatest commandment, which we recite each week at the beginning of every service is this: "Sh'ma Israel, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad." Hear O' Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And because we believe Yeshua and the Father are One, we ought to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength by keeping His commandments. We ought to both hear and obey the LORD in order to be established on a firm foundation.

{Next slide—4} And while the first part of Yeshua's final parable from His Sermon on the Mount explains what we ought to do for salvation, Yeshua actually concluded with a warning concerning what we shouldn't do. In Matthew 7, verses 26-27, He said: "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." This parable

doesn't give room to those who want to give lip service to Yeshua, saying "I believe in Jesus. I said the prayer. I'm good." There's no room for a "once saved, always saved" theology here. There's no room for those who say they can keep on sinning and still achieve salvation through God's grace, because such people "turn the grace of God into lewdness," according to the Book of Jude. Later in Matthew's Gospel, the LORD had a run in with the Scribes and Pharisees, who were the religious leaders of His day. They were chastising his disciples for eating bread with unwashed hands, and while we all might agree it's a good idea to wash our hands before we eat, God actually never commanded that we do this. In the passage, Yeshua chastised them back, calling them "hypocrites," specifically because they "transgressed the commandments of God" on account of their oral traditions. The lesson is this: When we hold up the teachings of men above the teachings of Yeshua, this is akin to those who hear the LORD's sayings and do not do them. In Matthew 15:7-9, Yeshua spoke about such people, saying: "Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" We worship God in vain—we worship Yeshua in vain—when we hold up our own traditions or the teachings of other people above what God has commanded us to do in His Word and by His living example. That being said, don't think that this problem originated in Yeshua's day. We could go back to the beginning, but for today's purposes let's look at an example in Deuteronomy 32, verses 18-20, where Moses wrote about this very thing. We read: "Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you. And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith.'" What's happening here? Moses prophesied that Israel would forget Yeshua, their Rock Who created them, and they would also forget the Father, who gave them instruction, and because of this faithlessness, God would turn His face away from them. This is not the place we ever want to be. It's akin to building our house upon the sand. With any difficulty, our house is bound to fall. As an aside, remember what John 1:3 explained. We read: "All things were made through [Yeshua], and without Him nothing was made that was made." Colossians 1:16-17 and Hebrews 1:2 and so many other passages explain the same reality. We covered this concept in earlier sermons from this series, especially Sermon 4 on the Wisdom of God, so I won't get into significant detail now. The point is this: our Rock—Yeshua—is the one who created us, and the Father provided His righteous law through Him for our own good. Faith is not just an intellectual understanding of Yeshua's identity, and it's not just a legalistic literal reading of God's commandments. Faith is, as we read in

Hebrews 11:1, “the substance of things hoped for” and “the evidence of things not seen.” It is the reality of Yeshua’s identity as our Rock and Salvation, our strength and our redemption, and because we trust in His identity and what He has accomplished, we also obey what the Father instructed us to do through His words and His deeds.

{Next slide—5} You’re going to find this testimony of two all throughout Scripture, especially centered around the “Rock” metaphor that we’re discussing. Moses proclaimed it, as He recorded in Deuteronomy 32, verses 1-4, where we read: ““Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as raindrops on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass. For I proclaim the name of the LORD: ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.” Yeshua is the Rock, whose finished work on the cross is perfect. He is just, He is the very embodiment of Truth, He is righteous and He is without sin. We ought to listen to Him and obey Him because of this. Moses proclaimed the name of the Yahweh, who is One in being with Yeshua, while instructing us in the Way that He said we ought to live. Study the whole of Deuteronomy 32. Deuteronomy 31:30 calls it the “Song of Moses.” You will find a microcosm of Scripture’s entire Truth explained there. Still, it’s not enough to simply read and understand Moses’s song, we also have to participate in the instruction it sets before us. The Holy Spirit exhorts us in Psalm 95:1, where we read: “Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.” Just like Moses, we ought to sing praises to the Father because He has sent us Yeshua, who is our Rock—the firm ground on which we ought to build our faith. This verse literally explains it; because the Hebrew word for "salvation" is "Yeshua" or its derivative. And just so we’re not confused and think that Yeshua and the Father are different divinities, Yahweh Himself explained His complex unity in Isaiah 44:8. We read: “Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.”” And so, as we’ve explored all throughout this series, the Father and the Son are One. "Hear O' Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One."

{Next slide—6} Before we move on to the second point, I want to take you through David’s words in 2nd Samuel 22:1-4, which is all about Yeshua and the instruction of God that He demonstrated for us. Pay special attention to the writer’s introduction, where we read: “David spoke to the LORD the words of this song, on the day when the LORD had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.” Please note how David was praising the LORD on the day the LORD delivered Him

from His enemies. In English this sounds redundant, but it's not. We can read it like this: David was praising the Father on the day the Son delivered Him. Let's read David's own words as the passage continues to confirm this: "And he said: 'The LORD is my Rock and my Fortress and my Deliverer; the God of my strength, in whom I will trust; my Shield and the Horn of my salvation, my Stronghold and my Refuge; my Savior, You save me from violence. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.'" Based on the introduction, David was praising Yahweh here, but the report that presents his words was written in the third person, because David was praising the Father for the eternal work of the Son. As a prophet, David looked forward to what Yeshua would do when He came in the flesh, and it was through Yeshua's finished work on the cross that David could declare the victory of this passage. It was David's faith and trust in what Yeshua would later do that gave him victory over his enemies, and for such Salvation David praised the Father. There's two other sections of the song to review, because they further demonstrate these points. In verses 32-33, we read: "For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a Rock, except our God? God is my strength and power, And He makes my way perfect." Why the apparent redundancy? Here, David explained that the Father and the Son are One, using very similar language to what we might read from the Apostle Paul in His epistles. David also explained how the Rock provided him with strength and power to live according to the righteous commandments God gave us for our instruction. He said: God makes "my way perfect." Indeed. Yeshua said, if we love Him, we'd keep His commandments, and He'd send us the Holy Spirit to help us. This very Truth even became known as "the Way" in the early first century. More on this in a few moments. For now, consider verse 47, where David also declared the coming resurrection. We read: "The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, The Rock of my salvation!" Recall what Paul wrote in Romans 10:9; namely, "if you confess with your mouth the LORD Yeshua [that Yeshua is Yahweh] and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." When David declared "the LORD lives" and praised the "Rock" of his "salvation" for the exultation of God, He was literally making the same confession of faith. David expressed the testimony of two that we all need to ensure our faith is established on a Firm Foundation that cannot fail.

{Next slide—7} Let's look back to Moses again and consider two instances when the children of Israel thirsted in the wilderness. There had been no food for them to eat nor water for them to drink. As we've previously discussed, the LORD rained down Bread from Heaven for them to eat, and now He was about to bring water out of a Rock for them to drink, fully caring for them in a desolate place. It's important as a side note to

point out how the LORD always provides us with what we need—He even gives food and water to the birds of the air, Yeshua said in Matthew 6, because we are of much more value than these. Why then do we worry about provision? In any case, the children of Israel were worrying about water, and so our faithful God gave Moses instruction on two occasions how to draw water out from the Rock. This was both highly prophetic and symbolic. The first time, God instructed Moses to strike the rock so water might come forth. The second time, God instructed Moses to speak to the rock so water might flow. Let's read both examples: In Exodus 17, verses 5-6, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the Rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the Rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.' And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." And again, in Numbers 20, verses 7-8, the LORD said: "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the Rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the Rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." OK, so there are several reasons for the difference. First, the LORD wanted to show us that His instruction is not a formula for us to follow, but rather we ought to build a relationship with Him so He can show us how to apply His instruction differently at different times. This is a lesson in discernment. In order to understand how to apply God's instruction in each situation, we ought to be in prayer asking Him to explain, and then we ought to wait on His reply. Second, we ought to understand yet again that the Rock is Yeshua, and the water coming forth from Him represents the Holy Spirit. The first time, God instructed Moses to strike the Rock to prophetically point forward to Yeshua's death on the cross. The second time, Moses spoke to the Rock to symbolize how we must confess with our mouths that Yeshua came in the flesh and believe in our hearts that God has raised him from the dead, so that we might be saved. When we truly possess this testimony, the LORD provides His Holy Spirit for us to help us obey His commandments. And again, it's not enough to give Him lip service for this, our confession of faith ought to lead to demonstrable obedience. In Moses's case, he showed a lack of faith in the second instance and because of it missed his opportunity to enter the promised land of Canaan. This worldly kingdom was not ultimately the city that Moses strove to enter, and the LORD restored Moses's salvation on account of his repentance, but not before the lesson was recorded for us so we could understand how important it is to discern the LORD's will in our lives. Building a relationship with the Rock is literally a matter of life and death.

{Next slide—8} I want to provide a little more context for these two episodes concerning Moses and the Rock, because I want to show you how the interpretations are found in Scripture. First, in Psalm 79:15-16, the writer explained that God Himself “split the rocks in the wilderness” to give the children of Israel “drink in abundance like the depths.” And so, Moses was simply like one of us demonstrating how we ought to interact with the Rock in our lives. The water literally ran down like “rivers” of living water, just as the Holy Spirit is now poured out on all flesh in the New Covenant, and yet it only benefits those who truly have faith. Isaiah explained the same thing in Isaiah 48:21, where we read: “And they did not thirst when He led them through the deserts; He caused the waters to flow from the rock for them; He also split the rock, and the waters gushed out.” These children lacked, even though they gave lip service to the LORD and received the outpouring of living water, on account of their faithlessness. In 1st Corinthians 10, the Apostle Paul confirmed the interpretation. Look at the excerpt on the screen from verses 4-5, where we read: “and all [the children of Israel] drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Messiah. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.” And so, we need to examine what is it that pleases God? Yeshua Himself explained in John 14:21, where we read: “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”” The bottom line is this: the children of Israel did not believe God had their best interest at heart. They repeatedly doubted His promises and His provision, and ultimately they even disbelieved He would help them defeat their enemies. This is why most of their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. More specifically, they didn’t believe God’s Word and therefore they didn’t obey Him. But when we believe in Yeshua, and therefore obey the words that He has given us, we please God and He comes to dwell with us to help us. When we have faith, God gives us living water to drink from out of our broken Rock that sustains us all the way into His Kingdom. Let’s take a look at John 7, verses 37-39, for further clarity. We read: “On the last day, that great day of the feast, Yeshua stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Yeshua was not yet glorified.” Though this verse doesn’t specifically explain that Yeshua is the Rock, I believe the parallel language ought to reveal this to you. So let’s put everything together, then. When we love Yeshua on account of what He’s done for us and what He has promised to do by keeping His commandments, He will give us His Holy Spirit to help us. That being said, and as we will explore further, when we hear Yeshua’s testimony but do not

keep His commandments, even the living water that He is pouring out from His heart cannot save us. It has to be mixed with faith.

{Next slide—9} Another explanation, found in 1st John 3, verses 18-23, explains things this way. We read: “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” And we know from Psalm 119, that God’s law is Truth. We read in verse 160: “The entirety of Your Word is Truth.” Continuing on in 1st John, we read: “And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Messiah Yeshua and love one another, as He gave us commandment.” In other words, because we believe in Yeshua as our LORD and our God, who came in the flesh to die for our sins and rise up again to the throne on high, we ought to love one another according to the righteous Way that He taught us. And God will know our hearts—we cannot deceive Him. We demonstrate our love toward God and one another when we love in deed and in truth, not only with the words we say. He said Himself, “Love one another as I have loved you.” He also said: “Follow Me.” In 1st John 2:6, we read: “He who says he abides in [Messiah] ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” Don’t be confused by these passages, for the testimony of two is evident. The saints endure by keeping God’s commandments and faith in Yeshua—there cannot be salvation without such demonstration of faith.

{Next slide—10} Continuing into the third of four references, note that our Rock Yeshua is both the “chief cornerstone” of God’s holy habitation as well as “a rock of offense” to those who reject Him. Isaiah 8:13-14 explains, where we read: “The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Now we know that over the centuries and even today, many of our Jewish brothers and sisters have accepted Yeshua as the Messiah, the Son of God, as well as many Gentiles, and hopefully many more will, but the great majority of both have stumbled on this very point—that Yeshua is the holy One of Israel, the Rock on which eternity is built. Those who do not build their faith on this Truth will not only stumble, but indeed they will collapse when the days of tribulation come. The Apostle Paul, quoting from Isaiah, explained in Romans 9 that we can only seek righteousness through our faith in Messiah Yeshua, and apart from Him we cannot achieve it. In Romans 10:4, He explained that Yeshua brought

fullness to the law for the sake of righteousness to everyone who believes. Without His sacrifice, there is no salvation. Without His death, there is no forgiveness. Without His resurrection, there is no life. But on account of what He did, we can live in freedom from condemnation and build upon the righteousness He established in our own lives according to the very example He gave us, and His Holy Spirit will help us. The Apostle Peter explained this in Acts 4, verses 10-12. After He healed a paralytic man in the name of Yeshua, we read this: “Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Messiah Yeshua of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” It is very hard for people to reconcile the majesty of God with the humiliation of the cross—this is the rock that offends, but as Peter also explained in Acts 2:24, death could not hold Him. Our God who created all things has life in Himself, and thus He would be raised up to His former glory.

{Next slide—11} The glory of Yeshua is such that all who believe in Him, and therefore do what He has commanded, will not be put to shame. Indeed, as we’ve covered in several of our messages in this series from Ephesians 2, our Messiah is the “chief cornerstone” of the eternal temple of God, and we are being built on top of Him and the Apostles who taught His doctrine as living stones right here and right now. Fundamentally, this has been the underlying theme of today's message. And while we will dwell with Yeshua forever in His Kingdom, we are still being built on this Firm Foundation right here and right now. The Messiah is literally building the temple of God today using those of us who have already believed. In Isaiah 28:16, we read: “Therefore thus says the LORD God: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily.” This tried stone is Yeshua. He was tried for our sins, but He was found blameless. And He was executed on the cross, but also raised up. He has come in the flesh, but now He sits on the throne of Heaven. He is the foundation of the eternal house that God is building, the city of God, on top of the holy mountain, which is God’s eternal throne. And while this message is clearly communicated in many different areas of Scripture, let’s turn to Daniel 2 for one of the best examples. Here, you’ll find the prophet Daniel, who had been taken captive in Babylon, explaining a dream and its interpretation to King Nebuchadnezzar. The king had dreamed of his own kingdom and the kingdoms that would come after it, represented by the statue of a man, with a head made out of gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, and its feet of both clay and iron. Daniel, who had gone in to the king, explained

that God had given him this dream to make known what would happen in the latter days after his reign. {Take a look at this verse on the screen.} Toward the end of the dream's description, Daniel said this in verses 34-35: "You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." Take note of this stone, which was cut out of the earth without hands, but later grew up into a great mountain that filled the whole earth. This is none other than the stone we've been studying all throughout today's message, and Scripture itself will explain this.

{Next slide—12} Let's take a look at the relevant portion of Daniel's interpretation of this very same dream in Daniel 2. In excerpts from verses 36-45, I want you to see how God's eternal Kingdom is being built by Yeshua, the stone of stumbling that would become the chief cornerstone. In Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the concept is firmly established. Starting in verse 36, Daniel explained to the king: "This is [your] dream. ...—you are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; ... And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile." Now, based on historical records as well as additional prophetic writings in the book of Daniel, we can understand the kingdom of silver to be Media-Persia, the kingdom of bronze to be Greece, and the kingdom of iron to be Rome, split into two parts during its latter days before it ultimately fell. As Daniel continued, this history becomes incredibly relevant to his prophesy and the metaphor we're studying today, as you can see in verses 44-45, where we read: "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure." Allow me to repeat: "The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure." This imagery is consistent with the whole of Scripture as well as the historical record. Yeshua, the rock of offense, came

during the kingdom of iron as well as thereafter, and His Kingdom broke these worldly kingdoms into pieces, first into two parts and then into nothing. Now, before I continue with this line of interpretation, allow me be clear about something: Some of you are probably listening to me right now thinking, Andrew, look around you. The kingdom that this vision talks about has not replaced the kingdoms of the world. There's death, there's suffering, there's a war going on right now between Israel and Iran and the United States. How can you make such an argument? Well, let me tell you. Daniel's prophecy explains that God's Kingdom, which would demolish the rest, would be set up during the days of Rome's rise and downfall, and that is exactly what happened. The stone that was cut out of the mountain of God and struck "the image" is presently growing into a great mountain that will fill the whole earth. Yeshua, though rejected by the kingdoms of this world, is now growing into the Kingdom that will stand forever. Yeshua's Kingdom now stands. Our God reigns. His Holy Habitation shall never be put to shame. In the consummation of all things, the New Jerusalem will come down from Heaven and consume the whole earth.

{Next slide—13} We've studied Revelation 21 many times before, when the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God made up by Yeshua, His Apostles and all of Yeshua's resurrected saints, will descend into a new heaven and a new earth after this current world is consumed with fire. This is a certain future from our perspective; a promise of God which the Father is now fulfilling through His Son, which we will all witness on the Last Day. This future is evident in Revelation 11:15, where we read: "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our LORD and of His Messiah, and He shall reign forever and ever!" But, where does this statement fall into the timeline? Doesn't our Yeshua already reign? Our resurrected Messiah stood on the earth alive before His disciples and said, according to Matthew 28:18, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and earth." This is the present reality. Yeshua now sits on the throne of Heaven at the right hand of God, and "our God reigns!" To top it all off, in 2nd Corinthians 5:20, Paul wrote this about Himself and those who believe in Yeshua through his words: "We are ambassadors for Messiah" for the purpose of pleading with those who are in the world to "be reconciled to God" through Messiah Yeshua. He didn't write, "we will be ambassadors." He wrote: "we are ambassadors." And if we are now ambassadors, then there must be an everlasting Kingdom led by a King that we now serve. I'm emphasizing these points to demonstrate that Yeshua's Kingdom is present for those of us who truly believe in our LORD our God right here and right now, and therefore we ought to act with such faith according to His words, because God's Kingdom is still going to descend into a new Earth. The mysteries of God are such that without faith we will surely stumble, but thanks be to God there are those among us

with salvational faith. We have been called as ambassadors for Messiah, citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom, to exhort others to call upon the name of the LORD, for it is only by such faith that anyone can be saved from out of this world.

{Next slide—14} That being said, I hope you can see that Yeshua was indeed taken without hands as a single stone from the mountain of God. This part of Daniel's prophesy described the moment when our Messiah came in the flesh; when He was born as the Son of Man through the womb of Miriam by the power of the Holy Spirit. And yet, upon His resurrection, He is now growing into the mountain of God that will fill the whole earth. While "He was a living stone, rejected indeed by men," as we read in 1st Peter 2:4-8, He was also "chosen by God and precious," risen up as the firstborn of the resurrection from the dead. Now, "as living stones" ourselves, we who trust in Yeshua are "being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood" and we will at yet another moment that is yet to come be risen up also to be with the LORD always. This is the very reason why—to those of us who believe—, "He is precious, but to those who are disobedient ... [He is] 'a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.'" With all that being said, how should we understand the spiritual dimensions of Nebuchadnezzar's dream that Daniel interpreted? How is it that this prophesied eternal Kingdom has preeminence and yet the kingdoms of this world, or at least their remnant, still stand? In Joel 2:32, we read: "And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls." This deliverance at Mt. Zion AND in Jerusalem has taken place. Remember from our study in Hebrews a few weeks back, Yeshua is now serving as our High Priest and Mediator of the New Covenant. And just as we studied other present tense declarations of this reality, the Apostle Paul also referenced Joel's prophesy in the present tense in Romans 10, explaining quite powerfully that "Yeshua" is the name of the LORD that we must call upon to be saved. He wrote: "There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same LORD over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." And so, the remnant Joel wrote about is now being drawn from all the nations of the whole earth— whoever calls upon the name of Yeshua. He is a stone of stumbling for most of the people who have ever lived, and yet He is growing into the holy mountain of deliverance for everyone who calls upon His name. And the LORD is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all might choose repentance and faith toward God.

{Next slide—15} As we started today's sermon, so too we are going to end it. Yeshua is the foundation of our salvation, the Rock on which we put our trust, and it is His instruction that we ought to follow in order to endure into the eternal Kingdom He has prepared for those who love Him. Through His death and resurrection, He has established this foundation for us in His Kingdom—we now have access through the grace that He has offered to us. In Psalm 87, verses 1-3, we can see this reality described quite plainly, where we read: "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God!" Now it's clear from reading this that Zion is not a worldly city. It is the city of God—"the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). It is the New Jerusalem that will descend from new heavens at the appointed time. It is a city made up of all of God's people who trust in and obey the Holy One of Israel. The LORD loves this city that He is preparing for us more than any dwellings made by men on the earth, more than any earthly temple, because within it, according to Revelation 21:4, "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." As Psalm 87 concludes, in verses 5-7, we further read: "And of Zion it will be said, 'This one and that one were born in her; and the Most High Himself shall establish her.' The LORD will record, when He registers the peoples: 'This one was born there.' ... Both the singers and the players on instruments say, 'All my springs are in you.'" This city's springs are living water, flowing out from the Rock that is Yeshua at its center. Read Revelation 21-22 in greater detail, and these same metaphors emerge there. This living water flowing forth from the Rock is the Holy Spirit, of which Yeshua said to Nicodemus in John 3:5, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Yes, the LORD is establishing this city right now, writing down the names of His saints in the Book of Life. He also told Nicodemus in verse 3: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Though we have been born into this world, we must be born into the City of God through the Holy Spirit of God, which we will receive when we build our house on the Rock in faith by hearing the Word of Yeshua and doing it.

{Next slide—16} Let's next take a look at Psalm 116, because it explains the mysteries of God that we've been discussing today so that we do not stumble on the Rock but rather build our house upon Him. In order to listen to and obey the Word of God, our hearts must remain humble, our faith must be certain, and we must live in a state of total surrender, for this is the only way we will dwell in the Kingdom that is going to endure. In verses 5-17, we read: "Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me.

Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. For You have delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the LORD In the land of the living. I believed, therefore I spoke, 'I am greatly afflicted.' I said in my haste, 'All men are liars.' What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows to the LORD now in the presence of all His people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints. O LORD, truly I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant; You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, And will call upon the name of the LORD." Indeed, whoever calls upon the Name of the LORD, our Rock, Messiah Yeshua, will be saved. He offers us the cup of salvation—His blood that was poured out for us. And we ought to walk according to His Word even unto our own death, for the LORD has said in Luke 17:33: "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it." The Kingdom of God is at hand when we walk in these truths, and we await the fullness of the Kingdom at the appointed time when the LORD has gathered the names of all His Saints in His most holy book. Let our names also be written in the Book of Life.

{Next slide—17} To close us out today, I want to leave you with the words of Jude from the final two verses of his short letter. The lesson is simple. Yeshua Himself, the Rock on which we build our firm foundation, can uphold us and prevent us from stumbling. When we trust Him and therefore follow His Word, He helps us to stand on the Firm Foundation of the salvation He has freely offered to us. And so I pray in the name of Messiah Yeshua, "to Him who is able to keep [us] from stumbling" that He will "present [us] faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, Who alone is wise" and to Him "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." Shabbat shalom.