

# KINGDOM BUILDERS

## THE STONE THAT THE BUILDERS REJECTED

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*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*

*(Psalm 118:22 ESV)*



*Because they lead my people astray, saying, “Peace,” when there is no peace, and because, **when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash**, 11 therefore tell those who cover it with whitewash that it is going to fall. Rain will come in torrents, and I will send hailstones hurtling down, and violent winds will burst forth. 12 **When the wall collapses, will people not ask you, “Where is the whitewash you covered it with?”***

*(EZEKIEL 13:10–12 NIV)*

*I will make **justice the measuring line**  
and **righteousness the plumb line**.*

*(ISAIAH 28:17 NIV)*

*And **the effect of righteousness** will be  
peace, and **the result of righteousness**,  
quietness and trust forever.*

*(ISAIAH 32:17 ESV)*

## WHO ARE THE BUILDERS AND WHAT DO THEY BUILD?

### 1. The first group of builders we identify are the world leaders—the builders of the kingdoms of humans ... the architects of society.

**Society** can be defined as an organized group of persons associated together for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes.

#### A) The Bible first speaks of “the builders” as the godless world leaders who shaped and planned and formed society apart from and opposed to God.

- (Psalm 118:22 ESV) **The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.**

In this psalm the stone was first in reference to the nation of Israel. But it is a messianic psalm and it becomes evident as we progress through Scripture that the “stone” is the cornerstone—Jesus Christ.

- (Isaiah 28:16 NIV) So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, **a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation**; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.”
- (Acts 4:11 ESV) **This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders**, which has become **the cornerstone**.
- (Ephesians 2:20 ESV) Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone**.

#### B) The builders of worldly kingdoms were then, and are now, the great men and women of society.

The builders were the pagan nations, the movers and shakers, the powerful and worldly individuals and groups who accomplish great things.

#### C) These godless world leaders are opposed to God and determined to choose their own way and follow their own ideas as to how to build a successful society (or lead a political party).

IN THOSE DAYS, AND FOR SOME TIME AFTER, GIANT NEPHILITES LIVED ON THE EARTH, FOR WHENEVER THE SONS OF GOD HAD INTERCOURSE WITH WOMEN, THEY GAVE BIRTH TO CHILDREN WHO BECAME THE HEROES AND FAMOUS WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES.  
(GENESIS 6:4 NLT)

#### D) We find a most dramatic and stunning example of these mighty builders of society in Genesis six.

- (Genesis 6:1–7 ESV) When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. **These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.** 5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

This very impressive, powerful society had captured the loyalty and commitment of the entire world with the exception of one man who found favor with God.

- (Genesis 6:8–9 NLT) **But Noah found favor with the LORD.** 9 This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, **the only blameless person living on earth at the time**, and he walked in close fellowship with God.

**LESSON LEARNED: GOD DESTROYS ALL THOSE WHO DO NOT USE HIS BLUEPRINT FOR LIFE.**

- (Genesis 6:13 NIV) So God said to Noah, **“I am going to put an end to all people**, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.”
- (Genesis 6:17 NIV) **I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens**, every creature that

has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.

**LESSON LEARNED: ONLY THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE ONE WAY GOD OFFERS TO ESCAPE JUDGMENT ARE SAVED.**

- (Genesis 7:21–23 NLT) All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. 22 Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. 23 God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat.

## 2. The second group of builders we identify are the Jewish religious leaders—the builders of the kingdom of God.

- (Matthew 21:40–45 NLT) “When the owner of the vineyard returns,” Jesus asked, “what do you think he will do to those farmers?” 41 The religious leaders replied, “He will put the wicked men to a horrible death and lease the vineyard to others who will give him his share of the crop after each harvest.” 42 Then Jesus asked them, “Didn’t you ever read this in the Scriptures? ‘The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing, and it is wonderful to see.’ 43 I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will produce the proper fruit. 44 Anyone who stumbles over that stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone it falls on.” 45 When the leading priests and Pharisees heard this parable, they realized he was telling the story against them—they were the wicked farmers.

The tables have now turned as Jesus reveals the guilt of the Jews as the ones rejecting the cornerstone.

As a result the task of building the kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to another.

- (Acts 4:11 ESV) **This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.**

\*\*\***Frederick W. Evans Jr.** ... speaks of Jesus being rejected by the religious experts ... **He**

wasn’t two years into his ministry when they decided he had to go. They were the builders, and they were going to build in their own way, without him. **Yes, they would build over his dead body.** [Boice, J. M. (2005). *Psalms 107–150: An Expository Commentary* (p. 960). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.]

## WHY DID BOTH GROUPS OF BUILDERS FAIL?

### 1. Building on the cornerstone is an inviolable law of the universe.

**Inviolable** ... impregnable to assault or trespass; invincible; incapable of being violated; something that is unable to be broken or dishonored; incorruptible, unassailable; secure from destruction, violence, infringement, or desecration.

**WE ABSOLUTELY MUST UNDERSTAND THAT BUILDING OUR LIVES ON THE CORNERSTONE IS NOT MERELY A RELIGIOUS CONCEPT BUT A UNIVERSAL LAW OF THE INFINITE, ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD. BUILD ON ANYTHING ELSE OR ADD ANYTHING ELSE AND YOU WILL FALL SHORT OF GOD’S GLORY.**

### 2. The builders failed because they rejected the most basic principle for life—you build on the Rock.

- (Psalm 118:22–24 ESV) The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23 This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

### 3. The political, religious rulers of Israel had built a refuge made from lies and deception.

- (Isaiah 28:14–15 NLT) Therefore, listen to this message from the LORD, you scoffing rulers in Jerusalem. 15 You boast, “We have struck a bargain to cheat death and have made a deal to dodge the grave. The coming destruction can never touch us, for we have built a strong refuge made of lies and deception.”
- (Jeremiah 23:1 ESV) “Woe to the

shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD.

Israel was a theocracy. The kings and priests and prophets were to rule in the name of God according to the law of God, but it was these very men who sought a refuge other than the LORD.

#### 4. So now the very foundation stone they rejected will be the standard of measurement when they stand before God in judgment.

- (Isaiah 28:16–17 NLT) Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “**Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on.** Whoever believes need never be shaken. 17 **I will test you with the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of righteousness.** Since your refuge is made of lies, a hailstorm will knock it down. Since it is made of deception, a flood will sweep it away.”

God’s measuring line of justice and plumb line of righteousness will sweep away everything based on deception.

### HOW DO WE SUCCESSFULLY BUILD?

#### 1. Understand that God tests the foundation of our “building” not by our moral standards but by his standard for justice and righteousness.

- (Isaiah 28:17 NLT) I will test you with the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of righteousness. Since your refuge is made of lies, a hailstorm will knock it down. Since it is made of deception, a flood will sweep it away.

**Moral means** ... of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior; a person’s standards of behavior or beliefs concerning what is and is not acceptable for them to do.

#### We need to accept and understand that ...

- i) God’s standards of justice and righteousness are infinite and eternal because they are of God and he is infinite and eternal.
- ii) We cannot even conceive of the surpassing

nature of his justice and righteousness.

- iii) Our systems of morality are based on our thoughts—what we believe to be right or wrong, good or evil.

#### iv) The very act of our choosing right or wrong, good or evil, originated in the sin and rebellion of Adam and Eve in Genesis three.

- v) Any human-constructed system of morality is going to fall short, even systems of morality that are based on the Bible or Christian principles.

#### 2. Our foundation stone must be the righteousness we find in Christ alone.

- (Romans 3:22a NIV) **This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.**
- (1 Corinthians 1:30 ESV) And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, **who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness** and sanctification and redemption.
- (2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so **that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**
- (Philippians 3:9 ESV) And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, **but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.**

#### 3. God’s foundation stone for life is based on his justice and righteousness which can only be accessed through Jesus Christ—the cornerstone.

- (Psalm 89:14 ESV) **Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;** steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.
- (Psalm 97:1–2 ESV) The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! 2 Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; **righteousness and justice** are the **foundation** of his throne.