

"THE STONE"

I Peter 2:4-10
11-14-2021

INTRODUCTION:

***What type of "stone" is Jesus to you?**

I. Jesus is the "<u>LIVING STONE</u>" *who imparts <u>life</u> to those <u>connected</u> to Him* (v. 4-5)

II. Jesus is the "<u>CORNER-STONE</u>" *who is <u>precious</u> to those <u>trusting</u> on Him* (v. 6-7a)

III. Jesus is the "<u>STUMBLING-STONE</u>" *who is an <u>obstacle</u> to those who <u>reject</u> Him* (v. 7b-8)

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The Lord Jesus is described in many ways in the Bible (EX: as light, water, Shepherd, vine, door, etc.), but perhaps the most frequently-used description of Christ is that of a *"Rock."*

The lord is frequently called a ROCK in the Bible **SEE:** Psalm 18:2, 31; 46

Cp. Psalm 28:1, 31:3, 42:9, 661:2, 62:6-7, 71:3, 78:35, 95:1, etc.
I Cor. 10:4 - *"And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."*

Christ is the foundation Rock upon which the Church is built (Matt. 16:18).

I Cor. 3:11 - *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"*

He is called the "*rock of offense"* (Rom. 9:33;).

And Jesus is the Rock "cut out without hands" that will one day destroy the Kingdoms of this world and establish His eternal, righteous kingdom (Daniel 2:44-45).

Zechariah also spoke of the Messiah as a Rock of Judgement when He said: "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes (Rev. 5:6): behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." (Zech.3:9)

The imagery of the "Rock" spoke of:

--Security for one hidden in the *"cleft of the Rock"*
--Stability for the one standing or built on the Rock
--Judgment for the one upon whom that Rock would fall

Peter (*petros*), whose name means "a stone" loved to speak of *"the Stone," "the Rock."*

As he preached in Acts 4:11 - *"This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."*

***What type of "stone" is Jesus to you?**

I. Jesus is the "<u>LIVING STONE</u>" *who imparts <u>life</u> to those <u>connected</u> to Him* (v. 4-5)

V. 4

"Stone" - *lithos* - a <u>cut</u> stone; shaped just perfectly for construction purposes.

We usually refer to something as "stone dead," but for Peter the Stone as a Person is pulsating with life and strength. (Hiebert, p. 130)

When you came to Christ, you did not come to a stone without life (a dead stone), but you came to a living Stone.

Because Jesus arose from the dead, He is *"the living One"* (Rev. 1:18) - He is not a cold, lifeless, useless Stone, but a living Stone which imparts that life to all connected (in contact) with it! (v. 5).

"Disallowed" = rejected after examination.

The lost world in the day in which Jesus lived saw His life, scrutinized His words and works, and found Him to be totally incompatible to their anticipation and agenda, so they rejected Him. (He didn't fit in with their views of what the Messiah would be like and didn't live up to their goals and aspirations) (Mt. 21:42-44)

Christ was repudiated and rejected because He did not measure up to what Israel wanted (Jn. 1:11). He came as *"light,"* but Israel preferred darkness (John 3:19).

It doesn't matter how "men" view something; what matters is what God says about it.

What does the Father say of Christ? "Although men rejected my Son, He is the ***chosen*** (choice, selected) and ***precious*** (honored, prized, special, highly costly) living Stone!"

V. 5

What is interested about I Peter 2:4-10 is how Peter moves back and forth from speaking of Christ as a form of a Rock to applying that truth to believers. (NOTE: *"ye"* v. 5. . . *"you"* v. 7. . . *"ye"* v. 9).

"Ye also" relates to all the scattered believers (1:1) of the five Roman provinces as

being part of the spiritual house (Anderson, RBP, p. 34).

Because of your connection to the *"Living Stone"* (v. 4), you yourselves became (as it were) ***"living stones"*** (v. 5). Because you came into contact with Christ, you came to share His life.

(My life comes from Christ's life - Col. 3:4 - He is my life)

"Built up" - lit. "are being built up"

Because this spiritual house is ever growing (as more and more people are added to Christ), Peter speaks of it as being int he process of being constructed.

The verb ***"built up"*** is passive, indicating that it is God and not the stones themselves who are building this spiritual house.

Whether we perfectly agree with each other or not on every fine point of doctrine, all believers are stones of the same building.

We are not isolated stones scattered over a field, nor are we a jumbled pile of stones. God is showing us the "orderly and purposeful arrangement of the individual stones, each shaped and placed to fulfill its assigned task" (Hiebert, p. 132).

Each believer is a living stone (a building block) who makes up a part of this ***"spiritual house"***. The corporate body of believers forms a ***"house"***, a dwelling place or habitation in which the Spirit of the living God dwells (As Paul said to the Corinthians: *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of god is holy, which temple ye are."* - I Cor. 3:16-17).

The ***"house"*** to which Peter refers is a spiritual Temple - hence the words ***"priesthood"*** and ***"sacrifices***" are mentioned to clarify the imagery being portrayed.

Peter agrees perfectly with Paul. SEE: Ephes. 2:19-22

All believers form a ***"holy priesthood"***.

We, like the tribe of Levi, have the access to God.

I don't need to go to a priest; I am a priest! Why? Because of the *"rent veil"*

(Mt. 27:51), I can go directly into the Holy of Holies and offer sacrifices of prayer and praise to God.

A pastor is no more a holy priest than the people in the pews.

"Offer up" - to carry up; in Old Testament imagery, the idea was that of a priest carrying up a sacrifice to the brazen altar.

"Spiritual sacrifices" - not animals on an altar, but the sacrifices we offer up are:

--a living, holy, and acceptable body (Rom. 12:1)
--Praise (Heb. 13:15)
--Doing good (Heb. 13:16a)
--Giving (Heb. 13:16b; cp. Phil. 4:18)

"Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" - It is Jesus Christ who makes our sacrifices acceptable to God.

Outside of Christ, our sacrifices are unacceptable. They are *"filthy rags"* (Is. 64:6).

Prov. 15:8 - *"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is His delight."*

II. Jesus is the "<u>CORNER STONE</u>" *who is <u>precious</u> to those <u>trusting</u> on Him* (v. 6-7a)

V. 6

The Scripture being quoted is Isaiah 28:16, which speaks of the Messiah.

"I lay in Sion" (Zion) - This is the location where Christ died (Is. 59:20; Mt. 21:5), and where He will come back to judge and reign (Is. 2:3, 4:3-5, 24:23, 30:19; Joel 3:17, 21; Micah 4:2; Rev. 14:1).

"Cornerstone" - a perfectly cut square stone that lines up the rest of the building (giving it straightness and cohesiveness [unity]).

"Believeth <u>on</u> Him" - It is not an intellectual awareness "<u>of</u>" Him; nor a "head knowledge "<u>in</u>" Him; that saves, but a throwing of oneself ***"on"*** (<u>on top of</u>; <u>upon</u> - *epi*) the Cornerstone that saves!

"Shall not be confounded" - shall not be put to shame (Let down; disappointed; note the Hebrew meant to "<u>be alarmed</u>" [Isaiah 28:16] - conveying the idea of shock and bewilderment in finding out the horrifying news that Christ could not perform what He promised).

Such a predicament will not be the case! God's people will be <u>no means</u> be "let down" and find the cornerstone to be a failure.

(Can you imagine the shock of a person trusting in Christ and then dying, only to find out that christ wasn't the answer; He wasn't the Savior after all. -- This horror will never happen! You will not be put to shame.)

Rom. 10:11 - *"For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."*

V. 7

"Therefore" - Because this Cornerstone is true, trustworthy, and reliable, He is ***"precious"*** (of infinite value; priceless; extremely honorable).

The Cornerstone is ***"precious"*** to the one who believes on Him.

III. Jesus is the "<u>STUMBLING STONE</u>" *who is an <u>obstacle</u> to those who <u>reject</u> Him* (v. 7b-8)

V. 7

But to them" - a sharp contrast

There are only two classes or groups of people in the world.

These two classes are distinguished by their viewpoint toward the Cornerstone, Jesus Christ.

"Disobedient" - unbelieving (critical text)

"The builders" = national Israel, who sought to build their own way to righteousness (Rom. 10:3) without Christ.

Christ is the ***"Head of the corner"*** though unrecognized as such.

V. 8

"A stone of stumbling" - an obstacle, a hinderance, a stone which gets in the way of the unbelieving world.

Because Christ is incompatible with the life of the lost, He becomes a sore spot in their lives, a stone that trips them up.

Is it His fault? No! It's theirs, for rejecting Him as the Cornerstone. Because they did not put Him where He belongs in their lives but left Him alone, He becomes an obstacle which they are constantly looking out to avoid.

"Rock of offense" - Another way of describing a rock which causes men to stumble and fall down.

"Rock *(petra)* ***of offense" -*** describes a large embedded boulder which no one cam move or dispose of, but which stands in the way as a permanent obstacle, tripping up those who refused to build with it.

Christ is a "bone of contention" to the world.

--A <u>believer</u> looks at Christ as a valuable Cornerstone

--An <u>unbeliever</u> looks at Christ as an obstacle that should be avoided at all cost. He is offensive, repulsive, they want to stay as far away as possible so that He does not interfere with their pursuits of sinful, self-centered living.

"Stumble at the word" - they trip and fall because they are unpersuaded of the word; they don't believe the Gospel.

"Whereunto also they were appointed" - God literally appointed (destined) them to stumble! Why? Because all who reject His Word will stumble.

It is a law of God = If you reject His Word (which could make you stand), you will end up stumbling into hell! (Lk. 16:29).

Either you *"tremble"* at God's Word in conviction and with a humble spirit (is. 66:2), or you will end up tripping over it and being judged by it.

They were not appointed to be disobedient (Calvinist view), but they were appointed to stumble because of their disobedience.

There are sure, unavoidable <u>consequences</u> (penalties) to unbelief (or disobedience).

God appointed the consequences (stumbling) and not the sin (of disbelief).

Is Christ your Cornerstone or your stumbling stone?
Is He your living Stone or the Stone that will grind you as powder in judgment?

SEE: Christ's parable of national Israel's rejection of Him and His pronouncement of judgment (Mt. 21:42-44).

CONCLUSION:

V. 9

"But ye" - in contrast to the unbelievers who stumble over Christ and His Word

God describes believers four ways:

1)***"A chosen generation" -*** a selected, elected race of believers; a generation of God's sovereign choice

2)***"A royal priesthood" -*** cp. v. 5. A kingly priesthood

In the Old Testament, "the levitical priests were not kings; and the Davidic kings were not priests (II Chron. 26:16-21), but in Christ believers are made both kings and priests" (Rev. 1:6) (Anderson, RBP, p. 36)

3)***"An holy nation" -*** (SEE: Exod. 19:5-6). Israel did not obey God's covenant and hence forfeited this designation. Now, true believers are set apart by God and for God.

4)***"A peculiar people"*** - The word *"peculiar"* in this verse does not mean "odd" or "strange," but <u>special</u> - belonging only and exclusively to God.

We are God's very own property, His special treasure, His prized possession. We are uniquely His!

"That" - Here is the purpose for which God made us His own. God saved you so that you by your life would ***"show forth"*** (tell out; proclaim; or "advertise") the praiseworthy virtue and power of God, who has once and for all (Aorist tense) called us out of the domain of Satanic darkness and into God's wonderful light (I Jn. 1:5).

I Thes. 5:5 - *"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness."*

Col. 1:13 - *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."*

Eph. 5:8 - *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light"*

Cp. Acts 26:18; Jn. 8:12

V. 10

No one is born a "child of God." None of us were a ***"people"*** of God in time past, but now because of the new birth (1:23), we are!

At one time were without the mercy of God, under His wrath (Jn. 3:36), but now (since *"coming"* to Christ - v. 4), we have been shown mercy.

God terminated our darkness and brought us into His light at conversion.

God terminated our status as non-citizens of Heaven and objects of wrath and made our citizenship Heaven and our relationship with Him one of peace and security.