

First Peter 2:7-9

2:7 – Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,’

Taken from Psalm 118:22 an exact quote from the Septuagint

Warning #1: Greek says: “for you, therefore, who believe is the honor”

1. Christ is honored by God
2. All who are built on him will also be honored

Jesus used Psalm 118:22 in Matt.21:42.

There the builders were:

1. the worldly religious leaders forming their own God and temple
2. the worldly political leaders forming their own kingdom

In his illustration or metaphor, this foundation stone that was rejected will also be chosen by God as the final capstone in the structure.

Dr. Constable says: “*Jesus Christ was the stone that would have completed Israel had Israel's leaders accepted Him as their Messiah, Israel's keystone. Instead, the Israelites cast the stone aside by rejecting their Messiah. God then proceeded to make this stone the foundation of a new edifice that He would build, namely, the church. Israel's rejected keystone has become the church's foundation stone.*” – see here -

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf> (All of Dr. Constable's notes on the whole Bible can be found here - <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm>)

2:8 – and,

‘A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.’

Taken from Isaiah 8:14 an exact quote from the Hebrew text. (Also used by Paul in Rom. 9:33)

“A stone that causes men to stumble” is from the words:

- **lithos** which means “a loose stone in the path”
- **proskommatos** which means “to cut against”
- Together “**lithos proskommatos**” literally means, “an obstacle against which one strikes.”

“A rock that makes them fall.” Is from the words:

- **Petra** – means “a rocky ledge rising out of the ground” and “a rock formation.”
- **Skandalou** – means “a trap set to trip someone.”

Faith is God's established way of saving men through out the OT and NT.

- Hebrews 11:3 - “By faith we understand.”
- Hebrews 11:6 – “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

Warning #2: Isaiah 8:14 – not to accept Christ is to stumble over Christ

Christ is the **step**, the **way**, the **door** –

To consider Christ unworthy is to:

1. stumble over the step
2. get lost from the way
3. fail to find the door

There is no other step, no other way or no other door.

A person without Christ is hopeless.

“Destined” does not refer to predestination by God who predestined these people to be lost, unsaved and to go to hell. This is not what God choose for any individual:

1. The main verb of 2:8 is “stumble”
2. The word “disobey” is a participle subordinate to the main verb
3. “destined” refers directly to “stumble”
4. So, God “destined” for them to stumble but he did not destine them to “disobey”
5. The unbeliever disobeys the gospel on their own free will.
6. Anyone who disobeys the gospel by rejecting Christ has done so by their own free will and the only thing left for them is to then stumble on Christ or on this Stone.
7. God then destined them to stumble when they disobeyed. (This verse does not say that God destined them to disobey.)

In Greek the antecedent (*which means “to go before” in Latin and is the word or expression that gives meaning to a pronoun, verb, adverb, etc.*) of “to this” or “as they were” (***eis ho***) is “stumble” (***proskoptousi***) which is the main verb.

“Are disobedient” or “disobey” (***apeithountes***) is the participle subordinate to the main verb which is “stumble” (***proskoptousi***).

Clearly the main verb is “stumble” (***proskoptousi***) since the text is talking about “stumbling” from Isaiah 8:14 and not

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

Main verb

Participle

Antecedent

Participle

They - Personal Pronoun

Stumble - Verb present tense

Because – subordinating conjunction

They - Personal Pronoun

Disobey - Verb present tense

The - determiner

Word - noun

As - subordinating conjunction

They – Personal Pronoun

Were – Verb past tense

Destined - verb past participle (A participle is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun or noun phrase, and thus plays a role similar to that of an adjective or adverb.)

To – infinitive marker

Do - infinitive or imperative

Their penalty for their disobedience is what they are destined to receive. As is seen in:

- Acts 2:23 –
- Romans 11:8 –
- Romans 11:11 –
- Romans 11:30-32 –

The revelation of Scripture shows that men are responsible for their damnation because they do not believe instead of placing the responsibility for the damnation of men on God’s foreordination:

- John 1:12
- John 3:36
- John 5:24
- John 6:47
- Romans 1-3

It should be understood that Calvinism teaches that God first saves men by his Holy Spirit, which gives them life through the new birth. After God has done this, the “born again” man is given faith so he can be “saved by faith”.

Israel was to live in the land and be a light.
People would come to them and see the glory of God.
The Queen of Sheba and Naaman both came to Israel and found God.

But, the church is not localized and waiting.
The church as a spiritual temple is everywhere and going out fulfilling the great commission.

Our Purpose is the same as Israel: Be a light.
Our Methods are different: Matt. 28:19-20

Two Groups:

1. Unbelievers – stumbling towards shame
2. “you who believe” – on their way to honor and vindication.

Peter has now explained why his believers are suffering in the world.
The unbelievers have different purposes, goals and standards than the believer.
There will be a conflict that will result in the suffering of believers.
This conflict will be the focus of Peter’s through out this letter.
His instruction will include continuing to be a light to the unbeliever so that they will trust in the Living Stone Jesus.

2:9 – “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

“**You**” is emphatic in the Greek. This should be read as a contrast to the previous disobedient whose lack of faith resulted in destruction. So, “But as for you.”

“Chosen” is used of Christ, the chosen stone, in 2:4, 6. They are called “chosen” in 1 Peter 1:1.

“**Race**” – this Greek word means “generation, race, common community, common descent.”

“**Royal**” – is from the Greek word for king.

“**Priesthood**” – in the OT only the line of Aaron could be priests, while the tribe of Judah through the line of Jesse and David where the kings. But, like Jesus who is patterned after the chosen Melchizedek as both the king and the priest of God, those who believe in Jesus are of that same “race”, “generation”, “common community” of the royal priesthood.

A “Royal Priesthood” would be a priesthood that belongs to the king. They are not the Levitical priesthood or some pagan Gentile priesthood, but the priesthood that belongs to the King of the kingdom of God. They serve before a ruling royal priest and approach a deity that no one else dares to come near (as in Heb. 9:1-10:25)

“**Holy**” – means “set apart” and refers to a person or a thing being set apart for the service of a deity.

“**Nation**” – means “a multitude of people of the same nature.”

“**for his own possession**” – The Greek literally says “to make around” which refers to a man making something and then surrounding it with a circle to indicate his ownership. This same Greek word is used in the Septuagint in Isaiah 43:21 – “The people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.” (Look this verse up and read the context especially Isaiah 43:22 – “Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob...”)

“Proclaim” – (or, “show forth”, or, “declare”) is from Isaiah 43:21 “to tell forth my praises”. The Word used here in the LXX is **aretas**, “praises” is also used by Peter and translated “excellencies” or “wonderful deeds”. The Greek word **aretas** means “excellencies, gracious dealings, glorious attributes.” The context of Isaiah 43 is the announcement that God forgives and redeems his people Israel from Babylonian captivity. Thus, our announcement to proclaim the excellencies of God are most likely to be in reference to us proclaiming and announcing his plan of salvation and the work of Jesus to accomplish that plan. (Rev. 4:11; Is. 43:7, 25; 48:9-11)

Indeed, we receive eternal blessings in this salvation, but one of the main points of Scripture is that God has demonstrated his greatness by accomplishing such a glorious work. The point: The work of salvation brings glory, honor and recognition to the greatness of God.

“Into” refers to both the final result as well as the location. All this is for us not merely to be in Christ (born again), but to be made into the image of Christ (maturity).

These descriptive titles are OT references to Israel that Peter transfers to the church.

- Exodus 19:5-6 including the emphatic “but you”
- Isaiah 43:20-21

Also take note: These are not titles that can be easily applied to the individual without the whole church being included. For example, you, the individual, can not be a holy priest without there first being a holy priesthood. And, you cannot be a holy nation of one holy person.

2:10 – “Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

2:11 – “Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.”

2:12 - “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”

2:13 - “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.”

