

1 Peter 2:6-9

In verse 6 Peter quotes *Isaiah 28:16* referring to Jesus Christ, the Living Stone who is now referred to as corner stone, placed in Zion (Zion is Israel). Jesus came to offer His kingdom to the nation Israel and they rejected Him. This earthly, literal kingdom was postponed until the return of Christ and His church to reign upon the earth in that 1,000 year period, known as the Millennial kingdom. (*Revelation 20:1-7*).

Peter next quotes from *Psalms 118:22-23*, “*The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone.*” Peter is referring to the national rejection of Christ by the builders (the leaders of Israel), and the nation of Israel, including the Roman Empire.

In verse 8 Peter quotes from *Isaiah 8:14* and delivers a warning to all who read this prophecy about Christ. Peter describes Him as, “*A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.*” Those who reject Jesus and do not build their lives upon Him, trip and fall over Him and thus ruin their lives.

At the first coming of Jesus Christ the nation Israel didn't build their future on His offer of the kingdom. The word translated “offense” or “offended,” literally means “scandalized” – by His offer. They didn't believe He was the royal Son of David, the long awaited Messiah. And they certainly didn't believe He was going to die. Which is why the Apostle Paul clarified that the cross was a stumbling block and an offense (*1 Corinthians 1:23*). “*Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness.*”

There are those who don't believe in a future national Israel, or a rapture, or a literal kingdom. They argue that Peter's use of these Old Testament passages originally delivered in the Old Testament concerning Israel now describes the church. In particular they use verse 9 where we're called a “*chosen race ... a holy nation.*” They argue that God is finished with Israel and the church has replaced her. So all the prophecies of Israel's future are now null and void.

This denies many other passages where the literal promises of God are given to the nation Israel:

- Promises regarding their return to the land of Israel (*Ezekiel 36:24*)
- Promises regarding a coming king (*Revelation 21:3*)
- Promises of establishment in the land of promise (*Ezekiel 36:28*)
- Promises of a coming, literal kingdom, and the reign of the Son of David in Jerusalem (*Isaiah 9:6-7*)
- Promise to protect Israel (*Zechariah 12:6-8*)

If the church replaces Israel, then the church erases the glorious hope and promise of a repentant Israel, following a future 7 year period the Bible calls the Tribulation. One of the primary purposes of the Tribulation is to prepare Israel for this second coming of Christ to rule and reign.

This same group believes that one of the purposes of the Tribulation is to purify the church by making her suffer. Christians are being persecuted, beheaded, imprisoned, and killed all over our world today and have experienced this since Christ walked the earth 2,000 years ago.

Are these suffering Christians to believe that even though they are suffering now, they will suffer even more during the Tribulation? But this time not from unbelievers, but from the wrath of God! Then they'll be rescued? This type of thinking was a medieval theology that believed the church needs to be purged of sins by the Tribulation like fires of purgatory in Catholic theology before she can ever hope to enter heaven. The church is already purified! The church is already made righteous and blameless by the perfection of her Savior.

The church is ready for Heaven now:

- We are clothed in His righteousness now (*Philippians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:4*)
- There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ (*Romans 8:1*)
- We are justified and freed from the penalty of every sin (*Romans 3:24*) “*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*”
- Even now we have peace with God (*Romans 5:1*)

1 Peter 2:6-9

One of the purposes of the Tribulation isn't to purify the church, it is to purify Israel and reposition it so that Israel will repent as a nation. *"Two-thirds of the people in the land will be cut off and die, says the Lord. But a third will be left in the land. I will bring that group through the fire and make them pure, just as gold and silver are refined and purified by fire. They (that is Israel) will call on my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'These are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is our God.'"* (**Zechariah 13:8-9**)

These prophecies of purifying judgment on Israel and their national repentance will be fulfilled by the regathered and repentant nation of Israel, *"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son. They will look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10).* They are going to welcome the Lord back the second time and crown Him as their sovereign King. *"And the people will live in the land and Jerusalem will dwell in security. (Zechariah 14:12)* When Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom headquartered in Jerusalem, we will also be with Him. (**Revelation 20:4**)

The Apostles were given a promise for a special role in Israel, Jesus promised *"The Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne; you also will sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* (**Matthew 19:28**)

The timeline:

- The church is completed (**Romans 11**)
- The church will be raptured to the Father's House (**1 Thessalonians 4**)
- The Lord will judge the world in general (**Revelation chapters 5-9**)
- God will judge the unbelieving nation of Israel yet be merciful (**Zachariah 13**)
- A multitude among the Jewish people will come to repentance and faith (**Revelation 7**)
- The end of the Tribulation they will welcome Jesus back as He descends to set up His Kingdom (**Zachariah 12-14**)

If the Apostle Peter's words were unclear and the readers of his day believe God was finished with Israel – Paul wrote to the Roman believers, in clear, unmistakably clear language, about the present state of Israel, *"I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery . . . that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and so all Israel will be saved."* (**Romans 11:25-26**)

1. Reception and vindication (Vs. 6)

The Corner Stone was the key stone in the construction of a building during the days of Peter. It served to measure and determine all the angles of the building, vertically and horizontally. Peter ties the Corner Stone back to Christ.

To the believer, (vs. 7) *"He is precious."* That word can be translated, *costly, valuable, of great worth.* The last part of verse 6, *"and He who believes in Him will not be disappointed."* This Corner Stone will not fail us. He is faithful. He is rock solid. He is priceless. And one day He and the gospel will be vindicated. The prophecies inform us that when the kingdoms of this earth have passed away, His kingdom will endure forever.

2. Rejection and condemnation

The unbeliever who rejects Jesus Christ as Corner Stone ends up in this analogy both stumbling over Christ and then being crushed in judgment by Him. The problem isn't that they don't understand the truth. The problem is they don't want to obey the truth; the problem is defiance. In verse 8, *"and to this doom they were also appointed."* Peter has just described their choice. They are appointed to judgment because of their unbelief.

God doesn't actively destine people to unbelief, but He does appoint judgment and doom on every unbeliever as a consequence of their disobedience and refusal to believe." [John MacArthur] One day the unbeliever will stand before this Living Corner Stone as their final Judge (**Revelation 20:11-15**) and they will give an account, not to their helplessness in being unable to believe, but to their willful defiance of the law of God, written on their heart. (**Romans Chapter 2**)