

JESUS IS EITHER A CORNERSTONE OR A STUMBLINGSTONE

1 Peter 2:4-10

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: When Jesus was taken to the temple for dedication right after He was born, Simeon made a prophetic statement about Him: *"...Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel..." Luke 2:34*. Jesus was going to have different effects on different people and He was going to be good for some and bad for others. Peter describes Jesus as either a "cornerstone" or a "stumblingstone." What is the difference between the two?

I. JESUS AS A "CORNERSTONE"

1. Jesus is a "living stone" - (v4)
 - Jesus was rejected by people:
 - John 1:10-11
 - The people crucified Him
 - Rejected by people but He was chosen by God and considered to be precious.
 - Psalm 118:22 - God has taken that which was rejected by people and turned it into a cornerstone.
 - Jesus is the "cornerstone" of what?

2. Jesus is the "cornerstone" of a great spiritual house/temple - (vv 5, 6)
 - The "cornerstone" upon which Christians are built.
 - 1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17; Ephesians 2:19-22
 - Christians are the "spiritual" house that is built upon Jesus:
 - Christians are to serve as a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices to God
 - Their bodies - Romans 12:1-2
 - Their praise - Hebrews 3:15
 - Their doing good and sharing - Hebrews 13:16
 - Their deaths - 2 Timothy 4:6-8
 - Christians serve as God's special people - (vv 9-10)
 - With a special task of proclaiming the praises of God.
 - Because by God's Grace:
 - They have been called out of darkness into His light.
 - They were not a people, but are now the people of God.
 - They have obtained mercy.

3. Jesus is the "rock" upon which Christians build their lives:
 - By following His teachings, Christians are able to establish their lives on solid ground - Matthew 7:24-27
 - By building upon Jesus, Christians are able to withstand the "storms" of life.

II. JESUS IS A "STUMBLINGSTONE" TO THOSE WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN HIM

1. There is no other alternative - (vv 7-8)
 - Either Jesus is the "cornerstone:"
 - Upon which Christians are built as "stones" in His Church/Temple
 - Upon which Christians build their lives by following His teaching
 - Or Jesus is a "stumblingstone" over which a person will meet his/her doom

2. Jesus is a "stumblingstone" to some:
 - Isaiah 8:13-15, cited by Peter
 - Simeon in the temple foresaw the same thing when Jesus was presented as a newborn in the Temple - Luke 2:34
 - Jesus even saw Himself as a "stumblingstone" - Matthew 21:42-44

3. Jesus became a "stumblingstone" to Israel:
 - Romans 9:30-33; 1 Corinthians 1:23
 - Jesus became a "stumbling block to the Jews because:
 - They thought that keeping the Law would gain righteousness for them.
 - They could not accept the need for someone (Messiah) to atone for their sins.

4. Jesus is a "stumblingstone" for many today:
 - Pride prevents some from accepting Jesus on HIS terms.
 - Many think that they can please God and go to heaven based on their good deeds.
 - Many are unwilling:
 - to confess their sinfulness and their need for Jesus Christ.
 - to turn their lives over to Jesus and do His will.

5. Doom awaits those who stumble by being disobedient and not trusting in Jesus:
 - Doom has been appointed by God - 1 Peter 2:8
 - For without Jesus Christ in one's life:
 - He/she will die in his/her own sins - John 8:24
 - Righteous punishment can only follow - Revelation 20:11-15

CONCLUSION:

1. **"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me..."** - Jesus is like a rock! What kind of rock is He to YOU?

2. If a person is willing to believe in Jesus and obey Him, Jesus can be that person's cornerstone.
 - Upon which he/she can be added as a part of Jesus' Church, the spiritual temple.
 - Upon which he/she can build his/her lives and have a full and meaningful life.

3. If a person chooses to disbelieve and be disobedient, then Jesus will by necessity be that person's "stumblingstone."

4. There is NO middle ground! What is Jesus to YOU?