

Session 18: The Rock of Offence, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 18)

One more thing about this before we move on, once we understand the two-fold nature of the prescription for cleansing, then verses that used to give us a problem will become clear: verses such as 1 Peter 3:21.

1 Peter 3:21 *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:*

Peter said that “baptism doth also now save us” but the question is: ‘save them from what?’ If you think that is talking about salvation from sins, then you are misunderstanding the passage. That is why it is important to get the doctrine right.

Now let us get back to the passage in Luke and the issue of Israel being offended “in him.” For some, the members of the little flock, God will be a sanctuary. But, as Luke records, others will ‘speak against him.’

Luke 2:34 *And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, **this child** is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;*

So what about this issue of “shall not be ashamed.”

Romans 9:33 *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and **whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.***

This comes from two things written back in Isaiah where the terminology Paul uses is slightly different from Isaiah’s. Paul’s reference comes from:

Isaiah 8:14 *And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for **a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence** to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

Isaiah 28:16 *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: **he that believeth shall not make haste.***

Before we look at the “shall not make haste” phrase, let us make sure we can identify the “stone” in those passages. God ‘laid in Zion a foundation stone.’ When did God do that – during the Extension of Mercy as recorded in Acts 1-8.

They rejected the stone prior to the cross. After the cross, God laid that stone down in front of them and forced them to deal with it again.

Then Isaiah went on to describe the “stone” in various ways. He mentioned a “tried stone.” When did that happen? That is a reference to Jesus’ earthly ministry; he was “tried” in the sense that he was tested.

Hebrews refers to this issue.

***Hebrews 4:15** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but **was in all points tempted like as we are**, yet without sin.*

Paul also refers to this “tried” issue where Christ was obedient in everything, up to and including his substitutionary death on the cross.

Philippians 2:7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and **became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

‘He was tried and he did not fail.’

The next type of “stone” was when he functioned as that “precious corner stone.” When did that take place? That was Jesus’ death on the cross when he shed his blood to take away the sins of the world.

***1 Peter 1:19** But with **the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

***1 Peter 2:7** Unto you therefore which believe **he is precious**: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.*

And there is that issue again in 1 Peter 2:7; “the stone which the builders disallowed,”!

But now, look again at the verse in Isaiah and let us pick up that final phrase.

Isaiah 28:16 *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: **he that believeth shall not make haste.***

When Paul refers back to that, he writes, “whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”

Romans 9:33 *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and **whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.***

Peter also referred to the Isaiah 28:16.

1 Peter 2:6 *Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and **he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.***

Notice also that in all three passages it is said that God “lay in Zion” (Sion, in the New Testament) a stumblingstone.

Zion, or Mount Zion, was the hill of eminence in Jerusalem. On this hill the palace of David was built. Because of this, the whole city was often referred to by the name “Zion.” Zion also came to signify the capital of the nation.

Psalms 2:6 *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Psalms 48:12 *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.*

Psalms 69:35 *For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.*

Psalms 87:2 *The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*

Psalms 51:18 *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

Isaiah 52:1 *Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.*

Isaiah 59:20 *And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.*

Now, let us return to Romans 9:33 and examine that final phrase.

Romans 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Remember that Paul was writing about the members of the remnant. The time he was referring to was the ‘laying of the stumblingstone in Zion’ which was during the Extension of Mercy.

What was Paul doing in verses 30-33? He was beginning his explanation that Israel was responsible for their ‘accursed from Christ’ status. The predicament they were in was their own fault. What was happening to them is their doing and they did it when they ‘stumbled at the stumblingstone.’ They did it when they were ‘offended in him.’

And those who believed on him will not:

- Isaiah says, “shall not make haste,”
- Paul says, “shall not be ashamed,”
- Peter says “shall not be confounded”

The issues being described in those three verses have to do with several related issues rolled together.

To explain what I am talking about, let me say it this way: whosoever believeth on him ...

- ...shall not be thrown into a commotion of fear or fright (Isaiah: shall not make haste) that they have made the wrong decision and must now change their mind back to agree with apostate Israel.
- ...shall not be ‘offended in their Messiah’ (Paul: shall not be ashamed) in the way he was presented because they can differentiate between the ‘meek and lowly’ and the ‘power and great glory’ aspects of his two comings
- ...shall not be mentally confused (Peter: shall not be confounded) by the arguments of those who strongly object to their faith in Jesus being Israel’s Christ

The one we are focusing on is Romans 9:33 where Paul was saying that the interruption of the prophetic program and the predicament Israel was in was not because God was unfaithful or because the remnant believed in vain, but all of those things were a result of Israel’s own actions. They rejected him, they stumbled over him and they were offended in him; they were ashamed to even think that this “meek and lowly” Jesus of Nazareth could be their King and their Christ.

When Jesus showed up, it was anything except what they thought ought to accompany any king – let alone their King.

All of Jerusalem was in an uproar at the birth of the king. That was the sign that God was giving to the nation. It was not a dazzling display of great power and glory, which would normally be

expected. And they were offended that it was not. They were offended at his claims of deity because he was not what they expected him to be; that was the 'ashamed' issue we saw earlier.

Space for personal reflection and notes

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Session 19: The Rock of Offence, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 19)

Matthew 13:54 *And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? ⁵⁵Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? ⁵⁷**And they were offended in him...***

(22 minutes - Aside discussion for context is pointing out several aspects of Israel having gone through the 1st course of judgment (the 450 years under the Judges). In Old Testament prophets there are 7 major doctrinal issues that are covered by the major prophets and the minor prophets pick up on 1-2 or 3 of those to give more detail. One of those is God's Jehovahness and grace, i.e., compound names that describe particular things, coming out of Egypt journeying to Mount Sinai there are 5 trials they encounter which God is teaching them that they have to have because they can not produce on their own. One of those, the Davidic Covenant, was with its 5 major tenants: Redeemer, etc. No notes given but references the following scripture in the discussion).

1 Samuel 12:16 *Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes. ¹⁷Is it not **wheat harvest** to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive an see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.*

Instead of heeding his wisdom and paying attention to their own prophets who talked about God taking on flesh and dwelling among them, they were offended in him.

They were offended "in him" not 'by him.' It was the things about him that bothered them. His origins are human; he cannot be the prophesied King. That is why they are talking about his human parentage and his brothers and sisters. They therefore determined that Jesus must be like them, and not deity, not their King.

Because they could not separate the two comings, Israel took the passages about the 2nd Advent (power and great glory) and imposed those passages on their conception of what their Messiah was supposed to be and Jesus did not 'fill the bill.' (Remember when we talked about the days of the Messiah being divided into two parts: 1) the meek and lowly part (at his first coming) and 2) the power and great glory part (at his second coming).

Just like those who cannot rightly divide the word of truth seem to ignore the distinctiveness of the mystery program and focus only on Israel's program, there were those in Israel who disregarded the meek and lowly concept and only focused on the power and great glory concept of the Messiah.

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 20: The Rock of Offence, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 20)

Back in the prophets, both comings were often spoken of together. For example, look with me in Isaiah 9.

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...*

Most people read this opening line and think it is being poetic, with the meter of some kind of prose at work here, merely repeating the same thing. It is not. There are two things listed here: a child (born) and a son (given). This is not a repetition of the same event, but it is describing the Lord in both of his comings: the first one is when a child is born and the second one is when the Son is given.

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder...*

Let me ask you a question, which one has the government upon his shoulder: the child or the Son? Answer: the Son. What is that government? How do we talk about it? We talk about it as his kingdom.

The passage may start out with his birth as a child coming into the world at his first coming, but the rest of the passage has to do with his duties as the Son at his second coming when he sets up his kingdom.

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom**, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.*

Act 1:3 *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his **passion** by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of things pertaining to the kingdom of God: ⁴And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. ⁵John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. ⁶When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

Who sits on the throne of David: the child or the Son? That government is “his kingdom” just as verse 7 describes. However, if a person does not read carefully, they would miss the two comings in the passage, or even confuse them.

Now, to get ourselves back to the issue that was unfolding in Israel. They were “offended in him” and therefore they rejected him in spite of the fact that God told them in their prophets that he would give them a three-part sign.

Nevertheless, the fact that their Messiah was a man, born of a natural woman, was part of the sign that God gave to the nation. By doing it that way, God arranged it so that it took faith to believe this was the prophesied Christ. You have a man, who owns nothing, and claims to be God in human flesh.

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. ⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: ¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ¹¹ Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Matthew 8:20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; **but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.**

Was Jesus rich or poor in earthly possessions? He was poor; he did not even own a home; he had not “where to lay his head.” They said, ‘this cannot possibly be the King!’ (So they thought in their own wisdom.)

Space for personal reflection and notes