

## Devotionals Feb 8 – March 7, 2022: The Gospel of Luke (4): The Stone Rejected, Now Exalted

Abby Van Solkema

“Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord” was the cry of the multitude as Jesus completed his journey to Jerusalem and made his triumphal entry into the city (Luke 19:38). How is it possible that only five days later he would be executed just outside this same city? Sadly, for most of the people in this multitude, their cry was only from their lips and not their hearts. Once they got past the amazing miracles and realized that Jesus was not going to overthrow the government and establish an earthly kingdom, they quickly lost interest. Just as a stone would be rejected from a wall by a builder because it wasn't the right size or shape, the people rejected Jesus because he did not meet their expectations for what a savior should be like. They were blind to the beauty of the precious stone that was God's only begotten Son because they saw him from an earthly perspective, not a heavenly one. As was prophesied in Isaiah 53, he had no earthly beauty or majesty and his life of suffering on this earth did not attract people apart from God-given faith.

The challenges that the religious leaders posed to Jesus as he was teaching the people in the temple during the last week of his life made it clear that they rejected him as well. They did not accept that he was the Son of God, and they rejected his authority over their lives. The chief priests, scribes, and elders were obviously trying to trap him in his words in order to justify condemning him to death. However, Jesus used this opportunity instead to further remind them that he was in fact the Son of God. In his explanation of the parable of the wicked husbandmen, he quoted from Psalm 118 to reinforce his message. “The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner” (Luke 20:17). As this was one of the Hallel (praise) psalms traditionally sung during the Passover feast, the religious leaders would have been very familiar with the words of this psalm. Any pious Jew would be able to recognize the meaning of this parable. Jesus was telling them that they were the fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalm 118 because they were rejecting the Savior. Yet instead of inspiring repentance, it only made them increasingly angry and determined to kill Jesus (Luke 20:19).

According to God's eternal plan, these wicked men would be successful in their endeavor to kill Jesus. They even enlisted the help of one of the twelve—his own, close-knit group of disciples—to carry out their mission. Judas Iscariot chose the lure of money over the true Savior. This betrayal, along with the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, was the culmination of what had already been happening throughout Israel's history as a nation. Over and over again they had rebelled against God and turned to serve other gods instead. Over and over again they had ignored, rejected, and even killed the many prophets that God sent to call them to repentance from their sin. And this rebellion did not die with those who condemned Jesus to death; it continues today as well. Anyone who stumbles over the truth of Jesus as the only way of salvation rejects the true cornerstone. Sadly, we know from Luke 20:18, Isaiah 8:14–15, and other passages that those who do not believe will be completely destroyed when Jesus comes again at the end of the world. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans that was predicted in Luke 21 was only a small picture of the final, terrible day of judgment that is coming soon for those who do not believe.

Yet although Jesus was rejected by the Jews as a whole, God used even this sin to accomplish his divine purposes of saving his people and exalting his Son to his rightful throne in heaven. He raised Jesus from the dead in victory over the grave and brought him up to the highest position of power and authority at God's right hand. He established Jesus as the chief cornerstone on which his church would be built. Not all the people had rejected Jesus. There was a remnant of God's elect people from the Jews and many Gentiles also who would join together to form the early church at the beginning of the New Testament. In the book of Acts (which follows Luke chronologically), we see the apostles carrying out this work of building the church on the

cornerstone of Christ. In Acts 4:11–12, the apostle Peter again confronts the same leaders who crucified the Son of God with the truth of the gospel: “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other.” The Jewish religious leaders had hypocritically been pretending to build the house of God, but their labors were selfish and futile because they would not use the true cornerstone.

Paul instructs the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 3, “Ye are God’s building...for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (vv. 9, 11). The theme of this issue is pursuing unity. Unity among the people of God cannot happen apart from Christ. The church can only be unified if its foundation is Christ alone. He is the keystone that determines how all the other living stones, the people of God, fit together perfectly to build the spiritual house of God (1 Pet. 2:5). With Christ as our foundation and cornerstone, the church is able to stand together, strong and unmovable, both now and forever. When we contemplate God’s faithfulness to his church that is made possible by the work of Christ, how can we help but proclaim with adoration, “Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord”!

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Read</b>	<b>Study Question</b>	<b>Sing or pray</b>
Feb 8	Luke 19:28–40; Psalm 118:26	What is the significance of the people quoting from Psalm 118 in their words of praise as Jesus enters Jerusalem? Why did this bother the Pharisees so much?	Ps. #163
Feb 9	Luke 19:41–48; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:8–11	Why was Jesus so angry that people were selling goods in the temple? Can you think of a modern-day version of this sin?	Ps. #165
Feb 10	Luke 20:1–19; Psalm 118:22–23	How did the Jews reject the authority of God as pictured here by the wicked husbandmen rejecting the lord of the vineyard?	Ps. #166
Feb 11	Luke 20:20–26; Romans 13:1–7	How are you called to honor the civil authorities? How are you called to honor God?	Ps. #174
Feb 12	Luke 20:27–44	What do you learn about how heaven will be different from earth in Jesus’ answer to the Sadducees’ challenge?	Ps. #176
Feb 13	Luke 20:45–21:4	What do you learn about outward appearances and giving from Jesus’ teachings in these verses?	Ps. #182
Feb 14	Luke 21:5–24	How does the destruction of Jerusalem that Jesus predicted here foreshadow the end of the world that is still coming?	Ps. #185
Feb 15	Luke 21:25–38	What are believers instructed to watch out for as they wait for the end of the world and Jesus’ return?	Ps. #188

Feb 16	Luke 22:1–6, 21–23	What does Jesus teach about the relationship between providence and human responsibility with his words about Judas Iscariot in verse 22? (See also Acts 2:23.)	Ps. #192
Feb 17	Luke 22:7–20	What are the similarities and differences between the Passover and the Lord's supper that Jesus instituted here?	Ps. #194
Feb 18	Luke 22:24–38	What do you learn about true greatness in the kingdom of heaven from Jesus' conversation with his disciples? How does it compare to earthly greatness?	Ps. #201
Feb 19	Luke 22:39–53	How did Jesus submit to the will of God during this last week of his life on earth? What can you learn from his example?	Ps. #205
Feb 20	Luke 22:54–65	Have you ever been tempted to deny Jesus when following him will cost you something, like Peter did here? What did you do?	Ps. #206
Feb 21	Luke 22:66–71; Psalm 110	What does it mean that Jesus sits at the right hand of God? Why is this a comfort for you as a child of God?	Ps. #207
Feb 22	Luke 23:1–12	Why was it so important for Jesus to be declared innocent of all the charges brought against him?	Ps. #211
Feb 23	Luke 23:13–26	How was the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus a picture of what Jesus did for you on the cross?	Ps. #214
Feb 24	Luke 23:27–33; Revelation 6:15–17	What message did Jesus bring to the people with this last prophecy before his death? What is the message to you?	Ps. #217
Feb 25	Luke 23:34–43	How was the compassion and love of Jesus evident even while he was in agony on the cross?	Ps. #221
Feb 26	Luke 23:44–45; Hebrews 9:11–15; Hebrews 10:19–22	What does the veil of the temple being torn reveal about Jesus and what his death accomplished?	Ps. #222
Feb 27	Luke 23:46–49; Romans 15:8–13	What effect did the death of Jesus have on the different people who were watching? What effect does it have on you as you think about it today?	Ps. #223
Feb 28	Luke 23:50–24:3	Why did the women who had come with Jesus from Galilee follow Joseph? Why is it important that their presence at Jesus' burial is noted?	Ps. #224
March 1	Luke 24:4–12; 1 Corinthians 15:17	Why is it so important for you to believe that Jesus is risen from the dead?	Ps. #227

March 2	Luke 24:13–24	Why were the two disciples on the road to Emmaus so sad? What kept them from fully understanding what had happened?	Ps. #232
March 3	Luke 24:25–35	How do both the Old and New Testaments have Jesus as their main theme? Does keeping this in mind change how you read the Bible?	Ps. #233
March 4	Luke 24:36–43; 1 Corinthians 15:35–50	What do we learn about Jesus' resurrected body in these verses? What will your resurrected body be like?	Ps. #239
March 5	Luke 24:44–48	What does Jesus teach here about how his people are enabled to understand the Bible? Are you conscious of this when you read the Bible as well?	Ps. #240
March 6	Luke 24:49–53; Acts 2:1–4	What was the "power from on high" that Jesus promised his disciples here to help them in their work? Do you have this same power in you?	Ps. #241
March 7	Luke 1:14; 2:10; 6:23; 8:13; 10:17– 20; 15:7; 19:6; 24:41, 52	What have you learned about joy throughout your study of the gospel of Luke in the past few months?	Ps. #246

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