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the head of the corner.

—Matthew 21:42



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**Bible Lens**

**Christ  
Jesus**

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# Christ Jesus

## from the **Golden Text**

### **Matthew 21:42**

*The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.*

Christ Jesus cites Psalms 118:22 to admonish the Pharisees and priests for rejecting him—and then warns them, “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you” (Matthew 21:43). Ironically, verse 26 of this very psalm had just been sung by crowds honoring Jesus as he entered Jerusalem (see Matthew 21:9).

The stone referred to by the Psalmist was seen as a reference to Israel, to King David, or to the promised Messiah. Here the allusion is to Christ. Like the “head of the corner” of a building—the stone that joins walls and supports the roof—the Savior is indispensable to the integrity and strength of the church. Rejection of the Christ brings destruction (see v. 44).

Peter later refers to this image when he is questioned by Jewish authorities—including Annas and Caiaphas—after Jesus’ resurrection (see Acts 4:10–12). And First Peter cites a rejected “chief corner stone” in his description of the household of believers (see 2:5–8).

## from the **Responsive Reading**

### **Ephesians 2:19, 20**

*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and*

*prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*

The “chief corner stone” metaphor strengthens the familial image of the “household of God.” With Christ as the foundation, all the faithful—both Jew and Gentile—are one building, “fitly framed together ... unto an holy temple in the Lord” (v. 21).

One source notes, “In many cities, foreigners who settled could remain ‘resident aliens’ for generations, lacking voting rights and other privileges that belonged to citizens.” For the writer of Ephesians, the Christian community was an extended family, with common rights and equal access to God for every member.

## from **Section 1**

### **2 | Luke 4:16, 17**

*And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias.*

Jesus begins his public ministry in his hometown synagogue. Respectful of tradition, he observes the practice of standing up to read. But when he openly identifies himself with the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1, 2—and compares himself to revered prophets Elijah and Elisha—the townspeople become so enraged that they attempt to kill him (see Luke 4:28–30).

The statement “He hath anointed me,” quoted in v. 18, was considered Messianic,



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and the Greek language supports this: The term translated *anointed* is *khriō*—a word directly related to *Khristos*, the Anointed One or Christ.

“No prophet is accepted in his own country” (v. 24) was proverbial at this time, and had been exemplified centuries earlier by Jeremiah’s rejection in Anathoth (see Jeremiah 1:1, 11:21).

from **Section 2**

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## 7 | Matthew 17:17, 18

*Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.*

Generation commonly referred to a group or race of people. Scholars are unsure about whom Jesus is addressing—solely his disciples or the entire crowd described in Mark’s account (see Mark 9:14–27). Whomever his intended audience, the Master is clearly rebuking a distorted view of his teachings—a view that limited their faith in the Christly power to heal.

from **Section 3**

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## 8 | Matthew 18:2, 3

*Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Jesus’ answer to the disciples’ question, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (v. 1) must have been surprising. Children were among the lowest in social standing in ancient cultures, and most people viewed religious leaders, political rulers, and military heroes as the greatest. Jesus charges his followers to be “converted” (Greek, *strephō*), meaning to turn—in this case, from pride and pretension to the meek trustfulness of a child.

from **Section 5**

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## 14 | Matthew 24:1, 2

*Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, ... verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

Although the first Jewish Temple had been demolished by the Babylonian army in 586 BC, the second Temple would likely have seemed nearly indestructible. Extensively renovated by Herod the Great circa 20 BC, it was built of immense stones—some nearly 40 feet long and weighing 400 short tons (12 meters, 360 metric tons).

Jesus’ prediction was fulfilled by the Romans within only a few decades, in AD 70. But his words of warning implied much more than the physical devastation of one building. In what has been called the “Little Apocalypse” (included in many verses of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21), he outlines signs of the total destruction of evil.

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### Resources quoted in this issue

RR: Keener, Craig S., John H. Walton, eds. *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016.

# Satan's fall from heaven

By Paul Stark Seeley

From the February 22, 1947, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Christ Jesus had a trenchant way of stating his thoughts, and an impressive originality in his form of expression.

To the seventy who had just returned from their successful healing mission he stated in graphic phrase what had been taking place in his thought. Let us weigh his words: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

The Master used this simile to picture the complete separateness of Satan—all evil—from the all-ness of God, which the Christ-idea had revealed to his consciousness.

Following his statement quoted above, the Master told his hearers what Satan's fall from heaven—evil's unrelatedness to God and man—meant to them individually in their everyday experience, namely, immunity from and superiority to all evil. Said he: "I give unto you power ... over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).

Have you been tempted to believe that you are a hurt mortal, that an accident or injury has hurt you physically, resulting in bad effects; that you have been mentally hurt by the unkindness, criticism, or hate of another; that some other mortal has hurt your chances for merited recognition, promotion, and successful accomplishment? Or perhaps some other phase of hurt tempts you to believe it is riveted on your thought and experience. But the Master's statement stands, "Nothing shall by any means *hurt* you."

In this same talk to the seventy Jesus also said, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven"—because the only real nature and selfhood of man is naturally and eternally included in the harmonious, exempt-from-evil kingdom, where positive

intelligence constantly reigns supreme over every expression of Life.

Never has there been an accident or injury in God's kingdom to hurt a single one of His ideas. Never have there been any conflicting forces with man as their victim. Let us know and rejoice in this eternal intactness of God's work. Satan's lack of place in God's heaven, Truth's creation, has always been a scientific fact. Eternally, there is no place in Love's infinitude for satanic evil in any of its modes.

If you are believing otherwise, it is only because you are believing in and mentally looking at a mistaken concept of creation—mortal mind's claim to expression. Turn to the Christ-idea of God as the infinite and only cause, and man, collectively and individually, as God's reflection, and you will find no mortal mind, no hurt-producing forces, no wrong-thinking mortals, some conniving to hurt and some believing they are hurt.

Our work is, through understanding prayer, to realize the individual and collective oneness of man with God and man's consequent eternal separateness from evil, from all that would claim by any means, physical or mental, to impair, injure, hurt, or destroy.

How separate and far away all this is from the universe of God, man's present and eternal habitation. Remember then and realize that there is no hurt mortal and no mortal doing hurt in the kingdom of our Father, and that His Christ, the spiritual idea of Life, enables you and me to demonstrate this.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/satan-s-fall-from-heaven](http://jsh.christianscience.com/satan-s-fall-from-heaven).