

1 Kefa 2:1-10

The Living Stone and a Holy People

In my last post, we explored how **Kefa** says we are **Called to Be Holy**. In this post, we learn about **The Living Stone and a Holy People**.

¹ Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, of all deceit, hypocrisy and envy, and of all the ways there are of speaking against people;

Ancient writers sometimes employed “vice lists,” indicating what people should avoid; **Kefa** employs a miniature vice list. **Rid yourselves** of the old ways also follows rebirth in **James**, **Ephesians**, and **Colossians**; together with other parallels to those letters, this similarity has suggested to some scholars a common baptismal tradition in the early church. It might also follow some teaching by **Yeshua** no longer available to us.¹

² and be like newborn babies, thirsty for the pure milk of the Word; so that by it, you may grow up into deliverance.

Be like newborn babies, thirsty for the pure milk of the Word of **God**, which here can mean (1) the written **Word**, then only the **Tanakh** (1:24), (2) the Gospel (1:25), which implies the future **Brit Hadashah**, (3) **Yeshua**, (4) true doctrine (as in Hebrews 5:11–6:2), or (5) all of the above.

Babies were dependent on their mothers or nurses for nourishment by their milk; use of cows’ milk was rare. It was believed that children were very impressionable at this nursing stage, and those who allowed them to be tended by nursemaids were advised to select the nurses with care. “Pure” milk meant that it had not been mixed with anything else; the term is used in business documents for sales of unadulterated foods.²

³ For you have tasted that Adonai is good. Here **Kefa** alludes to Psalm 34:8.

⁴ As you come to him, the living stone, rejected by people but chosen by God and precious to him, ⁵ you yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be cohanim set apart for God to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to him through Yeshua the Messiah. ⁶ This is why the Tanakh says,

***“Look! I am laying in Tziyon a stone,
a chosen and precious cornerstone;
and whoever rests his trust on it
will certainly not be humiliated.”***

⁷ Now to you who keep trusting, he is precious. But to those who are not trusting,

***“The very stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;”***

⁸ also he is

***a stone that will make people stumble,
a rock over which they will trip.***

They are stumbling at the Word, disobeying it—as had been planned.

¹ The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament.

² Ibid.

In verses 4-10, **Kefa** describes our identity as the people of God with support from several passages from the **Tanakh**. The overall metaphor here is the idea of stones being fit together into a building. The chief stone on which all the others depend for proper alignment is **Yeshua**. By virtue of His resurrection from the dead, he is a living stone. During His earthly ministry, He was rejected by people but honored by God (2:4).

As it was then, so it is today. You have only two choices with **Yeshua**: accept Him or reject Him. Those who accept Him know He is the Lord's honored cornerstone - the stone on which the whole house aligns. We are to live our lives with reference to Him, and we will never be put to shame (2:6). But for those who reject Him, He is a stone to stumble over; thus, they will trip over Him right into judgment (2:7-8). ³

⁹ But you are a chosen people, the King's cohanim, a holy nation, a people for God to possess! Why? In order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

A chosen people, the King's cohanim, a holy nation, a people for God to possess! In the **Tanakh** these terms are applied to the **Jewish** people, **Isra'el**. Kefa applies them to the readers of his letter, who are **Messianic Jews** and **Messianic Gentiles** who truly identify with them. The Bible resolves doubts and questions about election by stating its true purpose: ***in order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light***, namely, **God**. The word **Jew** in Hebrew is **Y'hudi**, related to the words **hod** (praise) and **todah** (thanks). To be a **Jew**, then, is to be one who praises and thanks **God**; the very name of the **Jewish** people reflects **God's** purpose in choosing us. **Gentiles** grafted into **Isra'el**, and therefore sharing **Isra'el's** spiritual life through her **Messiah**, are chosen for the same purpose.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; before, you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ~ 1 Kefa 2:1-10 (CJB)

Sha'ul makes a **midrash** (allegorical interpretation) on these same phrases, applying them not to **Jews**, as does **Hosea**, but to **Gentiles** (Rom 9:24b-26). Here **Kefa** applies them to his **Messianic Jewish** and **Messianic Gentile** readers.

We will learn about **A Call to Good Works** in 2 Kefa 2:11-17 in my next post.

³ The Tony Evans Bible Commentary.