

## **1:25 *The Word of the Lord Abides Forever***

### **The Word Remains.**

Clement of Alexandria: The Word of God remains forever—both prophecy and divine teaching. Adumbrations.<sup>43</sup>

### **Guided Toward Salvation.**

Andreas: God foresaw and forewarned us about all the above, but although he sees our great disobedience, the Lord of all persists in guiding us toward salvation. Catena.<sup>44</sup>

## **2:1 *Turn Away from Evil***

### **Be Born Again.**

Didymus the Blind: This verse upsets the heretics, who like to think that natures are good or bad in themselves and therefore cannot be changed. But what Peter says is fully in line with the words of Jesus: “You must be born again.” <sup>1</sup> Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>2</sup>

### **Lay Aside Malice.**

Hilary of Arles: As you have been born again by the Word of the living God, lay aside all malice, for an infant has no malice in him. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>3</sup>

### **Born to an Incorruptible Life.**

Oecumenius: These few words say a great deal, for it is unworthy of those who have been born again to an incorruptible life to be ensnared by evil and to prefer things which have no existence to that which truly exists. For evil is not a substance but merely clings to substances as if it were part of them. Peter says that believers ought to be immune to all deceit, pretense, envy and disparagement. Deceit and pretence are the exact opposite of the truth which was preached to you. If envy and disparagement find a home inside you, who are bound by the tie of brotherly love, how will you be able to bear the attacks of the heretics? Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>5</sup>

## ***2:2 Newborn Babies***

### **Long for Spiritual Milk.**

Hilary of Arles: Milk has three forms which can be compared to doctrine, that is, the liquid, cheese and butter. Liquid milk is the literal sense of Scripture, cheese is the moral sense, and butter is the spiritual sense. Find a good teacher and you will soon learn these things. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>6</sup>

### **Newborn Babies Drink Milk.**

Andreas: The divine law wants us to be perfect, but on the way toward perfection it has us first drink milk, as if we were newborn babies, and by that milk we shall grow toward salvation. Paul spoke to the same effect when he said: “Do not be children in understanding, but be innocent in wrongdoing. In understanding be adults.”<sup>7</sup> For it is not possible to advance toward purity, or toward maturity in understanding, or toward adulthood as a worker approved by God, unless you renounce evil and become like an innocent child. Catena.<sup>8</sup>

## ***2:3 You Have Tasted the Kindness of the Lord***

### **Taste the Bread of Life.**

Basil the Great: Everywhere we notice that the various facets of the soul are designated by outward things. Thus when our Lord is described as the true bread and his flesh as the true food, we must understand this as meaning that the pleasure of right reason is like the taste of bread. Just as it is impossible for someone to know what honey is like simply by being told about it, because he must taste it in order to find out, so too the goodness of the heavenly bread is not properly communicated by teaching alone. We must taste the goodness of the Lord by our own experience. Catena.<sup>10</sup>

## ***2:4 That Living Stone***

### **Come to Him.**

Didymus the Blind: Those who have accepted the gospel and who have been born again of incorruptible seed are an elect and approved race. At the same time they have been made living stones, built on top of the living Stone, who is chosen and honored, the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, in order to

build a spiritual house for God toward whom they are being led and to whom spiritual sacrifices are offered. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Chief Cornerstone.**

Andreas: This refers to the scribes and the Pharisees and the whole body of the Sanhedrin, about whom it was said: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." <sup>13</sup> Catena.<sup>14</sup>

## ***2:5a Built into a Spiritual House***

### **Cemented by Charity.**

Augustine: The Lord will repay his faithful followers who are so lovingly, so cheerfully, so devotedly carrying out these works, to the effect that he includes them in the construction of his own building, into which they hasten to fit as living stones, fashioned by faith, made solidly firm by hope, cemented together by charity. Sermons 337.<sup>15</sup>

## ***2:5b To Be a Holy Priesthood***

### **Fashioned into a Living Stone.**

Origen: Even though a man may have departed out of this life insufficiently instructed but with a record of acceptable works, he can be instructed in that Jerusalem, the city of the saints, that is, he can be taught and informed and fashioned into a "living stone," a stone precious and elect, because he has borne with courage and endurance the trials of life and the struggle for piety. On First Principles 2.11.3.<sup>17</sup>

### **A House of God.**

Origen: We learn from Peter that the church is a body and a house of God built from living stones. Commentary on John 10.266.<sup>18</sup>

### **Built on a Good Foundation.**

Hilary of Arles: You have been built on a good foundation, that of the apostles, prophets and patriarchs. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>19</sup>

## **2:6 *The Cornerstone in Zion***

### **No Building Without Cornerstone.**

Augustine: Without the cornerstone which is Christ, I do not see how men can be built into a house of God, to contain God dwelling in them, without being born again, which cannot happen before they are born the first time. Letters 187.31.21

### **Believers of All Cultures.**

Cyril of Alexandria: Peter calls our Lord Jesus Christ a chosen and precious stone, fashioned by the glory and splendor of divinity. He calls it the cornerstone, because through one faith it binds together in unity the two peoples, Israel and the Gentiles. Catena.22

### **Only One Cornerstone.**

Hilary of Arles: Everything in this prophecy is written about Christ. There are many living stones in God's temple, but here we are contemplating only the One. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.23

## **2:7 *The Head of the Corner***

### **Belief and Rejection.**

Didymus the Blind: Just as the Lord is the true light who has come into the world for judgment, so that at his coming he may give sight to the blind and blind those who see in the wrong way, so he is also a chosen cornerstone, giving honor to those who join themselves to him in faith and revealing himself to them as a reliable foundation, but to those who do not believe he is not precious but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, considered worthless by the builders who have rejected him. These builders are the scribes and the Pharisees. Catena.25

### **The Reversal.**

Chrysostom: These words refer to Christ, who himself prophesied in the Gospels, saying: "Have you not read, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner?' " 26 Catena.27

## **Sons or Stones?**

Hilary of Arles: Those of you who believe in Christ are more than just stones—you are sons of God!  
Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>28</sup>

### **2:8a *The Stone of Stumbling***

#### **Wickedness Brings Damnation.**

Andreas: They stumble because of their wicked mind and because they were chosen for damnation. For it is that which has brought them to this position. Catena.<sup>30</sup>

### **2:8b *They Disobey the Word***

#### **Their Own Unwillingness.**

Didymus the Blind: The position in which they find themselves is one which they have chosen, for it starts with their unbelief. For just as the world, which has been placed under evil, is not evil by nature but has attained this position by its own desire, so also those who are being talked about here have been so placed because of their own unwillingness to believe, for they are cousins of those who have been handed over to the wickednesses of their desires. For God was very patient with those who despised his goodness and mercy, but in the end he left them to follow their own will. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>31</sup>

#### **God Wills Everyone to Be Saved.**

Oecumenius: God is not to be held responsible for this, for no cause of damnation can come from him who wants everyone to be saved. It is they who have made themselves into vessels of wrath, and unbelief has followed naturally from that. Therefore they have been established in the order for which they have prepared themselves. For if a human being is made with free will, that free will cannot be forced, nor can anyone accuse him who has decreed their fate of having done anything to them which they did not fully deserve as a result of their own actions. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>32</sup>

## **2:9 A Chosen Race, a Royal Priesthood**

### **A Royal People.**

Clement of Alexandria: That we are a chosen people is clear enough, but Peter said that we are a royal people because we have been called to share Christ's kingdom and we belong to him. We are a priesthood because of the offering which is made in prayers and in the teachings by which souls which are offered to God are won. Adumbrations.<sup>33</sup>

### **The Approach to the Sanctuary.**

Origen: Because you are a priestly race you are able to approach the sanctuary of God. Sermons on Leviticus 9.9.<sup>34</sup>

### **The Altar Fire Maintained.**

Origen: If you want to exercise the priesthood of your soul, do not let the fire depart from your altar. Sermons on Leviticus 4.6.<sup>35</sup>

### **King and Priest Together.**

Didymus the Blind: Under the old dispensation, the priesthood and the kingship were two different things. No one could be both a king and a priest. But afterwards came the gospel, which united these two offices in Christ. From this it follows that the people whom he has chosen will be both royal and priestly at the same time. Some people wonder how it is possible, seeing that we are called from all the nations on earth, for us to be regarded as one holy people. The answer to this is that although we are from many different nations, the fact that we have all repented of our sins and accepted a common will and a common mind gives those who have repented one doctrine and one faith. When there is a soul and heart common to all believers, then they are called one people. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>36</sup>

### **All Believers Anointed.**

Augustine: In ancient times only one high priest was anointed, but now all Christians are anointed. Sermons 198a.<sup>37</sup>

### **A Holy People.**

Andreas: We are royal from the fact that Christ is a king, and we are a priesthood from the fact that he is a priest. Furthermore, we are also a holy people, so called by the one who is called holy in himself. Catena.<sup>39</sup>

### **A People Apart.**

Severus of Antioch: As believers in Christ we have received exactly the same things as he already has. Since he is of the royal tribe and became a high priest, so too have we been enriched by these gifts. Having them, we have become a holy nation and a people for safekeeping, that is, for being kept apart from the world; for we have entered into his rest. Catena.<sup>40</sup>

## **2:10 *You Are God's People***

### **The New People of the Circumcision.**

Origen: O people of God, chosen to expound the virtues of the Lord: take up the circumcision worthy of the Word of God in your ears, on your lips, in your heart and in the foreskin of your flesh, as well as in every part of you. Sermons on Genesis 3.5.<sup>42</sup>

### **Believing Gentiles Now God's People.**

Didymus the Blind: This verse means that Gentiles who were not God's people before they believed have now been called by him and have come to him. Some people think that Peter is talking about a mixture of beings who are both good and bad by nature, but their interpretation comes up against many serious objections. You cannot say of spiritual beings that there was once a time when they were not a people and when they lacked mercy, nor can you say of earthly beings that they have been turned into a people or received mercy. Therefore I believe that that is the wrong interpretation of this verse. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>43</sup>

### **One Holy People.**

Andreas: When people from different races and nations are called to abandon all their differences and to take on one mind, drawing near to him by one faith and one teaching, by which the soul and the heart become one, they are one holy people. Catena.<sup>44</sup>