

A Chosen Generation

by

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Text: 1 Pet. 2:9-12

“...ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

Allegiances And Relationships

Our text deals with the position of the Christian throughout his earthly life, including his relationship with God, and with the world. It teaches us of our position in the heaven-appointed government, whose head is God, to whom we owe total allegiance, and of the respect we owe earthly governments, which are subordinate to that of God.

Realizing that words must be defined, it will be necessary through this essay to define the meanings of the various words of our text. I have used the following scholarly texts: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, Vine's Expository of Biblical words, and Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. There can be no better scholarship than these.

Chosen Generation

Generation is defined “genos, born, country (-man), diversity, generation, kindred, nation, offspring, stock.”

“Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matt. 21:43).

Prior to Christ's advent, the kingdom of God was the sole possession of the Jews, but was taken from them and given to a different “nation”. This nation is described as *chosen (eklektos)* which is defined as “selected”, “favorite”.

To be a nation, there must of necessity be a government to exercise authority over the subjects within, otherwise chaos would rule over all. It is God's will that there be no confusion in the nation, but rather peace. *“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”* (1 Cor. 14:33)

God, The King

Paul explains the nature of this government and its head. *“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* (Eph. 4:6).

God, as is His prerogative, has appointed his Son, Jesus Christ, to be the head of His kingdom until the time of the consummation of all things. *“And (God) hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.”* (Eph. 1:22).

We are a *“royal priesthood”* through our relationship with God, our King.

Government On His Shoulders

Isaiah foretold of this new nation and of its government. *“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, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”* (Isa. 9:6). *“Of 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 justice and with judgment from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”* (Isa. 9:7).

Functionaries

To oversee the nation of God, Jesus created positions to be filled by qualified persons who would draw their authority solely from Him. *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”* (Eph. 4:11-12).

This Is A Brief Outline Of The Government Of Christ, The Appointed Head Of The Kingdom Of God

Citizenship

Christians, as subjects of God, are termed “citizens” of this nation. *“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we also look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Phil. 3:20).

The word *conversation* in this verse is from “*politeuma*” meaning “a community, i e (abst) citizenship”. Paul is telling us that our *citizenship* is in heaven (where the head of our government is).

Furthermore, he tells us, *“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear*

of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, in one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." (Phil. 1:27).

In this verse the word is "*politeuomai*" meaning "to behave as a citizen". Our conduct in this world should be worthy of citizens of this "chosen generation (nation)".

Here, No "Continuing City"

We are citizens of a heavenly nation with our citizenship in heaven, because here we have no permanent home. "*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims...*" (1 Pet. 2:11). *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*" (Heb. 11:13).

If we are pilgrims and strangers in our present life, it follows that our true citizenship is not here among the governments and nations of men. "*For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*" (Heb. 13:14).

"*Continuing*" (*meno*) is rendered "...a given place, state, relation: abide, dwell. Thus, we are citizens whose permanent dwelling place is not here in this world, but in heaven with our king.

A Peculiar People

In our text, Christians are described as a "*peculiar*" people. He does not refer to us as "*people*" (in general) but as "*a people*" (as Irish, a people). What does he mean by this? The word "*peculiar*" is defined as "purchased"

"...*your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own*" (1 Cor. 6:19). "*Ye are **bought with a price**; be not ye the servants of men.*" (1 Cor. 7:20). "...*feed the church of God, which he hath **purchased with his own blood.***" (Acts 20:28).

We were purchased with a most exorbitant price, the blood of Christ. We should all keep in mind the words of Peter, "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.*" (2 Pet. 3:11).

Your fellow-servant in Christ,
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