

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

A HOLY NATION

But 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. 1 Peter 2:9-10

There are a lot of well meaning citizens of the United States of America who are convinced that the good old U.S. is a "Christian Nation" founded on Christian principles by Christian men. The truth is that while some of the nation's founders were indeed true believers, many of them if not most of them were not. Humanists comprised the majority with the leading man among them, Thomas Jefferson, being a deist. Some of the great TV and radio "preachers" of today try to stir men up over issues like getting prayer back in the schools or keeping "under GOD" in our pledge of allegiance. Taking "in GOD we trust" off of our money is considered by them as some great crime. It seems to me the height of hypocrisy that a nation that leads the world in abortions, unwed mothers, and divorce, should worry about a meaningless slogan on their money. I am confident that GOD is not impressed with it anymore than HE is with the clamor to legalize same sex marriage or our winking at adultery and fornication. We are exporting democracy while we are importing drugs. The United States has been the recipient of multitudes of mercy and blessing but like every nation on earth which has forgotten GOD, we are now reaping what we have sowed as the impending hammer of judgment begins to fall. The rampant wickedness of our land is not going to be the "cause" of judgment, it is the evidence of it already begun.

It is only in the folly of man's imagination that any earthly nation could be termed a "Christian" nation anyway. There is no such thing spoken of in the scripture. The citizenship of an earthly nation can perhaps be comprised mostly of Christian men and women but earthly nations will not and cannot be followers of CHRIST. JESUS said, *"My kingdom is not of this world"* (John 18:36; see also I Cor.15:50). It is not readily apparent that there are even any nations whose citizenship is predominantly comprised of true believers and followers of CHRIST. The LORD said *"Ye shall know them by their fruits."* (Matt 7:16) Some are convinced that national patriotism is such a fruit, but the scripture nowhere defines it as such. (see Luke 20:25)

The governments of earthly nations exist only for the ordained purpose of GOD. (see Rom.13:1-6) Governments wage carnal warfare and shall continue to do so until the time of the end, but this carnal warfare is not that to which the followers of CHRIST are called. (see II Cor 10:3-5, Mat.24:6,7) All nations rise and fall at the behest of HIM who *"removeth kings, and setteth up kings."* (Dan 2:21) All earthly nations have already been or ultimately will be destroyed according to the LORD's purpose and others shall arise at HIS bidding to take their place until the day of judgment when all shall flee from HIS presence. (see Rev.15:4;Isa.17:13) This is why the children of GOD confess that we have here no continuing city. (see Heb 13:14) We are strangers and sojourners in this world and we look *"for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* (Heb 11:10) But we have a nation of which we are citizens and Peter here describes our citizenship.

We are a chosen generation. The religious men of this world grow angry when we preach that GOD determines the citizenship of this country, yet the unconditional election of a people in JESUS CHRIST assures that this nation will be populated. Those who hate this truth assume that they would be glad to enter its gates and that they have the ability to persuade others to come along with them, when the scripture plainly indicates that if the LORD did not compel men to come in, no one would dwell in this nation. The natural man hates this city and often tries to tear it down, so how could he ever be pleased to dwell there?

We are a royal priesthood. We are descended not only from a KING but from that GREAT HIGH PRIEST which is after the order of Melchisedec, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. HE has made us kings and priests. We are the LORD's free men and are not subject to any law except the law of the spirit of life in CHRIST JESUS, we are sons and not hirelings and servants. The way into the holy of holies is made open to us and we can offer the sacrifices of praise night and day, without the need of teachers because the SPIRIT of GOD is our GUIDE into all truth.

We are a holy nation. That which is holy is that which is "set apart" for a specific purpose. GOD has established this nation to be a manifestation of HIS glory in the ages to come, that we *"should shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light:"* We are gathered together as brethren in the LORD with one KING and one law, a nation set apart for HIS glory and our benefit. This is a kingdom where love reigns and the highest calling is to be the servant of all. *"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God."* (Isaiah 35:1-2)

We are a peculiar people. That which is peculiar does not conform to acceptable standards set by the world. GOD's people have different desires and a different way of thinking than the world does. They have been made new creatures and old things have passed away. They are not conformed to the world but are transformed by the renewing of their minds. (see Rom.12:2). We are peculiar because we are HIS. *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth."* (Deut 14:2)

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