

GOD'S ONE PURE NATION

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In Ezekiel 37:22-24, God foretold He would make Israel “*one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd.*” The next verse adds, “*My servant David shall be their prince forever.*” This is actually a beautiful prophecy of the church in the New Testament.

One church under one Christ

The church of Christ is the spiritual nation of Israel (Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:16; Heb 12:22-23), God’s spiritual, “holy nation” (1 Pet 2:5-9). The Lord’s church is indeed but “one nation.” There is only one church (John 10:16; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 1:22-23 + 4:4; 5:23; Col 3:15), and all are on in Christ in that church (John 17:11-26; Acts 4:32; Rom 12:4-5; 15:5-6; 1 Cor 12:12-27; 2 Cor 13:11; Gal 3:27-29; Eph 1:10; 2:12-22; 4:2-3,11-13; Php 1:27; 2:1-2; 1 Pet 3:8). This “one nation” has “one king,” and that is Jesus Christ (Matt 2:2; 5:35; 21:5; 25:34,40; 27:11,29,37,42; Mark 15:2,9,12,18,26,32; Luke 1:32-33; 19:14-15,27,38; 23:2-3,37-38; John 1:49; 12:12-15; 18:33-37,39; 19:3,12,14-15,19-22; Acts 4:27; 17:7; Rom 15:12; 1 Cor 15:24-25; 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 11:15; 17:14; 19:16; 20:4-6). According to the prophecy in Ezekiel 37:24, God’s “servant David” (see also Jer 30:9; Ezek 34:23-24) would be the one king and one shepherd over Israel. This is clearly speaking of Jesus Christ. First, Jesus Christ is “David” the king (or prince) of Israel in that he descended from David physically (Matt 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9,15; 22:45-46; Mark 10:47-48; Luke 18:38-39; Rom 1:3), and is sitting on his spiritual throne in heaven as the king of his spiritual kingdom, the church (Luke 1:31-33; Matt 16:18-19; John 18:36-37;

GOD'S ONE PURE NATION (continued)

Acts 2:29-36; Col 1:13; Eph 1:22-23; 5:23; Col 1:18).

Cleansed and undefiled

Faithful Christians have turned away from all forms of idolatry (Acts 15:20,29; 21:25; 1 Cor 10:14; 12:2; 2 Cor 6:16-18; 1 Thes 1:9-10; 1 John 5:21), including covetousness (Col 3:5). Not only that, but faithful Christians will turn away from all their transgressions. God “cleanses” His people from their sins (see also Psalm 103:3; 1 John 1:9). “Cleansing” goes beyond mere forgiveness. Forgiveness removes the sin from our record, which is necessary for our salvation. Cleansing the person actually removes what caused him to sin in the first place. Sin comes from the heart (Matt 15:18-20; 12:34-35). God says He will purify (the same Greek word as “cleanse” in 1 John 1:9) our hearts by faith (Acts 15:9). That faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom 10:17). When the evil is purged out of our hearts, what originally caused us to sin is gone. Now we are better prepared to resist the temptation the next time it comes. God not only wants us to have a clean record, but He also wants us not to repeat the same sins (1 John 2:1; Eph 6:16; 1 Cor 6:9-11). Our heart needs to change in order to accomplish God’s will. Thus, if we confess and repent of our sins, God will not only forgive us, but He will cleanse our hearts from all unrighteousness. This is only fulfilled in the New Testament by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Forgiveness of sins did not come through the blood of bulls and goats (Heb 10:1-4). Sins can only be cleansed and forgiven by the blood of Christ (Matt 26:28; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38; 3:25-26; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38-39; 26:15-18; Rom 3:24-25; 11:26-27; Eph 1:7; Col 1:13-14; Heb 9:11-28; 10:11-18; 1 John 1:7,9). Therefore, the prophecy of Ezekiel 37:23 only finds fulfillment under the New Covenant (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:12; 10:17). Because of Christ and the cleansing of our sins (Ezek 37:22-23), the Father is now our God and we are His people (Jer 30:21-22; 31:33; 32:37-40; Ezek 11:19-20; 37:22-27; Zech 8:8; 13:9; Rom 9:24-26; 2 Cor 6:16-18; Heb 8:10; 1 Pet 2:9-10; Rev 5:9; 21:3).