

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #79
4/23/2008

Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 15
19:21-20:10

In last week's lesson 1 Peter 2:9 was our focus. Then we referenced several passages of Scripture (James 1:14-15; Romans 8:5-8; Ephesians 4:17-23; 5:8-21; Romans 12:1-2) and saw that there was a relationship between what God says in these passages and what He tells us in 1 Peter 2:9. Our consideration of these passages was somewhat cursory and we need to elaborate more on how they enhance our understanding about being the **"chosen generation"** of 1 Peter 2:9. In addition to these references we drew some conclusions which we only briefly considered:

1. God's purpose for those in His church today, the subjects in His Spiritual Theocracy, is to exhibit His holiness. It is obvious that a distinct separation must exist between those who belong to Christ and those who belong to Satan (2 Corinthians 4:6-7; 6:14-7:1).
2. God has given clear instructions about how to exhibit His holiness in this sin-polluted world.
3. God has commanded His subjects to separate themselves and to be faithful in exhibiting His holiness. To fail to be obedient is to reproduce Satan's act of rebellion against the King.
4. God has given the resources, power and abilities needed to be obedient to Him. (Philippians 2:12-16).

Returning to the passage that has been our focus, 1 Peter 1:9: **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light,"** we go deeper into its meaning. We note that the statement in verse nine is preceded by the statement in verse eight about Israel, the original **"chosen people"** of God (Deuteronomy 7:6), **"being disobedient."** In such a context one should expect an emphasis upon God's new **"chosen generation"** being obedient to Him as subjects in **His Spiritual Kingdom**. That is exactly what is found.

The first conclusion is that God's purpose in choosing those, who yield their lives to Christ Jesus as Lord and King, is **"that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light,"** displaying His holy nature to an unholy world.

Three phrases modify **"chosen generation:"** (1) **royal priesthood**, (2) **holy nation**, (3) **peculiar people**. Each of these modifiers illuminates the phrase **"chosen generation."** **Royal priesthood** indicates that those who constitute this **"chosen generation"** represent the presence and authority of the King and are **"ambassadors for Christ"** (2 Corinthians 5:20) with the normally associated meanings of being **"ambassadors."**

"Holy nation" describes the nature and character of these **"ambassadors."** **"Peculiar people"** is used to indicate that those who constitute the

Revelation
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19:21-20:10

“chosen generation” have been purchased and become a valued possession of the King to be used at His discretion for His purpose which is then clearly and forcefully stated as *“showing forth His praises.”*

When those who constitute the *“chosen generation”* were converted from serving Satan to being servants of Christ, the Holy Spirit came to live within each of them and imparted God's eternal life into them, irrevocably changing their natures and making them *“new creatures in Christ Jesus”* (2 Cor. 5:17). Though their natures are changed, the place where they reside remains the same. However, because of their new natures, their real home is in heaven while they remain in this world as *“strangers and pilgrims.”* Having become citizens of the **Kingdom of God**, they can no longer be “at home” in the world, but remain in this world to serve their new King as His *“ambassadors.”* What they once were attracted to, they must now *“abstain from,”* because they are now at war with what they once loved. Such a situation presents both a demanding challenge and a marvelous opportunity.

The challenge is awesome. Indeed, at the conclusion of His address to His disciples on the last evening prior to His death, Jesus told them: *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you”* (John 15:16). *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33). The subjects likely feel like they are in a “war zone,” which is true (1 Pet. 2:11; Rom. 8:7-10; Gal. 5:17), and they are *“troubled on every side”* (2 Cor. 4:8). The integrity of their *“conversation,”* the way they live, must be honorably maintained among the *“Gentiles,”* the unconverted, so that the contrast is so stark that God is glorified among even those who despise Him (1 Pet. 2:12). To achieve this marvelous result they must be submitted to God and to what He says so that they can access the resources He provides for them. While God has assigned a daunting challenge to the subjects of **His Kingdom** He provided everything needed for His subjects to successfully fulfill His purpose for them.

While God's purpose for His *“chosen generation”* is nothing less than a supernatural display of the Kingdom of heaven on this earth through the lives of His subjects, it is an achievable purpose because of the marvelous and supernatural resources God has provided His subjects. The opportunities are supernatural. To all of His subjects, notice and appropriate what God has provided:

First, in dealing with the remnants of carnality and sin:

Revelation
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Lesson #79
4/23/2008

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19:21-20:10

Fully aware that His subjects must constantly deal with the reality of the remnants of their carnal nature (Rom. 7:5-25) and will still sin, God has provided a simple solution. God's work of conversion produces a nature which confesses sin and repents of it as soon as its unwelcome presence is noted (Luke 13:3; 1 John 1:7-10) so that the flow of God's power might not be restrained..

Second, concerning knowledge, wisdom and understanding:

Knowing that His followers are limited in their ability to know and understand spiritual truth, Jesus told them that problem would be solved when the Holy Spirit came to indwell them: ***"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"*** (John 14:26). ***"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you"*** (John 16:14-15). Through Paul's letter to the Ephesian Christians, more can be learned about what is available to those who have received the Holy Spirit:

"...Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:13-20).

Paul further explains the availability of God's supernatural knowledge and wisdom:

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #79
4/23/2008

Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 15
19:21-20:10

comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:14-20).

Third, concerning the need for power:

Jesus made marvelous promises to His disciples about how He was going to enable them to do His mighty and powerful supernatural work.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:12-14).

Jesus meant what He said and will do as He promised. It is critical to note exactly what Jesus said would prompt the flow of His supernatural resources — **"in my name"** means doing what Jesus would do, in the way He would do it and for the purpose for which He would do it. When such is done, Jesus supplies all that is required, no matter how much it is or what it is, to act in His place doing His things.

Paul, who personally experienced this flow of God's supernatural power through his life, gives testimony to it and explains how it is accessed when he wrote to the Philippian church:

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phi. 2:12-13; 4:13).

When Paul said, **"... work out your own salvation"** he meant to submit oneself to the rule of the King without any reservations. God has justified His subjects, forgiven His subjects of all of sins and guilt, and made His subjects His children and the subjects of His Kingdom and members of His family. **"Working out our salvation"** means living out the reality in one's life of what Jesus has done and what is professed to be true. When one chooses to do that then God does everything that needs to be done to accomplish whatever His will is through that one — everything! He conforms that one's will to His will and then He supplies all of the resources needed (2 Cor. 8:11; 9:7-12) to accomplish His will. He never expects His subjects to

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #79
4/23/2008

Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 15
19:21-20:10

do His will with their limited resources and lack of abilities, but, rather, to allow Him to simply use their lives as if they are His own, which indeed they are!

Fourth, concerning the activation of God's resources:

Two words tell what one must do if he is going to be a faithful subject to his King and allow Him *"to show forth His praises through him,"* thus bring the Kingdom of heaven to earth. These two words are *"submission"* and *"obedience."*

When Jesus made the promises about the availability of His supernatural resources to His disciples in that late night address to His disciples, He told them, and us, how to appropriate those promises. Jesus made it clear:

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. ... If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (John 14:21,23,24). "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

"Obedience" is the key! Obey the King and simply do what He commands and He will supply all that is needed, both naturally and supernaturally, to accomplish His will and **the Kingdom of heaven** will be seen on this earth.

"Submission" is a deliberate choice of putting oneself under the authority of the King, and replacing his opinions and his desires with those of his King. James explained this:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:7-10).

Paul combined the two, *"obedience"* and *"submission"* in Ephesians 5:1-21 where he lists 19 commands, orders from the King, for the subject of **the Kingdom of God**. The passage concludes with an explanation about how a subject of the King is empowered by the indwelling Spirit of God.

The formula for successful living in the earthly expression of **God's Spiritual Theocracy** is simple. Any failure is due to a lack of *"obedience"* and *"submission,"* not to some failure on God's part!