

Under God

1 Peter 2:9-10

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A. Chosen (vs. 9):

1. You - This message is directed only to the people of God.
2. You are a chosen – Peter is speaking to all believers, and knowing that the Jews are present, said that all believers were designated by God to have a special preference and favor in His kingdom plan. We are His treasured possession.
3. Chosen race - God selected Israel from among all other nations executing His agenda favorably through them. He has now selected from among all mankind a new tribe of people, as promised in Genesis 12:3, through whom He will execute His agenda and to whom He will bless if this generation abides in Him.
4. You are a chosen – We have a special purpose, and it is instituted by our spiritual gifts (1 Peter 4:7-11).
5. Chosen race - When Gentiles are included this meant that the church is now very diverse with people from different nations, therefore, it includes different colors of skin and languages (Matthew 25:31-46).
6. Chosen race - Peter states that among the Lord's chosen people He views us as one family (Eph. 3:14-15), one tribe and of the same nature (Eph. 2:16-19).
7. Royal Priesthood – Because we are of Christ Jesus, we live each day under His authority. Each day we are to “present our bodies as living sacrifices,” (Romans 12:1) as we offer up sacrifices of praise (Hebrews 12:28) as children of the King of Kings.
8. Holy nation - By selecting us from among all the people of the earth and growing us to be His royal priesthood, Christ removes us from the stains of the world so that we are consecrated, no longer controlled by evil desires (1:13-16; 2:1, 12, 16; 3:6; 4:2-6). As a result of us being made this chosen race, we are now a society of believers who have the same nature making up a nation unto God (2 Peter 1:3-4).
 - a) He quoted Old Testament passages from Isaiah 8:14; 28:16 and Psalm 118:22 to show that Christ was a foundational stone for believers and a rock which caused stumbling for unbelievers. Third, He used the language

of Exodus 19:5–6 and Hosea 2:23 to portray believers as a select nation reflecting the glories of God. God had fashioned special recipients of His mercy from those who previously never belonged to anyone.^[1]

- b) The church is “the people of God,” His holy nation, His “Israel” (see Ex. 19:6; Gal. 6:16). This fact does not mean that the OT promises will not be literally fulfilled for the Jews in the Kingdom, but rather that the church today is to God what Israel was to Him under the Old Covenant, in a spiritual sense. Since Christ is our King-Priest, we are a royal priesthood. “Peculiar” (v. 9) means “for one’s own possession” (Eph. 1:14). What a privilege it is to be a child of God and have citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:10).^[2]

9. People – As a result of all that Christ has shaped us to be, as described above, we now have a common bond that makes us not just one race, “a royal priesthood”, but we are also a distinct group of people from everyone else on earth especially since we are sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). Again, this is another major subject of this conversation.

- a) For Him there are not two covenants, one for the Jews and another for Gentile Christians, but one covenant, which the Gentiles, who once “were not a people,” have been brought into and made “the people of God” (1 Peter 2:10), while those Jews and others who do not believe in Jesus stumble and fall from their natural heritage in the covenant.^[3]

10. Own possession – All the above can take place because we have been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23) and are totally owned by the Lord God.

- a) Christians are a special people because God has preserved them for Himself. While these descriptions of the church are similar to those used of Israel in the Old Testament, this in no way indicates that the church supplants Israel and assumes the national blessings promised to Israel (and to be fulfilled in the Millennium).

B. Be the Light (vs. 9b-10):

1. Proclaim the excellencies - This select, consecrated priesthood that is now a nation unto God, once and for all, makes every effort to declare the superiority of the Lord and all that His perfect nature represents in salvation and the work of the Holy Spirit in each person's life. We are chosen for the purposes of God.

- a) As “living stones” believers are to worship God (2:4–8), and as priests they are to witness to the world (2:9–10). As Christ is the living stone

(2:4), believers are living stones (2:5) joined together to form one building. The metaphor shifts in the second half of 2:5. [\[4\]](#)

- b) The word “praises” is not the translation of the Greek word customarily used to indicate praise, but of one which means “excellencies, gracious dealings, glorious attributes.” The word “into” refers not merely to locality, but to a result, of the saints being participants of the light that God is in His nature. We are made creatures of light.[\[5\]](#)
2. Called – The declaration is done because God makes a divine call to save us to serve His purposes and to provide us as His nation and His favor.
 3. Darkness – By darkness it means that Christ saved from ignorance, evil and works of the devil.
 - a) Roughly half of this verse is a direct quotation of Exodus 19:6, implying that all Christians, including Gentile Christians, share in God's covenant with Israel. Jewish people in the Passover described their deliverance from Egypt as a call "from darkness into great light." Old Testament prophets taught that God had redeemed His people for His praise (Is. 60:21; 61:3; Jer. 13:11). [\[6\]](#)
 4. Marvelous light - Christ divine call brought us from being dead spiritually to being alive spiritually so that we walk in the newness of the Spirit.
 - a) For He provided a divine call conforming us to His saving purpose to bear His name and share His suffering (called). He brought us out of ignorance and error (darkness) into an unquenchable revelation due to the illuminating power of the scriptures providing guidance, salvation leading to righteousness, prosperity and general well-being (light). This light is marvelous.
 5. Marvelous light - The Holy Spirit allows the Word of God to make sense so that we move from ignorance and a sinful lifestyle (darkness) to a spiritual understanding that reveals God's “unquenchable revelation” for a lifestyle of obedience to Him.

C. People of God (vs. 10):

1. You were once/In the past - Before being called out of darkness we were “strangers and aliens,” (Ephesians 2:19), “separated from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” (Ephesians 2:12)

2. Not a people – We were not “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,” nor were we “God's own possession.” This is because we once lived in darkness so there was no Holy Spirit in us unifying us as one people unto God.
3. Now we have received mercy - For a long time God worked with only the Jews so we were doomed for hell (Ephesians 2:11-13) but because of His kindness and benevolent love He aggressively removed us from being doomed for hell and lovingly brought us into His family. He uses His “chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.”
 - a) Although we once deserved condemnation because of unbelief (John 3:18, 36; Eph. 2:1–3), we no longer are under the sentence of judgment (Eph. 2:4–7).^[7]
4. Now we have received mercy - We experience His mercy so that we can walk holy, a people of His possession, chosen to be His royal priesthood as lights to a dark world. Peter understands this first because he was Christ disciple, now as His apostle in the midst of a world of temple goers that nailed Christ to the cross.

^[1] Lea, T. D. (1998). [The General Letters](#). In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman concise Bible commentary* (p. 637). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

^[2] Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1997, c1992, S. 744

^[3] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, pp. 133–134). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

^[4] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 690). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

^[5] Wuest, Kenneth S.: *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader*. Grand Rapids : Eerdmans, 1997, c1984, S. 1 Pe 2:9

^[6] Keener, Craig S. ; InterVarsity Press: *The IVP Bible Background Commentary : New Testament*. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 1993, S. 1 Pe 2:10

^[7] Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. 1 Pe 2:10