

## *National Church Establishments.*

(The Church's Mission to the Nations)

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance. (Isa. 19:24, 25)

Question.—*What is the nature of the Church's work, or mission, in light of the national character of the Gospel?*

*Answer.*—Since Christ's work has nations, as distinct jurisdictions, especially in view, Mark 11:17; and the Gospel itself is presented as a national Gospel, Rom. 16:26; and since nations have had their first rise, God has dealt with them in terms of the true religion, Ps. 67:2; it should be apparent that the Church's mission is supremely to nations and their kings, Rom. 1:5; Mark 13:10; Acts 9:15; Matt. 10:18:

*First,* The Great commission, given by Christ to the apostles, is His commission to His Church in all ages and is aimed at the conversion of the nations, Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 20; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8. This contemplates every divinely constituted creature, or organization of man, 1 Pet. 2:13; even first of all to the national creature, Acts 26:17, 18.

*Second,* The Church has been constituted the heir of the world, Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:8. Thus, in order to bestow upon her this inheritance, God has made her the heir and the chosen weapon of His holy war of dispossession, Jer. 51:20. It is as the appointed heirs that His Church is chosen to be the established source of law, Isa. 2:3; 42:4; and the saints shall reign upon the earth, Rev. 5:10.

Question.—*How has the Church understood her mission and the trust committed to her keeping?*

*First,* The care with which the apostles sought to make up the number to twelve after Judas fell, Acts 1:21-26; suggests that the design was that these might be the fathers of the New Testament twelve tribes, Luke 22:29, 30; who, like Israel of old, had been appointed to dispossess the heathen of the nations and put them into the possession of the Church, Jer. 1:10; 2 Cor. 10:4, 5; Rev. 11:3-6.

*Second,* The nature of the baptism of the Spirit which the Church received whereby she was qualified for this mission and warfare, Acts 4:25, 26; demonstrates the national, and international, intent of the Gospel era, Acts 2:5-12.

*Third,* The early Christians understood their pilgrim status, as strangers in a strange land in the land of Israel itself, by selling their goods and possessions, all indicating the wilderness condition before taking possession of the land, Acts 2:45; 4:32-35. They anticipated and sought to rest and reign upon the earth in the fullness of a promised established state, Dan. 7:18, 27; Matt. 5:5.

*Fourth,* There is the immediate effect given to her national mission when, beginning at Jerusalem, Luke 24:49; persecution itself is overruled to bring about a meeting with Jewish rulers, who are seated before Peter, and Peter, being commanded to address them, preaches Christ to them, Acts 4:8-12. Likewise, Paul carried out his mission to the nations and their kings, 2 Tim. 4:17; Eph. 3:8.

*Fifth,* The Church through all her scattered communities is continually portrayed in this conflict with the nations, Phil. 1:27-30. The New Testament Church, due to her conflicts with magistrates and rulers, is constantly being enjoined to remain steadfast in this spiritual battle to possess the earth, 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Thess. 1:4; Eph. 6:11-17; Rom. 16:20. Their testimony for which they contended gave full witness to Christ as the ruler of the kings of the earth, Rev. 1:5. The word of their testimony reduced the Roman empire to the obedience of the faith, as the twelve New Testament tribes eventually rest and reign in possession of the whole of the Roman earth, Rev. 7:4-10.

*Sixth,* Contrary to the proponents of disestablishmentarianism, the greatest evils have not been perpetrated by the state in this connection with the Church but by the Church herself against the state through her sins, Mal. 2:7, 8. Thus, the Church sought to undermine the truth of God in Amos' day, *cf.* Amos 7:10-13; so, too, in Jeremiah's day, *cf.* Jer. 26:10, 11. In fact, in the case of Jesus Christ, it was Pilate, the magistrate, that sought to free Him, John 19:12; but the Church which conspired against Him, John 19:6. Thus, it has always been the apostatizing and apostate Church which has led nations into their grossest and darkest opposition to the true religion, Rev. 17:1, 2, 6, 13. And it was at this instigation that the great apostasy has commenced and continued, Rev. 17:17, 18.

*Seventh,* At the Reformation, when the Word of God was again brought forth, Rev. 10:2; there was a renewal of the original Great commission, Rev. 10:11. This gave impetus to the earth to help the woman once again, during the great apostasy, Rev. 12:16, 17.

*Eighth,* The sure and certain result is promised at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Rev. 11:15; and it shall be attained at the commencement of the Millennium, Rev. 20:2-4.