

National Church Establishments.

(Scriptural Relation Between Nation and Church)

At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. (Jer. 3:17)

Question.—*What relations exist between a nation and a church?*

Answer.—There are six propositions necessary for the clearing that, though scattered communities of Christians, or even great ecclesiastical corporations, may be expressions of true churches, 1 Pet. 1:1, 2; only a nation can be the proper manifestation of the church, Gal. 6:16:

First, There is nothing but a nation that has the divinely imparted constitution for being the bride which the church must constitute, Isa. 62:4, 5. A bride must have a bridal constitution which qualifies her for fruitfulness and the other ends of marriage, Eph. 5:23-32; so here, a church must have a bridal constitution to qualify her for marriage, Song 3:11. In order to bring forth and to subdue the earth, or land, the church must possess the nation, Isa. 60:10-12; and, therefore, the nation must subserve as the proper manifestation of the church, Matt. 25:1-13, 31, 32. After all, the chief end of all nations, and national being, is to serve God, Ps. 9:17.

Second, Nothing but a nation has the bride's call and promise addressed to it, Isa. 60:1-3. It is by displacing the nations that the church properly manifests herself, Ps. 47:1-3. The family, which is a nation in miniature, *cf.* Gen. 12:3 w/ 18:18; is addressed through its head, Acts 16:31. The gospel has come to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of children to the fathers, Mal. 4:4-6; Luke 1:17. The gospel era is the appointed time wherein all nations will be blessed through faith in Christ, Gal. 3:8. When the king believes, so, too, his national house is to follow, Ps. 72:11.

Third, Only a nation is capable of the fruitfulness which is necessary to build up Christ's family to its destined fullness, Gen. 22:17, 18. Christ must see the travail of his soul and be satisfied, Isa. 53:11; but, surely this longing shall realize its expected results, Ps. 72:17. Will, or can this fruitfulness be found within any small, or even large ecclesiastical, bodies? Isa. 45:23. Will it not rather be found in the turning of the nations unto him? Ps. 22:27, 28.

Fourth, Nothing but a nation can be a church, because only in a national condition is she qualified for her promise of inheriting the earth, Ps. 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34; or, for so subduing and enjoying it as that she may have a necessary provision for herself and her children, Gen. 1:28; Isa. 60:5. As mere individuals, or as scattered communities, the church cannot possibly inherit, or subdue the earth, or turn its resources to her own account, Matt. 12:25. The church must be united inwardly, as a church, 1 Cor. 1:10; and outwardly, in a national condition,

Mark 3:24, 25; in order to find the rest and reign predicated of the church, Rev. 5:10.

Fifth, In order to both put honor on his people, and that they may have an outward instructive representation from which all the more forcibly to realize Christ's inward relation to his church, as it's husband, head and king, Rom. 7:4; Eph. 5:23; Isa. 33:22; and also as the church's inward glory related to him, it is Christ's good pleasure that his church should have an outward, glorious, national subsistence, Isa. 49:22, 23. We stand in need of outward representations, Matt. 13:24, 31, 33; therefore, outward marriage, 2 Cor. 11:2; the outward family, 1 Tim. 3:15; and the outward nation, 1 Pet. 2:9; all function as bright representations of those relations which are inward and spiritual, Ps. 45:9-17. Nothing but the church can be invested with the suitable national glory, Rev. 12:5; therefore, there is the necessity that the church herself be a nation, Rev. 19:7, 8, 15-18. Through the instrumentality of the church, mystical Christ shall be formed amongst the nations, and the church shall be clothed with the royal apparel proper to bearing rule over the nations, Isa. 52:10; Rev. 1:5; 11:15.

Sixth, If we consider the name "Zion," we are reminded, in the first place, of the outward kingdom of David, 2 Sam. 5:7; ; but, this term is also put for the inward kingdom of Christ, Ps. 2:6. "Zion, or "Sion," is the name of a church that was also a nation, Isa. 59:20; and, again, it was the name of a nation that was a church, Mic. 4:2. It was of the this church become a nation that God declared he wished to dwell therein because it represented something that he desired, Ps. 132:13, 14. If this is how God would have his church constituted, does it not stand that nothing but a nation can be a church? Ps. 48.