

Deuteronomy 14:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.

Analysis

For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Israel's holiness derives from God's choice, not their inherent worthiness. Election to covenant relationship creates obligation to reflect God's character through distinctive living.

The word holy means set apart, consecrated for special purpose. Israel's holiness was positional (set apart by God's choice) and practical (called to behave accordingly). Both aspects remain true for New Covenant believers - we are sanctified (set apart) in Christ and called to pursue sanctification in daily living.

The phrase peculiar people (Hebrew 'am segullah') means treasured possession. Israel belongs to God as His prized treasure, chosen from among all nations for special relationship and purpose. This election was pure grace - God loved them because He loved them, not because of any merit they possessed.

Above all the nations indicates not racial superiority but covenantal privilege and responsibility. Israel received unique revelation, promises, and calling. With privilege came accountability to represent God faithfully to watching world.

Historical Context

God chose Abraham's descendants to be His covenant people, establishing them as a nation at Sinai. This election served God's redemptive purposes - through Israel would come the Messiah who would bless all nations.

Peter applies this language to the church (1 Peter 2:9), showing that believers in Christ inherit Israel's covenant privileges as the true Israel of God.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does election by God's grace humble human pride while elevating human dignity?
2. What does it mean to be holy both positionally (set apart) and practically (living distinctively)?
3. Why did God choose Israel from among all nations?
4. How do Christians participate in Israel's identity as God's treasured possession?
5. What responsibilities accompany the privilege of being chosen as God's special people?

Interlinear Text

וְכָאָלָה יְבָרֵךְ	בָּעֵם יִם כִּי	קָדוֹשׁ	אַתָּה	יְהִי הָ	וְכָאָלָה יְבָרֵךְ
H3588	people	For thou art an holy	H859	and the LORD	thy God
H5971		H6918		H3068	H430
רָכַב רָ	בָּעֵם יִם לֹא	לְהִי וְתִי הָ	בְּמַרְכָּבָה	סְגָל הָ	
hath chosen	and the LORD	H1961	H0	people	thee to be a peculiar
H977		H3068		H5971	H5459
מִכָּלָה	בָּעֵם יִם מִכָּלָה	עַל אֲשֶׁר בָּעֵם יִם מִכָּלָה	גַּת יְ	בְּאָדָמָה:	
H3605	people	H834	H5921	that are upon	the earth
H5971				H6440	H127

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 7:6 (Holy): For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

Leviticus 20:26 (Holy): And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

1 Peter 2:9 (Holy): But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Leviticus 19:2 (Holy): Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.

Titus 2:14 (Parallel theme): Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Deuteronomy 28:9 (Holy): The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

Leviticus 11:45 (Holy): For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Isaiah 62:12 (Holy): And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

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