

Who Are the People of God?

The Past

Study by Jason Labonte

I. Definitions

A. Hebrew אָם *Am* “People, Nation”

1. Root: אָמַע *Amam* “To Include”
2. Original Meaning: “[Those] United, Connected/Related”
3. Related Words
 - i. אִם *Im* “[Together] With”
 - ii. מֵעַם *Meim* “Beside”
 - iii. אִמָּה *Ummah* “Close By, Side-By-Side With, Parallel To”
 - iv. אִמָּה *Am* “Kinsmans (On Father’s Side)”

B. Greek λαός *Laos* “People”

1. Original Usage
 - i. A Group Distinct from the Rulers
 - ii. Often Referred to the Members of an Army
2. Later Usage: An Archaic Word Primarily Used in Poetry
3. Usage in Septuagint
 - i. Usually Used To Translate אָם *Am*
 - ii. Usually Refers Specifically to Israel, Where εθνος *Ethnos* Is Used for Other Nations
 - iii. Refers to People as a Unit, not as Individuals

II. Distinguishing Signs of The “People of God”

- A. Circumcision (Gen 17:9)**
- B. A Kingdom of Priests (Ex 19:6)**
- C. Holy Nation (Ex 19:6; Lev 11:42, 20:26, 19:2; Deut 7:6)**
- D. Chosen and Redeemed (Deut 7:6; Is 43:1-7)**
- E. Having Only One God**
- F. Relationship with God**
- G. Others?**

III. The Purpose of the People of God

- A. Not Chosen Because of Their Worth (Deut 7:7-8)**
- B. To Serve Him (Ex 8:1)**
- C. To Be a Witness (Is 43:8-13)**
- D. To Be God’s Army**
- E. To Worship Him**
- F. Others?**

IV. Covenants — The Basis of the Relationship with God

- A. Abrahamic (Gen 17:1-14)**
 - 1. Type: Conditional (vv. 4, 9)
 - 2. Details: Sign of Circumcision
- B. Sinaitic (Ex 19:4-6; 20:1-17)**
 - 1. Type: Conditional
 - 2. Details: Total Consecration to YHWH
- C. New (Jer 31:31-34)**
 - 1. Type: Royal Grant
 - i. Unconditional
 - ii. Perpetual
 - iii. Benefit Only as a Result of Loyalty and Service
 - 2. Details: Law Written on Their Hearts / Circumcision of the Heart