

Use of the Word “Nation” in the New Testament

The word “nation(s)” is translated from “*ethnos*” – Strong’s # 1484.

It is defined as:

- 1) a multitude (whether of men or of beasts) associated or living together
 - 1a) a company, troop, swarm
- 2) a multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus
 - 2a) the human race
- 3) a race, nation, people group
- 4) in the OT, foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles
- 5) Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians

It was translated “nation(s)” 64 times. Some examples include:

Matthew 21:42-44, "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a **nation** bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Matthew 24:7-14, "For **nation** shall rise against **nation**, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all **nations** for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all **nations**; and then shall the end come." (A similar rendering is found in Mark 13:8-10 and Luke 21:10)

Matthew 25:32, "And before him shall be gathered all **nations**: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:"

Matthew 28:18-20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all **nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Mark 11:17, "And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all **nations** the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Luke 7:1-5, "Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought

him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our **nation**, and he hath built us a synagogue."

Luke 12:30, "For all these things do the **nations** of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

Luke 21:23-26, "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all **nations**: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of **nations**, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;"

Luke 23:1-2, "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the **nation**, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."

Luke 24:47, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all **nations**, beginning at Jerusalem."

John 11:47-54, "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and **nation**. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole **nation** perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that **nation**; And not for that **nation** only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death."

John 18:35, "Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own **nation** and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?"

Acts 2:5-12, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every **nation** under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?"

Acts 7:7, "And the **nation** to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place."

Acts 10:22, "And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the **nation** of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee."

Acts 10:35, "But in every **nation** he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Acts 13:19, "And when he had destroyed seven **nations** in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot."

Acts 14:16, "Who in times past suffered all **nations** to walk in their own ways."

Acts 17:26, "And hath made of one blood all **nations** of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;"

Acts 26:4, "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own **nation** at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;"

Romans 4:17-19, "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many **nations**) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many **nations**, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."

Galatians 3:8, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all **nations** be blessed."

1 Peter 2:9, "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:"

Revelation 2:26, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the **nations**:"

Revelation 5:9, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and **nation**;"

Revelation 7:9, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all **nations**, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Revelation 10:11, "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and **nations**, and tongues, and kings."

Revelation 11:9, "And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and **nations** shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves."

Revelation 11:18, "And the **nations** were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."

Revelation 12:5, "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all **nations** with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."

Revelation 13:7, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and **nations**."

Revelation 14:6-8, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every **nation**, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

Revelation 15:4, "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all **nations** shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

Revelation 16:19, "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the **nations** fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Revelation 17:15, "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and **nations**, and tongues."

Revelation 18:3, "For all **nations** have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

Revelation 18:23, "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all **nations** deceived."

Revelation 19:15, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the **nations**: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Revelation 20:3, "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the **nations** no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Revelation 20:8, "And shall go out to deceive the **nations** which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

Revelation 21:24-26, "And the **nations** of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."

Revelation 22:2, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the **nations**."

The word “nation(s)” is also translated from “*genos*” – Strong’s # 1085.

It is defined as:

- 1) race
 - 1a) offspring
 - 1b) family
 - 1c) stock, race, nation
 - 1c1) i.e. nationality or descent from a particular people
 - 1d) the aggregate of many individuals of the same nature, kind, sort

It is translated “nation” twice, and is also translated “kind”, “kindred”, “offspring”, “stock”, and “born”.

Mark 7:26, "The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by **nation**; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter."

Galatians 1:13-14, "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own **nation**, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."

The word “nation(s)” is also translated from “*genea*” – Strong’s # 1074.

It is defined as:

- 1) fathered, birth, nativity
- 2) that which has been begotten, men of the same stock, a family
 - 2a) the several ranks of natural descent, the successive members of a genealogy
 - 2b) metaph. a race of men very like each other in endowments, pursuits, character
 - 2b1) esp. in a bad sense, a perverse race
- 3) the whole multitude of men living at the same time
- 4) an age (i.e. the time ordinarily occupied by each successive generation), a space of 30 - 33 years

Most often translated “generation”, it is translated “nation” only once.

Philippians 2:13-15, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse **nation**, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;"

The word “nation(s)” is also translated from “*allophulos*” – Strong’s # 246.

It is defined as:

- 1) foreign

Acts 10:28, "And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto **one of another nation**; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."