

# THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK:

OR,

## SEPARATION FALSE AND TRUE

*As Expressed in the New Testament ;  
Exemplified in Creation, Abraham and Israel ;  
and  
Expected in the Church.*

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J. M. DAVIES.  
—INDIA—

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## PREFACE.

**A** WORD of personal testimony might not be amiss.

It is now seventeen years since it pleased the Lord to reach me, enabling me to place confidence in His Son as my Saviour and confess Him as Lord. At the time I was among the Baptists in South Wales. The truth of God relative to the assurance of salvation and other kindred subjects was not taught, and during the first years of my Christian life the word of God was read but very little, with the natural consequence that my life was unsatisfactory to myself and not pleasing to the Lord. In a few years I immigrated to the United States of America, and after a year's residence in Montana, where the Lord graciously restored me to Himself, I went to the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, with the view of entering the "ministry." While attending the Institute it was my privilege to come into contact with a company of Christians who disowned all denominational names, and humanly ordained or salaried ministry. They sought to carry out the Word of God by meeting simply as Christians in the Name of the Lord Jesus, owning the Lordship of Christ as taught in 1 Cor. 14., and recognising the liberty of the Spirit to use whomsoever He would to the edification of His Saints. What one saw there in practice was so diametrically opposed to what I had seen in the existing denominations that it caused much exercise of heart. Denominational preferences were not easily given up, but gradually the Word of God displaced human ideas. In 1920 we sailed for India "commended by the brethren to the grace of God" to serve the Lord in the Malabar Coast. During the six years of service among the assemblies of Travancore and Cochin States, what was only too poorly apprehended prior to going was more clearly seen and more definitely embraced.

The value of knowing what the Scriptures teach regarding separation cannot be overestimated, especially in days when the enemy is seeking to undermine the truth of God by bringing about confusion through

the various cults that are springing up. The truth is taught in the Word by direct instruction as well as by type and illustration.

Concerning the Lord Jesus we read that the Father testified of Him "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is His desire that *we* should please Him too. It should be our greatest joy to do so. This we can only do as we seek to walk in His ways, carrying out His word, abstaining from that which "wars against the soul." The Nazarete of old was to eat nothing that was made of the vine during all the days of his separation. His path was to be an abstemious one. He had to abstain from things that others felt legally free to enjoy. So it will be with the separated believer.

Jeremiah lived in days as dark as ours. He said "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." The result of such meditation on the word of God is given in his next utterance. "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation." May this be true of each one who reads these pages.

That which is incorporated in this booklet first appeared in an abridged form in the "Indian Christian," edited by Mr. W. C. Irvine, and latterly they have appeared in "Our Record," edited by Mr. T. D. W. Muir of Detroit, U.S.A. Besides they form the substance of addresses delivered in many places in South India, South Wales, and North America. Many other portions of Scripture clamour for consideration and inclusion but to do so would enlarge the book considerably. May the Lord grant His blessing to rest upon it to the upbuilding and sanctifying of many.

I desire to gratefully acknowledge help received from Mr. W. Hoste who read over the MSS. and gave valuable suggestions, also to many others who have in various ways sought to encourage me in this service.

"Rehoboth,"

Trichur, Cochin State,  
South India.

J. M. DAVIES.

## FOREWORD.

**I**T is a pleasure to commend this book to the prayerful study of the Lord's people.

The subject is most important for our individual and collective walk, if we are to be well-pleasing to God.

"Separation" is the idea at the root of Sanctification—a setting apart for God. This is and always has been His purpose for His people. "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptian and how I bare you on eagles' wings and *brought you unto myself*" (Exod. 19. 4). It is beautifully expressed in Psa. 4. 3, where in contrast with those who turned His glory into shame and loved vanity and sought after lies, the psalmist would have them "*know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself,*" and yet again in Titus 2 14: "Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and *purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Himself for us      Us for Himself  
He died to save us and then to have us.

But if we are to know this experimentally we must set ourselves apart, for He has set us apart. We must be holy for He is holy; we must go forth *unto Him* without the camp bearing His reproach; for He is there.

The author has carefully and systematically searched the Word of God for all teaching bearing on this subject, and anyone who will read this book with the Bible in hand cannot but find real blessing to his soul. May the Lord grant it for His Name's sake.

August 31st, 1928.

W. HOSTE, B.A.

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CHAPTER I.

SOME ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES.

**T**HIS subject is of vital importance to every child of God. It is woven into the fabric of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." That which identifies a piece of money as a coin of the realm is the seal that it bears, and similarly, that which is to identify a man as a Christian is the seal above referred to impressed upon every department of his life by the Royal signet. This in itself should be sufficient reason why every believer should enquire "what God hath said" on a subject of such importance. We shall have occasion to notice later that it is one of the tokens of the New Covenant, just as circumcision was the "seal of the righteousness that Abraham had received through faith" (Rom. 4. 11), and the token of the covenant that God had made with him (Gen. 17. 11), which token was to be written with the knife in the flesh of every male Israelite.

There are at least three great periods or epochs in the world's history around which the teaching on separation gathers. They are—

1. Creation as recorded in Gen. 1. 3-31, which is the bringing of order out of the desolation referred to in verse 2.

2. The election of Abraham as recorded in Gen. 12. 1-3, some 2000 years after the first epoch. This is the calling out of Abraham to be the father of the people

who were to be God's chosen people. Consequent upon this election is the redemption of the nation at a later period from under the bondage of Pharaoh, the bringing of them out of Egypt.

3. The redemption of Individuals, or the gathering out from among the Jews and Gentiles, the church, a people for His name as recorded in Acts 15. 14. This commenced some 2000 years after the second epoch. As a result of Israel's rejection of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, God has temporarily set aside that nation scattering them to all parts of the earth. In the present age He is taking out of the nations those who through faith in Christ form the body known and called in Scripture as the church. After this outgathering is over and the church is completed He will return and rebuild the Tabernacle of David which is broken down. This will be another great epoch in the world's history and will usher in the Millennial reign of the Son of Man.

Before considering these in their order we shall look at some essential principles of separation as revealed in 2 Cor. 6. 1, 11-18; 7. 1. "We beseech you . . . that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Let not the grace of God be fruitless in your life.

He expects that the grace of God effectively received should bring the conscience under the light and authority on the word of God. Hence he continues with separation, establishing some fundamental principles of a separated life. Then he exhorts them to cleanse themselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (7. 1). This then is the divine order and to urge subjective sanctification before there has been a separation from that which God has condemned is an unscriptural procedure. Those who seek to follow this divine order and seek to teach it are often spoken of as very narrow, and as limiting the sphere of their influence and usefulness. Yet the portion dealing with separation is preceded with the admonition "Be ye enlarged." Thus

in God's estimation to be separate from all that is contrary to His mind and will is the secret of enlarging our sphere of usefulness. The straightened man is the unseparated man, whereas the separated man is the enlarged man.

There are four important principles relative to Separation in these verses that we do well to emphasize.

1. The Presence of God enjoins separation.

"I will dwell in them and walk in the midst of them" v. 16. A brief survey of the occurrence of this in the Old Testament will help to enforce its importance on our minds.

Exod. 25. 8: "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." Here we see that it was *God's desire* to dwell in the midst of the people that He had redeemed with an outstretched arm.

Exod. 29. 45-46. "They shall know that I brought them forth that I might dwell among them." It was not only His desire to dwell among His people but it was *His design* in saving them. God's redeeming purposes do not end until He has a people who can enjoy His presence and a people with whom He can have communion in holiness.

Exod. 33. 3: "I will not go up in the midst of thee lest I consume thee." Sin in the camp made it impossible for God to continue in their midst, hence He moved outside the camp in grace. Only when the Tabernacle was erected and the Mercy-seat set up did He return. God cannot be linked up with unjudged sin, with idolatry. The presence of God in the midst of His people is the detective detecting our ways and worship.

Exod. 33. 15-16: "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." "So shall it be known that we have found grace, and so shall we be separated." Thus the presence of God in the midst of His people realised and enjoyed is alike the proof of grace and the power for separation. In speaking to the church at Corinth the apostle re-iterates the same principle when he says

“But if all prophesy and there come in one that believeth not or unlearned he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God and report that God is in you of a truth.” If the presence of God was more of a reality in our gatherings, doubtless we would see more added to the church.

2. The Precepts of God enforce separation.

In this portion four are given. “Be ye not unequally yoked,” “Come ye out,” “Be separate,” and “Touch not.” Nothing could be stronger, nothing could be more definite. There is no room for a path of compromise here. Other references from various parts of the Word might be cited which teach the same truth. Contact with iniquity is contaminating. Contact with death and uncleanness was forbidden to the Israelite. To touch the carcase of an unclean beast or the carcase of unclean creeping things rendered the individual unclean and GUILTY (Lev. 5. 2). The unclean animal was to be an abomination to them (Lev. 11. 10).

Unclean fellowship has a defiling influence. God’s precepts demand that His people walk in separation from the defiling influence of moral and doctrinal evils.

3. The Promises of God encourage separation.

“I will dwell among them”;	} saith the Lord Almighty
“I will walk in them”;	
“I will be their God”;	
“They shall be my people”;	
“I will receive you”;	
“I will be a Father unto you”;	
“Ye shall be my sons and daughters”;	

What a galaxy of promises, seven of them repeated in quick succession, and all to encourage the believer who is prepared to walk in obedience to the word of God. What a constellation to brighten the firmament in the dark night of His absence. These promises surely sufficiently compensate for anything that the believer

is called upon to renounce by walking in the narrow path. The companionship of our God, His constant smile, His fatherly care and protection are only assured His people as they obey the word "Be ye separate."

Of all the family of faith our Lord says "He is not ashamed to call them brethren," but it is only of those who confessed by their life that they were strangers and pilgrims that He says "He is not ashamed to be called their God." In sovereign grace He delivered His people from Haman in the days recorded in the book of Esther, but in that deliverance the Lord does not openly manifest Himself as being on their behalf, and that, probably because they had stayed in Babylon when they might have returned to their own land (Ezra: 1. 3).

How precious it is that in this portion there are seven promises over against four precepts. How God would lure His own into the wilderness that He might speak comfortably to them. He would draw us with the cords of His promises given in loving kindness. May we find it in our hearts to say in response, "Draw us, we will run after thee." We can only claim the promises in the measure we seek to carry out the precepts.

#### 4. The Power of God enables Separation.

" . . . saith the Lord Almighty." This is the only place in the New Testament apart from the Revelation that the Lord reveals Himself to us in this character. But how precious it is here. The Corinthian Saints had been saved from the worship of idols, and brought out from under the power and dominion of Satan, but they were seemingly fearful of the consequences that they might have to suffer if they severed all their connection with their old heathen and idolatrous worship. It is the same to-day in heathen lands. When one trusts the Lord Jesus Christ there is not lacking the lurking fear of the anger of their old deities. Their old friends will threaten them with the vengeance of their gods, and tell them that if they forsake these gods

they will visit them with chastisement by spoiling their crops or flocks, or by bringing sickness into the family. The fear of such things as these seems to have prevented some of the weak Corinthian saints from separating from their old heathen places of worship. They wanted to effect a compromise by worshipping the Lord in a heathen Temple. This God could not allow, and hence to encourage these believers to separate from their old ways He reveals Himself to them as the Lord God Almighty. He would have them know that the one under whose wing they had come for refuge was God-all-sufficient. It was thus that He revealed Himself to Abraham in a previous day. "I am (El-shaddai) God-Almighty (or God-all-sufficient) walk before Me." Abraham in the dim distant past, the Corinthian saints in their day, and we in ours may depend upon the sufficiency of our God for every emergency or exigency that we are liable to meet in this separated path. There is no difficulty or no enemy that we may encounter as we seek to walk in that path, but that the power of God is there to enable us to meet it. When the Lord gave command to the man with the withered hand to reach forth his hand, He also gave the individual the power to obey. He who knows our frame will not test us above that we are able to bear. Then shall we not reckon upon His power, seek to walk in His precepts, thereby enjoy His promises and rejoice in the realisation of His presence?

CHAPTER II.

SEPARATION IN CREATION.

(Gen. 1. 3-31).

**I**N these verses we have recorded the six days work of making the earth a fit scene for man's habitation. "God created the earth not in vain, he created it to be inhabited" (Isa. 45. 18).

A cursory reading of the chapter will reveal that the principle of separation is brought into effect in one way or another in each of the six days. This is expressed by the word "divided" and by the phrase "after their kind," which involves the thought of separation. For the sake of clearness it may be well to tabulate them. The word "divided" used five times in the chapter is the word for "separated."

1st Day.—Light separated from the darkness.

2nd Day.—The waters which were under the firmament separated from the waters which were above the firmament.

3rd Day.—Dry land separated from the seas. Herbs and trees classified according to their kind.

4th Day.—Day separated from night.

5th Day.—Fish classified after their kind. Winged fowl after their kind.

6th Day.—Beasts classified according to their kind.  
Cattle classified according to their kind.  
Creeping things according to their kind.

*And God saw that it was good.* The law of separation enacted out in life is a pleasant sight to the eyes

of our God. It is well to note that the basis of this law of separation so clearly and indelibly inscribed on all of God's handiwork in Creation is the essential difference in kind between the things separated. An attempt at mixing light and darkness would bring about a twilight, when things cannot be seen clearly or in their true perspective. Things will appear hazy. And if we are going to be able to distinguish between the things that differ, we shall need to walk in the light.

To bring down the waters above the firmament "consisting of the enormous supply of vapour which fills the clouds." (W. Kelly) (Prov. 8. 28) to the level of the waters below the firmament would result in a mist or fog. And who desires misty or foggy weather, yet how many misty and foggy spiritual experiences there are because of the lack of separation.

To mix earth and water creates mud and swamps, the breeding places of pestilential diseases, and insects. The same applies in the spiritual world. How many unhealthy spiritual lives there are to-day owing to the doing away with the separation from the world which the Word enjoins so clearly. Many are the false doctrines abroad to-day which have been begotten and bred in the marshy and swampy experience of an un-separated heart and mind. Immediately following the separation of the dry land from the waters, we read of the earth bringing forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and of the fruit trees yielding fruit. And God saw that it was good, for a separated life precedes a fruitful life.

The day was to be governed by the "greater light." The sun was to have dominion over the day. This is the first use of the word "rule" in the Scriptures, and its last use in the Old Testament is in Zech. 6. 13, where reference is made to Christ sitting and ruling upon His Throne. So the believer, who is of the day, and not of the night, should be controlled and governed by Him who is the Sun of Righteousness, the Man upon the Throne. Christians should be governed by

principles that stand the unsullied light of His sanctuary. The rays of that light should be allowed to penetrate every department of his life.

*Inanimate creation* was divided according to the character of the fruit produced. "By their fruit ye shall know them." "Can a fig tree bear olive berries?" (Jas. 3. 12). Profession is to be tested by fruit.

*In the animal creation* the separation was based upon the difference in kind. The origin of species is found in the fact that God created them differently. This difference of kind is the direct result of the fiat of the Almighty, and not the result of any process of evolution. Animal creation left to itself obeys this law instinctively. Sin has corrupted man's heart so that he would feign break down every wall of separation that God has erected. (Com. Deut. 27. 21):

#### CLEAN FROM UNCLEAN.

Besides the separation based upon difference in kind as recorded in Gen. 1. we have a further separation between clean and unclean in Lev. 11. The animals fishes, fowl and creeping things are there grouped into two distinct classes. The separation is based upon the difference of nature.

It is interesting to note that amongst the animals the two things characterizing the clean were the divided or cloven feet and the chewing of the cud. These two would represent to us the two-fold characteristic of the child of God; the separated walk or foot-print, and meditating on the word of God. The camel chews the cud but does not divide the hoof, hence it is unclean. As the camel has capacity for storing water so there are many who seem to have a capacity for storing up the word of God in the mind, but whose walk is not separated . . . they are unclean. The swine divides the hoof, but does not chew the cud—hence it is unclean also. The impress of the swine's foot is very much like that of a sheep, but the animal chews not

the cud. And there are many who may outwardly in their walk be religious and moral, yet who do not delight in the law of the Lord. The true believer is the one who has a heart for the Word and whose walk is separate from evil.

Unclean animals could not be sacrificed on Jehovah's altar, and they were unfit food for His people. Similarly unclean lives are unfit for God and unclean fellowship is forbidden diet for His people. "Touch not the unclean thing."

In every page of nature's book, God has indelibly engraved this inflexible law of separation that he who runneth may read as he runs. God's handwriting is not like the characters upon the Cuneiform monuments that need a scientist to decipher them. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. It is only the wilfully blind that cannot read and understand.

CHAPTER III.

ABRAHAM THE "FATHER OF ALL THEM  
THAT BELIEVE."—*Gen. 12. 1-3.*

**T**HE record of the life of Abraham in Genesis and the important lessons drawn from that life for God's people to-day as seen in the New Testament make it necessary that we should consider the instruction the Lord would thereby impart to His own relative to their path.

Abraham is spoken of as the "father of all them that believe," and we are told to "walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham" (Rom. 4. 11-12). Hence his call and separation are a pattern for all believers. It will help us if we group a few of the important lessons from "that which was written for our learning" under four simple heads.

1. THE COMPELLING POWER OF HIS SEPARATION.

"The God of Glory appeared unto Abraham"—(Acts 7. 2).

"He looked for a city that hath foundations."—(Heb. 11. 9).

To bring about such a radical change with such tremendous consequences for himself and for his family and all his posterity, there must have been some adequate cause. There must have been some constraining power to enable him to leave his own city, the Ur of the Chaldees, his own people, and go in obedience to the word, not knowing whither he was going. This motive and propelling power is found in

the verses quoted. A glory greater than all the glory of Babylon had dawned upon him. The God of Glory had appeared to him. He had caught a glimpse of the city that hath foundations and that had so eclipsed the glory of Babylon that that of Babylon was no glory to him now. The word "looked" of Heb. 11. 9, is the same as that in Jas. 5. 17, translated "waiteth," and also that in Heb. 10. 13 translated "expecting" Abraham waited for and expected that city.

This must ever be the power behind a separated life. Only in the measure we look upon things unseen and eternal shall we be enabled to set aside earthly things.

Moses had respect unto the recompense of the reward, and he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Of our Lord we read that "for the joy set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame."

To be able to say "We see Jesus crowned . . ." and look with unveiled face upon His glory should result in a transformed life, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

"Look full in His wonderful face  
And the things of the earth shall grow strangely dim  
In the light of His glory and grace."

## 2, THE CHARACTER OF HIS SEPARATION.

Of Abraham it may well be said that "God separated him." The Lord had said to him, "Get thee out" (Gen. 12. 1). Thus he had the definite word of God to follow, the definite command to obey. He was also told "Come into the land . . ." (Acts 7. 3) so that his path of separation was a walk in fellowship with God. Then in his words to the servant who was going to get a bride for Isaac he said "God took me out . . ." (Gen. 24. 7). This, coupled with "God brought me out" (Gen. 15. 7), would give us to understand that it was the power of God that enabled him to walk in that path. And in Gen. 12. and other portions there are recorded the promises that the Lord gave him to encourage him to walk in that strange path. So that

Abraham had the Precepts, Power and Promises of God to assure him that he was in the right path.

... It is important to note the dispensational significance of the call of God to Abraham. Noah was the 10th man from Adam, and in his day was the flood. God's day of grace had lasted 10 generations, but it came to an end. With Noah and his family on the Mount of Ararat commences a new dispensation. This lasted for another ten generations, when another judgment came to pass. Rom. 1. 19-28 records the history and judgment of that dispensation. This synchronises with the call of Abraham, for he was the tenth man from Noah. Hence when the Lord gave command to Abraham to leave his country and kindred, it was a command to leave that which God had "given up." "Wherefore God also gave them up" we are told. Seeing God had abandoned them it was only right that Abraham should leave them too. But until God had given them up, Abraham had no divine authority to leave them. This is highly important. To leave something which God has not given up is to be lacking in the grace of God to bear with one another. The scriptures are very clear that once the Lord takes up a people He is very reluctant to give them up. "How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel" (Hos. 11. 8).

His separation was to be threefold, and they have their counterpart in the New Testament. He was to *leave his country*, which would represent *Political Separation*. As has been mentioned above, God had given up the Gentile world and now He was choosing Abraham out of the idolatrous multitude (Josh. 24. 2). He was to understand that he was to be separate from a condemned world. He was not to be occupied in building up that which God had doomed to judgment. Yet how many there are who profess to be the spiritual sons of Abraham to-day who are busily engaged with political matters. Whereas the scripture says that our conversation (or politics) is in heaven, whence we look

for the Saviour. Some years past much was made of patriotism, but what the church needs is true christian patriots, believers whose one aim and ambition it is to further the interests of the country of which grace has made them citizens (Phil. 3. 9.).

*Leave thy kindred*—Social separation.

This was more difficult than to leave his country, and many to whom it is very little or no trial to have nothing to do with the political world find it difficult not to conform to the world's way and fashions. Yet the "way of holiness" that the redeemed are to walk in is no broader than the gate by which they entered. "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way." Surely modesty of dress should characterise the believer, but some of the present day fashionable things are an abomination. "Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of the mind" is an injunction we do well to ponder in the presence of the Lord, for He weighs the path of the just.

*Leave thy Father's house*—Ecclesiastical Separation.

To some it may seem that we are introducing something into this portion by saying that it refers to ecclesiastical separation. But in his father's house there would be a good many idols which he would have to worship if he chose to stay there (c.f. Josh. 24. 14.). He would have no liberty to worship the true God in his Father's house, hence the call of God to leave it in order that he might have liberty to worship in accordance with the demands of God's word to him. Many there are who claim liberty to worship according to the dictates of their own conscience, but this is a false guide. Saul of Tarsus served God in all good conscience prior to his conversion, but it was an unenlightened conscience. Later on he spoke of his "conscience bearing witness in the Holy Ghost." The conscience needs the enlightenment of the Spirit of God. It was the shekel of the Sanctuary that was the divine standard in the Old Testament, and the Word of God will be that by which we shall be judged

when we stand before Him. Hence it is important that we should be guided by it to-day. The separated man must be separated from the false ecclesiastical systems of the day in order that he might have liberty to worship in accordance with the pattern of the New Testament.

“ . . . to a land that I will shew thee.” The Lord would not only have Abraham separated from the condemned scene around him, but he would have him in the land that God had appointed for him. This is God’s ideal. But Abraham tarried in Haran till Terah his father died. He had partially fulfilled, he had set out to obey but had stopped half way. While at Haran we do not read of any altar having been erected or of the Lord manifesting Himself to him, although we do read of the “souls that he had gotten in Haran.” And it is so easy to stay halfway, believing the Lord would have us stay there because He has graciously granted blessing in souls being saved, whereas the word is clear that such a place is only the second best for us.

God would have us go on in the path of obedience, and make progress in the path of faith. It was when Abraham reached Bethel that we read of him building the altar, and of the Lord manifesting Himself to him confirming the promises given to him before he started from Ur of Chaldees. The path of obedience to the known will of God is the only secret of knowing more of that will.

### 3. THE CONFLICTS OF THE PATH.

It was not long before it was apparent to Abraham that in the path of separation and obedience to the word of God lay times of severe testing. “There was a famine in the land” (Gen. 12. 10). This is the first recorded in Scripture. Isaac had a similar test (Gen. 26). A famine may represent a period of testing calculated to cast the believer upon the Lord, and as in the case of Abraham may come without any apparent

cause in the individual. A famine also represents a time of testing intended to bring sin to remembrance as with Joseph's brethren (Gen. 42. 22), and with the slaying of the Gibeonites by Saul (2 Sam. 21. 1), or with the prodigal son (Luke 15.). Yet the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him to keep them alive in famine (Psa. 33. 19). But Abraham failed, forsook his place and went down to Egypt. What sad consequences there were to that departure from God's path. Hagar was taken into the tent and that led to his second fall. One failure leads to another of a more serious character.

To find barrenness in the place that God's word has put us is not an easy test, but yet a very common one. Sometimes it comes as a surprise to us, and we are prone to wonder if we are where the Lord would have us be, but it is good to be guided by scripture rather than by circumstances.

*"There was strife . . ."* If a barren condition is hard to bear, contention amongst those who profess to be walking in the same path is harder. This ugly enemy would hardly be expected to shew its head so soon. Lot was Abraham's nephew and had left his country to go with Abraham. They were two relatives and two fellow-pilgrims, and one would have thought that Lot would have been prepared to sacrifice anything for the sake of the fellowship of the man of faith. But the man who takes to the path of separation by going *with* another, without having counted the cost himself and seemingly without any recorded dealing with God about the matter, will not count the fellowship of his brethren dear. He will sacrifice the pilgrim walk for earthly gain on the least temptation. Was there any self-seeking there? Had Lot at one time thought that he would be the heir to all of Abraham's wealth, and had he been disappointed when afterwards he found that there was going to be a seed given to Abraham? Desire for place and disappointment at not getting it, has it not been the cause why some have

returned or turned aside? May we have no desire but for His glory. In the path of obedience to the word of God the difficulties that Abraham had to encounter seem to have been mainly associated with those of his own family. First his father *hindered* him, then his nephew *harassed* him, and afterwards his wife *hurried* him. The flesh will always seek to put obstacles in our path of allegiance to the word of God. When it fails to hinder us, and this will only be when we take our place in death, for it was the burial of his father that made it possible for Abraham to continue in his path; it will seek to harass us in one way or another in order to drive us from our inheritance. Failing that it will seek to hurry us on unduly to seek to do the things of God in a carnal manner (cf. John 7. 3-4). Having begun in the Spirit it will seek to get us to be perfected in the energy of the flesh. This will make us legal, but legalism only produces proud Ishmaels that love to mock the sons of the promise.

But after the famine was ended and strife ceased Abraham's conflicts were not over. Time and again he was called upon to renounce what seemed to be his own rights, until at last he was called upon to give up his only son Isaac. God would engrave "death" and "judgment" upon everything that was of nature and of self. The path that he was called to walk in was a path contrary to nature, the path of crucifying self in all its varied forms and manifold workings. This is the hard lesson to learn, for we seem to be so dull of hearing.

#### 4! THE COMPENSATIONS OF A SEPARATED PATH.

For one hundred years Abraham walked this path, pitching his tent from place to place and establishing his altar. Hence if there are any compensations it would be well to examine them. "If any man will follow me, let him deny himself and take up the Cross." But if "for His sake we have given up houses . . . we

shall receive a hundredfold even in this life.”

God revealed Himself to him. The plains of Mamre witnessed 7 scenes of communion between the Lord and Abraham. Each manifestation was accompanied with some added revelation of God’s purposes in grace towards him. Thus he increased in the knowledge of God. Such conscious communion with the Lord is not to be under-estimated.

God made him a blessing to his family (Gen. 18. 19). How different to Lot, who was saved as by fire, and that at terrible consequences to his family. His sons-in-law perished in the flames and his daughters disgraced him.

God made him a blessing to Lot (Gen. 14.16 ; 18.29). The one to help backslidden Lot was separated Abraham. Abraham, being the one that was spiritual, sought to restore the one that was overtaken, even though it led through the valley of slimepits (Gen. 14. 1). But this vale of Siddim full of slimepits, led to the King’s dale (Gen. 14. 17), where he was made the recipient of the blessing of Melchisedek, the priest of the Most High God ; and to a further revelation of the Lord as “EL-ELYON”—“the possessor of heaven and earth.” What a recompense for putting himself out a little for his brother. Later when fire from heaven was to fall upon Sodom, “God remembered Abraham and delivered Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.”

God made him a blessing to Abimelech the heathen king (Gen. 20. 17 ; 21. 22, 25). This was through prayer, through his life and through his testimony. It is the man that seeks to walk with God that has power with God for men, and power with men for God. Then let us be keen of vision to see, and strong of heart to desire the recompense of the reward. “Well done thou good and faithful servant . . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

CHAPTER IV.

SEPARATION IN ISRAEL.

“AND I will put a division between my people and thy people” (Exod. 8. 23). The word “division” in this verse may be translated “redemption.” It is so rendered in Psa. 111. 9, and Psa. 130. 7.

“The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel” (Exod. 11. 7). Redemption leads to separation. Separation is the necessary complement of redemption. In creation separation is based upon the essential difference in kind and character between the things separated. Abraham’s was founded upon election, the promises and covenant of God, but in the nation the basis of their separation is redemption. Ever afterwards in Israel’s history the Lord appeals to them to be a people separate unto Himself on the ground that He had redeemed them and that therefore they were His by “redemption rights.”

It is essential to note the difference between what *did* differentiate them from others, and what *should* differentiate them. The one may be termed their positional and the other their conditional separation. The one was absolute, depending upon the fact of their redemption, the other was varied, depending upon their spiritual condition. The second grows out of the first, it is the essential sequence.

Israel’s history until the captivity is associated with Egypt, the wilderness, and the land—Canaan. We shall consider their separation relative to each in their historical order.

1. *From Egypt* (a) By Blood.

When the Lord spoke of putting a difference between the Egyptians and Israel, it was a reference to the blood of the slain lamb that was to be sprinkled upon the door-posts and the lintels of the houses wherein the Israelites dwelt. That night in Egypt presented a strange spectacle. The Israelites sprinkling the blood and the Egyptians possibly looking on wondering what it was all for. Some may have ridiculed, and some ignorant as to its meaning perhaps, may have followed the Israelites' example, for a mixed multitude went out with them, and on a previous occasion some of Pharaoh's servants had done something similar (cf. Exod. 9. 20). But whatever of that, one thing is certain, the sprinkled blood formed a very definite and unmistakable line of separation between the Egyptians and Israel on that memorable night. It forms the beginning of Israel's national history, and the commencement of Egypt's downfall. As the Angel of the Lord went through the land to smite the first-born of Egypt's strength, strict care was taken that no house was entered which had been sprinkled by blood. They were safe who were under the shelter of the blood. They had light and peace in their dwellings. But alas! for those who were not thus protected. "At midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt," and that without respect of persons. It was the blood of the lamb alone that God respected that night. There was a great cry by reason of God's judgment on the one hand, and great joy for the dawn of deliverance on the other. The following day witnessed one long procession of sad faces to the graveyard, and another of a people who sang for joy of heart as they began their way to the promised land.

Just such a line of demarcation exists in the world to-day, dividing it into two distinct and separate camps. Although the world lives regardless of it and many professing Christians do violence to it by living careless lives, yet it exists. Every true believer is elected

unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1. 2). But it is not the house that it is to be sprinkled under the New Covenant, it is the "heart that is to be sprinkled from an evil conscience." The conscience is to be purged from dead works to serve the Living God, and this should make the Christian differ in his life from the unconverted who have not been thus sprinkled. And be it remembered that solemn and eternal issues are consequent upon this separation, for it is only they who have taken the "Blood of the Cross" as their refuge who will escape from the judgment of God, when the day of grace will have run its course and the night of doom and judgment ushered in. Far greater than the midnight cry of those who were unsheltered by blood on "that night," will be the cry of those who, in this day, despise God's proffered mercy, and mock at the atoning blood. Weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth will be their portion, so saith the scripture.

But in the meantime, fellow-believer, let not your security lead you to laxity, but on the contrary, let a purged conscience be the forerunner of a purged life, a life that is separate from everything that is unholy and unclean.

The blood was not the only thing that caused the Israelites to differ from Egypt. The "One" who had provided a means of deliverance for them from the doom of Egypt was to lead them out of Egypt, thereby delivering them from the dominion of Egypt. Egypt was synonymous to slavery and bondage for Israel, but redemption was to make them a free people, free to live to Jehovah's glory and praise. This He did by opening a way for them to pass through the Red Sea.

(b) By the Red Sea. "Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore." "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel."

They had passed through the divided waters, and it was day. The previous day at evening found them

with the Red Sea in front of them and the enemy pursuing. When Israel "went into the midst of the sea" nature offered them no light on their path, it was night. It was a step in the dark as far as nature was concerned. The only light they had was that which the Shekinah Glory gave. It was a supernatural light, the light of the presence of God. One wonders if some of the mixed multitude did not object to taking such a step at such a time, and advise waiting until they got some more light on their path. How many do so to-day! The path of faith is often "contrary to nature." Nature will not assist anyone in this path that leads to separation from the world, it will but hinder. But in God's word there is light given and happy are they who walk in it. By following that light all were baptised in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. 10.). Once they had crossed, the sea stood between them and Egypt. The waters were opened up for them to go through, but the waters returned so that they could not go back.

The divided waters speak of Calvary, while the "baptism in the cloud" finds its antitype in being "baptised in the Holy Ghost" into the body of which Christ is the head. Being "baptised in the sea" typifies burial with Christ in baptism.

Of the Christians at Rome the Apostle could say that they had obeyed from the heart that form, that mould (literally—type) of doctrine, into which they had been delivered. They had given heart obedience to the truth of baptism. Their obedience to that ordinance was not merely a nominal one. It led to a separated life. Just as the Red Sea cut Israel off from Egypt so the waters of baptism should be a dividing line between the Christian and the world. By the Cross we have been crucified to the world, and if a believer goes back into the world, he denies the cross and belies his baptism.

The sprinkled blood saved them from Egypt's doom, and the Red Sea separated them from Egypt's bondage.

While the Blood does cleanse us from all our sins, it is crucifixion with Christ that breaks the power of sin in the life. No wonder that nature offers no light on that path. Do not wait for light from nature, for the darkness is deepening. Walk in the light of His revealed truth, in the path of faith and separation, the path that leads to true Joy.

PHARAOH'S CONCESSIONS.

Pharaoh made many concessions to Moses, which, had he accepted would have meant compromise and continued bondage.

1. "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land" (Exod. 8. 25). This would mean remaining in their slavery, and seeking to worship at the same time.

2. "I will let you go—only go not very far away" (Exod. 8. 28). Live on the border-land. It would mean a partial liberty but sure to relapse to slavery again.

3. "Go ye that are men, serve the Lord" (Exod. 10. 11). Leave your little ones and your flocks. If he could have kept the children he would be sure of the next generation. How important it is that we should be moved with fear to the saving of our families.

4. "Go ye, serve the Lord, only let your flocks be stayed" (Exod. 10. 24). "Let your little ones also go" He tried his utmost to keep them and when that was impossible he tried to keep their flocks, so that they would have nothing for God. If a believer's business is carried on on worldly principles there will be little for God out of it.

Nothing but a complete deliverance would satisfy Moses, the man of God. We will go "three days' journey into the wilderness." We cannot leave our little ones or our flocks. "There shall not a hoof be left behind."

Alas that so many of the people of God have acceded to these concessions, and have settled down

to a worldly life, to a path of compromise, or have camped on the edge of the wilderness, "not very far away." We are apt to forget that not only is the gate strait, but the way, the whole way, is a narrow way. If we are to be free to serve the Lord; free indeed, the individual, the family, and the business life must be separated to the Lord. There must be the three days' journey, the "cross," the "grave," and the "resurrection." There must be the crucifixion, and the burial; the baptising into his death and being raised again to walk in the newness of life.

### *2. In the Wilderness.*

They were now a pilgrim people. They had the Tabernacle, where dwelt the Shekinah Glory—Divine Guidance; they were provided with Manna from heaven daily and with water from the smitten rock—Divine sustenance; they were given the law—the Divine Oracles—which revealed to them their responsibility, the highest moral code that any nation ever had. These differentiated them from all the other nations. "Israel shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the other nations" (Num. 23. 9). No nations had such privileges as they. The Lord God was with them and the shout of a King was among them (Num. 23. 21). Hence their responsibilities were correspondingly great.

#### *Their Prohibitions.*

As a pilgrim people marching through the wilderness to their promised inheritance they were given certain prohibitions, which are recorded for our admonition in Deut. chapter 2. for we too have been constituted strangers, or "temporary visitors" here by the Cross of Christ, and hence we are to be pilgrims. May we not degenerate into aimless wanderers!

"*Meddle not with the children of Esau, for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot-breadth, because I have given Mount Seir. unto Esau for a possession*" (Deut. 2. 5).

The territory marked out in the providence of God as the inheritance of the descendants of the man who had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage was forbidden ground for these pilgrims. God had something better for them—a land flowing with milk and honey. Esau may well represent the man who places more value upon the gratification of physical appetites than upon spiritual things. “I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” The believer’s inheritance is in the realm of the spirit, and not even a foot breadth of the territory of the old man—the flesh, is to be his. Whether it be the flesh in its religious, self-righteous character, or in its more coarser forms the true Christian is to recognise that they “that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections and its lusts.” He must view things from God’s Throne and believe the report “The end of all flesh has come before me.”

“*Distress not the Moabites*—for I will not give thee their land for a possession. I have given Ar to the children of Lot for a possession” (2. 9).

“*Distress not the Ammonites*, for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon for a possession. I have given it unto the children of Lot” (Deut. 2. 19).

Lot was the world-lover, the one who was attracted away from the fellowship of Abraham by the allurements of Sodom. Moab and Ammon were his children and the pilgrim people were strictly forbidden to distress them or to try and possess their land.

O! the tragedy of being satisfied with the second or third best, the danger of contending for things that are not ours by New Covenant rights. The pleasures of this world, the things which the world indulges in and enjoys, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The desire to be somebody and reckoned as great in the eyes of the ungodly world has ruined many a testimony. The believer should neither care for the world’s frown

nor cater for the world's caresses. The world's caresses may be represented as floral wreaths placed upon the grave of a dead and buried testimony, a life that has lost its power for God.

The Valley of Zered and the Brooks of Arnon were to be crossed (Deut. 2. 13-24). We are not told all that took place at these brooks, but evidently some mighty work was done; the arm of Jehovah was revealed in some way. "Wherefore it is said in the books of the wars of the Lord, what He did in the Red Sea and in the Brooks of Arnon." (Num. 21. 14). It needs the power of God to separate the believer in the same way to-day. To cross over the borderline between worldliness and separation may perchance be costly and leading through a valley—the valley of decision, but it leads to the delectable heights of true fellowship with God. From the brooks of Arnon they went to Beer; Beer-Elm (Isa. 15. 8), where there was a well, the "well of the heroes," for none but the heroes of faith drink of this well. Then the voice of the Lord was heard "Gather the people together and I will give them water." The Princes digged the well with their staves. Pilgrims who had attained to Princely honour, and Princes who were contented to remain pilgrims—hence the staves! There they seem to have re-discovered the "river which followed them," the stream from the smitten rock. Dwelling and compassing Mt. Seir for "many days" they lost the stream and only found it again when they were prepared to go on with God in the path of obedience. How true the picture is to our experience. When we tarry instead of going on, things, and truth which we once knew and enjoyed slip away from us, we lose the joy of the Lord and it will only be restored to us as we cross the line of demarcation between "loving the present evil age" and going on in the path of true discipleship, seeking to walk as He walked.

There Israel sang, as they had not sung since they rent the heavens on the wilderness side of the Red

Sea. Joy flooded their souls once again, and it revealed itself in a spontaneous song of praise. This was followed by conflict with Sihon king of the Amorites, and a triumph for the people of God, a triumph that staggered the inhabitants of Jericho. The news of this victory spread far and wide. It melted the heart of the enemies, but nerved Israel for further conflicts and more victories. For those who seek to walk with God, forsaking evil, every conflict should mean an added victory. "Flee youthful lusts; Follow after righteousness; Fight the good fight of faith." That is how the New Testament expresses the same truth. It is the man who knows how to flee, how to make Christ and His Cross his refuge from the allurements of the flesh and the world that can handle the sword effectually.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM.

Balak the King of the Moabites, desired to exterminate the children of Israel, and for this purpose hired the prophet. But Balaam could not curse those whom God had blessed. He said that Israel should dwell alone and that the Lord beheld no iniquity in Jacob. He wished that his last end would be like theirs.

Yet in spite of the fact that he could not curse Israel he counselled Balak to lay a snare for them. "They called Israel to the sacrifices of their gods, and they did eat, and bowed down to their gods. Israel joined himself to Baal-Peor" (Num. 25. 2-3). Thus Israel was allured into a forbidden fellowship, which developed into a false worship, and ripened into a forbidden alliance that caused the anger of the Lord to be kindled against them. Balaam has long since died an inglorious death, but his doctrine has long survived him, and those who have embraced it are legion. His doctrine is to break down the line of demarcation between the world and the people of

God, to bring the world into the church. But the world and the church are different. The one is the devil's harlot, the other is espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ. Virgins should not copy harlots neither should the church or the individual believer copy the world, but should be guided by the word of God.

### 3. *In the Land.*

As a people who had been brought into covenant relationship with Jehovah, the land of Canaan was given to them for an inheritance. God had specified its boundaries and cast out its inhabitants from before them. Moreover, God had given them the promise of a coming Messiah, who, like Moses, would deliver them from all their enemies, and who would be the annointed prophet of the Most High, revealing to them the will of God and God Himself. No other nation had such a hope. This was intended to be an incentive to them to maintain their position as a separated people, which was now their privilege and responsibility. For the same purpose they were enjoined also not to—

1. Make any covenant with the nations. (Deut. 7. 2).
2. Contract any marriages with them. (Deut. 7.3).
3. Nor be conformed to them in their customs. (Lev. 18. 30; Lev. 19. 28; Deut. 14. 1).

#### ISRAEL A RULING NATION.

Israel was intended to be a ruling nation and not a subject race. To make a covenant with any nation would in itself be an admission of weakness and inability to conquer them, and a departure from the path of faith in Jehovah to deliver them. To make a league with them would mean entering into fellowship with them in their ungodliness and sin, and probably forfeiting to them some of the land which had been

given to Israel. It would mean being on friendly terms with the enemies of the Lord, and that at the expense of possessing all their possessions. It would mean walking in a path of compromise.

“Sin shall not have dominion over you” is the emphatic statement of the New Testament. No truce is to be effected with it. But as Israel could only exterminate their foes in the measure they obeyed the Lord, so the believer will only be able to enter practically into the realization of what it is to be “more than conquerors through Him” by obedience to the will of God, and thus by daily life prove what it is to be acceptable to the Lord.

#### ISRAEL A SEPARATE NATION.

Israel was not only intended to be a ruling nation, but a *separate* nation, hence intermarriages with the gentile nations was strictly forbidden. Mixed marriages would mean an unequal yoke, and would finally lead Israel away from the Lord, leading them into conformity with the ways and worship of the ungodly.

In the New Testament this principle is not abrogated but rather emphasised. The believer is free to marry —“only in the Lord.” A believer who marries an unconverted person knowingly, virtually denies the Lordship of Christ over his or her life. Hence it cannot meet with the Lord’s blessing or approval, but rather it may result in solemn consequences. One young lady who was thus contemplating marriage to an unconverted young man, went and spoke to Mr. Spurgeon about it, asking his advice. He requested her to mount a chair, and then on to a table, and asked her to pull him up to her level. This, of course, she could not do. Then he took hold of her hand and easily pulled her down to his level. This served as an illustration to her of what would happen if she married him while he was still unconverted. Many have been the bitter experiences of those who have

acted contrary to the scriptures in this important matter.

#### ISRAEL A PECULIAR PEOPLE.

Israel was also intended to be a peculiar people, a people *specially* for the Lord. They were not to be conformed to the ways and customs of the nations around them. They were to be governed by the word of God. This was not easy for them as their after-history proved, and it is no easier for the believer to-day as can be gathered from the conformity of so many who profess to be the Lord's people to the latest fads and fancies of the world, even at the expense of loyalty to Christ and adherence to all that God hath said.

“Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of the mind.” The word “transformed” is found in two other places in the New Testament. Matthew 17. 2, “Transfigured” and 2 Cor. 3. 18, “changed.” It is the word from which we get the word “metamorphosis.” The caterpillar metamorphosises into a butterfly. What a change that is! This change can only be brought about in the believer by having the mind renewed through the reading of the scriptures, by looking into the mirror of the word of God at the image of the Lord reflected therein. Thereby we shall be transformed into the same likeness even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The conformity of the believer to Christ is the final purpose of God in redemption. (Rom. 8. 29).

The record of the failure of Israel to maintain these lines of demarcation and its sad results should be sufficient warning for the believer to-day to seek to keep himself unspotted from the world.

World-conformity, worldly fellowships and alliances, with defeated Christian lives as the net gain, are alas too prevalent. Victorious Christian living demands

a purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord and be separate from the world.

SEPARATION IN THE CHURCH.

It now remains to consider separation as it is expected of the church. We shall find that the New Testament is very explicit in its demands upon the believer that he walk in a clean path, that he maintain a separated walk.

The section falls naturally into the following order :

The separated walk of the believer—the separated pilgrim.

The separated work or service of the believer—the separated preacher.

The separated worship of the believer—the separated priest.

As there is much that passes as separation which is only the separation of the Pharisee, a chapter is devoted to false and true separation.

## CHAPTER V.

THE SEPARATED PILGRIM—THE  
BELIEVER'S WALK.1. *In relation to the flesh.*

**L**ET him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2. 9). "If ye then be risen with Christ, mortify (comp. Rom. 4. 19; Heb. 11. 12) therefore your members which are upon the earth." "But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3). "Mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8. 13. (comp. v. 36—Put to death). They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh" (Gal. 5. 24). These scriptures enunciate the very first principles of the Christian life. Their teaching corresponds to that of the ordinance of circumcision under the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 17. 11) and as a seal of the faith-righteousness he had received. (Rom. 4. 11).

To the Noahic Covenant also God had given a token—the bow in the cloud—a token for faith to lay hold of in dark and stormy days, a token written with the finger of God in the heavens. But the token of the Abrahamic Covenant was to be engraved with a knife in the flesh. It was one of the ordinances that was to be observed on the 8th day, a phrase that is often found in the Old Testament. It speaks of a new beginning and typifies resurrection. While Israel was in the wilderness the ordinance was not observed, but

no sooner did they arrive in the land of their possession, than God demanded its observance. They were taught that they must first learn to use the knife on themselves before they would seek to blow the trumpets of judgment around Jericho. During the four days that followed their obedience to the word of God, they would have been an easy prey to the enemy, but God would have them learn that in their weakness alone could His strength be magnified.

Alas! that its meaning should have been lost so soon. The Apostle had to speak of the circumcision which was outward only, while that of the inner man, that of the heart was forsaken. The mere outward circumcision, the formal adherence to the ordinance corresponds to the separation of the Pharisee, but the believer's is to be that of the inward man, the separation of our Lord. "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Circumcision is not the type of baptism, but rather does it teach the mortifying of the deeds of the body, which is symbolised in baptism. It is the putting of the teaching of baptism—death, burial and resurrection with Christ—into daily practice. The verb "Mortify" in Col. 3. 5, has the continuous force. The believer will ever need to continue to put to death the deeds of the body. While the "old man" is judicially dead and put away from before God forever, the believer needs to reckon as God reckons and seek to act it out in daily life by not making any provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

True separation leads the individual to use one edge of the two-edged sword upon himself, before using the other edge on others.

"THE MEMBERS WHICH ARE UPON THE EARTH."

A cursory glance at the members which are upon the earth as recorded in Col. 3. will quickly reveal that amongst them there are sins which even the natural moral man shrinks from and abhors, but there are those there which are more tolerable and more toler-

ated. Covetousness for instance. Very often it is named economy! But it is economy "falsely so-called." The desire to amass wealth, to heap up riches is ever present in the human heart. Too often the conscience is pacified with the pretence that the profits shall be used on the Lord's altar. Such a thing is nauseating while true giving is a sweet-savour unto the Lord.

SAUL AND THE AMALEKITES.

Saul was enjoined to slay all the Amalekites sparing none, but he spared the fat among the flocks and Agag the King, telling Samuel that he had kept the animals for sacrifice! Samuel would have none of his hypocrisy and Agag was slain, hewed to pieces. "Obedience is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." Saul's path of compromise had disastrous results. He himself was slain by one (2 Sam. 1. 10.) and later a lineal descendant of Agag sought to exterminate Israel. Haman's ascendancy and autocracy was the consequence of Saul's disobedience. Sin tolerated and trifled with soon becomes a master.

DAVID AND THE AMALEKITE.

David's treatment of the Amalekite in 2 Sam. 1. betokens another spirit. The young descendant of "Duke Amalek" appeared to be very meek, and hypocritically bowed to David, but David would not tolerate the man who had touched the Lord's anointed. The flesh is an opportunist and can be very religious when occasion demands, but in its religious form it is to be more dreaded, and mortified as much as the flesh in its more ugly forms.

It is important to note that we are not called upon to mortify the body or its members by bruising the body or by ascetic habits, like some of the fakirs and so-called holy men of India do. Asceticism is of no value to the subjugating of the flesh; it only begets a false humility which puffs up the flesh with pride. This false asceticism is condemned in Col. 2. 23. They have a show of wisdom, but are of no value to the

subjugating—the keeping under of the flesh. The idea that by ill-treating the body one will be able to control the carnal appetites is as foreign to the scriptures as the idea that being “crucified with Christ” means the total eradication of the flesh, spoken of as the ‘old man.’ The law of sin has been engraved upon the members and can only be abrogated or rendered powerless by another law—the Law of the Spirit of Life—becoming operative in the life of the individual.

*2. In relation to the World.*

“I have chosen you out of the world” (John 15. 19.).

“The world hateth you” (John 15. 19.).

“Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17. 14.).

“The world is crucified to me and I to it” (Gal. 6. 14.).

“Friendship with the world is enmity with God” (James 4. 4.).

“Love not the world” (John 2. 15-17.).

How clear and definite are these words of Holy Writ. Dr. Scofield defines the world as “the order or arrangement under which Satan has organised unbelieving mankind upon his cosmic principle of force, greed, selfishness, ambition and pleasure.”

The Scripture says that “all that is in this world is ‘the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.’” They are things which are to pass away. They are transient and temporal, whereas God has set eternity in the heart of man. Hence naught but eternal things can really satisfy him. Yet how many believers there are who try to satisfy themselves with the husks that the world has to give. Worldly pleasures, worldly amusements, worldly associations and friendships are indulged in irrespective of the fact that “the world lieth in the wicked one,” and is a condemned scene (John 12. 3.).

The world’s hatred of Christ has not abated in the least. He is still despised and rejected. Men will

not have Him to rule over them. To be convinced of this it is only necessary to introduce the subject of the Cross into a social circle of unconverted friends, and it will soon be manifest. In governmental, commercial, social and even ecclesiastical circles Christ is rejected. In the letter to the church at Laodicea, He is seen outside desiring entrance. Anyone who trusts Christ to-day must reckon upon the enmity of the world if he is to be loyal to his Lord.

LOT'S EXAMPLE.

On the page of Scripture Lot, Abraham's nephew, stands out as the portrait of the worldly believer. He left Abraham, forsook the fellowship of the one who "confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth" for the fellowship of the men of Sodom who "were sinners exceedingly." Sodom allured him from the pilgrim path. He went into Sodom a wealthy man, but had to leave it poverty stricken. He was saved as by fire. He lost everything in the overthrow, except his salvation. If that had not been "reserved in heaven" for him he would have lost that too. But that was not one of Sodom's commodities. Worldly principles, worldly ambition, worldly honour, had seemingly controlled his life and eventually ruined his testimony and his family. The record of his earthly pilgrimage closes with his dwelling "in a cave." He forsook the "tent" for Sodom's dwellings. These he had to flee, but alas! he seems to have lost his tent and become a cave-dweller.

3 *In relation to certain Christians.*

"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5. 11.).

"If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thess. 3. 14.).

"Having a form of godliness, denying the power

thereof, from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3. 5.).

"They that profess to know God but in works they deny Him" (Titus 1. 16.).

Association with sin has a defiling influence. It is necessary for the believer to fully realise the force of the above Scriptures. Carnality, insubjection to the Word of God, a lifeless form of Godliness and an empty profession are things the true Christian is to avoid. To have fellowship with such as live the life described in these verses is forbidden to him. Yet many who have been born of God sit at the "communion" (as the Lord's Table is spoken of) to partake of the emblems of the "Broken Body" and "Shed Blood" of Christ alongside with men who are openly guilty of the above sins. Individuals are allowed into membership without regard to their life and testimony, whereas a great many of those who take upon themselves the responsibility of "administering" the supper or communion (though no such language is used in the New Testament) do not believe the whole word of God, especially the epistle to the Thessalonians which teaches the coming of the Lord. Not believing it, how can they submit it.

Even the "form of godliness" is to be turned away from. Godliness is profitable, but the form of it without the power is abominable, worthless and to be avoided.

#### JEHOSHAPHAT AND AHAB.

When Ahab sat on the Throne of the ten tribes of Israel, Jehoshaphat was king over Judah. The one was an ungodly wicked king, the other walked in the ways of the Lord, but he went down to Ahab to Samaria and an unholy alliance was formed. "He joined affinity with Ahab" (2 Chron. 18. 1). As a result of this affinity Jehoshaphat joined Ahab in battle against the Syrians (2 Chron. 18. 31). The purpose of the conflict would seem to justify his doing so. They were going to war against an outside foe, and thereby to re-capture Ramoth-Gilead, which was

one of the six cities of refuge. The plausibility of the end in view greatly influenced good king Jehoshaphat. But it almost cost him his life, and brought wrath upon him from the Lord (2 Chron. 19. 2). "Shouldest thou help the ungodly and love them that hate the Lord?" These were the questions addressed to him on his return to Jerusalem. However plausible it seemed to help Israel against Syria, Jehoshaphat was acting contrary to the mind of the Lord when he did so. Ahab was not only wicked himself, but he ruled over the ten tribes that had broken away from Judah. He was thereby guilty of perpetuating division among God's people. Jehoshaphat represents the large-hearted, broad-minded, charitable Christian who is prepared to help anything that is labelled "Christian work."

Another result of this affinity was that his son married Ahab's daughter (2 Chron. 21. 6). This led Jehoshaphat's son to walk in the ways of the king of Israel. Walking in a path of compromise may have sad results for the family.

Jehoshaphat did not seemingly learn the lesson even after his narrow escape on the battle field, but he must join himself to Ahaziah king of Israel; to make ships to go to Tarshish. But the Lord did not prosper his business partnerships with Ahaziah, the ships were broken.

To have refused fellowship with Ahab and Ahaziah would have incurred their frown, and laid him open to be accused of being narrow-minded, but it would have gained the favour of the Lord. Walking in a path of separation will oft-times incur your friends' displeasure, if they are carnal or worldly-minded, but it will inherit the Lord's well-done.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SEPARATED PREACHER—THE  
BELIEVER'S SERVICE.

“**T**O be liberated from sin should mean unconditional vassalage to the liberating Lord.” Every true believer is to be a servant, a bond-slave of Jesus Christ. Each individual who has been born again has some responsibility to fulfil. Every member of the body has not the same office, there is diversity but there is to be harmony also. Even “the joints and bands” have a responsibility (Col. 2. 19). Rheumatism in the joints is a common malady and when each believer is not seeking to fulfil his or her responsibility, the fellowship will get stiff and rheumatic in the same way.

Besides the ministry “which every joint supplieth” there is the more definite service, the public ministry in the gospel and teaching of the Scriptures which is that that we wish more especially to consider.

That we are living in the days of apostasy is clear to all who have eyes to discern the times. The darkness of doubt and unbelief seems deepening on every hand. Satan's emissaries are busy everywhere propagating evil doctrines. The Arch-enemy of Christ seeks by every means possible to draw the servants of the Lord away from the path laid down in the Word for them. Even should they be true to the main tenets of the gospel he will seek to make them unfit for service, he will seek to render their ministry powerless by alluring them into unscriptural and unclean fellowships.

"A true witness delivereth souls" (Prov. 14. 25).

"A faithful witness will not lie" (Prov. 14. 5).

"A faithful messenger refresheth the soul of his masters" (Prov. 25. 13).

"A faithful ambassador is health" (Prov. 13. 17).

These Scriptures make it clear that if we are to be a blessing to souls and a joy to the Lord, it is imperative that we should "run in the way of His commandments," in the footsteps of Him who was the "true and faithful witness," who ever spake the words of Him that sent Him and was undefiled, separate from sinners.

If we are to win the prize, we must run lawfully, and with patience. Our service, if it is going to be acceptable to the Lord and be approved by Him in that day must be rendered according to the precepts, principles and pattern laid down in the New Testament.

#### PAUL'S EXAMPLE.

The dealings of the Lord with Paul are exemplary, hence much space is given in the New Testament to the record of his conversion, calling and conduct, both as a saint in the world, and as a servant in the church.

"Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" was his first question to the Lord. Soon afterwards he received a definite commission. "Depart, for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles" (Acts 22. 2). Of this he was confident, consequently he did not consult with "flesh and blood" (Gal. 1. 7). He did not apply to the other apostles and seek their commendation but rather patiently waited for God's time to confirm the commission already received. This period of waiting was also a period of testing. Of it he speaks when he says, "The Lord counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." In due time the call given so many years before was confirmed. In a measure it was confirmed when Barnabus sought for him to come to help in the work at Antioch, but it was confirmed

in full through the church at Antioch, when the Holy Spirit said "Separate me Barnabus and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Paul's training for further service was received in the assembly as was that of Timothy later, for the church is the "ground and pillar of the truth." Training schools and seminaries are not God's ideal. Training in such a place develops the knowledge in advance of experience, and perhaps at the expense of experience, for of necessity a training school cannot give training or experience in church matters. Experience of church affairs can only be gained in a local assembly. A course of study in "Pastoral Theology" does not supply the lack of this practical training.

It should be superfluous to note that the confirmation of the Apostle's call was not referred back to the church at Jerusalem for their consideration and censorship, or approval as the case might be. There was no society formed at Antioch either, no organization for the maintenance and control of the Lord's servants. Although the Apostle returns to Antioch once and rehearses to the church there what the Lord had done, he does not in any way look upon it as the centre for the supply of all his needs. To the church at Corinth he wrote "When your faith is increased—we shall be enlarged by you . . . to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you" (2 Cor. 10. 15-16). Each newly formed church was to form a centre for the furtherance of the gospel. This makes it clear that the progress of the gospel depends upon the local church as well as upon the faithfulness of the servant of the Lord. But there is an utter absence of anything like "headquarters" or centralization in the New Testament. The local church is recognised as a unit in direct touch with the individual servant.

The important principle of the call to the individual being confirmed through another is not limited to Paul only. Even in the Old Testament it is to be found. The Lord called Aholiab and Bezaleel by name to work

with the Tabernacle, but this was confirmed to and through Moses also. The same principle is seen in the case of Timothy. It is not recorded that he made his desire known to the brethren, but rather by his life and testimony in the assembly he had so manifested his fitness for the work that the Apostle would have him go with him in the work of the gospel.

#### THE OX AND THE ASS.

“Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together” (Deut. 22. 10). This would have been an unequal yoke. The ox was a clean animal, but the ass was unclean. The firstling of an ass had to be redeemed by a lamb or have its neck broken. For a true believer, one who has been cleansed and thus rendered fit for service, to be yoked together in the service of the gospel with an unconverted man—whatever may be the other qualifications the unconverted man may possess—is entirely unscriptural. Paul’s yokefellows were first of all his fellow-believers, and then his fellow-workers. Yet how many there are to-day who do not adhere to this fundamental principle in service for God. Under a false Christian charity men serve along with others whom they know to be unregenerate.

“Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds, lest the fruit of thy vineyard be defiled” (Deut. 22. 9). There is to be no mixture of doctrine preached. “A sower went forth to sow” is the scriptural illustration of the preacher, and to preach conflicting doctrines leads to defilement. The servant of the Lord is not to sow divers seeds himself, neither is he to have fellowship with a man who does.

*Fellowship with a man means fellowship with what he teaches.*

“Lay hands suddenly on no man, be not partakers of other men’s sins” (1 Tim. 5. 22). The elect lady was not to receive into her house, or to bid “Godspeed” to the false teachers of that day, those who taught

subversive doctrine regarding the Person of Christ. "He that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9. 11). It was the false teachers of His day and age that the Lord called the "workers of iniquity." "Some men's sins are open before hand"—unsound morals, and hence the individual is given the outside place, the place of the unclean without question. "But some men's sins follow after." Their sin is not so easily manifested. In this list come false doctrine, and too often the teacher of it is tolerated. How many pulpits to-day are filled with men who deny the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures, yet they are the highly esteemed dignitaries of their denominations.

Under the old economy the man with leprosy in his body was regarded as unclean and put outside the camp, while the man with leprosy in his head was pronounced "*utterly unclean*" and consigned to the same place outside the camp. We are exhorted to give heed to sound doctrine, and to hold fast the form of sound words, while false doctrine is severely censured by the Lord.

The Doctrine of Balaam (Rev. 2. 14), the doctrine of the Nicolaitines (Rev. 2. 15) and the doctrine of Jezebel (Rev. 2. 20) are alike condemned.

*Fellowship with evil doctrine is defiling.*

"Be ye not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15. 33). This is written concerning evil teaching. There were those who taught there was to be no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15. 12). As the sowing of a mixture of seeds defiled the fruit, so evil teaching defiles the life. It corrupts. Contact results in contamination. It is only sound doctrine that can result in fruit for God. The Apostle warns Timothy to shun false teaching—profane and vain babblings (2 Tim. 2. 15-21) for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and will eat as doth a canker. It will eat away as doth gangrene, a malignant growth that saps the very vitals. One characteristic of such

is that it seldom manifests itself until it has the individual in its grasp. So with evil doctrine, it works insidiously and slowly saps the vitality out of the testimony.

The servant of the Lord is to study to shew himself approved unto God, by rightly dividing the word of truth, by dealing honestly, setting forth truly, without perversion or distortion the word of God; by shunning profane and vain babblings; and by purging himself from false teachers.

Separation from false teachers fits the servant for every good work. The "vain babblings" spoken of in 2 Tim. 2. 16 refer to the false teaching, whereas the pronoun "these" in v. 21, "If any man purge himself from *these*," refers to the false teachers mentioned in verse 17, "... of whom is Hymaneus and Philetus." Verses 18 and 19 are parenthetical. Thus purging himself from false teaching and false teachers he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, *prepared* unto every good work. In chapter 3. 16 we are told that the Scriptures "thoroughly furnish" the man of God unto all good works, but it is separation that *prepares* or *fits* him.

*The servant a vessel.*

Thus being separated is the path to being a "vessel unto honour," a vessel to be used for honourable purposes, meet for the master's use. By nature we were all "marred" vessels (Jer. 18. 4) but God had mercy upon us, and thus we were made again into other vessels, "vessels of mercy" (Rom. 9. 23) and prepared unto glory. "All the vessels of the ministry" were sprinkled with blood (Heb. 9. 21), and after use or defilement were washed (Lev. 6. 27; 4. 32). The widow that was in debt was asked to bring "empty vessels not a few" (2 Kings 4. 3). In the tents of God's people the vessels were to be covered (Num. 19. 14-15) thus protecting their contents from being contaminated. When Ruth was gleaning in the harvest field she was enjoined, when thirsty, to go to the

vessels that had been "filled" (Ruth 2. 9). It is from vessels in which the word of God "dwells richly" that weary gleaners will be able to quench their thirst. The earthen vessel that was defiled in any way was to be broken, as unfit for use again (Lev. 6. 28). How solemn when we realise that the treasure is in "earthen vessels" to-day (2 Cor. 4. 7). Throne water demands clean vessels. It is only clean vessels that are vessels unto honour. Hymaneus and Philetus were not vessels unto honour. They were delivered to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme. Their blasphemy was evil teaching. Paul was a vessel unto honour. God used him to the salvation of souls, to the establishing of assemblies, and the building up of the church.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SEPARATION—THE FALSE AND TRUE.

**T**HE word for separation (*aphorizo*) is used in the following New Testament passages, Matt. 13. 49; 25. 32; Luke 6. 22; Acts 13. 2; 19. 9; Rom. 1. 1; 2 Cor. 6. 7; Gal. 1. 5; 2. 12. A glance at these passages will reveal that it is God which effectually separates. Paul speaks of himself as having been separated by God. But a consideration of these passages will also reveal the possibility of a false separation, a thing which needs to be carefully guarded against. To look at a few instances of this false kind will be of help to us before we consider the character of a scriptural and true separation.

*Lot from Abraham.*—Gen. 13. 14.

Lot was Abraham's nephew and had left Ur of the Chaldees with his uncle. Nothing is recorded as to what actuated him to take such a step. But it was not long before this man who seems to have just gone with Abraham, without very definite dealings with God about his path, left the path of the stranger and pilgrim, the path of fellowship with Abraham for the well watered plains of Sodom. The highlands of pilgrimage were forsaken for the lowlands of world-conformity. It was a quarrel between the *herdmen* that succeeded in separating these two pilgrims. A quarrel over earthly possessions. Lot should have been prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of the fellowship of Abraham, and as the younger he should have been subject to the elder. But the prospects of a good place for cattle was of more consequence to

him than fellowship with the man of faith. Yet when he finally had to flee Sodom, it was as a pauper, without these "earthly things" that had seemingly been the cause for his separation from Abraham. The very things he desired to maintain he lost and more besides. His herdmen must have perished in the plains of Sodom, and his family grew up to disgrace him. A false separation is costly. If it costs to walk in the narrow path it will eventually cost more to walk in the broad path of coveting earthly things and conformity to worldly principles.

*Heber from the rest of the Kenites.*—Judges 4. 11.

The Kenites were a remarkable people, and that which is recorded of them is full of instruction for His people to-day. They were a pilgrim people. They preferred the wilderness to the city of palm trees—the place of the curse (Judges 1. 16). In the days of Jeremiah, their descendants, the Rechabites are made an object lesson to reprove the people of Israel (Jer. 35. 6-10). They would drink no wine and would live as strangers in tents in obedience to the word of their father. But this man Heber seems to have had a quarrel with his fellow-Kenites and consequently separated himself from them and had pitched his tent in the valley of Zaanaim, near Kedesh. And they showed Sisera that Barak had gone up Mount Tabor. (Judges 4. 11-12). What the reason was that made him do such a thing we are not told. Being alone he might have been afraid of Sisera, or might have been glad of the opportunity for revenge and made it easy for the enemy to pursue God's people. His wife seems to have been made of better material, and when Sisera sought refuge in her tent later in the day, she treated him as an enemy.

A believer that is out of touch with his brethren is a danger. He will not find it difficult to betray the Lord's people to the enemy's hands. The record of Heber is a very brief one but a very sad one, and in the history of the church there has been many a

Heber, and sad have been the episodes connected with their tents. May the Lord in grace deliver us from such a record. Let brotherly love continue is a much needed exhortation.

*Peter from the Antioch believers. (Gal. 2. 12.).*

“For before that certain came from James, Peter did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision, and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation (or ‘hypocrisy’).”

Peter seems to have gone to Antioch and as long as there was no one from Jerusalem there he enjoyed most happy fellowship with the saints, but as soon as some came from James, Peter begins to fear, and separates himself. Peter had had on a previous occasion a rather difficult experience with the church at Jerusalem. He had received a special invitation to go to the house of Cornelius, and the Lord had shewn him that he should not call that which God had cleansed unholy or unclean, and in accordance with the word of God Peter went to preach at the house of Cornelius. The Lord graciously granted blessing, the Spirit of God was poured forth in a special manner, and God was glorified. But when Peter returned to Jerusalem he was obliged to give quite an apology before those who were of the circumcision. He rehearsed the matter from the beginning and expounded it by order to them (Acts 11. 4.). They finally held their peace and glorified God. However, it must have been a rather difficult experience for Peter, and possibly he did not wish to have to give a similar apology again when he would return from Antioch, so in order to avoid that seeming difficulty he withdrew from the Gentiles, and by his action influenced others also. But by avoiding trouble with James he courted trouble with Paul, and of the two, one would prefer to meet the ones that came from James with their opposition

than to meet Paul. Peter finally succeeded in convincing the church at Jerusalem that it was wrong to call that which God has cleansed unholy or unclean, but he had no apology to make to Paul for his action, for he was blameworthy. *Earthly tradition* and the fear of man was the cause for this false separation, a separation which will be found blameworthy at the judgment seat of Christ. Is it not possible that we keep aloof from fellowship with Christians and groups of Christians simply because we are afraid of what some of our friends might think of us? The individual responsibility of the servant to the Lord is important to apprehend. To call that which God has cleansed unholy and unclean is tantamount to the assumption of superior holiness, and savours of the separation of the Pharisee.

*Barnabas and Paul* (Acts 15. 39.).

What yokefellows in the gospel these two had been. Barnabas was a good man we are told, and evidently a man of much grace, a true son of consolation. Paul exceeded in gift and Barnabas gladly yielded to him the place of the leader. Together they had gone with the gospel into new territory and new fields, and had been enabled to establish churches. What joy must have filled the hearts of the Lord's people at Antioch when they returned and told them of how the door of faith was opened to the Gentiles. But in Scripture the record of success is often followed by the record of defeat. The enemy, who knew the value of these two labourers labouring together, watched his opportunity to separate them. He who used earthly possessions to separate Lot from Abraham, and earthly tradition to separate Peter and the others from the Gentile converts, was soon to use *earthly-relationships* to separate these two fellow-workers. Their contention arose over John Mark, who was nephew to Barnabas (Col. 4. 10.). When they had set out on their first journey they took him with them, but as he was not called of God to go he soon leaves them and

returns home. Now as they were setting out on their second journey Barnabas desires to take John with them again, but the Apostle would not hear of it. He would act on the principle that he that putteth his hand to the plough and turneth back is not worthy of the kingdom. The "son of consolation," however, would become a son of compromise for the sake of his nephew. This was the cause of their contention and their ultimate separation. So Barnabas took John Mark and sailed to Cyprus. We are not told that he was commended by the brethren as Paul was. He seems to have acted in self-will, hence nothing more is recorded of him in the Acts, although the Apostle makes reference to him in the later epistles and also to John Mark. These later references would convey that the breach recorded in Acts 15. was healed. But it is a sad episode, and one that has been repeated often since. Families have taken sides because of a relation whom they think has been wrongly treated and whom they would desire to treat very leniently.

False separation may generally be attributed to one of these three reasons. Earthly possessions, earthly tradition and the fear of man, or earthly relationships. May the Lord in His grace deliver us from walking in a path of separation marked out by ourselves rather than by the Word of God.

#### THE TRUE NATURE OF SEPARATION.

It is well to enquire as to the true nature of separation and if we search the Scriptures we shall not search in vain. In the second Epistle to Timothy, the second chapter it is very clearly revealed, and strongly emphasized. Both the positive and negative aspects are lucidly shown to the young servant Timothy.

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please Him that hath chosen him to be a soldier" (v. 4). Here it is *separation to the Person of Christ* in view of the "well done, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What a motive

for separation "that he may please Him." No higher motive can be found and any separation which is not primarily a separation to the Lord will become Legal and Pharisaical.

"If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully" (v. 5). In this verse where the servant of the Lord is spoken of as an athlete, his separation is *separation to the Word*, the rules and regulations of the game. This is in view of the crown to be won, the reward to be obtained at the Judgment-seat of Christ.

"The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruit" (v. 6). Here it is *separation to his work* in view of the joy of harvest. A barren ministry is to be a shame to him. He is to patiently and expectantly look for a harvest, remembering that as the "seed of David is risen from the dead" so the seed of the Word of God sown in the hearts of men has life in itself and will yet bring forth fruit.

As a workman he is to deal honestly with the word of Truth, not to try to make Scripture teach what it does not in order to suit his convenient doctrine. He is to shun false teaching and purge himself from false teachers. Here we are given the *negative* aspect of his separation. The whole portion dealing with separation from false teachers seems to have reference to the gainsaying of Korah as recorded in Num. 16. 26. This is so important that it deserves more than a passing reference. We shall draw attention to three portions of Scripture that shew what the servant is to separate from.

Exod. 32. 26—*From a false object of worship.*

Moses was commanded to go down from the Mount, and when he came down he found that the people had made a golden calf and were bowing down before it, saying, "These be thy gods, O! Israel." They had returned to the worship of the Egyptians, who worshipped bulls and calves. They had returned to idolatry. Hence Moses stood in the gate of the camp

and said "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me." The record says that all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. They took sides with God against the nation. This was not easy, it was "contrary to nature," but they were rewarded for it in that they were chosen to stand before the Lord and minister unto Him. Israel was intended to be a nation of priests, but they failed, and the tribe of Levi is chosen, seemingly by virtue of their allegiance to the Lord at that time of crisis in their history. Israel had lost sight of the Man that had gone into the presence of God for them, and said, "We wot not what has become of him." This resulted in an earthly worship, from which those who afterwards were chosen to be servants separated themselves.

Num. 16. 26—*From a false system.*

"... And they rose up before Moses with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty *princes* of the assembly, *famous* in the congregation, men of *renown*, and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord."

In the New Testament this is spoken of as "the gainsaying of Core." It was a serious rebellion and had very disastrous results. These princes, men of renown, were under the leadership of Korah—a Levite, one who was privileged to work in connection with the Tabernacle under the jurisdiction of the High Priest. With this service and position he was not satisfied, but desired the priesthood also. He wanted to intrude himself into a position of honour that the Lord had given to Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron together represent the Lord Jesus Christ as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. The

one brought God's message to them, and the other went into the sanctuary on their behalf. The Levites typify the believer in his position as servant, serving under the authority and government of the High Priest. More especially they represent those who have by the Lord Himself been separated to the work of the ministry of the gospel. The iniquity of these men was visited with swift punishment, but before the judgment takes place, Moses said unto the congregation "Depart I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men and touch nothing of their's, lest ye be consumed in all their sins." Their sin finds its antitype to-day in "clerisy," and "priestcraft," that system which exalts a man who is only a servant into the position of pre-eminence that God has given to His Son. In the priestcraft of Rome the sin is seen fully developed, but clerisy in all of its varied forms comes from the same root. It is the sin of the "servant" or "minister" intruding himself into a position which the Word of God never gives him.

The very fact these were great men, men of renown, assured for them many followers, but they led their followers to an awful doom (ver. 33). Solemn warning, but unheeded by thousands even to-day. As long as the "minister" is a scholarly man, well taught in the schools of human learning, what he says is decisive, irrespective of what the Word of God says.

Clerisy with its attendant ritualism is something from which the true believer should "depart," that thereby he might be a vessel unto honour. Separation from such may be "contrary to nature" as was the case with the sons of Korah who died not (Num. 26. 11). They obeyed the Word of God rather than take sides with their father. For this they were afterwards rewarded. Psalms 42-49, and others were written for the sons of Korah. They were over the service, keepers of the gate: over the host of the Lord, keepers of entry. 1 Chron. 9. 19). Separation may be costly but it has its sure compensations.

1 Kings 13. 8, 16—*From a false centre.*

Jeroboam had erected an altar in Bethel, and burnt incense upon it. God had only one centre of worship under the old economy, and that was Jerusalem, but Jeroboam thought it was too much for the people to go to Jerusalem, so he established a calf in Bethel and a calf in Dan. Thereby he turned the people of Israel aside from the God-given centre, the place where the Lord had chosen to place His name. To carry on his false worship he ordained priests of the common people, and invented feast days of his own. Thus he established a worship with a false object, false centre, false priests and false feasts.

Against this the Lord sent a messenger. In obedience to the Word of God the messenger went and delivered his message, but when asked to eat bread and drink water, he refused, saying he could not do so in *that place*. Later when the old prophet asked him to do so, he at first refused him too, saying he could not eat with him in that place, implying that he would have no objection to eating with him elsewhere. In the Scriptures "eating and drinking" together means fellowship. Whereas the prophet was at liberty to deliver his God-given message *in and against* that place, he had no liberty to eat and drink there, for thereby he would be showing his fellowship with it.

How many false centres there are to-day! Instead of gathering alone to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, professing Christians gather to ordinances—such as baptism, to some special form of church government, such as Presbyterian, Episcopalian, etc., or to something which perpetuates a man's name—such as Wesleyan. Along with these false centres there are the false systems of ministerialism and the multiplied holy days, all of which is dishonouring to the Lord. God desires the church to be the standing testimony to the "name which is above every name" and the servant of God is not to countenance that which is contrary to this

purpose by having fellowship with sectarianism, and denominationalism.

The old prophet finally turned the young man aside from his purpose of heart by saying that he too was a prophet, and that an angel had spoken to him, telling the young man to eat bread and drink water there. "But he lied unto him." The consequences of turning aside from obedience to what he knew to be the mind of the Lord were sad. He was never given the privilege of delivering another message for the Lord.

*Christ the pattern servant.*

"The servant of the Lord must not strive." This sounds the final chord. The servant *must be separated to the pattern*, he is to be as his Lord, concerning whom we read that "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets" (Matt. 12. 19). No self-advertisement, no quarrelsome spirit. How necessary for such an exhortation, for we are often tempted to quarrel for the truth instead of contending for it. It is well to remember that an assembly is not composed of contentious Ishmaelites but contented Israelites. While thus seeking to be separated from evil to the Lord and His word we are to "follow . . . . with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart." This is to be our circle of fellowship.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEPARATED PRIEST—OR THE  
BELIEVER'S WORSHIP.

**O**UR God deserves and desires the worship of His people. "They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and the Father seeketh such to worship Him," not only individually and privately, but also collectively. To this end He has constituted us a holy priesthood. (1 Pet. 2. 5).

In the New Testament we read of the church (local) or assembly coming together to "one place" for varied purposes. Of these gatherings of the early church, the one for the "breaking of Bread" or the remembering of the Lord was most prominent and important. They met for this purpose every first day of the week. On these occasions they "sang Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs"; thus praising the Lord unitedly. The Scriptures were read and expounded, and one and another would, as led of the Spirit—for there was no human control—audibly give thanks, thus voicing not only his own sentiments, but the adoration and worship of the whole gathered company.

There may be no scripture to speak of this gathering as "the worship meeting," yet there is no occasion when the saints meet together when worship should be so spontaneous as then. As the heart muses upon the sufferings of Christ the "fire burns" and the tongue becomes the pen of a ready writer. Hence we shall consider the separated worship of the believer in its relation to the "Lord's Table."

When the Lord gave the priestly family the privilege of eating the Peace-offerings it was with two very IMPORTANT INJUNCTIONS. They were to be eaten in a *clean* place; and only the *clean* should eat them. (Lev. 10. 14; Num. 18. 11). The same principle applies to-day—Only those cleansed from their sins by the Blood and from their ways by the Word should partake of the Supper. And they should see to it that the place where they do so is clean from moral evil or doctrinal error.

*Separation from heathen worship.*—1 Cor. 10. 16-22. 2 Cor. 6. 14-18.

Those who formed the "church" at Corinth had been saved out of heathen idolatry. From 1 Cor. 6. 9-11 we gather that the lives of some of them had been anything but commendable, until the gospel of the grace of God reached them. But although their lives had been changed so that the Apostle could say "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," yet to separate entirely from their past was difficult. Some of them had for years lived in fear of demons, in dread of the black hand of the devil. In their unconverted state they had been afraid lest they should incur the anger of their "heathen deities" and had offered sacrifices to pacify the anger of their gods. When the gospel came to them they embraced it but some of them desired only to give the Lord Jesus Christ a place in their temples alongside with the gods they had previously worshipped. Others had a clearer apprehension of the truth of the gospel, and desired to worship the Lord only, but in the heathen temple. Thus they thought they would evade the anger of the "gods." At these temples there were heathen festivals, heathen orgies, and some of the Christians seemed to continue to go to them, thus partaking of the "table of demons" and the "table of the Lord." Upon this unequal yoke the Apostle speaks plainly. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons." Such a path of

compromise was an impossible one. Hence he continues in his second epistle beseeching them to be "enlarged," enlarged in their apprehension of the unique glory of Christ, in their apprehension of the protecting power of God and in the distinctive character of their new found faith. They were straitened in themselves. The truth had not liberated them from their old customs and fears as it should have, hence the double emphasis.—

"Be ye also enlarged."

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

These injunctions are followed by a five-fold appeal in the form of five questions, intended to indelibly impress upon them the truth of the Saviour's words, "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world."

*"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?"*

They are diametrically opposed principles. Fellowship means holding something together with another, but righteousness and unrighteousness hold nothing in common. Righteousness is the underlying principle in the government of the Kingdom of God, while unrighteousness is the basic principle of government in the realm of the kingdom of darkness.

*"What communion hath light with darkness?"*

They are diametrically opposed elements. Communion means common interests resulting from communion in life. These two elements cannot be mixed, they are antagonistic the one to the other.

Darkness hides, light reveals. In darkness things are covered, in the light things are manifest. In Gen. 1. we are told that the Lord separated the light from the darkness, and He saw that it was good. Such separation is "good" yet.

*"What concord hath Christ with Belial?"*

They are diametrically opposed persons. Concord means that there is agreement in sound and voice with one another. The Scriptures reveal to us that Satan's

desire is to imitate the work of God in every way he possibly can. In the Revelation the dragon possesses the face of a lamb but its voice is still the voice of the dragon. Satan may change his outward form, but he will never be able to change his inward character. He may transform himself into an "angel of light," but his message will be "another gospel" which is no gospel, but a message intended to deceive men to their eternal ruin.

*"What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"*

They are diametrically opposed faiths. The infidel here is not merely the infidel of Ingersoll's type, but it refers to that subtle form of infidelity prevalent in the East, the denial of the personal God. The infidelity which says "God is everything and everything is God." It has appeared during recent years in the West under the name of "Christian Science." The true believer on the other hand believes in a personal God. Thus the two faiths can have nothing in common. To have "part" means to share in a common object. There must be the common object of faith if we are to have fellowship with one another.

*"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"*

They are diametrically opposed systems. To be in agreement means holding a common sentiment. There were no idols in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, or in the Temple later erected in Jerusalem. Idolatry is the system of worship invented by the "god of this age." It is departure from the path of faith in the unseen God to walking by sight. Unbelief must have some visible object either in the form of the idols of heathenism or in the pictures and statues of an apostate Christendom. Idols have eyes, but they see not, they have ears but they hear not, but the "Temple of God" is a living organism. To the church at Corinth He says "Ye are the Temple of God." Life and death can have no fellowship. A living man and a lifeless idol have nothing in common.

After thus showing them the unique and distinctive

character of Christianity, the apostle appeals to them again in words which cannot be misunderstood. "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." To any among them who would still fear to separate from their old associations the last promise would be a great encouragement. To realise that the Lord God Almighty was to be their Father would mean complete deliverance from the fear of the black hand of the past.

Solemn it is that so many true believers to-day seem to have no exercise as to being thus unequally yoked. They take communion alongside of those who have never even professed to have received the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ. They, who are called in the Scripture "Light in the Lord" mingle in church fellowship with those who are still in "darkness." While they belong to Christ, they seem to be satisfied to be fellow-members with those who belong to Belial, children of wrath! Having had a personal dealing with God themselves regarding their sins, they continue to have part with those who have never had such. To anyone who may read these pages who is still yoked in such an unscriptural fellowship the word is "Come out"; "Be ye separate." To disobey will mean to suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ; to obey will mean His favour now and reward then.

#### SEPARATION FROM JUDAISTIC WORSHIP.

(Heb. 13. 13).

"Let us go forth unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach."

Judaism in its original form, being a God-given form of worship and ritual, was on a different plane entirely from heathenism. From the "Acts" and the Epistle to the "Hebrews" we gather that it was difficult for those converted from Judaism to separate themselves from the old ritual. It seems to have taken some time for even Paul to turn his back on all the outward forms of

Judaism, judging from the vow he made, and shaving his head, and insisting on being at Jerusalem at the time of the feast. Many clung tenaciously to the Temple and to the priesthood. They had ever been accustomed to the altar and the mediatorial ministry of the High Priest in his priestly robes, and it was no easy matter to forsake it all. But in this verse God calls the whole of the Judaistic ritual, "the camp," that which God had forsaken and abandoned, and that which was soon to be done away with. The reference in this portion is to the event recorded in Ex. 33. 7. Because of Israel's idolatry Moses moved the tent of meeting outside the camp, for God had said He could not dwell in the midst of them. The Lord only returned into the camp after the "Tabernacle" had been erected and a Mercy-seat provided, and atoning blood had been sprinkled. Until then all who sought the Lord had to go out to the tent outside the camp.

Christianity is not only distinct from Heathenism, but it is *entirely* distinct from Judaism also. Had Paul not taught this, he would not have suffered at the hands of the Roman Government, for Judaism seems to have been protected by the State. The fact that the two are distinctly different the one from the other needs to be well remembered in these days, when the professing church is going back to Judaism, and when its worship is getting Judaistic in character. To return to Judaism is to build up what God has destroyed, and to deny the whole teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews and other portions of the New Testament.

There are five cardinal points of difference between the two, which we do well to note briefly.

(a) Under the old economy there was a SPECIAL PLACE, whereas in the new there is none. In the New Testament it is clear to the most casual observer that the early believers had NO special place. The house of the mother of John Mark at Jerusalem, or of Gaius at Corinth sufficed. It still remains a fact that the only holy place in the New Testament is wherever two or three gather together in His name. Judaism

was a national religion; Christianity is international. The Jew had to worship at Jerusalem at the Temple, the place where Jehovah chose to place His name. It was there that he was to bring his tithes and offerings. The Temple was a most wonderful building, it cost a great sum to build it. But there is no such a holy place to-day. Great gorgeous buildings built after the fashion of the temple are a return to Judaism, they deny the pilgrim character of the church and the simplicity which is in Christ.

Concerning the church at Corinth we are told that they came together to "One place" but nothing is said of the character of the building or house possibly in which they met, but much is made of the spiritual condition of those who gathered there.

While the Old Testament made much of the place, the New makes much of the Person around whom His people are to gather.

(b) There was also a SPECIAL CEREMONY connected with their worship which was absolutely indispensable, but in the worship of the New Testament one is struck with the absolute absence of anything like ceremonies. The only two ordinances observed then and to be observed to-day are "Baptism" and the "Lord's Supper." There was no ritual connected with the observance of either. Simplicity characterised and was meant to characterise both. They "broke bread from house to house" and Philip baptised in some water on the roadside. How different from that which prevails in Christendom to-day. How the church has departed from the pattern laid down in the Word of God. How she has multiplied the ceremonies, and how ceremoniously are the ordinances carried out, instead of in simplicity.

(c) Besides there was the SPECIAL PRIESTLY CLASS without whom the worship of Jehovah could not be carried out. These were specially set apart and were easily recognisable among the thousands of Israel by the dress they wore. One of Jeroboam's sins was that he made priests of the common people whereas the

law demanded that no one but the family of Aaron could officiate in that capacity. There is nothing akin to this in the New Testament. Yet Rome and her daughters make priests of men who are not even Jews, far less of the tribe of Levi. "If Christ were on earth He could not be a priest, for it is evident that He sprang out of Judah." An earthly priesthood to-day is a denial of the High Priesthood of Christ, and of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2. 5, 9).

The Priestcraft of Rome and the Clerisy of Protestantism claim exclusive rights to administer the ordinances and perform the ministry of the church, but without any warrant in the New Testament for so doing. To the church there are given the gifts of "pastors, evangelists, and teachers," but theirs is no office to which they are ordained by man, but work for which they have been fitted by the Lord Himself. The term "office" is not used in the New Testament concerning the exercise of these gifts. In the King James Authorised Version it is so rendered but it is the *rendering* of the translators and not the original. The New Testament makes much of the "work" of the evangelist, etc., but nothing of his office.

If it was the purpose of God that the ordinances and ministry of the church should only be performed by a special class set apart for that by the church, then we might expect to find a pattern for it in the Acts and precepts for it in the Epistles. But on examination it is the opposite we find.

*Concerning Baptism.* It is recorded in the 8th chapter of Acts that Philip baptised the Eunuch. Philip was not one of the Apostles, his name first appears among the seven chosen to care for the widows at Jerusalem. Afterwards he was called an "Evangelist."

After Saul had seen the Lord on the Damascus Road we are told that Ananias baptised him. Who Ananias was we are not told, other than a devout man, a disciple of the Lord Jesus. If a specially set apart person was necessary for baptising then surely the baptism

of Paul would have been made an example in the matter. That in this, as in all else, Paul was an example for all who would afterwards believe, we are fully persuaded, but the example cuts at the foundation of clerical presumption.

*Concerning the Lord's Supper.* In the portions speaking of this important feast, there is not a single sentence which gives foundation for the idea of "administering it," or of the necessity of some special man being present before it can be observed. On the contrary we read "the bread WE break" and "the cup WE drink." The error of clerisy or the doctrine of Nicolaitines denies these simple ways of God in the church, and arrogate to a few the prerogative—self assumed—of administering it, but we do not read of anyone else ever doing it. Yet how many true believers think it wrong to break bread in remembrance of the Lord without some "ordained" man.

The following from the pen of the late Dr. Griffith Thomas is illuminating on this point:—

No single reference to a special priesthood can be found in the 27 books of the New Testament. Let us take 7 of these representative distinctive parts:—

1. Instructions of our Lord to His disciples and apostles—Gospels. Not a word regarding such a priesthood.

2. First book of general church history—Acts. No hint of such a priesthood.

3. First detailed picture of one apostolic church in the Epistles to the Corinthians, but not a sign of any such priesthood.

4. There are two great doctrinal Epistles for Gentile Christians, Romans and Ephesians, but no instructions as to such a priesthood.

5. There is a great doctrinal Epistle to Jewish Christians—Hebrews, but nothing in it except our Lord's priesthood.

6. There are three Epistles of Pastoral and ecclesiastical instructions—1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, but still not a word of a special priesthood.

7. There are the mature writings of John, James, and Peter, the great Apostles of the circumcision, but no trace whatever of this priesthood.

All the writers with one possible exception—Luke—were steeped in sacerdotal ideas, language, and

associations from childhood. They often use sacrificial language to describe certain elements and aspects of the gospel, especially Paul in Rom. 15. 16. BUT NOT ONE OF THEM USES THE WORD "HIERUS"—the word for a sacrificing priest to denote the Christian minister or gospel preacher from the layman—so-called. Bishop Westcott said it was the nearest approach to verbal inspiration he knew of. Bishop Lightfoot comments on it as the eloquent silence of the Apostolic writings. The Kingdom of Christ has no sacerdotal system. Dr. Thomas himself says it is the unmistakable control of the Holy Ghost in the composition of the New Testament.

*Concerning Ministry.*

Who should preach the gospel and teach the Scriptures? We have seen that no special class was necessary either for baptism or the Lord's Supper, but is not the ministry of the church to be entirely in the hands of a few who have been through the seminaries, and had the hands of ordination laid upon them? To this as to all other questions the answer must be "What saith the Scripture?"

In the church at Antioch we are told that there were "certain prophets and teachers." Each of these would therefore seek to exercise the gift that the Head of the church had given to them, each ministered according to the grace received.

In the church at Ephesus (Acts 20) there were "elders" who had by the Holy Spirit been made, or fitted to be "bishops" or "overseers." These were exhorted by the Apostle to "feed" or shepherd the flock. They were exhorted to do the work of the "pastor." The work was not in the hands of one, but as in the other churches of the New Testament, there was a plurality of elders, who were also overseers, and pastors. This is very different from what obtains to-day.

After the persecution culminating in the stoning of Stephen it is recorded that the Christians went everywhere "preaching the word" (Acts 8. 4). They went "evangelising the glad tidings" and that without any human ordination. Theirs was the ordination of the "Pierced Hand." That all believers should thus evan-

gelize is emphasised by the apostle in his letter to the Church at Phillipi, when he says "holding forth the word of life." How important it is that each believer should realise his or her responsibility in this the King's business. To make the preaching of the gospel the exclusive privilege of a few, who are only expected to preach it in special places and on specified occasions is disobedience to the command: "Go ye therefore into the highways and as many as ye shall find; bid to the marriage."

In the Epistle to the Ephesians we read of that "which every joint supplieth." The body, which is the church, is fitted together and compacted by that which *every joint* supplieth, according to the working in its measure of each one part (Eph. 4. 16). The body is to increase through the supply that comes through each member.

This is again spoken of in Col. 2. 19. The Apostle is speaking of some who were not holding fast the Head, that is, they were not giving the Lord His place of pre-eminence. When He is acknowledged as Head then we must recognise that He ministers nourishment to it and knits it together through the "joints and bands," thereby the body increases with the increase of God.

When each member of the body is performing its intended function, then the body is in health. Each member has some function to perform and is responsible to the Lord to fulfil that responsibility. The gifts have been divided to "*every man* severally as He will" (1 Cor. 12. 11). "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every man* to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12. 7). Others are to derive profit from the gift possessed. Each one is to profit from the other. Clerisy does away with this. It makes one man the pastor, evangelist and teacher. It puts one man into the position where he lords over God's heritage. This is the doctrine of the Nicolaitines. In Rev. 2. 6 we read of the *deeds of the Nicolaitines*. But in 2. 15 we read of their *doctrine*. Their deeds had given

birth to a doctrine, instead of allowing "the doctrine" to control their deeds. We are prone to try and support a wrong system by a verse of Scripture, whereas it would be better if we would test our practices by all Scripture. When the theory and practice of a specified and salaried ministry is examined in the light of the truth of God it is found unwarranted, unsupported and condemned.

(d) There was also a SPECIAL RELIGIOUS CALENDAR of holy days and months and years, under the old economy.

A casual reading of the Old Testament will reveal this, but when we turn to the New Testament the observance of "days, months and years" is severely censured. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2. 16-17). "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months and times and years" (Gal. 2. 9-10). When the Galatian Christians walked thus the Apostle became afraid lest he had bestowed labour in vain upon them. He stood in doubt of them wondering if they had ever apprehended the grace of God in the gospel of Christ.

Of the early believers we are told that they "came together on the first day of the week to break bread." The Christians at Corinth are exhorted in regard to giving that "every one should lay by him in store as God had prospered him" on the first day of the week. This is spoken of in the Revelation as "the Lord's Day," but is nowhere referred to as a "sabbath" or a "holyday," but as the Lord enables him the believer should spend its hours for the Lord. It is sad to see Christians spending Lord's Days in pleasure or in business, when they should seek to meet with His people and be active in the work of the gospel.

When the apostle was communicating to the church the revelation he had received regarding the Lord's

Supper he used the words "As oft as ye do this." Not even a special day mentioned, far less any special time of the day. To hanker after special times and seasons is a sign of Galatian Christianity. It is a Judaized form of Christianity, mixing law with grace, Sinai with Calvary.

(e) In the worship of the Temple much was made also of SPECIAL MUSIC. There was a choir and we read of the chief singers, as well as special instruments of music.

All this, however, is connected with the worship of an earthly people, as Israel was. In the New Testament little reference is made to singing. After the instituting of the "supper" we read that they sang a hymn. In the Epistle to the Colossians we are exhorted to "admonish one another in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3. 16). In writing to the church at Corinth regarding the gifts the apostle says "I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14. 15). But the gift of song is nowhere spoken of as a gift of the Spirit, nor is there any warrant for introducing "special singing" into the gatherings of the Lord's people. Everything should be done decently and in order. The hymns given out should be sung properly and well. Poor singing is a hindrance and could in most cases be remedied if there was a little exercise of heart about it. But choirs and solos entertain rather than edify, and "all things should be done unto edifying." The first and last references to musical instruments in the Word of God are ominous. They are first mentioned in connection with Cain's descendants and last referred to in connection with the destruction of Babylon in Rev. 18.

From the Judaism of their day with its Temple, its priests in their priestly robes, its ceremonies, and its special days and seasons with its wonderful music to please the flesh, the early believers were exhorted to separate. They were commanded to leave it, for the

word "Let" in Hebrews 13. 13 is the imperative, and they were reminded that the one they sought was not in the camp, but outside. Years before He had said "Your house is left to you desolate," and who can fully know the desolation of the place where the Lord is not to be found. Christendom to-day has returned to Judaism, but the Lord is outside, and if we are to know His fellowship we must needs "go forth" to Him, bearing His reproach.

*Separation from Babylonish Worship.*—Rev. 18. 4.

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues."

Scripture has much to say concerning Babylon, both the historical and the mystical Babylon. The one is the type of the other, the mystical is the antitype of the historical. A brief consideration of the historical will aid to a proper apprehension of the true character of the mystical. The mystical or ecclesiastical Babylon is called "The Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth," and John sees her drunk with the blood of saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (Rev. 17. 5-6). The "Mother" is Rome, and the "Harlots," her daughters, are the many Protestant denominations, the sects and systems of men, who will eventually return to their mother, as the "High Church of England" and others are already doing. The only way to avoid her sins and evade her plagues is to have nothing to do with her or her daughters. Contact means contamination. To fraternise with Babylon or her daughters is to lay oneself open to the charge of being of the same character. Virtuous women and harlots can have no fellowship. The worldliness, evil living and evil doctrine that is so prevalent in the sects is branded as harlotry. With it the people of God are to have no fellowship. From it they are to separate.

The origin of the historical Babylon is recorded in Gen. 11. Nimrod was its first King (Gen. 10. 9-10). He was a mighty hunter before the Lord, evidently meaning that he hunted the souls of men, persecuting

any who would not acknowledge his supremacy and kingship, just what will take place in the last days when the image of the beast will be set up and men commanded to bow down to it.

Babylon in its very incipency was contrary to the mind and will of God. The Lord had intended that the race should multiply, replenish the earth and thus scatter abroad, but when on the plain of Shinar they set about to build the tower of Babel, their aim was *centralization*, with the evident purpose of bringing everything under the control of Nimrod the King. Let *us* make *us* a name lest we be scattered abroad. In the parlance of to-day it means *amalgamation*. Later on when the Lord chose a place for His people to meet in, and erect a Temple, we find that it was built of "hewn stone," but Nimrod's tower was built of brick and bitumen. Bricks may be very easy to build with, but at best they are only imitation stone! A brick building may be erected much more rapidly than a stone one, but be it remembered that in the Temple of God no *bricks* are to be found, all are living stones. There are no imitation Christians in the true church, no mere professors of religion. When the Lord adds to the church He only adds those who are saved (Acts 2. 47). Yet how many there are who are professedly church members who have never been born again, and have never known the forgiveness of their sins through faith in the Blood of Christ. They are only so many of Babylon's bricks. To be associated with those who allow into fellowship those who have never been converted, and who take a name not given them by the Lord Himself is to be associated with Babylon. Nimrod and his associates desired a name for themselves, so they said "Let us build us a city and a tower." But this man-made unity incurred for them the displeasure of the Lord and resulted in the confusion of tongues, which has lasted till this day. These find their antitype to-day in the multifarious sects of Christendom, each with its own language or theory proclaimed from its many pulpits and many presses.

The after-history of Babylon was no improvement upon its commencement. A casual reading of the book of Daniel will reveal that it was a place of great human attainment and prowess, a place of great wealth and splendour and luxury. It was a place of palaces and feasts, but along with the outward display went the inward corruption and awful profligacy. The hand-writing on the wall pronounced its doom.

The ecclesiastical Babylon is not a whit behind the historical in outward show. She is arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with precious stones and pearls. Yet in her hand is a cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication (Rev. 17. 4). Outwardly very religious and very ceremonious, but inwardly full of dead men's bones. Let every Christian read the hand-writing on the wall and flee human systems.

To the people of God Babylon was a place of bondage. It was there that the image was built and all commanded to bow down to it. It was there the fiery furnace was heated seven times its usual heat and the young men cast into it. It was there Daniel was thrown into the lion's den. There the children of Israel hung up their harps on the willows, and answered the taunting of the Babylonians by saying "How can we sing the Lord's song in Babylon." When Nebuchadnezar took Israel captive to Babylon the names of the young men were changed, their diet was ordered changed, and they tried to change their worship. There was no liberty to worship or to pray, except as the Babylonian authorities decreed. Continued stay there resulted in the Jews inventing "fasts" of their own and forgetting the divinely appointed feasts (Zech. 7-8). Self-appointed fasts in memory of great events and great men and the feasts of the Lord forgotten and forsaken, even denied. Such is the effect of dwelling in Babylon. Little wonder that we read "Come out of her my people." O! that we might be Ezras and Nehemiahs, prepared to leave everything in order to seek to establish once again a

testimony to the name of the Lord alone, even though it be in confessed weakness.

The doom of Babylon is uttered in no uncertain words by the evangelical prophet Isaiah (ch. 13.19). It was prophesied that it should be the habitation of every unclean and hateful bird. How literally these words have been fulfilled. The Arabian never pitches his tent there any more. Visitors to that land have tried to get their guides to do so, but in vain. Even in this, the historical is a fit picture of the ecclesiastical. In the words of the parable every unclean bird is making its home in the branches of the professing church. Russelism, Spiritism, Modernism are all to be found there. How can a child of God pitch his tent in such a place? It is unsafe for himself and unsafe for his family. If he fails to heed the call of God to leave it he may sooner or later accept its evil doctrine and see his family the willing captives of its unclean teachings.

The reader of these lines may be one who is still associated with the "sects" and "denominations," and may be asking the question, "If I leave my sect or denomination, what am I expected to come out to?" Surely not to another sect or to form another, but to the Lord Himself. A divinely gathered company of believers will acknowledge no head but Christ, no centre of gathering but the Cross, and no name but the Name of the Lord Jesus, and they will seek to bear testimony in confessed weakness to the oneness of the body of Christ, disowning all denominational names and titles. They will seek to preach the gospel of the grace of God for the salvation of the lost, carry out His word by baptising only those who have believed, and by meeting simply as Christians to "break bread" in remembrance of the Lord on the first day of the week, and as occasion affords will gather for prayer, praise, and ministry thus exhorting and admonishing one another as long as it is called to-day.

May it be the reader's privilege to meet in such simplicity "till the day dawn and the shadows flee away."