

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE PECULIAR AND ARE SEPARATED FROM THE WORLD

Leviticus 20:26

INTRODUCTION:

Leviticus 20:26- *"Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine."*

- A. God has always desired that his people be unique, separate and peculiar
- B. **In every dispensation God has required severance, exclusiveness and holiness** for his purposes.
 1. In first dispensation Patriarchal age, a family religion. Father of family was to see that his children remained unique.
 2. In second dispensation, Mosaic age, ten commandments given with other laws to sever them from the pagans.
 3. In third and present dispensation, Christian age or **last days**, we have the law of Christ or the New Testament to sever us from those of the world.

I. FIRST, AS SEEN IN THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

- A. Idea of severance seen in call of Abraham **Gen 12:1-3-** *"Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2) And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3) And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.""*
 1. Severed from his country, kindred and father's house that God might make of him a great nation, a unique and peculiar people zealous of good works.
 2. Nation developed in Egypt and soon was required to be severed from Egyptians to serve Jehovah. **Exod.8:20-** *"Now the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.""*
 3. God bore them out to be a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. **Exod.19:4-5** *"You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5) 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;"*
- B. Note what God says in **Lev.20:8, 22, 24, 26-** *"You shall keep My statutes and practice them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 22) 'You are therefore to keep all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them, so that the land to which I am bringing you to live will not spew you out. 24) 'Hence I have said to you, "You are to possess their land, and I Myself will give it to you to possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. 26) 'Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine."*

II. WHEN THE PROMISE WAS PASSED TO ABRAHAM'S HEIRS, THEN ISRAEL WAS MADE A SEPARATE PEOPLE!

- A. In order to KEEP His people separate, God had them live in a specified ways; different from those about them! In **Lev. 20** he deals with several sins that Israel as well as Christians are to avoid to maintain separation from the peoples of earth and to have fellowship with God!
 1. **Idolatry [vs.1-5]**; **witchcraft [vs.6, 27]**; **disrespect for parents [vs.9]**; **adultery [vs.10]**; **incest [vs.11-14, 19-20]**
 2. **Homosexuality [vs.13]**; **bestiality [vs.15-17]**; **eating unclean meat. [vs.25]**

- B. These things were all common among the inhabitants of Canaan. **vs.23-** *"Moreover, you shall not follow the customs of the nation which I will drive out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I have abhorred them."*
1. God hated these sins, so he drove the Canaanites out so they wouldn't adversely influence HIS people, and gave the land to Israel.
 2. But possession of this land was **CONDITIONAL** - based on **severance** and **holiness**. **vs.26-** *"Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine."*
- C. Jehovah said, *"I have separated you"* from other people, **by your daily habits and social customs."**
- D. But God's people became rebellious, they changed God's government; they served other gods and inter-married with the heathens – ***SO THEY WERE NO LONGER DIFFERENT!***
1. They had to suffer punishment because they rebelled against GOD and His Ways! SO, Israel (No. Kingdom) was carried to Assyrian captivity during reign of Hoshea in 722 BC. **2 Kings 17:3-6-** *"Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him, and Hoshea became his servant and paid him tribute. 4) But the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea, who had sent messengers to So king of Egypt and had offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; so the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. 5) Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years. 6) In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile to Assyria, and settled them in Halah and Habor, on the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes."*
 2. Judah carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar during the reign of Jehoiakim in 606 BC
 3. Came again in reign of Jehoiachin in 597 BC and took 10,000 more; and then in 586 BC completely besieged and burned Jerusalem and took most of those who remained.
 4. Those Israelites **tragically** learned the **lessons of disobedience**, didn't they?

III. TODAY, CHRISTIANS [GOD'S PEOPLE] ARE TO BE SEPARATE!

- A. Today, Christians (who are **GOD'S ISRAEL** today as Paul speaks of in **Rom.9:4-6-** *"who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, 5) whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. 6) But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;"*) in like fashion, are to be severed, unique and peculiar to those who are about us! The Lord emphasized this!
1. The word "YOU" is very emphatic in **1 Pet.2:5, 9** *"**you** also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 9) But **you** are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that **you** may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called **you** out of darkness into His marvelous light;"*
 2. We are a "chosen generation" (ASV "an elect race"), a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (ASV "a people for God's own possession").
- B. Christians **designated** and **unique**, sanctified by God's Word. **Jno.17:17**
- C. This **UNIQUENESS** is now to be recognized in:
1. That NAME of Honor which we wear! [*Wear name of one you are attached to!*]
 - a) We're simply "Christians!" **Acts 11:26; 1 Pet.4:16; Isa.62:2**
 - b) Salvation is in the name of Christ. **Acts 4:12**
 2. That BIBLE CREED, or rule of faith and practice, which we try to follow so precisely!
 - a) We do not accept any human creeds! Our basis is J.C. **1 Cor.3:11; Matt.15:9**
 - b) Bible our only guide. **2 Tim.3:16-17; 2 Pet.1:3; 1 Pet.4:11; Jude 3.**

3. That ATTITUDE and WAY OF LIFE that we try to maintain by continuing that separation from the world's influence! **1 Pet.2:11-12**- *"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12) Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."*
2 Cor.6:17-18-- *"Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. 18) "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty."*
4. That ORGANIZATION of His people into local congregations, w/o earthly head or headquarters, but with **adequate functional leadership** within each group: **Phil.1:1; Acts 14:23; 6:2-3**- *"So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3) "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task."*
5. That PURE and SIMPLE New Testament WORSHIP that the Lord specified as: **THIS IS THE WAY I WANT YOU TO HONOR ME!**
 - a) People today are engaging in N. T. worship when they practice, in spirit and in truth, those things authorized by the NT: teaching, praying, singing, giving and Lord's supper
 - b) Consider how severed, separated and dispersed we would be from the Lord if we attempted to offer homage to Him in ways that were different from His word, or were not unique to His character! **2 Jno.9.**
6. That TEACHING and PREACHING by which the POWER of the gospel to CONVICT and CONVERT sinners is boldly set forth, in love and kindness! (i.e.) baptism for remission of sins: **Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom.6:3-4; Gal.3:26-27; 1 Pet.3:21**; Just one WAY to be saved: **Jno.14:6; Eph.4:4; Col.1:18; Matt.16:18**; etc.
7. That UNITY which exists among His true followers, in keeping with Jesus' **PRAYER** in **Jno.17:21**; and Paul's **PLEADING** in **1 Cor.1:10-13**; and that **PLAN** of addressing it in **Eph.4:4-6!**

CONCLUSION:

- A. After all of this teaching we ask the question: *"Are **YOU** uniquely separated from the world?"*
- B. Remember, *"friendship with the world is enmity with God."* – **Jas.4:4**; and *"the wages of sin is death."* **Rom.6:23**
- C. Many today have heard these truths who are still involved in the ways of Satan, just like in the first century! **Rom.10:16-17**- *"But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" 17) So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."*
- D. Are YOU ready to obey the gospel today and be separated with the Lord? Have you strayed from your duty to God? COME!