

Set Apart From Others? Or Set Apart For Him?

On the Hebraic Concept of Descending and Ascending

When we are commanded, "Be you Holy for I, Yehovah your Elohim am Holy"; **I Kepha (I Peter) 1:15,16**. What does that mean? Over the years as a Torah believer, I have come to see two patterns concerning this.

The first, the most common one, is believers applying God's Word in order to set themselves apart from other believers. This is akin to a High School student looking down on an eighth grader for being in a lower grade than they - as if being an eighth grader is somehow a reflection of some default in their character.

Then there is the second one, a smaller group, that sees Holiness as what a person does "for God" in order to "ascend" and mature and grow closer to Him. This is akin to the High School teacher who looks at the eighth grader and rejoices that they are now ready to ascend to their next level of education.

The first view of holiness is "pride" based, the second view "love" based. The first, looks down at those who are not yet at "their level", or whose views "are different", and the second, rejoices that the younger has successfully ascended to what ever level they have ascended to.

The first group is what happens when God's Word is placed in the hands of people yet carnal. The second group what happens when His Word is placed in the hands of people whose spirit has been born, or who I describe as spiritually "sprouted" individuals.

The first group uses God's Word like a weapon to condemn others with and look good in other people's eyes - to give the "appearance of being righteous". The second group uses His Word as an imaging device to diagnose what sin they and their fellow brother or sister in Yeshua is struggling with, in order to help themselves and others to heal, to overcome, and to ascend to the next level of maturity.

The Torah is not God's standard for us to use to judge and condemn others by, and neither is any other part of His Word. Even Yeshua Himself did not to use the Word in that manner, stating that the Word itself will do this; **Yehochanan (John) 12:47,48**, but that He Himself came to save that which was lost; **Luke 19:10** - that is, to bring sinners to repentance; **Mattit'yahu (Matthew) 9:13**. See also, **Yehochanan (John) 3:17**.

Rather His Word, and especially His Torah, is the spiritual dna He has provided to grow us into His image. It is something we are to "take into ourselves" to grow to maturity in Him, even as the flower takes in the rays of the sun, in order to grow to fruition.

It is not a tool to separate ourselves from others to make ourselves appear better than others,

or to proclaim that it is only "our" group, or denomination, or community, or sect, or church, or synagogue, that is the Way, the Truth, and the Life that all must come through to reach the Father. Only Yeshua is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and all these denominations and sects are just man's attempt to define how to be "holy" by man's perception.

And as can easily be seen from all of these various divisions in the body, no one group, no matter how they label themselves, sees or understands God's will with 100% clarity. As the Emissary Shaul (Apostle Paul) states, "we all only know in part"; **I Corinthians 13:9,10**.

Too often, holiness is carried out in terms of "us versus them", but this is pure carnality - pure flesh. The message is not "divide yourself from anybody who is different"; **I Corinthians 1:12,13; 3:1-6**, but rather "come out" of her my people; **Revelation 18:4**.

To divide, is like having a plate of food, and in one section of the plate you place your vegetables, the other section your meat dish, the other section a piece of bread. You have divided up your food into their distinctive groups.

However, this is not "coming out". This is dividing. In biblical culture, "to come out" means "to ascend", means to "rise up". Dividing is a horizontal action, Ascending a vertical action.

All things in creation are divided naturally into groups in the horizontal plane, but the individual members within all groups are either in a state of ascending or descending on the vertical plane. Yeshua told the religious leaders of His day, "You are from beneath, I am from above"; **Yehochanan (John) 8:23**.

In our flesh we are born, then ascend and blossom like the flower. When we become old, then like the flower we also then begin to decay and descend into the grave. The world around us is in a state of descent, and as such will someday soon, die. So to "Come out of her My people", means to ascend out of the downward spiral of death that is quickly consuming the life from this world.

We are all born into this world with a nature harmonious with the values of this world, and so though our fleshly life has a brief moment of ascent, the death within us assures that we all descend ultimately into the grave; **Romans 5:12; 6:23** as this world will likewise soon descend into the grave; **I Yehochanan (I John) 2:17**.

So the first step to reverse this descent of our soul into the pit and death, is to receive Yeshua as our Savior; **Romans 6:5-8**. And Yes, people are saved in the name of Jesus all the time - Yeshua does not hold our ignorance against us; **Luke 23:34; Ma'aseh (Acts) 7:14; I Timothy 1:12,13**. And the moment we receive Him as our Master and Savior, our spirit within us becomes "sprouted" or "saved". This begins the process of our spiritual ascent upwards.

All things born into this world ascend momentarily upwards towards Heaven, but because of sin, all ultimately fall short and begin to descend downward into the grave; **Romans 3:23**. But for those sprouted/saved in Yeshua, there is no end to their ascension short of willfully choosing to descend back into the world; **Evreem (Hebrews) 6:4-6; 10:26-29**.

Our problem is that we mistake "division" as salvation. That is, only the doctrine of my denomination, sect, group, book, etc.. can save you type of mentality. But it is only by being sprouted/saved in Yeshua that anyone can begin to ascend out of the grave. There is no other way. If it was our doctrine that saved us, then nobody would be saved - as everybodys doctrine is different and falls short of perfection.

Rather, doctrine is man's way to try and define what they believe, based on their best understanding of Scripture, of what the walk of a saved person looks like.

So to one, a saved person looks like a Baptist, to another a Pentecostal, to another a Catholic. For many, a saved person looks like somebody raised in the church who has never been to jail, owns their own business, and has the biggest house on the block. To others it looks like a monk or a nun. To others, about being more good than evil. But salvation does not look like any of these things. Salvation is "ascending out of this world" on the vertical plane of existence, not dividing apart from other believers on the horizontal plane of existence. As it is written, "Those who compare themselves to others are not wise; **2 Corinthians 10:12**.

Sin is what causes all life, and this world, to descend in its downward spiral into the grave and death; **I Corinthians 15:22**, all creation being effected by it; **Romans 8:19-22**. Sin is violation of the Torah - God's Law; **I Yehochanan (I John) 3:4**. So ascension looks like one who over time sins less and less and less; **I Yehochanan (I John) 3:6-9**. And that includes being less prideful and more teachable, and more humble, and more correctable. And as it is written, it is "...he who overcomes..." who shall be rewarded; **Revelation 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26-28; 3:5; 3:12; 3:21**".

Ascending is not about dividing horizontally, but about growing upwards. Not about being right in one's own eyes on the horizontal plane, but about desiring what is right in God's eyes on the vertical plane. Not by judging others to condemn them for their sins as if we have never sinned; **Yaaqov (James) 4:11,12**, for all on the horizontal plane have sinned. But rather, we rise upwards by loving others by helping them to overcome their sins and ascend; **Galatians 6:1,2; Yaaqov (James) 5:19,20; Yehudah (Jude) 1:20-23**.

Yeshua came not to save the righteous, but to bring sinners to repentance; **Mattit'yahu (Matthew) 9:13**. I was saved and "sprouted" while the chief of sinners. And I have been learning how to "ascend" ever since.

And when you ascend, others at various points will not desire to ascend beyond certain points with you for fear of upsetting their denominational peers, family, or the cultural norms around

them. But this is a natural "separation" of layers on the vertical plane - not a purposeful division by you on the horizontal plane. It is like you choosing to "ascend" to acquire a Master's degree, while *they choose* to "divide away" and "settle out" on the horizontal plane of an Associates Degree.

So everybody after being "sprouted" shakes out at different levels like a bottle of vinegar settles out into different layers after being shaken - with the lighter particles and liquids "ascending" to the topmost layer, the heavier ones settling out at lower levels of ascension - and the bottom layer not ascended at all.

All have eternal life in Yeshua (*except those who willfully reject the truth after having once received it - like those who return to the bottom layer of the vinegar after being shaken; Evreem (Hebrews) 6:4-6; 10:26-29; I Timothy 4:1-5*).

I was saved as a sinner. You were also saved while yet "a sinner". After I was saved, I began going to church. I was still a sinner at church, but beginning to ascend out of my sinful lifestyle. Learning at church not to steal, lie, do drugs, learning to be honest, and to not fornicate but to save sex for marriage, to study God's Word, feed the poor, shelter the homeless, be kind to others, forgive others, etc...

Then I hit the ceiling where the church would not allow me to rise above. I was still saved then too, but left the Roman church in order that I could continue to ascend to where the Scriptures plainly taught me we all have the potential and are all "called" to ascend to. I continued to be saved, but had succeeded in coming out of a Babylonian system designed to keep believers limited in their spiritual potential, growth, and maturity.

On the flip side of the coin, if I were to descend backward into the Roman church, and begin to do again those things I formerly ascended out of, it would be the equivalent of walking away from my salvation - for descending always leads towards death and the grave.

In other words, when I was in 5th grade, I was not held accountable to understand algebra and trigonometry. But now that I have learned higher math and achieved my collegiate degree, it would be detrimental for me to now exchange that for my former 5th grade education.

In the same way, when I first became a believer as a drug abuser, fornicator, rocker person, smoker, cusser, or whatever weakness I had, overcoming drugs first, and then lying, and then smoking and cussing, or whatever order that occurred in, did not cause me to lose my salvation. I was ascending - and ascending is a process that takes time.

In other words, failing to overcome all of my sins all at one time did not disqualify my salvation. However, now that I have overcome all those things so long ago, if I were to return to those things at this point in my life, it would have a detrimental effect on my salvation, because

descending always leads towards death.

Simply put, salvation means to ascend. And yes, you might "slip" or momentarily backslide while learning to overcome a sin, or prior to being supernaturally delivered from a sin, and it will not cost you your salvation. You are still ascending, so just because the slope is sometimes slippery, does not mean you are not ascending - only being set back at times.

The idea is not to descend back down the mountain with purposeful, willfull intent - preferring sin over righteousness. So if you end up with dementia and begin acting in bizarre or even sinful ways, this is not purposeful, this is a broken brain, broke in such a way to where you do not even know what you are doing. If someone takes you into their dungeon and forces you to have sex, this is not you descending, this is them being an evil person and you being their victim. It is important to understand the difference.

Another example. Two women, the same age, and dressed in a mini-skirt. One is descending into the grave, the other ascending to the Father. What is the difference?

The difference is that the first one grew up in church and knew the importance of dressing modestly and of God's will concerning sexuality, but has chosen to reject that instruction and live an immoral life. The other never stepped into a church until two weeks prior. She had been a prostitute and drug addict until Yeshua delivered her two weeks earlier. She wanted to wear something nice to church, but the dressiest thing she owned was a mini-skirt, and she has never been taught anything about modesty.

The first is descending, but this second precious soul ascending. Be careful how you judge her - for she belongs to Him and is like a fragile freshly sprouted flower at this point in her walk.

True holiness is not about the "pride" of "*us versus them*", but about the "love" of *helping each other to ascend and overcome*. Let us love one another in true holiness, glorifying Him in our actions and not ourselves, and by serving one another in love, rather than serving ourselves in pride.

Be compassionate and merciful towards one another, and forgiving of one another, understanding the goal - not of comparing ourselves to one another; **2 Corinthians 10:12**, but of our Heavenly Father's desire that "none perish, but receive everlasting life through the Messiah Yeshua His Son"; **Yehochanan (John) 3:16-21**.

The Levite

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