

MAILBOX BIBLE COURSE

LESSON 1 – RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH:

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*May God richly bless you as you proceed?
Your Instructor
Harold Smith*

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LESSON 1.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH 2 Timothy 2: 15

TEN OUTLINE STUDIES OF THE MORE IMPORTANT DIVISIONS OF SCRIPTURE

By Dr. C. I. Scofield

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INTRODUCTION

In the second chapter of Second Timothy the believer is presented in seven characters. He is called a son, v. 1; a soldier, v. 3; an athlete, v. 5; a husbandman, v. 6; a workman, v. 15; a vessel, v. 21, and a servant, v. 24. With each of these characters there is a suited exhortation. As a son. Timothy is exhorted to be strong in grace. Grace goes with sonship, just as law goes with servitude--as we learn

from Galatians. Then, as a soldier, Timothy is exhorted to endure hardness, and to avoid worldly entanglements; these are right elements of good soldiership. As a vessel, he is to be cleansed, separated: as a servant, gentle, patient, meek, and so of each of these seven aspects of his life as a Christian. In verse 15 he is told what is required of him as a workman: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, ~ workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The Word of Truth, then has right Divisions, and it must be evident that, as one cannot be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" without observing them, so any study of that Word which ignores those Divisions must be in large measure profitless and confusing. Many Christians freely confess that they find the study of the Bible weary work. More find it so who are ashamed to make the confession. The purpose of these lessons is to indicate the more important Divisions of the Word of Truth. That this could not be fully done short of a complete analysis of the Bible is, of course, evident: but it is believed that enough is given to enable the diligent student to perceive the greater outlines of truth, and something of the ordered beauty and symmetry of that Word of God which to the natural mind seems a mere confusion of inharmonious and conflicting ideas. The student is earnestly exhorted not to receive a single doctrine upon the authority of these lessons, but, like the noble Bereans (Acts 17:11), to search the SCRIPTURES daily whether these things are so. No appeal is made to human authority. The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that many MAN teach you. (1 John 2:27.)

THE JEW, THE GENTILE, AND THE CHURCH OF GOD Key Test 1 Cor. 10:32

Whoever reads the Bible with any attention cannot fail to perceive that more than half of its contents relate to one nation, the Israelites. He perceives, too, that they have a very distinct place in the dealings and counsels of God. Separated from the mass of mankind, they are taken into covenant with Jehovah, who gives them specific promises not given to any other nation. Their history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy--other nations being mentioned only as they touch the Jew. It appears, also, that all the communications of Jehovah to Israel as a nation relate to the Earth. If faithful and obedient, the nation is promised earthly greatness, riches and power; if unfaithful and disobedient, it is to be scattered "among all people, from one end of the earth even to the other." Deut. 28:64. Even the promise of the Messiah is of blessing to "all the families of the Earth." Continuing his researches, the student finds large mention in Scripture of another distinct body, which is called the Church. This body also has a peculiar relation to God, and, like Israel, has received from Him specific promises. But there similarity ends, and the most striking contrast begins. Instead of being formed of the natural descendants of Abraham alone, it is a body in which the distinction of Jew and Gentile is lost. Instead of the relation being one of mere covenant, it is one of birth. Instead of obedience bringing the reward of earthly greatness and wealth, the Church is taught to be content with food and raiment, and to expect persecution and hatred, and it is perceived that just as distinctly as Israel stands connected with earthly and temporal things, so distinctly does the Church stand connected with spiritual and heavenly things. Further, Scripture shows him that neither Israel nor the Church always existed. Each had a recorded beginning..That of Israel he finds in the call of Abram. Looking then for the birth of the Church he finds (contrary, perhaps, to his expectations, for he has probably been taught that Adam and the Patriarchs are in the Church) that it certainly did not exist before, nor during the earth-life of Christ, for he finds Him speaking of His Church as yet future when He says (Matt. 16:18.), "Upon this rock I will build My Church." Not "have built," nor "am building," but "WILL build." He finds, too, from Eph. 3: 5-10, that the Church is not once mentioned in Old Testament prophecy, but was, in those ages, a mystery "hid in God." Scripturally, he finds the birth of the Church in Acts 2 and the termination of its career on the earth in 1 Thes.. 4.16,17. The student also finds, in the Scriptural division of the race, another class, rarely mentioned, and distinguished in every respect from either Israel or the Church--the Gentiles. The comparative position of the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church may be briefly seen in the following Scriptures:

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The Jew
Rom, 9:4, 5
John :22
Rom, 3:1, 2

The Gentile
Eph. 2:11, 12
Eph. 4: 17, 18
Mark 7:27, 28

The Church
Eph. 1:22, 23
Eph. 5:29-33
1 Peter 2:9

Comparing, then, what is said in Scripture concerning Israel and the Church, he finds that in origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct, and future destiny 411 is contrast.

CALLING ISRAEL

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. Gen. 12: 1. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A and of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness. Dent. 8: 7-9. And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses. Gen. 24: 34, 35. The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. Dent. 28:7. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath. Dent. 23: 13.

CHURCH

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling. Hebrews 3: 1. For our citizenship is in heaven. Phil. 3:20, R. V. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head. Matt. 8: 20. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Pet. 1:4. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place, 1 Cor. 4: 11. And J e s u s looked round about, and saith unto His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! Mark 10:23. Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? Jas. 2:5. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. John 18:2. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 18:4. Of course it is not meant that a godly Jew did not, at death, go to heaven. The distinction is that the incentive to godliness in his case was earthly reward, not heavenly. It should be needless to say that, in this Dispensation, neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved otherwise than by the exercise of that faith on the Lord Jesus Christ whereby both are born again (John 3:3, 16) and are baptized into that "one body" (1 Cor. 12: 13) which is "the Church" (Eph. 1:22, 23). In the Church the distinction of Jew and Gentile disappears. (1 Cor.. 12:13, Gal. 3:28, Eph. 2:14, Eph. 2:11, "in times past Gentiles," I Cor. 12: 2, R.V., "when ye were Gentiles.") The contrast between Israel and the Church further appears in the rules given for the conduct of each. Compare:

ISRAEL

When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee . . . thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them. Deut. 7:1, 2. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Exodus 21:24, 25. Deut. 21: 18-21.

CHURCH

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. Matt. 5: 44. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat. 1 Cor. 4:12-13. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy fight cheek, turn to him the other also. Matt 5:39. Luke 15: 20-23. In the appointments for worship we still find contrast. Israel could worship in but one place, and at a distance from God--only approaching Him through a priest. The Church worships wherever two or three are gathered, has boldness to enter into the holiest, and is composed of priests. Compare: Lev. 17:8, 9 with Matt. 18:20. Luke 1:10 with Hob. 10: 19, 20 Num. 3:10 with I Pet. 2:5

In the predictions concerning the future of Israel and the Church, the distinction is still more startling. The Church will be taken away from the earth entirely, but restored Israel is yet to have her greatest earthly splendour and power. See,

THE CHURCH

In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14: 2, 3. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thes.. 4: 15-17. For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory. Phil. 3:20, 21. R.V. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. 1 John 3:2. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she could be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Rev. 19:7-9. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Rev. 20: 6.

ISRAEL

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1: 31-33. (Of these seven promises to Mary five have already been literally fulfilled. By what rule of interpretation are we authorized to say that the remaining two will not be fulfilled?). Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I WILL RETURN, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up. Acts 5: 14-16. I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and weft grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches. be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is

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happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Romans 11: 1, 11, 24-26. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. Isa. 11: 11, 12. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. Isa. 14: 1. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt: but, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Jer. 16:14,15. Behold, the days come, saith the Loan, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jer. 23:5, 6. Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. Jer. 32:37, 38. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Loan hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Loan, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. Zeph. 3:14, 15. It may safely be said that the Judaizing of the Church has done more to hinder her progress, pervert her mission, and destroy her spirituality, than all other causes combined. Instead of pursuing her appointed path of separation, persecution, world-hatred, poverty, and non-resistance, she has used Jewish Scripture to justify her in lowering her purpose to the civilization of the world, the acquisition of wealth, the use of an imposing ritual, the erection of magnificent churches, the invocation of God's blessing upon the conflicts of armies, and the division of an equal brotherhood into "clergy" and "laity."

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TEST PAGE OF LESSON 1 - RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH BIBLE STUDY

Fill in the answer to these questions:

1. In 2 Timothy Paul gives seven characteristics of a believer. Could you name three of them?

2. More than half of the Bible is written to or about what nation? _____

3. There are three main groups of people that the Bible is about. Can you name them?

4. Israel is a "chosen people" and they are part of the Church – True or false _____

5. Does God's promises to Israel pertain to a land on earth or a place in heaven. Which?

6. The "rapture" has nothing directly to do with Israel - True or false _____

7. Could we say that Israel is an earthly people and the Church heavenly? Yes __ or No__

8. Israel is now away from the Lord. Will God bring them back to Himself in the future?

Yes_ or No__

9. Was the Book of Corinthians written to the unsaved Gentiles? Yes__ or No__

10. Has man mixed the Jew's religion into the church systems of today? _____

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