



# There Is A Difference:

## BETWEEN THOSE WHO BELONG TO GOD AND THOSE WHO DON'T

*“And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left” — Matthew 25:32-33*

God makes a distinction between those who trust in Him and those who don't. If you are a genuine child of God, you are unique.

Everything was set in motion when God provided a substitute for our sin. This provision was not for us only, but also for the sins of the whole world. But the difference occurred when through God's grace we understood our need for a Savior. We responded to His call by placing our trust in Jesus alone for our salvation. (Jesus is God's sole provision for sin.) At that instant, God made us different. He no longer accounts our trespasses to us. Our faith is counted for righteousness. He gave us a new nature and made us a new creature in Christ. He marked us as His own and sealed us with His Spirit.

Today's lesson illustrates this point. We will see God distinguishing between His children and those who are not. He treats His own differently. At times the world senses that there is something unique going on, but they do not understand what is happening.

The Scriptures speak to this point when it says,

*“For “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” — 1 Corinthians 2:14.*

They try to deny this distinction, but when Christians live their faith, the world senses there is a difference.

This lesson shows that God distinguishes between those who are His and those who are not. This should be a source of comfort for the believer and a discomfort for those who have yet to turn to God in faith.

Our key passage is Exodus 11:7:

*“... that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel”*



1. **Reconstruct the scene leading up to Israel’s Exodus from Egypt by examining the following verses. Discuss what the Exodus must have looked and sounded like.** — Exodus 11:2; 6-7; 12:33, 35-36, 37-38

**ANSWER:**

Think of what it must have been like to see, and to hear the sights and sounds of the first Passover. Then imagine the commotion that followed. First, the Hebrews placed the blood of a lamb on their door posts and lintels. At midnight the Angel of Death passed over all the homes in Egypt, killing the firstborn in the unmarked homes.

Just think what happens today when there is an emergency in the neighborhood. The scream of the firetrucks can be heard as they rush onto the scene. They are followed by the ambulance and the police. It causes quite a commotion in the neighborhood. Curious people peer through their windows, while others flood into the street to find out what happened. Now imagine what it would be like if everyone in your neighborhood had an emergency at the same time!

Imagine the sounds of anguish that arose from the homes in Egypt when the firstborn males died. Because of the nations overwhelming loss, Pharaoh let the Jewish people go. But before Israel left, they were told to visit their Gentile neighbors home and collect jewels of silver and gold.

“Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. <sup>3</sup> And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians” – Exodus 11:2.

Exodus 12:33

“And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, *We be all dead men.*”

Exodus 12:35-36

“And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: <sup>36</sup> And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required.* And they spoiled the Egyptians.”

Then the Exodus began. Six hundred thousand men, along with their wives, children, livestock and goods all exited the land.

Ex. 12:37-38

“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were men*, beside children. <sup>38</sup> And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even very much cattle.*

Think what this must have sounded like. There were 3 million people leaving the nation. The Israelis must have knocked on thousands of Egyptian doors. Moans of grief and fear filled the air. Then came the sound of marching feet. Thousands upon thousands of feet with carts and wagons, followed by their livestock. All passed through the street without a dog barking.

Exodus 11:6-7 describes the scene:

“And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. <sup>7</sup> But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.”

Certainly, the binding of the dogs mouth was a supernatural act. Most dog owners would agree. Few dogs would let someone knock at the door of their home without barking. Even more, few dogs would keep silent as thousands of people moved past them.

It is the Lord who made a distinction between the Egyptian and the Israeli.

**2. Note seven other ways God made a distinction between the Egyptians and the Israeli's. Categorize the five types of distinction God made.**

**ANSWER:**

- a. First the **land of Goshen** (where the Jewish people lived,) **is spared**, whereas the rest of the land of Egypt experienced the plague. In Exodus 8:22-23 it says,

“I will send swarms *of flies* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms *of flies*, and also the ground whereon they *are*. <sup>22</sup> And **I will sever in that day the land of Goshen**, in which my people dwell, that no swarms *of flies* shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I *am* the Lord in the midst of the earth. <sup>23</sup> **And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.**”

The unique thing about this passage is three plagues already came upon all the land. Now God distinguishes between His people and the Egyptians.

- b. Second, to be more specific, **all the Egyptian homes were affected, while the Israelite homes were spared.**
- c. Third, there was a **distinction made with the cattle** during the 5<sup>th</sup> plague. In Exodus 9:4 Moses said,
- “the LORD shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel.”
- d. Fourth, God made a distinction in the 7th plague with the fire and hail. **It destroyed the fields of Egypt, but the land of Goshen was spared.**

**Exodus 9:23-26 –**

“And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. <sup>24</sup> So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. <sup>25</sup> And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. <sup>26</sup> **Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.**”

- e. The ninth plague brought further distinction. It brought **darkness to the land of Egypt but not to the Israeli dwellings**.

**Exodus 10:21-23** – “And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness *which* may be felt.’ <sup>22</sup> And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: <sup>23</sup> They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.”

- f. The tenth plague distinguished **between the birth order** of man and beast.
- g. Furthermore, it distinguished **between those who acted in faith** and those who did not.

### REMEMBER THE REASON:

“And I will put a division between my people and thy people: tomorrow shall **this sign** be.”

– Exodus 8:23

“... that **ye may know** how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel”

– Exodus 11:7

### CATEGORIES OF DISTINCTION:

1. God was able to make a distinction between **nations** and **people**
  2. God was able to make a distinction between **possessions**: i.e. livestock and fields
  3. God was able to make a distinction in **birth order** of man and beast
  4. God was able to make a distinction in **dwelling places**: i.e. Egyptian homes and the Israeli homes.
  5. God was able to make a distinction between **those who acted in faith** and those who did not act in faith.
- 3. How does the biblical account refute the modern skeptic’s claim that the plagues were just a coincidental series of natural disaster, common to that day?**

We live in an era of skeptical thinking. National Geographic’s, along with other “revered” news agencies, have recently published articles and documentaries suggesting the plagues (if in fact, they did happen) were the outcome of natural disasters common to the area. The coincidental timing of the plagues simply fooled the superstitious Egyptians into believing the plagues were a divine act of God. Modern logic goes this way:

“For millenniums plagues have come and gone. They were common in that region of the world. Therefore, in the natural course of events, a polluted Nile formed algae, like our red tides, forcing frogs out of the river. These frogs made their way onto the land and into a number of Egyptian homes. Their death polluted the land. It brought forth lice, flies and disease which impacted the health of livestock and humans. The Jews were not impacted because of their kosher eating habits.”

## ANSWER:

**God took coincidence off the table when He brought a distinction between Egypt and Israel.**

Men always look for the natural solution. But how do you rationalize swarms of flies only in the Egyptian homes and not in the Israeli homes, and swarms of flies throughout the entire land of Egypt except in Goshen. Remember, the first three plagues, (the bloody water, frogs and lice) were through out the entire land. Therefore, logic should suggest that all the land would suffer from swarms of flies not just select regions and certainly not just in Egyptian homes.

Nor does coincidence and/or natural disaster explain away the selective destruction of fields, and or the selection of the first born. Logistically, how would you separate only the firstborn males in the nation. Furthermore, the selection became even more defined when you consider that only the firstborn who are not under the bloodstained doorways died along with the firstborn animals. Plus, they perished in a very narrow time period. Only God could do this. Nor does coincidence explain away the phenomenal timing of Moses' pronouncements and actions.

4. **What insights can we gain from the following passages?** — Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psalm 135:4; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9

## ANSWER:

There is a difference between God's people and the world.

**What God sets aside for Himself is special.**

Ex. 19:5 — "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, **then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:** for all the earth *is* mine"

Deut. 7:6 — "For thou *art* an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy **God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth."**

Deut. 14:2 — "**For thou *art* an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that *are* upon the earth."**

Deut. 26:18 — "**And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee,** and that *thou* shouldest keep all his commandments"

Psa. 135:4 — "For the **Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure."**

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."**

1Pet. 2:9 — "**But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;** that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"

## 5. What other ways has God made His children unique?

### ANSWER:

To just name a few:

#### a. We are made a new creation:

2 Cor. 5:21 – “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Cor. 5:17 – “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, **he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

#### b. Imputed Righteousness:

Rom. 4:22-24 – “And therefore it (Abraham’s faith) was **imputed** to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was **imputed** to him; <sup>24</sup> But for us also, to whom it shall be **imputed**, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead”

#### c. Indwelling by the Holy Spirit

John 14:16-17 – “The Father . . . shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even* the Spirit of truth; **whom the world cannot receive**, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he **dwelleth** with you, and shall be in you.

1Cor. 3:16 – “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God **dwelleth** in you?”

There is a distinction between God’s people and the world. The world cannot understand it. They try to deny it, but when His people live by faith, the world senses the difference.

If you are a genuine child of God, He has marked you as His own. He treats you differently. Because of this, the world may hate you. They will sense that there is something different.

John 15:18 — “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.”

John 17:14 — “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

1 John 3:13-14 — “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”

2Tim. 3:12 — “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

However, this should be a source of comfort for the believer and a discomfort for those who have yet to turn to God in faith.