

Cycle of Apostasy

Apostasy is not a term specifically used in the English Versions of the Bible. However, though not in name, but in fact: a-pos'-ta-si, a-pos'-tat (he apostasia, "a standing away from") (ISBE): I.e. a falling away, a withdrawal, a defection, is expressed in the Law and the Prophets, and the Gospels and Epistles. In both cases apostasy was/is applied to those who were enlightened, i.e., had a knowledge of God, and had pledged obedience:

Law:

And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which Jehovah commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do. And Moses reported the words of the people unto Jehovah” (Exod. 19:7-8).

Epistles:

“For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire.” (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

Apostasy and the Law and the Prophets:

Deut. 17:2 - trans-gresh'-un: From "transgress," to pass over or beyond; to overpass, as any rule prescribed as the limit of duty; to break or violate, as a law, civil or moral; the act of transgressing; the violation of a law or known principle of rectitude; breach of command; offense; crime; sin. In the Old Testament *pesha`* (a *revolt* (national, moral or religious): - rebellion, sin, transgression, trespassive, ret), occurs 80 times, rendered in all versions by "transgression." Its meaning is "rebellion." The word "rebellion" differs from this word in that it may be in the heart, though no opportunity should be granted for its manifestation: "An evil man seeketh only rebellion" ([Pr 17:11](#)). (ISBE)

“For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them: transgressing (i.e., “to *break* away (from just authority” ret), and denying Jehovah, and turning away from following our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood” (Isa. 59:12-13).

Apostasy and the Epistles:

Paul was accused of teaching the Jews, among the Gentiles, to “forsake” (i.e., apostasia) (Acts 21:21).

“Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away (i.e., apostasia) come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?” (2 Thess. 2:3-5).

When considering *transgression*, *rebellion*, and/or *ungodliness*, it is a grave mistake to view those who are guilty of the actions as the vile and detestable of society. Rather, how could a member of the Clergy, a Pastor, a Preacher, or a Bible class Teacher be guilty of such?

Yet, the apostle Paul warns, saying, “But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:1-2). The term “fall away” (ASV), is equal to “shall depart (KJV).” The action is a forward motion, i.e., it requires moving away from the object, or subject under consideration, i.e., “the faith.”

Regarding “the faith” the subject of apostasy, falling away, or departing from, was addressed by Jude saying, “I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” (Vs. 3). Jude was constrained to write because, “there are certain men crept in privily, *even* they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Vs. 4).

Every New Testament writer addressed the subject of apostasy. However, the apostle Paul outlined the dangers in simple terms: “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

The question to be addressed is simple, i.e., Why is apostasy rampant? (Next article).