

Backsliding

- I. Three Views
 - A. A backslider has lost his salvation.
 - B. A backslider is out of fellowship.
 - C. A backslider was never saved.

- II. Definition _____

“To run away, to rebel against God in favor of heathen Gods & idols, to become apostate.”

CF Jer 2:19, 3:5, 8, 11, 12, 22, 5:6, 8:5, 14:7 and Hos 11:7; 144

- III. Other words that have the same meaning
 - A. _____ to be apostate.
CF Jer 3:14, 22, 31:22, 59:4
 - B. _____ to be rebellious.
CF Hos 4:16
 - C. _____ turn back.
CF Prov 14:14

- IV. Observations
 - A. In each instance this term is used when Israel turned away from the true & living God to worship heathen God's and idols.
 - B. The term backsliding does not appear in the New Testament, but the idea is implied.
CF Mark 4:16, 17; Luke 9:62; Gal 3:1-5; 1 Tim 5:15; 2 Tim 4:10; Rev 2:4; 3:17.
 1. The idea is that those who have made a profession have now turned back, becoming sinful and indifferent.

C. ISBE's comment:

It may be questioned whether Israel was guilty so much of apostasy and defection, as of failure to grow with the growing revelation of God. The prophets saw that their contemporaries fell far short of their own ideal, but they did not realize how far their predecessors also had fallen short of the rising prophetic standard in ideal and action.

D. A look at apostasy, (ISBE)

I.e. a falling away, a withdrawal, a defection. Not found in the EV, but used twice in the NT, in the Gr. Original, to express abandonment of the faith. Paul was falsely accused of teaching the Jews apostasy from Moses (Acts 21:21); he predicted the great apostasy from Christianity, foretold by Jesus (Mt 24:10-12) which would precede "the day of the Lord" (2 Thess 2:2). Apostasy, not the name but in fact, meets scathing rebuke in the Epistle of Jude, e.g. the apostasy of angels (ver 6). Foretold, with warnings, as sure to abound in the latter days (1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Thess 2:3; 2 Pet 3:17). Causes of: persecution (Mt 24:9-10); false teachers (Mt 24:11); temptation (Lk 8:13); worldliness (2 Tim 4:4); defective knowledge of Christ (1 John 2:19); moral lapse (He 6:4-6); forsaking worship and spiritual living (10:25-31); unbelief (3:12). Biblical examples: Saul (1 Sam 15:11); Amaziah (2 Ch 25:14-27); many disciples (Jn 6:66); Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:19-20); Demas (2 Tim 4:10). For further illustration see Dt 13:13; Zeph 1:4-6; Gal 5:4; 2 Pet 2:20-21.

"Forsaking Jehovah" was the characteristics and oft-reoccurring sin of the chosen people, esp. in their contact with idolatrous nations. It constituted their supreme national peril. The tendency appeared in their earliest history, as abundantly seen in the warnings and prohibitions of the laws of Moses (Ex 20:3-4,23; Dt 6:14; 11:16). The fearful consequences of religious and moral apostasy appear in the curses pronounced against this sin, on Mount Ebal, by the representatives of six of the tribes of Israel, elected by Moses (Dt 27:13-26; 28:15-68). So wayward was the heart of Israel even in the years immediately following the national emancipation, in the wilderness, that Joshua found it necessary to re-pledge the entire nation to a new fidelity to Jeh and to their original covenant before they were permitted to enter the Promised Land (Josh 24:1-28). Infidelity to this covenant blighted the nation's prospects and growth during the time of the Judges (Judges 2:11-15; 10:6.10.13; 1 Sam 12:10). It was the cause of prolific and ever-increasing evil, civic and moral, from Solomon's day to the Assyr and Bab captivities. Many of

the kings of the divided kingdom apostatized, leading the people, as in the case of Rehoboam, into the grossest forms of Idolatry and immorality (1 Kings 14:22-224; 2 Ch 12:1). Conspicuous examples of each royal apostasy are Jeroboam (1 King 12:28-32); Ahab (1 king 16:30-33); Ahaziah (1 King 22:51-53); Jehoram (2 Ch 21:6, 10, 12-15); Ahaz (2 Ch 28:1-4); Manassah (2 Ch 33:1-9); Amon (2 Ch 33:22). See Idolatry. Prophecy originated as a Divine and imperative protest against this historic tendency to defection from the religion of Jeh. In classical Greek, apostasy signified revolt from a military commander. In the Roman Catholic church it denoted abandonment of religious orders; renunciation of ecclesiastical authority; defection from the faith. The persecutions of the early Christian cents, forced many to deny Christian discipleship and to signify their apostasy by offering incense to a heathen deity or blaspheming the name of Christ. The emperor Julian, who probably never vitally embraced the Christian faith, is known in history as "the Apostate", having renounced Christianity for paganism soon after his accession to the throne.

An apostate's defection from the faith may be intellectual as in the case of Ernst Haeckel, who because of his materialistic philosophy, publicly and formally renounce Christianity and the church; or it may be moral and spiritual as with Judas, who for filthy lucre's sake basely betrayed his Lord. See exhaustive art on "Apostasy" in Jew Enc.

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