

**“Try the things that differ”.**

What would you think, my reader, of the following argument?

*“Englishmen eat, drink and sleep. Frenchmen eat, drink and sleep, therefore Englishmen are Frenchmen”.*

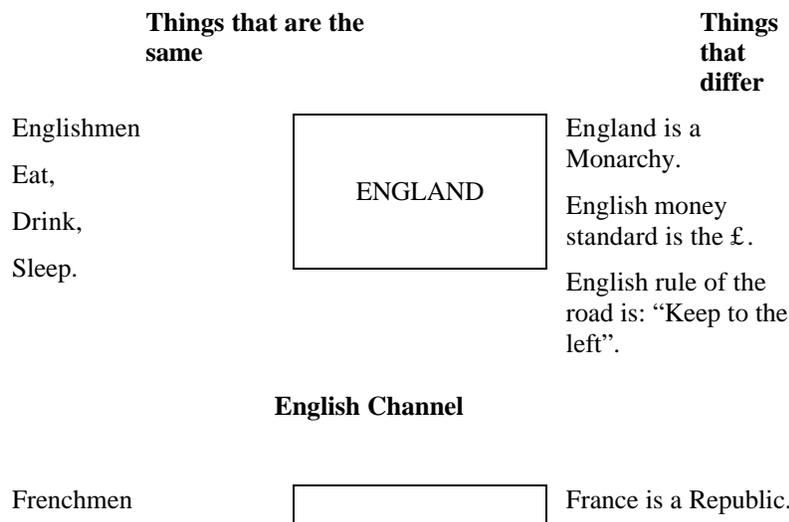
You would not think very highly of the intelligence of anyone who would put forward such trifling statement as a serious argument. You would need no training in formal logic to set it aside as ridiculous. You might even go further and say, “Why waste precious time by speaking of it at all?” The reason is, that the truth of God in one great particular is sometimes attacked with as foolish an argument as that given above.

You may have been exercised in your reading of the Scriptures as to the evident differences that are to be found in the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles and the book of the Revelation, for example, differences as to spheres of blessing, such as: “The meek shall inherit the *earth*”, and “All spiritual blessings in *heavenly* places”. You may have discerned a real difference between “The Kingdom” and “The Church”, or between “The Bride” and “The Body”, and then someone has demolished the whole of your conception of truth by saying something like this:

*“All the redeemed are saved by the same precious blood, they receive the same gift of life, they read the same inspired book, they worship the same God, they own and are owned by the same Father, therefore all these so-called differences are fanciful and highly dangerous”.*

Now while you readily perceive the fallacy in the argument about Englishmen being Frenchmen because both eat, drink and sleep, you may not so readily perceive the self-same fallacy in the argument that denies all the differences concerning different companies of the redeemed taught by the Scriptures, simply because such companies have some things in common.

Let us see whether this figure of the two nationalities will help us in appreciating what is known as “dispensational truth”.



Eat, Drink, Sleep.	FRANCE	French money standard is the Franc.  French rule of the road is: "Keep to the right".
--------------------------	--------	--

It is most obvious that the similarities noted on the left-hand side cannot neutralise the most evident differences that are recorded on the right-hand side. Let us set out the case for dispensational truth in exactly the same way, using the two countries to represent two dispensations, and using the English Channel for the dispensational boundary, noting on the left-hand some things that are similar in both dispensations, and on the right some things that are different.

<b>Things that are the same</b>		<b>Things that differ</b>
The Word of God. Redemption by the blood of Christ. God the Father.	<hr/> The Dispensation covered by the ACTS <hr/> <b>Acts 28</b> <hr/>	The people of Israel a present factor. The presence of miraculous gifts. The hope of Israel.
The Word of God. Redemption by the blood of Christ. God the Father.	<hr/> The Dispensation of the Mystery EPHESIANS <hr/>	The people of Israel absent. The absence of miraculous gifts. The hope of glory.

The reader will not need a lengthy discussion to prove the truth set out on the left-hand side of the diagram. We will therefore turn our attention to the opposite side. How far are these items substantiated by the Word of God? The diagram assumes that at the end of the Acts there came a definite dispensational change, as definite as is the change from a Monarchy to a Republic. The diagram suggests that the presence of Israel during the Acts and the absence of Israel since the end of the Acts are most important features. Let us search and see:

*Israel a factor until Acts 28*

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24).

"Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8).

"If thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert 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?" (Rom. 11:24).

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles of the period, the Jew is “first” (see Rom. 1:16). The Kingdom of Israel is ever before the mind (see Acts 1:6); when the apostle Paul reached Rome, he did not visit the Church so far as we are told, but sent for the elders of the Jews. After an all-day Conference, the people of Israel were solemnly dismissed by the quotation of Isaiah 6:9,10, and, for the first time since the call of Abraham, the salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles without reference to the people of Israel.

Upon examining the epistles written by Paul during his imprisonment (that is, after the change of dispensation had been made) we discover that the people of Israel, the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are all conspicuous by their absence. We have crossed the English Channel as it were, and have left a “Kingdom” for a “Republic”.

The second feature we have indicated on the diagram is the presence of miraculous gifts. The apostle - who worked miracles during the Acts of the Apostles - sent Timothy a prescription for his “often infirmities” in the dispensation that followed, and many are the wrecks that have resulted from the attempt to live as though the miraculous gifts of the Acts period were today still the rule and not the exception.

When we cross the Channel and step onto the shores of France, we find ourselves at once surrounded with a set of circumstances that differ from those obtaining in our own country. If we should be so foolish as to persist in ignoring, for example, the change in money, we should put ourselves and others to a great amount of trouble, and soon find life impossible; while if we were so foolish as to attempt to ignore the change from “keep to the left” to “keep to the right”, we should probably pay for our foolishness with our lives, and most certainly endanger the lives of others.

Lastly, what is “hoped for” is a good index to a calling. The reader will remember the phrase “the hope of your calling”. The epistle to the Romans was the last to be written before the Acts came to a close, and whatever was the hope of the Church then will represent what was its hope right through the period:

“There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles *trust* (hope R.V.). Now the God of (that) *hope* fill you with all joy and peace in believing” (Rom. 15:12,13).

The apostle refers to Isaiah 11, which speaks of the millennial reign of Christ, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and when the Lord will set his hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people Israel. This is in line with the statement of the apostle in Acts 26 and 28:

“The *hope* of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, *hope* to come” (Acts 26:6,7).

“For the *hope* of Israel I am bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20).

In the prison epistles of Paul, Israel has gone, and with Israel the *hope* connected with that nation. In its place is “the hope that is laid up in heaven”, “which was preached unto every creature under heaven” (see Col. 1:5,23,27; 3:4).

Those possessing the true *Berean* spirit (Acts 17:11) will not be misled nor overawed by those who use arguments similar to those mentioned at the commencement of this leaflet, but will desire, at any cost, to know what is their calling, so that they may enter into their possessions, and walk worthy of their vocation.