

August 12-18, 2019

Romans 7–16

“Overcome Evil with Good”

Summary: *The law of Moses is fulfilled in Christ—Paul delights in the law of God after the inward man.*

The law of Christ brings life and peace—Those adopted as children of God become joint heirs with Christ—God’s elect are foreordained to eternal life—Christ makes intercession for man.

Paul explains how the law of election (foreordination) operates—The people of Israel are chosen (foreordained) to receive the adoption, covenants, promises, and blessings of the gospel; yet they are not all Israel who are of Israel—They must seek their blessings by faith—The Gentiles also attain to righteousness and salvation by faith.

Salvation comes through righteousness to those who believe in Christ—Faith comes by hearing the gospel taught by legal administrators sent of God.

Israel was chosen (foreordained) according to the election of grace—But some harden their hearts against it—The Gentiles are adopted into the house of Israel—The gospel goes preferentially to the Gentiles until the fulness of the Gentiles.

Paul counsels the Saints to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, to use their own grace-given gifts, and to live as Saints should live.

Paul counsels, Be subject unto God’s ministers; keep the commandments; love one another; righteousness leads to salvation.

Avoid quarreling about opinions and making unrighteous judgment of each other—Every knee will bow to Christ—The kingdom of God embraces righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

True Saints fellowship one another—Paul recounts his diligence in preaching the gospel—The gifts of the Spirit are poured out upon the Gentiles.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What is the forgiveness-key that follows repentance?

One element that Judaism seems to lack

is the ordinance that provides knowing that sins are forgiven. Immersions are completed with purification in mind, however, immersion for forgiveness of sin is unknown in today’s Judaism. Yet, immersions for the Jews and for the Latter-day Saints is similar at least in form. The Jews prefer immersions in “Living Water” from a spring source. The

water must be flowing in and out of the font and it should be below ground level.

What Biblical event did emphasize the purification for sins?

Anciently, the ritual sacrifice of a rare, red calf, mentioned in (**Numbers 19:1-9**), was for purification from sin. “(The) Red Heifer - the animal whose ashes were used in the ritual purification ceremony, cleansing those made impure by contact with a human corpse or grave. In biblical times, the heifer was first slaughtered outside the Israelite camp and then burned. Its

ashes were kept in a pure place and, when needed, were mixed with clear spring water . . . (for) the ritually impure person . . .” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) This indicates that the Biblical ordinance took place in a “water of separation” (separate font) and for purification of sins. “The Bible is very specific about the kind of cow to be used. It had to be in perfect physical condition -- “a red heifer, faultless, containing no blemish and which has never been yoked.” The rabbis interpreted “faultless” to mean perfect in color also, ruling that even two non-red hairs in its hide were enough to disqualify it. Obviously, such an animal was very rare and apparently the ceremony was performed only a very few times in all of ancient Jewish history.” “Perhaps the strangest feature of the law of the red heifer is that, although the impure were cleansed by its ashes, all those who helped to perform the ceremony were rendered unclean by it and had themselves to be purified afterwards. Thus the red heifer was an agent of both purity and impurity. This paradox has puzzled the rabbis and the law remains one of the few in the Torah for which no rational explanation can be found.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What Biblical ritual was used to teach the atonement?

Anciently, sacrifices in the Temple were rituals that taught the principle of atonement. The blood of the first-born, unblemished animal became a symbol of the blood of the “First Born Lamb of God.” It may be that to emphasize the principle of bringing Him (the first-born, unblemished Lamb of God) into our lives, the Children of Israel were instructed to refrain from eating any blood. “The absolute prohibition to consume blood is one of the few laws in the Bible that is commanded not only to Jews but to all men (**Genesis 9:4**). It is

thus a more universal law than the Ten Commandments. The reason given for the prohibition is that “the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh.” (**Deuteronomy 12:23**), and elsewhere) . . . The dietary laws, the laws of *kashrut*, command us to drain and remove all the blood from cattle, beasts and fowl.” “In the dietary laws, too, salt is important. Before meat can be cooked, the blood must be removed, which is done by sprinkling coarse salt on it and leaving it for an hour. Salt has the property of attracting liquids and when, at the end of the hour, the meat is thoroughly washed, it is blood-free and ready for cooking.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What can the color of red mean for you?

In that sense, even the color of blood (red) has stayed symbolic for Jews. “. . . there are Ashkenazim who attempt to protect their toddlers from harm by tying a red ribbon around their wrists.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) There is a tiny, yet prolific flower in Israel that we have come to know to be the “Lilly of the field.” It is a deeply red anemone. Its prolific springtime decoration of Israel is a reminder of His springtime redemption for all people. After all, the Book of Mormon plainly describes Jesus perspiring blood “from every pore” (**Mosiah 3:7**), as does the Doctrine and Covenants, in which Jesus speaks of having suffered, “caused myself even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore” (**D&C 19:18**).

How can I maintain my identity with the Lord, in the world?

One of Paul’s great concerns was the assimilation of early saints into the world culture that existed around them. Today’s Latter-day Saints are told to be in the

world yet not part of it. (D&C 25:10) One of the Jews' greatest concerns is "conforming to the world," or as they call it, assimilation. Note the similar trends of the challenge of Jewish assimilation and identity with that of the Latter-day Saints. "Assimilation is the process in which one cultural or national group loses its identity and becomes part of another group. Referred to Jews, assimilation means . . . Later, their admiration for the modern national state, a growing appreciation of the lifestyle and social structure of the dominant nations, and the idea of progress combined to create the conception that the Jewish national existence was outdated. Such Jews also felt that they were guilty of intellectual and emotional dishonesty in cherishing Jewish messianic hopes. Furthermore, instead of looking to Erez Israel as the Jewish national homeland, Jews became imbued with nationalistic feelings for the country in which they lived."

How does the Jewish part of the Children of Israel counter assimilation?

"Assimilation in the Jewish community of the United States has been directed by several different pressures. During colonial times, there were so few Jews that they were regarded as exotic." "The Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel caused many Jews to reaffirm their Jewish identity. The rapid economic rise of the bulk of the American Jewish community into the middle and upper-middle classes during the postwar period remade the life-style of American Jews, so that in many aspects Jews became part of the American establishment. This was particularly true in the realms of academic and artistic endeavor, where Jews became a dominant force during this era. It was thus no longer necessary to play down the fact of one's Jewishness. Increased efforts were made by almost every American Jewish body toward intensifying Jewish education and

losing Jewish identity and becoming absorbed in gentile society." "Throughout Jewish history assimilation of Jews has taken place and has been motivated by many factors. In some cases Jews viewed gentile culture as superior and wished to join it." "For some Jews, assimilation served as a shortcut to attaining individual advancement

strengthening the connection between American Jews and Israel. The last generation of American Jews has rebuilt the institutions of Jewish communal life at an estimated cost of two billion dollars, and enormous personal energy." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How does the Latter-day Saint part of the Children of Israel counter assimilation?

Assimilation for Latter-day Saints represents a compromise in lifestyle and obedience to the Lord's commandments. Yet being "in the world" and yet "not of the world" allows us the interchange with others that would benefit both of us from our God-given standards. Those higher standards even apply to the treatment of our enemies. Through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find that the motivation of those who many call the Essenes was to move away from wickedness and establish a singular community of righteousness. Their organization had a shadow of biblical organization. Their leader was called the "Teacher of Righteousness" and he had two assistants. There was also a council of "Twelve Overseers." They had an order following the 'righteous king' which is said in Hebrew, "Melech Zedek." The Dead Sea sect shunned others and probably evoked one of the Savior's comments in the Sermon on the Mount. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 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;
That ye may be the children of your
Father which is in heaven: for he maketh
his sun to rise on the evil and on the
good, and sendeth rain on the just and on
the unjust. For if ye love them which love
you, what reward have ye? do not even
the publicans the same?" **(Matthew 5:43-46)**