

Aug 7-13, 2023

Romans 1–6

“THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION”

Summary: *Romans 1. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ—The wrath of God rests on those guilty of murder, homosexual practices, fornication, and other sins if the guilty do not repent.*

Romans 2. God will render to every person according to his or her deeds—Both Jews and Gentiles will be judged by gospel laws.

Romans 3. Man is not justified by the law of Moses—He is justified through righteousness, which comes through faith in Christ, made possible through Christ’s atoning sacrifice.

Romans 4. Abraham’s faith was accounted to him for righteousness—Man is justified by faith, righteous works, and grace.

Romans 5. Man is justified through the blood of Christ—Adam fell, and Christ atoned that man might be saved.

Romans 6. Baptism is in similitude of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—The wages of sin is death—Christ brings eternal life.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What to do when I recognize sin?

Paul’s admonition to recognize sins and then do something

about overcoming them is a basic principle found in the Bible and in Judeo-Christian teachings. Notice the similar religious standards of the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Jewish explanation of sin and repentance, The very fact that Judaism has a doctrine of *mitzvot* (the plural Hebrew word for commandments – as well as blessings) means that it also takes sin into consideration. Performing a *mitzvah* means that it must also take sin into regard. “Performing a *mitzvah* is doing God’s will; sin is doing something which is against God’s will. In biblical Hebrew there are about 20 different words which denote sin which range from a deliberate act in defiance of what God has forbidden to accidental, unwilling

transgression. The Bible is therefore very much aware of sin.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

How do I reflect on the “two types” of sin?

“Sins can be divided into two categories -- - those of commission and those of omission. The former are more serious insofar as they involve a positive action – doing something which is forbidden. The latter consists of the failure to perform *mitzvot*. As far as the rabbis were concerned, the three most serious sins are murder, idolatry, and adultery or incest. They ruled that rather than commit these, a person must give up his life. In order to save his life, a person is allowed to commit the other sins.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What did Satan vow to do to God’s children?

As mentioned previously, three things

disappear when “True Religion” apostatizes; the identity of God, the identity of Satan and the truth about life before and after mortality. “Satan appears in the Bible, was discussed by the rabbis of the Talmud and is explored in detail in Jewish mysticism, or Kabbalah. In Hebrew, the term Satan is usually translated as “opponent” or “adversary,” and he is often understood to represent the sinful impulse (in Hebrew, *yetzer hara*.)”

(<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/satan-the-adversary>) In Judaism, although Satan is mentioned, Jewish thought now includes: “In rabbinic theology, every person has in him a *yezer ha-tov* and a *yezer ha-ra* -- a good inclination and an evil one. The *yezer ha-tov* urges man to do God's will, whereas the *yezer ha-ra* entices man to sin. Thus, life is seen as a constant struggle between these two elements. The rabbis, with great psychological insight, also understood that the first time a person sins, he does feel bad about it, but as he performs that sin again and again, it no longer seems to him to be forbidden. As a result of their view of sin, the rabbis tried to give advice on how to avoid it. A person should always realize that there is a Seeing Eye and a Hearing Ear above him, and that all his sins are recorded. A person should reflect on the destiny of all human beings and realize that ultimately, he will have to give account for his sins. Above all, the best protection against the evil inclination is the study of Torah.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

What hope is there?”

“Although Judaism sees sin as a most serious matter, even the sinner is not without hope. One of the most important theological doctrines of both the Bible and the *Talmud* (written Jewish interpretations of biblical law) is that if a sinner repents his bad deeds, God will forgive him. Repentance consists of several stages ---

firstly the sinner must reflect on his actions and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing. He must then make up his mind never to do it again and confess his sin. This confession is not made to any other human being but is made by the sinner directly to God. On this basis the two confessions, *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course, he should not deliberately put himself on that spot again.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) The restoration of the Gospel includes recognition of wrong, remorse, repentance, and confession to God. With the priesthood returned to the earth, that process, including appropriately confession to God's appointed priesthood leaders is a sacred blessing.

What comfort is there in “returning” to God?

“Repentance in Hebrew is known as *teshuvah*, which literally means “return,” and signifies a return to God. A person who repents his sins is known as a *ba'al teshuvah*. Many rabbis of the *Talmud* believed that the real *ba'al teshuvah* is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that when a person repents out of love of God (and not just out of fear of divine punishment), all the sins he had committed are considered to be *mitzvot*. This is perhaps the most comforting doctrine that Judaism has given to the world.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) Since the Gospel is eternal – God gave that hope and comfort to ancient prophets and “the people of the bible,” who still continue teaching one of the most important principles of salvation.

What can I do to know I have been forgiven of sins?

One element that Judaism seems to lack is knowledge that an ordinance provides a token of a covenant that sins are forgiven. Jewish immersions are conducted with purification in mind, but immersion for forgiveness of sin is unknown in today's Judaism. Yet, immersions for the Jews and for the Latter-day Saints is at least similar in form. The Jews prefer immersions in "living water" from a spring or heaven (rain) source. The water must be flowing in and out of the font and it should be below ground level. However, the sacrifice of a red calf (**Numbers 19**), indicates Biblical ordinance took place in a "water of separation" (that could mean a separate font) and it was for purification of sins. ". . . ashes of the heifer, and lay

them up without the camp (Temple) in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin." (**Numbers 19:9**)

What follows repentance and forgiveness?

Through repentance comes peace, also known as grace. Peace is the word *shalom* in Hebrew. "At the end of the Priestly Blessing (**Numbers 6:24—26**); "May God turn His countenance unto you and grant you *shalom*. (In this case) *shalom* is more like grace or spiritual fulfillment than simply (the word) peace." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) This thought goes through my mind every time I say – and hear, "*Shalom!*"