

Confessing Sins & Sins That Are Past

One of the things that has really amazed me in listening to Bible preaching & teaching down through the years isn't just what is being taught, but what's ignored surrounding what is being taught. Such is the case in this subject that includes confession of sins and remission of sins that are past.

Under the O.T., where we find man being justified 'by faith' (not 'through faith'), confessing sins first shows up under the Mosaic Covenant for forgiveness of sins. Out of many scriptures that can be given, the following two passages well paints this picture.

Leviticus 5:1-6 And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and *is* a witness, whether he hath seen or known *of it*; if he do not utter *it*, then he shall bear his iniquity. **2** Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether *it be* a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and *if it be* hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty. **3** Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness *it be* that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth *of it*, then he shall be guilty. **4** Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with *his* lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever *it be* that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth *of it*, then he shall be guilty in one of these. **5** And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these *things*, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that *thing*: **6** And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

...he shall CONFESS THAT HE HATH SINNED in that *thing*

...the PRIEST SHALL MAKE AN ATONEMENT FOR HIM CONCERNING HIS SIN

Leviticus 16:20-22 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy *place*, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: **21** And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: **22** And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness... **16:30** For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

...and CONFESS OVER HIM ALL THE INIQUITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and ALL THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS IN ALL THEIR SINS

...*the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *THAT YE MAY BE CLEAN FROM ALL YOUR SINS BEFORE* the LORD

Both personal and collective sins were openly confessed followed by the offering of blood for atonement as well as the declaration of forgiveness of those sins by the priest.

With the nation of Israel still in context, let's fast forward to the ministry of John the Baptist... "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." **John 1:29** Let it be clear that John's message wasn't the death, burial & resurrection of Christ, as even the disciples didn't understand it (**Lk 18:31-34; Jn 20:8-9; Lk 24:44-49**). John preached the kingdom of heaven at hand his message being the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins that included confession of sins.

Matthew 3:1-9 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, **2** And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. **3** For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. **4** And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. **5** Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, **6** And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. **7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? **8** Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: **9** And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

...Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance
...were baptized of him in Jordan, CONFESSING THEIR SINS

Mark 1:1-5 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; **2** As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. **3** The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. **4** John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. **5** And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

...PREACH THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS
...were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, CONFESSING THEIR SINS

Luke 3:3-9 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; **4** As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. **5** Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth; **6** And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. **7** Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? **8** Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. **9** And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

...PREACHING THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS
...BRING FORTH therefore FRUITS worthy of repentance

Though sin existed before the Mosaic Covenant, sin wasn't imputed till the law (**Rom 5:13**) and confession of & repentance for was demanded of Israel before God would establish New Covenant blessings. After the resurrection, with authority to remit or retain sins (**Jn 20:22-23**), Peter didn't let up on this message to ISRAEL of repentance & baptism for the remission of sins... "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. **37** Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? **38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." **Acts 2:36-38**

I have personally witnessed hundreds of baptisms w/water and though I have heard many moving testimonies, I don't ever recall hearing confession of SINS or demonstration of repentance BEFORE the baptism. Remember, and without exception to the rule, baptism w/water was an IMMEDIATE response to the kingdom gospel; there was no INTRODUCTION TO BAPTISM 101 class (**Lk 7:29-30; Mk 16:16**).

Before turning to Paul, in dealing with what confession corresponds with salvation today, a progression of variables changes, that's mostly ignored in much teaching today, as God turns AWAY from the nation of ISRAEL being a kingly priesthood. Not only do we see inclusion of the Gentile & heathen through Paul's ministry, but Israel enters into a state of blindness in part till the fulness of Gentiles be come in.

- A. Peter preached the baptism of repentance to Israel, in the name of Jesus Christ, for remission of sins with promise of Baptism w/the Holy Ghost (**Acts 2:22-38**).
- B. Philip baptized Sarmatians, but only in the name of the Lord Jesus, after believing preaching of the Kingdom of God, followed by Peter & John laying hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost (**Acts 8:12-17**).
- C. Philip preached Jesus to an Ethiopian Eunuch & baptized him, at the Eunuch's request, after giving a heart's sincere response as to Jesus Christ being the Son of God (**Acts 8:26-39**). No evidence of the Eunuch receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- D. Peter baptized the devout Gentile household of Cornelius, which was already working righteousness, but only in the name of the Lord Jesus & AFTER that household received the baptism w/the Holy Ghost; Peter wasn't through preaching! There's no record of repentance or confession of sins (**Acts 10:34-48**).
- E. Paul, though not sent to baptize (thus no evidence of an authority/formula; **1Cor 1:12-18**), baptized a woman of Thyatira, which worshipped God (proselyte), whose heart the Lord opened attending to the things spoken of by Paul (**Acts 16:14-15**).

After the resurrection, Peter & company preached Christ, according to prophecy, to the nation of Israel (**Acts 2:22-41**). Paul's gospel (my gospel), was the preaching of Jesus Christ that was concealed WITHIN the prophets to NOW be made known for the obedience 'of faith' among ALL nations (**Rom 16:25-26**).

Roman's chapters 1&2 proves both Jew & Gentile guilty before God; the Gentile without the law & failure of the Jew under law, but failed because they sought it not 'by faith' (**Rom 2:12-13; 9:31-32**).

Roman's 3 is where Paul proclaims that TODAY no man is justified by the law & brings into perspective a 'FREELY' element.

Romans 3:20-26 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. **21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; **22** Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: **23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: **25** Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; **26** To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

...But NOW the righteousness of God WITHOUT the law is manifested

...the righteousness of God *which is* by faith OF Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe

...Being justified FREELY by his grace through the redemption that is IN Christ Jesus

...Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through FAITH IN HIS BLOOD, to declare HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS for the REMISSION OF SINS that ARE PAST

If you were a Gentile recipient, outside of the nation of Israel, the words... “for the remission of sins that are past” was music to your ears! A Jew’s sins, under the Mosaic Covenant, would have been dealt with via confession of sins & sacrifices, from birth to death, via the priesthood that was set up. For the Gentile, faith in Christ’s blood took care of PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE sins! Outside of one’s recognition of being a sinner & accountable to God (**Rom 2:4; 3:23; Acts 20:21**), does one have to confess their sins publicly or to a priest today? Paul is clear regarding the heart felt confession for salvation today and it’s not a confession of sins to man or priest... “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” **Romans 10:9-11**

...Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed

The law of gravity: What goes up comes down.

The law ‘of faith’: What transforms from within comes out.

2 Corinthians 5:19-21 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. **20** Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. **21** For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

...that God was in Christ

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