
The following is an expanded edition of a presentation/discussion, which I presented at Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, for use in my teaching at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The Additions are added at the end of the Spertus Material

**TABLE OF CONTENT
OF A PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

and

A LIST OF ADDITIONAL MATERIALS
(not in the original packet)

CHRISTIAN VIEWS OF REPENTANCE

Sunday, March 5, 2000
6:30-9:00pm

by

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INTRODUCTIONS

Brief Introduction of the presenter and of the topic

. TABLE OF CONTENT

PRAYER

. Prayer ... Psalm 51:12(10)-19(17) ... as an introduction to the topic

STUDY ...

. Please, turn to your READER, p. 144f.

You have noticed that only three articles were chosen to be included in your READER. Dean Bell made the right decision. Of course, I would have wanted all of the articles to be included, but, ... there is a limit. You have read these articles. We will turn to them, in time, and I will select a few paragraphs, here and there, and respond to your questions.

EMPHASIS ON TEXT

You have noticed that my emphasis is on TEXTS.

Some of you will, probably, be disappointed that I will not speak about the various views and practices of repentance among the various Christian communities. I am sorry. This is, obviously, a legitimate topic and might be included in another version of this seminar.

The reason for the emphasis on texts is clear: to provide a *basic* understanding of the topic. What will be clear, from the beginning is that in the New Testament there are, basically two views of sin and two views of how to overcome sin. Jesus of Nazareth shares the Jewish view of sin and repentance, while Paul of Tarsus does no longer work with the Jewish paradigm of sin. This, obviously is the cause of differences and of confusion among Christians.

. Please, turn to your READER, p. 145, on the bottom

I list an article by Dennis Prager ...

- My comments on p. 146 ...

- Sin and Repentance in the Writings of Paul ... my comments serve as a brief overview and introduction to a more detailed discussion - if time permits.

Now to a brief overview of the

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- 1972 • Lipinski, Edward, "Sin," *EncJud* 14 Red-SI (1972) 1587-1593.
- An Outline by W.L.Michel (June 1998, slightly revised, 3-2-00)
- The following article is not added here,
Grundmann, "αμαρτανω, ..., αμαρτια," *TDNT* I (1964) 267-316, esp., 302-316
- Turn to an **Outline** of this article with a few texts (Michel, June 1998)
- Now, please, turn to Quanbeck on "Repentance" in your READER, 148-149 and then
- Turn to an **Outline** of this article with a few texts (Michel, June 1998)
- The very basic article on "Repentance" from the *TDNT* is included in your READER, pp 150-188 ... 1967 • "νοεω ..., " *TDNT* I (1967) 948-1008, "μετανοεω, ..., " *TDNT* I (1974) 975-1008, E. μετανοεω and μετανοια in the New Testament, 999- I. The Linguistic Understanding, 999- II. The Concept of Conversion, 1000- 1. John the Baptist, 1000- 2. Jesus, 1001- 3. Primitive Christianity, 1003-
Please, turn now to
- An **Outline** of this article (W.L.Michel, March 2000)
- The article on "Repentance" from the *EncJud* is included in your READER, 189-191 ... • "Repentance," *EncJud* 14 Red-SI (1972) 73-78. "Repentance," 73-74 (J.Milgrom). "Rabbinic Views," 74-75 (Louis Jacobs). "In Jewish Philosophy," 76 (S. Rosenblatt). "Post-Medieval Period, Modern Developments," 76-78 A. Unterman
... any questions?
- Another important article by Milgrom-Snyder is not included in your READER. I include it here with the additional materials for your further study.
1976 • "Repentance in the OT," *IDBSup* (1976) 736-738 (J. Milgrom)
1976 • "Repentance in the NT," *IDBSup* (1976) 738-739 (G. F. Snyder)

Another important word for "Repentance" is

- "επιστρεφω, ..., " *TDNT* VII (1971) 722-729 (Bertram)
I include it for your further study

A very important article on "sin" is the following:

- 1980 • "חַטָּא *chātā* ; ..., " *TDOT* IV (1980) 309-319 (Klaus Koch)
I include it here for your further study

This is an excellent article. He adds an important brief paragraph on the Intertestamental Period and the growing view that "sin" is a controlling irresistible power.

This is the view which Paul of Tarsus accepted and developed further. But, when this paradigm for "sin" is used then getting rid of sin becomes an impossible task for humans. Repentance, obedience, following the TORAH (=Teaching), sacrifices, repentance, etc. ... no longer work to overcome the gulf, break ... with God. It now becomes impossible to use "free will" against the יְצֵרָה רַע, "the inclination toward evil," which now has become "THE Impulse of Evil," a Divine Bad/Evil Power, which can not be resisted and overcome by humans. The solution to the problem is, according to Paul, a Divine Good Power, which kills the Divine Evil Power. This power Paul calls "Christ." Although "*christ*" is a translation of Hebrew "*meshiach*," (Anointed, consecrated one of the LORD) Paul, obviously, did not mean "The Messiah."

Please, turn now to

- An **Outline** of the previous article (Michel, 1998)

- 1998 Blumenthal, David R., "Repentance and Forgiveness," *Cross Currents* (Spring 1998) 75-82.

I find this article to be very instructive, especially, for Christians, but it might also be helpful for Jewish persons to review the ideas expressed in this article.

• **WHAT IS THE ETYMOLOGY OF KIPPUR?**

I add an outline of a lecture/discussion on the Book of Job.

I was invited to be the study leader on Yom Kippur, September 23, 1996. 2:15-4:00pm at ילֵאֶרְשׁׁ AM YISRAEL.

I reprint the section on the word “*kippur*.”

Yom Kippur is usually translated as “a day of, a time of at-one-ment,” i.e., an opportunity of reconciliation with one another and with G-d, which, of course, is not limited to Yom Kippur. In Leviticus 23:27 (and other places) the expression *yōm kippūrīm* (piel, plural) occurs.

In the standard dictionaries the etymology of *k-p-r* is given as

1. *kpr*, usually in the piel, *kipper*, “cover,” i.e., to cover one’s face, make amends, atonement.
2. others think that *kpr* might mean “wash away, obliterate.”

There is a third possibility. M. Dahood has written about this third etymology in several places.

See, e.g., “Love and Death at Ebla and Their Biblical Reflections,” in Marks, J. H. and R. M. Good, eds., *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East*. Guilford, Connecticut: Four Quarters Publishing, 1987, 93-99.

On p. 95 he writes:

“The bilingual vocabulary which renders Sumerian URUDU, ‘copper,’ by Eblaite *kà-pá-lu* (n.23: See G. Pettinato, *Ebla* [N 1]: 206, 248, n.31, and 262. The tablet number is TM.75.G. 1678 obv. III 6. Since Sumerian-Akkadian bilinguals equate URUDU, ‘bronze’, with *erû*, it becomes obvious from URUDU = *kà-pá-lu* at Ebla that Eblaite is not early Akkadian but rather a Canaanite tongue.)

sheds light on *kōper*, ‘payment, gift,’

(n.24: For a recent study of *kōper*, see H. C. Brichto, *HUCA* 47 [1976]: 19-55, esp. 26-27, 35. Brichto correctly points out that etymological derivations of *kipper*, ‘to compose a difference,’ from putative cognates in Arabic with the meaning ‘to covers’ or in Akkadian with the sense ‘to rub, wipe’ are without support in biblical Hebrew; derivation from Eblaite *kà-pá-ru*, ‘copper,’ now offers a Canaanite commercial explanation for an important theological term, as well as upsetting the Egyptian etymology of biblical *koppōret*, ‘cover, lid,’ recently proposed by M. Görg, *Biblische Notizen* 5 [Bamburg 8, 1978]: 12.)

Since the scribes at Ebla sometimes write *lu* for *ru*,

(n.25: Consult G. Pettinato, *Ebla* [N 1]: 68.)

the equivalence of *kà-pá-lu* and *kōper* is quickly established, and the etymology of Cyprus, a chief source of copper in antiquity, discovered. This definition also elucidates *kōper*, ‘henna’ a reddish-orange (hence the color of copper) dye made from the leaves of henna, and *kēpîr* frequently rendered ‘young lion,’ but now preferably to be understood as ‘tawny lion.’ **Ezek 38:13**, *šōhārê taršîš wēkol-kēpîrêhā*, may now be translated ‘the traders of Tarshish and all her copper goods.

(n.26: Contrast the most recent English translation of the Bible, the *New International Version of the Holy Bible* [Abbr. *NIV*; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978] which renders, ‘the merchants of Tarshish and all her villages,’ with the alternate version or ‘her strong lions.’ If the latter is correct *kēpîrêhā*, ‘her tawny lions,’ may have a metaphorical sense of ‘tycoons,’ the metaphor suggesting the color common to the copper currency and to the lions. Consult my comments on **Ps 34:11**, *kēpîrîm*, in *Psalms* I [AB 16; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966]: 206.)

See also Michel, *Job I* (1987), p. 84f (n.18) on **Job 4:10-11**.

So, *kpr* then has to do with disposing of a debt, or some other difference, with copper, i.e., with money. *Kpr* then is a financial term and has nothing to do with “cover”, or “wipe, wash away.” If this, truly, is the etymology of *kpr* then *kipper* means “to compose a difference (with copper = money).”

On Yom Kippur we compose our differences with one another and with G-d and ask G-d to inscribe us into the Book of Life. How then dare we speak about the Arguing with G-d Tradition on Yom Kippur? (See also many of the Psalms and the complaints made by Jeremiah, which are based on the law-court pattern of prayer) I may be mistaken, but, I think, there is no better time. If we understand our relationship with G-d as a הִירָב, *bērît*, “covenant, promise,” then, not only we, but also G-d is held to G-d’s promise.

CHRISTIANS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS JEWS AND JUDAISM

What would it mean for Christians to repent of their disastrous teaching of contempt for Jews and Judaism (especially since the fourth century when Christians gained political and military power) which prepared the climate in which pogroms and then the Shoah became possible?

It does not come as a surprise to Jewish people that Christians continue to be anti-Jewish - even today after the Shoah/Holocaust!. It does come as a surprise to many Christians, though, that the Christian message *continues* to demand the end of Jews and Judaism.

I have lived with this “problem” all of my life. I have read extensively in the relevant literature and the picture is ugly ... masking one sick, physically, intellectually and spiritually. I add here a few examples of my views:

- “A Christian in Crisis and the Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community.” - An address presented at a solemn observance of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps and the 52nd anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. FROM UPRISING TO LIBERATION. Sunday, April 23, 1995. 1:00-3:00pm. Mather High School Auditorium, 5835 North Lincoln Avenue, Chicago.

I also gave two lectures in the context of the assembly POWER IN THE SPIRIT “A NEW SONG FOR A NEW DAY” July 13-15, 1995. Roanoke College, Salem, Virginia. Olin Theater. About four hundred persons were in attendance (clergy and lay).

- “Sing a New Song: A Meditation on Psalm 96.” Thursday, July 13, 1995, 4:15 p.m.
- “How Shall We Sing A New Song? The Need for a Total Cessation of Christian Teachings of Supersession in the Relationship to Judaism.” Friday, July 14, 1995. 9:00 a.m.

There never was a *legitimate* reason for the necessity of the “Conversion of the Jews” to any form of Christianity. If “Christians” insist on being super-sessionist and demand a “repentance,” a “conversion” of Jews to “Christianity” then they demand the end of Jews and Judaism and, therefore, can only be regarded as worse than the Nazis, because, after the Shoah it is clear, beyond any doubt, what the consequences of such talk can be.

This is, of course, not to say that there is not a clear biblical *call* and *invitation* (in the Tanakh and in the New Testament) to ALL of us humans to live according to the hopes and dreams which the biblical God has for ALL humans. THIS is legitimate. Who would be offended by such an *invitation* to such a feast? THIS was the urgent call of Amos, Hosea, ... and of Jesus of Nazareth, and of countless other persons (biblical and even secular!) throughout the ages: *change your conduct, repent ...* or in the words of Micah 6:8,

הַדִּיג לְךָ אָדָם מִהַטְבוֹ	He has told you - O human - what is good
וּמִהֵי הֵיךְ דוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ	and what is it that - YHWH/the LORD - seeks from you
כִּי אִם-עֲשֵׂתוּ מִשְׁפָּט	only - to do - justice
וְאַהֲבַת הַדָּס	and to love - hesed/covenant loyalty
וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת עִם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ: פ	and to act wisely - by walking - with your God

Why would anyone not want to accept such an invitation and become a disciple of this Way of Life?

Jesus of Nazareth, apparently, followed Hillel when he is reported (in Matthew 22:37-40) to have said (quoting from Deuteronomy 6 and Leviticus 19):

- 37 “You shall *love* (i.e., show loyalty to) the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your mind.
- 38 This is the great and *first* commandment.
- 39 And a *second* is like it,
You shall *love* your neighbor as yourself.
(i.e., show covenant fidelity to the person you have dealings with next)
- 40 On these two commandments depend all of the teaching (Torah from God) and the prophets.”

Jesus learned this “Golden Rule” from his teachers, who were followers of Rabbi Hillel, who died about the time when Jesus was born. When a non-Jewish person, who came to Hillel and wanted to become part of the people of God, but only on condition that Rabbi Hillel teach him the entire Torah while he was able to stand on one foot, Hillel said,

“What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor,
this is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary,’ (i.e., ‘Go and study it.’)”

This statement was well known in the time of Jesus and it appears already in the Book of Tobit 4:14-15 (about 200 BCE)

14 "... Watch yourself, ... in everything you do,
and discipline yourself in all your conduct.

15 And what you hate, do not do to anyone. ..."

Why do so many of us (even members of religious communities), actually, *prefer* to live with slander, bigotry, injustice, authoritarianism, rape, torture, racism, sexism, prejudice, thievery, greed, disrespect, ridicule, insult, murder, devastation, ... it simply does not make any sense. What makes sense is to CHANGE from such a way of life and to listen to the voices from God ... and REPENT ... תשובה, תשובה, μετανοια ...

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ADDITIONS FOR USE AT LSTC

From the 2000 Spertus READER, Vol. I, pages 143-191

- . Title Pages, Schedule, etc
- . Pages 143-147
 - Basic Materials ... and Notes
- . Pages 148-149
 - Quanbeck, W. A., "Repentance," *IDB* 4 (1962) 33-34
- . Pages 150-188 -
 - "νοεω ...," *TDNT* I (1967) 948-1008, "μετανοεω, ...," *TDNT* I (1974) 975-1008, E. μετανοεω and μετανοια in the New Testament, 999- I. The Linguistic Understanding, 999- II. The Concept of Conversion, 1000- 1. John the Baptist, 1000- 2. Jesus, 1001- 3. Primitive Christianity, 1003-
- . Pages 189-191
 - Milgrom, J., et al., "Repentance," *EncJud* 14 Red-SI (1972) 73-78 ("Repentance," 73-74, J. Milgrom; "Rabbinic Views," 74-75, Louis Jacobs; "In Jewish Philosophy," 76, S. Rosenblatt; "Post-Medieval Period, Modern Developments," 76-78, A. Unterman)

From the 1989 presentation

- . A READER. A Collection of Materials ...
 - . A Very Brief Bibliography and a Collection of Secondary Sources
 - . Texts "To Die For." Relevant texts which use "die" and "to die for."
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