
Words of Truth

Shame Is Part Of The Process Of Repentance

By: Brian A. Yeager

We should know that we are not under the Law of Moses today (Romans 7:1-6, Ephesians 2:11-17, Colossians 2:12-14, and Hebrews 8:1-10:22). That does not mean that studying the things contained in the Law of Moses are not profitable to us. The things recorded of old are written so that we can learn from them (Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-12). All Scriptures, whether directly applicable or not, are profitable to us (II Timothy 3:15-17).

Amongst the many things we can learn from the Old Law is how we should feel about ourselves when we transgress the Lord's will. Men such as Job who started out perfect (Job 1:1-2:13), but erred many times with His ignorant words (Job 3:1-31:40), were corrected (Job 32:1-41:34), and repented (Job 42:1-17). We can learn from Job how you can fall and be restored. Yet, that process included Job abhorring himself (Job 42:1-6).

There are also lessons beyond individuals that included the entire tribe of Judah. In our studies of the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel we learned that Judah had done WORSE than Israel, Sodom, and even the heathen nations around about them. They were so much worse that their sinful actions essentially justified those of Israel and Sodom. That is a statement of enormous proportions. Notice: *“Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter. Thou art thy mother's daughter, that lotheth her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, which lothed their husbands and their children: your mother was an Hittite, and your father an Amorite. And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways. As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good. Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done. Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more*

righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters” (Ezekiel 16:44-52).

Judah had to repent of their transgressions (Ezekiel 18:18-32). Part of that process required them to cease from their “holier than thou” mentality (Isaiah 65:1-5) so that they could loathe themselves for their transgressions (Ezekiel 16:61; 20:33-43; 36:21-32). As we read forward about Judah, they did just that (Ezra 9:1-10:44 and Daniel 9:1-19). We need to consider those lessons and learn that if we transgress, self-hatred is part of the repentance process.

You Have To Reach A Point Of Abhorring Yourself To Truly Repent

In the Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32), we can read of a time wherein the erring son “came to himself” (vs. 17) and realized he was no more worthy to be called his father’s son (vs. 18-19). If any of us do err from the faith, we have to have that moment when we come to ourselves. That is the moment when you realize what you have done to your Heavenly Father and our Savior Jesus Christ (Genesis 6:6, Psalms 78:40, Psalms 95:10, Isaiah 63:10, Ezekiel 33:11, Luke 19:41-42, Hebrews 6:6, and Hebrews 10:26-31). That is the moment wherein you begin to have godly sorrow that leads to repentance (II Corinthians 7:9-10). You realize then how that God is hurt and sickened over you. You realize then His disgust for your sinful choices. That is when you want to change. That is when you humbly begin the process.

A Humble Restart

You have to fall to your knees before you can stand on your feet (spiritually speaking). Consider this: *“But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:6-10).* As the process of repentance continues so must the humble and contrite spirit to have a restored relationship with the Lord and faithful brethren (Isaiah 57:15; 66:2). When it is time to arise, from the process of self-abhorrence, there must be a proper recollection going forward (i.e. I Corinthians 15:8-9 and I Timothy 1:13-16; cf. Luke 17:7-10).

Conclusion

If you can feel good about yourself in a state of sin, hope is lost. For all of us, there must be a recollection of our sinful pasts and the uselessness of that life (Romans 6:21). Shame, of who we were, is part of becoming and remaining who we are (Romans 6:22)!