

ORIGINAL SIN

One of the many objections that Jewish people have in considering the Good News is the doctrine of original sin. The majority of Jewish people believe that man is basically good and the doctrine of sin and depravity turns them off to discussing their need for a Savior.

The doctrine of original sin teaches that because of Adam and Eve's transgression, the effect of their disobedience is passed on to all of their descendants. To the Jewish person this seems unfair for two reasons:

1. Why should all of mankind suffer because someone else disobeyed?
2. Man's will is hopelessly bound to his sinful nature so he cannot save himself by his own effort.

Orthodox Judaism teaches that one commits sin by breaking the commandments of the Law. Reform Jews (liberal in theology) teach that sin is based in the inequities of society. Conservative Jews (the middle ground theologically between Orthodox and Reform Judaism) believe that the individual person can sin by committing immoral or antisocial acts. All three hold to the idea that man has two inclinations described as the "yester ha rah" (the evil inclination) and "yester ha tov" (the good inclination)

When dealing with this objection it is best to keep the focus on the Jewish Scriptures (Tanakh or Old Testament).

In Genesis we learn that God described all mankind as having an evil inclination. "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent (yester) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5)

The Torah proves that man is not basically good. David wrote: "The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one." (Psalm 14:2-3) "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." (Psalm 5 1:5)

The commandments of God reveal to man his true nature. No man can keep all the commandments perfectly. Yet God's requirement is that we be perfect "in order that you may remember to do all

My commandments, and be holy to your God." (Num 15:40) "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.'" (Lev 19:2)

The prophets speak of man's sinfulness: "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) "Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins." (Ecclesiastes 7:20)

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." (Isaiah 53:6)

Man can lead a good life in the eyes of other men, have an enviable ethical life and help his fellow man. But, before a holy God who calls us to be holy as He is holy, we are all inadequate. We need a righteousness that can only come from God and that provision was made for us through the promised Messiah. Yeshua lived a perfect life and our sin was placed upon Him. (Isaiah 53:6) He was the sacrifice that met God's justice, for a just God must punish sin or He would not be just. His sacrifice met God's mercy in that He took the punishment that was meant for us.

It was through the giving of Messiah's life as the perfect sacrifice and His resurrection that man is given His righteousness, a righteousness that is not from himself but from God.

"Then you will say on that day, 'I will give thanks to Thee, O LORD; For although Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, And Thou dost comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song. And He has become my salvation.'" (Isaiah 12:1-2) The word for salvation here in the Hebrew is Yeshua.

-Roy Schwarcz

Middle East Ministries PO Box 340
Marshall, VA 20116
Tel: 40-364-1103 Fax: 540-340-1509
Email: jaffrey@MiddleEastMinistries.org
web: MiddleEastMinistries.org