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Come Now, Let Us Reason Together

1: 18-20

Come now, let us reason together DIG: What does the LORD promise in accordance with their repentance? What's happening in Judah, in 1:15, 21-23 that accounts for this call and promise? Given their religious rituals in 1:11-15, how does the secular image of adultery fit their spiritual state? How is He a jealous God? Likewise, how do scarlet and red fit? What is the condition upon which their forgiveness rests?

REFLECT: Have you ever found yourself working so hard for ADONAI that He started getting cut out of the picture? When has the Lord ever said: Come now, let us reason together to you? Did you respond? If not, what were the consequences for you? What did it take to restore your relationship with Him? How do you confess your sin? When do you confess your sins?



So after answering their response to **ADONAI** and showing them that their faithfulness in the sacrificial system had been to no avail because their sacrifices were not accompanied by faith, **God** offers them salvation. **He** then invites the sinful people to come to their senses and admit that they had been wrong in their attitudes and practices. The invitation, **Come, literally go (the Hebrew language views the action from the starting point; the English from that of a destination) now, let us reason together**, was more than a call for negotiations between the people and **God**. The word **reason** is a legal term used for arguing, convincing, or deciding a case in court. The people were to be convinced by their

arguments that **He** was right and they were wrong about their spiritual condition. **Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow (1:18)**. If they admitted the depth of their **sins**, that their **sins** were **like** blood-colored **scarlet** or **red** stains on their souls, **God** in His grace would cleanse them, making them spiritually **white** like **snow** or **wool**.⁷

*When **Yeshua** told us to pray for forgiveness of our debts as we forgive our own debtors, **He** knew who would be the one to pay the debt. As **He** would hang on the cross **He** would say: **It is finished (John 19:30)**. Tetelestai, one Greek word meaning **paid in full**. It is in the perfect tense indicating a past, completed action, with continuing, and in this case, permanent results. There are some facts that will never change. One fact is that you are forgiven. If you are in **Christ (Ephesians 1:1, 3-4, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 20)**, when **He** sees you, your sins are covered - **He** doesn't see them. **He** sees you better than you see yourself. And that is a glorious fact of your life.*

When the nation of **Isra'el** was still in her childhood, learning from **ADONAI** at the foot of Mount Sinai, **He** said to them: **I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God**. This means **He** is zealous to protect what rightfully belongs to **Him** alone. Hence, it is an ethical right in the sense of a husband being zealous to have the affection of his wife alone (see the commentary on **Exodus**, **to see link click [DI](#) - You Shall Not Make For Yourselves an Idol**). If they continued to commit spiritual adultery (**Hosea 2:2-5**), **He** vowed that there would be consequences, **punishing the children for the sin of their fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love Me and keep My commandments (Exodus 20:5b-6; Deuteronomy 5:9b-10)**. Forgiveness only comes as a result of a changed attitude.

There is a delicate balance between human freedom and divine sovereignty. We should not think that obedience produces forgiveness. If that were true, we would control the divine will. But we cannot play **God**; **He** forgives not because **He** has to, but because **He** wants to. **He** is the **God** of second chances (see the commentary on **Jonah [At](#) - Jonah's Prayer**). But it is also clear that **the LORD** does not forgive those who are unwilling to obey.

God offers forgiveness of sin to **Isra'el** if they come to **Him**, and **He** even gives them the motivation for doing so. **If you are willing to be obedient, you will eat the best from the Land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. For the mouth of ADONAI has spoken (1:19-20)**. **He** seeks to motivate them to accept **His** salvation by showing the alternatives and consequences of their decision. If they accepted **His** offer of forgiveness, salvation would follow. But if they rejected **His** offer, then curses

would follow. The Bible teaches that mankind has the ability to choose (**Genesis 2:16-17, 4:6-10; Isaiah 1:18-20; Jeremiah 36:3; Ezekiel 18; John 7:17**). Confession of sin always comes before cleansing. It was true in **Isaiah's** day and it is still true for us today.

In **1:19-20**, the verb tenses in these two conditional sentences point to action. In each case the first verb pair are in the imperfect tense (viewed as an ongoing, but not yet completed action); whereas, the second verb pair is in the perfect tense (viewed as a completed action with continuing results). Thus, the sense means something like, *if you are willing to obey . . . then obey; however, if you are disposed to resist . . . then rebel*. The Hebrew does not recognize a distinction between hearing and doing. They would say that if you do not obey a command, you did not truly hear it! But only with a changed heart and confession of sin will our actions line up with **God's** heart.

Jesus' closest friend on this earth, the apostle **John**, said it this way: **If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us, or cleanse us, from all unrighteousness. But if we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word has no place in our lives (First John 1:9-10).**