

Test your Bible Knowledge

1. "For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, And her mouth is smoother than _____"

- a. bitterness
- b. oil
- c. an honeycomb
- d. slander

2. Moses' father and mother were:

- a. nephew and aunt
- b. uncle and niece
- c. half brother and sister
- d. cousins on the father's side

3. The Israelites made Saul their king:

- a. before the battle at Jabesh-gilead
- b. during the battle of Jabesh-gilead
- c. immediately after the battle of Jabesh-gilead
- d. five years after the battle of Jabesh-gilead

Scriptures:

- 1) Proverbs 5:3
- 2) Exodus 6:20
- 3) 1Samuel 11:11-15

-Fred Singleton

Schedule:

Sunday Bible Study - 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship - 11:00AM

Sunday Evening Worship - 5:00 PM

Wednesday Night Bible Study - 7:00 PM

Jefferson City Church of Christ

402 Dix Road

Jefferson City, Missouri 65109

(573) 353-0176 Or (573) 635-1690 Web

Page: www.jeffcitycoc.org

"Tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"-1King 22:16

The Wages of Sin and the Free Gift of God

It is a text of dual emphasis. The one is darkly foreboding, the other magnificently exhilarating. Paul wrote: "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

It cannot be determined exactly when the church in Rome was established. Perhaps those Jews and proselytes who were present in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:10) migrated back to the Imperial City and planted the cause of Jesus. By the time Paul penned the epistle to the Romans (perhaps a quarter of a century later), the glowing reputation of this church was known throughout the empire (Romans 1:8). The letter is doctrinal (chapters 1-11), practical (chapters 12-15), and personal (chapter 16).

Preliminary to a consideration of the text soliciting our special focus, we should reflect upon the material that prepares the way for its presentation. Consider the gist of the first six chapters of this inspired document:

Chapter 1 – An indictment of the obtuse and wicked Gentile world is issued.

Chapter 2 – A complaint is made against the inconsistent Jews.

Chapter 3 – All are victims of sin, but there is a plan for salvation through Christ.

Chapter 4 – Salvation is not achieved through a graceless system of law.

Chapter 5 – The universal consequence of sin is death.

Chapter 6 – God's saving plan is accessed by means of obedient faith.

A survey of these chapters will lay the foundation for understanding Romans 6:23.

Sin Defined

There are three significant terms in the initial phrase of the text that must be explored. These are: “sin,” “wages,” and “death.”

Missing the Mark

Sin is represented by various biblical expressions in both Testaments of the Bible. The word itself derives from original terms (Hebrew, *hata*; Greek, *hamartano*), that portray the image of missing a mark, or target (cf. Judges 20:16; Romans 3:23). These words imply several things: (a) There is a target or standard of spiritual and moral excellence at which one must aim. (b) As fallible human beings, we frequently miss the standard—either purposefully or through ignorance (cf. Hebrews 9:7, ASV). In either case, we sin, and sin condemns—even if it is only **one** sin (James 1:15; note the definite article [ASV]).

Rebellion

A rebellious temperament is the root of many sins. The prophet Samuel declared, “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim” (1 Samuel 15:23). Jeremiah once described the disposition of wayward Israel as follows: “They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who **refused to hear** my words” (Jer. 11:10). One cannot help being reminded of the hardened Jews, who Stephen encountered, and who, rather than reverently consider his teaching, “stopped their ears,” and then murdered God’s messenger (Acts 7:57-59).

Neglect

Sin is more than simply doing wrong; it also embraces the idea of purposefully neglecting one’s duty to the Creator. James expressed it in this fashion: “He who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin” (4:17). One scholar has observed that those here in view “cannot take refuge in the plea that they have done nothing positively wrong; as Scripture makes abundantly clear, sins of **omission** are as real and serious as sins of ‘commission’” (Moo 1985, 158). So many

whine, “I know I should, but I’m just weak.” The rationalization of weakness will not produce forgiveness. There must be an appropriate seeking of pardon and a serious attempt to change one’s conduct.

Presumption

David once petitioned the Lord: “Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be upright, and I shall be clear from great transgression” (Psalm 19:13). Several things may be said regarding this sobering text: (a) Presumptuous sins appear to be in contrast to the hidden faults mentioned previously. The former are sins committed in ignorance. Who could possibly keep up with the slips he makes unawares? These are sins nonetheless, and require forgiveness. (b) Presumptuous sins, however, are of a different sort. The original Hebrew term is undergirded by such ideas as the “haughty” attitude of one who is “insolent” and who “scorns” the sovereignty and authority of God (cf. Brown, Driver, and Briggs 1981, 267).

A New Testament word that illustrates this arrogant disposition is *ethelothreskeia*, a compound term from *ethelo* (“will”) and *threskeia* (“worship”), hence rendered “will-worship” (Colossians 2:23). It is a self-initiated action reflected in a mode of worship that either is “forbidden or unbidden” (Vine 1991, 881). J. H. Thayer depicted it as “worship which one devises and prescribes for himself, contrary to the nature of the faith which ought to be directed by Christ” (1958, 168). -More next week

DID YOU KNOW

Aaron was Moses’ brother. He also served as Israel’s first high priest. In the Old Testament Aaron spoke for Moses, beginning in Egypt when Moses confronted Pharaoh. Aaron assisted Moses during the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt. Aaron was three years older than Moses; Aaron was 83 when they first confronted Pharaoh (Exodus 7:7). Their sister, Miriam (Numbers 26:59), must have been the eldest child. She carried messages when the infant Moses was found by Pharaoh’s daughter (Exodus 2:1-9). Fred Singleton