

The Repentance of Israel

- The way of out of exile: repentance *with all their heart* and *with all their soul* (Deut 30:1–3)
 - In Ezr 9 and Neh 1, individuals repent.
 - In Neh 9, the whole community joins together to repent.

- Neh 10: binding themselves to three concrete promises:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

- Neh 13: a discouraging outcome (see esp. Neh 13:18).
 - We are still seeking for a *truly repentant Israel*.

- The prophets on repentance:
 - Zech 1:3; Mal 3:7 “Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.”
 - Jer 3:22 “Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness.”
 - Isa 40:3–5: make ready the way of the LORD

- Repentance remains a major thrust in the intertestamental period (1 Bar 2; 3 Macc 2; Jub 23)

- As of the NT, people are still trying to end the exile: e.g., John the Baptist and the baptism of *repentance* for the *forgiveness of sins*.

- Jesus as the truly penitent Israel
 - Matt 3:15 Jesus baptized to fulfill all righteousness
 - Luke 23:34 Forgive them: praying on our behalf!
 - Luke 23:46 Into your hands I commit my spirit
 - *Yahweh is returning to Israel and Israel is returning to Yahweh in the same person, Jesus.*

- Implications: because of Jesus’ perfect repentance, we are now in the restoration; we now have circumcised hearts (Rom 2:25–29).
 - Yet we may not enter into these restoration blessings (i.e., salvation) without true repentance, being united to the true Israel (Acts 2:38).
 - Acts 3:19–20, 26: we must repent, but it will be God who grants repentance (see also Acts 11:18).