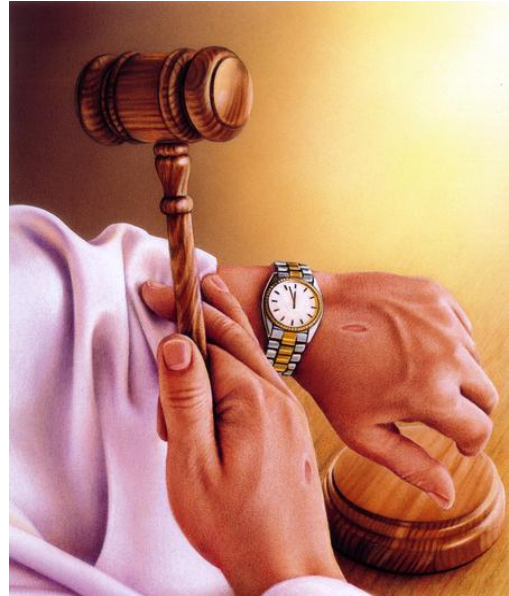


*Dear Aebi: "Will one's sins forgiven in baptism or restoration be brought up in the judgment?"*

No. If they were, they would not be said to be forgiven. In the Old Testament, sins were remembered every year at the day of atonement. They were never really forgiven or removed under that system. But under the gospel, the New Testament, they are forgiven, which means they are "remembered no more" (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17). Hebrews 10:1-4 reads in the New King James Version, "



{1} For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

{2} For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.

{3} But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

{4} For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins."

The Hebrews writer goes on to argue that Jesus' blood was different and could take away sins. "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. . .For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:12,14) Then he quotes Jeremiah 31 in verse 17 ("Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more") and calls this "remission," which means forgiveness, in verse 18.

If a sin is truly repented of when one obeys the gospel or is restored, it is forgiven—remitted, blotted out, erased, expunged. Peter said, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..."(Acts 3:19). When sins are blotted out, they exist no more. And when God says He will remember them no more, He means just that.

What purpose would it serve to bring up forgiven sins in the judgment anyway? To embarrass, harass, or humiliate the saints who are being taken to heaven? They have been cleansed of all sin by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). Their robes have been washed clean of all stain and been made white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14; 1:5). Their sins are washed away. Sins will be brought up in the judgment--sins that have not

been repented of, sins of all who refuse to obey Christ and God. When Christ comes, He will reveal secret sins and hidden things of darkness (1 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 2:16; Matt. 10:26; 1 Tim. 5:24). Evil men will be judged according their evil deeds, but the evil deeds once done by those now saints will have been forgotten. No one with sin will enter heaven, so come into Christ and be made a new creation where old things (sins) have passed away (2 Cor. 5:17).

One man objected, saying, “Then what do Romans 14:12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 mean when they say we will give account of ourselves to God?” They are talking about **sins of which people do not repent**. Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 10:26; Romans 2:16; and 1 Corinthians 4:5 are all talking about this same thing.

A poet has described the intent of these passages thus: “Written on the eternal wall, the past shall reappear.” Yes, but without those sins which have been forgiven! What will this accomplish, i.e., recalling past sins of the unrepentant? It will show that God's judgment in every case is just. No one will have any grounds for appeal. All the guilty will know--and all the world will know--that they are guilty, and of exactly what.

But God's grace will cover--erase--expunge--eradicate the sins that have been forgiven. People may hold things against us in spite of our repentance and begging forgiveness, but God will not, Isaiah 55:6-9, for God does not hold grudges like people. And people should not hold grudges either, Matthew 18:15-17,21-35.

*-Charles J. Aebi*