

DOCTRINE OF REBOUND

- I. Introduction.
 - A. There are three adjustments to the justice of God; the first being the salvation adjustment, the second being the rebound adjustment, and the third being the maturity adjustment.
 - B. This doctrine acknowledges the biblical fact that all believers continue to possess a sin nature and continue to commit personal sins following salvation. IKings 8:46; Ps. 143:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccles. 7:20; Rom. 7:19,23; IJn. 1:8,10
 - C. This doctrine is designed to provide the answer to the question, “What is the believer to do when he commits personal sins after making the salvation adjustment?”
 - D. In order to fully understand the Divine reasoning for the rebound adjustment, one must be aware of the doctrinal realities that govern the Angelic Conflict.
 - E. The first deals with the absolute righteous nature of God; God cannot have a relationship or fellowship with anyone that is not righteous. Deut. 32:4; IICor. 5:21
 - F. At the point of the salvation adjustment, God imputes His righteousness to the one who believes in Christ; therefore, the believer is positionally as righteous as God. Phil. 3:9
 - G. However, when the believer sins, he becomes experientially unrighteous, forcing God to withdraw His fellowship. Isa. 59:2
 - H. Various terms are used to describe the believer when he is out of fellowship, each with its own particular emphasis.
 - 1. This condition is referred to as **death** (temporal death, the believer out of fellowship), which emphasizes the complete inability of one to do anything, the state of total helplessness. Rom. 6:21,23, 7:9-11
 - 2. It is also referred to as **sleep**, which emphasizes a state of insensibility and inactivity. Rom. 13:11; IThess. 5:6
 - 3. The believer is referred to as a **prisoner of war (POW)** when he succumbs to the indwelling sin nature and commits personal sins. Rom. 7:23
 - 4. The believer is called a **slave**, which indicates an abject state of servitude to a cruel master that pays its slaves with death. Rom. 6:16,23
 - I. This all means that the believer has lost his fellowship with God, cannot learn under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, is neutralized in terms of spiritual growth, and cannot produce actions that are rewardable.
 - J. However, the believer must not confuse losing fellowship with God with the possibility of losing his relationship with God; the latter is impossible, as seen in the second doctrinal reality, the doctrine of eternal security. Jn. 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28,32,35-39
 - K. In that same vein, the believer should not confuse the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which is permanent and cannot be lost, with fellowship with God, which can be broken by personal sin. Rom. 8:9,11
 - L. In accordance with these realities, the Bible never commands believers to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but does command them to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. Eph. 5:18
 - M. The third doctrinal reality that one must understand is the doctrine of the rulership of life, since this doctrine explains the two potential situations each believer will face following salvation.

- N. The fourth doctrinal reality that is critical to understanding the efficacy of rebound is the doctrine of unlimited atonement; this doctrine teaches that Christ died for all men by bearing every sin that had been, was, or would be committed. ICor. 15:3; IPet. 3:18
- O. The fifth doctrinal reality that one must comprehend is the doctrine of propitiation, which indicates that the righteousness and justice of God was satisfied with the work of Christ on the cross. IJn. 2:2
- P. The sixth doctrinal reality that bears on this subject is the fact that all God does must not only be compatible with righteousness, justice, truth, and love, it must be compatible with the principle of grace. Tit. 2:11
- Q. Therefore, the mechanic for salvation, as well as the mechanic for regaining fellowship, cannot depend on human works or achievement; it must be based on grace.

II. Vocabulary.

- A. The Hebrew vocabulary consists of only one verb; the verb יָדַח (yadhah) has as its primary meaning the confession of sin. This verb emphasizes both the recognition of a fact and the declaration of that fact. Lev. 5:5, 16:21
- B. Greek vocabulary.
 1. ὁμολογέω (homologeō), verb, 26X, lit. to say the same thing as another, to share a common view, to concede that something is true; to admit, agree, acknowledge, or confess.
 2. ὁμολογία (homologia), f.noun, 6X, an expression of allegiance, an acknowledgment that one makes, a confession.
 3. ἐξομολογέω (exomologeō), verb, 10X, to indicate acceptance of an offer, to consent to something; to make an admission of sin, to admit or confess.

III. Definition and description.

- A. Rebound is the doctrinal term that is used to describe the action that a believer takes once he has recognized that he is out of fellowship and desires to regain his fellowship with God.
- B. The terminology is derived from the game of basketball, in which some shots miss and the ability to score is contingent upon regaining the ball.
- C. It involves nothing more than simple acknowledgment or confession of any sin that the believer has committed following salvation. IJn. 1:9
- D. Rebound, like the salvation adjustment, is based on the principle of grace; there is no human merit involved in obtaining salvation or in restoring fellowship with God following salvation.
- E. The efficacy of rebound is based on the completed work of Christ; this focuses specifically on the fact that God has already judged every sin of every member of the human race.
- F. As a righteous judge, God must deal with all sins and all sinful conditions at some point in the Angelic Conflict.
- G. Rebound is simply the legal action by which one cites a precedent that causes The Judge to provide a favorable ruling on his behalf.
- H. When a believer names, cites, or acknowledges any personal sin he has committed to God, he is acknowledging the fact that said sin has already been judged in Christ.
- I. Since that sin has been judged, and the appropriate penalty has been paid by another, then God the Righteous Judge is free to pardon the offending party.
 1. The doctrine of propitiation deals with the fact that every person has offended the righteousness of God by committing personal sins.

2. As such, each person is guilty, and comes under the righteous judgment of God, who is the offended party.
 3. The work of Jesus Christ on the cross satisfied God's righteous judgment against sins by judging all sins in the person of His Son.
 4. Propitiation deals not only with the removal of the sin, but also with the fact that the believer has come under the goodwill and favor of God.
 5. Expiation, which is a related term, deals with the fact that God also removes the guilt that is incurred by the offending party.
- J. Rebound does not involve any emotions or acts of contrition; one does not have to feel or act a certain way, he simply must acknowledge his failure before God.
- K. Simple recognition and acknowledgment to God is all that is required; this means that none of the following are necessary to obtain forgiveness.
1. The believer does not have to feel guilty (or feel any particular way) in order to recognize and confess a sin.
 2. The believer does not have to do anything beyond confession; acts of contrition or penance are not necessary to obtain God's forgiveness.
 3. The believer does not have to keep confessing the same sin repeatedly to obtain forgiveness; one act of confession is sufficient to restore fellowship.
 4. One does not have to beg God for forgiveness, or promise never to commit the sin in the future.
- IV. Rebound is the mechanic for obtaining the forgiveness of sins, which are committed following the salvation adjustment. IJn. 1:9
- A. The immediate context is quite important to the principle of rebound; it documents the realities the every believer continues to have a functional and active sin nature, and continues to commit personal sins following salvation. IJn. 1:8,10
- B. The sole mechanic for obtaining forgiveness of sins is confession of sin to God. **If** (*the conjunction ἐάν (ean) introduces a condition of the third class, which presents the condition as uncertain of fulfillment, but still likely; maybe we will confess, maybe we won't*) **we confess** (*the verb ὁμολογέω (homologeō) means to cite or acknowledge; it was used in a legal sense to denote one that made a true statement in a court of law. Since this is a legal term having to do with citing the facts of the case, it implies that the Supreme Court of Heaven places no emphasis on anything beyond that confession.*) **our sins**, (*the pronoun indicates that believers can and do continue to commit sins after salvation. The Greek noun ἁμαρτία (hamartia) means to miss the mark; hence, it denotes an action that is not righteous, a sin*) **He** (*immediate context indicates that God is in view. IJn. 1:7*) **is faithful** (*reliable, trustworthy; we can rely on the fact that God does the same thing every time we confess a sin, since He is immutable*) **and righteous** (*God does not have to violate His righteousness in order to provide forgiveness, since all sins have been judged in Christ. The term recognizes that God's forgiveness is in accordance with the highest standards of law, justice, and morality*) **to forgive us our sins** (*as the offended party, only God can forgive those that violate His righteousness, and fall short of His glory*) **and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (*not only does God forgive the sin in question, all other sins that may have been committed in the interim are also forgiven at confession of a single sin. The believer can be assured that God cleanses us from all sins, known and unknown, and the guilt that is associated with them.*)

- C. When the believer complies with the requirement of this verse, God immediately forgives and cleanses him; the believer once again is restored to fellowship with God, the Holy Spirit is placed in the position of rulership, and the STA is isolated.
- D. In fact, fellowship with God is the primary subject of this section, which begins with IJohn 1:5.
- E. While this passage deals with specific confession of specific sins, it is evident that one may acknowledge the fact that he has sinned, without remembering each and every sin. Matt. 6:12; Ps. 19:12
- F. This mechanic should be taught to every believer as soon as possible after he makes the salvation adjustment.
- G. Knowing that recognition of sins is paramount in confessing sins, each believer should also be instructed in hamartiology, so he might learn what violates the righteousness of God and what does not.
- H. This allows the positive believer to maximize his time in fellowship, which is critical for Divine good production; this forms the basis for redeeming the time. Eph. 5:16; Tit. 2:14
- I. The principle of rebound, and the cleansing that comes when one rebounds, was taught by Jesus Christ in the upper room when He washed the disciples' feet. Jn. 13:3-10
 - 1. Although not recorded in John's account, the background to this incident involved the disciples engaging in one or their frequent debates about who was greatest among them. Mk. 9:34; Lk. 22:24
 - 2. It is quite clear from both Jesus' words and the disciples reactions that they did not understand what Jesus Christ was doing or why. Jn. 13:7
 - 3. The physical reality of washing the feet was a necessity due to two factors: they type of footwear, and the dusty roads and paths used for travel.
 - 4. However, Jesus Christ made it plain that His actions were not emphasizing the physical reality of washing their feet; His actions had deeper spiritual significance, which the disciples would come to understand at a later time.
 - 5. Peter initially refused the offer to have his feet washed, but was immediately told that failure to submit carried with it a severe consequence. Jn. 13:8
 - 6. In typical fashion, Peter overreacts and insists that the Lord give him a complete bath, rather than simply wash his feet. Jn. 13:9
 - 7. Whereupon Jesus responded with the teaching that a bath was not needed in all cases; in fact, only one person in the room needed a bath. Jn. 13:11
 - 8. The bath in this teaching aid represents the salvation adjustment, which everyone except for Judas had made. Jn. 13:11
 - 9. Washing the feet (or any extremity) is designed to portray the principle of rebound; more particularly, the forgiveness and cleansing that comes from rebound.
 - 10. In fact, there are two different Greek words that denote the difference between bathing, and washing an extremity.
 - a. λούω (louo), is a verb that denotes the process of washing the entire body, taking a bath. The cognate noun λουτρόν (loutron) is used of the bath associated with salvation. Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5
 - b. νίπτω (nipto), is a verb that denotes washing of a particular part of the body, rather than the entire body. Jn. 9:7

11. As Jesus told Peter, the consequences of failing to rebound are dire; therefore, the importance of rebound cannot be emphasized too strongly. Jn. 13:8
12. Thus, He exhorted His disciples to follow His example; each one of them should be willing to humble himself as Jesus did, and each should be willing to forgive others when wronged.

- V. The principle of personal forgiveness toward those that have wronged the believer is imperative to the rebound technique.
- A. As per the exhortation in the upper room, Jesus Christ desires each of His followers to operate the same way He does when it comes to those that sin against him.
 - B. This is evident within the Model Prayer, which contains a correlation between God's forgiveness of the believer, and the believer's forgiveness of others. Matt. 6:12
 - C. Jesus Christ uses a third class condition to describe the two potential situations that may occur when one sins against the believer. Matt. 6:15
 - D. However, He goes on to say that if the believer chooses not to forgive the ones that have wronged him, neither will God forgive that believer of his sins.
 - E. Therefore, the only logical conclusion that one can draw from this teaching is that God does not honor rebound for those that walk in unforgiveness.
 - F. God has made it plain in other portions of His word that He chooses not to listen or respond to people under certain circumstances. Isa. 1:15; Jer. 11:11
 - G. In fact, God even instructs believers not to pray for others believers on certain occasions. Jer. 11:14; Jn. 5:16
 - H. Further, there is apparently no limit to the forgiveness that the believer is to exercise toward others that have done him wrong. Matt. 18:21-22
 - I. Additionally, the parable that follows is closed with a dire warning from Jesus Christ, which indicates that those that choose not to forgive will incur Divine discipline as well. Matt. 18:23-35
- VI. Rebound was taught in the Old Testament.
- A. It was taught in many places, both on a personal level of confession, and on the national level.
 1. Personal examples of rebound include the confession of any believer (Lev. 5:5), Achan (Josh. 7:20), Balaam (Num. 22:34), David (Ps. 32:5, 38:18), and Daniel. Dan. 9:20
 2. When the nation fell into reversionism, and came under Divine discipline, national confession was practiced by those that recognized the problem. IKings 8:33-36; Neh. 1:6, 9:2; Dan. 9:20
 - B. Rebound was also taught via typology; a type may be defined as a figure or example of something future, and which has a more or less prophetic character.
 - C. In the Old Testament, there are two categories of sins, which are acknowledged through the sin offering and the trespass offering. Lev. 4,5
 1. The sin offerings dealt with the types of sins that were committed in ignorance, were committed unintentionally, or were not recognized by the one committing them. Lev. 4:2,13,22,27
 2. The trespass offerings were directed toward sins that one committed in cognizance, sins for which one could not plead ignorance. Lev. 5

3. The fact that provision was made for both types of sins is designed to teach the truth that the work of Christ on the cross dealt with all sins.
 4. Therefore, when one applies the principle of rebound (which most likely occurs when one becomes cognizant of a sin), all sins, known and unknown, are forgiven and cleansed.
- D. Rebound was taught via the typology of the bronze laver. Ex. 30:18-21, 38:8
1. The bronze laver was a large basin that held water, which was designed for the cleansing of the priests; it was placed between the bronze altar and the Tabernacle.
 2. The base of the bronze laver was made of hand mirrors that had been melted down; this indicates that the base of the altar was reflective enough for one to be able to see himself in it.
 3. The priests were to wash only their hands and feet in the bronze laver, making certain that they were clean before they approached the Tabernacle proper.
 4. Failure to use the bronze laver meant that the priest was approaching the Tabernacle in an unclean condition, which was punishable by death.
 5. The typology explained.
 - a. Typologically, the priests represent the believers in time, who are present to engage in the worship and service of God. IPet. 2:5,9
 - b. The metal bronze is used typologically to represent judgment; in this case it is personal judgment, as one examines himself with respect to the issue of sin. ICor. 11:28-31
 - c. The mirrored surface is typical of the Word of God, the perfect law of liberty, by which one may accurately assess his condition. James 1:23-25; Heb. 4:12
 - d. The bronze laver was placed between the bronze altar and the Tabernacle, indicating that the priests must cleanse themselves before they engaged in any service to God.
 - e. The fact that the death penalty was prescribed for priests that did not wash their hands and feet, indicates that failure to practice the rebound technique rendered the priest incapable of serving or worshipping God.
 - f. It is typological of temporal death, and operational death.
- E. Rebound was also taught through the typology that is found in the trimming of the wicks on the golden lampstand. Ex. 25:31; 30:7-8
1. The trimming of the wicks is equivalent to cutting them back, which is viewed as a form of cleansing. Jn. 15:2
 2. This was to be done in the morning and the evening, indicating the ongoing need to deal with the issue of personal sin in the life of the believer. Ex. 30:7-8
 3. Trimming the wicks allowed the golden lampstand to produce maximum light in the Holy Place; this portrays the fact that the believer must be clean, in order to maximize the illumination of the Word of God.
 4. The trimming of the wicks is found in conjunction with the offering at the altar of incense, which is typical of the spiritual sacrifice of prayer. Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8
 5. This emphasizes the importance of dealing with the sin nature as one approaches God in prayer. Matt. 6:12
- VII. Terms associated with rebound, terms used to describe rebound, and/or the results of rebound.
- A. Judging yourself is the basis for rebound. ICor. 11:31; IICor. 13:5
 - B. Actual terms used to describe the act of rebound.

1. Confess. IJn. 1:9
 2. Repent. Lk. 17:4
 3. Awake (from spiritual sleep) and arise (from temporal death). Eph. 5:14 cf. Rom. 13:11
 4. Laying aside, or putting aside. Heb. 12:1; James 1:21; IPet. 2:1
 5. Cleanse your hands. James 4:8
- C. The immediate result of rebound is abiding in Christ once again. Jn. 15:4
- a. At that point, the believer is able to walk in the light. IJn. 1:7
 - b. He has fellowship with God, and may have fellowship with others in the light.
 - c. He is able to walk in the truth. IIIJn. 1:3-4
 - d. He is able to walk in love. Eph. 5:2

VIII. False views of rebound.

- A. Rebound constitutes a license to sin.
1. This objection is often voiced by those that have a tendency toward legalism.
 2. Their reluctance to accept the truth of this doctrine stems from the fact that they infer that if simple confession of sin brings the forgiveness of God, then there is no reason not to sin.
 3. Although the Bible advances reasons not to sin, it still acknowledges the reality that each believer continues to possess a functional and active sin nature following salvation. Rom. 7:13-14; IJn. 1:8,10
 4. The fact that some believers may distort and abuse a doctrine, does not detract from the validity of that doctrine. Rom. 6:1,15
 5. Many of those that object to rebound often fall prey to false doctrines such as the eradication of the sin nature, or sinless perfection.
 6. Lastly, many that reject the principle of rebound do not address the issue of what the believer is to do when he sins.
- B. Confession is not the sole requirement for obtaining forgiveness.
1. This is often taught by those that believe that you should feel a particular emotion when you sin (specifically, sorrow).
 2. They confuse the verb ὁμολογέω (homologeō—confess, name, cite, acknowledge) with the Greek verb μετανοέω (metanoēō—to change the mind), or with the Greek verb λυπέω (lupeō—to feel sorrow, regret, or remorse). IICor. 7:8-9
 3. The problem with their subjective view is that there is no objective method for determining who is actually sorry for their sins; further, one must determine how sorry is sorry enough to obtain forgiveness.
 4. The reality is that the believer may feel badly when he sins, or he may not; the issue is a legal one, and not an emotional one. IJn. 2:1-2
- C. Rebound eliminates Divine discipline.
1. This view is advocated by those that do not desire to face the fact that there are consequences for sinning.
 2. The argument suggests that since Jesus Christ has already been judged for every sin, then God will not judge believers when they commit personal sins.
 3. However, this confuses the removal of the penalty for sins (eternal death) with the forgiveness of sins, which is an experiential issue.

4. This also confuses the legal issue involved in sinning with the family issue, which comes to exist at adoption.
 - a. In any normal family, every child will disobey his parents.
 - b. While the parents forgive their indiscretions, they may choose to discipline the child as they see fit. Heb. 12:9-10
 - c. However, even under discipline, the child is still a member of the family.
 5. King David, a man after God's heart, is one of the most notable examples of the fact that confession of sin does not eliminate Divine discipline. IISam. 11,12; Ps. 51
- D. The believer cannot simply confess his sins to God, the believer must confess his sins to others.
1. This view is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church, as well as some others, who have adopted a non-biblical hierarchy of priests, bishops, popes, etc.
 2. They teach that the believer must confess his sins to another, who can prescribe the proper penance, and intercede on behalf of the believer to God.
 3. This view completely ignores the truth that all believers are priests, and are fully capable of representing themselves before God. IPet. 2:4-5; Rev. 1:4-6
 4. Others take legitimate verses out of context in order to promote their view that public confession is always necessary for obtaining forgiveness.
 5. While we agree that there is a place for a believer to confess his sins to another believer on isolated occasions, the Scriptures do not suggest that said confession is necessary to obtain forgiveness from God. James 5:16
 6. Further, when a believer is confessing his sin to other believers, he should recognize that it may not be edifying for those that hear it. Rom. 15:2; Eph. 4:29
 7. Therefore, when we sin against one another, confession to one another is in order; however, the confession should generally be no more widespread than the transgression.

*"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."
Jn. 13:8*

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
1Jn. 1:9*