

TESHUVAH, ECUMENISM, AND THE
REIGN OF HEAVEN: THE ROLE OF
REPENTANCE IN THE ECUMENICAL
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Abstract:

Repentance (teshuvah) is central to Judaism, both collectively and individually. In the Christian tradition, by contrast, the Body of Christ — both Protestant and Roman Catholic — protect the church(es) from the taint of collective sin. These ecclesiologies permeate the ecumenical movement, where there is a corresponding reluctance to identify (ecclesiastical) sin as the root of ecumenical disunity. This essay explores the Jewish theology and practice of teshuvah, its centrality, its communality, its liturgical basis, and its eschatological import. In Judaism it is collective repentance that leads to the Reign of Heaven. The article urges that teshuvah is vital for the ecumenical movement and that ecclesiastical repentance is one possible path to ecumenical unity but the only path.

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Japanese festival foods, the issue integrates an Anglo-American type of political culture.