

**To Forgive**

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)



The [first](one.html) place we find ‘forgive’, we do not find repentance:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 50:14-21*** *After burying his* [*father*](fathers.html)*,* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father. When* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*'s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" So they sent word to* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*: I ask you to forgive your brothers the* [*sins*](sin.html) *and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the* [*sins*](sin.html) *of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him,* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)[*wept*](mashal.html)*. His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said. But* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *kindly to them.*

[Joseph](joseph.html)'s brothers are asking forgiveness through their dead father.

Pharaoh repented, and [HaShem](hashem.html) forgave:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 10:16-19*** *Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God and against you. Now forgive my* [*sin*](sin.html) *once more and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God to take this deadly* [*plague*](plagues.html) *away from me." Moses then left Pharaoh and* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *changed the wind to a very strong west wind, which caught up the locusts and carried them into the* [*Red Sea*](stages.html)*. Not a locust was left anywhere in Egypt.*

The Israelites sinned. Moses asked for forgiveness. There was no repentance. [HaShem](hashem.html) punished.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:25-35*** *Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. So he stood at the entrance to the* [*camp*](stages.html) *and said, "Whoever is for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. Then he said to them, "This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of Israel, says: 'Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the* [*camp*](stages.html) *from* [*one*](one.html) *end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.'" The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about* [*three*](three.html) *thousand of the people died. Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day." The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great* [*sin*](sin.html)*. But now I will go up to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; perhaps I can make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for your* [*sin*](sin.html)*." So Moses went back to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and said, "Oh, what a great* [*sin*](sin.html) *these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their* [*sin*](sin.html)*--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written."* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *replied to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. Now go, lead the people to the place I* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *of, and my* [*angel*](angels.html) *will go before you. However, when the* [*time*](time.html) *comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their* [*sin*](sin.html)*." And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *struck the people with a* [*plague*](plagues.html) *because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made.*

Moses asked for forgiveness. [HaShem](hashem.html) forgave and punished.

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 14:14-25*** *And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, are with these people and that you, O* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, have been seen* [*face*](body.html) *to* [*face*](body.html)*, that your* [*cloud*](important.html) *stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of* [*cloud*](important.html) *by day and a pillar of* [*fire*](fire.html) *by night. If you put these people to death all at* [*one*](one.html)[*time*](time.html)*, the* [*nations*](nations.html) *who have heard this report about you will say, '*[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath; so he slaughtered them in the desert.' "Now may the Lord's strength be displayed, just as you have declared: '*[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving* [*sin*](sin.html) *and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the* [*sin of the fathers*](sin.html) *to the* [*third*](three.html) *and* [*fourth*](four.html)[*generation*](toldot.html)*.' In accordance with your great love, forgive the* [*sin*](sin.html) *of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the* [*time*](time.html) *they* [*left Egypt*](thebirth.html) *until now."* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *fills the whole earth, Not* [*one*](one.html) *of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous* [*signs*](signs.html) *I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me* [*ten*](ten.html) *times-- Not* [*one*](one.html) *of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their* [*forefathers*](fathers.html)*. No* [*one*](one.html) *who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will* [*inherit*](inherit.html) *it. Since the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the* [*Red Sea*](stages.html)*."*

Solomon asks [HaShem](hashem.html) to forgive when Israel repents:

***I Melakim (Kings) 8:33-39*** *"When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and confess your* [*name*](name.html)*,* [*praying*](prayer.html) *and making supplication to you in this* [*temple*](temple.html)*, Then hear from* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and forgive the* [*sin*](sin.html) *of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*. "When the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they* [*pray*](prayer.html) *toward this place and confess your* [*name*](name.html) *and turn from their* [*sin*](sin.html) *because you have afflicted them, Then hear from* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and forgive the* [*sin*](sin.html) *of your servants, your people Israel.* [*Teach*](teacher.html) *them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*. "When* [*famine*](famine.html) *or* [*plague*](plagues.html) *comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, And when a* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *or plea is made by any of your people Israel--each* [*one*](one.html) *aware of the afflictions of his own* [*heart*](body.html)*, and spreading out his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *toward this* [*temple*](temple.html)*-- Then hear from* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, your* [*dwelling*](dwelling.html) *place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you* [*know*](daat.html) *his* [*heart*](body.html) *(for you alone* [*know*](daat.html) *the hearts of all men),*

Here Solomon again links repentance and forgiveness:

***I Melakim (Kings) 8:46-51*** *"When they* [*sin*](sin.html) *against you--for there is no* [*one*](one.html) *who does not* [*sin*](sin.html)*--and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near; And if they have a change of* [*heart*](body.html) *in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their conquerors and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted* [*wickedly*](wicked.html)*'; And if they turn back to you with all their* [*heart*](body.html) *and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to you toward the land you gave their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, toward the* [*city*](city.html) *you have chosen and the* [*temple*](temple.html) *I have built for your* [*Name*](name.html)*; Then from* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, your* [*dwelling*](dwelling.html) *place, hear their* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *and their plea, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy; For they are your people and your* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, whom you brought* [*out of Egypt*](thebirth.html)*, out of that iron-smelting* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) has agreed to forgive our [sins](sin.html) IF...

***II Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) 7:10-16*** *On the* [*twenty-third day of the seventh month*](twenty.html) *he sent the people to their homes, joyful and glad in* [*heart*](body.html) *for the good things* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *had done for David and Solomon and for his people Israel. When Solomon had finished the* [*temple*](temple.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the* [*temple*](temple.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and in his own palace,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *appeared to him at night and said: "I have heard your* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *and have chosen this place for myself as a* [*temple*](temple.html) *for sacrifices. "When I shut up the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *so that there is no rain, or* [*command*](cmds613.html) *locusts to devour the land or send a* [*plague*](plagues.html) *among my people, If my people, who are called by my* [*name*](name.html)*, will humble themselves and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *and seek my* [*face*](body.html) *and turn from their* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *ways, then will I hear from* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and will forgive their* [*sin*](sin.html) *and will heal their land. Now my* [*eyes*](body.html) *will be open and my* [*ears*](body.html) *attentive to the* [*prayers*](prayer.html) *offered in this place. I have chosen and consecrated this* [*temple*](temple.html) *so that my* [*Name*](name.html) *may be there forever. My* [*eyes*](body.html) *and my* [*heart*](body.html) *will always be there.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) does not forgive when there is no repentance:

***Yirimiyah (Jeremiah) 5:7-11*** *"Why should I forgive you? Your children have forsaken me and sworn by gods that are not gods. I supplied all their* [*needs*](needs.html)*, yet they committed adultery and thronged to the houses of prostitutes. They are well-fed, lusty stallions, each neighing for another man's wife. Should I not punish them for this?" declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. "Should I not avenge myself on such a* [*nation*](nations.html) *as this? "Go through her vineyards and ravage them, but do not destroy them completely. Strip off her branches, for these people do not belong to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have been utterly unfaithful to me," declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

[One](one.html) day [HaShem](hashem.html) will give us a [new](new.html) [heart](body.html) and will forgive us for the last [time](time.html).

***Yirimiyah (Jeremiah) 31:33-34*** *"This is the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *I will make with the house of Israel after that* [*time*](time.html)*," declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. "I will put my* [*law*](law.html) *in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man* [*teach*](teacher.html) *his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, '*[*Know*](daat.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*,' because they will all* [*know*](daat.html) *me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. "For I will forgive their* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *and will remember their* [*sins*](sin.html) *no more."*

[HaShem](hashem.html) will forgive us when we turn from our [wicked](wicked.html) ways.

***Yirimiyah (Jeremiah) 36:1-3*** *In the* [*fourth*](four.html) *year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*: "Take a* [*scroll*](letters.html) *and write on it all the words I have spoken to you concerning Israel, Judah and all the other* [*nations*](nations.html) *from the* [*time*](time.html) *I began* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *to you in the reign of Josiah till now. Perhaps when the people of Judah hear about every disaster I plan to inflict on them, each of them will turn from his* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *way; then I will forgive their* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *and their* [*sin*](sin.html)*."*

[Yeshua's](yeshua.html) parable to illustrate forgiveness includes repentance.

***Matityahu (Matthew) 18:21-35*** *Then Peter came to* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he* [*sins*](sin.html) *against me? Up to* [*seven*](seven.html) *times?"* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *answered, "I tell you, not* [*seven*](seven.html) *times, but* [*seventy*](seventy.html)*-*[*seven*](seven.html) *times. "Therefore, the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. "But when that servant went out, he found* [*one*](one.html) *of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. "Then the master called the servant in. 'You* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your* [*heart*](body.html)*."*

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) said that if there is repentance, we should forgive.

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 17:1-4***[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to* [*sin*](sin.html) *are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his* [*neck*](body.html) *than for him to cause* [*one*](one.html) *of these little ones to* [*sin*](sin.html)*. So watch yourselves. "If your brother* [*sins*](sin.html)*, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he* [*sins*](sin.html) *against you* [*seven*](seven.html) *times in a day, and* [*seven*](seven.html) *times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."*

Here [Yeshua](yeshua.html) is forgiving without apparent repentance:

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 23:32-34***[*Two*](two.html) *other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called* [*the Skull*](east.html)*, there they crucified him, along with the criminals--*[*one*](one.html) *on his right, the other on his left.* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not* [*know*](daat.html) *what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.*

Peter here equates forgiveness and repentance:

***II Luqas (Acts) 8:18-24*** *When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles'* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*, he offered them money And said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your* [*heart*](body.html) *is not right before God. Repent of this* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your* [*heart*](body.html)*. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to* [*sin*](sin.html)*." Then Simon answered, "*[*Pray*](prayer.html) *to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."*

If...

***I Yochanan (John) 1:9*** *If we confess our* [*sins*](sin.html)*, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our* [*sins*](sin.html) *and* [*purify*](purity.html) *us from all unrighteousness.*

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