

Repentance & Forgiveness

Genuine repentance always involves a confession of wrongdoing and a willingness to make things right. Repentance is a change that takes place in one's life as a result of the Ruach's work to enlighten one's consciousness to the state of sin in the presence of a Kadosh (Holy), Aluah (God).

In the Hebrew Tanakh (Old Covenant), (2) two words are used in the concept of repentance:

1. NAHUM (naw-kham'), Strong's: 5162 - to be sorry, console oneself, to lament, to grieve. This word is describing the emotions that are aroused when motivated to take a different course of action.
2. SHUB (shoob), Strong's: 7725 - This word expresses a radical change of mind toward sin and implies a conscious moral separation from sin and a decision to forsake it and agree with אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)'s ways, his commandments.

In the Greek of the New Covenant, there are also (2) two words used which parallel the Hebrew usage.

1. METAMELOMAI (met-am-el'-lom-ahee), Strong's: 3338 -To change my mind, repent, to have feeling or care, concern or regret which is akin to remorse.
2. METANOEO (met-an'-oy-ah) Strong's 3341 - Repentance, Change of mind, change in the inner man, to have another mind, which describes that radical change whereby a sinner turns from the idols of sin and of ones self to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah).

Repentance then is the informing and changing of the Mind, stirring and directing the Emotions to urge the required change, and the action of the yielded Will in turning away from sin and back to the ordinances of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah).

Importance of Repentance

1. אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) commands it "אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) now commands all men everywhere to repent" **Acts 17:30** He said that He has 'winked' at our previous ignorance - He has turned a blind eye to it, but now there is no excuse. Paul reasons that the creation itself leaves man without excuse as to the reality of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) and His nature. **Romans 1: 19-21**

2. It is Necessary for Salvation **וְיָשׁוּבָה (Yahusha)** said, "Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish " (**Luke 13:3**). There is no qualification - it means ALL. It is the אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)-appointed way of salvation - "for righteous sorrow works repentance unto salvation" **2 Corinthians 7:10**

3. The Reason for Messiah's coming "You shall call his name **וְיָשׁוּבָה (Yahusha)** for he shall save his people from their sins" **Matthew 1:21**

וְיָשׁוּבָה (Yahusha) said, "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost" **Luke 19:10** "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" **Luke 5:32** "Repent, for the kingdom of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) is at hand" **Matthew 4:17** John the Baptist preached the same message **Matthew 3: 2**, and is also mentioned in **Isaiah 40: 3**

4. It was the original commission of the descendants of Abraham which is now conferred also upon all believers in the Aluah (God) of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Speaking to Yisrael, "And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a Kadosh (holy) nation" on the condition that they kept His covenant and obeyed His laws (**Exodus 19: 5**).

And again, You also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house, a Kadosh (holy) priesthood.." - a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a Kadosh (holy) nation" **1 Peter 2: 5,9**
"That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations"

Luke 24:47

"Repent and be baptised" - the execution of the commission by the Disciples **Acts 2:38**

"This message of the kingdom (i.e. repentance for the remission of sins) should be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, " **Matthew 24:14**

The need for Repentance

Repentance - a turning away from sin and back to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) is necessary, because **יְהוָה** (Yahuah)'s law says "the soul that sins, it shall die" **Ezekiel 18: 4,20** (Adam initially broke the law **Genesis 2:16-17**)

Death in all its aspects is now upon Adam's race - **Romans 5:12** As by one man sin entered in, death passed unto all men

Romans 5:14-21 Death reigned. and through that state of spiritual death sin reigned, until unmerrited favor (Grace) to repent was extended through the Messiah, **וְיֵשׁוּעַ** (Yahusha).

Romans 6:23 The wages/penalty of sin is spiritual and eternal (as well as ultimate physical death).

Romans 2: 6-12 He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Hebrew first and also the Gentile, 10 but glory and honor and Shalom (peace) for everyone who does good, the Hebrew first and also the Gentile. 11 For **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) shows no partiality. **12** All who have sinned outside the framework of Torah will die outside the framework of Torah; and all who have sinned within the framework of Torah will be judged by Torah.

Man without **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) is going his own way, setting his own standards and making his own choices, "all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned each one to his own way"

Isaiah 53: 6

for "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." **Proverbs 14:12**

But He laid upon Him, the Lamb of **יְהוָה** (Yahuah), the iniquity of us all (**Isaiah 53:6**), to atone for our sin and make reconciliation, to restore us to life! BUT, we must turn back from going our own way, to go His way.

Declaring the Word

The good news (gospel) is the power of **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) unto salvation to all them that believe" **Romans 1:16**

"They went out and declared that men should repent" **Mark 6:12**

"Testifying repentance toward **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) and Amanah (faith) toward our Adon, **וַיְהוָה** (Yahusha) Ha Mashiach" **Acts 20:21**

"the good news came in word and in power, and in the Ruach HaKodesh in much assurance, how you turned to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) from idols to serve the living and true Aluah (God) " **1 Thessalonians 1:5-10**

It is His ordained method to use preaching for the salvation of souls. **1 Corinthians 1:21**

Rebuke

"If your brother trespasses against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him " **Luke 17:3**

It is rebuke born out of love with the object of effecting repentance - not condemnation.

Hebrews 12:11, Proverbs 3:11,12

The Goodness of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)

"the goodness of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) leads you to repentance" Man's sin deserves judgment, but He extends His mercy to us. **Romans 2: 4** "Good and upright is **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), therefore He teaches sinners the way" **Psalms 25:8** "While we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us "

Romans 5: 7, 8

Divine Enabling

"By unmerited favor (grace) are you saved, through Amanah (faith), and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)" **Ephesians 2:8**

Grace is the unmerited favor by the intervention of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) on our behalf to impart by His power a spiritual enabling. Minds of men are blinded to the truth - **2 Corinthians 4:4**

They need instruction - "If perhaps **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) will grant them repentance, so that they might know the truth" **2 Timothy 2:25**

"**אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) has also granted to the Gentiles (nations) repentance unto life" **Acts 11:18**

Repentance involves all the components of our being, **Mind** (Intellect), **Emotions**, **Will** and our **Ruach** (Spirit).

Mind

A person must understand the real nature of sin, to forsake it and turn to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah). This is where the operation of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s word is effectual to bring to the sinner's mind the understanding of sin in the sight of a Kadosh (Holy) Aluah (God). Within the faculties of a person's mind, the 'turning' begins in a change of thinking and evaluation of oneself from viewing the particular thing as acceptable or pleasurable, to seeing sin as sin, agreeing with **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) and saying the same thing that He says about it. This is true confession of sin, not merely verbally pleading for forgiveness of what we have done. This requires the illuminating power of the Ruach HaKodesh to bring **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s perspective on it and agree with His judgment on it.

Emotions

Emotions are an important aspect of repentance. True repentance involves righteous sorrow for sins committed. For righteous sorrow works repentance to salvation but the sorrow of the

world (remorse) works death" **2 Corinthians 7: 9,10**

Remorse for the consequences of our sin, being self-centered, will only bring reform - a temporal effort of self improvement. It will not produce a true change of heart resulting in a character change.

True repentance includes deep humiliation and utter dependence upon **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) in our need for deliverance from our sinful state (**Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 57:15**) and includes a sense of shame (**Ezra 9:6**).

A genuine hatred for the sin and a loathing of our sinful ways will be experienced. **Psalm 97:10**
Luke 18:13

Our Will

From a heart being broken before **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), the will is engaged to resolve a change of course, forsaking the old way and turning in a new direction in which the determination is to please **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah). It is a deliberation to turn from sin and pleasing self, to pleasing Him.

A repentant person accepts responsibility for their sin, and does not blame others. **James 1:14-15**

It is "I" who sinned and needs to do something about it, calling upon the mercy of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) to break old habits, make straight paths for their feet and receive the Ruach's enabling to live a Kadosh (holy) life. **Psalm 38:18; Hebrews 12:12; 2 Peter 1:5-9, Romans 13:12-14**

So repentance is a process which commences with the mind being informed so as to effect a change of attitude toward sin, and an exposure and realisation of the nature of it in one's life, which brings a change of heart - an emotional response of turning to hate what was once indulged, and a decision within your will to forsake it.

Ruach (Spirit)

This 'turning' on our behalf, through the illumination and empowering of the Ruach of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), effects a change in our spirit-being, whereby we are initially 'reborn from above'. Thereafter the Ruach continues to illumine areas of our life which will need change.

Effect of Repentance

1. Conversion - We become new creatures "Repent and be converted" **Acts 3:19** Repentance is our response to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), Regeneration is **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s response to us
2. Changed from Death to Life, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.
Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 1:13,14
3. Forgiveness and Remission of Sins, Sins are blotted out and times of refreshing come from **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah). **Acts 3:19**
4. Just think how much more the blood of **וְיֵשׁוּעַ** (Yahusha) will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living Aluah (God). For by the power of the eternal Ruach (Spirit), **וְיֵשׁוּעַ** (Yahusha) offered himself to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. (**Hebrews 9:14**), to have confidence toward **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah). **Hebrews 10:22**
5. Rejoicing in the Shamyim (Heavens) over every sinner who repents **Luke 15:7-10**

6. Good Works - the Fruit of Repentance A requirement for a converted life is to have an outworking of spiritual fruit in one's life **Matthew 3: 8; Acts 26:20**

True repentance brings a change in lifestyle from disobedience and lawlessness to the obedience of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) and His Kadosh precepts.

"Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" **Matthew 7:14**

But the one who goes in through the gate is the sheep's own shepherd. 3 This is the one the gate-keeper admits, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep, each one by name, and leads them out. 4 After taking out all that are his own, he goes on ahead of them; and the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice. 5 They never follow a stranger but will run away from him, because strangers' voices are unfamiliar to them." **John 10: 2-5**

There is no such thing in Scripture as unconditional forgiveness. **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) has a prerequisite for forgiveness, which is that the offender must repent first. They must do this by showing true remorse for their wrongdoing, doing everything possible to make amends, and most of all, changing their life and turning to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) and away from their sinful ways. The scriptural formula for forgiveness is repentance First, Then forgiveness.

He answered, "Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), but it has not been given to them. 12 For anyone who has something will be given more, so that he will have plenty; but from anyone who has nothing, even what he does have will be taken away. 13 Here is why I speak to them in parables: they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. 14 That is, in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) which says, 'You will keep on hearing but never understand, and keep on seeing but never perceive, 15 because the heart of this people has become dull —with their ears they barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, so as not to see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and do repent and return unto me, so that I could heal them.' 16 But you, how Baruch (blessed) are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear! 17 Yes indeed! I tell you that many a prophet and many a righteous men longed to see the things you are seeing but did not see them, and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them. **Matthew 13: 11-17**

False Repentance

Because of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s impending wrath, we must make sure that our repentance is true, not false.

Luke 3:7-9 warn us of the dangers of false repentance. Verses 10-14 show us the nature of true repentance.

False repentance is a dangerous error because it does not deliver you from the coming wrath of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah).

The theme of 3:7-9 is clearly a warning. John mentions "the wrath to come," "the axe ...

already laid at the root of the trees,” and that “every tree ... that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” Furthermore, he anticipates the excuse that his Hebrew audience would raise, that they were exempt from אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)’s judgment because they were children of Abraham. He shows them that it was not valid. His warning shows that there is such a thing as false or superficial repentance and that it will not deliver a person from the impending wrath of אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah). Therefore, we need to be sure that we can identify and avoid such deception.

A. FALSE REPENTANCE IS OUTWARD, NOT INWARD.

John’s pointed question, “Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” questions the motives of his listeners. Even though they may go through the outward ritual of water baptism, they needed to examine their hearts. Were they truly repentant toward אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) for their personal sins or were they just following the religious fad of the moment? The picture behind John’s language was that when there was a brush fire, or when a farmer would burn the stubble from his field, any snakes in the grass would escape ahead of the flames. But as soon as they were safe, they would resume their subtle, crooked, poisonous ways, because their nature as snakes had not been changed. They were just trying to save their skins so that they could go on in their snake-in-the-grass ways.

In the same way, false repentance is just outward and oriented toward self, not toward אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah). The falsely repentant person may momentarily fear אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)’s judgment and “receive the Messiah.” But he has not faced the corruption of his heart before אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah). He is not truly sorrowful for offending אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)’s Kadoshness (holiness). He does not cry out to אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) for a new heart that will hate sin and love righteousness. Like Esau, he may regret, even with tears, that he has lost his birthright. Like Judas, he may feel badly that he has betrayed the Son of אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) for a few pieces of silver. But his repentance is just superficial and outward, not a matter of the heart.

B. FALSE REPENTANCE ASSUMES THE BASIC GOODNESS OF ONE’S HEART.

The religious leaders among John’s crowd would have agreed that repentance was a good thing for the tax collectors and other “sinners” in the crowd, but they did not apply it to themselves because they assumed that they were basically good people. After all, they kept the Law of Moses. They observed the religious rituals. They tithed. And, besides, they were children of Abraham. אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) had promised to Barak (bless) the seed of Abraham. They knew that אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) would judge the heathen someday, but they were not like those despised sinners.

But John—how dare him—does not call them the children of Abraham, but the children of vipers! He preaches the same message to the religious leaders as he does to the tax collectors and prostitutes: “You must truly repent and bring forth fruit in keeping with your repentance.” John says, “I don’t care how religious your background! Your heart is just as corrupt as those who are outwardly sinful. Your pride in thinking that by your own goodness you can stand in אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)’s Kadosh (holy) presence is just as offensive to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) as the greed of the tax collectors or the immorality of the prostitute.” אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)’s view of the human race is repeatedly stated in the Hebrew Scriptures:

Genesis 6:5: Then אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 8:21: ...the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth.

Psalms 14:2, 3: אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) has looked down from the Shamyim (heavens) upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah). They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalms 51:5: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Isa. 64:6: For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;...

We cannot truly repent if we cling to the notion that we have anything in ourselves to commend us to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah). The axe must be laid to the root of self-righteousness.

C. FALSE REPENTANCE WILL BE JUDGED BY אֱלֹהִים (YAHUAH).

The fearsomeness of the judgment is described by the words, “wrath,” “axe,” and “fire.” Who can endure the Kadosh (holy) wrath of the infinite Aluah (God)? Who can stand if the arm of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) is swinging the axe against him? Who can be thrown into the Lake of Fire without terrible consequence? Just because His judgment is delayed does not mean that it will not happen. To deny that a terrible day of judgment is coming, you’d have to tear out of your scripture the Book of Revelation, plus many other passages including many words of אֱלֹהִים (Yahusha).

2. True repentance is essential because it does deliver from the coming wrath.

The main idea in scriptural repentance is turning from sin to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah). If we truly have turned from sin to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), our lives will show it. Our thinking, emotions, attitudes, and behavior will be different. Repentance is a lifelong process for the believer, but it must begin at a certain point:

A. TRUE REPENTANCE BEGINS BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE SINFULNESS OF MY HEART AND APPEALING TO יְהוָה (YAHUAH) FOR A NEW HEART.

When John tells his hearers that they must not put confidence in their religious heritage as children of Abraham, he also hints at their true need, namely, that יְהוָה (Yahuah) would impart life to their stony hearts: “יְהוָה (Yahuah) is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.” יְהוָה (Yahuah) had promised through **Ezekiel 36:26, 27**

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new Ruach (spirit) within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Ruach (Spirit) within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Thus true repentance recognizes the sinfulness of my heart and realizes that I am powerless to correct the situation, because of the weakness and corruption of my flesh. So I cry out to יְהוָה (Yahuah) for a new heart, and He graciously provides what I cannot do. He imparts a new nature to me that loves righteousness and longs to obey Him. He gives me His Ruach HaKodesh to empower me to walk in His ways. Just as a tree bears fruit according to its nature, so the truly repentant soul begins to bear fruit according to this new nature, fruit that pleases יְהוָה (Yahuah) and is observed by others.

B. TRUE REPENTANCE REVEALS ITSELF BY BEARING GOOD FRUIT.

When those in the crowd who were convicted of their sin asked John, “What shall we do?” His answers are refreshingly simple and practical. Each answer relates to the second table of the Law, our relationship with our neighbor. As the disciple John put it, “If someone says, ‘I love יְהוָה (Yahuah),’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love יְהוָה (Yahuah) whom he has not seen” (**1 John 4:20**).

John the Baptist is saying that the fruits of repentance will be seen in the way we relate to others, especially in the particular station in life where we live and work.

Also, note that each of the fruits of repentance mentioned by John relates to possessions or money. John’s teaching here is not comprehensive, of course. Those who are truly repentant will be growing in the many other areas mentioned in scripture. But, as **OWYָהוּה (Yahusha)** points out in **Luke 16:10-13**, our stewardship of the money יְהוָה (Yahuah) has entrusted to us is the litmus test of whether we will be faithful in more important matters. While we all must grow in this area, and fruit takes time to ripen, those who are truly repentant will be growing in these (3) three areas that John mentions.

True repentance will bear the fruit of generosity toward the needy.

“Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise” (3:11). The word “tunic” refers to an undershirt worn under the coat or outer tunic. John is advocating the simple generosity that comes from the attitude, “אֵלֹהִים (Yahuah) has met my needs and this poor man could use what I have an abundance of. I’ll give it to him.” One fruit of repentance is growing generosity.

True repentance will bear the fruit of honesty without greed in business.

In the Roman system, tax collectors would bid with the government for the tax business in a certain region. The high bidder would get the contract, and then he would be free to pocket everything he collected above his bid. Obviously, such a system was subject to great abuse. The Hebrews hated their countrymen who went into such a corrupt business.

But John doesn’t tell the tax collectors to get out of that line of work. Rather, he tells them, “Collect no more than what you have been ordered to” (3:13). In other words, be honest and don’t be greedy. Do your job in a fair and upright manner.

Forgiveness

A definition for forgiveness could be -- giving up my right to hurt you, for hurting me. It is impossible to live on this fallen planet without getting hurt, offended, misunderstood, lied to, and rejected. Learning how to respond properly is one of the basics of the believers life.

The word “forgive” means to wipe the slate clean, to pardon, to cancel a debt. When we wrong someone, we seek his or her forgiveness in order for the relationship to be restored. It is important to remember that forgiveness is not granted because a person deserves to be forgiven. Instead, it is an act of love, mercy, and grace.

The words "forgive" and "forgiveness" in the Tanakh (Old Testament) are (4) Four Hebrew words: Kaphar Strong's: 3722 (Atonement), Nasa or Nasah, Strong's: 5375 (to take/Forge), Salach (Forgive) Strong's: 5545, Selichah (forgiveness) Strong's: 5547.

Kaphar (kaw-far')

The Hebrew word kaphar and its derivatives appear in 154 passages in the Hebrew scripture.' The original meaning of this word is “to Atone”, "to cover," "to cover over," or "to overspread."

In about (80) eighty passages of the 154 instances in the Hebrew Tanakh (Old Testament), kaphar is translated "to atone" or "to make atonement." It is interesting to notice that the cover of the ark, the mercy seat, as it is described in **Exodus 25** and **Leviticus 16**, is the noun kapporeth derived from kaphar.

In (9) nine places in the English Bible kaphar is translated "purge." **Psalm 79:9** is an illustration of this: "Help us, O אֵלֹהִים (Yahuah) of our salvation, for the esteem of your name: and deliver us, and purge away [kaphar} our sins, for your name's sake." When the words

"purge away" are given as the translation of kaphar, then it is suggested that the "making atonement" is strongly connected with "purging sins." The same is true in these few passages where kaphar is translated "be merciful," "put off," "be pacified," or "pardon."

In the English Bible kaphar is used (3) three times to express the idea "forgive."

Be merciful, O אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), unto your people Yisrael, whom you have redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto your people of Yisrael's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven [kaphar] them."

When the first innocent blood was shed אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) said to Cain, "Your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground" (**Gen. 4:10**). Literally, it is said to Yisrael, "The blood shall be covered [kaphar]" and the meaning of covering is that "the blood shall be atoned [kaphar]." In the Psalms we find the second use of kaphar to express the idea "forgive."

But he, being full of compassion, forgave [kaphar] their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time he turned his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.'

The (78th) seventy-eighth psalm describes אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)'s wonders toward Yisrael both in Egypt and in the desert. It is literally said that אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) because of His compassion "covered [kaphar] their iniquity" or "made atonement [kaphar] for their iniquity."

The (3rd) third passage where we find "forgive" given as the translation of kaphar is in the book of Jeremiah:

Yet, אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), you know all their counsel against me to slay me: forgive [kaphar] not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from your sight, but let them be overthrown before you; deal thus with them in the time of thine anger.'

In this verse Jeremiah speaks against those who make devices against him as אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)'s prophet. Literally, he says to אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), "You shall not cover [kaphar] their iniquity." The intensive form of kaphar is used in this passage; by the use of kaphar, Jeremiah indicates that he has in mind אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)'s atoning covering of sin.

Nasah (naw-saw')

Nasah and its derivatives appear in the Hebrew Scriptures about (650) six hundred and fifty times.' The meaning of this verb is 1) "the lifting up; 2) the carrying; and 3) the taking away of a burden." "

It is interesting to notice that nasah is one of the Hebrew words used to represent acceptance. This is the case (13) thirteen times. Its use is illustrated from the story of Lot praying for Sodom, where אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) says to Lot, "See, I have accepted you concerning this thing also" (**Genesis 19:21**).

In the English Bible we find some (15) fifteen passages " where "forgive" is the translation of nasah', and in each instance it implies that the sin is "taken away," as exemplified in **Hosea 14:2**, "Take away [nasah] all iniquity." Nasah means "forgiveness" or "taking away sin" only because it implies that an "atonement" is made. The Levitical law states that if a man transgresses the law then "shall [he] bear [nasah his iniquity]" (**Lev. 5:17**). But each man who has sinned against **Hosea 14:2** will feel like Cain after he had killed his brother, "My punishment [the sin and its consequences] is greater than I can bear [nasah]" (**Genesis 4:13**).

In the Levitical law it is taught that the priest made atonement for the congregation by eating "the sin offering in the Kadosh (holy) place" and in this way did "bear [nasah] the iniquity of the congregation" (**Leviticus 10:17**). Prophetically it is said of Messiah, "He bare the sin of many" (**Isaiah 53:12**).

When the idea "forgiveness" is expressed by nasah' then the (3) three basic meanings of this Hebrew word are interpreting in an expressive way one aspect of the doctrine of forgiveness. Naga' stands for the "lifting up" of the burden of sin. **וַיִּשָּׂא** (Yahusha) is "bearing" it, and in this way it is "taken away."

The Hebrew word nasah suggests a broad conception of the doctrine of forgiveness, namely the actual reclaiming from sin. But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says **יְהוָה** (Yahuah). For as the Shamyim (heavens) are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." **Isaiah 55:7-9**. **יְהוָה** (Yahuah)'s forgiveness is not merely forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O **יְהוָה** (Yahuah); and renew a right Ruach (spirit) within me." **Psalms 51:10**.

And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far bath He removed our transgressions from us?" **Psalms 103:12**

David's repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his crime. No desire to escape the judgments threatened, inspired his prayer. But he saw the enormity of his transgression against **יְהוָה** (Yahuah); he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. David did not in despair give over the struggle. In the promises of **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) to repentant sinners, he saw the evidence of his pardon and acceptance.

Salach (saw-lakh') :

Salach and its derivatives appear approximately (50) fifty times. This root is translated (33) thirty-three times as "forgive," (2) twice as "forgiveness," (1) once as "spare," and (14) fourteen times as "pardon." Gesenius says about this word: "The primary idea seems to be that of lightness, lifting up."

It has been noticed that in each place salach is used it expresses the divine pardon extended to the sinner. No other idea has been assigned to it. In no case has the word been used of human forgiveness between men. The following two passages exemplify the use of salach:

Exodus 34:9. "And he said, If now I have found grace in your sight, O **יְהוָה** (Yahuah), let my Adonai, I pray you, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon [salach] our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance."

1 Kings 8:30. "And hearken to the supplication of your servant, and of your people Yisrael, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear in Shamyim (heavens) your dwelling place: and when you hear, forgive [salach]."

It has been noticed that salach is given to those who "turn to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) **Ex. 34:9**," "give

supplications," or "that seek the truth." To the one "whose heart turns away from **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)" it is said, "**אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) will not spare [salach] him" (**Deut. 29:20**).

It appears, on the whole, that the process represented by this word Salach is the Divine restoration of an offender into favor, whether through his own repentance or in the intercession of another. Though not identical with atonement, the (2) two are nearly related. In fact, the covering of the sin and the forgiveness of the sinner can only be understood as (2) two aspects of (1) one truth: for both found their fullness in **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s provision of mercy through **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha).

That the divine pardon extended to the sinner is different from human forgiveness is suggested by the usage of the Hebrew word salach, for in no case has this word been used of human forgiveness between men, but only to express the divine favor and pardon toward a sinner. The divine forgiveness as a gift is portrayed in the following way:

Forgiveness, reconciliation with **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), comes to us, not as a reward for our works, it is not bestowed because of the merit of sinful men, but it is a gift unto us, having the spotless righteousness of the Messiah as its foundation."

When the Tanakh (Old Testament) of the English Bible has "to forgive" as the translation of the Hebrew work kaphar, then a close connection and conception is suggested between forgiveness and justification. In the Psalms it is said of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), "But he, being full of compassion, forgave [kaphar] their iniquity, and destroyed them not." Literally this verse says, "But he, being full of compassion, covered their iniquity." The apostle Peter says, "Love covers up a mass of sins." "

וְיֵשׁוּעָא (Yahusha) describes in the parable of the wedding garment, in the (22nd) twenty-second chapter of Matthew, how **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) covers our sins.

Only the covering which **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha) Himself has provided brings us into **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha) will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . . **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha) in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. . . . Then as **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)."

When a person's sins are forgiven, then it implies that he stands covered by the righteousness of **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha) and is in the eyes of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) justified.

Not only does the Hebrew word kaphar point to a synonymous conception of forgiveness and justification, it also suggests a close connection between forgiveness and atonement. The idea "to make an atonement," as it is found in the Tanakh (Old Testament), is a translation of kaphar. In the Levitical law the following command was given to the sinner:

And he shall bring his trespass offering unto **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) for his sin which he has sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement [kaphar] for him concerning his sin."

Literally it is said, "And the priest covered over him concerning his sin." The death of **וְיֵשׁוּעָא** (Yahusha) has its source in **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s desire to forgive and its effect in the covering of sin is suggested by kaphar, which describes forgiveness as the atoning covering of sins.

I've heard people suggest that **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) forgets our sins when He forgives. They usually cite **Hebrews 10:17**: "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more". Or **Isaiah 43:25**: "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."

But those verses don't say **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) forgets our sins. They say He will not remember them. What's the difference? To forget something is to have no memory of it. Obviously **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), who is omniscient, has not lost His memory of our transgressions. Rather, He refuses to call them to mind. He promises not to bring them up. They are covered by the shed blood of **וְיֵשׁוּעַ** (Yahusha) and forgiven because of this sacrifice, which was given to establish the New Covenant for all those that would believe and obey.

Unconditional forgiveness is canceling a debt to all those who intentionally offend us, whether or not they own up to what they have done. Offering forgiveness without repentance, however, does not follow the scriptural model of forgiveness (**Luke 17:3,4**).

Scripture says that we are to forgive as **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) forgave us (**Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13**). **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) forgives us when we repent (**Mark 1:15, Luke 13:3,5, Acts 3:19**). He does not grant forgiveness to those of us who are stiff-necked and refuse to repent. We must recognize our sin and repent to receive and enjoy **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s merciful forgiveness. **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) requires repentance and so must we.