

Fill Your Own Cup 5786 – Omer Series – Interpersonal Relationships

Session Four – Amends, Repair, Forgiveness

1) Tara Brach, Self-Forgiveness and Making Amends, December 05, 2012

<http://blog.tarabrach.com/2012/12/self-forgiveness-and-making-amends.html>

The urge to make amends arises when we have had the courage to face the reality of our impact on others. It arises when our hearts yearn to relieve their suffering or when we dedicate ourselves to not causing further suffering. Even if someone is no longer alive or an active part of our lives, it is possible to acknowledge the truth of his or her hurt and to offer him or her our wishes, prayers, and remorse.

As we intentionally take responsibility for our actions, the harsh grip of self-aversion loosens, and we come home to a sense of connectedness, peace, and ease. This healing is very close to the Christian and Jewish process of atonement. By atoning for our errors, we make possible reconciliation—with God, with the injured other, and with our own heart and being.

2) Mishna Tractate Yoma 8:9

...For transgressions between a person and God, Yom Kippur atones; however, for transgressions between a person and another, Yom Kippur does not atone until he appeases the other person...

משנה יומא ח:ט

עֲבֹרוֹת שְׁבִין אָדָם לְמִקּוֹם, יוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר. עֲבֹרוֹת שְׁבִין אָדָם לְחֵבֵרוֹ, אִין יוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר, עַד שְׂרָצָה אֶת חֵבֵרוֹ

3) Babylonian Talmud Tractate Yoma 87a

Rabbi Yosei bar Hanina said: Anyone who asks forgiveness of his friend should not ask more than three times, as it is stated: "Please, please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did evil to you. And now, please forgive" (Genesis 50:17). The verse uses the word please three times, which shows that one need not ask more than three times, after which the insulted friend must be appeased and forgive. **And if the insulted friend dies before he can be appeased, one brings ten people, and stands them at the grave of the insulted friend, and says in front of them: I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel, and against so-and-so whom I wounded.**

תלמוד בבלי מסכת יומא

פז.
וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בַר חַנִּינָא: כָּל הַמְבַקֵּשׁ מִטּוֹ מִחֲבֵירוֹ, אַל יִבְקֵשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ יוֹתֵר מִשְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים, שְׁנֹאמֵר: "אֲנָא שָׂא נָא וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא".
וְאִם מֵת — מְבִיא עֶשְׂרֵה בְנֵי אָדָם וּמַעֲמִידֵן עַל קְבֻרָתוֹ, וְאוֹמֵר: חַטָּאתִי לֵה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְפָלוּגֵי שְׁחֵבְלֵתִי בּוֹ.

4) Genesis 50:15-21

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrong that we did him!" So they sent this message to Joseph, "Before his death your father left this instruction: So shall you say to Joseph, 'Forgive, I urge you, the offense and guilt of your brothers who treated you so harshly.' Therefore, please forgive the offense of the servants of the God of your father's [house]." And Joseph was in tears as they spoke to him. His brothers went to him themselves, flung themselves before him, and said, "We are prepared to be your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Have no fear! Am I a substitute for God?"

בראשית נ:טו-כא

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶחָיו-יוֹסֵף כִּי-מֵת אָבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לּוֹ: יִשְׁטַמְנוּ יוֹסֵף וְהָשִׁיב יְשִׁיב לָנוּ אֶת כָּל-הַרָעָה אֲשֶׁר גָּמְלָנוּ אֹתוֹ: וַיֵּצֵאוּ אֶל-יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אֲבִיךָ צִוָּה לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר: כֹּה-תֹאמְרוּ לְיוֹסֵף אֲנָא שָׂא נָא פְּשַׁע אֶחָיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי-רָעָה גָּמְלוּךָ וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לִפְשַׁע עַבְדֵי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיךָ וְיִבְרַךְ יוֹסֵף בְּדַבְרָם אֱלֹהֵי: וַיִּלְכוּ גַם-אֶחָיו וַיִּפְּלוּ לִפְנֵי וַיֹּאמְרוּ הִנֵּנוּ לְךָ לְעַבְדִּים: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף אַל-תִּירְאוּ כִּי הִתַּחַת אֲלֵהֶם אָנֹכִי:

Besides, although you intended me harm, God intended it for good, so as to bring about the present result—the survival of many people. And so, fear not. I will sustain you and your dependents.” Thus he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

וְאַתֶּם חֲשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה אֲלֵהִים חֲשַׁבָה לְטוֹבָה לְמַעַן עֲשֶׂה כִּיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְהַחֲיִית עִם-רַב: וְעַתָּה אֶל-תִּירְאוּ אֲנִי אֶכְלָל אֶתְכֶם וְאַתֵּן טַפְּכֶם וַיְנַחֵם אוֹתָם וַיְדַבֵּר עַל-לִבָּם:

5) Mishna Torah, Laws of Repentance 2:10

It is forbidden for a person to be cruel and refuse to be appeased. Rather, he should be easily pacified, but hard to anger. When the person who wronged him asks for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a complete heart and a willing spirit. Even if he aggravated and wronged him severely, he should not seek revenge or bear a grudge.

משנה תורה, הלכות תשובה ב:

י' אִסוּר לְאָדָם לְהִיּוֹת אֶכְזָרִי וְלֹא יִתְפַּיֵס אֶלָּא יְהֵא נוֹחַ לְרַצּוֹת וְקִשָּׁה לְכַעַס וּבִשְׂעָה שֶׁמִּבְקֶשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ הַחוּטָא לְמַחַל מוֹחֵל בְּלֵב שְׁלֵם וּבִנְפֹשׁ חִפְצָה. וְאֶפְלוּ הֵצִיר לוֹ וְחֻטָּא לוֹ הִרְבֵּה לֹא יִקָּם וְלֹא יִטַר.

6) Babylonian Talmud Tractate Nedarim 55a

Rava sent R. Yosef a question: What is considered Alalta (produce)?
R. Yosef answered; They agree that if one made a vow using the generic term “grain” only the five biblical grains are forbidden. (the Aramaic translation of produce is Alalta.)
Abaye said: This does not answer the question! Tevu'ah connotes only the five grains, but Alalta includes everything!
Rava heard this, and said: I knew that Alalta includes all that grows. My question was whether rental of houses and ships is included. Perhaps since houses and ships depreciate, this is not considered increase; Or, since the depreciation is not discernible (in the short run), it is considered increase.
It (Rava’s restatement of his question) was said in front of R. Yosef. He said: 'If he knows himself, why did he ask us?'
He became angry!
Rava heard about this, and came to Rav Yosef on Erev Yom Kippur He found Rav Yosef’s attendant mixing wine for Rav Yosef.
He said: Give me the cup, and I will mix it, and give it to him.
When Rav Yosef drank it, he said: This is how Rava the son of Rav Yosef B. Hama mixes wine!
Rava said: Yes, it is me.
R. Yosef said: You may not sit down until you explain to me the verse "From Midbar (to) Matanah, and from Matanah (to) Nachli'el, and from Nachli'el (to) Bamot." (Numbers 21:18)
Rava said: When a person makes himself like a Midbar (the dessert) Torah is given to him for a Matanah (gift).
When he receives a gift of Torah, it is like a Nachalah (inheritance) to him. Once it is like an inheritance to him, he rises to Bamot (a high position).
If he raises himself (becomes haughty), God lowers him - "And from Bamot (to) ha'Gai (the valley)"; further, he will be stuck in the ground - "v'Nishkafah (this is like Iskufa, a threshold that is trampled on) on the face of ha'Yeshimon"; If he repents (from his haughtiness), God will lift him up.

תלמוד בבלי נדרים נה.

שלחה רבא לקמיה דרב יוסף עללתא היכי מיקריא? אמר רב יוסף מתניתין היא ושון בנודר מן התבואה שאין אסור אלא מחמשת המינין
א"ל אב"י מי דמי תבואה לא משמע אלא מחמשת המינין עללתא כל מילי
משמע אהדרוהו לקמיה דרבא אמר הא לא קא מיבעיא לי דעללתא כל מילי משמע הדא הוא דאיבעיא לי שכר בתים ושכר ספינות מאי? מי אמרינן כיון דפחתן לאו עללתא היא או דילמא כיון דלא ידיע פחתייהו עללתא היא?
אמרוהו רבנן קמיה דרב יוסף אמר וכי מאחר דלא צריך לן אמאי שלח לן?
אי קפד רב יוסף שמע רבא ואתא לקמיה במעלי יומא דכפורי
אשכחיה לשמעיה דהוה קא מזיג קמיה כסא דחמרא אמר ליה הב לי דאמזיג ליה אנא ייב ליה וקא מזיג איהו כסא דחמרא כי קא שתי אמר הדין מיזגא דמי למיזגא דרבא בריה דרב יוסף בר חמא
אמר ליה הוא ניהו
אמר ליה לא תיתיב אכרעך עד דאמרת לי פירושא דהדין מילתא מאי דכתיב (במדבר כא, יח) וממדבר מתנה וממתנה נחליאל ומנחליאל במות
א"ל כיון שעושה אדם את עצמו כמדבר שהוא מופקר לכל תורה ניתנה לו במתנה שנאמר וממדבר מתנה וכיון שניתנה לו במתנה נחלו אל שנאמר וממתנה נחליאל וכיון שנחלו אל עולה לגדולה שנאמר ומנחליאל במות ואם הגביה עצמו הקב"ה משפילו שנאמר (במדבר כא, כ) ומבמות הגיא ולא עוד אלא ששוקעין אותו בקרקע

	שנאמר (במדבר כא, כ) ונשקפה על פני הישימון ואם חוזר בו הקב"ה מגביהו
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7) Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, The Force of Forgiveness, Vayigash • 5770<https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/vayigash/the-force-of-forgiveness/>

The Torah is making a statement of the most fundamental kind. Historically and psychologically, families precede society and the state. If brothers cannot live together in peace, then they cannot form a stable society or a cohesive nation. Maimonides explains that forgiveness and the associated command not to bear a grudge ([Lev. 19:18](#)) are essential to the survival of society: "For as long as one nurses a grievance and keeps it in mind, one may come to take vengeance. The Torah emphatically warns us not to bear a grudge, so that the impression of the wrong shall be quite obliterated and be no longer remembered. This is the right principle. It alone makes civilization and human relationships possible." (Deot 7: 8).

Forgiveness is not merely personal, it is also political. It is essential to the life of a nation if it is to maintain its independence for long. There is no greater proof of this than Jewish history itself. Twice Israel suffered defeat and exile. The first – the conquest of the northern kingdom followed a century and a half later by the destruction of the First Temple and the Babylonian exile – was a direct consequence of the division of the kingdom into two after the death of Solomon. The second – defeat at the hands of the Romans and the destruction of the Second Temple – was the result of intense factionalism and internal strife, *sinat chinam*.

When people lack the ability to forgive, they are unable to resolve conflict. The result is division, factionalism, and the fragmentation of a nation into competing groups and sects. That is why Joseph's forgiveness is the bridge between Genesis and Exodus. The first is about the children of Israel as a family, the second is about them as a nation. Central to both is the experience of slavery, first Joseph's, then the entire people. The message could not be clearer. Those who seek freedom must learn to forgive.