Institute 4-20-21 **Comparing Biblical Doctrines with Restoration Scripture: FORGIVENESS**

**Introduction**

As we connect the last month of classes, forgiving is a companion principle to repentance and the Savior’s atonement. We can receive the healing of the atonement to help us forgive. As we forgive, we become more Christ-like. Forgiveness is the very reason God sent His Son.

**Jewish Thought**

* **Sirach 28:2** (In the OT Apocrypha, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*): “If you forgive someone who has wronged you, your sins will be forgiven when you pray.”
* The **Talmud** teaches: “Let this be a token in thine hand—each time that thou showest mercy, God will show mercy on thee; and if thou showest not mercy, neither will God show mercy on thee.”
* The ***Encyclopedia Judaica*** states: “Because of the imperfection of every mortal, even such righteous men as Abraham are dependent on God's mercy. Recognizing human frailty, God **forgives** transgressors, especially those who themselves are **forgiving** (Cecil Roth, 1971, p. 1383).
* Modern **Jewish scholars** find a time when God will no longer forgive: “The unrepentant wicked are destroyed by the eschatological upheavals or condemned at the judgment. No further opportunity for repentance and forgiveness is allowed.” (Neusner, *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period,* 233).
* According to Jewish law in the Talmud, a guilty person should ask for forgiveness three times.  If the victim will not forgive you after asking three times, the guilty party is no longer obligated to ask forgiveness. God will grant pardon by default.

**Catholic**

# “Catholics believe that sins forgiven are removed from the soul (John 20), and not merely covered by the merits of Christ. Only God can forgive sin, since He alone can infuse sanctifying grace by which sin is expelled. God can forgive sin either immediately, in response to an act of perfect contrition, or mediately, through a sacrament. The sacraments primarily directed to the forgiveness of sin are baptism and penance” (*Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, “Forgiveness”).

* His Holiness John Paul II, "Day of Pardon," *Let us forgive and ask forgiveness!* (March 12, 2000, the First Sunday of Lent)

**Islamic**

Islam claims to be a religion of peace. Allah gives forgiveness, and His followers are to forgive other and avoid revenge. Here are two Quranic verses that address forgiveness:

* “Those mindful (of Allah). . . (are) those who . . . control their anger and pardon others” (Surah Ali-’Imran, 3:133-4).
* “But if you pardon, overlook, and forgive their faults, then Allah is truly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (Surah At-Taghabun, 64:14)

**Restoration Thought**:

* **President Gordon B. Hinckley** taught: “Forgiveness . . . may be the greatest virtue on earth, and certainly the most needed. There is so much of meanness and abuse, of intolerance and hatred” (General Conference, Oct. 2005, 78).
* **Elder Gordon B. Hinckley** “How difficult it is for any of us to forgive those who have injured us. We are all prone to brood on the evil done us. That brooding becomes as a gnawing and destructive canker. Is there a virtue more in need of application in our time than the virtue of forgiving and forgetting? . . . I submit that it takes neither strength nor intelligence to brood in anger over wrongs suffered, to go through life with a spirit of vindictiveness, to dissipate one’s abilities in planning retribution. There is no peace in the nursing of a grudge” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign,* 6/1991).
* **Elder Gordon B. Hinckley** “If there be any who nurture in their hearts the poisonous brew of enmity toward another, I plead with you to ask the Lord for strength to forgive. . . . Let us follow [H]is advice and “bind up the wounds—oh, the many wounds that have been caused by cutting words, by stubbornly cultivated grievances, by scheming plans to “get even” with those who may have wronged us” (ibid.).
* **Elder Kevin R. Duncan** “Even though we may be a victim once, we need not be a victim twice by carrying the burden of hate, bitterness, pain, resentment, or even revenge. We can forgive, and we can be free!” (General Conference, April 2016).
* **Elder Kevin R. Duncan** “To forgive is not to condone. We do not rationalize bad behavior or allow others to mistreat us because of their struggles, pains, or weaknesses. But we can gain greater understanding and peace when we see with a broader perspective” (ibid.).
* **Elder Kevin R. Duncan** “The Savior’s Atonement is not just for those who need to repent; it is also for those who need to forgive. If you are having trouble forgiving another person or even yourself, ask God to help you. Forgiveness is a glorious, healing principle. We do not need to be a victim twice. We can forgive” (ibid.).

**SCRIPTURE**

***How often do we need to Forgive?***

In a long discussion on forgiving others, Peter asked the Lord if Christians should forgive seven times. This was actually a generous offer. The Jewish rule was that you should forgive someone three times, not more. Jesus teaches a very different principle here than Peter understood. The Lord does not add to the Jewish law, as “new wine/doctrine” in the old bottles. He hopes his disciples will grasp the higher law that “forgiveness from Jesus is qualitative not quantitative.” (Edersheim, 125).

**Matthew 18:21-22**,

“Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven

**Luke 17:3-4**,

“If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.  And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

**D&C 98:40**

And so on unto the second and third time; and as oft as thine enemy repenteth of the trespass wherewith he has trespassed against thee, thou shalt forgive him, until seventy times seven.

We find these same truths in both the Bible and in the scriptures of the restoration.

**BIBLE**

* **Gen 50:17**, “Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.”
* **Leviticus 16:30** “On this day, shall the *priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may clean from all your sins before the Lord”
* **1 Samuel 24:1-15** Young King David forgave King Saul for trying to take his life
* **Amos 1:3**, “…and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.”
* **Matt 5:44**, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”
* **Matt 6:12 // Luke 11:4 // 3 Nephi 11:11**, “**F**orgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”
* **Mt 6:14-15** Jesus ends his example of the Lord’s Prayer in praise, but then expounds on forgiving others. “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”
* **Matt 18:15 (**[**3 Nephi 13:14**](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/13.14?lang=eng#13)**, 15**), **“**If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” [see all Mt 18].
* **Mark 11:25-26**, “When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your …
* **Luke 6:**[**37**](http://biblehub.com/luke/6-37.htm) “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven”
* **Luke 7:42-43 42** “…When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. …which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most.. Thou hast rightly judged….I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”
* **Luke 15:11-30** Prodigal Son—father forgives, brother words have double meaning “thou hast killed for him the fatted calf” (as a type of Christ’s sacrifice).
* **Luke 23:34** “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do”
* **Colos 3:13**, “…forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you”
* **Eph 4:32** “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God…hath forgiven you”
* **2 Corinth 2:7,10** “ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. …To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ”

### BOOK OF MORMON

### 1 Nephi 7:20, 21; “I did frankly forgive them all that they had done . . .”

### [Enos 1:5](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/enos/1.5?lang=eng#4), 9, 11 “And there came a voice unto me, saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee…when I heard these words I began to feel a desire for the welfare of my brethren the Nephites … the Lamanites…”

### Mosiah 26:22, 29, 30, 31, “…Ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses; … he that forgiveth not his neighbor’s trespasses when he says that he repents, the same hath brought himself under condemnation.”

### DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS:

***Forgive Enemies:* *Forgive in political strife and sue for peace not war 10x!***

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| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:16 | “Renounce war and proclaim peace.” |
| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:34 | “If a nation should proclaim war . . . first lift a standard of peace.” |
| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:35-36 | “If that people did not accept the offer of peace, neither the second or third, they should bring this testimonies before the Lord. Then , I the Lord . . . justify them in going out to battle against that nation.” |
| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:39-40 | “if after thine enemy has come upon thee the first time, he repent and come unto thee praying thy forgiveness, thou shalt forgive him, and shalt hold it no more as a testimony against thine enemy—And so on unto the second and third time; and as oft as thine enemy repenteth of the trespass wherewith he has trespassed against thee, thou shalt forgive him, until seventy times seven.” |
| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:42-43 | “And if he trespass against thee the second time, and repent not, nevertheless thou shalt forgive him.  And if he trespass against thee the third time, and repent not, thou shalt also forgive him.” |
| August 6, 1833 | D&C 98:44-45 | “if he trespass against thee the fourth time thou shalt not forgive him, but shalt bring these testimonies before the Lord . . . if he do this [repent], thou shalt forgive him with all thine heart; and if he do not this, I, the Lord, will avenge thee of thine enemy an hundred-fold” |
| December 16, 1833 | D&C 101:11, 16 | “Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations  . . . when the cup of their iniquity is full . . . be still and know that I am God” |
| June 22, 1834 | D&C 105:25-26 | “I will give unto you favor and grace in their eyes, that you may rest in peace and safety, while you are saying unto the people: Execute judgment and justice for us according to law, and redress us of our  Wrongs . . . in this way you may find favor in the eyes of the people, until the army of Israel becomes very great” |
| June 22, 1834 | D&C 105:38-39 | “And again I say unto you, sue for peace, not only to the people that have smitten you, but also to all people; And lift up an ensign of peace, and make a proclamation of peace unto the ends of the earth” |
| June 22, 1834 | D&C 105:40 | “And make proposals for peace unto those who have smitten you, according to the voice of the Spirit which is in you, and all things shall work together for your good.” |

### *Between 1829-43*, *How many times did the Lord say*, “thy sins are forgiven thee,” for either Joseph or others?

### D&C 5:21 [1829], the Lord commands the prophet “Joseph, to repent and walk more uprightly before me, and to yield to the persuasions of men no more.” But then in about 30 verses we find him forgiving him.

***You are forgiven***

* **D&C 25:3 “T**hy sins are forgiven thee, and thou art an elect lady, whom I have called.”
* **D&C** **75:7-8 “[**William E. McLellin] chasten him for the murmurings of his heart; And he sinned; nevertheless, I forgive him and say unto him again, Go ye into the south countries.”
* **D&C 84:61 “**For I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing [testimony](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/#note61d) to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you.”
* **D&C 82:1**  “Verily, verily, I say unto you, my servants, that inasmuch as you have forgiven one another …”
* **D&C 112:2-3** “…I the Lord, was not well pleased. Nevertheless, inasmuch as thou hast abased thyself thou shalt be exalted; therefore, all thy sins are forgiven thee.”
* **D&C 132:56, “L**et mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses; and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses, wherein she has trespassed against me; and I, the Lord thy God, will bless her, and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice.”

***Forgive Others Or You Have A Greater Sin***

* D&C 64:9-11 “Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin. I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men. And ye ought to say in your hearts—let God judge between me and thee, and reward thee according to thy deeds.”

**NO FORGIVENESS: Blasphemy against Holy Ghost**

Forgiveness is not granted for blasphemy against a sure witness according to: Matt. 12:31–32; Mark 3:28–29; Luke 12:10; Heb 6:4–8; D&C 76:34–35 (also there is limited forgiveness for murder, see 1 John 1:15; D&C 42:18, 79; History of the Church 5.391-382).

***Joseph Smith***

The Prophet Joseph discussed this state as rare, but with some apostates.

What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against him. After a man has sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him. He has got to say that the sun does not shine while he sees it; he has got to deny Jesus Christ when the heavens have been opened unto him, and to deny the plan of salvation with his eyes open to the truth of it; and from that time he begins to be an enemy. This is the case with many apostates of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (King Follett Sermon, 1844).

For those who have not seen the Lord, but sinned after have received their calling and election, Joseph taught,

I then said to the Elders, As I have done so do ye; wash ye, therefore, one another’s feet; and by the power of the Holy Ghost I pronounced them all clean from the blood of this generation, but if any of them should sin willfully after they were thus cleansed, and sealed up unto eternal life, they should be given over unto the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption (*History of the Church,* 7.323-324).