

“I AM”: Forgiver

How big is your God?
How big is your sin?

Is your God bigger than your sin...or the other way around?

Is there something in your past, something that you can't seem to shake? Is there something you have done wrong and the memory comes back to haunt you from time to time?

Perhaps you hurt someone in such a way that you cannot forgive yourself. Whenever you think of that person, you remember what you did and the guilt feelings rush back.

Perhaps it is something you did that someone witnessed (or you think they witnessed). When you are around that person, the memory returns. You wonder what they think of you. You know what you think of yourself. The guilt hangs over you.

Do you have some sort of sin that will just not go away? (Some call it a vice or an addiction.) It is your weakness and you know it. You wish you could shake it, but you cannot. Stubborn 'will power' is not enough. You fall once again and guilt washes in all over again...and again...and again.

Have you ever gotten angry with God? Not everyone has, but some people shout back at God when things go badly. Some even refuse God or rebel against him. Have you? Have you ever shaken your fist at God and in your heart walked away for a time? Coming back to God is so hard, so very hard. You think, "How can he accept me back?"

Can he really?

Did you know that forgiveness is part of the character of God? It is His nature to forgive, and what will he forgive?

Speaking about Himself, God said that He forgives: *sin, iniquity, and transgression*. These are three different words in the Hebrew Old Testament, each describing a different way in which a person can sin.

Their precise meanings might be illustrated by a person who is going along the right moral path toward good....

Sin *misses the goal*, perhaps by wandering aimlessly, perhaps by distraction. To 'sin' is to *fail or come short of the goal*. **God forgives sin**.

Iniquity *distorts* the path by *bending or twisting* the right path and ultimately not achieving the goal. 'Iniquity' would include different ways in which a person *rationalizes* wrong or *renames* wrong as if it is right. **God forgives iniquity**.

Transgression is an abrupt *breaking off* of the path. It comes with the conscious intent to leave the path; *rebellion*. **God forgives transgression**.

You see, God forgives all kinds of sin regardless of the way in which a person sins. So, there is NO WAY OUT...You cannot possibly think that God cannot forgive your sins. As a result, there is true hope for everybody!

Now, someone reading this is dying to interject: "Don't forget to tell folks that they must repent!"

That is correct, but just calm down; this is not about US. This is about God and His forgiveness. It is about Him and His divine character.

Here's the point. God does not have to try to forgive. Forgiveness is not 'second' nature to God. He does not have to wrestle with the reality of your sin and how repulsive it is and then make himself forgive by force of will. God forgives because it is his nature to forgive. It is just the way He is.

It is as if God said to Moses, "I AM who I am...I AM a forgiver."

He did.

The Lord God...who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin.... --Exodus 34:7

How great is our God!