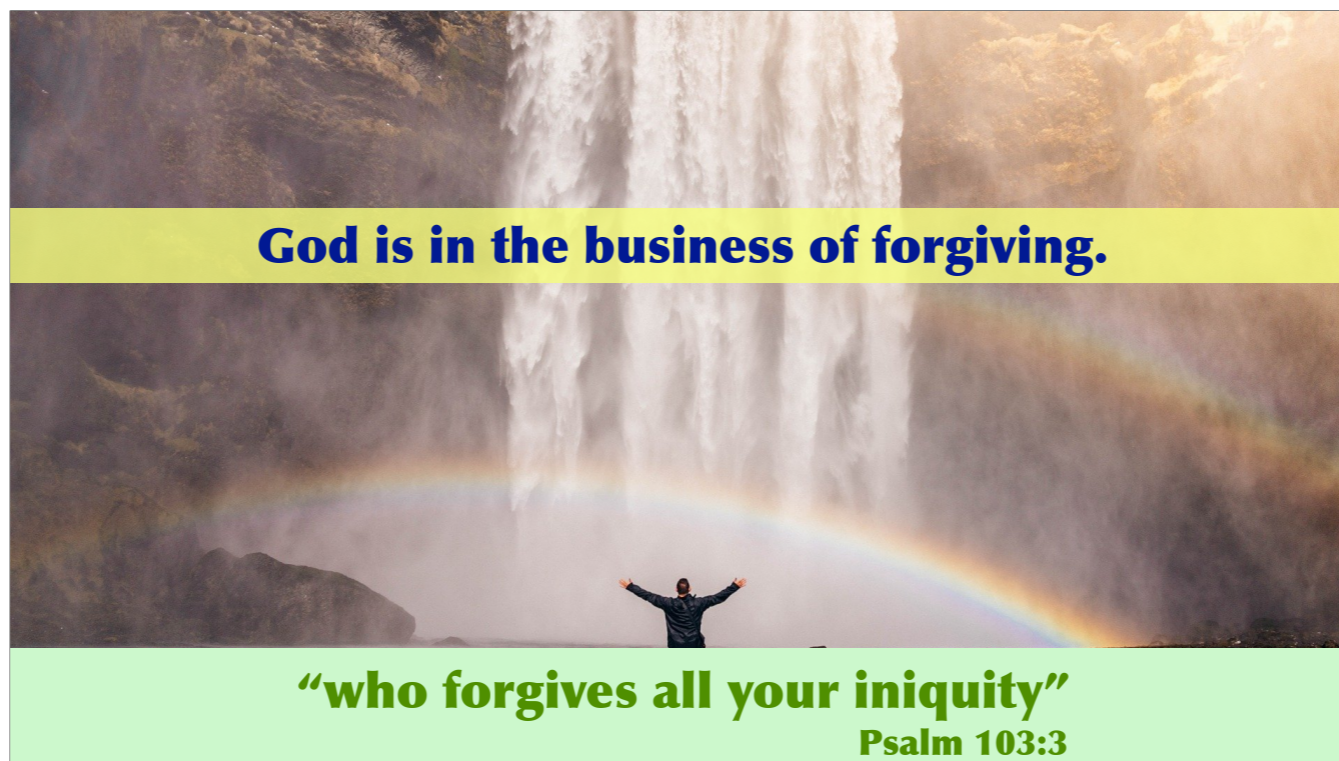


**Do Not
Forgive
Them!**

Isaiah 2:9

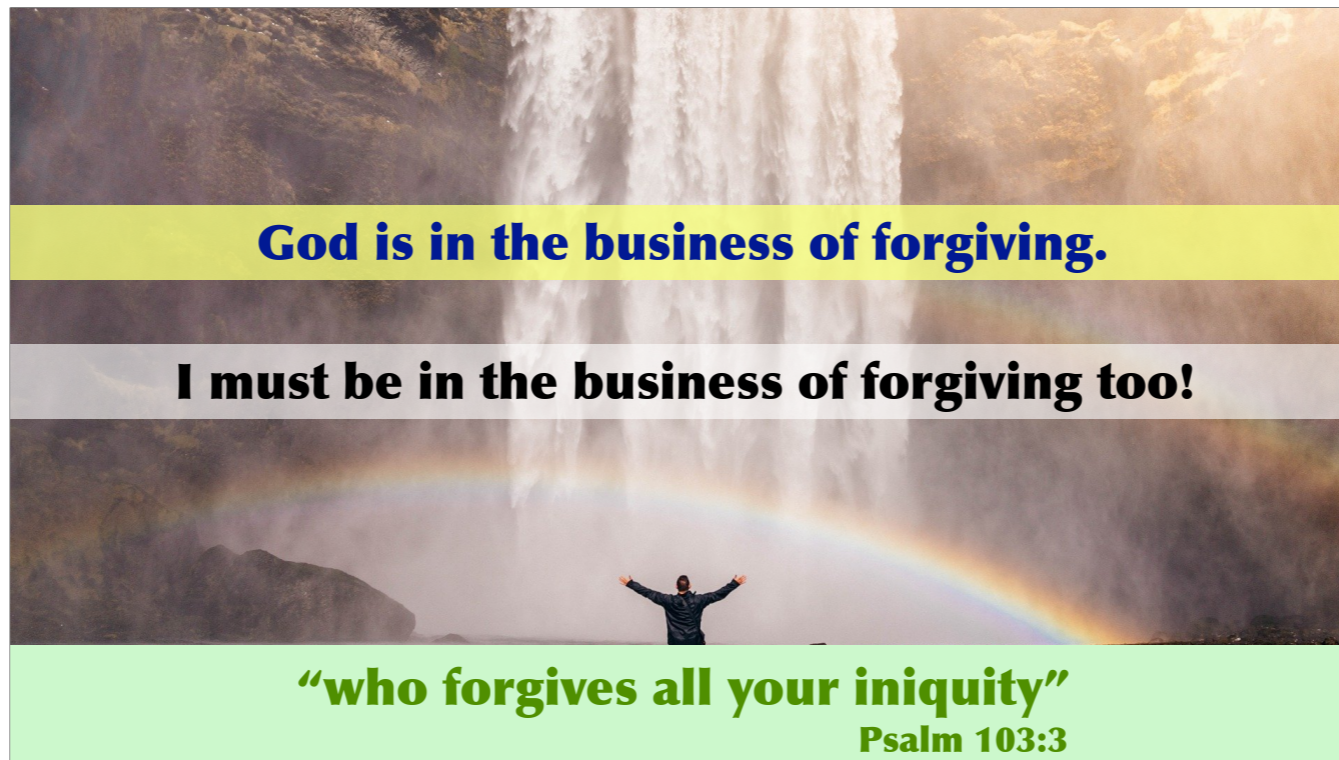




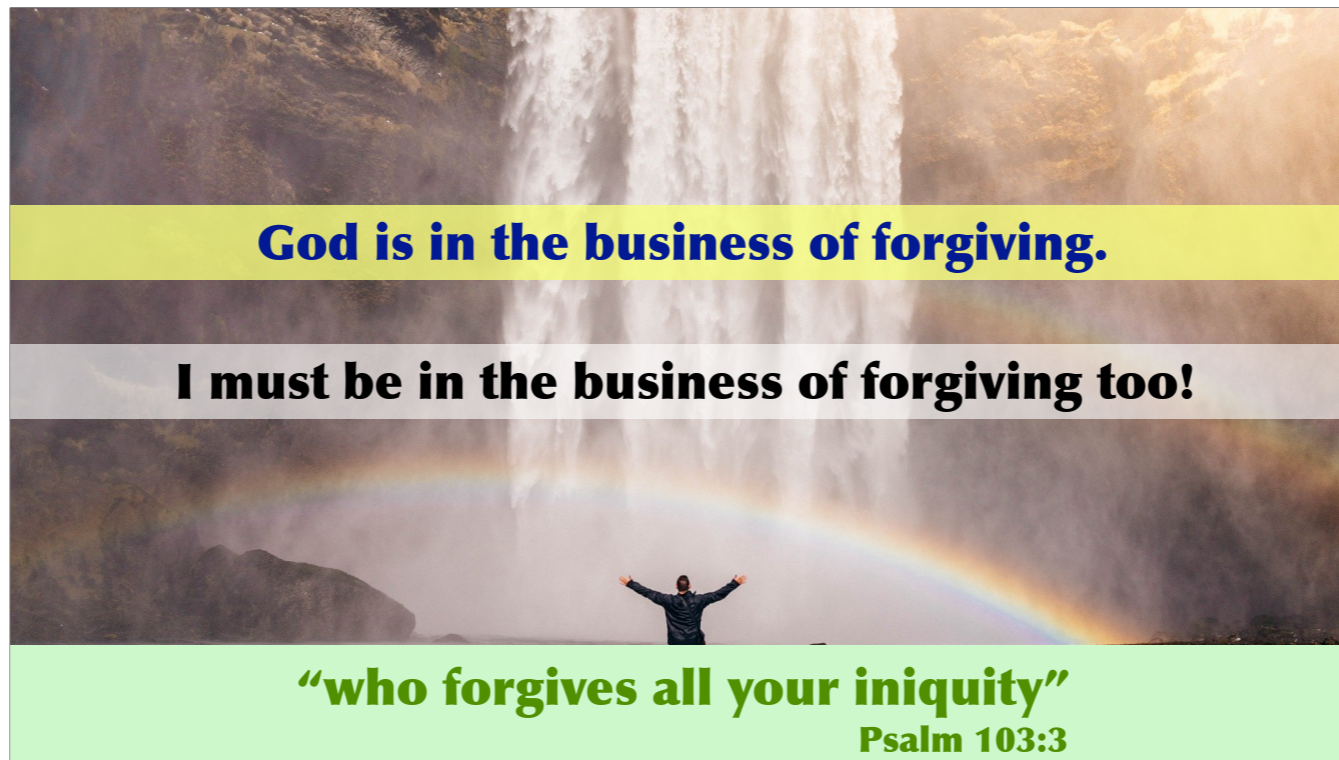
God is in the business of forgiving.

“who forgives all your iniquity”
Psalm 103:3

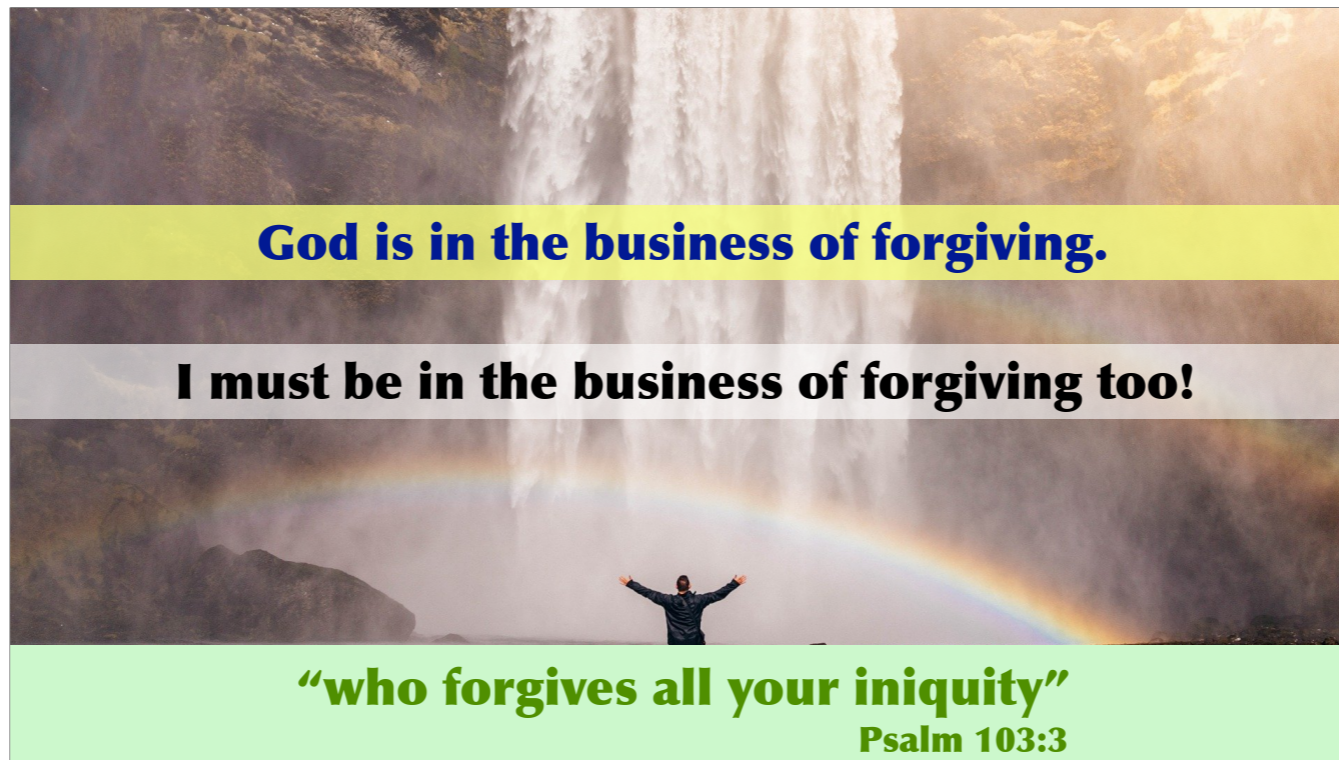
- Previous lessons: God is in the business of forgiveness.
 - Psalms 103:1-5 (ESV) 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.



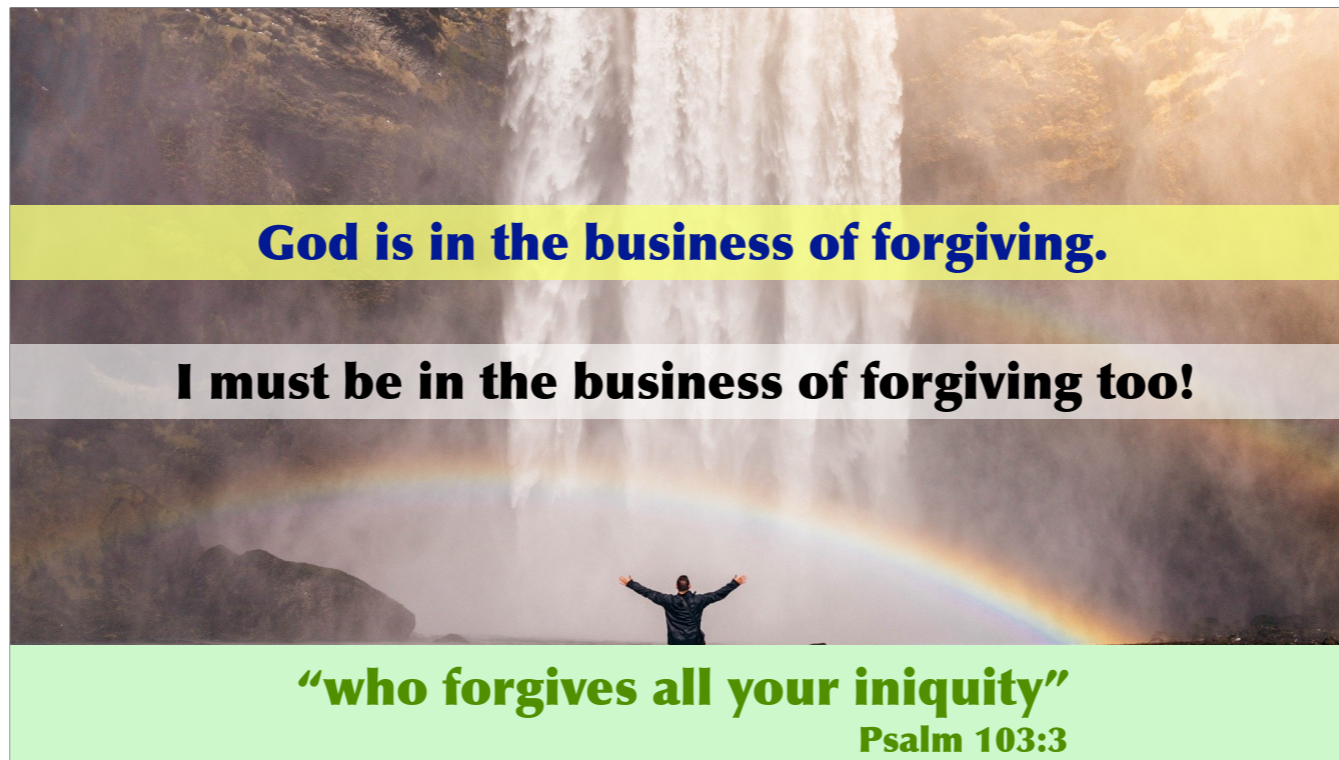
- Since we are to be like God, we also must be in the business of forgiving.
- But we also learned in last lesson that God doesn't always forgive!
 - Moses knew that Jehovah might not forgive the people of Israel for their great sin of making the Golden Calf at Mt. Sinai.
 - Moses warned that God would not forgive idolatry before they entered the promised land



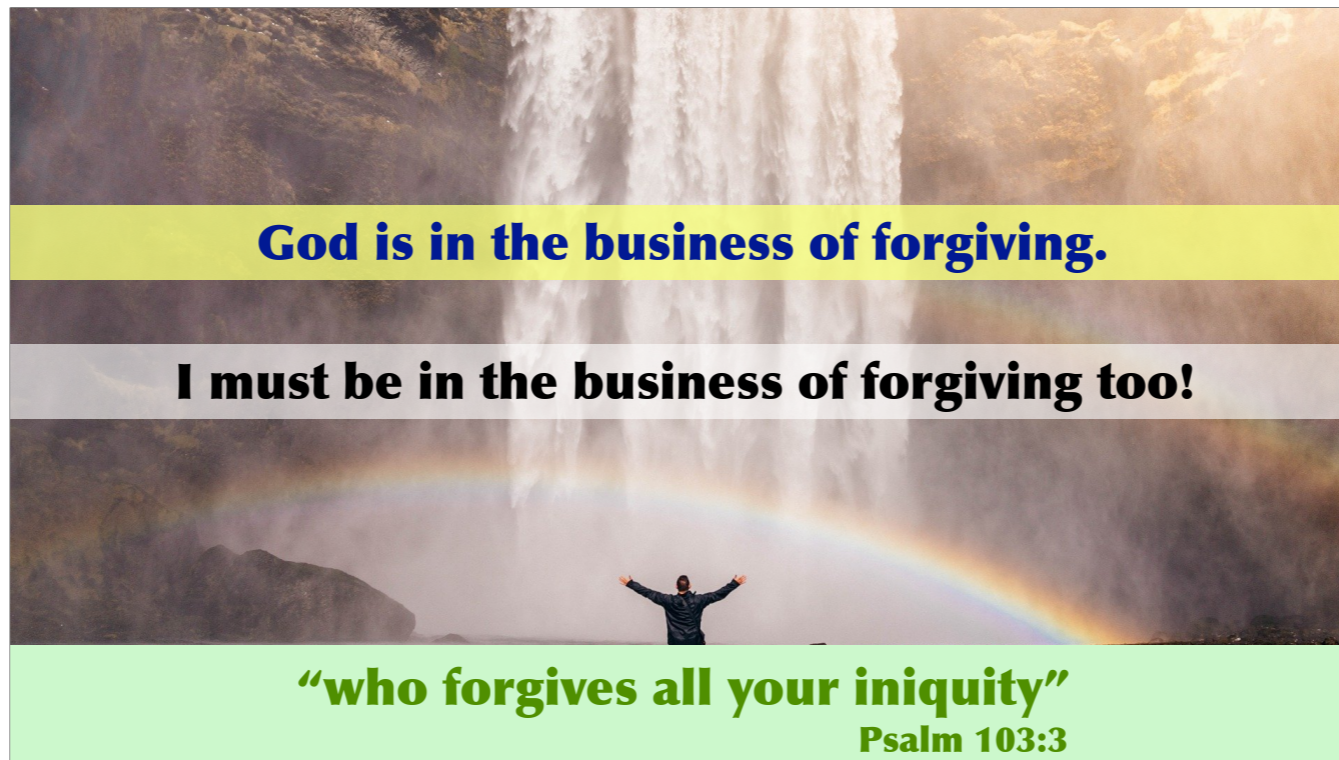
- Joshua reminded them of the same thing before he died.
- Jeremiah in laments bold asserts that Jehovah had not forgiven them.



- Does this mean there are limits or situations where I don't have to forgive someone who has sinned against me?
 - In previous lessons, there is a recognition and warning that Jehovah might not forgive ... forsaking God is serious and when we refuse to repent, there will not be forgiveness.
 - Two prayers that are much more personal ... asking God not to forgive someone (or a group of people)



- Approach passages like this very cautiously
 - It's easy to use them to justify what we already desire.
 - Must be sure that we are understanding the context clearly and apply consistently.
 - The prayer is the expression of a man.
 - While we may know that these are the words that are said, since they are recorded by inspiration
 - While we understand they are important for us to learn from, otherwise they would not be given to us by God



- What is recorded is what is said by a man
 - so is this prayer approved by God?
 - Is this prayer a that we should emulate?
 - In what circumstances was this prayer said, and do my circumstance match closely with the prayers?



- Isaiah's Prayer: Isaiah 2:8-11
 - 8 Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.
 - 9 So man is humbled, and each one is brought low— do not forgive them!
 - 10 Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of the LORD, and from the splendor of his majesty.
 - 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.



**Do not
forgive
them!**
Isaiah 2:9

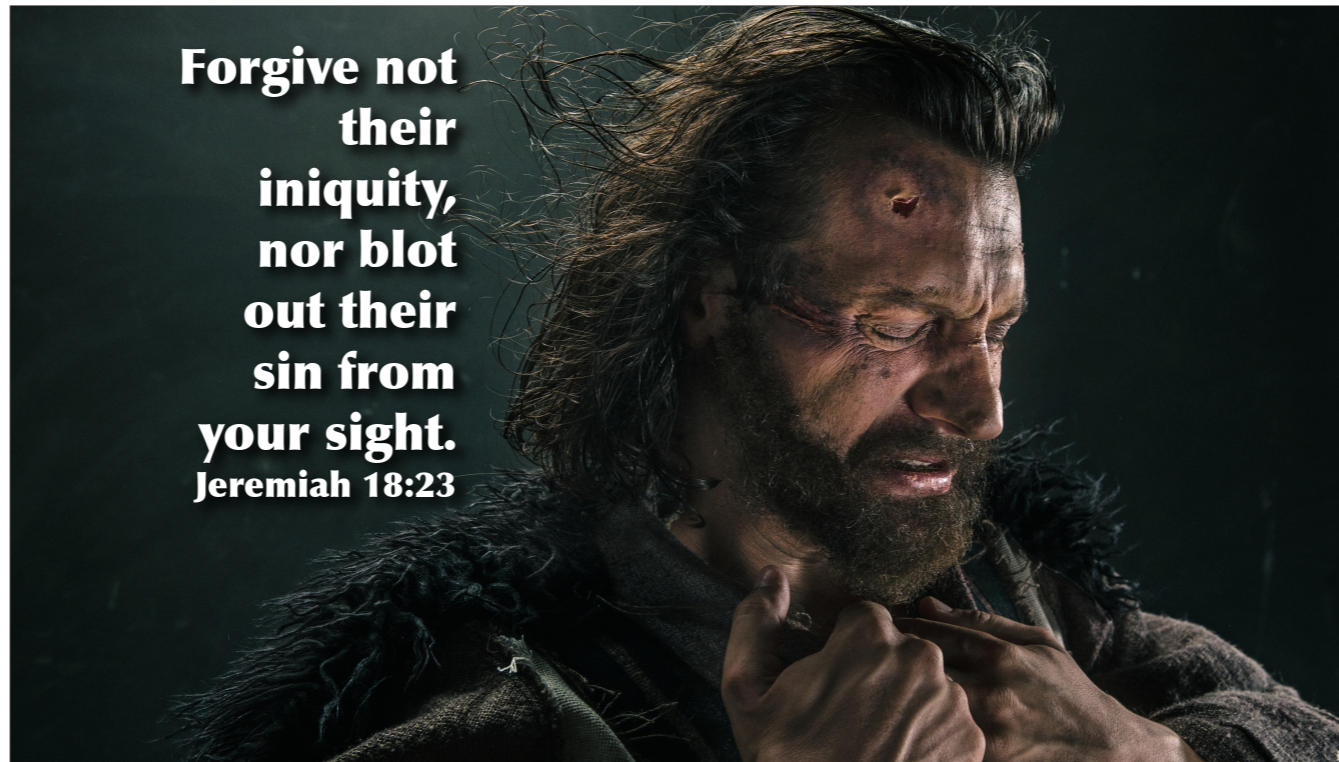
- What's different in this case...
 - Now a righteous man is praying that Jehovah will not forgive his own people.
 - Opposite of Moses praying that Jehovah forgive!
 - He recognizes their sins and consequences (idolatry, pride, brought low)
 - Just like Moses
 - Wants Judah to be humbled and Jehovah to be exalted
 - Isaiah is praying that God doesn't forgive!



- Does that mean that I can pray that God doesn't forgive someone?
 - Isaiah's prayer actually fit with God's revealed will for his people.
 - His prayer mirrors what God has said and what God intends.

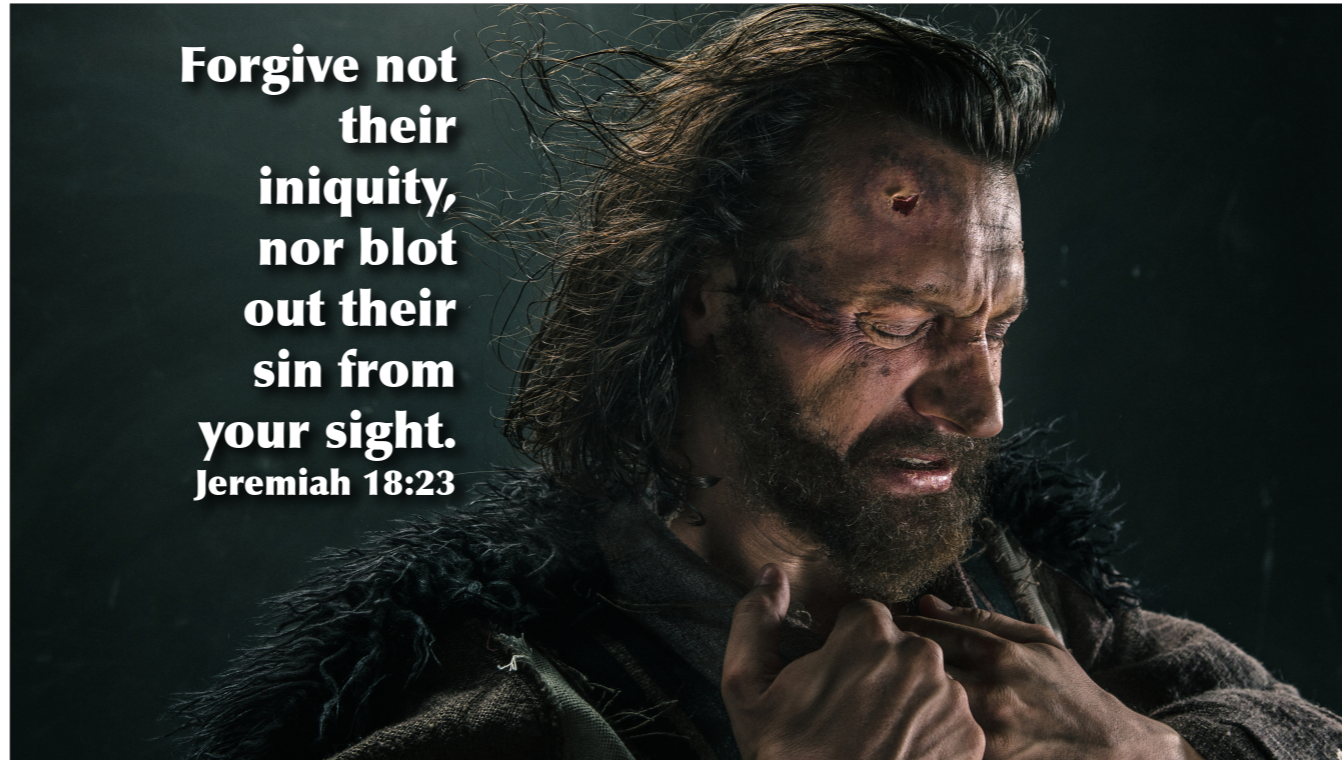


- Is this different because it's about a nation as opposed to an individual?
 - As a nation they were so wicked that repentance on a national level was not going to happen.
- It feels to me like this is not an exact parallel to an individual sinning against me.
 - Yet it recognizes that there are circumstances (horrible) so bad that it's clear repentance will not happen.



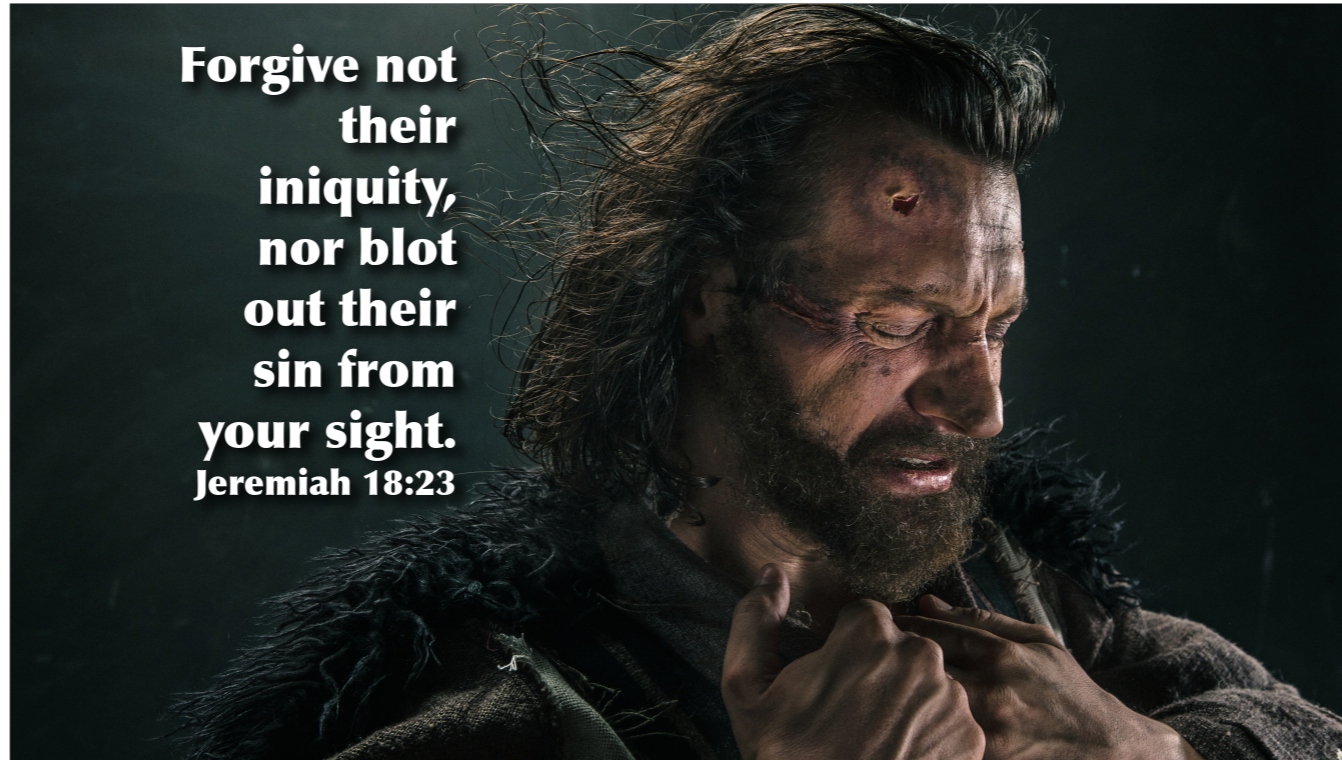
- Jeremiah's Prayer
- Jeremiah 18:18-23 (ESV) 18 Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words." 19 Hear me, O LORD, and listen to the voice of my adversaries. 20 Should good be repaid with evil? Yet they have dug a pit for my life. Remember how I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away your wrath from them. 21 Therefore deliver up their children to famine; give them over to the power of the sword; let their wives become childless and widowed. May their men meet death by pestilence, their youths be struck down by the sword in battle. 22 May a cry be heard from their houses, when you bring the plunderer suddenly upon them! For they have dug a pit to take me and laid snares for my feet. 23 Yet you, O LORD, know all their plotting to kill me. Forgive not their iniquity, nor blot out their sin from your sight. Let them be overthrown before you; deal with them in the time of your anger.

**Forgive not
their
iniquity,
nor blot
out their
sin from
your sight.
Jeremiah 18:23**



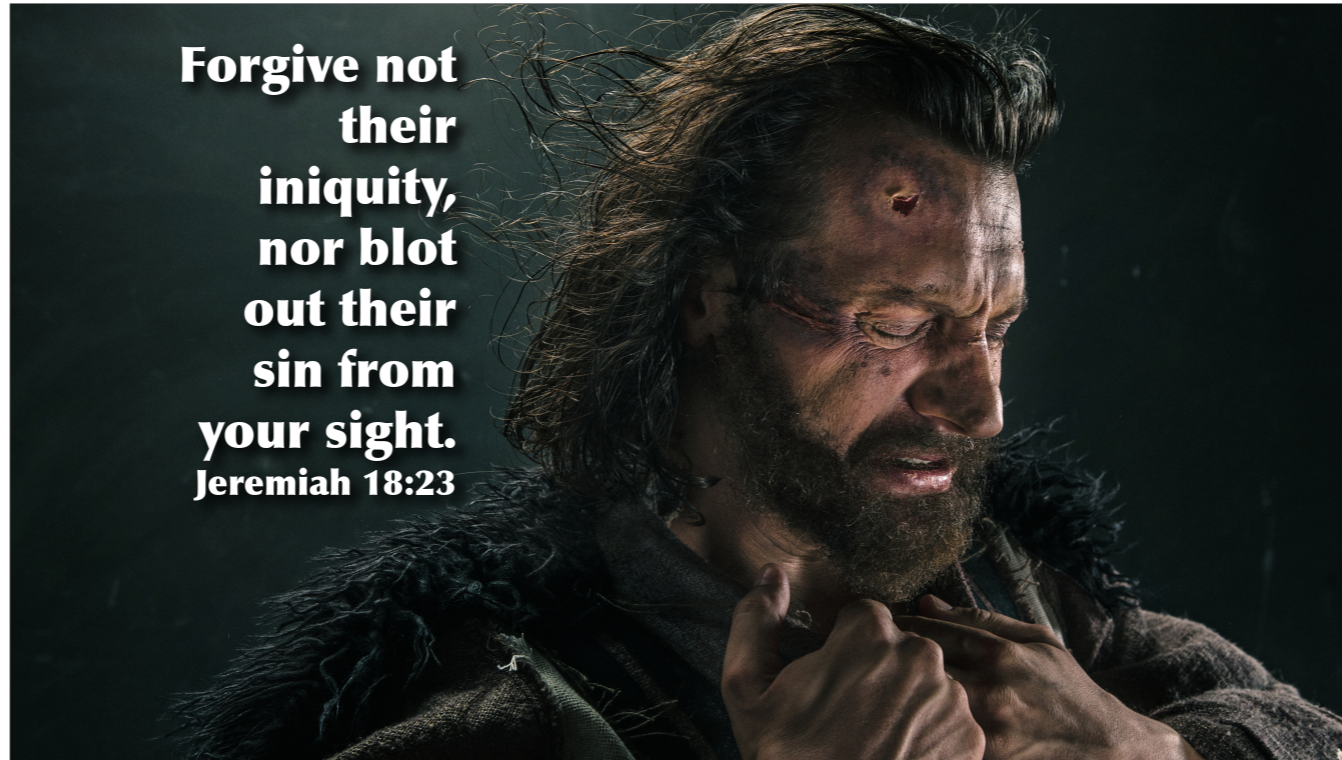
- Context for Jeremiah's Prayer
- 1-4: Jehovah is the potter, Clay is nation of Israel: Jehovah can do as he wills
- 5-11: Message of Hope and a Warning
 - 11) disaster is coming
 - return from evil
 - amend ways & deeds
- 12: Judah and Jerusalem's response
 - It's vain to return from evil and amend ways
 - Follow our own plans
 - Act according to our stubborn, evil heart

**Forgive not
their
iniquity,
nor blot
out their
sin from
your sight.
Jeremiah 18:23**



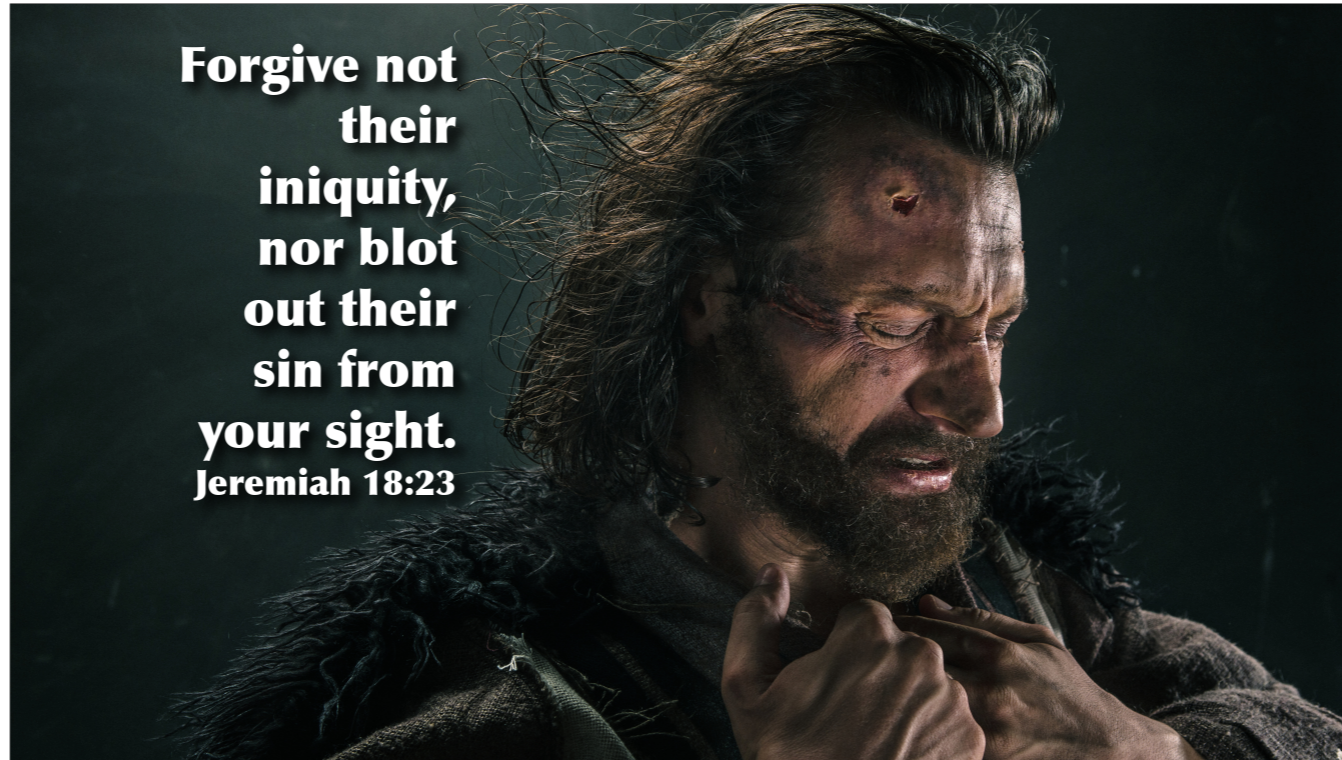
- 13-17: God's response
 - Israel has done a horrible thing
 - my people have forgotten me
 - offerings to false gods
 - stumbled
 - follow side roads, not highway
 - land is a horror
 - scatter them
 - show my back, not my face
 - day of calamity

**Forgive not
their
iniquity,
nor blot
out their
sin from
your sight.
Jeremiah 18:23**

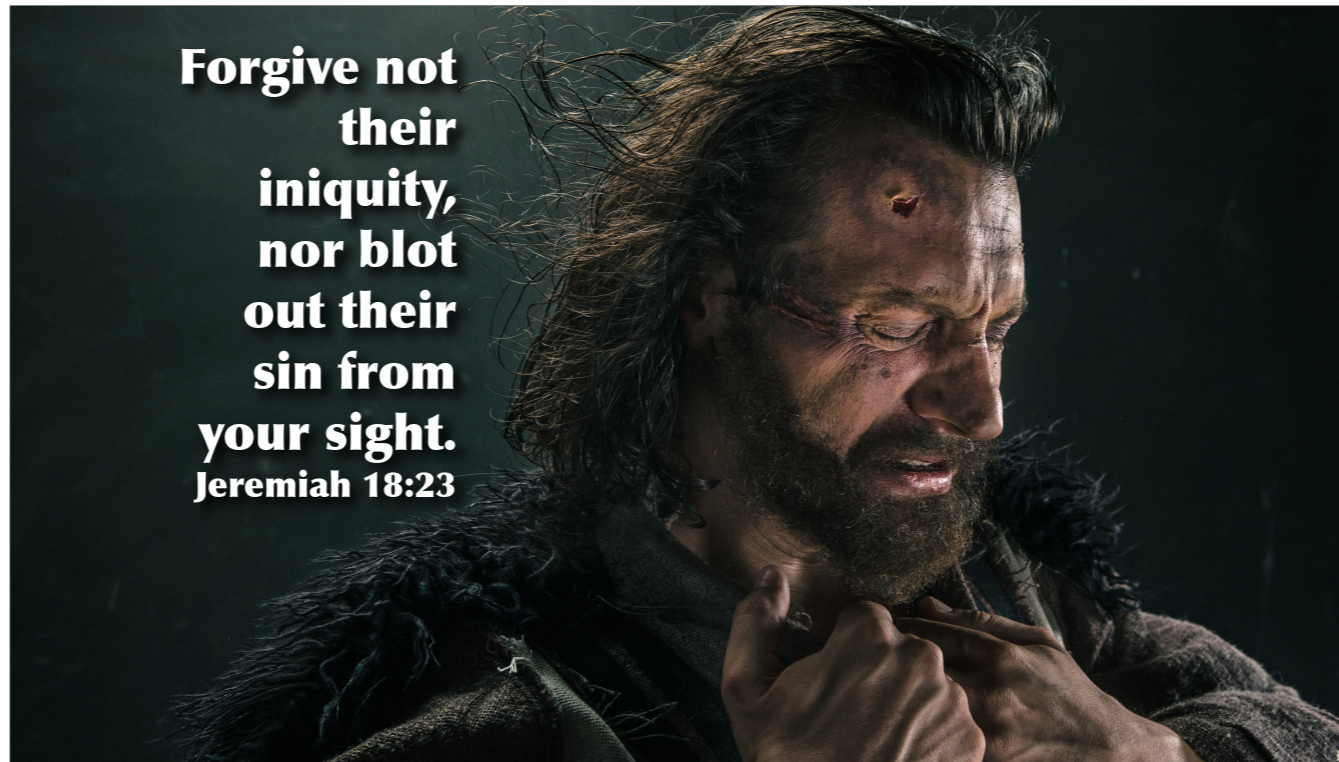


- 18: Judah's Plots against Jeremiah
 - law not perish from priest, counsel from the wise, word from the prophet
 - strike him with tongue
 - not pay attention to any of his words
- 19-23: Jeremiah's Prayer against His Adversaries
 - 19: hear me and listen to adversaries
 - 20: should good be repaid with evil?
 - dug a pit for my life
 - Remember
 - I stood before you: speak good; turn wrath

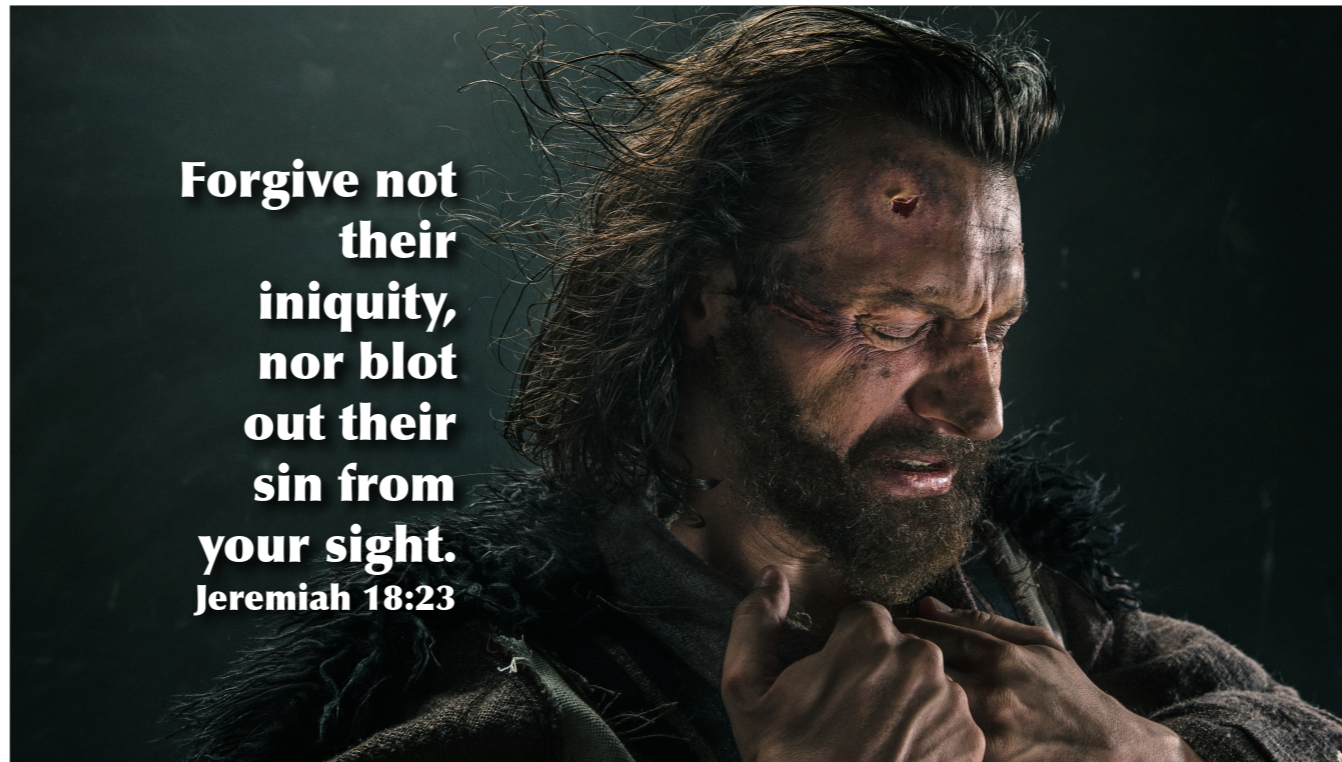
**Forgive not
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Jeremiah 18:23**



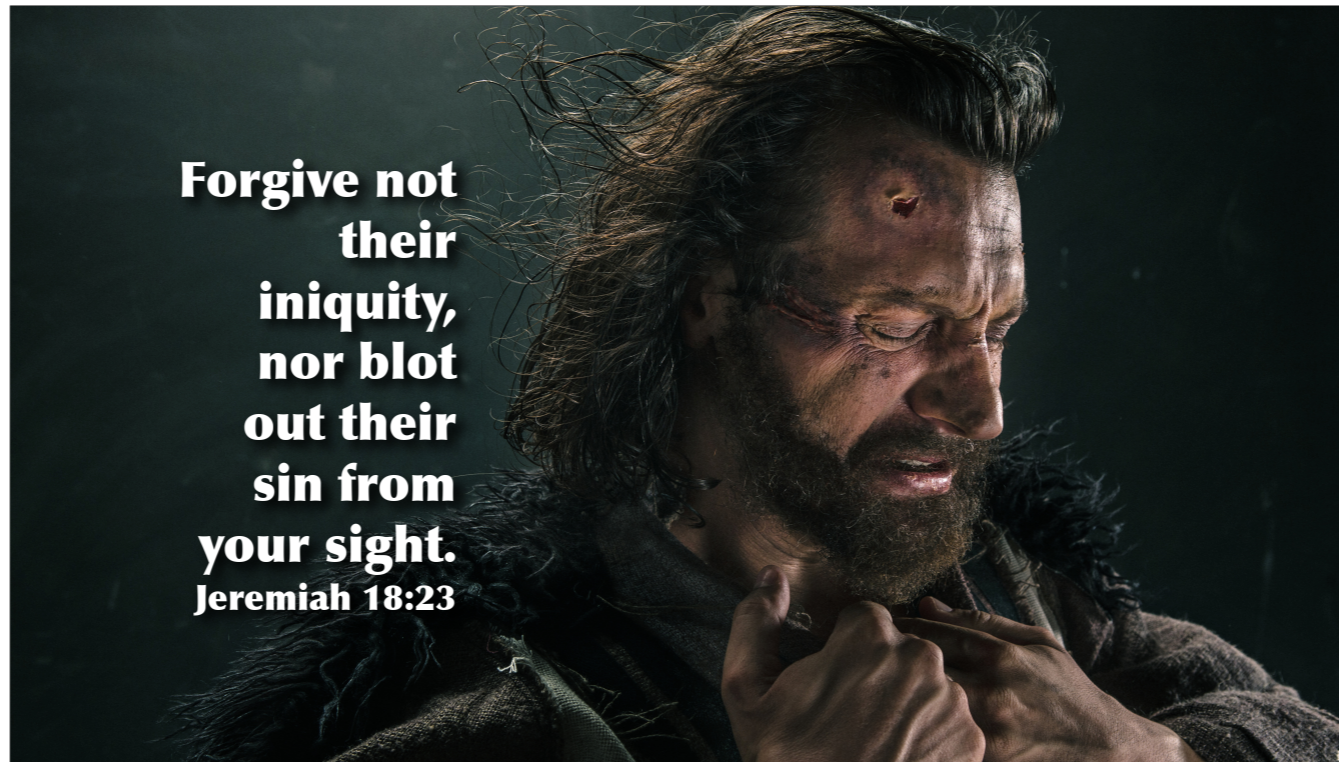
- 21: Deliver up ...
 - their children to famine
 - power of sword
 - wives: childless and widows
 - men: death by pestilence
 - youths: swords in battle
- 22: Cry heard from houses: suddenly plundered
 - They have dug a pit
 - Laid snares



- 23: You Know Jehovah
 - All their plotting to kill me
 - **Forgive not their iniquity; nor blot out sin**
 - Let them be overthrown
 - Deal with them in anger



- Was he wrong to ask this?
- Was this was just an emotional outburst?



- Was this inline with God's will?
 - It does seem that Jeremiah's prayer is inline with Jehovah's warning and punishment.
 - He had personally experienced their evil plots reinforced his understanding that God's judgment was absolutely necessary because of their refusal to listen and turn from evil

**As for you,
do not pray
for this
people, or
lift up a cry
or prayer for
them, and do
not interred
with me, for
I will not
hear you.
Jeremiah 7:16**



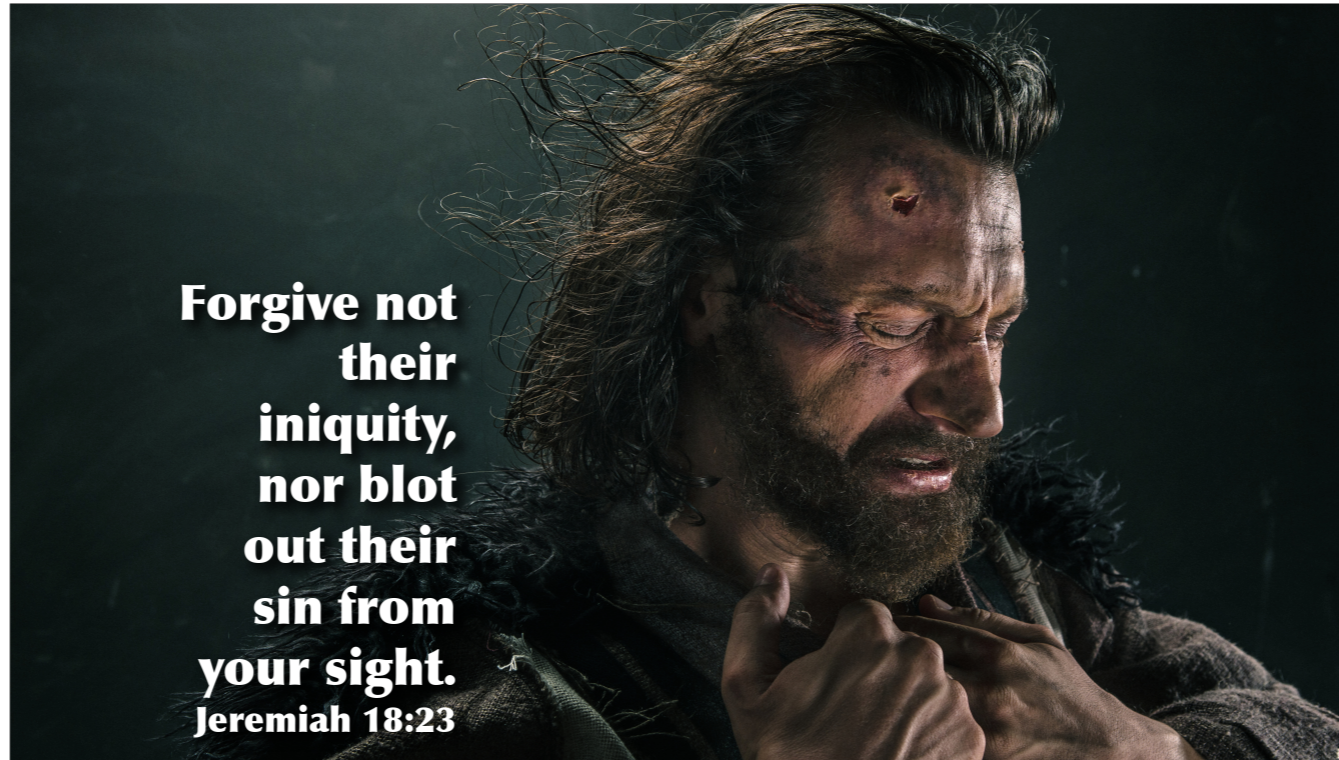
• Further: God had commanded Jeremiah not to pray for them!

- Jeremiah 7:16 “As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you.
- Jeremiah 11:14 “Therefore do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble.
- Jeremiah 14:11 The LORD said to me: “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.

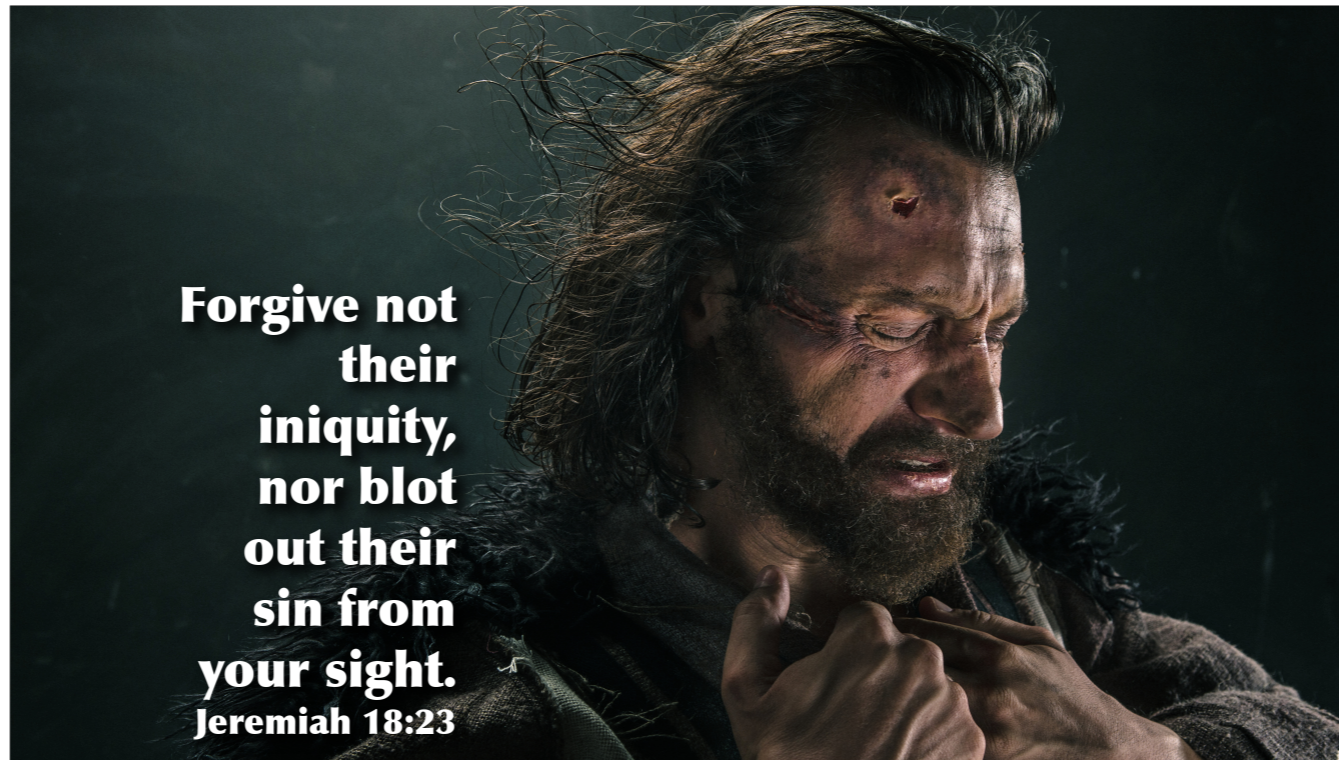


**We have
transgressed
and rebelled,
and you have
not forgiven.
Lamentations 3:42**

- Lamentations 3:42 “We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.”



- Can I offer such a prayer to God?
 - Yes. So long as it fits into God's will (must be clearly stated!)
 - However, it's not merely about personal vengeance, or a sin against himself.
 - If someone has sinned against me (or hurt me), does this justify asking God to NOT forgive the sinner?



- Pray that they will know sin and repent.
 - God's forgiveness is for all as long as they will believe and repent.
 - God knows the heart of the sinner.
 - God knows my heart (beware of vengeance)
 - I am not in the position of being rejected like God is: so I need to be ready to forgive.
- Warning about those who are hard heartedly stubborn in they ways and think that they are safe from God's judgment.



- How do I cope with someone who has sinned, refuses to acknowledge sin (much less repent)?
 - This is not intended to be trite ... (but it may sound trite)



- Luke 6:27-28 (ESV) 27 “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.
 - Love your enemies.
 - not that you like them, but you do what is best for them regardless of what they have done to you (ESTD!)
 - Pray for those who persecute you
 - not the same as praying for someone who sins against?



- Do good ... those who hate you
- Bless those who curse you.
- Pray for those who abuse you.
 - A prayer offered in anger will seek their destruction, judgment, justice(some Psalms)
 - A prayer offered in love will seek for them to repent, come back to God.



- Luke 6:35-36 (ESV) 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.
 - Love your enemies
 - Do Good
 - Kind to the ungrateful and evil
 - **Be merciful.**



- Let your anger and hurt be supplanted by Pity and Mercy (Jonah)
 - Jude 1:22-23 (ESV) 22 And have mercy on those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.
 - Pray for them
 - believe
 - repent
 - Do Good
 - Be Kind



- Forgiveness is just the beginning of the process in restoring a relationship

- Psalms 103:1-5 (ESV) 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
- and all that is within me,
- bless his holy name!
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
- and forget not all his benefits,
- 3 who forgives all your iniquity,
- who heals all your diseases,
- 4 who redeems your life from the pit,
- who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- 5 who satisfies you with good
- so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
-

**We implore you on
behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.**

2 Corinthians 5:20

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Do Not Forgive Them!

Isaiah 2:9

Synopsis: Previous lesson reminds us that sometimes even God is unwilling to forgive. Continuing with this difficult thinking about our God, this lesson considers the prayers of Isaiah and Jeremiah asking God not to forgive someone. Is this a valid request we can make to God, or is it limited in scope? How do I cope with forgiving someone who will not repent?

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”