

Who forgives and what is forgiveness, anyway?

“Mercy” (Hebrew) in the OT:

racham: to have compassion, love

chanan: to show favor

techinnah: supplication

“Mercy” (Greek) in the NT:

eleos: to show mercy

in most of NT but predominantly the Gospel of Mark and Paul’s letters

eleeo: mercy

in most of NT but predominantly Paul’s letter to the Romans

“Forgiveness” (Hebrew) in the OT:

nasah: to lift, carry, take

in Torah and Psalms and wisdom literature

salach: to forgive

in later books of Torah

kafar: to cover, make atonement

in Psalms and wisdom literature

“Forgiveness” (Greek) in the NT:

aphesis: forgiveness, release, remission

spans the NT

charisomai: to give, favor, forgive

in Paul’s letters

We might see...

- Forgiveness is not a work done by us
- Forgiveness as a gift of grace, but not defined as mercy
- God instructs us to actively love while we wait for transformation.

Then what is our job?

What might be your job?