

Jewish Tradition: The 2 Feet of Our Spiritual Journey

The 40 days from the beginning of the month of Elul through Yom Kippur on the 10th day of Tishrei are known in Jewish tradition as a time for repentance and forgiveness.

There are special prayers during this time called סליחות, *selichot*, meaning “forgiveness.” One well-known prayer is called אדון הסליחות אדון “Adon HaSelichot,” meaning “The Lord of Forgiveness.”

Each line of this prayer-poem starts with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first four lines are:

“Lord of Forgiveness, Tester of Hearts, Revealer of Deep Things, Speaker of Righteousness”

The refrain after each stanza is:

“We have sinned before You; have mercy upon us”

This prayer poem is usually sung, and its melody has become quite popular among modern Israelis, both secular and religious, Sephardic and Ashkenazi.

It is the glory of the gospel that any person can repent, forgive, and know that he or she is forgiven by God—on any day, at any moment! These responses form a basis for all prayer and faith. Since we have all sinned and been sinned against, we must all repent and forgive. Repentance and forgiveness are the two “feet” of our spiritual journey. It’s where our faith “hits the ground.”

Yeshua taught it this way:

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matt. 6:12).

We repent of our sins and forgive those who have sinned against us. How basic! How simple! How obvious!

God is the inventor of forgiveness. He is the Lord of Forgiveness. So let's not forget to put into practice these two most basic steps of faith: repent and forgive. And let's remember to intercede for the Jewish people during this season that many more will come to know the total forgiveness, peace and assurance that we have with God through Yeshua's perfect atonement! {eoa}

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