

True repentance involves more than simply saying that we are sorry for a sin we have committed. Using the examples of King Ahab, King Manasseh, and the wayward son of Jesus' parable, this article will help us understand what repentance really is. It will also discuss factors that elders must consider when weighing the repentance of a fellow believer who has committed a serious sin.

(Luke 5:32) I have come to call, not righteous people, but sinners to repentance."

Paragraph 2

(Acts 17:30) True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance; but now he is declaring to all people everywhere that they should repent.

(Romans 3:23) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Paragraph 3

(1 Kings 18:13) Has my lord not been told what I did when Jez'e·bel was killing the prophets of Jehovah, how I hid 100 of the prophets of Jehovah by groups of 50 in a cave and kept supplying them bread and water?

(1 Kings 16:30) A'hab the son of Om'ri was worse in the eyes of Jehovah than all those who were prior to him.

Paragraph 4

(1 Kings 21:19-29) You must tell him, 'This is what Jehovah says: "Have you murdered a man and also taken his property?"' Then say to him, 'This is what Jehovah says: "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Na'both, the dogs will lick up your own blood.'"' 20 A'hab said to E·li'jah: "So you have found me, O my enemy!" He replied: "I have found you. 'Because you are determined to do what is bad in the eyes of Jehovah, 21 here I am bringing calamity upon you, and I will make a clean sweep after you and will annihilate from A'hab every male, including

the helpless and weak in Israel. 22 And I will make your house like the house of Jer·o·bo'am the son of Ne'bat and like the house of Ba'a·sha the son of A·hi'jah, for you have provoked my anger and have caused Israel to sin.' 23 Also concerning Jez'e·bel, Jehovah has said: 'The dogs will eat up Jez'e·bel in the plot of land of Jez're·el. 24 Anyone belonging to A'hab who dies in the city the dogs will eat up, and anyone who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat up. 25 Indeed, there has never been anyone like A'hab, who was so determined to do what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah, egged on by his wife Jez'e·bel. 26 He acted in the most detestable way by going after the disgusting idols, just as all the Am'or·ites had done, whom Jehovah drove out from before the Israelites.'" 27 As soon as A'hab heard these words, he ripped his garments apart and put sackcloth on his body; and he went on a fast and kept lying down in sackcloth and walking despondently. 28 Jehovah's word then came to E·li'jah the Tish'bite: 29 "Have you seen how A'hab has humbled himself on my account? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the calamity during his lifetime. I will bring the calamity upon his house in the days of his son."

Paragraph 6

(1 Kings 22:7-9) Je·hosh'a·phat then said: "Is there not here a prophet of Jehovah? Let us also inquire through him." 8 At that the king of Israel said to Je·hosh'a·phat: "There is still one more man through whom we can inquire of Jehovah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies good things concerning me, only bad. He is Mi·cai'ah the son of Im'lah." However, Je·hosh'a·phat said: "The king should not say such a thing." 9 So the king of Israel called a court official and said: "Bring Mi·cai'ah the son of Im'lah quickly."

(1 Kings 22:23) And now Jehovah has put a deceptive spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, but Jehovah has declared calamity for you."

(1 Kings 22:27) Tell them, ‘This is what the king says: “Put this fellow in the prison and feed him with a reduced allowance of bread and water until I return in peace.”’”

(1 Kings 22:34-38) But one man shot his bow at random, and he struck the king of Israel between the joints of his coat of mail. So the king said to his charioteer: “Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I have been badly wounded.” 35 The fighting raged throughout that day, and the king had to be propped up in the chariot, facing the Syrians. The blood of the wound poured out into the interior of the war chariot, and he died in the evening. 36 Around sunset a cry passed through the camp, saying: “Everyone to his city! Everyone to his land!” 37 Thus the king died, and he was brought to Sa-mar'i-a; they buried the king in Sa-mar'i-a. 38 When they washed off the war chariot by the pool of Sa-mar'i-a, the dogs licked up his blood and the prostitutes bathed there, according to the word that Jehovah had spoken.

Paragraph 7

(2 Chronicles 19:1, 2) Then King Je-hosh'a-phat of Judah returned safely to his own house in Jerusalem. 2 Je'hu the son of Ha-na'ni the visionary went out to meet him and said to King Je-hosh'a-phat: “Is it the wicked you should be helping, and is it those who hate Jehovah you should love? Because of this the indignation of Jehovah is against you.

Paragraph 9

(2 Chronicles 33:1-9) Ma-nas'seh was 12 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 55 years in Jerusalem. 2 He did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, following the detestable practices of the nations that Jehovah had driven out from before the people of Israel. 3 He rebuilt the high places that his father Hez-e-ki'ah had torn down, he set up altars to the Ba'als and made sacred poles, and he bowed down to all

the army of the heavens and served them. 4 He also built altars in the house of Jehovah, about which Jehovah had said: “In Jerusalem my name will be forever.” 5 And he built altars to all the army of the heavens in two courtyards of the house of Jehovah. 6 And he made his own sons pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hin'nom; he practiced magic, used divination, practiced sorcery, and appointed spirit mediums and fortune-tellers. He did on a grand scale what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, to offend him. 7 He put the carved image that he made into the house of the true God about which God had said to David and to his son Sol'o-mon: “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will permanently put my name. 8 And I will never again remove the feet of Israel from the land that I assigned to their forefathers, provided they carefully observe all that I have commanded them, the entire Law, the regulations and the judicial decisions given through Moses.” 9 Ma-nas'seh kept leading Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray, causing them to do worse than the nations that Jehovah had annihilated from before the Israelites.

(2 Kings 21:6, 7) And he made his own son pass through the fire; he practiced magic, looked for omens, and appointed spirit mediums and fortune-tellers. He did on a grand scale what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, to offend him. 7 He put the carved image of the sacred pole that he made into the house about which Jehovah had said to David and to his son Sol'o-mon: “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will permanently put my name.

(2 Kings 21:10, 11) Jehovah kept speaking through his servants the prophets, saying: 11 “Ma-nas'seh the king of Judah has done all these detestable things; he has acted more wickedly than all the Am'or-ites before him, and he has made Judah sin with his disgusting idols.

(2 Kings 21:16) Ma·nas'seh also shed innocent blood in very great quantity until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other, besides his sin of causing Judah to sin by doing what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah.

Paragraph 10

(2 Chronicles 33:10-13) Jehovah kept speaking to Ma·nas'seh and his people, but they paid no attention. 11 So Jehovah brought against them the army chiefs of the king of As·syr'i·a, and they captured Ma·nas'seh with hooks and bound him with two copper fetters and took him to Babylon. 12 In his distress, he begged Jehovah his God for favor and kept humbling himself greatly before the God of his forefathers. 13 He kept praying to Him, and He was moved by his entreaty and heard his request for favor, and He restored him to Jerusalem to his kingship. Then Ma·nas'seh came to know that Jehovah is the true God.

Paragraph 11

(2 Chronicles 33:15, 16) He then removed the foreign gods and the idol image from the house of Jehovah and all the altars that he had built in the mountain of the house of Jehovah and in Jerusalem, and he had them thrown outside the city. 16 He also prepared the altar of Jehovah and began to offer up communion sacrifices and thanksgiving sacrifices on it, and he told Judah to serve Jehovah the God of Israel.

(2 Kings 22:1, 2) Jo·si'ah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned for 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Je·di'dah the daughter of A·dai'ah from Boz'kath. 2 He did what was right in Jehovah's eyes and walked in all the ways of David his forefather, and he did not deviate to the right or to the left.

Paragraph 12

(Psalm 86:5) For you, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive; You abound in loyal love for all those who call on you.

Paragraph 14

(Luke 15:11-32) Then he said: “A man had two sons. 12 And the younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that should come to me.’ So he divided his belongings between them. 13 A few days later, the younger son gathered all his things together and traveled to a distant country and there squandered his property by living a debauched life. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he fell into need. 15 He even went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to herd swine. 16 And he longed to be filled with the carob pods that the swine were eating, but no one would give him anything. 17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, while I am dying here from hunger! 18 I will get up and travel to my father and say to him: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Make me as one of your hired men.”’ 20 So he got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was moved with pity, and he ran and embraced him and tenderly kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’ 22 But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quick! bring out a robe, the best one, and clothe him with it, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 Also bring the fattened calf, slaughter it, and let us eat and celebrate, 24 for this son of mine was dead but has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they started to enjoy themselves. 25 “Now his older son was in the field, and as he returned and got near the house, he heard

music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants to him and asked what was happening. 27 He said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father slaughtered the fattened calf because he got him back in good health.’ 28 But he became angry and refused to go in. Then his father came out and began to plead with him. 29 In reply he said to his father, ‘Look! These many years I have slaved for you and never once did I disobey your orders, and yet you never once gave me a young goat to enjoy with my friends. 30 But as soon as this son of yours arrived who squandered your belongings with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ 31 Then he said to him, ‘My son, you have always been with me, and all the things that are mine are yours. 32 But we just had to celebrate and rejoice, for your brother was dead but has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Paragraph 15

(Luke 15:21) Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’

(Luke 15:19) I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Make me as one of your hired men.”

Paragraph 17

(2 Corinthians 7:11) For see what a great earnestness your being saddened in a godly way produced in you, yes, clearing of yourselves, yes, indignation, yes, fear, yes, earnest desire, yes, zeal, yes, righting of the wrong! In every respect you demonstrated yourselves to be pure in this matter.

(1 Corinthians 5:11-13) But now I am writing you to stop keeping company with anyone called a brother who is sexually immoral or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. 12 For what do I have to do with judging those

outside? Do you not judge those inside, 13 while God judges those outside? “Remove the wicked person from among yourselves.”

(1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) Or do you not know that unrighteous people will not inherit God’s Kingdom? Do not be misled. Those who are sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, men who submit to homosexual acts, men who practice homosexuality, 10 thieves, greedy people, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners will not inherit God’s Kingdom.

Paragraph 19

(Ezekiel 33:14-16) “And when I say to the wicked one: “You will surely die,” and he turns away from his sin and does what is just and righteous, 15 and the wicked one returns what was taken in pledge and pays back what was taken by robbery, and he walks in the statutes of life by not doing what is wrong, he will surely keep living. He will not die. 16 None of the sins he committed will be held against him. For doing what is just and righteous, he will surely keep living.’

Paragraph 20

(Luke 5:32) I have come to call, not righteous people, but sinners to repentance.”

Paragraph 21

(Proverbs 5:21, 22) For the ways of man are before the eyes of Jehovah; He examines all his paths. 22 The wicked one is ensnared by his own errors, And he will be caught in the ropes of his own sin.

(Proverbs 28:13) The one covering over his transgressions will not succeed, But whoever confesses and abandons them will be shown mercy.