

MERCY — Hebrew Word Study

30 Days of Repentance + Heart Preparation | Psalm 51:1–2 · Micah 7:18–19 · Lamentations 3:22–24 · Titus 3:3–7

1 | KABAS — TO WASH (Psalm 51:2)

David asks God to wash away his iniquity. Chaim Bentorah highlights kabas (wash) and the emphatic wording often translated “thoroughly.” His devotional image is of cleansing that addresses not only outward wrongdoing but the inward burden that remains. The image of “sanitizing” is Bentorah’s application, not a literal Hebrew definition.

Consider: Am I asking God only to remove consequences, or also to change what is happening in my heart?

2 | CHATA, PESHA, AVON — SIN, TRANSGRESSION, INIQUITY

In a study of Psalm 103:3, Laura Bentorah distinguishes chata (sin / missing the mark), peshah (transgression / rebellion), and avon (iniquity / guilt or wrongdoing). Her meditation emphasizes that God’s forgiveness is not limited to small or isolated failures. These terms overlap in biblical usage; they should not be treated as a rigid three-level ranking.

Consider: Where am I tempted to believe a repeated struggle places me beyond God’s mercy?

3 | CHAPHETS — TO DELIGHT (Micah 7:18)

Micah says God delights to show mercy. Bentorah explores chaphets as taking pleasure in or desiring something. The text presents mercy as something God willingly shows, not something wrung from Him by perfect performance.

Consider: Do I picture God as reluctant to forgive, even when Scripture says He delights in mercy?

4 | KAVASH — TO SUBDUE (Micah 7:19)

The image of God treading iniquities underfoot uses kavash, meaning to subdue or bring under control. Bentorah connects this picture with the Exodus sea crossing and freedom from bondage. That Exodus connection is a devotional reading, rather than an explicit identification in Micah.

Consider: What would change if I trusted God to confront sin without assuming He has abandoned me?

5 | CHESSED, RACHAMIM, CHADASH — LOVE, COMPASSION, NEWNESS

In Lamentations 3:22–23, chesed conveys steadfast love or covenant kindness; rachamim conveys compassion; and chadash means new or fresh. Bentorah meditates on the possibility of recognizing fresh expressions of God’s love each day. His comparison of compassion to romance is a devotional analogy, not the standard lexical definition.

Consider: Am I looking only for familiar expressions of God’s care, or am I open to noticing His faithfulness in new ways?

DAY 11 CONNECTION

Mercy invites honest confession (Psalm 51), reveals God's delight in forgiveness (Micah 7), sustains hope in grief (Lamentations 3), and brings renewal through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit (Titus 3). Receiving mercy is not avoiding repentance; it is trusting God's character while we repent.

REFLECT & PRAY

Do I receive God's mercy as readily as I ask Him to reveal what is wrong? What am I still trying to pay for after bringing it to Him? Where might His compassion be meeting me today?

Write your own prayer, asking for honest repentance, a receptive heart, and trust in God's mercy. Close: In Jesus' name, Amen.

SOURCE STUDIES — Chaim Bentorah website (read alongside Scripture)

Thoroughly Wash Me (2016)

Forgives All Your Iniquities (2015)

Taking Pleasure — Chaphets (2023)

Subdue and Delight (2014)

Lamentations 3:21–23 (2012)