

## **GOD RELENTED**

**Request:** “Since we believe God is omniscient (all knowing), what does it mean – God Relented?”

One famous bible story where it says God relented is the Golden Calf incident (Ex.32). The Golden Calf incident occurred three months after the Exodus (Ex.19:1-3) at Mt. Sinai while Moses was receiving the Law for the priest-nation of Israel (Ex.19:6).

God told Moses that He was putting these “stiff-necked” people under the sin unto death (Ex.32:9-10; 1 John 5:16) [15 century BC].

“You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 7:51) [Stephen / 1<sup>st</sup> century AD]

Moses interceded on behalf of the Israelites and the bible says that God Relented (Ex.32:11-13)

“So the Lord changed His mind (NAS), relented (NIV), repented (KJ) about the harm which He said He would do to His people.” (Ex.32:14)

[Nacham means to be sorry, to be moved to compassion, to console oneself, to relent, or to suffer grief.]

- Did God put them under the sin unto death? (Answer - Heb.3:17). How did God relent? He did it over 40 years rather than immediately. (Ex.32:10) (kalah / piel impf) [destroy].

<b>This lesson will study four aspects of what it means for God to Relent and still remain omniscience.</b>
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### **1. A functional knowledge of the Essence of God is important to understanding the idea of God Relenting.**

<b>Omniscience</b>	Sovereignty
Omnipotent	Righteousness (+R)
Omnipresent	Eternal Life
<b>Immutable</b>	Love
Veracity	Holy

Have absolute confidence that God’s immutability will not change – “Thou art the same.” (Heb.1:12. 6:18; 13:8; Ps.102:24-27; James 1:17).

“For I, the Lord do not change, therefore you O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.” (Mal.3:6)

“The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, ‘Thou art a priest forever according the order of Melchizedek.’” (Ps.110:4; Heb.5:6, 10; 6:20; 1 Sam.15:29)

### **2. The second important concept in understanding God relenting is the language of accommodation.**

Language of accommodation is the way God communicates with the sons of God. It is how a perfect God communicates with all sorts of imperfect children of God.

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa.55:8-9)

The language of accommodation is studied in theology in two categories:

- anthropomorphism (human body terms) and
- Anthropopathism (human emotions and thinking terms) (**Deut.1:31; Ps.103:13; 139:1-4**).

It is God condescending to speak on our level and in our references for our benefit as related to the will of God (Gen.6:3-8; Ex.32:7-14) [**God relented**]. In (Gen.6:6) [it is the word grieved (NAS)] and in (Gen.6:7) [it is the word sorry], but in both cases it the Hebrew word nacham (relented).

**When the bible says that God relented, it is the language of accommodation of anthropopathism.**

Anthropopathism is more difficult to interpret because it is more abstract in meaning. It must not be taken literally but rather **figurative**. Your interpretation is always guided by its message (Ps.44:20-26; Ex.15:4-10; 14:21) [Red Sea].

### 3. During this intercessory prayer, Moses expressed three imperatives:

- |            |        |               |
|------------|--------|---------------|
| • Turn     | shub   | (kal impv)    |
| • Relent   | nacham | (niphil impv) |
| • Remember | zakar  | (kal impv)    |

When Stephen preached from our lesson text, he used the Greek word turn away (strepho / a.a.ind) [shub] and deliverance them up (paradidomi / a.a.ind) (nacham) [relent] (Acts 7:41-42) (NAS).

Like the Hebrew words, these two Greek words were used to reflect God's approach to dealing with reversionism (Rom.1:24, 26, 28) (**paradidomi** / nacham) [relented].

In fact, our lesson text is dealing with reverse progress reversionism (RPR) (Amos 5:25-27).

**PRP** is when the bona fide object of love becomes the object of Mental Attitude Sins (MAS) while at the same time the inconsequential object becomes the object of affection and attention. It usually is the returning to a former life style, OMCD.

**Golden calf**  
(Inconsequential object)

**God**  
(Bona fide object)

In our lesson text, the Israelites had returned to the idolatrous practices of the religion of Egypt (RPR).

- Was God's relenting for Moses or the Israelites?
- Did God put them under the sin unto death? (Heb.3:17)
- How did God relent (nacham) 40 years of mercy and grace? (Deut.8:3-5; Matt.4:4; John 6:30-35, 58)
- What is the lesson to be learned? (Heb.3:12-19; 4:12)

God allows believers to volitionally choose to travel the road of reversionism, even RPR to see the reality of the spiritual end and spiritual loss.

This is seen in the parable of the prodigal son of Luke 15: "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!'" (Lk.15:17)

"And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him." (Lk.15:20)

"Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it." (Heb.4:1)

"Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need." (Heb.4:16)