

Deuteronomy 10:12–13

V'atah, And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you? Only this: to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all God's ways, to love God, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul, and to keep God's commandments and laws, which I command you today for your good.

Exodus 3:7–10

Then the Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of My people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I know their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land...**And now (וַיִּצְטָק), go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.**"

Exodus 19:3–6

Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying: "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and declare to the children of Israel: You have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. And now (וַיִּצְטָק), if you will obey My voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My treasured possession among all peoples..."

Joshua 24:1–24 (Summarized)

Joshua recounts Israel's history:

- God chose Abraham.
- God led Isaac and Jacob.
- The family went down to Egypt.
- God sent Moses and Aaron.
- God brought Israel out of Egypt.
- God parted the Sea.
- God sustained them in the wilderness.
- God brought them into the Land.
- God gave them victories they did not earn.
- God gave them cities they did not build and vineyards they did not plant.

Then Joshua concludes....

And now, וַיִּצְטָק, fear the Lord and serve Him wholeheartedly and faithfully. Put away the gods your ancestors served... Choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.

Bereishit Rabbah 21:6 (on Genesis 3:22)

Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said: This teaches that the Holy One opened for Adam an opening for repentance. " **אין "ועתה" אלא תשובה** ", 'And now' (**ועתה**) is nothing other than an expression of teshuvah, as it is said: 'And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you...' (Deut. 10:12)."

Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 17a: Rabbi Elazar ben Dordia spent his life pursuing pleasure with no apparent moral direction.

One day he traveled an extraordinary distance to visit a famous courtesan.

During their encounter, she told him that just as a breath of air could never return to its source, laughed and said, "Elazar ben Dordia would never be able to repent."

Her words shattered him. He went and sat between mountains and hills and begged them for mercy on his behalf. They could not.

He appealed to heaven and earth. They could not.

He appealed to the sun and moon. They could not.

Finally, he understood: **אין הדבר תלוי אלא בי**

The matter depends on no one but me.

He placed his head between his knees and wept until his soul departed.

A *bat kol*, a heavenly voice, proclaimed, "Rabbi Elazar ben Dordia was destined for the World to Come."