This deceptively simple question has vexed Jewish thinking since antiquity. Still, contemporary philosophers testify to its enduring relevance in the present day. This seminar examines the central problem of release from sin, and its historical constructions in the penitential discourses of medieval Judaism. Primary sources will include selections from the Sufi-inflected Jewish pietism of Bahya ibn Paquda, the Sefer Hasidim, the philosophical writings of Saadya Gaon and Maimonides, as well as the eschatological and mystical approaches to penitence in the kabbalah of Catalonia and Castile. For context, students will read medieval rabbinic writings alongside parallel works on repentance by Christian and Muslim thinkers. The course will conclude with a unit on the problem of forgiveness in contemporary thought. No pre-requisites required, but previous coursework in religious studies, Jewish studies, and/or philosophy will be beneficial.