



Topic: Forgiveness and being forgiven. Category: Kingdom> Bible Scriptures: Matthew 18:21-35 and Ephesians 4:31-32.

Forgiveness

Let me ask you a question. If someone causes offence to me, how many times do I forgive that person? This is the same question Peter asked of Jesus. To answer Peter's question of how many times he should forgive someone who causes an offence to him, Jesus tells a story of what the kingdom of heaven is like.

The Kingdom

Matthew 18:21-35 *Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.*

"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

"So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Verse 23 *'Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.'*

The kingdom of heaven is like the King who is compassionate, hates injustice and offences, wants to settle accounts and wipe off debts to restore a relationship



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of no offence or obligation. This King wants to raise His servants up to be like Him and in equal relationship with Him.

The Kingdom Reflects The King

Verses 24-25 *'And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.'*

The King is someone of honour. He actions that desire to settle accounts and have an equal relationship with His servants. Using His power to set people free.

The servant caused great offence to the King, owing the King more than he could ever earn or pay back. The cost of such offence is that the servant and his family become a slave to the debt. The servants' whole life and family are now obligated to pay the cost for the offences he has caused.

That is the way of the world, not the kingdom of heaven, which Jesus is about to reveal.

Slavery and being in debt to a person from the tribe of Jewish blood at the time of Peter's question was greatly offensive to them, yet the flesh or selfishness of humanity demands the debt must be paid.

Verses 26-27 *'The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.'*

Yet the King who is rich in mercy and compassion, forgives the servant and releases the servant from all the debt and offences done against him.

Throughout the history of mankind God has been continually offended against by the rebellion and evil of humanity, especially the offences humanity has done to each other.



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Jesus reveals that God Himself and His kingdom is like the King in this story, rich in mercy, full of compassion, and has forgiven humanity for all the offences and evils done against Him and against each other.

God Himself paid the debt, became the flesh and blood sacrifice to take upon Himself all the offences of humanity done to God and each other, not only to release us from the slavery of these offences but to totally defeat them for all eternity!

God Himself was the one who was offended, yet He was the one who initiated forgiveness and became the sacrifice and paid the cost.

The King forgave and released the servant from all offences done to him.

When the one who is offended initiates forgiveness, release and reconciliation occurs.

Verse 28 *"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'"*

Forgiveness was given to the servant, yet the servant was not changed by the experience. Why?

The servant had forgotten that he himself had greatly offended, owed a great debt, even greater debt than that which was owed to him and that he was forgiven. The servant held onto all the offences done to him. As a consequence the servant had not been changed by his experience of being forgiven and having his debt cancelled.

Not only did the servant hold on to all the offences done to him, but also sought out the offender in anger, violently demanding his own justice.

The justice of the flesh nature demands that someone has to pay!



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Like the servant we could never pay back the debt of all the offences we have done to God.

As long as we try to pay back the debt, we miss the revelation of God's forgiveness and ultimate sacrifice of Himself paying our debt in full.

When we forget we have been forgiven of greater offences than any that ever can be done to us, we tend to hang onto the offence done to us and identify ourselves with that offence. That is the flesh nature that cries out someone has to pay!

We remain in captivity, slave to the offence and unforgiveness.

How we release others from offences done against us is a direct reflection to the revelation we receive of the cost of Jesus' sacrifice.

To be fully healed from the hurt, pain, rejection, inequality, abuse, whatever offence that has been done and be released from identifying with it, the person who has been offended against must initiate forgiveness. Let go of it all to receive Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus has paid the cost of it all.

In the place of the offender having to pay, let them go of the obligation and receive God's payment on behalf of you and on behalf of them. This is the enormity and value of God's own sacrifice and payment of all offences of all humanity, in time past, time present and time future.

Verse 32 *'Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.'*

If we remember we are forgiven, we then can in His forgiveness to forgive others.

Verse 33-34 *'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.'*



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The torturers here in this verse means to be pressed for the Truth. God is not condemning anyone who is holding onto unforgiveness. What Jesus is saying is because I love you I need to get this unforgiveness out of you before it destroys you. When you live with unforgiveness you actually identify yourself with that offence and that abusive situation becomes a stronghold over you. It has control over you, gets into your thoughts, heart and every aspect of your life, unless you let go of unforgiveness it becomes part of you, you become a slave to it and live in bondage to it. Let the offences done to you and the offenders, release all obligation of having to pay and forgive.

God does not approve of offences done to each other. God does not approve of abuse.

God hates such evils and is grieved by them. He does not hate the offender. He hates the offence, the hurt and the pain caused.

To forgive is to break relationship with that moment of pain.

Verse 35 *"So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

God loves us so much, He will do anything to bring us into receiving His forgiveness and being transformed by that reality. Who Jesus sets free is free indeed. God challenges and presses us with the truth to set us free.

The truth is, we are forgiven. It is a free gift from God. He's paid the cost of all offences on the cross. To continually receive that forgiveness is to live in that reality of letting go of all offences done to us.

Ephesians 4:30 *'And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.'*

All who have received Jesus are sealed with His Holy Spirit. We are given His Spirit. His Spirit is a Spirit of unity. God is grieved when offences are done to each other.



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Therefore the Apostle Paul reminds us that we are forgiven and to let go of everything that holds another in bondage.

Ephesians 4:31-32 *'Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.'*

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is founded on forgiveness and rooted in love.

I would like to share with you a poem titled To Be Forgiven.

To be forgiven is like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders.

To be forgiven is a way to make things right.

To be forgiven is the key to healing.

To be forgiven is to be able to forgive myself.

To be forgiven is the ultimate act of love.

To be forgiven is to be a child of God.

To be forgiven is the freedom to embrace.

To be forgiven is to receive, God's free gift, of grace!