

A Biblical Treatise on Forgiveness

It is our *natural inclination* to find other people or circumstances which are to blame for relationship problems in order to justify or excuse our offenses and shortcomings. *The greater our guilt, the more we must blame*. The resulting emotions are devastating to our mental/emotional health and balance and separate us from *Yah Adonai*. The *Rev. 12:11* formula for overcoming involves “*loving not our lives unto the death*”, which surely includes *dying to self*. The greatest way to die to self is by *forgiving and asking for forgiveness*. Each one of us is to: “...*have a clear conscience in the sight of both God and man*” (*Acts 24:16*). Do we really understand forgiveness? *Yeshua's* teaching on forgiveness is in the Gospel of Matthew: “²¹Then Peter came to Him and said, ‘Master, how often shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ ²²Yeshua said to him, ‘No, not up to seven times, I tell you, but seventy times seven! (Lit. seventy-seven, cf. Gen. 4:24). ²³Therefore, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he had begun to settle up, a man was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents (One talent was worth 6000 denarii, or about 16 years’ wages {1T=\$60Kx16=\$960K, 10,000T=\$9.6 billion}). ²⁵But since he didn’t have the money to repay, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶Then the slave fell on his knees and begged him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll repay you everything.’ ²⁷And the master of that slave, filled with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸‘Now that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii (~\$1,600). And he grabbed him and started choking him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe!’ ²⁹‘So his fellow slave fell down and kept begging him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ ³⁰Yet he was unwilling. Instead, he went off and threw the man into prison until he paid back all he owed. ³¹‘So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply distressed. They went to their master and reported in detail all that had happened. ³²Then summoning the first slave, his master said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Wasn’t it necessary for you also to show mercy to your fellow slave, just as I showed mercy to you?’ ³⁴Enraged, the master handed him over to the torturers until he paid back all he owed. ³⁵‘So also My heavenly Father will do to you, unless each of you, from your hearts, forgives his brother.’” (*Matt. 18:31-35*).

INSIGHTS IN MATTHEW 18 ON FORGIVENESS (DYING TO SELF)

Let us look at the cast of characters: a king, deputy-1 who owed the king 10,000 talents (about \$9.6 billion), deputy-2 who owed deputy-1 100 denarii (about \$1,600), an undisclosed number of fellow deputies (slaves), and an undisclosed number of jailers. To put it in perspective, Israel paid a sum of \$1.5M to Rome (via the Roman IRS system to pay or die) and this sum that deputy-1 owes the king is 6,400 times higher than the total taxes from all of Israel to Rome in 1 year! This raises about five questions:

1. Why did the king forgive the full debt if deputy-1 was only asking for an extension on the loan? He never asked for forgiveness. He said: “*give me time and I will repay you*” How much repayment? Everything! Instead the king never entertained that and moved directly to canceling the debt!
2. Why is it that the forgiven deputy-1 used violence in trying to collect a meager \$2K compared to receiving an unsolicited gift of \$10 billion? This doesn’t make any sense. After given \$10 billion the first thing he does is choke another deputy. What would you have done? Wouldn’t you say *Hallelujah, look what is happened to me?* But what would happen if you get \$10 billion and you grab someone in KS that owes you \$2K and squeeze their neck and throw them in prison. What triggered such? Why did he react that way?
3. Why is there no mention of deputy-2 being released from jail? Is he still in jail? Why is there that omission?
4. The king orders deputy-1 to be put in jail until he pays everything he owes. How can you pay back an un-payable debt in jail? If he were out of jail he could do some moonlighting or something to earn money. But the Bible is very precise; it says he is to be put in jail until he pays how much? Everything!
5. How can a loving Heavenly Father turn us over to the torturers (*verdugos*, in Spanish, the Greek word means *imps or demons*)? *Messiah Yeshua* said: “*This is how my heavenly Father will treat you, unless you each forgive your brother from your hearts.*” I have no problem with *Yah's* discipline, or *Yah's* chastisement or facing the consequences of my sin. But being turned over to torturers? Torturers inflict pain for the sake of pain itself. There is no redeeming value in torture.

THE TREATISE

QUESTION 1

There was no way that deputy-1 could have paid such a debt. When a debt is un-payable the only way to deal with is through forgiveness. But he was a very proud man. He said: *I will repay you*. How much? Everything! *The king forgave the unplayable debt because he was compassionate (he extended grace)*. The king *never entertained the notion* of giving an extension.

QUESTION 2 & 3

Why did he throw in jail the other deputy who owed only \$1,600? Very simple, he never truly received the invaluable gift of forgiveness. Forgiveness was extended to him, but he was too proud to take it. He said: *I will repay you everything*. Here we have the tension between cancellation and extension, between grace and works, between humility and pride, and the sad case of someone who was given one of the greatest gifts ever, but he refused it because he was not wired intellectually or emotionally to hear what he was given. Why was that? Because all these years he had been living in the land of *if only... If I could only collect the \$1,600 that deputy-2 owes me, I will be in a better position to have some leverage with the king as I renegotiate my loan of \$9.6 billion. If only...*” He was constantly blaming deputy-2 and the \$1.6K he owed him for the entire debt he owed the king. Can somebody be that silly? I think so. We do the same thing. Psychology serves us very well. We blame things on our father and mother. We say, *if my father had been a better godly man, I would be a better spiritual believer today. If my mother had taught me this or that I'd be able to overcome... If my leaders were more dedicated, if the youth counselor prayed more, if only, if only, if only...* We look at our own failures and rather than saying: *I have failed* we say: *Someone out there owes me something*. So what do we do? We go around throwing people in jail. We take every offense done to us and we turn it into a stone. And with the cement of our bitterness we begin to build a prison around us. And because bitterness is addictive, everyday we need a greater dosage than the day before. And even though people do make mistakes, we make them bigger and bigger and bigger every time, because we need bigger stones until we have a high fence built around us. And once we have built that high fence (*a jailhouse*), we have no more room for *Yah Adonai* in our lives. Then the only alternative is for *Yah Adonai* to have the *torturers* be brought in. When pride takes over *Yah Adonai* can no longer bring conviction of sin unless he enlists the help of the specialists in the area of pride. Who are these? *Satan and his demons, those are the torturers*. The only hope as people begin to go downhill, downhill, and downhill is for them to finally they come to their senses and reflect that *“in my Father's house there is plenty of food to eat, and here I perish of hunger; I better get up and return to my Father's house...”* When Biblical counselors analyze every tragedy that sits across them in their counseling sessions they all go back to a point where a decision between (1) humbling themselves and calling their actions sin before the Almighty or (2) justify it away. And without failure, every major scandal or bad situation goes back to the point where a person decides to get themselves up to the throne of the Most High and call their sin *NO SIN*. *Yah Adonai* who loves us so dearly and who desires intimate fellowship with us will stop at nothing, even to turn us over to the *torturers* until we come to our senses. He turns us over to torturers because of our pride. We are too proud to forgive. We are like people who if we are told to be at the airport at 9am, show up late at 9:01am and miss the plane, but when someone arrives 55 minutes late, also missing the plane, we justify ourselves by saying: *shame on you, you are late! 55 minutes late! You are very late*. One minute or one hour, we both missed the plane! We have not understood what it means to not love our lives so we can gain the Kingdom. And we do not wish those people well. But, we want them to pay the consequences of the debt.

QUESTION 4

How can going jail pay a debt? Why does it say *go to jail until you pay*? Answer: because an un-payable debt can only be dealt through forgiveness. So the king very wisely was putting him in jail where he would have no one to blame until one day he would come to his senses and say: *unless I accept the gift of Yah's Forgiveness,*

I will never get out of here. Yah Adonai allows us to go downhill and to be hurt, and face the consequences of our wrongdoing until we come to the point where we can harm and do damage to no one but ourselves and we are able to say *Lord will you forgive me please, I need to get out of here*. The only way to deal with forgiveness is by accepting it, admitting we need it and applying it. I want to challenge us today to apply *Yah Adonai's Grace* to others that have hurt you. The Holy Spirit is illuminating your conscience right now and is showing you the person that hurt you so badly. There is someone that is more difficult to forgive than another individual, *you!* Will you forgive yourself today? You are going to stay in that jail until you realize that there is no way you can pay for sin except through *Yah Adonai's Grace*. You have to forgive yourself like He has forgiven you.

QUESTION 5

Why is deputy-2 never released from jail by the king? Answer: *because the king did not put him in there. Only deputy-1 was in a position to release them*. Do you realize that there are people today that are in a spiritual jail because you and I are keeping them there? Be tender to the Spirit at this moment. Maybe someone reminds you, *do you remember so and so?* And immediately a spiritual indigestion begins in you. The Spirit's voice says *Do you know that they are trying to come back to the Lord?* No! *I'll wait until I see it. Or He sends you regards.* No! *He is a manipulator...* What are we saying? *I have a judgment here against that person, and that person is going remain there because he owes me...* There could be people, even here in KS, that will never reach their highest potential because someone is holding the spiritual mortgage on them. Sadly, there are also people who need to forgive themselves... *Yah Adonai* already forgave you! Do not let the devil bring defeat in your life! You have to defeat him with *Yeshua's Blood (the gift of salvation), the word of your testimony and because you love not yourself even unto death*. It is your jail, not *Yah Adonai's*. Are you going to empty that jailhouse today? Do you realize that such painful experiences could become your life message? The most painful thing in your life can become your greatest asset! What was man's greatest evil? Answer: *the killing of Messiah*. But *Yeshua* wrapped grace on it and it became the greatest event of all, our forgiveness. *But I am not Yeshua, you say*. Look at Stephen in Acts 7. He forgave *Paul*, among the crowd and he became a great writer in the Bible. He became this person because Stephen never put him in his jail. There might be a "*Paul*" in your life that needs to be forgiven and be set free today. Thus Scripture says: *"bless them that curse you."* We do not curse, but we do say, *I hope you get what is coming to you...* What's the difference? When we bless them, we remove the jurisdiction the devil has to use them against us. Satan cannot use demons to agitate them or to hurt them; instead he uses US! Satan cannot understand love or grace. *You pay the consequences of putting people in jail regardless.*