

March 22, 2026

Matthew

- 14 Courage—John Beheaded & Jesus Walks on Water
- 15 Devotion—What DEFILES, Canaanite Woman & Feed 4,000
- 16 Jesus—Peter Declares “You Are the Messiah” - 1st Time
- 17 Glory—Transfiguration & Heals Demon Possessed Boy - 2nd Time
- 18 Forgiveness—Greatest in Kingdom & Parables of Wandering Sheep & UNMERCIFUL SERVANT
- 28 Resurrection Commission—Happy Easter
- 19 Eternal Life—Divorce, Children, Rich & Kingdom
- 20 Grace—Parables Workers & Vineyard & 2 Blind Men SEE - 3rd Time
- 21 Authority—Jesus’ Triumphal Entry & Temple Parables of Two Sons & of the Tenants
- 22-23 Honor—Parable of Marriage Banquet – Greatest Commands
- 24 Alert—Temple Destruction & NO ONE Knows the HOUR
- 25 Active Faith—Parables of Virgins, Bag of Gold, Sheep & Goats
- 26 Atonement—Last Supper & Jesus’ Arrest
- 27 Our Savior—Betrayal & Crucifixion



Jesus Predicts Forgiveness?

Matthew, c. 1625 by Frans Hal



Sea of Galilee

Matthew 18:21 Peter asked Jesus,
 “Lord, how many times shall I Forgive
 my brother or sister who sins against me?
 Up to Seven Times?”

After the Transfiguration – off the Mountain
Chapter 17:22-23 says

When they came together in Galilee,
he said to them, “The Son of Man is going
to be delivered into the hands of men.

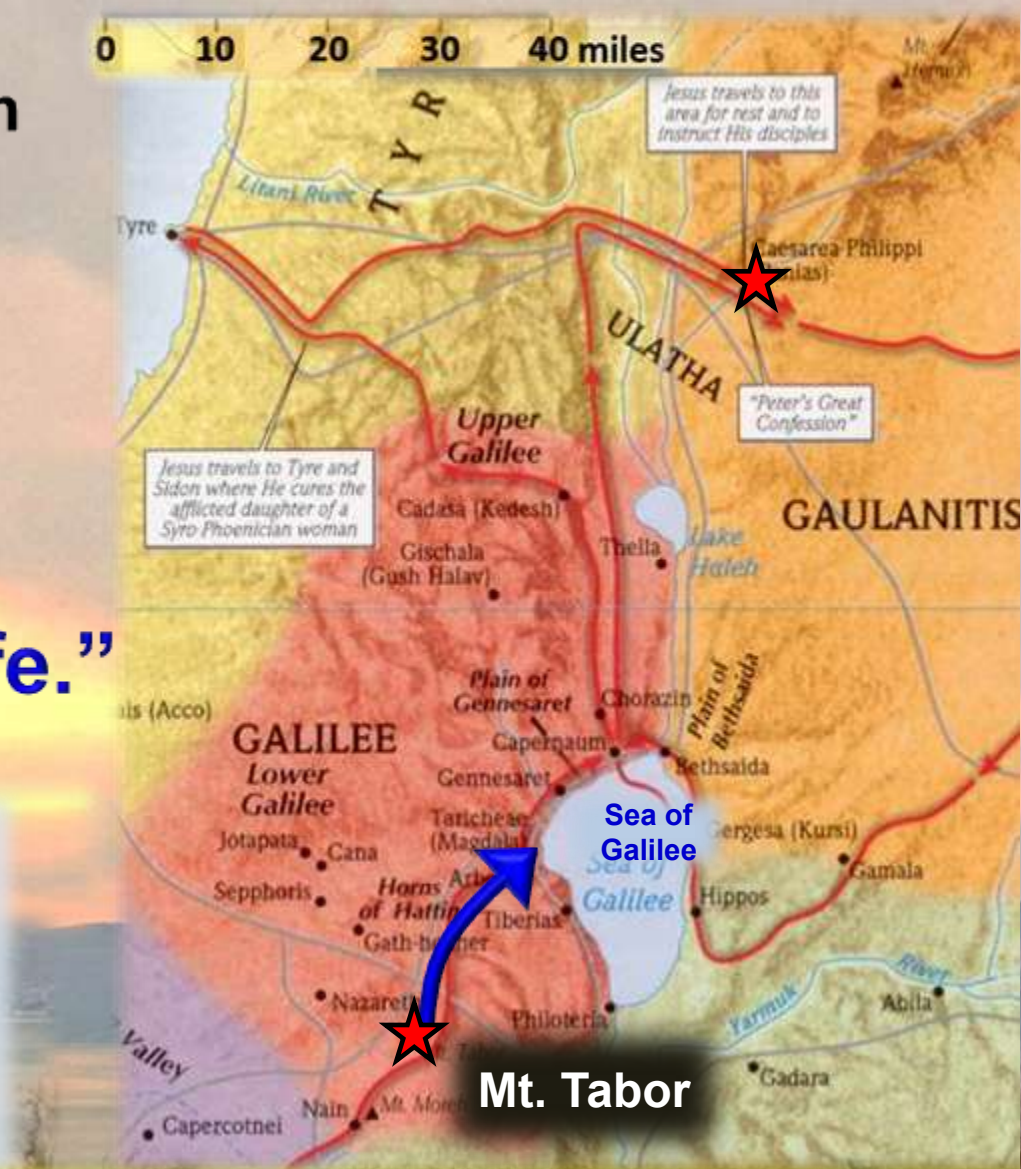
23 They will KILL him, and on the
3rd day He will be RAISED to Life.”

And the disciples were filled with grief.

Then closing Mt 17, Jesus has
Peter cast a line into the lake for a fish
with the temple tax in the fish’s mouth

Matthew 18 – more parables & then

the Astounding Declaration on ***FORGIVENESS***



Forgiveness

Prof. Everett L. Worthington Jr.

Handbook of Forgiveness

1st Ed. (Routledge, 2005, 596 pp.; 2nd Ed., 2020, 397 pp.).

- ✓ Commonwealth Professor Emeritus,
Dept of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University
- ✓ Author of 40 books & over 450 articles mostly on
forgiveness, marriage, and family
- ✓ founding editor of *Marriage and Family: A Christian Journal*
- ✓ 1999–2005, director of “Campaign for Forgiveness Research”
- ✓ www.EvWorthington-forgiveness.com

Of course, we have the Bible & Matthew 18 that

Tells us to FORGIVE as Christ Forgave us – in certain clear terms!

to me – Love is the SOURCE of true Forgiveness

WITH heinous crimes, we ALL fall short of Christ’s **ABILITY**



EDITED BY EVERETT L. WORTHINGTON, JR.
AND NATHANIEL G. WADE

HANDBOOK OF FORGIVENESS

Second Edition



R
ROUTLEDGE

Forgiveness

Bernard Meltzer (1916–1998), “What’s Your Problem?” radio host

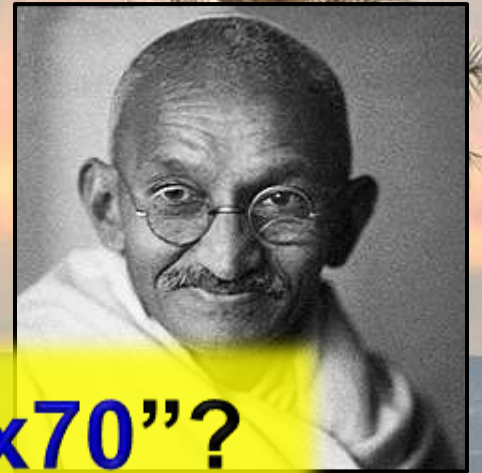
**“When you forgive, you in no way change the past
— but you sure do change the future.”**

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948),
India’s greatest civil rights leader

**“The weak can never forgive.
Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”**

What does Jesus *MEAN* by “Forgive 7x70”?

Some translations say 77x – doesn’t matter – in reality & intimation
77 is equal to 7x70 = means a **LOT**, more they DESERVE – AND
To you & me & most – 7x70 is more than we can bear without grace



Matthew 18

1-5 Who Is the Greatest in Kingdom of Heaven – CHILD

6-9 Whoever Causes Little One to Stumble – HELL

10-14 Parable of Lost Sheep – Master Leaves 99 for 1

Matt. 18:10 “See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”

Some manuscripts add to Matt 18:10 this from Luke 19:10

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

15-20 Correcting a Brother, Go, then Take 2-3 to Him

21-35 Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
about *Mercy* or *Forgiveness*?

ALSO – Recall, Jesus supports Law Enforcement – *even on the Cross!*

Jesus CLEANSED the Temple – we cannot elaborate here



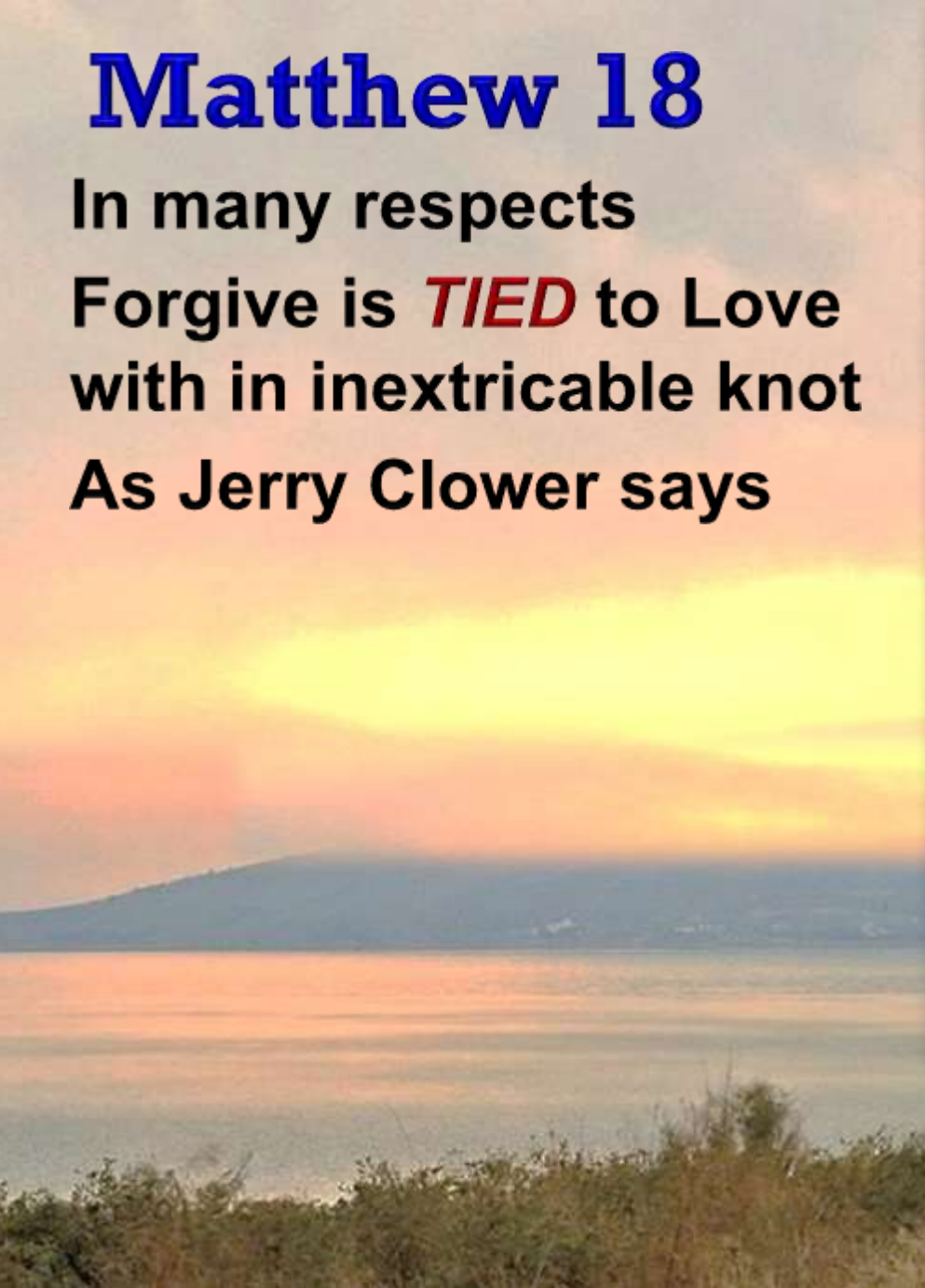
***Focus
Today***

Matthew 18

In many respects

Forgive is *TIED* to Love
with in inextricable knot

As Jerry Clower says



After all these ... Greatest in Kingdom

6-9 Whoever Causes Little One to Stumble – HELL

10-14 Parable of Lost Sheep & 15-20 Correcting a Brother

Peter has a good question? **WHY that came up is mysterious.**

~ Did Peter have some troublemaker on his MIND?

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked,

“Lord, how many times shall I FORGIVE
my brother or sister who sins against me?

Up to seven times?”

Linked to Matt 18 is Matt 6:14 **For if you FORGIVE
other people when they sin against you,
your heavenly Father will also FORGIVE you.**



Parable of Unmerciful Servant – Matthew 18:21-35

Interestingly – exact word in Matthew 18 is used only 2x in the N.T.

Only other time is John 14:18 “I will not **LEAVE** you as orphans”

That’s right, same word in Matt is translated “LEAVE” in John

Root word used 146x in 32 variations – with 2 uses as in above

Use of Matt 6:14 “you **FORGIVE** ^{1st} Father will **FORGIVE**” ^{2nd}

• where **1st FORGIVE** only 5x, mostly trans FORGIVE
but also John 16:32 “A time is coming ... when you will
be scattered, each to your own home.

You will LEAVE me all alone.

• where **2nd FORGIVE** only 4x, once in Parable of Sheep
that’s right: same word 6:14 “Father will **FORGIVE**” as
in Mt 18:12 “Master will **LEAVE** the 99” in Matt 18



Parable of Unmerciful Servant – Matthew 18:21-35

What in the world does “Forgive” mean in all this?

**21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked,
“Lord, how many times shall I FORGIVE
my brother or sister who sins against me?
Up to seven times?”**

**Clearly – the word used by Jesus, Matthew, John, et al
Has a broader meaning than some would SLANDER Christians
146x root is used in 32 variations and translated varioiously**

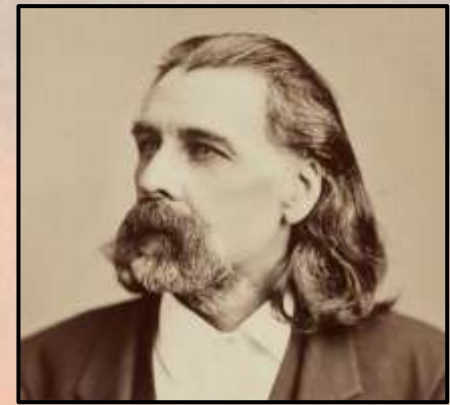
**> forgive, forsake, lay aside, leave, let, omit,
> put / send away, remit, suffer, yield up, & more**

**Greek for FORGIVE when translated *FORGIVE* means
Leave the Offense, Put Away Offense, Forsake the Offense**



Forgiveness

Henry Wheeler Shaw, under penname
Josh Billings (1818–1885), humorous authored
several witty homespun books



"There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997),
founder Missionaries of Charity,
1979 Nobel Peace Prize, many other honors

**"To FORGIVE takes LOVE,
to FORGET takes HUMILITY"**



What does Jesus *MEAN* by "Forgive 7x70"?

Parable of Unmerciful Servant – Matthew 18:21-35

**21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked,
“Lord, how many times shall I FORGIVE
my brother or sister who sins against me?
Up to seven times?”**

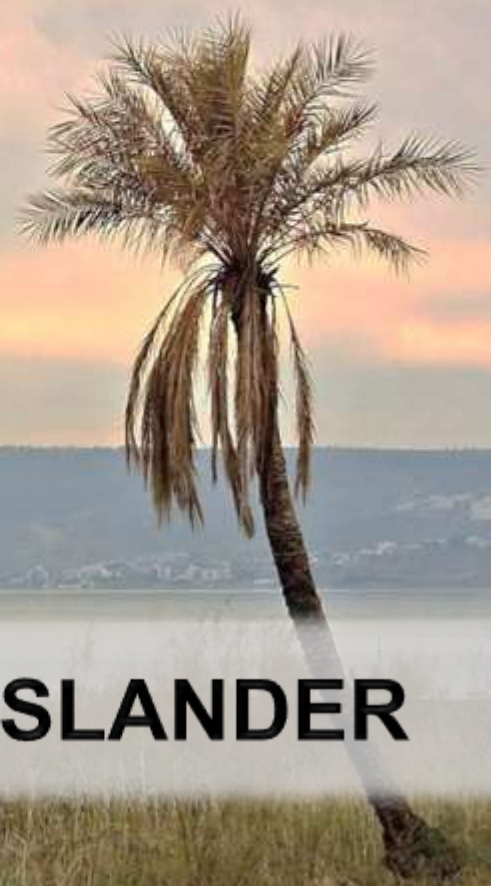
**22 Jesus answered, “I tell you,
not seven times,
but seventy times seven times.**

Few hold to this verse to avoid ALL confrontation

Few hold to v 22 to hold Christians HOSTAGE

^ Few want Christian to bow down to EVERY Offense

FORGIVE has a broader meaning than some SLANDER



Parable of Unmerciful Servant – Matthew 18:21-35

We have this clear statement that has also been widely abused

22 Jesus answered, “I tell you,
not seven times, but seventy times seven times.

What does Jesus *MEAN* by “Forgive 7x70”?

- ✓ Does that mean EVERY Offense?
- ✓ Does that mean you must NEVER resist crime?
- ✓ Does that mean you must NEVER ask for justice?
- ✓ Does that mean you must ALWAYS bow to abuse?
- ✓ Does that mean a life of total PACIFISM?

At least Jesus means We MUST “forgive” a LOT – the question is
If not ALWAYS 100% of time, then HOW MUCH & WHEN?



Forgiveness

What does it mean? rather, who does NOT know what it means?

We ALL have an inkling. We all want it for our failures.

Most of us are generous to forgive SMALL offenses.

ALL of us know what Jesus says in Matthew 18 = 7x70!

What about forgiving Rape & Murder?

What about Hitler – Stalin – Pol Pot – Adi Amin ????

EVERY OFFENSE? No Matter How EVIL?

Would we have a U.S.A. if Founding Fathers **FORGAVE** Britain?

You would NOT have a home if ANY criminal

KNEW you FORGAVE ALL OFFENSES!

What does Jesus **MEAN** by “Forgive 7x70”?



Forgiveness – in **ENGLISH** History

Oxford English Dictionary (OED) dates first use in English to 900 A.D.

Just before the Christian Crusades to take back the Holy Land

900 A.D. & obsolete now: “to give, or grant”

1200 & obsolete now: “to give up, cease to harbor” as resentment

1000 A.D. became “to give up a claim, give offender a pardon”

OED References Matthew 6:12 “**Forgive us our debts ...**”

Lewis B. Smedes (1921–2002), Christian author said

**“To forgive is to set a prisoner free
and discover that the prisoner was you.”**

What does Jesus *MEAN* by “**Forgive 7x70**”?



Forgiveness

What does GOD in Christ mean by FORGIVENESS? *Even the O.T. knows!*

Psalm 103:10-12 sums up many more verses we know by heart & cherish

10 He does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.

11 For as HIGH as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is His LOVE for those who fear Him;

12 as FAR as the east is from the west,
so FAR has he removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 38:17

Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness;
but in LOVE you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction,
for you have CAST ALL MY SINS BEHIND YOUR BACK.



Forgiveness

Martin Luther King, Jr.

**"Forgiveness is not an occasional act;
it is a permanent attitude."**



E. G. Bella, bookworm-turned-author with a passion for
cheesy puns, colorful characters, and contagious faith

**"As long as you keep pulling, the bell keeps ringing.
Forgiveness is letting go of the rope."**



What does Jesus *MEAN* by "Forgive 7x70"?

22 ... seventy times seven times.

WHAT Does Jesus MEAN? – Jesus tells us in a most ... wait for it ... Jesus tells what he means by 7x70 in a most UNFORGIVING Parable! Those SLANDERING the Christian & wish to hold Christian HOSTAGE Those say “Forgive 7x70” as they slap & steal & abuse have wait – wait – have **NOT read Jesus’ explanation**

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him Ten Thousand Bags of Gold was brought to him.

**Who LOANS 10,000 bags of GOLD? – the DEBT is UNPAYABLE!
DEBT was likely LONG in accumulating
KING has absolute control over the Man in Debt**



Forgiveness

What does GOD in Christ mean by FORGIVENESS? *Even the O.T. knows!*

Isaiah 43:25

²⁵ “I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for MY own sake,
and I will not remember your sins.

Micah 7:19

¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.

You will cast ALL our sins into the depths of the SEA.

Part of God’s “Forgiveness” is HIS ability in LOVE to Forget

God has the ability to *FORGET* & Cast into the *SEA*
one day in Heaven, I too will have that ability.

22 ... seventy times seven times.

What did Jesus mean by 7x70?

25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered he & his wife & children & all that he had be SOLD to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’”

Well – ahhhhhh – 10,000 Bags of Gold!

How many times had that servant come before?

At 1,000 Bags ... 2,000 ... 3,500 BAGS of Gold?

What I believe ALL understood was this:

- ✓ **That Servant COULD NEVER PAY BACK**
- ✓ **That Servant Had been RACKING up Debt a LONG TIME**



Forgiveness

Alexander Pope (1688–1744), one the most prominent Enlightenment poets & satirist of the early 18th century

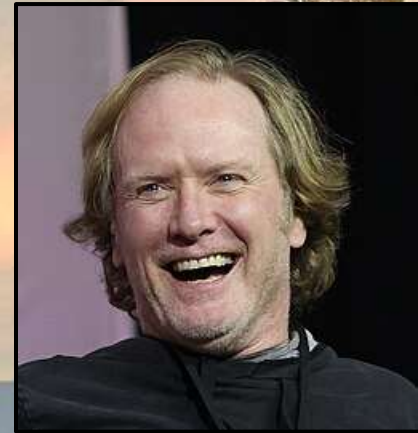
"To err is human; to forgive, divine."

Dave Willis, American voice actor & screenwriter

"Holding a grudge doesn't make you strong; it makes you bitter.

Forgiving doesn't make you WEAK; it sets you *FREE*."

What does Jesus *MEAN* by "Forgive 7x70"?



**Matt 18:27 The servant's master took pity on him,
CANCELED the DEBT & LET HIM GO.**

**10,000 Bags of Gold! – that says a LOT about KING
King can afford that LOSS**

No matter how BAD you have been – LISTEN

- ✓ **Your DEBT is not too BIG for God to FORGIVE**
- ✓ **Your DEBT is not too TAXING to God**
- ✓ **Your DEBT is IMPOSSIBLE for YOU to PAY**
- ✓ **Master will NOT be hurt by your DEBT**



Forgiveness

Unknown Author –

**"When you forgive, you heal.
When you let go, you grow."**

Unknown Author –

**"Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door
of resentment & the handcuffs of hatred."**

What does Jesus *MEAN* by "Forgive 7x70"?



28 “But when that servant went out,
he found one of his fellow servants who
owed him a hundred silver coins.

100 COINS!

He grabbed him and began to CHOKE him.

‘PAY BACK WHAT YOU OWE ME!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees & begged him,
‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

Realize – do NOT forget – this is Jesus’ explanation of 7x70
NOT MY VIEW – yet is a view Jesus gave that WE rarely SEE
Matt 18:30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off & had the
man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

NO ONE – **NONE** – NADA – Fails to see the INJUSTICE HERE
EVERYONE sees this selfish bigheaded EVIL Servant DISGUSTING



Forgiveness

Unknown Author –

"Forgiveness is the economy of the heart....
forgiveness *SAVES* the expense of anger,
the cost of hatred, and the waste of spirits."

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), American Reformed theologian,
ethicist, professor at Union Theological Seminary 30+ years

"Forgiveness is the final form of LOVE."



What does Jesus *MEAN* by "Forgive 7x70"?

We are all on a world stage – YOU are the Best Christian many know

31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged & went & told their master everything that had happened.

**32 “Then the master called the servant in.
‘YOU WICKED SERVANT!’
‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.**

33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’

34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be TORTURED, until he should pay back all he owed.

We almost find this punishment just, appropriate – UNTIL UNTIL we see that that “Wicked Servant” is ME & YOU

No, we would NEVER to that, precisely, but the point is 7x70!



Forgiveness

Oswald Chambers (1874–1917) Scottish Baptist Minister
best known for his devotional *My Utmost for His Highest*

"Don't get impatient with others.

Remember how God dealt with you –
with patience and gentleness."



What does Jesus *MEAN* by “Forgive 7x70”?

Jesus takes us home on what He means by 7x70

34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be TORTURED, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you UNLESS YOU FORGIVE your BROTHER or SISTER from your HEART.”

One can argue that Jesus just meant SISTER & BROTHER

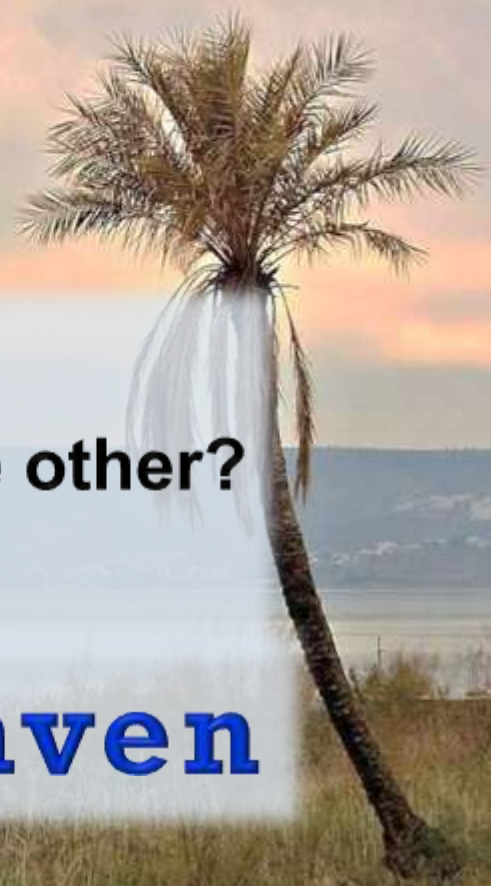
One can argue that Jesus did not mean enemy

Yet who is the NEIGHBOR in the Good Samaritan Story?

Who is meant when slapped on one cheek to turn the other?

Can we solve 7x70 CLEARLY? ? ?

I think NOT – not this side of **Heaven**



35 “This is how my heavenly Father
will treat each of you **UNLESS YOU FORGIVE**
your **BROTHER** or **SISTER** from your **HEART.**”

What Jesus **DOES DO** is **LIFT** the bar & compass of **LOVE**

Jesus lifts **LOVE** above anything
any teacher has ever taught **B.C.** or **A.D.**

IF you **Love** **GOD** –

you will **LOVE** others to a **HIGH** degree
Higher degree that the world **CANNOT** grasp!

Even as, *this side of Heaven*, **NO ONE**
will reach Jesus’ competence in **FORGIVENESS**



Forgiveness

Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997), founder Missionaries of Charity,
1979 Nobel Peace Prize, many other honors

“I have found the paradox,
that if you **LOVE** until it **HURTS**,
there can be **NO** more **HURT**,
only more **LOVE**”

Jesus *means* ***FORGIVE 7x70!***

knowing that you & I never will, not 100% from the **Heart**
not *this* side of **Heaven**

