

PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT
Matthew 18:23-35

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Mat 18:23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 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. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, “Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all”. 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 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!” 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you all”. 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31 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. 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. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

This is one of the “Kingdom of Heaven is like” parables which teaches on certain aspects of the pathway to salvation.

In the parable, Christ describes a servant who was forgiven his debt by His Master, but in turn, the servant does not forgive those who are indebted to him. When the Master learns of his servant’s lack of forgiveness, the Master holds the servant accountable and reinstates the debt his servant owed Him. The Master then delivers the servant to the “tormentors” to pay his full debt.

Here is the spiritual message of the parable:

The spirit words “King” and “Master” represent Christ. The debt that the servant owes his Master represents the same debt that all mankind owes to Him because of their sins. That debt is “death”.

Eze 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Because of Christ's work at the cross, Christ earned the legal right to collect mankind's debt of death from mankind. As a result, Christ became mankind's near-kinsman redeemer.

In this age, Christ is collecting mankind's debt of death only from the Elect believers who have been chosen for an early salvation. In the final age, Christ will collect the debt of death from the balance of mankind.

In the end, all mankind will have to pay their debt of death to the Master because no one is spiritually any different than the unforgiving servant.

Isa 66:16 For by fire (judgment) and by his sword (Word of God) will the LORD plead with all flesh (all mankind): and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

But since Christ is a loving and merciful Master, Christ will give each of His servants a new birth prior to collecting the debt of death from them. In this way, the servants can pay their debt of death in full and go on living as a new creation who is spiritually like the Master. The spiritual process that the Master uses to make this happen is called conversion. This is the salvation that Christ came to give all mankind:

1John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

In the parable, the unforgiving servant represents one of the "many" individuals who are given the Early Rain of the Spirit in this age. He has been called to be a saint but was not chosen to become one.

Matt 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen...

And because the unforgiving servant was not chosen, the Master will not complete his conversion before he dies. As a result, the unforgiving servant will be resurrected to judgment where he will then pay his debt of death to the Master.

Now let's look at the first five verses of parable:

Mat 18: 23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 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. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, "Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all". 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

When the Master decides to “settle accounts” with His servant, we find that the servant owes his Master 10,000 talents. Since all mankind has sinned, every person who has ever lived owes Christ that same debt of 10,000 talents.

This amount of debt is understood as 10x10x10x10. The number ten represents completeness. Since it is multiplied four times, the number four is added to its meaning. The number four represents the “whole” of something. The “whole” of the debt that is owed to the Master is not just the individual debt of this one servant. The 10,000 talents represents the whole debt that is owed to Christ by all mankind. And since all mankind is spiritually no different than the unforgiving servant, all mankind (except the very Elect) will follow in his steps and have to pay the full debt of death to Christ – either in this age or in the final age.

When the servant says to his Master that he cannot pay the debt, the Master has compassion upon him and forgives him his debt.

The Master’s forgiveness comes to the servant in the form of the Early Rain of the Spirit. With the indwelling of the small measure of the Spirit, the servant will have faith. With the Spirit and faith, he will become a new creation (a child of God) who is justified before the law of sin & death. This is when the Master forgives the servant his debt.

Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

But because the Early Rain of the Spirit has left the servant unconverted, he will remain carnally minded and unforgiving of others. In this spiritual state, the servant is not like his Master.

Though not presented in the parable, Satan will come to the servant and deceive him via the spirit of anti-Christ. The spirit of anti-Christ will deceive the servant into accepting “another gospel” which teaches a person to mix works with faith. When the servant accepts this false gospel, he will fall from grace and become a man of sin/minister of Satan. It is in this “worse than the first” spiritual state (**Mat 12:43-45**), the servant will find a fellow servant who owes him 100 denarii:

Mat 18:28 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!” 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you all”. 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

The fellow servant who owes 100 denarii to the unforgiving servant represents an unconverted Elect believer before they have fallen away from faith. Like the unforgiving servant, he has received the Early Rain of the Spirit and has been forgiven his debt by the Master. And like the unforgiving servant, he also remains unconverted.

The number 100 is understood as 10x10. As before, the number ten represents completeness. The number two represents the witness of God (the Elect). When the numbers are combined into

the number 100, it represents all unconverted Elect believers who have been called to be saints and have had their debt forgiven by the Master.

When the unforgiving servant tells his fellow servant that they owe a debt to him, it represents the unforgiving servant teaching the fellow servant the same false gospel that he had accepted earlier. He teaches the fellow servant that their faith was not enough to forgive all their debts. When the fellow servant cannot pay the 100 denarii, the unforgiving servant throws him into prison to work off the debt. This represents that the fellow servant has accepted Satan's false gospel which mixes works with faith. The prison is representative of the fellow servant being a captive of Satan.

2Tim 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Mat 18:31 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. 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. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him.

The fellow servants who witness the unforgiving servant's actions represent all converted Elect believers who have the same character as their Master. They are few in number and have come out from the many who were called. They were originally no better than the unforgiving servant, and because of weren't, the Master had to reinstate their original debt of death, too. The Master then collected the full payment of the debt from them during their time of conversion.

As a result of the fellow servants being converted and made into a new creation, they now have the same divine spiritual nature of their Master. With this new divine spiritual nature, they are just as forgiving as their Master.

The scripture below applies to the converted fellow servants who have had the plank removed from their eyes.

Mat 7:1-6 Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Because the unforgiving servant does not forgive his fellow servant of the 100 denarii, the Master reinstates the unforgiving servant's debt of death and metes out the same judgment that the unforgiving servant gave to his fellow servant. This will happen at the judgment seat of

Christ at the beginning of the final age. At that time, the unforgiving servant will be delivered to the “tormentors” in the Lake of Fire (symbol for judgment) where he will pay his debt of death to the “last penny”:

Mat 5:26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

But unlike what the Master did with the Elect servants earlier, He will begin the spiritual process of collecting the debt prior to giving them a new birth. Because of this change, the unforgiving servant will experience torment during the first part of their judgment. But before the unforgiving servant pays his debt in full, the Master will have mercy upon him.

Psa 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Mat 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law: JUSTICE, MERCY, and FAITH: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Before the unforgiving servant perishes in the Lake of Fire, the Master will have MERCY upon him. His mercy will come to him in the form of the Latter Rain of the Spirit. This gift will restore the unforgiving servant’s faith and give him a new spiritual birth as a child of God. The new child of God will then be gathered to heaven, leaving the child of the devil in the Lake of Fire to perish. This death will satisfy JUSTICE and will pay the “last penny” of the unforgiving servant’s sin debt.

After the last of mankind has been converted, mankind will cease to exist because everyone has paid their sin debt of death. However, the Kingdom of Heaven will be that much fuller. Everyone will then have the same divine spiritual nature as their Master and will know the true meaning of forgiveness.