

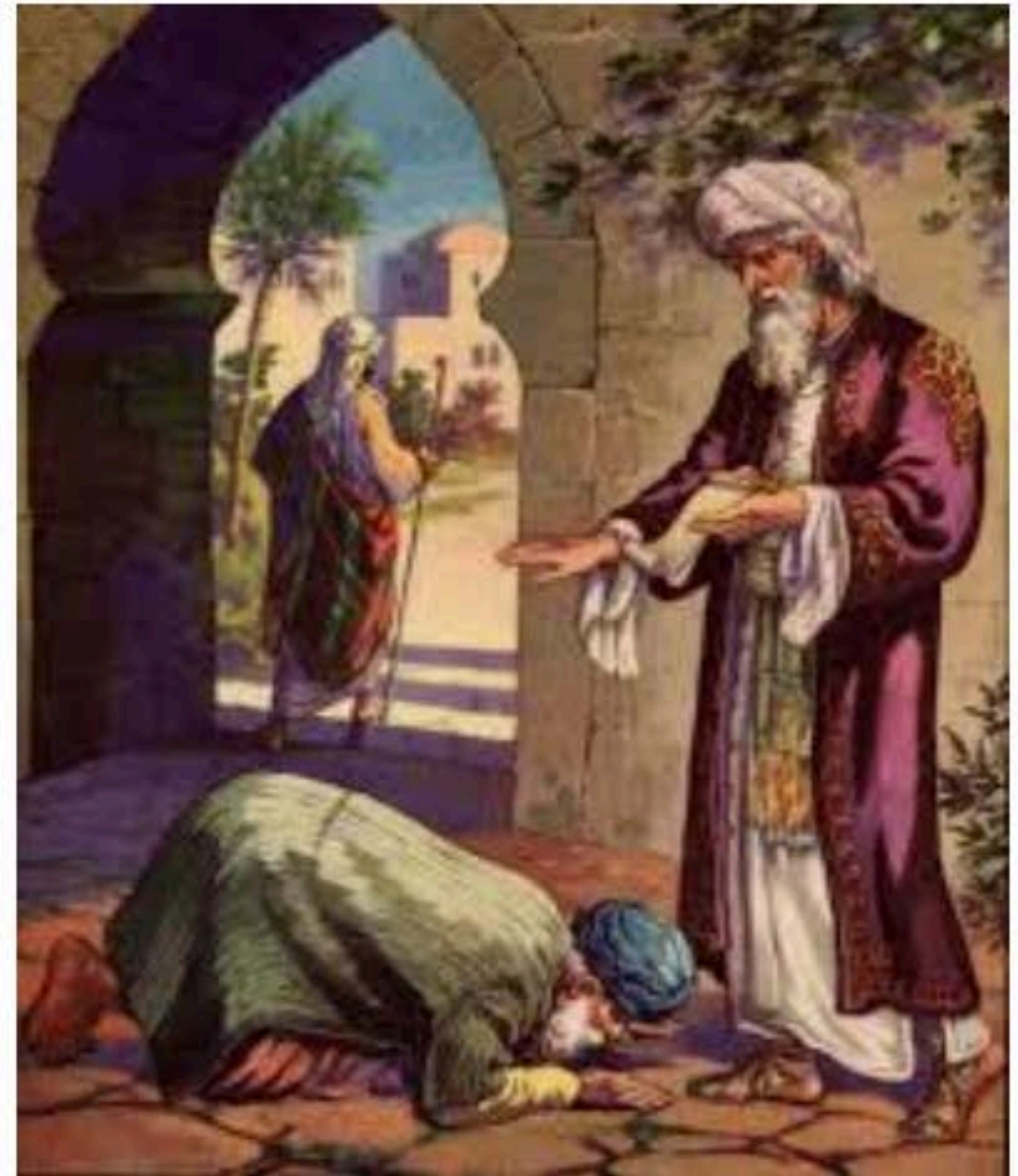
The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

This is a parable or a story Jesus told to teach a lesson to us.

This whole parable begins because of a question Peter asks Jesus. The question went something like this: "Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or friend when he does something mean to me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered him, "I tell you, seven times is not enough but forgive them as many as seventy seven times."

Then Jesus began the parable to explain. The kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted all his servants to pay him back. These servants had borrowed money from the king and the king wanted it back immediately. As he was going down a list of servants who needed to give him money he came to one that owed him a great deal of money. Everyone was surprised the king even loaned that much money to one person! Even the servant was surprised too because he didn't have the money to pay the king back.

So the king decided that the servant and his wife and children should all be sold and the money raised should be used to pay back the money they owed him. This would mean that they would be sold to someone who would make them all slaves. The servant knew this would be terrible so he fell on his knees and begged the king, "Be patient with me and I will pay back everything." The king had forgave him and told him he didn't have to pay it back and let him go. So he didn't make him pay anything back and he let him go!



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Then the servant did something that was not good. He left the king and decided to get his servant to pay him back for the money he owed him. When he found his servant who only owed him a small amount of money, he grabbed him and began to choke him. "Pay back what you owe me!" he yelled.

Then his servant did the same thing that he had just done. He fell on his knees and begged, "Be patient with me, and I will pay you back." But he said, "No way!" Instead, he had the man thrown into jail until he could pay the money back.

People heard what had happened and told the king about the unmerciful servant. So the king called the servant in. "You wicked servant, he said, "I cancelled all that you owed me because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your servant just as I had on you?" The king immediately threw the servant into jail, until he could pay back all the money he borrowed.

Jesus ended the story with this final statement. "This is how your heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother with all your heart".

Remember the question Peter asked Jesus at the beginning? How many times should you forgive your brother if he does something wrong to you? God wants us to keep on forgiving and to have mercy on others. He forgives us all the time for small and big things so why wouldn't we forgive others just the same. It's not always easy but it's what God wants us to do!

