

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

Matthew 18 v 21, 22

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked "Lord how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

PRAYER



Lord, I suspect the numbers don't matter much in these verses. Jesus wanted to correct Peter's wrong attitude. Peter saw forgiveness as a duty and wanted to set a limit beyond which he would not go. Like Peter I too have to learn that forgiveness isn't like that. Lord, I would be in a very sorry state if you set limits on the number of times you would forgive me. So by your grace, help me not to withhold my forgiveness to others who may have sinned against me. Help me to remember the forgiveness you have shown to me and so set no limits on forgiveness. Help me to keep on forgiving until it stops being a duty and becomes an act of love. AMEN

FORGIVE AS GOD FORGAVE YOU

Ephesians 4 v 31, 32

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3 v 13, 14

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

PRAYER



Lord, I thank You for your limitless forgiveness. I don't deserve it for I am a sinner. If you can forgive a sinner like me through the work of Christ Jesus then I too must forgive. Forgive me Lord for holding onto the hurt and not wanting to let it go. I cuddle and stroke it and guard it jealously, and all that happens is that it pours oil onto the fires of bitterness, rage and anger. My lack of forgiveness just does me harm. While I hold onto this hurt it is in control of me, not the other way around. Lord help me to let go, to forgive every grievance so that I may rid myself of all bitterness, rage and anger. I pray that you will fill me with love to enable me to do this and always be bound to your people in your name. AMEN

Acts 26 v 17b, 18

I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

PRAYER



Father, I don't find it easy to receive forgiveness. It makes me acknowledge that I have done wrong and my pride doesn't like that. Help me to humble myself, acknowledge my sin and my need of the forgiveness from you and from those I have hurt. And, having received and accepted forgiveness, help me Father to forgive myself, in Jesus name. AMEN

READINGS & PRAYERS

TO HELP OVERCOME FORGIVENESS

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Matthew 6 v 12

GOD IS ABOUNDING IN LOVE

Numbers 14 v 18 - 20

The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation. In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them for the time they left Egypt until now. The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked".

PRAYER



Heavenly Father, I am so thankful that you are patient and forgiving. It is music to my ears that you are slow to anger, abounding in love, forgiving sin and rebellion. Truly you are a just God who punishes sin and so, Lord I acknowledge my need of forgiveness. Without it I am lost. Please forgive me, in accordance with your great love for it is on your love that I place my hope. And having been forgiven may I become like you, slow to anger, abounding in love, ready to forgive those who hurt and sin against me. AMEN

GOD' MEANT IT FOR GOOD

Genesis 50 v 15-20

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" So they sent word to Joseph saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly. Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your Father. Joseph said to them, Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

PRAYER



Almighty God, only you know the end of a thing from the beginning. What has been done to me was intended to harm me and it has, but you are the God who can bring good out of harm, you know how I have been treated and how I am being tested. I want to retaliate Lord, but you have a greater purpose for me and I cannot yet see how things will work out. So, Lord though I find it incredibly difficult I choose to forgive those who have harmed me. I pray that you would forgive them too and bring good out of harm. May you accomplish Your sovereign will. AMEN

Hebrews 8 v 12

For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.

PRAYER



Heavenly Father, I give thanks that you forgive our wickedness and remember our sins no more. I find that so hard to do. I do want to be rid of this Lord; I don't want to turn into a bitter, angry person, but I can't do it alone. As I choose each day to forgive, please give me a divine forgetfulness so I do not keep raking over the embers of this hurt, trying to fan them into flame again. Help me to let the fire die out until I remember it no more. As I look to the cross I know you will give me the grace to forgive, but also to forget. Thank you Lord. AMEN

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

Matthew 6 v 12 - 15

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

PRAYER



Father, I find it hard to let go when I've been hurt by the actions and sins of others against me. But as I try to let go and forgive those who have hurt me so, please, forgive me for my resistant heart. Keep me set apart from the evil one that I will not fall into sin. I know that I can't come to you for forgiveness if I won't offer it to others, so Lord give me the strength to lift these burdens of pain from my back and to forgive. Help me to follow your example. AMEN