

## Gospel Reflection

### Matthew 18:21-35

This parable in today's gospel is the harsh reality of people on this earth. We honestly often have difficulty just forgiving one another. Wars are fought over unforgiveness. Families feud and do not forgive one another. Children fight over possessions, thinking they do not have enough. Situations escalate in ways we do not want or need to create this world of dystopia. This is the one of the many places God calls us to forgive others, Matthew 6:14-15, Mark 11:25, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, Proverbs 17:9, Psalm 103:10-11 and more. But this scripture gives the reason why it is important in parable, to understand the text much deeper than the command to forgive.

What eyes do we need to understand this parable's message? What ears? What hearts? Our God of love is also a God of mercy, wrapping each of us in compassion and forgiveness. Just as God loves beyond measure, he also forgives beyond measure. He asks us to only forgive seventy-seven times in this parable, much greater than the capacity Peter thinks we have to forgive of only seven times. When we operate out of the space of abundance, we know God's mercy provides that abundance. We know we can pay it forward and give from that abundance of love, forgiveness, mercy, and justice. His love calls us to give those same gifts he gave us to others. Those gifts of forgiveness. Those gifts of justice. Those gifts of mercy. To walk humbly with thy God. Our wells of abundant living need to run deep. We need to be deeply rooted in our God source to be able to give those gifts of God to others, without fear of not receiving more. We are also given the incredible gifts of space and time to work through forgiveness as it is not always easy. Can you imagine being given such precious gifts that have no boundaries or who they are given to? How sacred and what honor it is to take that which is given and be able to draw from that gift to pass it on to others. The purity of the heart and the reflection of God.

We are not set free in forgiveness to then imprison others. No, let us work on setting free those who are truly bound so tightly in unforgiveness that their prickly bristly protective shell is so pricked to receive the healing that is needed inside their soul. Let us all take one step each day, every day, in forgiveness and the number of 77 will seem miniscule compared to the infiniteness God has to offer in healing and hope.