

Written by Dr. John E. Russell Sr -

"Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king, who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' He demanded.

"His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

"But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

"Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Matthew 18:23-35, NIV

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The story begins with a king settling accounts with his servants. One servant who owed him 10,000 talents was brought before him. The Roman talent was a weight measurement that equals 71 pounds US. Therefore, 71 pounds of gold is \$1,252,100.75, based on the current spot gold price of gold \$1,209.30 (8 January 2015). His total debt was \$1,252,100.75 X 10,000 = \$12,521,007,500 (assuming this to be a troy pound):

There are approximately 14.583 troy ounces in an avoirdupois pound. Precious metals are always quoted in troy ounces (31.1 grams), as apposed to the standard avoirdupois ounce of 28 grams.

http://onlygold.com/Info/Value-Your-Weight-In-Gold.asp

Since the servant was unable to repay 12.5 billion dollars, the king ordered that he and his family be sold as slaves and all that he had be sold to pay on the debt. The servant fell down before his king and begged him to be patient until he could repay him. The king had mercy on him, forgave the debt and let him go.

The forgiven servant went out and found a fellow servant who owed him 100 denarii (\$5,800). He grabbed him, began choking him and demanded that he pay him the relatively small sum. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him to be patient until he could repay him.

The forgiven servant refused to wait and had his fellow servant thrown into prison until the debt was paid.

Other fellow servants saw what had happened and told the king.

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The king called in his wicked servant for not having mercy and canceling the insignificant debt
as the king had canceled his astronomical debt. The king was furious and had him turned ove
to jailers to be tortured until his debt was paid.

The Interpretation

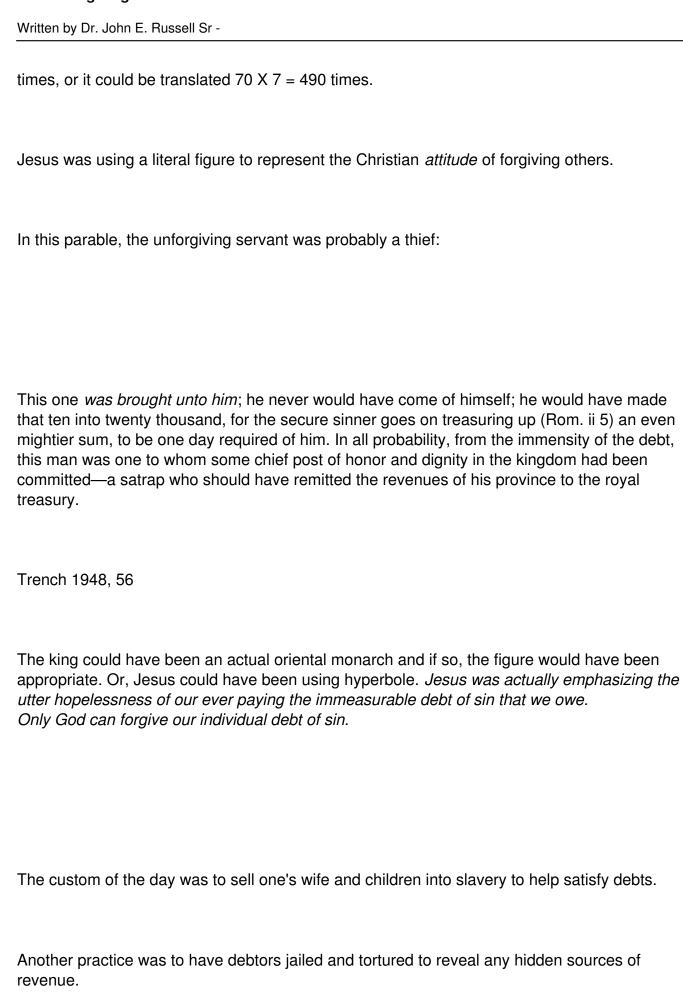
The story characters and the real people they represent are:

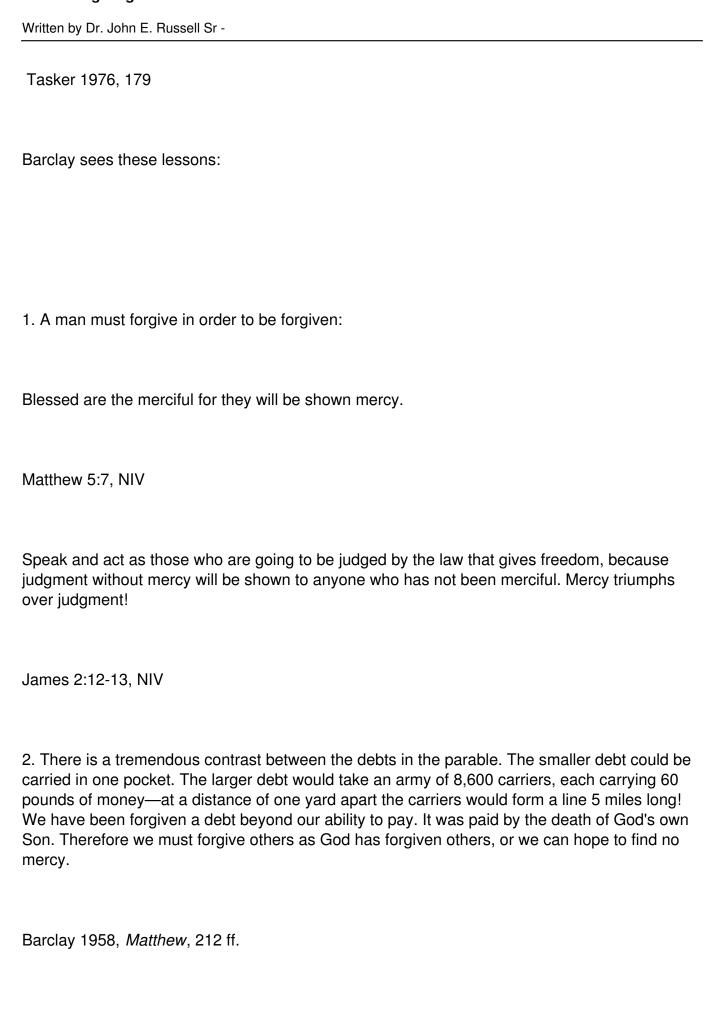
- 1. The king: God
- 2. The servants: believers

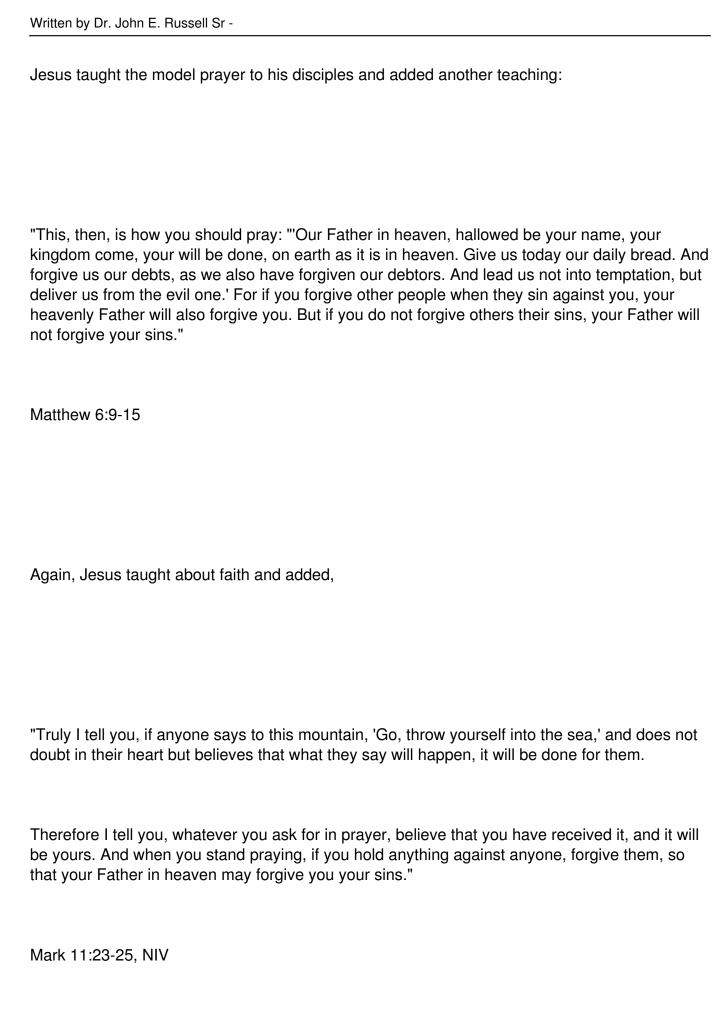
The debts and what they represent are:

- 3. The 12,521,007,500 USD: our debt of sin to God.
- 4. The 5,8000 USD: the debt of wrong done to us by others.

Peter probably felt he was being generous in offering to forgive someone 7 times. (Two Rabbis of that time had taught not to forgive more than 3 times). Jesus replied that we should forgive 77







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Central Truth
We must forgive others
As God has forgiven us
Or we will not be forgiven.
Conclusion
Thank God for his grace and forgiveness. Let us ask God to search our hearts and reveal all
unforgiveness and grudges. Then, let us forgive everyone and give up all grudges.

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Some have said, "I just can't forgive so-and-so for what he did to me." Keep in mind that forgiving someone is a *decision*, not some emotion. Jesus would never said to forgive people if we could not forgive them! Simply forgive those who have wronged us. Then Jesus tells us to pray for our enemies:

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Matthew 5:43-48, NIV

Concerning "hurt feelings," pray for people who wrong us. Give those people a gift—it will transform your hate to love! Dr. McMillen, who served as a medical missionary, says,

Do something good for your enemy and it will surprise you how much easier it is to love him. This is the Scripturally and psychologically sound method of changing our feelings.

McMillen 1967, 78

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If you recall, Jesus did this. He practiced what He preached. When He was giving the best gift the world ever received—*His life*—He *prayed* for those who crucified Him: ... "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." ... (Luke 23:34, NIV).

God's Word always works. It worked for me. My wife had been injured twice and I was angry. I considered suing the guilty party. Then, I obeyed the Lord. I forgave them. My thinking became more objective and clearer. I was set free.

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