

The Parables Of Jesus

Lesson 7

The Parable Of The Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18:23-35)

Where & When: In Capernaum (*Galilee*), toward the middle of 3rd year of public preaching

Occasion Producing The Parable:

- The disciples once again wondered about "greatness" in the kingdom (v. 1)
- Jesus' reply is a discourse covering various subjects
 - True greatness is to be like a child (vv. 2-6)
 - True greatness is to not be a stumbling block to others (vv. 7-11)
 - True greatness is to restore believers gone astray (vv. 12-14)
 - True greatness is to forgive others when they have wronged you (vv. 15-20)
- Peter questions Jesus re: how much forgiveness is expected (vv. 21-22)

The parable seems best divided into 3 "scenes"

- Scene 1 → vv. 24-27
- Scene 2 → vv. 28-30
- Scene 3 → vv. 31-34

Questions:

- 1) What decision of the king sets the stage for the remainder of the parable? (v. 23)

Scene 1

- 2) A slave was brought before the king owing how much? (v. 24) Research what you can to find out how much this was worth?

- 3) What was the slave's problem? (v. 25a) What did the king command to be done? (v. 25b) Incredibly, for what did the slave beg and what were his intentions? (v. 26)

- 4) What amazing thing does the king do? (v. 27)

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Scene 2

- 5) What does this same slave do in v. 28? What was the debt owed?

- 6) How did the second slave respond? (v. 29; cp. v. 26) How does the forgiven slave reply to his fellow slave? (v. 30)

Scene 3

- 7) What is recorded in v. 31? How does the king react to the unmerciful slave? (vv. 32-33)

- 8) What is the king's decision re: this unforgiving slave? (v. 34; cp. v. 25)

- 9) What is the lesson Jesus obviously teaches from this parable? (v. 35; cp. v. 21; Lk. 17:3-4; Mt. 5:7; 6:12; 7:1-2; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-13)