



# Bible Heroes

Forgiven debt

Teachers  
Story notes

Essential Teachers notes:

This parable of Jesus is probably not the most popular with many, especially not bankers, but the kind of radical forgiveness it displays is sorely needed in today's world. The idea of burning your last bridges, squandering your last chance, and 'no way back' are rife and yet God never shuts that door to us and asks us to not shut that door to others. If you have older kids it's worth reminding them that forgive means to not hold it over someone's head but not to necessarily forget - the king would have been wise to hesitate before lending the man more - equally forgiveness is granted when requested on our knees, acknowledging our shortcomings, not given automatically.

Tell this story or a similar one of your choice from a favourite bible translation or story book. This version is supplied for inspiration, feel free to omit or embellish to give it your personal voice.

Main Passage : Matthew 18:21-35

Peter and Jesus were chatting. Peter knew when people did something wrong he should forgive them but how many times should he keep forgiving? He wondered if 7 times was enough, 7 was the number of completeness, it seemed a good number of times too.

Jesus shook his head, "not 7, but 77!" Jesus said imagining Peter trying to count them all up.

"Let me tell you a story about forgiveness in the kingdom of heaven" Jesus said and moved so everyone could hear him. "There was once a king who had many servants. When a servant was in need the king would lend him money but if the servant did not repay the money he would be thrown into the jail.

One day the king decided to sort out those debts and called one of his senior servants. The man had borrowed one hundred thousand denarii. When the servant came he had nothing to give back to the king and so the king ordered the man thrown in jail and everything the man owned to be sold, even his wife and children could be sold as slaves so the king may be repaid.

The senior servant fell on his knees and begged the king for mercy, for more time. The king had compassion on the man and decided he would be generous. He didn't give him more time, he cancelled the debt.

The man walked out of the room owing the king nothing.

He left the king and walked out so excited he was almost dancing. He would celebrate tonight. But then he saw a servant who owned him a hundred denarii. He walked over to the man and reminded him of his debt.

This servant also fell on his knees and begged for mercy, for more time. What did the senior servant do? Did he have mercy like the king and forgive this man his debt? Or did he throw the man in jail, until he got his money?

When the other servants saw the poor servant in jail they were angry. They went back to the king and told him all the senior servant had done and the king became angry too. The senior servant found himself in jail.

God forgives you, forgive each other, from the heart, not because you are counting a number."

**Today's hero is The Servant because he shows us the gift of Forgiveness**

