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# advance in discipleship – kingdom of forgiveness – 08/27/20

**KINGDOM OF FORGIVENESS**

There is a series of teachings by Jesus in chapters 18-20. Jesus focuses heavily on forgiveness in 18:15-35. In these accounts is the famous “seventy times seven” statement (18:22) by Jesus when Peter asks if he should forgive a brother seven times. This “seventy times seven” phrase is used only one other place in the Bible.

The first place it is used in Genesis 4:24 in the context of the fall and the sinful behavior that followed. Lamech refers to God’s decree that no one is to take revenge on Cain for killing Abel or they will receive a “sevenfold” judgment. Lamech kills a young man and he himself decrees that if anyone would take revenge on him it would be dealt to them “seventy-sevenfold”.

This is the curse at work. This is stinking thinking. Lamech displays a self-righteousness that almost takes your breath away. He certainly does value himself far above everyone else. The sin nature and self-centeredness has taken root in man at the deepest levels. The lives of those he took seem to be of little account and there is no remorse. The real shame in Lamech’s view would be if anything should happen to him because of his sin.

Back to Peter’s question and Jesus’ answer. By quoting the same words in the context of forgiveness rather than wrath, Jesus is indicating two very important principles a disciple needs to know. One, the Kingdom of Heaven (v.23) is a place only for those who have found forgiveness and forgive others. Secondly, Jesus has come to reverse the curse brought to humankind through the fall. True forgiveness can be the life of His followers who will live beyond the sin nature, above self-centeredness, above self-exaltation. The Kingdom is a place of forgiveness and only Jesus’ followers will be there.