

Psalm 51:1-4 (GW) ¹ Have pity on me, O God, in keeping with your mercy.

In keeping with your unlimited compassion, wipe out my rebellious acts.

² Wash me thoroughly from my guilt,
and cleanse me from my sin.

³ I admit that I am rebellious.
My sin is always in front of me.

⁴ I have sinned against you, especially you.
I have done what you consider evil.

So you hand down justice when you speak,
and you are blameless when you judge.

16) Does David sound repentant?

The second great power of forgiveness is that it can loosen the stranglehold of guilt in the perpetrator. (The Scandal of Forgiveness)

17) What is it like to be freed from guilt?

18) Why do you think God didn't allow Uriah's family to seek revenge against David?

Doing an injury puts you below your enemy; revenging an injury makes you but even with him; forgiving it sets you above him! - (The Freedom of Forgiveness)

19) How do the Bible accounts we looked at today reflect this statement?

20) What have you learned about the power of forgiveness?

21) How can you forgive the unforgiveable? In yourself? In others?

Forgiving the Unforgivable

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” - C.S. Lewis

1) Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

2) How is this true in your life?

Genesis 50:15-17 (GW) ¹⁵ Joseph's brothers realized what their father's death could mean. So they thought, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us? What if he decides to pay us back for all the evil we did to him?” ¹⁶ They sent a messenger to Joseph to say, “Before your father died, he commanded us, ¹⁷ ‘This is what you should say to Joseph, “I'm begging you to forgive the crime and the sin your brothers committed against you. What they did to you was very evil.” ’ So now, please forgive our crime, because we are servants of your father's God.” Joseph cried when he got their message.

3) Why were Joseph's brothers afraid?

4) Why do you think Joseph cried?

Genesis 50:18-21 (GW) ¹⁸ Then his brothers also came and immediately bowed down in front of him. “We are your slaves!” they said.

¹⁹ Joseph said to them, “Don't be afraid! I can't take God's place. ²⁰ Even though you planned evil against me, God planned good to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive, as he is doing now.

²¹ Don't be afraid! I will provide for you and your children." In this way he reassured them, setting their minds at ease.

5) How did Joseph show that he was not angry with his brothers for what they had done to him?

6) How was Joseph able to forgive the unforgivable act of selling him into slavery?

7) What do we learn from Joseph about forgiving a great wrong?

First, forgiveness alone can halt the cycle of blame and pain, breaking the chain of ungrace. (The Scandal of Forgiveness)

8) How did Joseph break this cycle?

9) What do you think was the result of his forgiveness in his life? In the lives of his brothers?

10) How would your life look if you were free from the cycle of blaming others?

2 Samuel 12:7-12 (GW) ⁷“You are the man!” Nathan told David. “This is what the LORD God of Israel says: I anointed you king over Israel and rescued you from Saul. ⁸I gave you your master Saul's house and his wives. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if this weren't enough,

I would have given you even more. ⁹ Why did you despise my word by doing what I considered evil? You had Uriah the Hittite killed in battle. You took his wife as your wife. You used the Ammonites to kill him. ¹⁰ So warfare will never leave your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

¹¹ “This is what the LORD says: I will stir up trouble against you within your own household, and before your own eyes I will take your wives and give them to someone close to you. He will go to bed with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² You did this secretly, but I will make this happen in broad daylight in front of all Israel.”

11) What was David's sin?

12) Who did it affect?

13) What was God's punishment for this sin?

2 Samuel 12:13-16 (GW) ¹³ Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.”

Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin; you will not die. ¹⁴ But since you have shown total contempt for the LORD by this affair, the son that is born to you must die.” ¹⁵ Then Nathan went home.

The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had given birth to for David so that the child became sick. ¹⁶ David pleaded with God for the child; he fasted and lay on the ground all night.

14) How did David respond to his sin being exposed?

15) Do you think David got off too lightly? Why or why not?