

**"FORGIVE  
 WHATEVER  
 GRIEVANCES YOU  
 HAVE AGAINST  
 ONE ANOTHER.  
 FORGIVE AS THE  
 LORD HAS  
 FORGIVEN YOU."**

(Col. 3:13)



**"FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW  
 WHAT THEY DO." (LUKE 23:34)**

# FORGIVENESS

## The Unforgiving Servant

To teach His followers about forgiveness, Jesus told them a story about a merciful master who forgave his servant a large debt because he had no means of paying it. But the servant to whom a fellow servant owed money, had the debtor thrown into prison until he could pay what he owed.. When the master found out what the unmerciful servant had done, in anger he had him handed over to the torturers until he paid his debt. In conclusion Jesus said; "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you. If ye from yours hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (Mat. 18:23-35)

## Seventy Times Seven

One day Peter came to Jesus and said; "Lord how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? --- up to seven times? --- Jesus said to him; "I do not say to you, up to seven times but up to seventy times seven" (Mat. 18:21;22)

## Love Your Enemies

In His Sermon on the mount Jesus stressed the importance of love and forgiveness saying; "Love your enemies ..... do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you ....." (Mat. 5:44)

On Calvary Jesus did not only pray that his persecutors may be forgiven but he also gave them an excuse. He defended their cause declaring that their sin was only one of ignorance, requesting the Father to forgive them, for they know not what they do.

## St. Longinus

One to whom this request applied was St. Longinus. He was the Soldier who pierced Jesus with a spear, knowing not what he was doing, the

✠ **"BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, COMPASSIONATE, AND MUTUALLY FORGIVING, JUST AS GOD HAS FORGAVE YOU IN CHRIST."** (Eph. 4:32)

✠ «كونوا لطفاء بعضكم نحو بعض شفوئين متسامحين كما سامحكم الله ايضاً في المسيح.» (افسس ٤: ٢٢)

*Of all the words which Jesus spoke, none are easier to understand, nor harder to practice than those about forgiveness. On Calvary Jesus prayed for His persecutors; "Father, forgive them .....". What a hard lesson to master.*

**"FOR GOD SO  
 LOVED THE  
 WORLD THAT  
 HE GAVE HIS  
 ONLY  
 BEGOTTEN  
 SON THAT  
 WHOEVER  
 BELIEVES IN  
 HIM SHOULD  
 NOT PERISH  
 BUT HAVE  
 EVERLASTING  
 LIFE."**

(John 3:16)



Lord forgave him and converted him. St. Longinus preached in Cappadicia and achieved martyrdom at the hands of Caesar Tuberous. Our church commemorates him on two occasions; the 23rd of the Coptic month Abib and the 5th of Hatur.

## Following His Steps

In His deepest agony on the cross, Jesus was not thinking about His suffering, His pain or His wounds ..... He ignored it all. His unique concern was his love to mankind putting into practice His teaching about love and forgiveness, setting before us an example that we should follow his steps by extending our forgiveness and love to all those who harassed, persecuted, and mistreated us. All our life we will have to keep trying so our forgiveness can approach that of Jesus.

