

Choral Reading: The Unforgiving Governor (Matthew 18:21-35)

Solo 1: One day Peter came and asked Jesus this question:
Solo 2: "How many times am I required to forgive my brother?"
Solo 1: Jesus answered Peter by telling him a story.
Chorus 1: There once was a powerful king.
Chorus 2: With a kingdom so large . . .
Chorus 1: So immense . . .
Chorus 2: So broad and far-reaching . . .
Chorus 1: That the king chose governors to help him rule.
Solo 2: What were these governors supposed to do?
Chorus 1: Keep the citizens loyal,
Chorus 2: Enforce the law,
Chorus 1: Encourage peace,
Chorus 2: And . . .
Solo 2: What else?
All: (with emphasis) Collect the taxes!
Solo 1: The kingdom was running so smoothly that the king went on a long voyage leaving his governors in charge.
Solo 2: He had such a good time that he didn't worry about loyalty,
Chorus 1: Or laws,
Chorus 2: Or peace,
All: Or taxes!
Solo 1: Then one day, the king decided it was time to return home.
Solo 2: When he arrived, he was especially anxious to hear how his kingdom was doing,
Solo 1: So he ordered his governors to hurry to the palace and bring him their taxes.
Solo 2: But (pause) one governor was worried!

Solo 1: He dreaded going for he had spent all the taxes on himself.
Solo 2: Spent the taxes on himself?
All: Yes, spent the taxes on himself.
Chorus 1: He had purchased champion horses,
Chorus 2: And thrown extravagant parties,
Chorus 1: And bet on races at the Colosseum.
Solo 2: Bet on races at the Colosseum?
Chorus 2: Yes! Bet on races at the Colosseum!
Solo 1: And he lost all the taxes he'd collected!
Chorus 1: Oh dear!
Chorus 2: (slowly with emphasis) He lost all the taxes he'd collected.
Solo 2: At last the moment arrived when the worried governor stood before the king.
Solo 1: But instead of bringing trunks of gold, the trembling governor presented the king (gasp) with an IOU.
Chorus 1: The amount he owed was enormous!
Chorus 2: Huge!
Chorus 1: Impossible to repay!
Chorus 2: The other governors were shocked!
Solo 2: Ten million dollars he owed?
Chorus 1: Ten million dollars he owed!
Chorus 2: (softer) Ten million dollars he owed.
Solo 1: The throne room grew very quiet as everyone looked at the king.
King: You evil scoundrel! You were responsible to bring me ten million dollars in taxes, and instead you show up with this IOU. You and your family and all you possess will be sold!
Chorus 1: The guilty governor shook with fear!
Chorus 2: He trembled with terror!
Chorus 1: He fell on his face.

Chorus 2: He sobbed.

Chorus 1: He blubbered.

Chorus 2: He groaned.

Chorus 1: He moaned.

All: He cried and cried.

Solo 1: And the king felt compassion.

Solo 2: He pitied the man and forgave him.

Solo 1: The IOU was ripped up and the enormous debt was erased!

Chorus 1: All was forgotten.

Chorus 2: All was forgiven.

Solo 2: All was forgiven?

All: Yes! All was forgiven.

Solo 1: And the governor left the throne room a free man.

Solo 2: But – not long after, the pardoned governor began to forget.

Chorus 1: He forgot the king's compassion.

Chorus 2: He forgot the king's kindness.

Chorus 1: He forgot the king's forgiveness.

Chorus 2: And he forgot to be thankful.

Solo 2: He forgot everything?

Chorus 1: He forgot everything!

Chorus 2: (softly) He forgot everything.

Solo 1: On his way home, the forgetful governor spied one of his servants who had borrowed \$10.

Solo 2: He rushed at the servant and grabbed his neck.

Solo 1: He demanded the servant repay him right then and there.

Solo 2: The poor man shook with fear and asked for an extension.

Chorus 1: He fell on his face.

Chorus 2: He sobbed.

Chorus 1: He blubbered.

Chorus 2: He groaned.

Chorus 1: He moaned.

All: He cried and cried.

Solo 1: But the governor had no compassion.

Solo 2: He felt no pity.

Solo 1: In fact, he had his servant hauled off to jail.

Solo 2: The governor would not forgive his servant?

Chorus 1: The governor would not forgive his servant!

Chorus 2: (softer) The governor would not forgive his servant.

Solo 1: The other governors saw what happened and were deeply grieved.

Solo 2: How could the forgiven governor treat his servant this way?

Solo 1: When the king heard what happened, he immediately sent for the governor.

King: You wicked man! I cancelled that huge debt you owed me. I pitied and forgave you because of your plea. Should you not have followed my example and forgiven the one who pleaded with you? As a result, I will treat you the same way you have treated him. Off to prison until you repay every penny!

Solo 1: This time there was no use weeping . . .

Solo 2: For the Governor had chosen his own fate.

Solo 1: And Jesus told Peter, "So shall My Father do to you if you do not forgive others from your heart."

Chorus 1: For we are like the Governor.

Chorus 2: And God is like the King.

Chorus 1: We owe God a huge debt we can never repay.

Chorus 2: Yet God forgives us everything.

Solo 2: So then what is the answer to Peter's question?

Chorus 1: We must forgive others endlessly!

Chorus 2: We must forgive others endlessly!

All: We must forgive others endlessly!