

A Story of Forgiveness

There was once a king who was well loved by his countrymen and women. He was a good king, fair and honest, large in stature but gentle. However, one day he discovered that someone had been stealing from his treasury. He had to do something, so he told the people of his kingdom that when he discovered who was committing this crime, that person would receive 10 lashes as punishment for this crime.

A week went by and the guilty person was not found. The stealing continued. The king announced that since the crime had continued when the person was found the punishment would be 20 lashes. This was a pretty severe punishment.

Another week went by and the nothing changed. The king being very concerned and frustrated announced that the punishment would now be 40 lashes. This in itself was a death sentence. No one could live through 40 lashes. The pain would be unbearable, death would be slow.

A few days later the king discovered the thief. It was his mother! His heart was broken, he knew what he had to do but his heart was heavy. Those around him told him to change the law, that he couldn't do this to his mother. He knew as the leader of the country, he had to do what was right. So he ordered his mother to be prepared for the lashing.

As the crowds looked on, his mother was tied between two posts. The executioner stood ready with his whip. Just as the executioner drew his arm back to strike the first lash, the king shouted "Stop!" The whip stopped mid-air.

The king walked over to his mother, leaned into her back, wrapped his big arms around her with the biggest bear hug he could give her and told the executioner to precede with his task. The executioner told the king he couldn't do that, to which the king replied, "I gave you an order. Proceed!"

What love, what forgiveness! How much this king must have loved his mother. He was willing to die for her, bearing her sin.

When we ask Jesus how much he loves us, He replied, "I love you this much," and he stretched out his arms on the cross and died for us.