



LONG WALK TO FREEDDOM

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Pastoral Welcome

It's 2014! Are you excited to see what Jesus has planned for you? I sure am! Jesus has wonderful blessings He wants to bring into our lives! He loves every boy and girl. He desires the best for us. Remember to pray every day thanking Him for His love, kindness and forgiveness.

**Hugs and love,
Pastor Michelle**

Mother gathered her children. "I have news for you," she said. "We are going on a difficult and dangerous journey to join Father." Niang's father had left Myanmar to work in another country. But he didn't have the proper papers and he was arrested. Father soon realized that God had a plan for him even though he didn't understand it. The officials reviewing Father's case realized that Father was a member of a tribe that was in great danger in his homeland. "If your family can join you here," an official told him, "we can help you live in peace." Father sent word to Mother to try to join him.

Back home the family prayed for God's protection on their dangerous journey. Mother and the family gathered a few belongings and started to make their journey to reach father. Mother led the way down the dusty path. "If the government's agents find us, they will surely arrest us," Mother whispered. "So walk very quietly." Niang and her family walked for many hours each day on dusty paths. The travel was hard and tiring. They stayed in people's homes that fed them and kept them safe. Mother often said "Let's thank God for protecting us. With every step we take we get closer to freedom!"

The family came to the river that marked the border between their homeland and freedom. Mother prayed for God's guidance and help. Mother found a man with a small boat who was willing to ferry them across the river. Mother knew Jesus had placed this man in their path to help them. Niang trembled as she climbed into the boat. "When I am afraid, I will put my trust in you" Niang whispered as she gripped the sides of the boat as it bounced against the current.



At last the boat bumped against the far shore, and the children clamored out. Niang whispered a prayer of thanks to Jesus as she felt the solid ground under her feet again. The ride in the river was a bumpy and scary one but she knew Jesus would protect them. The family didn't dare hesitate on the riverbank, but hurried into the jungle, away from any soldiers' guns. They still had a long way to walk before reaching Father. With every footstep they prayed for God's protection. A new life waited for them. At last the family arrived where Father was staying. They were so happy to be reunited once again after such a long trip. They moved to a refugee camp where Niang enrolled in school. As she studied English she tried to imagine what life in America would be like.

Months later the family traveled to America and soon settled into their new home here. Life is very different for them now. Niang has made new friends and tells them how God protected her family during their long walk to freedom. "I want my friends to know that Jesus loves them," she says "and that He has a plan for each of us".

Life isn't easy when a family settles in a new country, a new city, or a new home. Everything is new and confusing. The customs may be different, even the languages may be different and often those around you don't understand how hard it is to adapt to new surroundings or learn all they need to know to live in a new place. Niang and her family are Adventist Christians, but many fellow refugees were not. They were able to teach others that Jesus loves them, that He died for them, and that He wants to be their friend forever. They were able to illustrate this by telling them of the hard journey they had. Niang was reminded of the journey the Israelites took when Moses led them out of Egypt. The Israelites had to adjust to a new living and traveling in the wilderness but with God leading the way they were safe and protected. God had a plan for them and He has a plan for each of us.

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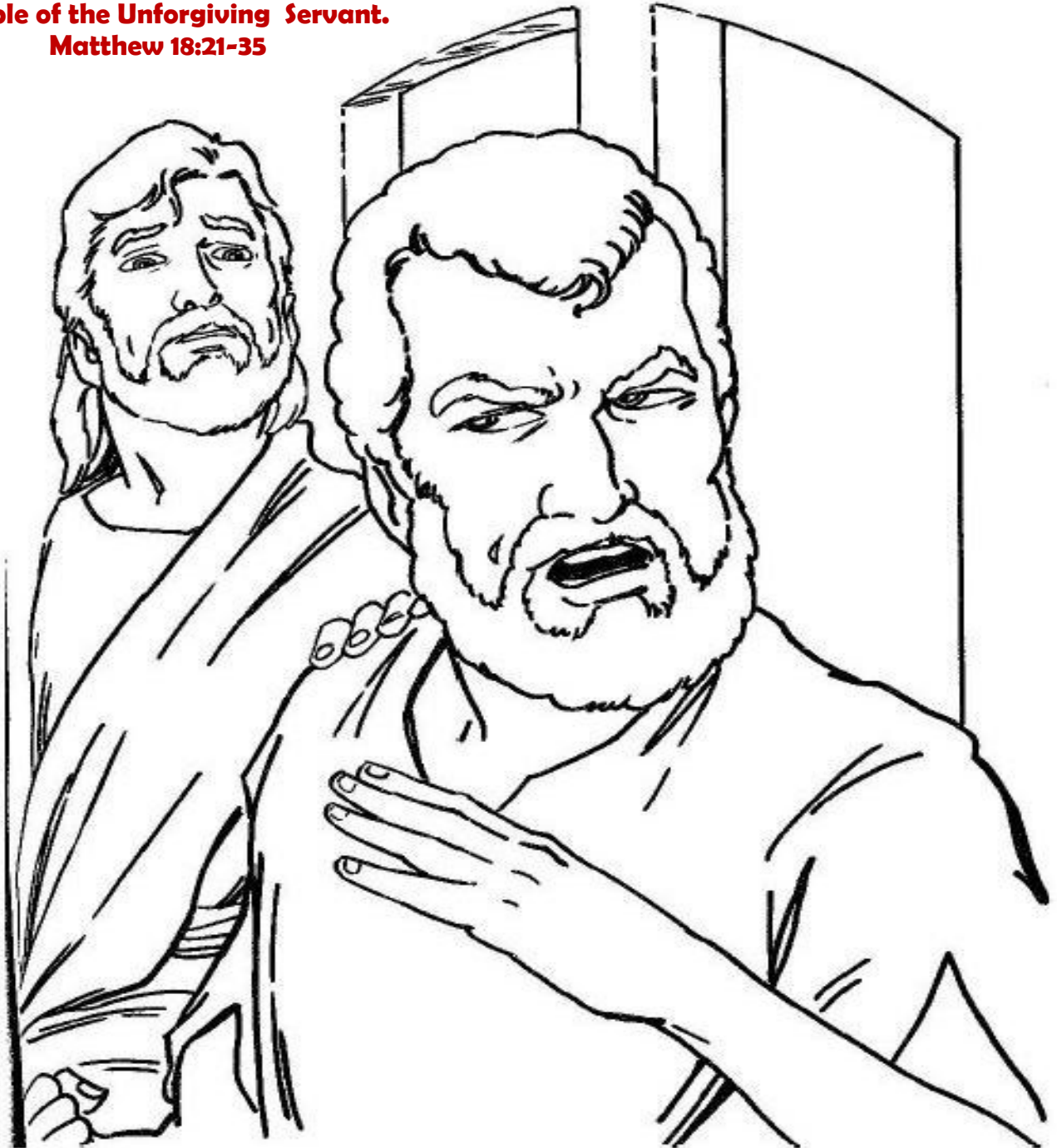
"Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?" Psalm 56:3, 4

FORGIVENESS

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

Ephesians 4:32

**Parable of the Unforgiving Servant.
Matthew 18:21-35**





3 WORDS THAT DESCRIBE JESUS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

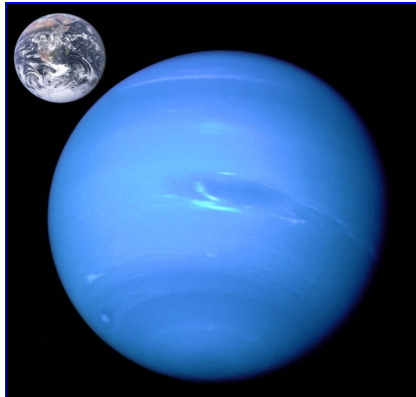
MY 3 BEST FRIENDS ARE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Neptune

- It is nearly 4 times the size of Earth.
- It is covered in thin wispy white clouds that stretch out around the planet.
- Storms have been spotted swirling around its surface and freezing winds that blow about ten times faster than hurricanes on Earth making it the windiest planet.
- It is a large, water planet with a blue hydrogen-methane atmosphere and faint rings.



Giraffe

- A giraffe's habitat is usually found in African savannas, grasslands or open woodlands.
- The hair that makes up a giraffe's tail is about 10 times thicker than the average strand of human hair.
- Giraffe's neck is 1.5 to 1.8 meters long, it contains the same number of vertebrae as a human neck.



- Giraffes are ruminants. This means that they have more than one stomach. In fact, giraffes have four stomachs.
- Drinking is one of the most dangerous times for a giraffe. While it is getting a drink it cannot keep a look out for predators and is vulnerable to attack.
- Male giraffes sometimes fight with their necks over female giraffes. This is called "necking". The two giraffes stand side by side and one giraffe swings his head and neck, hitting his head against the other giraffe. Sometimes one giraffe is hit to the ground during a combat.
- Giraffes have bluish-purple tongues which are tough and covered in bristly hair to help them with eating the thorny Acacia trees.



Unforgiveness is Unacceptable

JESUS FORGIVES

TRUE OR FALSE:

God is always willing to forgive our sins. Micah 7:18-19 T or F

Forgiveness is part of God's character. Colossians 1:14 T or F

God forgives us when we confess our sins to Him. 1 John 1:9 T or F

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD:

"Who forgives (**ALL** , **SOME**) your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who (**DELIVERS**, **CROWNS**) you with loving, kindness and tender mercies," Psalm 103:3

CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER:

How far does Jesus send our sins away from us? Psalm 103:12

- A) 3000 miles
- B) As far north as possible
- C) As far as east is from the west

ORIGINAL MEANING

In the original language of the New Testament, Koine Greek, the word to FORGIVE is **ἀφίημι** (afiemi) which means to send away.
When God forgives us He sends our sins away.

Character Focus:

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love, grace, mercy and forgiveness.

Psalm 86:5 - Psalm 145:8 - Micah 7:18-19

Heart Search:

Acknowledge when and how you have difficulty forgiving others.

Matthew 6:14-15 - Ephesians 4:31 - 1 John 2:9

Gratitude:

Thank God for ways you have seen forgiveness offered readily in your family.

Personal Requests:

Ask God to help you, your siblings, and parents, to be willing to forgive others quickly, in all situations.

Ephesians 4:2-3 - Ephesians 4:32 - Colossians 3:12-14



Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross so that we can have our sins forgiven. Please give me Your love in my heart so I can forgive as You have forgiven me. Amen