**Her many sins have been forgiven**

Luke 7:36-50

Key Verse 47 “Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

**Introduction**

This passage shows two people. One is a Pharisee named Simon who invited Jesus. The other is a nameless woman who had lived a sinful life. From God’s point of view Jesus corrected him and blessed her. May the Lord help us to love Jesus wholeheartedly.

**1. Read verses 36-38. Who invited Jesus to dinner? (36) What kind of woman came to the dinner without being invited? (37a) What does she do? (37b-38) Why do you think she does such a dramatic thing?**

1-1, Read verses 36-38.

**36** When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. **37** A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. **38** As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

1-2, Who invited Jesus to dinner? (36)

One of the Pharisees. According to verses 40, 43, and 44, his name is Simon. In other synoptic gospels(Mt 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9), his name appeared as Simon the Leper.

1-3, What kind of woman came to the dinner although she was not invited? (37a)

A woman in that town who lived a sinful life. This tells us more than that she was a sinner just like we are all sinners. She was a particularly notorious sinner, most likely a prostitute. She might have heard of Jesus’ ministry though, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.” (7:22,23)

No sooner had she heard of where Jesus was than she came to him. It took a lot of courage and determination for this woman with such a sinful reputation to come into the house of a Pharisee, but she was willing to do anything to express her love for Jesus.

1-4, What does she do? (37b-38)

She came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. **38** As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

This oil was for hair. However she used it to anoint Jesus’ feet. It shows her humility.

It reminds us of David. After committing the terrible sins of adultery and murder, he repented with tears, saying: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Ps 51:17).

1-5, Why do you think she does such a dramatic thing?

Again this woman must have been a prostitute. If she were the sister of Lazarus(John 12:1-8), she might have done it to support her family. If she were Mary Magdalene, she might have done it to satisfy her lust. Whatever motive she might have had, she was a public sinner. People were ashamed of her.

When she came to Jesus, she believed that as he had welcomed others, so he would welcome her. When she came to Jesus, she cried endlessly. She wiped his feet with her hair, kissed them. She also brought an expensive alabaster jar of perfume, worth about $ 35,000. It must have been her treasure. She broke it and poured out to Jesus’ feet. She knew that she was not worthy to come to Jesus in this way for she knew that she was a dirty sinner.

**2. Read verses 39-42. What does the Pharisee who had invited Jesus say to himself? (39) What does Jesus say to the Pharisee in a parable? (40-42)**

2-1, Read verses 39-42.

**39** When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.” **40** Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said. **41** “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+7#fen-NIV-25237c)] and the other fifty. **42** Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

2-2, What does the Pharisee who had invited Jesus say to himself? (39)

“If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

The Pharisee saw that a woman was disturbing the dinner. He was upset. He was judgmental for he did not know her heart and Jesus’ mind. He might have anticipated Jesus’ praise about his invitation just as other guests might have done so.

2-3, What does Jesus say to the Pharisee in a parable? (40-42)

“Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. **42** Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

Denarius is a small coin. Five hundred denarii worth about $ 60,000.00 while five denarii $ 6,000.00. Jesus came up with a easy parable so that Simon may understand it.

**3. Read verses 43-47. How does Simon reply to Jesus? (43) How does Jesus compare what Simon and the woman do for Jesus? (44-46) Why do you think Simon and the woman treat Jesus differently? How does Jesus conclude logically? (47) How important is it for one to know oneself as a sinner? (1 Tim 1:15)**

3-1, Read verses 43-47.

**43** Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. **44** Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. **46** You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.**47** Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

3-2, How does Simon reply to Jesus? (43)

**43** Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

3-3, How does Jesus compare what Simon and the woman do for Jesus? (44-46)

**44** Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. **46** You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

“Do you see this woman?” Jesus helps Simon to see what he ought to see. He had to see her humility and love for Jesus. He saw her as a notorious sinner only. Also he had no idea about who Jesus truly is. He could have learned from her. However he was blind spiritually due to his high mind and self righteous attitude.

3-4, Why do you think Simon and the woman treat Jesus differently?

He did not know the fact that he himself was a debtor. He thought that he was a nice person. Here a debtor is equivocal to a sinner. He was a sinner because he criticized both the woman and Jesus. He was a sinner because he could have thought about his own reputation and praise from others. He was a sinner because he did not live for the glory of God, but for himself. Most importantly, he was a sinner because he was not thankful as much as he ought to. He might have concluded that he became affluent thanks to his capability. From human point of view, he was a successful man like Nicodemus. However, from God’s point of view, he was a self seeking sinner.

**Romans 2:7-11** read,

“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. **8** But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. **9** There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; **10** but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. **11** For God does not show favoritism.”

3-5, How does Jesus conclude logically? (47)

Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

Jesus' grace produces love. Most of us want to love Jesus like the woman. This pleases Jesus most and makes our lives joyful. Yet we find ourselves like the Pharisee, cold-hearted and critical. May the Lord have mercy on us to have the love of Jesus burning in our hearts.

Those who truly receive the grace of forgiveness of sins will love Jesus with all their hearts. The more one receives grace, the more he or she will love Jesus. However, if love for Jesus is not burning in our hearts, there is something lacking in our sense of God's grace. Sometimes we forget God's grace. If so, we must pray for God to help us remember the precious grace of Jesus we have received.

3-6, How important is it for one to know oneself as a sinner? (1 Tim 1:15)

Jesus teaches us God's view of sinners. God sees that the greater sinner can love him more. God has great hope for great sinners. St. Paul was one such great sinner. At one time, he was an enemy of Christ and the church who threatened to destroy Christians. He consented to stoning Stephen. All of the early Christians were afraid of him. But the Risen Christ saw him as a chosen instrument. The Risen Christ visited him and extended his saving grace. Paul accepted this grace and Jesus' calling as an apostle. This ignited a burning love for Jesus in Paul's heart. Paul poured out the rest of his earthly life in service to Jesus. He suffered much, worked harder and achieved more than others.

**15** Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. **16** But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. (1 Tim 1:15)

**4. Read verses 48-50. What does Jesus declare to her? (48) What do the other guests say about Jesus? How does Jesus bless her further? (50b) What kind of fruit have you experienced personally after Jesus forgave your sins? (1 Cor 15:10)**

4-1, Read verses 48-50.

**48** Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” **49** The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” **50** Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

4-2, What does Jesus declare to her? (48)

“Your sins are forgiven.”

Sin must have given her many pains in her life and made her cry all the time. To this woman, “your sins are forgiven” was the best expression of Jesus’ love. Jesus carried all our sins and shed his blood as the ransom sacrifice for our sins. Jesus welcomes anyone who comes to him for the grace of forgiveness.

Although Jesus mentioned that her many sins have been forgiven, still he turned to her by saying, “your sins are forgiven.” It was probably because Jesus repeated in order for her to be persuaded of it and also helped her to believe the intrinsic power in the words of God. Often times it is hard to believe that we are forgiven.

4-3, What do the other guests say about Jesus?

“Who is this who even forgives sins?”

No one in heaven or on earth could bring any charge against her, for Jesus had forgiven her. Her debt of sin was canceled.

4-4, How does Jesus bless her further? (50b)

“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Her coming to Jesus, especially in a Pharisee’s house, was a great act of faith which Jesus admired. In a proportion to her faith, he saved her and the peace of God was given to her. So the key to her forgiveness was her personal faith. It was her faith that saved her for she believed the words from Jesus, “your sins are forgiven.”

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.” (Rm 5:1-2)

4-5, What kind of fruit have you experienced personally after Jesus forgave your sin? (1 Cor 15:10)

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

**In Conclusion**

This passage helps us to cultivate our hearts again to see how we could love Jesus, and how our sins were forgiven. How can we love Jesus? We can love Him when we boldly come to Him with our sins to be forgiven, The more we come to realize the forgiveness of our sins, the more we love Jesus and give thanks to Him. Let us love Jesus by recalling how much He loved us by shedding his blood. Amen.

**One word: Your faith has saved you**