

GIG329 – Are You Offended?

Hello again, and welcome to the podcast. It is great to have you with us, and I hope everything is going well with you. I know that we are approaching upcoming elections, and Lord, we commit them into Your hands. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

I wanted to share with you today something that has been happening for me on a personal level; it is about repentance. You may say, "Well, I have been listening to your podcasts, and the flow of the messages has not necessarily gone along with this idea of repentance." My response is that it is always a good time to repent. Whenever the Lord is convicting your heart of something, that is the time to repent. It is something that we need to have as an ongoing part of our walk with God on a daily basis. And so, as this happened, I really wanted to share it with everyone, and I hope that it is a help to you to watch me go through this personal experience dealing with repentance.

I am titling this podcast, *Are You Offended?* It comes basically out of something that is really fun to me; and honestly, this whole event has been really uplifting. It has been something very special to have the Lord working in my heart the way He has over the few days that this has been transpiring. But I want to tie it back to something that really is a foundation of it, which is that we try every Friday night to have Shabbat dinner together with the family and others who would come in as part of the spiritual family. We look to welcome in the Sabbath and to honor the Sabbath, and to read Scriptures and go through prayers, as well as have dinner and fellowship together; and it is always just a wonderful time. I think honoring the Sabbath and being consistent with keeping the Sabbath is very important for us as believers in Yeshua, and I think everyone should really pray about it and try it.

But, that is not what this is about. There is something that we constantly do at our Shabbat table, and that is a prayer that we go through which is called the Lord's Prayer. Obviously it is a very, very important prayer to our lives as believers. And it is always fun for us because Silvana, my wife, is from Brazil and speaks first language Portuguese. In our time together at the table for Shabbat, when we come to saying the Lord's Prayer, we do several different things with it, which is always just so enjoyable. One is that when you talk to people about the Lord's Prayer, many of us who have learned the Lord's Prayer in church since our youth have different versions of it. You know, the Catholics have one version, and there are different versions in the Protestant church. And so it is always fun to come to this time of the Lord's Prayer and to pray it out loud. One thing I started doing was just having everybody all together, all at once, say the Lord's Prayer the way they learned it. When you do that, right off the bat you are asking for different versions to be said, and everybody is saying the version that they knew as a child. It is really fun and sometimes even becomes funny to listen to everyone saying the Lord's Prayer in the way that they learned it.

But one of the versions that we use is the version that Silvana has from Brazil, and the reason is because of a difference of interpretation in the words of this prayer. So what I would like to do is read Matthew 6, starting at verse 6, and read through the Lord's Prayer from the NASB. Then I am going to talk a little

bit about the versions of interpretation and how we have gotten in and used that in our times together for Shabbat and our dinner of welcoming in the Sabbath. So here we go, Matthew 6, verses 6-13.

"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." So we know that the Lord's Prayer is something that we do in our hearts. It is between us and the Father, and it is the Father who is observing our hearts and working with us in our hearts and our spirits from that position. Verse 7 goes on to say,

> "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'"

Verses 14-15 go on to say, "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." So we see that this is a very serious prayer, and it has very serious implications for our lives – not just the voicing of the prayer, but the actual living out the reality of this prayer in our lives.

So I want to look at this idea, because as I say, there are different words used as you pray this prayer. For one example, in verse 12 it says, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." Of course, you have probably heard it, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." That would be one difference that you would find in people voicing this prayer, as they are voicing it together. It is important to get to kind of the bottom line of what this is saying to us, so that is why we would have Silvana and sometimes our son Noah pray this prayer in Portuguese. I cannot do the whole prayer in Portuguese, but when you get to this verse about forgive us our debts, the translation as it comes through out of Portuguese is, "Forgive us our offenses, as we also have forgiven those who have offended us."

The more we would do this in our times together, the deeper this really began to strike me, because I thought, "There is a difference, at least in my mind." When I read this, when I quote it, there is a difference between saying, "Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors," or, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us." Because those carry this idea that somebody sinned against us, and something bad was done to us that really was a sin; it really created a debt. In other words, if someone creates a debt with you, they owe you something in order to clear that debt; they have to do something to pay you off for the debt that they have made between you and themselves. And I feel like the context of that is less holding to the spirit of what God is looking at than if we say, "Forgive us our offenses" – remember, that is always in past tense – "as we also have forgiven those who have offended us." The reason that is so different to me is that when I think about the word *offense* and say, "You offended me," or, "I took offense at that," it is not that you are creating a debt with me that you owe me and that you must pay off; nor is it, "Hey, you really sinned against me," and, "That was really a sin on your part against me." It has a whole different context to it, that, number one, we are asking God to forgive us our offense towards Him, how we have offended Him. And I think, "Wow, if I think about offending God, that is different than thinking about sinning against God."

I believe there are my attitudes; I can have an attitude that I think God finds offensive that may not be found in the list of sins when we read through everything that qualifies as a sin in our minds. And so there really is, I think, a deep, deep spiritual lesson for us to reach into here. When we talk about offense and being offended, then for me to be offended by you, that is my choice. I am not sure what you did, but the issue was that I took offense at that. Whereas if we say we have forgiven our debtors, that is something they owed us. If I have forgiven those who have offended me, I am saying I am dropping my offense. I took offense – was I justified in my taking offense? Hmm, maybe, maybe not. But the point is it was my choice to be offended or not to be offended, and that is where I think the difference comes in. I feel like there really is a choice that we have when we come and work with the Lord; because remember, this is a prayer that we go into our inner room and we pray to our Father who is in heaven. We are working with Him, and He is determining how we are doing with this prayer and relating to us in our prayer.

I have taken this so deeply into my heart, and we have started to do this in our time together at the Sabbath table. Instead of everyone voicing the prayer as they learned it in their youth, we are all now beginning to pray it in this way. Starting with verse 10, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our offenses, as we also have forgiven those who have offended us." So we are dropping the offense. We begin to say that together, and we realize that it is up to us. It is not up to our debtor to do anything. It is not even that the debt is really a debt; it is not that the sin is really a sin against us; we have just taken it that way. We are the ones that make it a debt. We make it a sin. We make it an offense. And we walk around holding onto that offense against someone for some reason; however valid or invalid it is, it is still our choice. And I think we need to recognize how deeply we have a choice to do that.

When we look even at the language of this, we can go and look up the word used for *trespass* in this version in the *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*. And certainly, with a title of a book like that, you can really trust what it is saying the meaning of the word is! This is the McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, so it has to be correct. And when we look up that word, the first thing it says is, *paraptōma*, which is the Greek word for it; *āšam* is the Hebrew; but the meaning is, "an offense committed." Now listen to this definition: "An offense committed, a hurt, or wrong done to a neighbor; and partakes of the nature of an error or slip rather than of deliberate or gross sin."[1] That is pretty heavy. It is actually saying in the definition, and in the way the word was used back at this time in the Scriptures, that this was not necessarily in the nature of a sin; it was a nature of an error, of a slip, rather than a deliberate or gross sin. And so, whatever the action of this individual was to their neighbor, the neighbor is the one who is being offended. And it is obvious from the definition that there may be absolutely no justification or reason for that offense to be taken.

And so, when this event that I was going through transpired, it really, really bothered me. Obviously, as I have come to learn, I really took offense. I was just mulling this over and praying about it and putting it before the Lord, and it seemed like putting it before the Lord did not really take it away or do anything. I could not sleep at night. It really bothered me, bothered my sleep, and I just would wake up and have my thoughts on this. I would go before the Lord and ask the Father to help me with it. I would go to the cross of Christ and I would place myself on the cross with the Lord, which is something that I do a lot

[1] M'Clintock, John, and James Strong. "Trespass." Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature 1881: Volume 10, p 542. Print.

because that is where our salvation stems from, is Yeshua hanging on the cross for our offenses, for our sins that are actual committed sins.

But it bothered me. Then this morning I got up and had things to do. I had a very early Zoom meeting that I had to attend. As I was finishing up some of these things I had to do, it was almost like this voice; I mean, it was not a voice, but in my head it was like a voice, going, "So, Gary, are you offended?" And it just struck me. I went, "Oh, wow, that's it! I am offended. I am offended by this action that these individuals took. And, wow, I guess I have been praying that prayer an awful lot, haven't I?" Every Sabbath, as the sun goes down, we are reciting this prayer, "Forgive me of my offenses, as I have forgiven those who have offended me. Wherever I have taken offense over something, Lord, forgive me for taking that offense. I drop that offense. I release the offense." Because again, offense is a choice, and I do not have to be offended. I do not care what it is, I do not have to be offended. And the Lord made very clear to me, "The reason this is not going away is because you are offended. And you are the one who is praying this prayer, you are leading people in praying this prayer every Sabbath; and boy, here is a good time to apply it to your own life in a perfect circumstance which, as they say, 'Ticks all of the boxes.'"

So I just humbled myself before the Lord and I asked the Lord to help me. What I did was use 1 John, as we are familiar with it, and I will read it. 1 John 1:7-9 says,

> But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins [this is what we operate in as believers constantly], He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This was a great lesson for me, and that is why I am sharing it with you; because even once I realized, "Oh my gosh, I have taken offense here," I still could not let it go. I just felt like I was staying in that state of being offended. But I voiced this prayer, you know, several times before the Lord, and humbled myself before the Lord, and I confessed my sin: "Lord, my sin is I took offense, and that is wrong. That is my choice to have been offended by someone. I want to let it go. I want to take it to the cross. I want it to be covered by the blood of Christ, the sacrifice of His life and His death for me and for everyone involved in this situation." And it says He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sin. He does forgive us our sin; but beyond forgiving our sin, He really takes care of business, "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is one thing to be forgiven, it is another thing to be cleansed; it is another thing to have that offense just wiped away, just cleansed, cleaned out of my heart and cleaned out of my mind so that I can let go of it, cleaned out of my emotions so that I feel no response to it. I am dead to it, and it is dead to me.

It is that cleansing that I want us to understand we can have. We confess our sin, we are forgiven; but we want to walk with Him in maturity, and we want to be cleansed from the things in our heart that are not right before Him. And it is very important that we do that, because we know what this prayer talks about, and we will look at Mark 11 quickly. Mark 11:24-26 says,

> "Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions [or your offenses]. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions."

That is a heavy statement. You can say, “Well, I am saved. I know I am saved.” Okay, but what we are looking for, number one, is to be forgiven; and number two, we want to be cleansed so that these things are no longer in us and we no longer walk this way, but we really are transformed into His image and into His righteousness.

I hope this helps you. It certainly was a wonderful experience, and is now. I am still basking in it, going back and rehearsing it all in my heart and just making sure there is nothing but that I am really cleansed from this on every level. And I bless this to you. It is fun to open my heart and open my life, because I am just trying to walk with God. I am trying to grow in God and be a mature son that is created into His image, and that is what I think we are all believing for.

I bless you in your walk with God; and I always ask that you pray for me in my walk with the Lord, because I need that strength and that help and that faith that comes from others. So I bless you, and hopefully you will pray for me and bless me also. I loose this cleansing and maturing to all of us.

Amen.