

# Matthew 18:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying,  
Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

## Analysis

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**The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him** (προσεκύνει αὐτῷ, *prosekynei autō*)—the Greek indicates repeated prostration in desperate supplication, not worship of deity. This physical posture of total helplessness and submission reflects the sinner's proper position before God: recognizing inability and pleading for mercy.

**Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all** (μακροθύμησον ἐπ' ἐμοί, καὶ πάντα ἀποδώσω σοι)—tragic self-deception. The promise to repay 10,000 talents is delusional; even if he lived 200,000 years, complete repayment was impossible. This mirrors the unconverted sinner's attempt to bargain with God through works, resolutions, and moral improvement—all inadequate before infinite holiness. The servant seeks patience (*makrothymēson*, 'long-suffering'), not forgiveness, revealing incomplete understanding of his condition.

## Historical Context

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Prostration (falling face-down) was standard posture for approaching ancient Near Eastern monarchs. The servant's promise reflects ancient negotiation tactics where debtors proposed payment plans to avoid immediate consequences. However, no payment schedule could realistically address such debt, making the promise empty—though perhaps made sincerely in desperation.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. What 'payment plans' do people offer God instead of accepting the free gift of forgiveness through Christ?
2. How does the servant's self-deception ('I will pay thee all') mirror modern confidence in personal moral progress?
3. When have you approached God asking for patience/time rather than humbly accepting undeserved grace?

## Interlinear Text

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πεσὼν οὖν ὁ δοῦλος προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων,  
fell down therefore G3588 The servant and worshipped him saying  
G4098 G3767 G1401 G4352 G846 G3004

Κύριε, Μακροθύμησον ἐπ' ἐμοί καὶ πάντα σοι ἀποδώσω  
Lord have patience with me and all thee I will pay  
G2962 G3114 G1909 G1698 G2532 G3956 G4671 G591

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 18:29** (Parallel theme): And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

**Matthew 8:2** (Worship): And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

**Luke 7:43** (Parallel theme): Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

