

Matthew 18:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors,
till he should pay all that was due unto him.

Analysis

And his lord was wroth (ὀργισθεὶς ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ, *orgistheis ho kyrios autou*)—righteous anger, the Greek *orgizō* indicating justified wrath against covenant violation. The same lord previously 'moved with compassion' (v. 27) now burns with anger—not contradiction but appropriate response to abused grace. This reveals God's character: mercy to the repentant, wrath toward those who trample grace underfoot (Heb 10:29).

Delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him (παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν τοῖς βασανισταῖς, *paredōken auton tois basanistais*)—'handed him over to the torturers.' The term *basanistēs* refers to those who extract payment through torture (possibly torturing until family pays, or legal torturers). The phrase 'till he should pay all' signals impossible fulfillment—the 10,000 talent debt remained unpayable, making his torment effectively permanent. This pictures the eternal conscious punishment of those who reject grace.

Historical Context

Roman legal practice permitted torture of slaves to extract testimony or information about hidden assets. Some interpret *basanistēs* as prison guards authorized to use harsh methods to motivate payment. Regardless, the term evokes severe suffering and the impossibility of escape—the reinstated debt, never fully payable, ensures unending punishment.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the lord's righteous anger toward abused grace inform your understanding of divine justice alongside divine mercy?
2. What does the impossibility of paying 'all that was due' after grace is withdrawn teach about the finality of judgment?
3. How should this warning about torment for unforgiveness motivate you to examine whether you've truly forgiven from your heart (v. 35)?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὀργισθεὶς	ὁ	κύριος	αὐτῷ	παρέδωκεν	αὐτῷ	τοῖς
And	was wroth	G3588	lord	him	and delivered	him	G3588
G2532	G3710		G2962	G846	G3860	G846	
βασανισταῖς	ἕως	οὗ	ἀποδοῦ	πάν	τὸ	ὀφειλόμενον	
to the tormentors	till	G3739	he should pay	all	G3588	that was due	
G930	G2193		G591	G3956		G3784	
αὐτῷ							
him							
G846							

Additional Cross-References

James 2:13 (Parallel theme): For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

