

## Luke 7:36-50

### “Yeshua Forgives Sin”

“Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined *at the table*. And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining *at the table* in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, ‘If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.’ And Yeshua answered him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he replied, ‘Say it, Teacher.’ ‘A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?’ Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom he forgave more.’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged correctly.’ Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume. For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.’ Then He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven.’ Those who were reclining *at the table* with Him began to say to themselves, ‘Who is this *man* who even forgives sins?’ And He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

As recorded in Luke 7:36-50, in the dinner at the Pharisee's home, there were open-minded and reasonable Pharisees, who at least recognized the uniqueness of Yeshua, and who wanted to hear Him out (Luke 7:36). At this dinner, a woman who was a sinner cried in the presence of the Messiah, whose tears fell on His feet, which she was wiping with her long hair (Luke 7:37-38). The host asks, “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” (Luke 7:39, NIV), to which Yeshua responds with a parable of two debtors (Luke 7:40-43). Yeshua notes the actions of the woman to the host, and how she wet His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair, and had anointed Him with perfume, when the Pharisee had done nothing (Luke 7:44-46). And so, Yeshua asserts that the woman, whose sins were many, should be forgiven on account of her love (Luke 7:47).

The details of what transpired notwithstanding, Yeshua issued the decisive word, “Your sins have been forgiven” (Luke 7:48). There is no indication that the woman or Yeshua had ever encountered one another before, and that her actions were intended to demonstrate some deference because of previous transgressions committed against Him. *Yeshua forgives the woman of her life's sins*. Unlike the previous encounter of Luke 5:17-26, where forgiving a man of sin merited the charge of blasphemy, those who were present are open enough to the Messiah, to ask the question—albeit perplexed, amazed, or bewildered—“Who is this, who even forgives sins<sup>76</sup>?” (Luke 7:49, RSV). *The audience which has encountered Yeshua is not dismissive of Him*, and can be said to be intrigued about who He is. He has already been regarded as a prophet of sorts (Luke 7:39), and now a much more significant identity—a seemingly supernatural identity—has to be contemplated. As Marshall indicates,

<sup>76</sup> Grk. *tis houtos estin hos kai hamartias aphēsin* (τίς οὗτός ἐστιν ὃς καὶ ἀμαρτίας ἀφίησιν).

## The Nature of Yeshua in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

“The question of who Jesus is had already been raised in v. 39, with the implication that he was a prophet. Now the christological significance of the story is carried a step further.”<sup>77</sup>

Yeshua has to be identified as a prophet *first*, before He can be recognized as something more. In Luke 7:49, the question asked, “Who is this who dares to forgive sins?” (Contemporary English Version), began a conversation on both the purpose of Yeshua arriving in the audience’s lives, and His origins and identity. In the view of Stein,

“From this verse it is clear that Jesus’ hearers (and Luke) did not understand the statements about forgiveness in 7:47-48 as divine passives, i.e., they were not an attempt to avoid God’s name by using the passive ‘you are forgiven’ instead of ‘God forgives you.’ On the contrary, Jesus is understood as exercising a divine prerogative and personally announcing, as in 5:20-21, that the woman’s sins were forgiven.”<sup>78</sup>

Indeed, Yeshua’s forgiveness of the woman’s sins are an indication that Yeshua has to be more than a prophet. Writing on “Toward a Systematic Theology of the Deity of Christ,” Robert A. Peterson properly details, “In every section the Old Testament teaches that forgiving sins is a divine prerogative,” referencing a number of Tanach passages (Exodus 34:6-7; Psalm 103:10, 12; Isaiah 43:25). He further concludes how “In every section of the New Testament forgiving sins is also Jesus’ divine prerogative,”<sup>79</sup> referencing a number of Apostolic Scriptures passages (Luke 7:47-49; Acts 5:30-31; Colossians 1:13-14; Revelation 1:5-6).

In their resource *Putting Jesus in His Place*, Bowman and Komoszewski offer the following Bible passages for consideration, in how both the Lord God and the Lord Yeshua/Jesus are seen exercising “Forgiveness of sins”:<sup>80</sup>

<b>Forgiveness of sins</b>	
<b>the LORD GOD</b>	<b>Lord Jesus (Yeshua)</b>
<p><i>Exodus 34:6-7; Psalm 51:4; 130:4; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; 55:7; Jeremiah 31:34; Daniel 9:9</i></p> <p>“Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave <i>the guilty</i> unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations’” (Exodus 34:6-7).</p> <p>“Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge” (Psalm 51:4).</p> <p>“But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared” (Psalm 130:4).</p>	<p><i>Matthew 9:1-8 (cf. Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26); Luke 7:47-49; Acts 5:31; Colossians 3:13</i></p> <p>“Getting into a boat, Yeshua crossed over <i>the sea</i> and came to His own city. And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Yeshua said to the paralytic, ‘Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.’ And some of the scribes said to themselves, ‘This <i>fellow</i> blasphemes.’ And Yeshua knowing their thoughts said, ‘Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, “Your sins are forgiven,” or to say, “Get up, and walk”? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’—then He said to the paralytic, ‘Get up, pick up your bed and go home.’ And he got up and went home. But when the crowds saw <i>this</i>, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men” (Matthew 9:1-8).</p> <p>“When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. And they came,</p>

<sup>77</sup> Marshall, *Luke*, 314.

<sup>78</sup> Stein, 238.

<sup>79</sup> Robert A. Peterson, “Toward a Systematic Theology of the Deity of Christ,” in *The Deity of Christ*, 218.

<sup>80</sup> Bowman and Komoszewski, 287.

“I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins” (Isaiah 43:25).

“I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you” (Isaiah 44:22).

“Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

““They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more’” (Jeremiah 31:34).

“To the Lord our God *belong* compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him” (Daniel 9:9).

bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. And Yeshua seeing their faith said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’ But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?’ Immediately Yeshua, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, “Your sins are forgiven”; or to say, “Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk”? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’ —He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.’ And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this’” (Mark 2:1-12).

“One day He was teaching; and there were *some* Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting *there*, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and *from* Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was *present* for Him to perform healing. And *some* men *were* carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him. But not finding any *way* to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle *of the crowd*, in front of Yeshua. Seeing their faith, He said, ‘Friend, your sins are forgiven you.’ The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ‘Who is this *man* who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?’ But Yeshua, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, “Your sins have been forgiven you,” or to say, “Get up and walk”? But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,’ —He said to the paralytic—‘I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.’ Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God. They were all struck with astonishment and *began* glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, ‘We have seen remarkable things today’” (Luke 5:17-26).

“He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31).

“bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you” (Colossians 3:13).

## The Nature of Yeshua in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

Further investigation of both the statements and actions of Yeshua the Messiah—particularly those which can only be performed by God proper—is warranted, for us to gain a fuller picture of whether or not He is truly God and integrated into the Divine Identity.

### Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25

#### “Yeshua Calms the Winds and the Sea”

“On that day, when evening came, He said to them, ‘Let us go over to the other side.’ Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. Yeshua Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, ‘Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?’ And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Hush, be still.’ And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?’ They became very much afraid and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?’” (Mark 4:35-41).

“When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Yeshua Himself was asleep. And they came to *Him* and woke Him, saying, ‘Save us, Lord; we are perishing!’ He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?’ Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. The men were amazed, and said, ‘What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?’” (Matthew 8:23-27).

“Now on one of *those* days Yeshua and His disciples got into a boat, and He said to them, ‘Let us go over to the other side of the lake.’ So they launched out. But as they were sailing along He fell asleep; and a fierce gale of wind descended on the lake, and they *began* to be swamped and to be in danger. They came to Yeshua and woke Him up, saying, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm. And He said to them, ‘Where is your faith?’ They were fearful and amazed, saying to one another, ‘Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?’” (Luke 8:22-25).

Within the record of Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:23-27; and Luke 8:22-25, Yeshua and His Disciples take a boat to the east side of the Sea of Galilee. They encounter a fierce storm along the way, one that is so bad that they exclaim to their Teacher, who was asleep in the stern, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!” (Matthew 8:25, NIV) or “Master, Master, we’re going to die!” (Luke 8:24, HCSB). Yeshua asks His Disciples why they have no faith (Mark 4:40; Matthew 8:26; Luke 8:25), because all He has to do is rebuke the wind and the waves, for the sea to be calm (Mark 4:39; Matthew 8:26; Luke 8:24). The response of the Disciples, to the actions of their Lord in exercising some significant degree of power over the weather, is one of significant bewilderment:

- “Who then is this, *is* that even the wind and the sea obey him<sup>81</sup>?” (Mark 4:41, Mounce and Mounce).<sup>82</sup>
- “What sort of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him<sup>83</sup>?” (Matthew 8:27, Mounce and Mounce).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Grk. *tis ara houtos estin hoti kai ho anemos kai hē thalassa hupakouei autō* (τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ).

<sup>82</sup> Mounce and Mounce, 145.

<sup>83</sup> Grk. *potapos estin houtos hoti kai hē thalassa autō hupakouousin* (ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν).

<sup>84</sup> Mounce and Mounce, 28.