

## Jumbo Jet Forgiveness: Delivers Us From Evil by Ken Wilson April 21-22 2007

### Introduction:

- + Monday's shooting rampage at Virginia Tech
- + random acts of violence were a common occurrence in the time of Jesus
- + Israel under Roman occupation, wracked by insurgency and counter-insurgency
- + random acts of violence leave a mark on the psyche. Examples: Luke 13: 1-5; people slaughtered by Pilate, eighteen killed in the tower of Siloam crash

The message of Jesus was for just such a cultural context.  
Forgiveness delivers us from evil.

### Context of the Lord's Prayer: Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-6)

- + against retribution (a national issue, not just personal)
- + for love of enemies (a national issue, not just personal)

"Our father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Mt. 6: 9-13)

- + structure of prayer: key words; father, forgive, evil
- + Jesus' commentary on the prayer highlights forgiveness (see Mt. 6: 14-15)

How the prayer might land on a Sunni mother whose first son is murdered by the Shiite militia and whose second son joins the Sunni militia to retaliate.

- + more than a prayer; more than just words
- + the prayer of a man with a voice, forging a path to deliver us from evil

Deliver: word appears 3X in the Gospels:

- + beginning: Lk. 1: 74
- + middle: Mt. 6: 13
- + end: Mt. 27:43

At the earliest and most shocking to the system point of crucifixion, with "fight and flight" physiology in full gear, Jesus said this:

"Father forgive them because they don't know what they're doing." (Luke 23:34)

The mockers were chiding, "He trusts in God, let God deliver him from this evil!"  
While he was forging the only path of deliverance from evil: forgiveness.

On the cross, Jesus forged the path laid out in his prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil"

Everyone in Israel had their favorite deliverance program:

- 🍏 Some cooperated with evil in the hopes of getting off easy
- 🍏 Some tried to run and hide from evil in the wilderness.
- 🍏 Others took up the sword against the sword.

Evil is sticky. Tempting. Seductive. We think we're striking a blow against evil, but sometimes we're just sinking deeper into the quick sand.

- 🍏 In the aftermath of Virginia Tech, the parents of the perpetrator need police protection.
- 🍏 Human tendency to decry evil in others while backing into the evil of pride and self-righteousness.

Evil isn't overcome by good intentions. Evil is only overcome by good. Forgiveness is a good we have to practice with the stench of evil all around us.

Forgiveness: The Beginning, Middle, End of the Gospel

Mk. 1: 15: Jesus' first words to Israel surrounded by her enemies; "Get off this path of deliverance that doesn't deliver. Get on the path that I will show you."

Mt. 6: 13: Jesus' prayer in the face of Israel's enemies "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Lk. 23: 34: Jesus words on behalf of Israel in the grip of her enemies: "Father forgive them..."

The death and rising of Jesus is like an epic hinge in history. God has entered human history and is nudging it from within.

The death and rising of Jesus is orchestrated by God to forge and to powerfully affirm the path of forgiveness as the means by which we are delivered from evil.