

Free forgiveness: a bridge across the abysses of revenge article review sample

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Forgiveness refers to the act of setting free any need to get back at someone who caused pain and affliction to another or the need to release negative thoughts of resentment and bitterness. This paper focuses on Chapter 8 of the book “ Forgiveness and Reconciliation” by Hemlick and Peterson. The primary objective of this paper is to present the case of Korea and how forgiveness prevailed.

For 50 years, villagers in South Korea claimed that during the early part of the Korean War, some American soldiers took out their weapon and fired their machine guns leaving many helpless civilians dead (151). Survivors told their story and asked for amends but they were rejected and denied from their own government and the military of the United States (151). Over the years, such incident had raised many questions. There is a question on America’s resistance to dig the past and take responsibility for what happened. Further, in a speech delivered by Max Weber (153), he suggested that political leaders should pay their attention to the future and not on the memories of the past. Forgetting can function by making the culprits more comfortable with what happened in the past while victims continue to recall the memories. On the other hand, mutual remembering serves as a path breaker to any reconciliation intended in the future (154). According to the authors, once people experienced a history of much killing, they become more prepared to either sustain the killing or prepare to hold it (155). Further, the authors state that forgiveness starts when victims let go of the thoughts of revenge and culprits abandon claims of innocence (156). Further, Hemlick and Peterson state that public truth about negative events in the past is vital to political repentance; however, the context of reconciliation is

needed uncover the truth and offer forgiveness (159).

When the authors claimed that forgiveness is only realized after the victims let go of the thoughts of revenge, the authors clearly mean that for forgiveness to happen, a positive feeling must emerge. When revenge is continuously sought, forgiveness becomes elusive to perceive. For forgiveness to happen, culprits must also stop declaring innocence. In doing so, culprits accept their iniquities. Only through reconciliation that that truth can be exposed and forgiveness be provided.

This chapter started with the case of Korea asking redress from United States for what happened 50 years ago. This case emphasizes the fact that after many years, Korea has not yet let go of what happened and continues to seek for the uncovering of the truth. However, America continued to deny and taking responsibility for what happened and even claimed that there were no substantial evidences to prove that what happened actually materialized. The authors were effective in considering other cases such as the Nazi Case in Germany that admitted the incident and sought for forgiveness.

This case presented how forgiveness can be obtained. The authors emphasized the need for both parties to work out something – for the victim to let go thoughts of revenge and for the perpetrators to stop declaring their innocence. Only when these two acts are rendered that forgiveness is achieved.

Work Cited

Helmick, Raymond G, and Rodney Lawrence Petersen. *Forgiveness And Reconciliation*. 1st ed. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001. Print.

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