



THE HOLY FATHERS teach us that the one who forgives always wins. Whatever the occasion may be, if you forgive, you immediately cleanse your soul and become fit for Paradise. If you have forgiven those who plotted to murder you, you have become equal to the martyrs. If you have forgiven an insult, you have gained peace and won the Kingdom of Heaven. If you have generously overlooked the rumors and slanders against you, you have dulled the sting of your foe. If you have returned good for evil, you have shamed your enemy. If you have swallowed a sarcastic insult to your honor, you have become worthy of heavenly honors. If, being of higher rank in life, you have asked the pardon of a lesser man, you have not only NOT disgraced yourself, but you have furthered your spiritual maturity. If you were not to blame but asked the offender to forgive you, you have thus helped his soul to be delivered from the hell of hatred and have covered many of your own sins too. If you have abased your pride, you have exalted your humility.

—ARCHIMANDRITE SERAPHIM ALEKSIEV (+1993)