

## Satan Wants You Bound and in Bondage

Satan wants believers to be spiritual bound (enslaved or a servant of sin). He wants to be in control. He wants to be the one to influence your thoughts and decisions. He wants you tied up and tangled up, obligated and committed to him. When we are bound we are under attack. God's desire is for us to serve him with all our mind, heart and soul and Satan wants the same thing as God. Ephesian 3:1 Paul states for this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles. We are a slave to the one we serve, either Satan or God.

Judges 15:9–20 describes the result of a Philistine incursion meant to capture Samson. The Israelites in Judah hand Samson over when he volunteers to have his hands tied with new rope. However, when he sees the Philistine forces, Samson is empowered by God's Spirit. He snaps his restraints and attacks.

You may not be in a physical cell ,but more than likely you are in some type of spiritual jail cell. You are Being mentally tortured, your views are distorted; you have eyes but don't see clearly. Satan is chanting lies into your ears, causing you to doubt the word of God, making you feel miserable. This is how he has you in bondage. Many Christian live are in a constant state of bondage.

What about you? You may not be in a physical jail cell but more than likely, you are in some type of spiritual jail cell. It has been my experience, both personally and professionally, many Christians live in a constant state of bondage to the enemy, Satan. He has many believers bound in a tiny dark spiritual cell with no hope of getting out. Satan distorted our minds by brings our sinful charges against us over and over again. We may not hear his voice audibly but boy..... isn't it loud? His

echoes are in our ears for the purpose of deafening us, causing us to doubt God and neglect our salvation. if we choose to believe his lies and not the truth written in God's word we are in bondage. Satan knows our triggers and will pull them out when we least expect them. Satan wants to bring us back to the miserable dark days. but...this isn't the whole story for those of us who are in Christ.

Let's explore some gospel truths in the second book of the Bible, Exodus 6:1-8. It is my prayer and aim that you and I possess and continue to possess hope in Jesus when Satan strikes. Satan's plan of attack on Christians are to either bind them to a particular sin; or keep them bound in their sins. Yes, you can be a Christian and be bound in a particular situation, or bound to a particular problem. I believe the clearest example of this is found in Romans 7. Paul struggled with his spiritual "thorn in the flesh." Nobody knows what it was but there was sure a struggle. The question that I pose to myself often, is why? Why are so many Christians bound to sin rather than experiencing a flourishing relationship with Jesus. Why are we not being bound to Him. I want to lay out a few reasons why I think this is the case.

First I believe it boils down to a belief and realization issue. I don't think many Christians truly know and realize they are free in Jesus. Or they simply do not believe it. Do you believe you are free in Jesus? John 8:36 He whom the Son sets free is free indeed.

Whom God has set free is free indeed! You Must Believe This and place your faith and trust in this truth!!!

In John 8:36 Jesus makes a wonderful statement of victory. He says, "So if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed." These are powerful and encouraging words and right off the bat I want to issue you a big congratulations because you are free.

I believe many Christians do not understand what they have in Jesus. Many do not understand what occurred at the moment of regeneration, what transaction occurred at the moment of saving faith. Either they don't understand or they don't believe it. They may have believed it for their eternal salvation but are not believing it for their progressive sanctification. I believe it boils down to an identity issue. If you are saved, your identity is rooted and grounded in Jesus, an identity that is "received and not achieved" as the scripture puts it. Here is the problem, Satan does not want us to know and believe this amazing truth because if we truly understand who we are in Jesus and are secure in our received identity, there will be no spiritual cell, there will be no spiritual bondage, there will only be freedom and rest in Jesus Christ our savior!

Secondly I believe another main reason Christians struggle with being bound is because they live a compartmentalized life. This is the mindset of the average believer... For example: many Christians "think of [their] spirituality as just one aspect of [their] life, perhaps referred to as [their] Religious Self. Monday through Friday [they are] living the life of [their] Vocational Self (what many of us think of simply as our Normal Self). On Saturday, then [they live] the life of [their] Recreational Self. When Sunday comes, it's time for [them] to become [their] Religious Self. The Vocational Self goes to work, eats meals, pays bills, and does the regular mundane tasks thought necessary to be a well-adjusted adult. The Recreational Self is how we compensate for the stress of spending time as our Vocational Self. Then we become our Religious Self on the days or in the moments when we feel especially needful of a higher power or simply when we feel the need to access our 'spirituality.' Each version of ourselves resides in its own neat compartment, and stays in its own lane. It's rare for us to access multiple versions of ourselves at the same moment...If we assign God and his Word a portion of our lives, we are at the same time seeking to detach the other portions from his sovereign power. This is what the Bible calls 'quenching the Spirit.'..The most

significant practical issue with compartmentalized living is that our Religious Self inevitably becomes our smallest self. Many Christians say they believe in the God of the universe and have trusted in the Son of God as their Lord and Savior, but then spend the bulk of their lives obeying other lords and trusting other saviors. Whatever we focus most of our conscious time on; will invariably dominate the way we think and feel." As you think, so you become. As you think so are your behaviors and actions (Prov 23:7). For many of us these are the struggles at this very moment we are facing.

I want to share four short truths to help us become free from our spiritually tiny dark cell.

First off, an important and crucial point we MUST understand is that **freedom originates with God and not us**. We see this in the first two verses of Exodus 6. The qualifying statement that Jehovah God makes is "I am the LORD...." God is letting Moses and Pharaoh know who is the true Sovereign God of the universe. God will work it out in such a way that Pharaoh will want to cast Israel out of Egypt. Israel may have desired to be free from their bondage, but they did not have the power in which to carry out the move. God is the initiator of our freedom. Just as he was the one to initiate the freedom of Israel under Pharaoh. If you are saved, it is a result of God's supernatural wooing of you to Himself (John 6:44). I am reminded of a phrase from the beloved hymn, "Victory In Jesus," "He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood." John teaches us that we love God because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). If we truly want to be freed from our spiritual bondage, God can and will make it happen because He swears by His own name. Are we trusting in our own imitative or the power of God?

Next we need to **understand the importance of trusting in God's covenant**. How do we know that we can be freed from our spiritual bondage? We Know this Because of God's covenant to us! God reiterates the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that He will bring

them (Israel) into the land of Canaan (Ex. 6:3-4). God then swears to Israel that He will honor that covenant and bring them into the "Promised Land" (Ex. 6:8). The qualifying statement we see again is the exclamation from Jehovah God, "I am the LORD." Why can we trust God's covenant or agreement He has made to us? Because God cannot break a covenant. Why cannot God break His covenant? Because He swore by Himself (Gen. 22:16; Heb. 6:13). The word "covenant" literally means to cut a covenant. During a covenant ceremony, an animal was cut in two and those making the covenant would pass in between the covenant thus walking through the blood. The statement they were making was, "the same happen to me if I break the covenant." In Genesis 15, we see were God put Abraham to sleep and passed in between the animals Himself thus making it an unconditional covenant. What is God's covenant He makes to us at the moment of saving faith? A thorough reading of Romans 5-8 teaches us that in Christ, we are not bound to Satan as slaves to sin any longer but slaves to Jesus Christ. Jesus was cut for us. Jesus was nailed to the Cross for us. The Cross of Calvary is God's sign to us, God's covenant He made with us, "I love you! In me, you are free! Consider what I did to free you and I."

Thirdly, living in bondage to sin is living a life of insecurity whereas living as a biblical slave of Jesus is living a life of security. Satan promises us if we say yes to sin and no to God, we will have a prosperous and secure life. This is a LIE! You and I both know that when we say yes to sin and no to God, we are entering into Satan's bondage. The good news of the gospel is when we are in a spiritual bondage to a besetting sin, God will hear our "groanings." Israel was miserable due their "bondage" in Egypt and cried out to God. Egypt is pictured as life lived under Satan's rule and reign. Just like we see Egypt "keeping Israel in bondage" (Ex. 6:5), Satan keeps us in bondage if we let him. The word bondage brings the connotation of being bound, something that binds, fastens, confines, holds together like a cord or rope. Think about one who is tied up. This is

the basic idea of bondage. Satan uses invisible ropes to keep us bound to him and his sin. The way in which the phrase "keep in bondage" is used in Exodus 6:5 in the Hebrew is speaking of a continuous non-stop binding. When this is the case, and often it is, we then cry out to God in the form of "groaning." The term "groaning" is not a negative term but rather a positive term. In Romans 8:26, Paul tells us there are times in life that we are unable to put into words what we are feeling and experiencing in our heart. "Groaning" then brings the idea of crying out because of a great pressure. The pressure of being bound to sin is insurmountable but God hears us! Not only does God hear us but He remembers His covenant with us. Although there may have been sin in the camp, God is a gracious God ready and willing to forgive us when we confess and repent (1 John 1:9). The text may not tell us that God reminds us of His covenant He has made with us on the Cross but spiritually speaking, He does through the gospel.

Concerning the last gospel truth, we should understand is the completeness of God's rescue operation. Now that God has initiated our freedom from bondage, established His covenant with us, and leading us to peace and security in Him, He then encourages us. This is reveal in the completeness of His work. Exodus 6:6-7 speaks of God redeeming Israel, showcased by their deliverance from Egypt, taking Israel as a people to Himself, and leading them in the security and knowledge that He is their God. The same is true with us! God's deliverance in Scripture is always final and complete. Satan will make us think it is not complete therefore falling into the trap of sinful habits and sinful behaviors. This too is a LIE!

In Christ, we ARE complete because HIS work is complete. When God redeems us to Himself, as He did with Israel, this is showcasing the grace in God forgetting our sin (Heb. 8:12). "The sins we do not forget, God does not remember." Satan brings up all of our charges against us, turning us against ourselves but he has no authority to stand on. In Christ

our sins are forgiven! Micah 7:19 teaches us God casts our sin into the sea of forgetfulness. God has rescued and delivered us wholly and completely! Do we believe this truth? **The sooner we come to grips with the fact we cannot initiate our own freedom, we cannot free ourselves, we don't have it within ourselves to deliver ourselves from the grips of Satan, the sooner we will experience freedom from our spiritual bondage.**

It is when you and I reach the end of our rope, to where we reach the point of exhaustion of attempting to free ourselves, to where we are tired and angry enough at sin, to when we will realize we don't have what it takes to free ourselves; then and only then will God work because WE are not working. This is actually good news and a gift from above because we are a set of people who are weak outside of Christ, but when in we can rest in His strength (2 Cor. 12:9). Whatever Satan is using to maintain his grip on you, don't loose heart. Our hope is in Jesus, who is our "Living Hope!" John 8: 31 and 32. To those who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.