

FREEDOM FROM THE SLAVE LIFE

By

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Freedom is a concept people of all generations hold dear. Without freedom the human spirit itself appears shackled, robbing man of peace, happiness and wellbeing.

For the cause of freedom, millions in this life have fought and shed their blood. But so far man has sought for freedom that is temporary and superficial. True freedom, if it's to be obtained, must be born of the Spirit, for the origins of the human plight lie in the spiritual.

Our Three Enemies

Every human being has three enemies clearly identified in the scriptures.

- They are
- i. Satan (John 10:10; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:12).
 - ii. The World (1 John 2:15-17, 5:19; Eph. 2:2; Jam. 4:4; Rev. 12:9).
 - iii. The Flesh (Rom. 7:14, 18, 8:8, 13; 1Cor. 9:27; Lk. 14:26).

To be free and secure in our salvation received through Christ, each of these three enemies must be confronted, resisted and conquered. Left unchecked, they function as cruel slave masters in the life of every individual, being deadly enemies of the human soul.

The Genesis

Mankind as a whole was sold under sin in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate the 'forbidden fruit' in obedience to Satan (Gen. 3; Rom. 7:14). Like the tree of good and evil man partook against God's will and warning, man, originally created good like God (Gen. 1:27, 31; Deut. 32:4), came to embody two contrasting natures: Good and Evil, representing Satan, who knowing good had then corrupted his way (Ezek. 28:15).

But to do good man, now under the control of Satan (Eph. 2:2-3), was powerless to do but only "evil continually" (Gen. 6:5; Rom. 7:19). The situation is dire! For the carnal person, the will to do good is present with him/her, but how to perform that which is good, he/she is incapable (vs 18). It's a life of slavery.

In anguish the slave man cries out:

“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24).

A New Master

If we are to be free, there is the need to change masters! As Rom. 6:16 says “to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to him ye obey.” But in drastic contradistinction to the normal master/servant relationship, Jesus is the only Lord who becomes our Master without enslaving us (John 15:15)! He sets us free instead: “If the Son therefore shall set you free, you shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

The Conquering Messiah

Christ is able to make the above declaration of freedom and actually set believers free because He made conquest of all three enemies by His ministry and death on the cross! Right from the beginning of His ministry, He had begun to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8) as He healed the sick and cast out devils from their victims (Matt. 4:23-24). In an early confrontation with the devil in Mark 1:23-24, a demon-possessed man cried out in fright: “Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God”.

Jesus was in for battle with the devil, and He took it all the way to cross. His death was a calculated strategy meant to “destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”, and thereby liberate those held in the bondage of death (Heb. 2:14-15). Because Jesus had lived a life of victory over Satan – totally avoided and overcome all his temptations and traps of sin - He boldly proclaimed just before His death; “the prince of this world cometh, and hath **nothing in Me**” (John 14:30)

What an amazing life! What a pure life! Jesus was absolutely sinless (Heb. 4:15)! Satan did not have his fornication in Him, neither his lies, nor idolatry, Sabbath-breaking, etc, in Him.

And it was not as if the devil had kept his distance! In the wilderness, Jesus had a head-on encounter with the devil, with the latter at his deceiving best – but Jesus kept him at bay and prevailed over him with the

Sword of the Spirit, that is the Word of God (Matt. 4, Eph. 6:17). He knew him well as the father of lies (John 8:44).

After His glorious resurrection from the death, having given Satan a devastating blow, He announced: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Col. 2:15 reports that "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them."

As proof of His great Calvary victory over Satan, a great earthquake occurred that day in Jerusalem and many of the dead saints resurrected from the dead and showed themselves to the residents of the Holy City (Matt. 27:50-54). He had snatched from the prince of darkness the keys of death and hell, giving freedom and life to His people (Rev. 1:18). That great defeat of Satan was signaled by the return of light after a three-hour period of darkness during which Christ fought and prevailed over the devil (Matt. 27:45-46). Surely, the darkness could not overcome the light (John 1:5).

Nevertheless, Satan awaits his final deathblow which Christ will soon deliver! Halleluiah!

The second enemy, the world, was equally given a sound thrashing by Christ. He knew from the outset that His purpose in this world was not to be part of its system but to overcome it (John 16:33). Standing before the judgment seat of Pilate, He bluntly told him, "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

He was in this world, but He was not of this world—a world earlier claimed by Satan as his own (John 17:14-16; Matt. 4:8-9). Consequently, Christ lived a separate life from the world and its corrupt ways. Although He loved sinners and came to save the perishing, He kept Himself "unspotted from the world" as Jam. 1:27 puts it (Matt. 18:11; John 3:17; 1 John 3:3).

Next comes the third enemy: the flesh. Here too, Christ achieved a spectacular victory and actually made mincemeat of it!

Though born flesh and blood like the average human being (John 1:14; Heb. 2:14, 17; 1John 4:3), He lived a totally victorious life over the deceitful lusts of the flesh and did not once sin. Not even guile was found in His mouth (Heb. 4:15; 1Pet. 2:22).

He had a physical human body but lived by the Spirit and thereby mortified/killed the lusts of the flesh (Rom. 8:13; 1 Cor. 15:45). Because of the flawless, sinless life He lived, the apostle Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost referred to Him as “the Holy One” (Acts 2:27).

According to a Jewish-Christian legend, Yeshua led such a perfect life in total obedience to the Father’s commandments that the early disciples used to call Him “the Living Torah” – His life a perfect reflection of the law of God (John 8:29; John 12:50; Matt. 5:17-18). Though He was tempted in all points, He did not once give in to the pulls of the flesh (Heb. 4:15). He came to show how to live in the world as flesh and blood and still overcome Satan, the World, and the Flesh.

Called to Overcome

To be an overcomer, one needs to be regenerated from within; one needs to be reborn by the will of the Father into the spiritual Kingdom of God: He that is born of the flesh is flesh, and He that is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 1:13; 3:3, 6). It’s certainly by the Spirit that believers are set free, for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. 3:17)

The life of freedom from the slave life of sin and death is ushered in as soon as a person (a sinner) takes the step of changing his/her master from Satan to Christ! At one fell swoop, the believer is set free from all three enemies.

By accepting Christ as our New Master and Saviour, we automatically become citizens of His heavenly spiritual Kingdom, and we break with Satan’s (Col. 1:13, 3:1-2). Just like Christ, the Kingdom of the believer is no longer of this world as previously (John 17:16).

Repentance is an important first step, being an expression of intent to change over from the kingdom of Satan to that God – a decision to ditch Satan as master in favour of Christ (Acts 26:18).

With this comes power over Satan! With Satan having already been defeated by Christ, believers ‘naturally’ have power over him. Believers share in Christ’s victory over Satan with a mandate to cast him out (Mark 16:17; Matt. 12:28). Indeed, Christ has given believers power to tread over all the power of the adversary and nothing shall be any means hurt us (Luke 10:19).

Thus the truly anointed believer has power and authority over Satan, the first enemy, through Christ, the power and wisdom of God (1Cor. 1:24).

But the belligerent spirit that he is, Satan is an indefatigable foe who we must resist on a constant basis with faith (Jam. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). By the Word of God (which is the Sword of the Spirit) and the power of the BLOOD of the Lamb, believers overcome the devil as demonstrated by the saints of old (1 John 2:14; Rev. 13:11).

In addition to this, we must display a high degree of alertness to satanic craftiness as Jesus did in His encounter with him in the wilderness. He is the same serpent that beguiled Eve through his subtlety (2 Cor. 11:3). Under no circumstances should we be ignorant of his devices, lest he gets advantage over us (2Cor. 2:11). The watchword is vigilance – giving him not an inch to gain a toehold in our lives (Eph. 4:27).

The second enemy, the World, is a creation of the first enemy, Satan (Matt. 4:8-9). The devil is its god (2 Cor. 4:4). Logically, then, friendship with the world makes one an enemy of God (Jam. 4:4). The Bible makes it clear that because believers are not of this world, we are not to love the world nor the things in it. To do so demonstrates lack of love for God, which is the keeping of His commandments (1John 2:15-17; 5:3; John 14:15). That's why 1 John 5:4 states, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"

The believer who has been born into the Kingdom of God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit no longer has his citizenship in this world but in heaven (Philippians 3:20). This being the case, he lives a superior higher life above the normal worldly life of sin.

Indeed, such a believer is a pilgrim, a stranger in the world, and so does not indulge in the sinful pleasures of its citizens (1Pet. 2:11, 4:3-4, Col. 3:1-2, 5). Yes, he/she no longer lives his/her life "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2-3).

This is a life of freedom from the harmful dictates of the world which lies in wickedness (as a result of satanic deception – 1John 5:19; Rev.12:9).

To overcome the world is to become a citizen of Heaven, the Jerusalem Above which is free (Gal. 4:26, Eph. 2:19). Our citizenship of Heaven is made plain by this announcement in Heb. 12:22:

“But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, and to an innumerable company of angels.” (Emphasis mine).

As every citizen has civic responsibilities, so does the believer with a heavenly citizenship. He does the will of the Father on earth as it is in Heaven (Matt. 6:9-10,7:21-23; Eph. 3:15). That will of the Father is nothing but His commandments!

But still, the believer has yet one enemy to contend with! And he (that enemy) is pretty close-himself, that is the Flesh! Of the three, the flesh is the most deadly! To deal effectively with it demands the most extreme of measures: hate it, deny it, even crucify it with Christ for a New Life in Him (Luke 14:26; Gal. 2:20). Such a harsh treatment is in order because the flesh (like the heart) is “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9).

The flesh is a most wicked foe that must not be coddled nor tolerated at all. No good thing dwells in the flesh (Rom. 7:18), and we only tolerate it at the cost of our eternal life (Rom. 8:13).

It is that serious. Hence the call to “walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

How do we walk in the Spirit? By being born again as children of God by His Spirit (Rom. 8:14; John 1:12-13). Because God is a Spirit (John 4:24), He gives birth to children who are spiritual, not carnal, in substance. It is that simple: Flesh begets flesh, and Spirit begets spirit (John 3:6).

Reborn into the spiritual character of God and Christ (the ‘quickening’ last Adam), the believer is divested of the flesh and its lusts – called the old man – that he might put on the New Man: The God Nature (Eph. 4:22, 24). In the process, he dies to the lusts of the flesh (which enslaves) that he might live a new life of righteousness and freedom in the Spirit (Rom. 8:10; Col. 3:5). Yes, he becomes a new creature with no place for the old things of the flesh (2Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10).

Here we see that God has totally given up on the old Adamic Nature. Being hostile to His law (Rom. 8:7; Jer. 17:9), it is beyond redemption and only fit for the unquenchable fire! This is the essence of Matt. 3:11-12: those who receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire are the ‘Wheat gathered into the garner’ and the chaff those who remained in the flesh.

It is the Spirit that generates the God Nature in believers to live godly lives (Ezek. 36:26-27).

To such believers there is now no condemnation, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1-2).

The spiritual law of God previously impossible to keep (Rom. 7:14; 8:7) because of the flesh becomes 'keep-able. Once again, the flesh comes over as the most tyrannical taskmaster of the three in keeping us from the law of God. With the new spiritual life in Christ, however, the believer is freed from the law of sin and death. Instantly, the incapacity (powerlessness) to do good (keep God's law) gives way to capacity to keep the law (Rom. 8:3-4)

Reborn from Above into Freedom

The believer can now keep the law from Above because he has been born again by the Spirit from Above!.

At last, the lament over our inability to keep God's law because of the crippling influence of the flesh gives way to a sigh of joy and relief.

"Thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the [Spiritually renewed] mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:25).

The inward man will yet see delight, for the powerlessness has been cured (Rom. 7:22) - finally freed from the law of sin warring against obedience to the law of God (Rom. 7:21, 23).

It is a life of freedom and victory over the flesh and the lusts thereof! As the scriptures clearly teach, a person either keeps the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus or the law of sin and death. There is no middle ground. But it is certainly the Spirit that profits, giving us life and peace (John 6:63; Rom. 8:6).

In our new state of freedom, let's always remember to rein in the flesh by the Spirit, for the deceitful lusts of the flesh are ever present with us (1 John 2:16).

Everything comes full circle here. To constantly prevail against the flesh, we must constantly hate the flesh as Jesus instructed, even urging us to

figuratively cut off body parts that entice us into sin (Matt. 5:27, 30, 18:8). The apostle Paul knew this all too well; he wrote:

“But I keep under my body [flesh], and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1Cor. 9:27).

Similarly, the apostle Peter admonished: “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us a in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath cased from sin.

“That he no longer should live the rest of his time [life] in the flesh [which he has afflicted or killed and so “dead” according to vs 6] to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” (I Pet. 4:1-2).

The believer who has through the victory power of Christ and the New Birth overcome Satan, the World and the Flesh, has to all intents and purposes attained eternal life (John 5:24, 8:51). It is a spiritual planting whereby we reap life Everlasting (Gal. 6:8; 1John 5:11).

Now here lies the rub! Why does the victorious Christian have eternal life and yet dies? Why did all the saints die and do die?

The answer is straightforward: While we remain flesh and blood, we cannot inherit the Spiritual Kingdom of God in toto! (1Cor. 15:50). Until the redemption of our bodies and our translation at Christ’s return, we will have to serve out a light sentence (not condemnation as in Rom. 8:1) of affliction and physical death in our bodies (Rom. 8:23, 2Cor. 4:17-18, 1Cor. 15:52-54). Thank God, the sentence is for a limited time—it ends at Christ’s return!

The Great Day of Independence

The return of Christ will mark the great day of independence for all believers, as the oppressive power of death, the last enemy, is broken (1 Cor. 15:26). Christ, who holds the keys of hell and of death, will open the great prison house of Satan and release its inmates (Isa. 14:17, Heb. 2:14-15; Rev. 1:18).

As with every independence, the granting of freedom will be preceded by a change in political authority – the overthrow of the god of this world announced with the Seventh Trumpet blast (Rev. 11:15; 1Thess 4:16-17). By then, Christ will have “put down all rule and authority” and therefore in a

position to declare freedom from death and all (1 Cor. 15:22 – 24, 26; Ps 110:1).

From Mount Zion, He will look upon those appointed to death in the grave and order their immediate release (Ps. 102:19-20). His Spirit in the dead saints, who take part in the first resurrection (of the just), will raise them up as He calls forth their spirits to live in an incorruptible spiritual body (Rom 8:11, John 5:25, Job14:14-15; 1 Cor 15:44).

Thus will the Lord Jesus Christ remove the veil of death cast over all nations (Isa. 25:7-9; John 1:14 perfected in Rev.21:3-4). Our full Divine Nature (though partakers now 2Peter 1:4) will be made manifest then (1 John 3:1-2). We will be made immortal like God, bearing the image of the heavenly (1 Cor 15:49).

A Foretaste of Glory!

At last, one perplexing difficulty in scripture has been solved! Regularly we come across scriptures that seem to contradict other scriptures in relation to **when** believers are saved, redeemed and enthroned. While some speak of salvation/redemption now (Eph 1:7; Titus 3:4 -7; Luke 19:3-10), others speak of a salvation / redemption yet future (Rom.8:23), Heb 1: 14, 1Peter 1:5).

Likewise the Kingdom and the rebirth are placed in different eras. The kingdom is **now** and **within** us as members of the body of Christ (Luke 17:20-21; Col 1:13), and yet we shall inherit it at Christ's return (1Cor 6:9; Daniel 7:18, 27). The New Birth is a present reality courtesy of the Holy Spirit baptism and the Word (John 3:3-6, 1Peter 1:22; 1John 3:9), and yet we await a future translation when flesh and blood shall give way to immortality (1 Cor 15:50-50).

As all scripture, given by the inspiration of God, is sacrosanct, it is not to be assumed that one set of scripture (either pro-here-now or pro-future) is correct and the other wrong. Both are right! Salvation is both now and in the future as does Rebirth. But one foreshadows the other, heralding the coming of the more perfect.

As 1 Cor 13:9-10 and 12 put it, "For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

“For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know [all/fully]”

So is our redemption- the climax is yet future! Our full-fledged status as the divine son and daughters of God is not known yet, until we ‘awake with His likeness’ (Ps 17:15; Ph 3:21).

When we rightly divide the word of truth (as every Bible student should), with relevant references made here “a little and there a little” (Isa. 28:10), we will come to realize that the present spiritual reality of the kingdom and of believers salvation from death to life is to be fully manifested when Christ returns with “healing in His wings” in visible power! (Mark 4: 1-2, Rev 1:7).

Christ captured the two eras/stages of God’s kingdom in His reply to His disciples who just before his ascension had besought Him: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1; 6).

Notice His answer: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power [to give you the kingdom]”.

“But [first] ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:7-8)

Jesus’ reply is most instructive. The Kingdom proper is not yet; it is in the hands of the Father as to when to bring it. But its forerunner (the Church-Kingdom) will appear when you receive power from on high (See Lk. 24:49).

The mission of the Church can be likened to the role of a diplomatic mission in a foreign land.

Like a diplomatic mission or embassy, the Church represents a foreign Kingdom/power, namely the Kingdom of God in Heaven. The “diplomatic staff” are the members of the body of Christ (the Church) described as “ambassadors of Christ”; they are in charge of God’s ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20, I Cor 12:27-28).

And the church’s equivalent of diplomatic credentials is the power of the Holy Spirit introducing her to the ‘host country’ (the world) as well as mandating her to represent (witness) the Kingdom (Acts 1:8).

Through its teachings, the Church issues 'visas' to nationals of the host country; that is, members of the unsaved world community, who through repentance and faith in Christ apply to enter the Kingdom. The visa to Heaven, once the application has been submitted in the name of Jesus for processing, are the commandments of God (John 14:1-3; Luke 24:47; Matt. 7:21-23, Rev. 22:14 KJV).

Another similarity lies in sovereignty or extraterritorial status. Though stationed on the host country's territory, diplomatic missions are exempt from local law and mostly treated as part of the territory of the home country. The same applies to the church. She is in this world but not of this world (John 17:16). And because she is not of the world but of heaven, she is exempt from the sentence of eternal punishment that will be passed against the unsaved world community on Jesus' return (2 Thess. 1:7-10).

Moreover, as an extension of God's Heavenly Kingdom on earth, the sentence of banishment from Heaven against Satan and his evil angels is in force in the Church (Rev. 12:7-9).

This explains Jesus statement in Matt. 12:28; "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you". Wherever and in whatever form the Kingdom of God is, Satan is treated as an outcast.

In fulfillment of Christ's promise, the first phase of the Kingdom was inaugurated on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost fell and the Church was born in Power! (Acts 2:1-4)

Now we await--at the end of our tour of duty--our recall home as true ambassadors. Yes, we await our entry into the Kingdom proper which Yeshua will bring at His glorious appearing (2Cor. 5:1-2; 1Pet. 1:13; Titus 2:13).

Only then will the saints be completely free! Until then, we will still be subject to physical death to be raised in glory and in power on the last day (1Cor. 15:42-43).

So as far as physical death is concerned, all believers are "prisoners of hope" (Zech. 9:12) currently imprisoned in this body of death till mortality is swallowed up of life. The guarantee (assurance) of that sure hope is none other than the Resurrection Spirit of Christ in believers (Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 5:1-5; Col 1:27).

It's a hope we must patiently wait for; it is the hope that Christ, the Marvellous Grace of God, brings at His revelation - as the One who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light (Rom. 8:24-25; Co1 1:5; 1Pet. 1:13; 2Tim. 1:10).

In the long run, the spirit-filled believer is only *temporarily* in the prison of his/her mortal body, unlike the carnal person in condemned cells-eternal/second death in the lake of fire (Rom. 8:1-2; 2Tim. 1:12; 1Tim 6:19, Rev. 20:13-15).

Halleluyah! FREEDOM and LIFE belongs to the people of God for His Life will have become ours, and we will rejoice in His salvation forever!

Meanwhile, all three enemies will be facing inescapable destruction: Satan bound a 1000 years and then cast into hell (Rev. 20:2-3; 14); the World sentenced to destruction by fire (2Pet. 3:6-7, 10; 1John 2:17), the Flesh equally given to flames (Matt. 10:28; 1Cor. 6:13, Rom. 8:1).

This is a pointer to the ill-fate of all who willingly served and associated themselves with the three enemies. Involvement with any of them is a choice of doom. Rom 8:13 warns sternly, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die..." So goes for the other two (Matt. 25:41).

The Throne of Glory and the Incomparable Rewards that Await Us!

Only Jesus gives us life and freedom – nay a place on His throne beside the Father as friends and co-rulers with Him (John 15:13-15, Rev. 3:21, 5:10) As overcomers of Satan, the World and the Flesh, sharing Christ's throne will be a well deserved honour for the saints, who purged of all sin by Christ and re-created in His righteous Nature, shall be without sin and guile-just like Christ Himself (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 14:1-5; 7:14, Eph. 5:27).

Indeed, under the terms of the New Covenant whereby the divine commandments are written in our minds and hearts, God has pledged to forget all our past sins and misdeeds as if we never sinned! (Heb. 8:10-12). By the blood of the New Covenant, He removes the stain of sin from believers and makes them white (symbolic of righteousness and purity) - Matt. 26:28, 1John 1:7; Rev. 1:5.

To these gallant overcomers, He makes the following additional promises:

- i. The right to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God (Rev. 2:7, 22:2 Opp. Gen. 3:24).

- ii. Exemption from the second death (Rev. 2:11, 20:6, 13-15).
- iii. The right to eat of the hidden manna and a new name written on a white stone (Rev. 2:17. Compare Rev.11:19 - Manna in covenant ark in Heaven – Heb. 9:4, 8:5; Ex. 25:40).
- iv. Power (authority) over the nations (Rev. 2:26).
- v. White raiment with one's name written as a permanent fixture in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 3:5. See Re. 19:7-9 & Matt. 22:11-14 – white wedding garment of righteousness)
- vi. A pillar in the temple of God as his permanent abode (Rev. 3:12. See Isa. 56:1-5 for Sabbath link).
- vii. A possessor of all things (Rev. 21:7, 1Cor. 3:21. Compare Heb. 1:2 & Acts 3:19-21 – Yeshua, Heir of all things and restorer of same).

So it's worth the battle; it's worth every sacrifice. The prize is too grand-unimaginable glorious-to pass up (1Cor. 2:9; Jam. 1:12). So let us fight on, laying aside "every weight and sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race (of salvation) set before us. We have Jesus, our Friend and Master, as our Example (Heb. 12:1-2).

Let us give no place to the devil in our lives (Eph 4:27) nor to the world and the flesh for that matter.

Because we will be receiving a Kingdom that cannot be removed, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28-29).

Decision Time

When we break with our enemy-taskmasters, we open the door to freedom and salvation in Jesus. But when we continue in servitude to their evil desires, we give ourselves only one option – destruction as is their collective lot! The future belongs to Jesus, the Messiah!

So which way will you go? The way of freedom or the way of death? The choice is ours!

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Rom. 6:16).

As Moses set before the Israelites a choice between life and death, so it's true of all mankind today:

“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God; listen to His voice, and hold fast to him for the LORD is your life, and He will give you many years in the land He swore to give to your father, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deut. 30:19-20 NIV)

May the LORD by His grace make all of us instruments of His righteousness (Eph. 2:10) that we might live His life of freedom forever! And yes, we can certainly do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phi. 4:13). Amen!!

What grace and freedom Christ brings! Obviously, your desire for freedom from your three deadly enemies has been stoked up! Now, you can translate that desire into reality. To learn more, please write to:

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APPENDIX 1

Is the Body and the Flesh One and the same?

Col. 2:11 (KJV) makes a distinction between the body and the flesh. It says the sins of the flesh must be put off the body described as the temple of God in 1Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19.

The flesh, on the other hand, is presented as hostile to God, for no good thing dwells in it (Rom. 8:7, 7:18).

Clearly, then, the flesh represents the satanic implant in man, his seed – the main conduit of his influence over man. And that's why when a person is reborn by God, the flesh must necessarily die; that is, Satan must die in your body if God, the Spirit (John 4:24), is to live in you again. The two cannot share you; the two cannot be co-tenants in the same body! (It didn't happen in heaven and won't happen elsewhere – certainly not in your body!).

Indeed, in Eden when Satan deceived man and invaded his body, God's Spirit left him so Satan could have man all to himself.

Hence the divine fore-warning in Gen. 2:17, "in the day thou shalt eat of the tree of good and evil thou shalt surely die" That is to say, you will lose Me, My Spirit, and be indwelt by Satan and his lusts.

In this day of salvation, the process is ongoing – only it's in reverse. Satan is on his way out (handed the eviction order 2000 years ago), and God is coming alive in the hearts of millions of people who repent of their sins and accept the Lord Jesus as their Lord and Saviour (Eph. 3:17).

This is the great mystery revealed to God's people.

APPENDIX 2

Deliverance by Night?

There is reason to believe that the declaration of freedom at the sounding of the seventh trumpet will occur at night. The deliverance of Israel from Egyptian slavery occurred at night to signal freedom from the power of darkness to that of light (Ex. 12:29-33, 42).

Jesus at Calvary triumphed over the prince of darkness at 'night', that is, during the three-hour period of darkness in which He fought the forces of darkness culminating in His triumphant "it is finished" declaration (Matt. 27:45-46; John 19:30).

As a final act of deliverance from the power of darkness, the 'rapture'/catching away of the saints will also take place at night - or at least at a time of darkness when the sun and the moon are not shining (Luke 17:34, Matt. 24:29-31, Acts 2:19-21 Amos 8:9).

For independence to be meaningful, it ought to be declared while the old power existed, if even in its twilight, not after! (It is a standard practice enacted at all independence ceremonies).

So will it happen when Christ brings freedom to all the world. Universal salvation will be declared in the very twilight of Satan's 6000 year rule.

The seventh Trumpet sound, tolling the death knell of Satan's kingdom, will be accompanied by this announcement from Heaven:

"The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15) Amen!

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