



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Prayer

Lord, please help me to be conscious of the people I meet who are bound by the devil in their minds. I know that You want to use me to touch them and to bring them the freedom that can be found only in You. I am so sorry for the times I get so busy that I fail to recognize opportunities to speak Your name and to share Your love with people who are lost and bound. Please help me to become consistently alert to the people for whom You died and to go out of my way to tell them the Good News that will deliver them and set them free. Let me always remember that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and that I have been forgiven and they can be to, I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture

Exodus 23: 1-33 (AMP)

1 YOU SHALL not repeat or raise a false report; you shall not join with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. 2 You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you bear witness at a trial so as to side with a multitude to pervert justice. 3 Neither shall you be partial to a poor man in his trial [just because he is poor]. 4 If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying [helpless] under his load, you shall refrain from leaving the man to cope with it alone; you shall help him to release the animal. 6 You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his cause. 7 Keep far from a false matter and [be very careful] not to condemn to death the innocent and the righteous, for I will not justify and acquit the wicked. 8 You shall take no bribe, for the bribe blinds those who have sight and perverts the testimony and the cause of the righteous. 9 Also you shall not oppress a temporary resident, for you know the heart of a stranger and sojourner, seeing you were strangers and sojourners in Egypt. 10 Six years you shall sow your land and reap its yield. 11 But the seventh year you shall release it and let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat [what the land voluntarily yields], and what they leave the wild beasts shall eat. In like manner you shall deal with your vineyard and olive grove. 12 Six days you shall do your work, but the seventh day you shall rest and keep Sabbath, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your bondwoman, and the alien, may be refreshed. 13 In all I have said to you take heed; do not mention the name of other gods [either in blessing or cursing]; do not let such speech be heard from your mouth. 14 Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to Me. 15 You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before Me empty-handed. 16 Also you shall keep the Feast of Harvest [Pentecost], [acknowledging] the firstfruits of your toil, of what you sow in the field. And [third] you shall keep the Feast of Ingathering [Booths or Tabernacles] at the end of the year, when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. 17 Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord God. 18 You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread [but keep it unmixed], neither shall the fat of My feast remain all night until morning. 19 The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk. 20 Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep and guard you on the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. 21 Give heed to Him, listen to and obey His voice; be not rebellious before Him or provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgression; for My Name is in Him. 22 But if you will indeed listen to and obey His voice and all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. 23 When My Angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I reject them and blot them out, 24 You shall not bow down to their gods or serve them or do after their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break down their pillars and images. 25 You shall serve the Lord your God; He shall bless your bread and water, and I will take sickness from your midst. 26 None shall lose her young by miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. 27 I will send My terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people to whom you shall come, and I will make all your foes turn from you [in flight]. 28 And I will send hornets before you which shall drive out the Hivite, Canaanite, and Hittite from before you. 29 I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate [for lack of attention] and the wild beasts multiply against you. 30 Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and are numerous enough to take possession of the land. 31 I will set your borders from the Red Sea

to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the river [Euphrates]; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand and you shall drive them out before you. 32 You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. 33 They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.



Exodus 21–24. The Book of the Covenant

After the Ten Commandments, this was the first installment of the Law for the Hebrew nation. These laws were written in a book. Then the covenant that pledged to obey the Law was sealed with blood (24:4 , 7–8).

The laws cover every aspect of daily life, from kindness toward widows and orphans to the death penalty for murder to hospitality toward strangers. Although many of the specific, individual laws no longer apply to us, the principles behind them most certainly do. Fairness, justice, and mercy are the foundation of Israel's Law—which becomes very clear when we compare them with the laws of the nations around Israel.

Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk (23:19): A number of explanations have been suggested for this unusual command; it may be a warning against adopting a pagan, Canaanite ritual.

(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History & Commentaries; page 148-149)

Laws About Obedience and Victory: V 2 Do not get into a riotous situation. V 3-6 Judgment was to be fair. No advantages should be given to the poor nor should they be disadvantaged because of their poverty. Financial status was not to be considered. V 4-5 God wants us to be merciful toward animals. V 8 Judges weren't to receive gifts lest they would be influenced and wouldn't give true judgment. V 11-12 The seventh year is just for the poor people. Whatever grows up naturally, whatever seeds were left in the ground, let it grow, and let the poor go out and gather it. V 13 " Be circumspect " means be careful, keep it carefully. VV 20-23 The Angel is Jesus Christ. VV 24-30 In this we find the principles of God's victory and how He brings it forth in our lives. The Jebusites and Hivites are a type of giant in our flesh; coming into the Promised Land is coming into the life of the Spirit and victory of the Spirit. The overcoming life is coming out of the wilderness, out of the yo-yo Christian experience—where you're up and down—into a beautiful, victorious life in Christ Jesus. A life of victory is a life after the Spirit, not after the flesh. The enemies who were in the land represent those aspects of our flesh that have so often defeated us and conquered us. But God is promising victory over anger, anxiety, fears, or temper—over any area that has held you in bondage. God is promising you the victory, but it comes one area at a time. God doesn't just give you instant perfection. Instead, we're growing in the grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. V 31 The sea of the Philistines would be the Mediterranean.

(Old Testament Study Guide; The Word For Today; 2005; Chuck Smith; page 35-36)

Set the Spiritual Hostages Free!

1 John 3:8

Multitudes of people in this world today are held hostage in their minds by the devil. They are incarcerated, locked up, and caged in their minds and emotions, held like slaves, prisoners, or detainees who are under arrest and live at the mercy of their conqueror.

I couldn't begin to count the people I've met through the years who fit that description. Although they belong to Jesus and legally have every right to freedom, they remain in spiritual bondage, at least in some measure, in certain areas of their lives. Whether they persisted in a particular sin or failed to do something they should have done (such as read the Word, pray, or stay in fellowship with other saints), their minds were pried open wide enough for Satan to find an inroad and take that part of their minds captive.

You see, the mind is the primary area Satan seeks to attack. He knows that once he succeeds in planting a stronghold of deception in some area of a person's mind, from that lofty position he can then begin to control and manipulate that person. The Bible calls this kind of deception in the mind a "stronghold" (2 Corinthians 10:4). It is a "stronghold" because once a lie is planted in someone's head, it is very hard to remove!

But First John 3:8 says that Jesus came into the world "... that he might destroy the works of the devil"! I want you to particularly notice the word "destroy" in this verse. It is taken from the Greek word *luo*, which refers to the act of untying or unloosing something. It was used in classical Greek literature to refer to people being delivered, released, or freed from difficulties, burdens, or needs.

In the New Testament, the word *luo* was used to depict the untying of the thongs of a shoe or sandal in Mark 1:7; the unfastening of a donkey's colt in Matthew 21:2; the loosening, unraveling, and removal of Lazarus' grave clothes in John 11:44; and the taking away of Paul's chains in Acts 22:30. But the Greek word *luo* also means to break or to destroy, as in Revelation 5:2, where the Bible says that Jesus is worthy to "loose" (or break) the seals referred to in the book of Revelation.

One of the clearest examples of the word *luo* is found in Luke 3:16, when John the Baptist says, "... But one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose...."

The word *luo* is translated here "to unloose." It is the picture of someone who reaches down to unloose the tight strings of a sandal; then he begins to unwrap those strings from the shoe until finally the shoe becomes so loosened that it easily slips off his foot.

Now let's look at First John 3:8, the verse we are focusing on today. Here the Bible uses the word *luo* when it says, "... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." This tells us that when Jesus Christ came into the world, He came to untie and unloose Satan's binding powers over us. His objective was to disentangle us from Satan's control; to unfasten us from the demonic shackles that held us captive; to unravel the chains Satan used to keep us in his grip; and to break and destroy all the fetters Satan had used to hold us hostage.

Because the word *luo* is used in First John 3:8, it could be taken to mean:

"... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might untie people from all the works of the devil, unraveling Satan's hold on them—until the devil's works in people's lives are utterly destroyed and his hostages are set free."

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus' redemptive work destroyed the power of the enemy and our liberty was fully purchased. You see, setting people free from Satan's power has always been Jesus' primary concern. First John 3:8 declares that this was the purpose that the Son of God was manifested on this earth. Since this is His concern, it should also be ours.

So many people in this world today are incarcerated, locked up and caged in their minds and emotions. They are held like slaves or prisoners, living at the mercy of their conqueror. Therefore, it is time for you to learn how to recognize the devil's strategies in other people's minds and lives. Jesus came to set people free, and God wants to use you to take the delivering power of God to them so the works of the devil can be destroyed in their lives.

The mind may be the devil's preferred battlefield, but you can make sure he loses every skirmish! Just determine today to be a willing vessel God can use to free spiritual hostages from demonic oppression!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

Can you think of people you know or have known who live like spiritual hostages?

Has the Holy Spirit ever told you to minister to any of these individuals? How did you respond to His instructions and what was the result?

Why not make a list of the people you know who need to be set free from Satan's bondage and then ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to bring freedom to them?

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

"Men are affected by the course which they pursue; for good or bad their own conduct comes home to them. The backslider and the good man are very different, but in each of them the same rule is exemplified — they are both filled by the result of their lives. The backslider becomes filled by that which is within him, as seen in his life, and the good man also is filled by that which grace implants within his soul. The evil leaven in the backslider leavens his entire being and sours his existence, while the gracious fountain in the sanctified believer saturates his whole manhood, and baptizes his entire life. In each case the fullness arises from that which is within the man, and is in its nature like the man's character; the fullness of the backslider's misery will come out of his own ways, and the fullness of the good man's content will spring out of the love of God which is shed abroad in his heart." - C.H. Spurgeon

" Start Over"

When you've trusted God and walked his way

When you've felt His hand lead you day by day

But your steps now take you another way..... Start over.

When you've made your plans and they've gone awry

When you've tried your best and there's no more try

When you've failed yourself and you don't know why..... Start over.

When you've told your friends what you plan to do

When you've trusted them and they didn't come through

And now you're all alone and it's up to you..... Start over.

When you've failed your kids and they're grown and gone

When you've done your best but it's turned out wrong

And now your grandchildren have come along..... Start over.

When you've prayed to God so you'll know His will

When you've prayed and prayed and you don't know still

When you want to stop cause you've had your fill..... Start over.

When you think you're finished and want to quit

When you've bottomed out in life's deepest pit

When you've tried and tried to get out of it..... Start over.

When the year has been long and successes few

When December comes and you're feeling blue

God gives a January just for you..... Start over.

Starting over means "Victories Won"

Starting over means "A Race Well Run"

Starting over means " God's Will Be Done"

Don't just sit there.....

...Start Over....

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