

This Is One of the Worst Kinds of Spiritual Slavery

Prosperity without freedom is the worst kind of slavery.

The Bible is a book filled with blessings, teachings, words of encouragement and warnings. Many times, a single verse can carry within it each of these categories and more. One example of such a verse is Exodus 1:7 (TLV):

“Yet Bnei-Yisrael were fruitful, increased abundantly, multiplied and grew extremely numerous—so the land was filled with them.”

At first glance, the words of this passage can be viewed as a blessing. We read these words and see that over their years in Egypt; G-D has allowed the children of Israel to become prosperous in every way. We can also see within the text an expression of encouragement as we clearly see that the children of Israel had seen an abundant increase both financially and numerically.

Yet many people reading these words do not look beyond the outward so that they can see that these words were provided to us for teaching and as a warning. Remember what 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us:

“All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed.”

To put this verse into context, the children of Israel moved to Egypt to survive a famine that lasted seven years. Yet by the time we read about them in Exodus, they had continued living in Egypt for over 200 years. In Egypt, they had grown from 70 people to millions of people. They had gone from

starving in a famine to becoming wealthy. Yet in all their outward prosperity, they were living outside the promised land and outside the covenant promises of G-D. When viewed in context, Exodus 1:7 reads a lot like Revelation 3:17:

“For you say, ‘I am rich, I have made myself wealthy, and I need nothing.’ But you do not know that you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked.”

Or even:

“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world but forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26).

You see the children of Israel had over the years exchanged their faith in G-D and His blessings for faith in Egypt and the riches they had acquired there. They had become so assimilated into Egyptian life that they forgot that their covenant blessings and promises were connected to the land of Canaan (Israel). Life in Egypt had become comfortable; they had become a large people within the boundaries of Egypt. They had become prosperous in earthly goods. Yet somehow they failed to see that even though by worldly metrics they were blessed, they were not free. It wasn't until the Egyptians reminded them who they were by physically enslaving them that it became clear. They didn't realize they had voluntarily placed themselves in bondage.

This lesson is vital especially for those of us who live in the United States and much of the Western world. The body of believers has for many years grown and prospered in the metrics the world uses to denote prosperity. However, we must be careful that we don't trade our freedom in G-D for the riches of the world. We cannot allow ourselves to forget who we truly are and what real prosperity is.

In John 8:31-40, Yeshua (Jesus) is having a conversation with some Judeans:

Then Yeshua said to the Judeans who had trusted Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly My disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!"

They answered Him, "We are Abraham's children and have never been slaves to anyone! How can you say, 'You will become free'?"

Yeshua answered them, "Amen, amen I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now the slave does not remain in the household forever; the son abides forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed! I know you are Abraham's children; yet you are trying to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I tell of what I have seen with the Father; so also you do what you heard from the Father."

"Abraham is our father," they replied to Him.

Yeshua said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. But now you are seeking to kill Me—a Man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. This Abraham did not do!"

Notice the context of this conversation deals with two things: first, freedom and second, the covenant G-D made with Israel through Abraham. Yeshua tells them they need the truth to set them free. But because of their blindness, they could not even admit that Israel had been slaves in Egypt or that at that moment they were servants of Rome. Yeshua reminds them that slavery is first spiritual and then it becomes physical. He also lets them know that just as the children of Israel had been blind breaking the covenant G-D made with Abraham (by remaining outside the promised land) they had become blind to their being outside of the covenant with Abraham by not accepting the freedom He was offering to them. As we read Genesis 22:18, Yeshua is the seed of Abraham spoken of in this verse: "In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed—because you obeyed My voice."

While we may not be under Roman authority today or living in the slavery of Egypt these words still speak to us today. We cannot ever allow the successes of the world to become more important than the covenant freedom provided through the covenant G-D made with Abraham. Prosperity without freedom is the worst kind of slavery. {eoa}

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