

# TAKE UP THY SWORD †

A newsletter with hope and encouragement from the Holy Bible

*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... (Hebrews 4:16)*

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## from Bondage to Breakthrough

*So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 4:31-5:1).*

How can we lift our hands to praise the Lord for the victory if our arms have been tied down? Just as Joseph went from the pit to the prison to the palace, we also must journey through the wilderness in order to reach our promise land. God said in Zechariah 13:9 that He would purify us “as silver is refined” and test us “as gold is tried”. So we can't stop fighting for our freedom, because:

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Cor 10:13).*

Now which of these would sound more enticing on life's menu: bondage (slavery/imprisonment) or breakthrough (advancement/increase)? Unfortunately the word 'easy' is not found too often in the bible, so we have to remember that the road to the top is an uphill battle. Perhaps that is why David gave us this comfort: *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Ps 126:5-6).*

When I was 'in the world', I was a partaker of many ungodly things such as intoxication and certain acts which are an effect/consequence of that condition. My deliverance came from my desire to live righteously and the affliction I endured as a result of my rebellion. So when God began to “wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Ps 51:2), this scripture became manifested in my life:

*And ye shall know the truth (the Word of God), and the truth shall make you free... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8:32, 36).*

Jesus also stated in verse 34 of that same chapter that we are the “servant of sin” when we do evil in His sight. But instead, we can strive to be “servants of righteousness” (Rom 6:18)! So how can we destroy the chains/fetters of the enemy even while we are yet sinners? Here are 3 major DONT'S found in Romans 6:12-14:

- 1) *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*
- 2) *Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin...*
- 3) *[Don't let] sin... have dominion over you...*

Jesus was sent “to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isa 61:1). But before “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), it was 'The Great I Am' who snatched the children of Israel out of the hand of their oppressors. He used a willing vessel named Moses:

*And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years... and afterward shall they come out with great substance (Gen 15:13-14).*

This amazing story of deliverance begins in the book of Exodus. Although Pharaoh “made their lives bitter with hard bondage” (1:14), “the people multiplied and waxed very mighty” (1:20). And when they cried out to God, He sent Moses to speak on their behalf – a man “slow of speech, and of a slow tongue” (4:10). But God hardened Pharaoh's heart each time Moses said, “Let my people go!” in order to show His awesome signs and wonders to everyone. After administering several plagues which the Israelites did not have to endure, “the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt” (12:29). But because of the blood of the lamb (foreshadowing of Christ), God's people were protected from the destroyer. They came out of the land that same day and God said, “ye shall see them again no more for ever” (14:13). Then God led the way to their destiny in a pillar of a cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night - even through the Red Sea!

We, too, can overcome any situation. The only weight we have to carry is our own cross, because Jesus said: “My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matt 11:30)!

**THUS SAITH THE LORD, “I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright” (Lev 26:13).**

**PRAYER:** *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust...Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me (Ps 31:1-2).*

**“...Be encouraged in the law of the Lord” (2 Chron 31:4):**

Psalm 18:48-50; Isaiah 1:16-20, 10:27, 14:1-7, 54:14-17, 58:6; John 16:33; Acts 16:25-26; Romans 6:22-23, 12:2; 2 Corinthians 2:14, 10:3-6; Galatians 4:3-7; 1 John 5:3-5

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