

Freedom Around the Corner

“¹⁷Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

“¹⁸For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly but because of the One who subjected it—in hope ²¹that the creation itself also will be set free from bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8:18-21).

Being a new creation is such a wonderful promise. Do you believe (trust) it? If so we need to start living in the promise of a *new creation*. Let us focus on the phrase: *“old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”* How much has become new? Answer: ALL THINGS! How about my hang-ups? ALL THINGS! How about my shortcomings? ALL THINGS! How about my habits? ALL THINGS! How about my weaknesses? ALL THINGS! How about my inconsistencies, my selfishness, my self-esteem, my personality? ALL THINGS! Yes ALL things have become new, but we must first become *“in Messiah.”* Scripture states: *“the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God”* – we are eagerly awaiting newness around the corner.

To be sure, there is work involved in *believing* (trusting) that we are a NEW creation. In God there is always work involved in possessing His promises (which analogous to the children of Israel possessing the Promised Land. They were given the land of Canaan for an inheritance, but they had to drive the Canaanites out. In a sense, the Canaanites were squatters, but God transferred their right to their land unto His children, in His sovereignty). You and I have to work at *being* this new creation God says we are in Messiah. How?

“⁷Get rid of the old hametz, so you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened—for Messiah, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸Therefore let us celebrate the feast not with old hametz, the hametz of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread—the matzah of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

Scripture establishes for us that *Yeshua* is/was the true Passover Lamb (John 1:29) and in order for *Yeshua* to be the Passover Lamb of the Bible, he would have to be offered for the sins of the world on the very day of Passover, that is, on the fourteenth of *Aviv/Nisan* in the Hebrew calendar—on the day of the 10th Plague in Egypt when the Angel of *Adonai* passed over the homes of the children of Israel in Goshen. But It Is What It Is!

Some of you were given a bag full of stones if you were taught that the Believer’s life is to be devoid of struggles. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, if we are not struggling, then we are probably not causing any damage to Satan’s kingdom. Anyone doing something for the Lord is going to meet strong opposition from the kingdom of darkness. Scripture affirms this warfare mindset when the Apostle Paul states: *“¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the worldly forces of this darkness, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).*

I am definitely in a struggle. Sometimes we win, sometimes the enemy wins, but in the struggle against Satan we know the final result – we are victorious, our side wins: *“And they (we) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their (our) testimony; and they (we) loved not their lives unto the death.” (Rev 12:11, KJV).* In order to receive the crown we have to wrestle. And in order to wrestle well we must have a warfare mentality – one moment we are up, and in other moments we are down, sometimes we are ahead, sometimes we are behind, sometimes we win a scrimmage and sometimes we lose a battle – but ultimately we win the war. Scripture comforts us while in these battles:

“⁸We are hard pressed in every way, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not in despair; ⁹persecuted, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed;” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

“I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

“³⁷But in all these things we are more than conquerors (SUPERCONQUERORS) through Him who loved us” (Ro. 8).

“⁹ But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Messiah may dwell in me” (2 Cor. 12:9).

I must understand and accept the fact that the Believer’s Walk is a struggle – a spiritual battle – not really against a system or against men but ultimately against the one who is behind the system, the ancient enemy of God, Satan the ruler of darkness. *Yeshua* said: *“¹⁰The thief comes only to steal, slaughter, and destroy. I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly!” (John 10:10)*

But if the normal state of affairs is a state of war, then we Believers are nothing less than an army – the Army of God. There are only three statuses for members of the armed forces of the Lord of Hosts/Armies (*Adonai Tzevaot*): (1) a frontline soldier (a Marine or a Green Beret?), (2) a POW or (3) or a deserter. These are ultimately, the only positions one can be in the *Army of God*. Rank does not matter – in fact greatness is measured by servant hood (cf. Mark 9:35 and 10:44).

Many segments of the Redeemed Community are POWs and churches are often no more than collections of glorified POW camps whose people are holding on until the Commander comes back to rescue them. They hope and wait to see what will happen, without joy, without victory. People dead on the inside and broken-hearted saying: *“Messiah will come and will fix things up.”* Victimized by circumstances and lacking in trust, we see people who are enslaved and imprisoned by their own lusts, sin, and fears. They just wait and often despair – when will I get out of this situation? In fact, a theology has been developed to explain this conquered state of affairs and justify the status quo: *“Glory to God, we are down because the Lord is purifying His flock.”* LIES! General Patton told his army: *“I am sure that some stupid politician in Washington told you that the secret of winning the war is to die for our country. But I tell you that the secret to winning this war is to cause the enemy to die for his country!”*

Yes, there are times that the enemy has us pinned down and we must lose gracefully, but if we are to be an overcomer, we must win – with grace, with holiness, with transparency, with humility – but win we must. One more time, personalized: *“I Rabbi Tony (your name) have overcome Satan by (1) the blood of the Lamb, and (2) by the word of my testimony (about the Blood of the Lamb); and (3) because I have loved not my life unto the death.”*

We are about to enter into The Lord’s High Holiday of freedom. We have the opportunity to gain total and complete freedom. Let us gain *Freedom Inside*, where it matters most but also Freedom on the Outside. It takes a surrender of our way to His way, since He said: *“I am the way, the truth and the life.”* Are you ready to be healed inside? I am:

♪ God, my God, I cry out. Your beloved needs You now. God, be near calm my fear and take my doubt. Your kindness is what pulls me up. Your love is all that draws me in. I will lift my eyes to the Maker of the mountains I can't climb. I will lift my eyes to the Calmer of the oceans raging wild. I will lift my eyes to the Healer of the hurt I hold inside. I will lift my eyes, lift my eyes to You. ♪

♪ Hear my cry O God attend unto my prayer. From the ends of the earth I will cry unto Thee when my heart is overwhelmed. Lead me to the Rock (Yeshua) that is higher than I. For you have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your Presence forever I will trust in the cover of your wings. ♪