Theological Reflection

> Exodus 21:2-6 (NIV):
>
> “If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything.
>
> If he comes alone, he is to go free alone; but if he has a wife when he comes, she is to go with him.
>
> If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall belong to the master, and the man shall go free alone.
>
> But if the servant declares, ‘I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,’
>
> then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life.”

Theological Reflection: Freedom and Bondage

The passage from Exodus highlights a powerful principle of freedom and servitude. In ancient Israel, servants (or slaves) could serve for six years, but in the seventh year (a year of Jubilee), they were granted freedom. However, if a servant chose to remain with his master because of love or attachment to his family, he would submit to a permanent form of servitude, symbolized by his ear being pierced. This piercing was a physical mark, a sign of permanent commitment and choice to remain under authority.

This concept serves as a symbol of the human soul’s condition. Spiritually, every person is either a servant to sin or a servant of righteousness (Romans 6:16). The piercing of the ear in the Old Testament symbolizes the spiritual state of the soul who, after hearing God’s call to freedom, refuses to choose life in Christ. Instead, they remain enslaved to sin.

Theologically, the marking of the ear with a piercing reminds us that true freedom is not simply physical but spiritual freedom — the freedom from sin, death, and eternal separation from God.

Christ: The Announcer of True Freedom

Jesus Christ’s mission was to proclaim freedom from the spiritual slavery of sin, a theme clearly outlined in the New Testament. He came to set captives free from both the penalty and power of sin.

> Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV):
>
> “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Jesus invites all to leave the burden of sin and embrace the rest and peace that come with the freedom He offers. His yoke symbolizes submission to His lordship, but paradoxically, it is a yoke that brings relief. It’s important to note that Christian freedom is not a freedom to sin but a freedom to live righteously and in relationship with God.

The Gospel of Liberty: The Seal of Freedom

Christ’s purpose was to announce the year of Jubilee, a time of release and restoration. This concept is further revealed in His words from Luke 4:18-19:

> Luke 4:18-19 (NIV):
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> “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

The “year of the Lord’s favor” is directly linked to the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:10), where debts were forgiven, land was returned, and all forms of servitude ended. Jesus, the perfect fulfillment of the law, came to declare the ultimate freedom from the oppression of sin. In Him, the year of Jubilee is realized spiritually, offering a permanent release from the power of Satan.

The Seal of God: The Holy Spirit as a Mark of Freedom

In the New Covenant, those who are freed from the bondage of sin through faith in Jesus Christ receive the Holy Spirit as a seal. This is a mark of ownership, guarantee of salvation, and a promise of eternal freedom.

> Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV):
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> “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.”

This sealing by the Holy Spirit signifies God’s ownership over our lives and guarantees that we belong to Him. The Holy Spirit is not just a guide but a seal — a spiritual guarantee that the work of salvation has been completed and that we are now free to live in the righteousness of Christ.

The seal of the Spirit also serves as a protection against sin and the schemes of Satan, as the Holy Spirit empowers believers to

live according to God’s will. Thus, receiving the Holy Spirit is synonymous with receiving freedom from sin (Romans 8:2).

The Seal of Satan: A Mark of Rejection

Those who hear the gospel and willfully reject it, turning back to sin, willingly place themselves under the authority of Satan. The mark of Satan is not a physical mark like the piercing of an ear, but a spiritual mark on the heart — a heart that hardens to the gospel and becomes incapable of repentance.

Romans 1:21-32 (NIV) describes the progression of those who reject God’s truth, detailing how their hearts become hardened as a result:

> Romans 1:24-25 (NIV):
>
> “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.”

As people continue to reject God, they become increasingly ensnared by sin and unrighteousness. The seal of Satan hardens their hearts, making them indifferent to God’s calling and resistant to change. This is a dangerous position, for once a person reaches this point, repentance becomes impossible. The Bible speaks of those who have “seared their consciences” (1 Timothy 4:2), making them unable to hear God’s voice anymore.

The Danger of Rejecting Freedom

In rejecting the freedom offered by Christ, individuals choose to remain under the oppressive rule of sin and Satan. Hebrews 6:4-6 (NIV) warns about the irreversible nature of rejecting Christ after having known the truth:

> Hebrews 6:4-6 (NIV):
>
> “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away,

> to be brought back to repentance, because, to their loss, they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.“

This warning shows the seriousness of rejecting the offer of freedom through Christ. Those who once knew the truth and then turned away to continue in sin have hardened their hearts, and it becomes impossible for them to return to repentance. This is a stark reminder that eternal freedom is a gift that must not be neglected.

Call to Repentance: The Time is Now

The freedom Christ offers is available to all who will repent and turn to Him. The call to repentance is urgent, and we must not delay in responding to God’s voice.

> 2 Corinthians 6:2 (NIV):
>
> “For he says, ‘In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.’ I tell you, now is the time of

> God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.”

If you have heard God’s voice calling you to freedom, do not harden your heart. The time to repent and accept His salvation is now. If you ignore this call, you risk receiving the seal of Satan, which will permanently seal you in spiritual death and separation from God.

Conclusion: Choose the Seal of God, Not the Seal of Satan

Today, you are faced with a choice: the seal of God or the seal of Satan. Will you choose to accept the freedom offered through the blood of Jesus Christ and be marked by the Holy Spirit? Or will you continue in the rejection of God’s grace and remain under the influence of sin?

> Revelation 22:11-12 (NIV):
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> “Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right, and let the holy person continue to be

> holy. ‘Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.'”

This is the moment of decision. Choose freedom in Christ, for the time of salvation is now. Repent, and receive the seal of God, and experience the eternal freedom that comes with being His.

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