

Freedom and Provision

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- [0 : 00] Please open your Bibles to the book of Etsis in the 21st chapter. Etsis chapter 21.
- We finished chapter 20. That may be the longest I've spent in any one chapter. I've lost count, but maybe 14, 15 sermons in chapter 20.
- And now we move on to Etsis 21. And we're going to look at verses 1 through 11. And the title of the sermon is Freedom and Provision. So, Etsis 21, 1 through 11.
- That's just 21, beginning in verse 1.
- Now, these are the rules that you shall set before them. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years. And then the seventh, he shall go out free for nothing.
- [1 : 13] If he comes in single, he shall go out single. If he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him.
- If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her masters, and he shall go out alone.
- But if the slave plainly says, I love my master, my wife and my children, I will not go out free. Then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl.
- And he shall be a slave forever. When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do.
- If she does not please her master who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people since he has broken faith with her.
- [2 : 17] If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights.
- And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing without payment of money. Let's pray together. Dear Heavenly Father, we ask for your help as we look at your word today.
- As we deal with a difficult subject, that of slavery, Lord, we pray that you would help us to understand what's going on here. That we would see Christ in it. That you'd be glorified in the preaching of it.
- Lord, we pray this all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Now, as we look at this passage, we need to remember the context. Remember what has just happened for the Israelites.
- They spent 400 years in bondage, in slavery, in Egypt. And so the subject of slavery would have been fresh on their mind.
- [3 : 28] And as they think about this, and what does slavery look like? It was common in the world in that time, in the surrounding countries. They have to be asking the question, what does it look like for us?
- And what we see here is that God is giving them orders, commands that make it distinct from Egypt and other surrounding countries. What's going to happen in Israel is going to look different than what happens in Egypt and in Canaan and other countries.

He's also answering a question for them. What are they going to do about debt? Now, remember, they really haven't had possessions. They were slaves in Egypt. But when they left, they asked for things.

And thus, it says, they plundered the Egyptians. And so now they've come out with great wealth. We know from experience, does wealth always stay with the same people?

Wealth shifts around. Some people end up owing money. Some people end up making money. And so what are they going to do about the issue of debt as they become their own country? What's it going to look like?

[4 : 34] How will it differ from what they've seen before? And so I want us to look first at the regulations for slaves. I'm going to spend the most time here kind of just walking through what's described here, what's going on.

And as I say that, all throughout my message, I use slaves in my titles. That is the translation that we have here in English in the ESV.

What we have, though, I would argue is more of what would be called indentured service or an indentured servant or indentured servitude. So what's being presented to us is that one could sell themselves into a type of service or slavery because of poverty or debt.

So when we think of slavery, I think inevitably we think of what was experienced here in the United States, where people were stolen, they were brought over, they were forced to work against their will, they were not free. And I want you to understand we're not talking about the same thing here.

In particular, we're talking about a service that would go for those within Israel. There would be times in which Israel, like other countries, in war would capture an enemy people.

[5 : 44] And there may be people that would be carried in. The slavery there might be similar to what we know. But what's being described here is not that. Maybe the closest would be, you may be aware, but when people were wanting to come to the New World and didn't have the money to pay for the voyage, sometimes they would sell themselves into indentured service with the idea that when I get there, I'm going to work for you for two years or three years.

I'm going to give that time working for you so that I can have passage to a New World because it was of that much value to leave behind what they had and move to the New World. It's what we might call a bond servant.

As we think about this, I want you to understand it was voluntary. They were choosing to go into this service. And so it's not exactly what we would think of as slavery.

Leviticus 25 describes some of this in verses 39 through 40. If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave.

He shall be with you as a hired worker and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee. And we'll talk more about the year of jubilee in a moment.

[6 : 59] But you see here what's going on. If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, he's not to serve as a slave. So even though the wording here can be confusing for us, I want to be clear what's going on is not a slavery per se.

What's going on? They owe a debt and they want to pay a debt off. And how are they going to pay the debt off? Well, you've got to work to pay the debt off.

In this instance, often likely the one to whom they owe the debt, they would go and work for for a set time to pay that off. And so slavery itself, the way we would think of slavery, was strictly forbidden among the Israelites, among one another.

As you see in that last passage, you shall not make him serve as a slave. He shall be with you as a hired worker. He's one who's working for a wage and that wage is to pay off the debt.

In fact, God demands the debt penalty for slave traders. That's just 21.16. Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him shall be put to death.

[8 : 13] And so the way we would think of slavery was a capital crime in Israel. To steal someone or even to purchase someone who has been stolen is worthy of the death penalty in Israel.

So what is going on here and why allow this at all? What's happening? What I argue what God is doing here is protection for the poorest of the poor in Israel.

God's seeking to protect the vulnerable in society. Some observations about it. One is that this was temporary. There would be no one who could be sold into this servitude, this slavery, that would stay in that position permanently.

There wasn't permit service or servants. It was temporary. Look at verse 2 of our passage. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve you six years.

And in the seventh, he shall go out free for nothing. And so as we look at this, it's tied to the principle of the Sabbath. The seventh day was a day of rest.

[9 : 20] The seventh year was a year of rest. The most anyone could serve was for six years. Now it mentions here the year of Jubilee. I'm probably likely referring to that seventh year as a year of Jubilee for them.

But Israel also celebrated a Sabbath of Sabbaths, seven years or seven times of seven years, 49. On the 50th year was a year of Jubilee.

So that all possessions that had been accumulated returned to the original owners and all slaves were set free. So it's also possible you could become an indentured servant the year before the year of Jubilee and serve only one year or two years, depending on what that would look like.

And it's also clear in God's word that God was concerned for their fair treatment, their protection against abuse, and even preserving their dignity.

And part of what we see here in principle is that people made in God's image should be treated with respect and dignity. They're not to serve as slaves. They're to serve as a hired worker.

[10 : 26] Preserve that dignity. Allow them to work off the debt in a way that's honoring and shows them respect. And as they think about this, remember that God's people are those who have been redeemed, and they were never to suffer slavery again.

God's desire was that that wouldn't happen again. Remember, the context of Egypt is fresh on their mind. God doesn't want them to be slaves again. It's his six feasts of this.

Say, therefore, to the people of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.

God has redeemed them. They're not the return of slavery. They are a redeemed people. Now, on a side note, we know that ultimately they do in the exile because of their rebellion against God, their sin against God because of their spiritual adultery with false gods.

God gives them over back, as it were, into slavery as exiles in a foreign land. But you have to understand that as God's redeemed people, this is not God's desire for them. God's desire is that they would follow him and serve him freely.

[11 : 48] And then, as I said, every seventh year they were to be released, they could only serve a maximum of six years. But it's also interesting, as you look at this, that there's a choice by the individual.

The servant has the right to choose if they leave the house or not. So it wasn't a perpetual state again. They got to choose to leave if they wanted to. But the law also allowed the individual the ability to choose to stay in his state or, again, to return to a free state.

Now, why would someone want to stay in the state? First, let's look at what it says. It says 21, 5 through 6. So this is back our original text.

Now, one observation is this kind of service obviously wasn't the worst possible state, was it?

If there are people who would choose to stay and serve forever in this household, that has to be because whatever they were going back to would have been a worse state than what they have here in this home.

[13 : 15] So, at the very least, I want you to understand that those who were the masters in this home, we might call them, had the duty of responsibility to treat them as family, to love them, to make it a home in which they want to be a part of and stay.

John Currid explains some of this idea of taking them to the doorpost and boring their ear through with an awl.

I know that's probably something that sounds pretty foreign to us. Maybe some of us men, some of you ladies have pierced ears. Maybe you can relate. An awl, though, is something...

I have a dibbler that I use in the garden that's similar to this. It would be something that's graduated that you could push through or pierce something. And so, John Currid says, The act is carried out at the doorpost to recall Israel's putting the blood of the covenant on their doorposts in Egypt.

The piercing of the slave's ear is also a bloody ritual symbolizing a covenant, an oath between the Hebrew servant and his Hebrew master. And so, the individual had the option to say, I want to stay in this household.

[14 : 25] But if he did, it's a covenant bond. And so, they'd go to the doorpost and probably even use the doorpost to pierce through the ear. And so, there would be blood that would be left on the doorpost.

And that would be symbolic of the blood of the covenant, that they committed themselves to this household. But also, they'd have the ongoing hole in their ear that would symbolize this to everyone around them.

That they weren't a slave who was serving out of debt, but they're one who's become a part of the household. They've chosen to be a part of this family. I'm going to talk a little bit about some more reasons why that might happen.

But first, I want you to notice as well that when they were released, there was provision that was given for them so that they didn't return back into a state of poverty. Deuteronomy 15 lays this out in more detail.

If your brother, a Hebrew man or Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year, you shall let him go free.

[15 : 32] Already, you should notice that this is a parallel passage. It's a repeating of what we have here. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go out empty-handed.

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the Lord your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you. Therefore, I command you this today. And so notice when they go out, it's to, in many ways, resemble what they experienced when they left slavery.

They didn't leave with nothing. You can imagine someone could come serve in a house for six years, pay off the debt, and go back and start out with nothing again. There's very little hope in that situation, is there?

Instead, they're to give them of their animals, their livestock, their grain, food, and their wine, so something to drink, but they provided for them the things that would sustain them, the sustenance that they needed.

[16 : 41] Now, why was that? Well, the reason was so that they would not fall back into slavery. They would not fall back even into debt. And so, when we put this all together, we begin to realize that this service actually benefited the servant.

What do I mean by that? Well, they were there because of debt. Now, this debt may well have been caused by mismanagement of the household, of their funds.

They've gotten into financial trouble of some sort. It could even be due to some sort of sin. Maybe some of you know family members or others who have fallen into poverty because of alcohol or drug addiction.

There could be bad choices that they're making that have caused this. And so, they've fallen into debt, and they can't pay it all. And so, what are they going to do? Well, they're not just going to throw them in jail, and then taxpayers pay to feed them the rest of their life.

What do they do? Well, they say, come live with someone else who's managing their household well, and serve them for six years. And so, it's almost like going to college for your finances.

[17 : 54] First-hand experience. You are an apprentice in their home to learn how to manage your money. And as they learn, and they get an idea of how better to control or run a household, then they go out with some possessions with a fresh start.

They can do this now. They've had the training. And so, this slavery, if we want to call it that, had a redemptive purpose to redeem those who have fallen into poverty, perhaps from sin, at least from debt, and to set them on a new life, a new course, where they would no longer be given to that debt.

And so, a redemptive purpose in this. Also, we see in our text in Exodus 21, that there's provision made for family situations. And I want to talk about those for a moment.

We see in verse 3 about his wife. If he comes in single, he shall go out single. If he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him.

So, first provision we see here for a family is, if you're married when you go in, and your wife has to serve too, so both of you are working off this debt, when the years are up, you both go out together.

[19 : 08] You don't separate families. But then secondly, we see something different in verse 4. If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her masters, and he shall go out alone.

So now, here's an interesting situation. We have, perhaps in a large household, they have more than one servant there. And the male servant and the female servant want to be married to one another.

And they get married, and they have children. Well, when the male's time runs out, and he leaves, he doesn't take the wife with him. Now, again, this may be hard, because are we separating families? Why doesn't he do that?

Well, there's a clear and obvious reason. The wife had her own debt for which she was working off, and her time's not up yet. In other words, a woman may come in and have six years to work, and she can't just marry a guy who has six months and get to leave early.

She still has her debt that she must work off. And so they stay in the household. Now, again, that may sound difficult for us, but I think we need to understand that one of the things going on is that this man is in there because he couldn't handle his household.

[20 : 24] He didn't manage his household well. And so this may even be God's provision to protect the woman, that they both don't leave and get back into debt really quickly. The man has to go and establish his household, and then he can actually pay to redeem her is one option.

He can choose, once he's established, to bring her out and pay the debt for her, which is really a beautiful picture, the idea of redemption. Or we go back to what we saw earlier.

The other option is he chooses to stay with her in the household, and both of them live permanently with his family. They become a part of the family. And then we have another situation that's described really at the end, verses 7 through 9.

We'll look at one verse at a time. Verse 7. When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. That's when the time runs out. Why is that?

And what are we talking about here? Well, first I want to be clear. We know, I think, at least the adults in the room, that there are countries in our world now where families will sell their daughters into slavery of a certain sort.

[21 : 40] And I want you to understand this isn't prostitution. It's not that kind of slavery that's being spoken of. Remember, this is service in a family. And what this appears to be is much closer to an arranged marriage.

A father or a family could give a daughter to a man who's well-established, if they're not, to pay off a debt.

And she could become a part of the actual family, either married to him or to his son. And so not only would they get out of debt, she also would enter into a well-established household and be well-provided for.

And so we might think of, again, in our language, we might call this an arranged marriage. So as we look at this, look at verse 8. If she does not please her master who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed.

He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people since he has broken faith with her. So again, this helps us see why she's coming into the household. He's deemed her for himself. He's agreed to an arranged marriage.

[22 : 47] She comes in. They're not yet married. She's serving in the household. And he realizes, you know, I don't really want to marry this girl after all. So what does he do? Well, again, we see God's protection.

He can't just sell her as a slave to anybody. He has no right to sell her. She's not a possession to be traded. Instead, she can be redeemed.

She's to be cared for. And we really see verse 9. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. So he should treat her as part of the family. If she's to be married to the son, then she's not serving as a servant.

She's in the household as a daughter. And she's to be treated as such, even though, again, this can help the situation of her family. In verses 10 through 11, if he takes another wife to himself, this is the master of the household or the son, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights.

And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing without payment or money. We see that the Lord is again making provision that this person would not be neglected.

[24 : 04] What if this man decides he wants another wife and he marries her? Can he now neglect this woman? No, he has to continue to provide those three specific things that are mentioned here.

He has to give her food and clothing, basically provide for her household, and her marital rights. And so as we look at this, we actually have two issues now, don't we?

Slavery and we have polygamy. I want you to understand in this that God is not condoning slavery. What we see is God is protecting the weak in a broken and sinful society where such things happen.

And we can say the same is true for polygamy. God makes clear elsewhere that we're not to have more than one wife. But the nations around them are doing it. God in his omniscience knows that there will be these things happening in their nation.

So he provides not for, again, slavery, but a way to serve to pay off your debt. And make sure that if you're doing that, you're treated well. And again, if there's polygamy, that the person involved is not mistreated if that person should marry another.

[25 : 11] And as we look at this, I want to make spiritual application for us. Think about how this relates to us. Probably not strictly speaking in the physical sense of taking debts or bringing servants into our household to work off debts to us.

We could probably argue from Proverbs, it says, the borrower is slave to the lender. So there's at least some encouragement for us to be careful when we borrow money because whoever we borrow money from owns us, in a sense.

But we aren't dealing with this exact same situation. So spiritually, how does this relate to us? Well, we can think first on our slavery to sin. We've seen this already in terms of the Israelites in Egypt being in bondage, how that spoke to us of our bondage to sin.

And I think we've established this point well enough that I don't want to belabor it, but we are born enslaved to sin. All of us are enslaved to sin. And I have four scripture passages I want to just quickly walk through that highlight this truth, that speak about us being slaves because in truth, none of us want to think that's what we are.

We all want to think we're free. America's kind of founded on that principle, the home of the free and the brave. Or I remember I had a student in my middle school class who jokingly said one time, 13 year old, I'm my own man.

[26 : 49] I can do what I want. Right? Even when we're kids, I want to make my own decisions. I'm ready for that. As adults, we like to pretend sometimes we can make our own decisions.

But the reality, I think, that we need to see is that for all of us, we are born in a state of bondage to sin. So John 8, 34 through 36. Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

Who practices sin? All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Therefore, all are enslaved to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever. The son remains forever.

So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed. Now you may call it, the slave doesn't stay in the house forever. It's a reference to our passage. And if the son sets you free, because he has the rights of the household to do with the servants what he wants, if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

So we see here that we're born enslaved to sin, and there's one way that we can get freedom. For the son just set us free. Titus 3, 3, a second passage.

[28 : 00] For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing out our days in malice and envy, hated by others, and hating one another.

So here, slaves to various passions and pleasures. We saw before, slave to sin. Passions and pleasures here is really speaking of the desires that bring about those sins, or the sins of the heart that promote the outward sins.

And then 2 Peter 2, 19. They promised them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.

So they're slaves of corruption because corruption has overcome them. And we've already been told we're enslaved to sin, we're enslaved to the passions, corruption. Why?

Because these things are overcoming us. Because they, as it were, control us. Or if we think of slavery, it's because we obey them. Romans 6, 16, the final passage.

[29 : 13] Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness.

So here we have a contrast. And what it points out to us is that all of us are slaves. We're born enslaved to sin.

And whoever we obey is who we're a slave to. And on the other side of that, there's obedience and righteousness that we can be enslaved to. Service to God, as it were.

And how are we going to obey? Well, only if the Son sets us free. And that's really what I want to look at in our next point. Freedom in Christ. So, we are in bondage.

Even if we think about the debt that we have to pay off. There's a record of debt that stands against us. We're going to see from Colossians 2 in the Lord's sermon, Lord's Supper service, in a little bit.

[30 : 10] There's a record of debt that stands against us. How can we be free? How can that debt be paid off? Well, the freedom that we desire is found in Christ Jesus. In Christ, we are set free from sin.

Remember the husband when he goes free and his wife and kids are still there. And she's working off the debt. How can he get her back? He has to pay her debt to redeem her from bondage and to set her free.

Well, Jesus paid the price to redeem us. And that price was his own blood. He laid down his life to redeem us from our slavery to sin.

Our bondage to sin. To pay the debt that stood against us. So, Galatians 3.13 says, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree. And so, we have a curse over us. That debt, that sin, Christ becomes, as it were, our curse to set us free.

[31 : 21] And Ephesians 1.7, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace. How are we redeemed?

Through the blood of the Son. What does that mean? Well, the forgiveness of our trespasses or sins according to the riches of his grace. He pays our debt with the riches of his grace.

How do we see the riches of his grace? Grace isn't paid in gold or silver coins. It's paid in something far, far more precious. The precious blood of the Son of God.

He shed his blood to free us. Why has he set us free? Why do I argue he set us free so that we might become a part of God's family? We were the ones who cannot manage our household.

We are in debt to God because we were enslaved to sin. And so the Son comes and he sheds his blood to redeem us and bring us not to set us free that we might return back to our debt but to make us part of his household.

[32 : 30] Galatians 4. 4-7 But when the fullness of time had come God sent forth his Son born of a woman born under the law to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons.

And because you are our sons God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying Abba Father so you are no longer a slave but a son and if a son then an heir through God.

So Scripture speaks of us in these exact same terms. We are born enslaved to sin. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ and to what end? That we might become sons and daughters of God.

All of you who have been redeemed by Christ's blood have been brought into his family. You are in Christ who is a son. You become a son. And so we also have his Spirit indwelling us.

The Holy Spirit indwelling us that teaches us to look to God and cry to him Daddy, Father. And it goes on and says you are no longer a slave but a son and if a son then an heir through God.

[33 : 47] You become an heir of the household. We were we had a debt. We were in bondage. We've been set free and made a family of God. And now we have riches beyond all comparison.

Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is yours in Christ Jesus. And so he's made us rich. Colossians 1 13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins.

We were in the domain of darkness we've been transferred into the kingdom of the son. Secondly I want you to see that it is an eternal redemption.

Hebrews 9 11-12 points out this reality. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come then through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands that is not of this creation he entered once for all into the holy places not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood thus securing an eternal redemption.

An eternal redemption. We've been transferred into his household we will never go back into that debt again. Our debt has been eternally paid. Think of the slave in Israel the servant.

[35 : 14] He could be set free he could go out on his own and he could get back into the same habits and fall back into debt and end up back in someone else's household perhaps.

And so sometimes they would choose to stay a part of that family because life was better. They had that help. We won't ever fall back into a state of condemnation.

That's not to say we won't sin. We do. But Christ's blood has covered all our sin if you've trusted in Jesus Christ. You have been eternally redeemed and so therefore we will never be condemned.

I want you also to understand that Jesus came as a servant. As we think about this text and what we're looking at Jesus came to serve.

Psalms 40 6-8 Now this may be difficult at first but look for parallels with our passage. Psalm 40 6-8 In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted but you have given me an open ear.

[36 : 18] burnt offerings and sin offering you have not required. Then I said behold I have come in the scroll of the book it is written of me I delight to do your will oh my God your law is within my heart.

Now this is prophetic of what Jesus would say later on that he's come to do the will of the Father he delights in God's will speaking of Christ but do you notice but you have given me an open ear.

What's greater than sacrifice and offering? What sacrifice might Christ offer to God the Father? Obedience. And so the open ear here I think and I mean pretty universally what I saw was theologians agreeing that this is speaking of that all.

God the Son has committed himself to serve God the Father to do his will. We see even again the idea open ear and then verse 8 I delight to do your will oh my God your laws within my heart.

So remember the hole in the ear was to symbolize forever service. You're forever a servant. And so in saving men we could say that Jesus Christ became the Father servant forever.

[37 : 38] He did the will of the Father. Philippians 2 7 speaks in that way he emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men.

So he emptied himself and took the form of a servant. Mark 10 45 for even the son of man came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. So he came to serve and to give his life as a ransom to redeem many from their Now if you're following along in your outline I don't have one that marks as application we might say this is the application that I had prepared and we've had some application all throughout but our last point is slavery to God what does this mean for us how do we apply these truths well first we see God's protection and care for the servants the slaves in Israel and so we can be assured that God will protect us and care for us if God calls us into his household if he makes us a son or daughter to serve his house he will protect us and care for us if he protected the weakest and poorest of the poor in

Israel he will protect us in our weak state Isaiah 43 verses 1-4 but now thus says the Lord he who created you O Jacob he who formed you O Israel fear not for I have redeemed you I have called you by name you are mine when you pass through the waters I will be with you and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you for I am the Lord your God the holy one of Israel your savior I give Egypt as your ransom Cush and Seba in exchange for you because you are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you I give men in return for you peoples in exchange for your life we see there God's redemptive love for his people and we can rest assured that in

Christ he will protect and care for us secondly we're to our master now I know I've just preached a sermon really on slavery and the politically correct people in our day we can't use that word and we can't say master but God's word is clear that we have been freed from slavery to become slaves to obedience and righteousness and to God as our master our Lord that's what Lord means it's interesting that in the writings of Paul James and Peter they all three introduce themselves as bond servants of Christ Jesus a bond servant is one who sold themselves into slavery and they're saying I've sold myself into slavery to Jesus Christ I'm willingly serving Christ bond servants of the

Lord the master Yahweh and in that case it's a choice to serve out of love and that's what God's called us to as well we haven't been free from a forced slavery into another forced slavery it is our delight to serve in this household because we're sons and daughters because we're heirs because of the goodness of our master and so Romans 8 15 for you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry Abba Father so our spirit our nature has changed our spirit was one of slavery we did what Satan and sin and our passions told us to do and God has freed us now to choose something different he's given us a spirit of adoption as sons so that we look to God as our father and it delights us to do what our daddy asked us to do 1st

[42 : 02] Peter 2 16 we have an exhortation live as people who are free what does it look like to live as people who are free not using your freedom as a cover up for evil but living as servants of God so you've been set free from slavery and how do you live your slave well you don't choose to do the thing that once enslaved you that's stupid you don't go back to the sin what do you do instead you choose to serve God in that blessed state living as servants of God Romans 6 17 through 19 but thanks be to God that you were once slaves of sin you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed and having been set free from sin have become slaves of righteousness I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations for as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness leading to more lawlessness so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification and so we have an exhortation to live a certain way and

Paul even acknowledges I'm speaking here in human terms slavery it's not exactly what you are but choose to serve God to obey to live for righteousness and not to go back to what formerly enslaved us Romans 6 22 but now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God the fruit you get leads to sanctification and it's in eternal life and so we're slaves to God but there's payment here and what is the payment it is sanctification and it ultimately ends in eternal life so as we serve God what do we see we're growing in holiness to be like him because we're not following the old master we're following the new master we're living in righteousness and then as we grow in that we know that ultimately our end is that when we die or when Christ returns we will have eternal life with him and his household and then thirdly finally in our message we're to serve others for his sake

God calls us to service what does it look like well part of that the first table of the Lord our God with all heart soul mind and strength to love him and then also to love our neighbor as our self and so Matthew 20 25 to 28 addresses this but Jesus called them to him and said you know that the rulers of the Gentile lorded over them and their great ones exercise authority over them it shall not be so among you but whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave even as the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many and so I want to encourage you number one if you have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ if you have been set free to serve God serve him not that we might earn salvation but because of our thankfulness that we have been brought into his family that we have been set free from what we once had to obey and then

I will speak to the rest of you in this room with acknowledgement that there may be some of you who are still in that state of bondage to sin slavery to sin forced as it were to obey its desires to find even the good things that we seek to do are corrupted by our own selfishness there's only one way to be set free from that slavery and that bondage it's by trusting in the blood of Jesus Christ the redemption that is found only in the son and know that if you do that state it's nothing like your prior state you are not only a slave you are my prayer is that all of you would trust in the son and daughter let's pray together dear heavenly father we thank you that you have not left us in our bondage that you have freed us by the precious blood of your son

Jesus Christ in whose name we pray these things Lord we pray that you would work in the hearts of all who are gathered here that there would be none who would remain in that state of bondage to sin but that Lord you would set them free by the application of the precious blood of your son to their account to cover them in the blood of the lamb Lord we pray for those who have known that redemption Lord that we would love you and that we love our neighbor and so Lord we would serve you as a slave and in the process that Lord we would serve others that you might be honored and glorified that others might come to know you we pray this in Christ's name amen