119 MINISTRIES

“The following is a direct script of a teaching written and presented only in audio format. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We listened to the audio version of the teaching to complement the written teaching you see below.”

I Shall Walk in a Wide Place

Here is something that should surprise us. A man surrounded by commandments says he is walking in a wide place.

Not a narrow cell. Not a cage. A wide place.

Most of us were taught to feel the opposite. We heard that the law is a weight, a list of things we cannot do, a burden we were rescued from. And somewhere along the way, many of us learned to flinch at the word commandment.

But listen to the one who wrote the longest psalm in the Bible.

Psalm 119:44-47. "I will keep your law continually, forever and ever, and I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts. I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame, for I find my delight in your commandments, which I love."

Notice that little word, for. He walks in a wide place because he has sought the precepts. The freedom is not in spite of the commandments. It is connected to them.

So which is it? Is God's law a cage, or is it the wide place?

Scripture answers with one voice, from the Psalms to the apostles. God's Torah is not the cage. Sin is.

Hear how Yeshua puts it, in John 8:31-36.

"So Jesus [Yeshua] said to the Jews who had believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' They answered

him, 'We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, you will become free?'"

"Jesus [Yeshua] answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave 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.'"

His listeners thought they were already free. They had never worn chains. But Yeshua locates slavery somewhere they did not expect. Not in a commandment. In sin.

Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

That is a sobering sentence. Because it means the chains most of us carry are not the ones we notice. They are the habits we cannot seem to stop. The words we wish we had never said. The anger that rises before we can catch it. The thing we promised ourselves we would never do again.

And notice who breaks those chains. Not the law. Not our effort. The Son sets us free.

That matters. The freedom we are talking about comes through Messiah Yeshua, not through our own record of rule-keeping. The commandments are not the savior. He is.

But free for what?

Paul answers in Romans 6:16-18.

"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? But thanks be to God, that 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."

Paul does not describe a person set free from all direction. He describes a person who has changed masters. Once, sin ruled. Now the heart obeys.

Redemption breaks sin's grip and lifts its condemnation. It does not hand us a license to throw away the instruction of the One who redeemed us.

Freedom from condemnation is not freedom from the Father's ways.

And here is the good news hiding inside that sentence. The Father's ways are not a cage either.

Think about a river. Its banks seem to hold the water in, to limit where it can go. But take the banks away, and the river does not become more free. It spreads out into a marsh, shallow and still, going nowhere. The banks are what let a river run.

And a river runs because it is going somewhere. The Father's path leads somewhere because it leads to him. That is what Moses set before Israel, in Deuteronomy 30:19-20. Listen for the words, for he is your life.

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD [YHWH] your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days."

Choose life. The instruction was given as a path toward life, not a trap.

Now, that does not mean the obedient never suffer. Faithful people still grieve. They still get sick. They still face loss. Scripture never promises otherwise. But the path itself is good. And the One who gives it is our life.

James saw the same thing. Listen to James 1:22-25.

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."

Did you hear what James called it? The law of liberty.

James stands right beside the psalmist. He does not call God's law a chain. He calls it liberty. And he warns about the one thing that keeps us from tasting it: hearing without doing. Looking into the mirror, and walking away.

That is where many of us live. We know a great deal. But knowing about the wide place is not the same as walking in it.

So let's be careful about one thing. Doing is not how we earn salvation. No act of obedience buys the Father's love. Salvation is a gift, received by grace through faith in Messiah Yeshua. But a freed slave who never steps out of the cell has not yet learned to live free.

So let's bring this home.

Imagine someone who has always treated one particular command as an inconvenience. Maybe it is the Sabbath, a day set apart that keeps getting swallowed by errands. Maybe it is honoring a father or mother who is hard to honor. Maybe it is speaking truthfully about a neighbor, or being generous when money feels tight. Whatever it is, they keep it at arm's length, the way we hold something we resent.

What would happen if they turned around and received it as a gift?

Here is an invitation for this week. Not a new rule. Just a step. Choose one of the Father's commands you have kept at a distance, and take it up, not as a burden to resent, but as a gift of freedom.

Ask him to show you why it is good. And watch what it teaches you about him.

It may be harder than you expect. Freedom often is, at first. But you may also find what the psalmist found.

That the commandments we once feared are the very banks that let our lives run.

The Son has set us free. We are not slaves of sin anymore. And the road he opened is not a narrow cell.

It is a wide place. Come and walk in it.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching.
Remember, continue to test everything.
Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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