

## Holiness: A Gift of God's Grace ~ Part 13

***"I am Adonai, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. Therefore you are to be holy, because I am holy."*** ~ Leviticus 11:45

***"Following the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in your entire way of life; since the Tanakh says, 'You are to be holy because I am holy.'"*** ~ 1 Kefa 1:15-16

In my last post, we were looking at Romans 6. ***"So then, are we to say, 'Let's keep on sinning, so that there can be more grace'? Heaven forbid! How can we, who have died to sin, still live in it?"*** (Romans 6:1-2) In this post, we will continue to look at what provisions God has made for us to live a Holy life.

### What Provisions Has God Made for Us to Live a Holy Life? ~ Part B

What then does Sha'ul mean by his expression ***"died to sin?"***

He means we died to the dominion of sin or to the reign of sin. Before we trusted in Yeshua for our salvation, we were in the kingdom of HaSatan and sin. We ***"walked in the ways of the 'olam hazeh and obeyed the Ruler of the Powers of the Air"*** [HaSatan]. (Ephesians 2:2) We were under the power of HaSatan (see Acts 26:18) and the domain of darkness (see Colossians 1:13). Sha'ul said we were slaves of sin (see Romans 6:17). We were born into this kingdom of sin, slavery, and death. Every person who has ever lived since Adam, except for the incarnate Son of God, has been born a slave in the kingdom of sin and HaSatan.

But through our union with Yeshua we have died to this realm of sin. We have been set free from sin (see Romans 6:18), ***"transferred us into the Kingdom of His dear Son"*** (Colossians 1:13), and turned from the power of HaSatan to God (Acts 26:18). Before our salvation we were in bondage to sin, under the reign and rule of sin. Regardless of how decent and moral we were, we lived in the kingdom of sin. But now through our union with Yeshua in His death to sin, we have been delivered out of the realm of sin and placed in the kingdom and realm of righteousness.

It is because we were in this realm of sin, under its reign and rule, that we began to sin from infancy. Because we were slaves, we acted like slaves. We developed sinful habits and a sinful character. Even if we were what the world considers "good," we lived for ourselves, not for God. Our attitude toward Yeshua was expressed by the words of His enemies: ***"We don't want this man to rule over us."*** (Luke 19:14)

But if we have been delivered from this realm, why do we still sin? Though God has delivered us from the reign of sin, our sinful natures still reside within us. Even though sin's dominion and rule are broken, the remaining sin that dwells in Believers exerts a tremendous power, constantly working toward evil.

An illustration from modern warfare can help us see how this is true. HaSatan has been defeated and the reign of sin overthrown. However, our sinful nature resorts to a sort of guerrilla warfare to lead us into sin. Terrorists are no longer fighting over territory as much as they are fighting over ideology. We continue to struggle between the Spirit and our sinful natures which Sha'ul wrote about: ***"For the old nature wants what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit wants what***

*is contrary to the old nature. These oppose each other, so that you find yourselves unable to carry out your good intentions.”* (Galatians 5:17)

Further, because we are born as sinners, we have from birth developed habits of sin. We all tend to act according to these sinful habits that have been engraved in us from long practice. We tend to sin out of habit. It is our habit to look out for ourselves instead of others, to retaliate when injured in some way, and to indulge the appetites of our bodies. It is our habit to live for ourselves and not for God. When we become Believers, we do not drop all this overnight. **In fact, we will spend the rest of our lives putting off these habits and putting on habits of holiness.**

Not only have we been slaves to sin, but we still live in a world populated by slaves of sin. The conventional values around us reflect this slavery, and the world tries to conform us to its own sinful mold.

Therefore, though sin no longer reigns in us, it will constantly try to get at us. Though we have been delivered from the kingdom of sin and its rule, we have not been delivered from its attacks.

That is why Sha’ul exhorted us to be on our guard so that we will not let sin reign in our bodies. Before our salvation, before our death to the reign of sin, such an exhortation would have been futile.

Now that we are in fact dead to sin - to its rule and reign - we are to count on that as being true. We can now stand up to sin and say no to it. Before we had no choice; now we have one. When we sin as Believers, we do not sin as slaves, but as individuals with the freedom of choice. We sin because we choose to sin.

To summarize then, we have been set free from the reign and rule of sin, the kingdom of unrighteousness. Our deliverance is through our union with Yeshua in His death. When Yeshua entered this world He voluntarily entered the realm of sin, though He never sinned. When He died, He died to this realm of sin (see Romans 6:10), and through our union with Him we died to this realm also. We are to count on this fact: we are dead to sin's rule, we can stand up to it and say no. Therefore, we are to guard our bodies so that sin does not reign in us.

Yeshua has delivered us from sin's reign so that we now can resist sin. But the responsibility for resisting is ours. God does not do that for us. In my next post we will begin to look at how Yeshua has prepared us to enter into the battle for holiness.

In my next post, we will look at the battle for Holiness more closely.