

Free to Be a Servant

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By Lenny Cacchio

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—The Passover that we read about in Exodus has an obvious theme that is repeated over and over: "Let My people go that they may serve Me."

The Israelites were in slavery, and the demand from God was to free them. From that we can conclude that one of the themes of Exodus—and indeed we can extrapolate this to the entire Bible—is freedom.

Freedom from slavery. Freedom from sin. Even the law of God is called the law of liberty (James 1:25).

But Paul gives us a warning about freedom. Freedom unconstrained leads to tragic consequences.

Romans 6:15-16—"What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

Romans 6:17-18—"But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."

Romans 6:19-20—"I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness."

Romans 6:21-23—"What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

If you think about it, Paul seems to be channeling Bob Dylan (or the other way around): You gotta serve somebody. "It may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody."

So when the message to Pharaoh is "Free My people from slavery so that they are free to serve Me," we're not looking at a self-contradiction.

We're looking at people being free to choose whom they will serve, whether sin unto death or accepting the gift unto joy in the present world and eternal life in the next. It will be one or the other. Because you gotta serve somebody.