

*Nuggets and Gems from the Bible*

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SETTING FREE —  
THE NEED OF THOSE  
UNDER THE  
BONDAGE OF SIN

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***Living Stream Ministry***  
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# LIFE'S SETTING FREE— THE NEED OF THOSE UNDER THE BONDAGE OF SIN

In the record of John's Gospel, nine cases have been selected to prove that the Lord Jesus is the life and the life supply to people. The first six cases, in [chapters three through seven](#), form one group of signs, signifying, on the positive side, the aspects of the Lord as our life and life supply: the regenerating, the satisfying, the healing, the enlivening, the feeding, and the quenching. The last three cases, in [chapters eight through eleven](#), form another group of signs, signifying, on the negative side, that the Lord is life to us to deliver us from the three main negative things: sin, blindness, and death.

As fallen human beings, we are constantly troubled by sin, blindness, and death. Blindness actually means darkness. When you are blind, you are in darkness, for nothing causes so much darkness as blindness. Blindness, darkness, and death come from sin. Sin is the basic factor of blindness, darkness, and death. If we are sinful,

we are surely blind because blindness always accompanies the sinful things. Sin brings in death, but between sin and death there is always blindness. After you have sinned and before you reap death, you have darkness. Therefore, sin, blindness, and death are the three negative things that the Lord must deal with. The only way these negatives can be dealt with is by the Lord becoming our eternal and heavenly life.

The case in [John 8](#), the seventh case among the nine, fully covers the matter of sin. No chapter in the entire Bible covers the problem of sin as widely and thoroughly as does the eighth chapter of John. In this chapter we have the answer to all the problems of sin. Following this, in [chapters nine and ten](#), the matter of blindness is dealt with in a thorough way. Lastly, in [chapter eleven](#), the matter of death is thoroughly taken care of. After [chapter eleven](#), there will be no additional cases because the positive cases have been covered and the negative things have been dealt with. Now let us see how the Lord as life deals with the first negative thing—sin.

## NO MAN WITHOUT SIN

The religionists were trying their best to find fault with the Lord Jesus. After [chapters five](#)

and **seven** they attempted to put Jesus into a difficult situation. They caught a sinful woman and brought her to the Lord Jesus. According to the law, such a sinful woman had to be stoned to death, but the religionists did not do it. They brought her to the Lord in an attempt to trap Him. They said, “Teacher, this woman has been caught committing adultery. Moses commanded us to stone such a person. What do You say?” The religionists were quite bold. They asked the Lord a very tricky question. If He had said that they had to stone her to death, then He would have lost His position as the Savior and Redeemer. Could a Savior say that such a sinner must be stoned to death? Of course, the Lord, as the Redeemer and Savior, could not say this. But, on the other hand, if He said that they should not stone her to death, then they would have said that He was breaking the law. This question was a subtle trick of the enemy. The religionists thought that they were very wise. Actually they were stupid. They thought that the Lord Jesus would find it difficult to answer and that they had an excellent opportunity to catch Him.

When the Lord was asked this question, He did not say a word. The wisest way to answer a question is not to answer, to answer later on, or

to answer slowly. The Lord's first reaction to their question was not to answer it quickly. We also must learn this wisdom. When people come to you with an urgent question, you must learn from the Lord. He simply stooped to write on the ground. Silence cools people down, like cold water cools boiling water. When the Lord stooped to write, He was cooling down the situation. At the same time, by cooling down the hot situation, the sinful woman was comforted. I believe that by stooping to write on the ground the Lord Jesus was indicating to the religionists that they should not be so proud, that they had to humble themselves a little. They had to realize that they were as sinful as that woman.

When I was young, I tried to discover what it was that the Lord Jesus wrote on the ground. Throughout many generations no one has been able to tell what He wrote. I would guess that the Lord might have written, "Who is without sin among you?" While the Pharisees were asking what should be done with such a woman, the Lord Jesus might have written in big letters, "Who is without sin?" Everyone was staring at the Lord as He stooped to write on the ground. Then the Lord stood up and said, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to

throw a stone at her” (8:7). The Lord seemed to be saying, “You may stone her to death, but someone must take the lead. No one is qualified to take the lead in this except the one who is without sin. Let the one who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her.” This word pierced their conscience. I believe that even before the Lord spoke these words, while He was still writing on the ground that their conscience was touched. What did the religionists do? Beginning with the older ones and up until the youngest, they went out one by one (8:9). The oldest, being the wisest, went away first. They knew that they were not qualified to take the lead in stoning the woman to death. But they were qualified to take the lead to run away. All the younger ones followed them.

Who is without sin? No one. Do not condemn others, for while you condemn others you are the same as they are. You are not qualified to condemn others. You are birds of the same feather. If you condemn another bird, you simply condemn yourself. Only the Lord, the great I Am (8:28, 58), is without sin, and only He is qualified to condemn sin. What wisdom the Lord Jesus has! After the religionists left, notice how lovingly and gently the Lord expressed Himself to

the sinful woman. He asked her if anyone condemned her, and she said, “No one, Lord.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you” (8:11). That was music to the woman’s terrified soul.

This incident manifests the Lord’s wisdom. The people came to condemn the sinful woman, but the Lord’s question convicted them of their own sinfulness.

## **THE SOURCE OF SIN—THE DEVIL**

The Devil is the source of sin (8:44). Sin is the nature of the Devil, and sin, the nature of the Devil, is a lie. Sin is a lie, a falsehood. Everything that is sinful is unreal. The issue of the lie is death and darkness. Death and darkness, as falsehoods, are opposed to reality. Since the Devil is the father of liars, he is the source of sin. The divine element of God, working as life and light within man, sets man free from the slavery of sin. But the evil element of the Devil, working as sin by death and darkness within man, enslaves man to sin. His nature is a lie and brings in death and darkness. With darkness is falsehood, the opposite of the truth, the reality.

The Devil is the evil father who has brought forth sinful children (1 John 3:10). The sinful children are all the followers of the Devil. Thus,

in [1 John 3:10](#), we have the term “the children of the Devil.” Because the Devil is the father of sinners, the sinners are “the children of the Devil.” The Devil is the old serpent ([Rev. 12:9; 20:2](#)), and the sinners are also the “serpents, the generation of vipers” ([Matt. 23:33; 3:7](#)). Hence, they need the Lord to be lifted up for them in the form of the serpent on the cross ([John 3:14](#)).

## THE SLAVES OF SIN

Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin ([8:34](#)). A slave is always under a certain bondage. Satan, the Devil, has brought all humankind under the bondage of sin by imparting himself into man as the sinful nature that compels man to sin. It is impossible for anyone to free himself from such a slavery.

## THE RESULT OF SIN—DEATH

The result of sin is death ([8:24, 51-52](#)). In [verse 24](#) the Lord said, “Unless you believe that I am, you shall die in your sins.” Death came in through sin. “Death passed to all men because all have sinned” ([Rom. 5:12](#)). As long as one has sinned, he is destined for death. Thus, the result of sin is death.

## THE MAIN ITEMS OF SIN

The three main items of sin are adultery or fornication, murder, and lies (8:3, 41, 44). These items are the most sinful aspects of sin. Consider—can you find another aspect that is as sinful as adultery, murder, and lying? Nothing is more sinful than these three aspects, which represent the whole relationship of sin. All sinful things are included in these three categories. Adultery or fornication means confusion. Anything that confuses humankind is a type of adultery or fornication. Murder is killing, and lying is cheating. Anything that is sinful either confuses, kills, or deceives people.

## ONLY ONE MAN WITHOUT SIN

This chapter reveals something more on the positive side, for we are told how we can be delivered from sin. Firstly, this chapter reveals the only One who is not sinful. Throughout the whole universe, who is the One without sin? It is only the Lord Jesus Himself. He is without sin (8:7, 9).

## QUALIFIED TO CONDEMN SIN BUT HE WOULD NOT

Who is qualified to condemn you? Who has

this position? Only the One who is without sin. The only One who is qualified and has the position to condemn you is the Lord Jesus Himself, for He is without any spot of sin. Although He is qualified to condemn you, He would not do it.

### **LIFTED UP FOR SINNERS' SIN**

The Lord Jesus was lifted up for the sinners' sin (8:28). Sin is the embodiment of the serpent, and the sinners' sin is the poison of the serpent. For redemption, the Lord Jesus had to be the Lamb of God, but for dealing with the serpentine nature, the Lord Jesus had to be lifted up in the form of the serpent. In order to deal with the sinful, serpentine nature of mankind, He had to be lifted up on the cross in the form of a serpent.

### **QUALIFIED TO FORGIVE SIN AND ABLE TO SET FREE FROM THE SLAVERY OF SIN**

The Lord is qualified to forgive man's sin and able to set him free from the slavery of sin (8:32-34). The Lord not only gives us life, but He also enters into us as our life. Satan's subtlety was not only to cause us to do something wrong; it was to inject himself into us. Thus, sin is no

longer merely objective, an outward wrongdoing. Sin is in the very subjective nature of our being. It is no longer outside of us; it is inside of us. It has even become our very self. It is in our nature. Therefore, anything that is outside of our nature cannot help us in dealing with the sin that is in our nature. We need another life to come into us. In human history, there is only one Person who is able to come into us and be our life to encounter the serpentine nature within us. Confucius or Plato cannot do it. The only One who can do it is Jehovah, the great I Am. Only He Himself can come into us as life to counteract the serpentine nature within us. Our slavery is not an outward thing; it is inward, even in our nature. We need another life, a stronger, richer, higher life, to set us free from this slavery. Only the Lord can be such a life, and He truly is such a life because He is the divine life. The divine life is higher than the human life. It is also higher than the satanic life. When this divine life comes into us it defeats the serpentine life and nature.

### **ABLE TO SAVE FROM THE RESULT OF SIN**

The Lord is able to save man from the result of sin, which is death (8:24, 51-52). Once sin

has been dealt with, spontaneously the result of sin also will be removed. The religion of law is unable to do this, for it belongs to the tree of knowledge resulting in death ([Gen. 2:17](#)). Jesus is the tree of life resulting in life ([Gen. 2:9](#)). In principle, saving man from the result of sin is changing death into life.

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