

Freedom in Him

By Miguel Mendoza

Abraham Lincoln, one of the presidents of the United States of America, during the third year of the national civil war, issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. The document declared that all persons held as slaves “are, and shall be free.” On the evening of April 14, 1865, he was assassinated at Ford’s Theatre in Washington, D.C. It is said that, after he died, his body was taken into a procession and marathon viewing through different states in the country so people could pass by his coffin and see their martyred president. An African American lady, along with her little son, was there surrounded by thousands of people who eagerly came to the streets to catch a glimpse of the president’s body. As she saw the coffin passing by, she said to her son, “look carefully my dear son, because that man died for you.”

We can confirm through the Holy Scriptures that our Lord Jesus died for us; therefore, my dear brother and sister, look carefully to that Man and Saviour because only in Him we have the assurance of freedom from sin, and, to our own benefit, everlasting life.

We have the following promise: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:14, 15.

Freedom through His life on earth

Our Lord Jesus left heaven, left His throne, left His glory and the angels’ adoration and made Himself of no reputation. The apostle wrote, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Philippians 2:5-7).

“It is important that we each study to know the reason of the life of Christ in humanity, and what it means to us—why the Son of God left the courts of heaven—why He stepped down from His position as commander of the heavenly angels who came and went at His bidding—why He clothed His divinity with humanity, and in lowliness and humility came to the world as our Redeemer.” *That I May Know Him*, p. 36.

In the Gospel of Luke, we find the work of the Lord when on this earth: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, **to preach deliverance to the captives**, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” (Luke 4:18).

Jesus set an example to all humanity that through His life every person in the world could attain the perfect life of the Lamb of God. “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:21-25).

“Before the universe of heaven, Christ condescended to take upon Him the form of humanity, and stand among the lowly ones of earth, that He might reach them where they were, and by precept and example teach them, that though among the poor and oppressed they might be pure, and true, and noble. He came to reveal to the world that the life and character need not become contaminated amid poverty and lowliness. The lily that rests upon the bosom of the lake may be surrounded with weeds and unsightly debris, yet, unsullied, it opens its fragrant white blossom to the sunlight. It strikes its channeled stem down through the mass of rubbish to the pure sands beneath. Refusing everything that would defile, it gathers to itself only those properties that will develop into the spotless, fragrant flower.” *That I May Know Him*, p. 36.

It is through His life of complete subjection to the will of the Father that Jesus opened up the path of obedience to humanity making it a possibility for them to follow His steps. “I was led through the life of Christ to see His meek, self-denying life. This great sacrifice was to obtain for us a great salvation. And if we obtain this great salvation it must be by our making a sacrifice on our part. As Jesus sacrificed for us, we must sacrifice for Jesus. As He denied Himself for us, we must deny ourselves for Jesus. As he endured privation and suffering for us, so we must endure privation and suffering for Jesus. As He was tempted of Satan, as He was buffeted by Satan forty days then left for a season and angels ministered unto Him, so we shall be buffeted by Satan for a season; and if we resist him these seasons will be followed by grace and strength from God imparted unto us by His angels.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 252.

Freedom Through His Sacrifice

“[But] now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9:26). As we contemplate the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, we learn that it was humanity who had to be hanging on the cross and not our Saviour. He paid the ransom. Through His voluntary sacrifice we have the assurance of salvation, freedom from the condemnation of the law and of sin.

“This was a voluntary sacrifice. Jesus might have remained at the Father's side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

“Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.

“The Son of God had died as their sacrifice and had ascended to heaven to stand before the Father as their advocate. By repentance and faith they might be freed from the condemnation of sin and through the grace of Christ be enabled henceforth to render obedience to the law of God.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 393.

We don't deserve to be treated by God as we are treated today, “It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22, 23) Neither did Christ deserve to die the death that we deserved to die. He died so that we could live.

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had

no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With His stripes we are healed.'" *The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

Freedom Through His Resurrection

"The sinner can be justified only through faith in the atonement made through God's dear Son, who became a sacrifice for the sins of the guilty world. No one can be justified by any works of his own. **He can be delivered** from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation of the law, from the penalty of transgression, **only by virtue of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ.**" *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 389 [emphasis supplied].

The Apostle Paul says that if it weren't for Christ's resurrection we would be, of all men, the most miserable because this would be the only life we would have: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (1 Corinthians 15:19). There would not be any glimpse of the hope of eternity. Life, to all human beings, would probably be a cycle of being born, growing up, achieving our goals, facing success and failure and being always waiting for death.

But Scripture records that the resurrection is a reality both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Some examples are:

- a. The dead man that touched the bones of the prophet Elisha: "And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet." (2 Kings 13:21).
- b. The son of a widow in the time of the prophet Elijah: "And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." (1 Kings 17:22).
- c. The resurrection of Lazarus: "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:43, 44).
- d. The resurrection of many saints and Jesus: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matthew 27: 52, 53). "Notwithstanding the lying reports circulated, the resurrection of Christ could not be concealed by Satan, his angels, or the chief priests; for this holy company, brought forth from their graves, spread the wonderful, joyful news; also Jesus showed Himself to His sorrowing, heartbroken disciples, dispelling their fears and causing them joy and gladness." *Early Writings*, p. 184.

Therefore, enough evidence is given to all that believe in Jesus—resurrection is a reality. Jesus Christ overcame death and through His resurrection we can rest assured that, if we die, we shall live again.

"Jesus Christ has triumphed over death and rent the fetters of the tomb, and all who sleep in the tomb will share the victory; they will come forth from their graves as did the Conqueror." *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 272.

Freedom Through His Mediatorial Work

Today, Christ is in heaven, in the holiest of all (Hebrews 9:8), doing a work on our behalf. He is our High priest, our Mediator, our Advocate, our Intercessor. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we

have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:14, 15).

Jesus is making intercession for us: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Hebrews 7: 25-27).

By faith and with confidence we need to enter into *the holiest* by the merits of Christ: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." (Hebrews 10: 19-23).

"Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by His mediatorial work. Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God?" *SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White], vol. 7A, p. 487.

So, let us trust in our Lord Jesus. He desires to give us freedom and power to overcome Satan and his deceptions. "But we have not been deceived. Notwithstanding the apparent triumph of Satan on the earth, Christ is carrying forward his work in the heavenly sanctuary. The word of God portrays the wickedness and corruption that should exist in the world in the last days. As we see the fulfilment of the prophecy, our faith in the final triumph of Christ's kingdom should be increased. We should go forth with courage to do our appointed work." *The Review and Herald*, May 3, 1906.

Freedom Through His Second Coming

God's people's long-awaited event is the second coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Jesus promised His dear disciples He would come again. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3). He said He would fulfill this promise very soon. The gospel of Matthew says: "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." (Matthew 24:33).

Our hope is to see our Lord Jesus coming soon to rescue and deliver us from the evil, sin and suffering of this world forever. It is true that "the exact time of the second coming of the Son of man is God's mystery" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 632), but we can trust that He *will* come.

However, we all have a work to do. "I have been instructed to trace words of warning for our brethren and sisters who are in danger of losing sight of the special work for this time.... In every land we are to herald the second coming of Christ, in the language of the revelator proclaiming: 'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him.'" *Evangelism*, p. 217.

We are all journeying to our heavenly home: "We are pilgrims and strangers who are waiting, hoping, and praying for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If we believe this and bring it into our practical life, what vigorous action would this faith and hope inspire; what fervent love one for another; what careful holy living for the glory of God; and in

our respect for the recompense of the reward, what distinct lines of demarcation would be evidenced between us and the world." *Evangelism*, p. 220.

Freedom Throughout All Eternity

One day we will be free from all tears. There will be no more suffering. There will be joy in the presence of God. "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it" (Isaiah 25:8).

The Revelator describes eternity in the following words: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Revelation 7:15-17).

We will be in the presence of God and see His face. "Christ took with Him to the heavenly courts His glorified humanity. To those who receive Him, He gives power to become the sons of God, that at last God may receive as His, to dwell with Him throughout eternity. If, during this life, they are loyal to God, they will at last 'see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.' Revelation 22:4. And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner saved by the grace of Christ than to look upon the face of God and know Him as Father?" *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 421.

Eternity will only confirm the infinite sacrifice of Christ on behalf of humanity and our Lord Jesus will always bear the marks of His love towards us: "Throughout eternity He will bear in His hands the prints of the cruel nails by which He was transfixed to the cross of Calvary.... We are now fitting up for the future, eternal life; and soon, if faithful, we shall see the gates of the city of our God swing back on their glittering hinges that the nations who have kept the truth may enter in to their eternal inheritance." *Our Father Cares*, p. 187.

Freedom in Him

Dear brother, sister, young person, and child - let us pay attention to the inspired words: "Let every one realize that there is **freedom in Jesus Christ**. He loves you, and He desires to reveal Himself unto you, that you may reveal Him to the world. He desires you to tell others of His love and of His willingness and power to save. Jesus Christ, the Lord our righteousness, will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rereward.

"I ask you to search well your own hearts. Put away the evil speaking that has been weakening the faith of some of God's people. We must have a living faith in God. We cannot afford to go backward. We must press forward in the footsteps of our Redeemer, even though we are led through a cloud.

"The Lord is not pleased to have His people a band of mourners. He wants them to repent of their sins, that they may enjoy **the liberty of the sons of God**. Then they will be filled with the praises of God, and will be a blessing to others." Manuscript 43, 1908.