

Our Good Shepherd CHRIST (*The Word, Logos, of God*)
vs. SLAVERY (*Oppression of other souls, both humans and nephesh animals*)
[- a brief introductory summary outline -]
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PROGRESSIVE REVELATION: God's demonstration in **HISTORY** of His unselfish character contrasted with our selfish sin. *EVERY* person today has ancestors who were slaves at some point in history, and ancestors who enslaved others. There have been many **FORMS** of physical, human "slavery" throughout history. Sadly, it's even worse today. HIS Simple WAY of SALVATION, freedom from Slavery to Sin, is ONLY by His Grace (gift) thru our Faith in His Goodness, NOT our "good" works (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Remember that HISTORY is the revelation of TWO contrasting types of character (TWO very different "WAYS"): One Way is **HIS-STORY**, (His-Way). He alone is the **SOURCE** of pure, unselfish, self-sacrificing love (even for His enemies). Our Good Shepherd Creator is not only the **SOURCE** of uniquely pure love, but His love is **INFINITELY** greater than any creature's effort to imitate it. His *SIMPLE* WAY of forgiveness and transformation (metamorphosis) is to ADMIT our inability to make ourselves good enough, COMMIT to Him & His ability to fix our selfishness problem, and to SUBMIT to Him as LORD (authority over our will and desires). His **WAY** is a love/trust RELATIONSHIP **NOT** a RELIGION.

The second Way is **SIN'S-STORY**, (Self's-Way, human-efforts, man-made "religions") repeatedly EXPOSING that anyone and everything **LESS** than God and **separated** from Him, will degenerate (devolve) into selfishness (*evil-ution's survival of the fittest*). See Genesis 15:16 about "the sin of the Amorites not yet full". Sin is simply the attitude and actions of serving SELF at *others'* expense. **LUCIFER**, the highest angelic being was the first to rebel and seek becoming **MASTER** over slaves. He rejected **GOD** as the only infinite source of all things, especially goodness (unselfish love). Lucifer desired and believed he could become (evolve) into God-hood (self-deification). He led many other angels to serve under him, and they then sought to rule over and enslave all the rest of God's creation. The term and name, "*Lucifer*", means the enlightened one (fake light). "*Satan*" means the adversary (enemy). "*Devil*" means slanderer and deceiver. Everyone begins life now separated from God and a slave to sin and Satan spiritually (John 8:31-36).

GOD VS. SLAVERY: The story of GOD's progressive response across HISTORY to the sin of physical, human slavery.

1. GOD **ROOTED** His original creation in the Way of His LOVE that SERVES others. Satan & humans created the Way that forces other nephesh souls into slaves (both human and yes, even His animal souls) That's not God's Way (Job 12:7-10; Prov. 12:10; 1 Samuel 12).
2. GOD **RECOGNIZED** (acknowledged, but did not condone) the reality that sinful creatures' chose to REBEL and enslave one another.
3. GOD **REGULATED**, temporarily, the slavery that was chosen and practiced by rebellious creatures. (*Old Testament history*)
4. GOD **REJECTED** slavery progressively, which is recorded throughout the Prophets and the New Testament.
5. GOD will **REMOVE** selfish sin and slavery completely in His soon to come New Creation (New Heavens & New Earth).

1. GOD **ROOTED** His *original* creation in the Way of His LOVE that serves others.

Genesis 1:26-31 - **Dominion:** Humans were created to reflect God's character as RULERS over physical creation. BUT our (RRR) Role, Rank, & Responsibility is to represent God's authority over creation, **GOD'S WAY**.

Genesis 2:15 **Abad = serve, Shamar = protect:** Ch. 2 tells us what TYPE of rulers humans were to be.

Matthew 20:20-28 - Jesus fully revealed that to rule God's Way is to be a **SERVANT-LEADER**.

John 10:11 - His **Way** is Self-sacrificing **LOVE:** sacrificing the *desires of self* for the needs of others.

(See also Isaiah 53; Romans 5:8; Galatians 2:20; etc.)

2. GOD **RECOGNIZED** (acknowledged but did not condone) sinful creatures' choice to REBEL and enslave one another.
Gen 3 – Adam & Eve submitted to Lucifer and his self-deceptive lie in hopes that they too could become "gods". Instead, they became slaves to him and to their own selfish desires, which dragged humankind into greater and greater destruction. (Romans 1:18-32; First John 2:16)
Genesis 4-6 - **BEFORE** the **FLOOD**, the infection of sinful selfish violence (survival of the fittest) spread throughout God's creation. Not only the animals, but especially humans used, abused, enslaved, and killed others. This was one of the primary reasons that God **LET-GO** (He did not lash-out) and allowed the flood.

Angelic and human leaders had made the choice that they did not want Him to be their God (protector/provider). So, He gave them their choice and let-go and let the earth fall apart. He let go just enough so that the flood occurred and partially cleansed the earth from the infection of selfishness (sin).

Genesis 7-11 - **AFTER** the flood, God instructed NOAH to institute human government under God's guidance. The foundational rule or law given by God to human governments at that time was CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. However, people and rulers who chose to rebel against GOD'S WAY allowed the infection of sin to spread again. NIMROD, became the first recorded DICTATOR, who hunted down and enslaved people to build an empire (a monument to himself called, the Tower of Babel – later called Babylon – and today is the area of Iraq).

Genesis 12-Revelation 20 - **ALL** of human history has been filled with Predatory-Parasitic-“Politicians” and governments that have (in different degrees) ENSLAVED (oppressed) people under their authority/power. Even **AMERICA** has been infected with sin and slavery to varying degrees at different times – EVEN TODAY!

3. GOD **REGULATED** and tolerated (ONLY TEMPORARILY) the slavery that was already chosen and practiced by rebellious creatures. (Old Testament history of ISRAEL)

* **WHY didn't God immediately remove slavery?** Remember that part of God's sovereign purpose in history is to expose OUR INABILITY apart from Him to be “good” enough to keep even just a FEW rules to RESTRICT (limit) our sinful selfish natures. “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory (goodness) of God” Romans 3:23.

Genesis 12 - So, GOD called a single MAN (**ABRAM**), to leave his pagan country and trust God to create a single group of PEOPLE (**HEBREWS**) to form a single unique NATION (**ISRAEL**) to REVEAL His WAY to the Universe. All over the earth, horribly cruel forms of human slavery were being practiced.

Then God raised up ISRAEL to begin introducing a PROGRESSIVE awareness of His Way of loving leadership. Israel was the first recorded nation at that time to began to transform cruel “slavery” into a more compassionate system closer to modern systems of indentured-employment.

Deuteronomy 24:18 – God warned Israel to beware of the human selfish tendency to abuse their authority over others. To help them maintain compassionate empathy within the slavery restrictions He gave them, God reminded them to “remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there”.

* **BUT**, Israel, like all people and all cultures, corrupted even these elementary rules with their selfish sin.

* God allowed this to expose human inability to be “good enough”, and therefore our need for His goodness.

4. GOD **REJECTED** slavery progressively among His people, recorded throughout the **Prophets** and the **New Testament**. **Prophets** – God raised up men to risk their lives by confronting abusive authorities in Israel.

* The prophets predicted a future time when God's Messiah-Christ (God incarnate as a human) will restore His Kingdom, back to His Way, like it was originally in EDEN. Remember that God's Way has always been and always will be SERVANT-leadership, NOT slavery. He allowed free will decisions throughout history to expose and demonstrate that separation from His infinitely pure goodness produces sinful selfishness and oppression of others (survival of the fittest). (Gen. 15:16; Galatians 5 fruit of the flesh/self vs. Spirit); Psalm 23; Isaiah 11)

New Testament – JESUS, the Christ (God incarnate as a human), lived the ONLY pure and perfect example of humble, SERVANT-LEADERSHIP (Matthew 20:20-28; Philippians 2). God, the ultimate, pinnacle authority came down to lift His creatures out of this infected creation and into His realm of unselfish, self-sacrificing love.

[Jesus said]: “I am from above, you are from below” (John 8:23). “I am the Good Shepherd who gives his life for the sheep. (John 10:11-18)” “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom payment for many.” (Matt. 20:20-28) “Before Abraham existed, I AM.” (John 5:58)

NT AUTHORS – “... neither Greek nor Jew, slave nor free, ... all are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3:28)

5. GOD will **REMOVE** selfish sin and slavery completely in His soon to come New Creation (New Heavens & New Earth).

* As mentioned earlier, God's Spirit thru the OT and NT prophetic voices, predicted and promised a future time when our Good Shepherd Creator will come again:

- to judge and reject all angelic and human beings who willfully chose to refuse His WAY of self-sacrificial love.

- to rescue and embrace all angelic and human beings who choose to admit their inability to be good, and submit

by faith to His WAY of forgiveness and freedom for slavery to sin. (Luke 9:23-26; John 8:31-36; Rom 6:23; Isa 11; Rev 20-22)