



[John 8:31-37](#)

(31) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. (32) And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (33) They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, 'You will be made free?'" (34) Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. (35) And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. (36) Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. (37) "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

New King James Version

[God](#) chose to illustrate our enslaved condition through His rescue of the descendants of Abraham, [Isaac](#), and Jacob from their bondage to Egypt. He desired to free them from their servitude and establish them as a separate nation of their own, a people free to determine the quality and outcome of their lives. Once at liberty, they were no longer subject to the orders and decisions of the pagan Egyptians.

Working through Moses, God succeeded in His purpose, and Israel was settled as a free people in their own land. However, the Israelites never truly learned the lesson of what having the liberty to choose required of them. [John 8:31-37](#) gives evidence of this when [Jesus](#) confronted them about it nearly 1,500 years later.

Even during the Israelites' wilderness journey after being freed from Egypt, the flaws in their thinking began to surface in their conduct. Within just two years, they rejected the righteous leadership of Moses, refusing to exercise their liberty to choose to enter the Promised Land and take it as their possession.

The result of that dreadful choice was that every Israelite adult over twenty years of age except for Joshua and Caleb perished on the journey. Thirty-eight years later, the younger generation entered the land under Joshua and took it. However, after he died,

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for John 8:31-37 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

the nation quickly deteriorated from the dynamic bastion of righteousness that God intended, choosing to abandon the godly causes that they had followed under Joshua. In their decline, the Israelites showed they were still enslaved by their own carnality.

John 8 proves that, despite possessing both biblical and historical records—as well as being taught by the very God of creation right in their presence—individual Israelites failed to choose to be free of the spiritual slavery to which they were currently in bondage. Why? They never overcame the slave mentality that their ancestors learned in Egypt and which they succeeded in passing on to successive generations.

Like their ancestors, they were slaves of sin and passed the same self-centered thinking processes on to their children. They persisted in the same old, carnal ways. They were each unwilling to make the changes in their thinking that God demanded after He called them out of Egypt. Why, despite their advantages, did they not change?

John 8 is proof of how tightly bound we are to the anti-God carnality ingrained in our hearts. The Jews ended Jesus' teaching session with their violent intentions toward Him so filling their hearts that He escaped only because God intervened to protect His life. They grasped that He was telling them that they had to make changes in their thinking, but they could not bring themselves to make them. They could not change because they were deeply enslaved by a deadly combination of factors. Simply stated, they did not believe *who He was* and *what He said*. Rather than submit to them, they fought against these truths.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Leadership and Covenants \(Part Three\)](#)

Related Topics:

[Bondage to Sin](#)

[Enslavement to Sin](#)

[Freedom from Slavery](#)

[Leadership and Covenants](#)

[Slave Mentality](#)

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for John 8:31-37 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2018 [Church of the Great God](#)
New King James Version copyright © 1982 by [Thomas Nelson, Inc.](#)