



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

Owned by What Overcomes You

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Devotion and Discussin Questions

Key Texts: 2 Pet. 2:17-22; Jer. 2:13; Matt. 12:43-45; Heb. 10:26-29; 2 Peter 3:9

Everyone serves something. That's not a very popular thought in our culture, because we love to talk about freedom and independence. But Peter reminds us in 2 Peter 2:17–22 that no one is truly free on their own. We are all owned by what overcomes us. The question isn't whether you have a master, but *who* that master is.

False teachers claim to offer freedom. They talk big, but their words are empty. They promise life, but lead only to disappointment, slavery, and destruction. And the tragedy is—they often capture those who are most vulnerable: new believers just finding their footing in Messiah. That's why Peter speaks with such urgency. He wants us to see the danger clearly, so that we don't fall for empty promises and end up enslaved again.

1. EMPTY WELLS, EMPTY PROMISES

Peter begins with this image: *"These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. The gloom of utter darkness has been reserved for them"* (2 Peter 2:17). A spring without water is worse than useless—it's a cruel disappointment, especially in the desert where water means life. That's what false teachers are like. They look like a source of life, but when you draw from them, there's nothing there.

Jeremiah 2:13 echoes this warning: *"My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me—the spring of living water—and they dug their own cisterns, cracked cisterns that hold no water."* The difference couldn't be sharper. Yeshua said, *"Whoever believes in Me...from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water"* (John 7:38). He refreshes, He satisfies, He brings life. But anything else—even when it looks promising—is a dry well. False teachers offer the appearance of vitality, but their words are empty.

2. BAIT FOR THE VULNERABLE

Peter continues: *"For, speaking pompous emptiness, they entice in unrestrained fleshly desires those recently escaping from the ones living in delusion"* (2 Peter 2:18). Their words may sound confident, polished, and persuasive, but they're nothing more than bait. And who do they target? Those just stepping out of their old lives—the ones most vulnerable, still learning to stand in Yeshua.

Think about it: confidence can be convincing, even if it's empty. These false teachers appeal to sinful cravings and say, "You can have it all. You can follow Yeshua and still indulge your flesh. You can call it freedom." But that isn't freedom—it's slavery. It's bait with a hook. Instead of catching people for life like Yeshua called us to, they're reeling them back into bondage. And the tragedy is that many who are just beginning to walk with Yeshua are the ones being pulled back.

3. OWNED BY WHAT OVERCOMES YOU

Verse 19 sums it up: *"They promise freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption—for a person is a slave to whatever has overcome him."* That's the bottom line. Everyone

serves something. The false teachers claim to be free, but they can't stop serving their cravings. They're owned by what has mastered them.

Peter doesn't leave us neutral. He says you're either enslaved by corruption or enslaved by Messiah. He himself calls himself a *slave of Yeshua the Messiah* (2 Peter 1:1). That's the only kind of slavery that leads to life. Anything else will corrode you from the inside out. And Peter's warning is clear: if someone, after truly knowing the Lord, becomes entangled again in sin, their end is worse than their beginning (2 Peter 2:20–22). There's no middle ground. You will be owned by what overcomes you. The question is—will it be sin, or will it be Yeshua?

CONCLUSION

Peter closes with sobering images: *"A dog returns to its vomit, and a pig, after washing, goes back to wallowing in the mud"* (2 Peter 2:22). Those are harsh words, but they're meant to wake us up. False teachers may look appealing, their words may sound spiritual, but their path leads to slavery and destruction. Don't drink from empty wells. Don't take the bait. Don't let sin overcome you again.

But here's the good news: Yeshua offers living water. He offers real freedom—the kind that isn't about doing whatever we want, but about being set free from what once enslaved us. He alone is the Master worth serving. So, who owns you today?

Maybe you've been drinking from dry wells. Maybe you've been enticed by the promise of freedom that turned out to be another form of slavery. Or maybe you've realized that your desires, your cravings, your sins—they've been the ones mastering you. Today, surrender again to Yeshua. Let Him conquer you with His love. Let Him fill you with His living water. Don't go back to the vomit. Don't return to the mud. Come to the One who sets captives free.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be a "spring without water," and how do we see that in today's world?
2. Why are new believers especially vulnerable to enticing but empty teaching?
3. How do false definitions of "freedom" still trap people today?
4. What are some practical ways we can stay free from being "entangled" again in sin?
5. In what area of your life do you need to let Yeshua truly be Master?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Abba Father, we confess that too often we've run to empty wells and believed promises that left us dry. We admit that we've been overcome by things that don't give life. But today, we choose You. We surrender to You, Yeshua, the only true Master who brings freedom. Break the chains of sin. Keep us from going back to the mud. Fill us with Your Spirit, so that rivers of living water flow from us. May we belong fully to You.

In Yeshua's name, amen.