

REFLECTIONS & REVELATIONS: “CAPTURED ALIVE”

2 Timothy 2:24-26

²⁴and a slave of the Lord shouldn't fight. On the contrary, he should be kind to everyone, a good teacher, and not resentful when mistreated.

²⁵Also he should be gentle as he corrects his opponents. For God may perhaps grant them the opportunity to turn from their sins, acquire full knowledge of the truth, ²⁶come to their senses and escape the trap of the Adversary, after having been captured alive by him to do his will.



Not long ago, I revisited a prayer I wrote several years ago based on Ephesians 4:29: “Let no harmful language come out of your mouth, only good words that are helpful in meeting the need, words, that will benefit those who hear them” (CJB). I decided to revisit this prayer, because I still have this bad habit of opening mouth and inserting foot. While it's gotten better over the years, there are times when it greatly impacts my relationships. Therefore, I decided it's time to revisit this prayer and allow Scripture to renew my mind, reshape my heart, and reshape my words.

This time, however, every morning as I pray, I take my time. I sit with it, reflect on the words, and journal what acting upon those words looks like in everyday life. A few mornings ago, I was reading the portion of my prayer based on 2 Timothy 2:26 (above), and the word “alive” stood out to me, so I took time to do a little research. What I found was very interesting! The actual definition is in the text box, but the first thing I want to point is “**to take alive.**”

“captive:” – “to take alive
 (make a prisoner of war)
 that is figuratively) to
 capture or **ensnare:** take
 captive catch.

Now, anyone who knows me, knows I love a good visual, and when I shared this verse with one of my cousins, she described seeing the image of a roaring lion with us alive and dangling out of his mouth! That image is the inspiration behind the photo above.¹ It's the closest thing I could find to the image in my head. While it might not be an exact representation, it is a good lead in for my second point.

The second thing in the definition I want to point is “make a prisoner of war.” If there is one thing I truly hope to communicate in this newsletter to anyone who may not know it is, once we accept Yeshua (Jesus) as our Lord and our Savior, we become a Daughter of God. We not only become a

¹ Wilson, Gareth. “3 Poachers Eaten by Lions in SouthAfrica.” *Zimbabwe Today*, 05 July 2018, <https://zimbabwe-today.com/3-poachers-eaten-by-lions-in-southafrica/>.

part of His family, but we become a part of His Kingdom, and there is a kingdom that stands opposed to God's Kingdom, and that is the kingdom of darkness. I know some may be thinking, "Who doesn't know that?" But, I know the first fourteen years or so of my "Christian" walk, I didn't fully understand that. I was so wrapped up in asking God for what I wanted, thought I needed, that I wasn't really focused on advancing His Kingdom. Honestly, I was all about advancing mine! And even when I hit the realization that this is about His kingdom and not mine, I'm pretty sure there were then, and there are now, times I've been like the man in the photo—running for my life from the Adversary, the roaring lion, trying to capture me alive.

As a matter of fact, as my cousin and I discussed this concept, we noted when we're alive in Christ and allow the devil to get us disobedient to God's Word, we allow our Adversary to take us captive – alive! We're alive, because we know the Lord. We're alive, because when God looks at us, He sees the blood of Yeshua covering us. We're alive, because through Christ, our sins are forgiven. BUT, Proverbs 16:18 tells us "The tongue can speak words that bring life or death. Those who love to talk must be ready to accept what it brings" (ERV). Another translation says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit" (NKJV).

Thus, one of the many ways we can find ourselves in disobedience to God's Word is when the confessions of our mouth glorify what our Adversary is doing to us more than they glorify what our Heavenly Father is doing in and through us by the power of His Holy Spirit and the Lordship of His Son in our lives. I say that to say, if we don't want to be captured alive by the enemy of our souls, then maybe, just maybe, we need to be mindful of the words we speak.

Granted, no one is perfect in speech. I know I'm not! As I said, I have this habit of opening mouth and inserting foot, but when it comes to how I perceive my circumstances, I like to bring the reality of what I'm looking at under the authority of what God says. Do things always change for me? Absolutely not! But, what does change is the peace I have in the midst of the storm, and the fruit of my words taste so much better than when I spew negativity like an oil gusher! In those moments, I'm spewing oil, but it sure isn't the oil of Holy Spirit. So, now I'm on a journey for Holy Spirit to take even more control of my mouth, so the words I speak can meet the need of others and be uplifting and edifying to ALL those who hear them. Hopefully, when I get to the next level in my journey with that, I'll send another Newsletter to give Abba Father all the glory He deserves.

In the meantime, the next thing I want to look at about this definition is the Greek word *zogreo*, because it's only used twice in the New Testament! That really caught my attention. So, let's take a quick look at those two verses in the New King James Version:

Luke 5:10: "...And Jesus said to Simon, "**Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.**" (bold and underline added)

2 Timothy 2:26: “and *that* they may come to their senses *and* escape the snare of the devil, having been taken **captive** by him to *do* his will. (bold and underline added)

I wanted to use this version to highlight how the Greek word *zogreo* was used in each of these verses. What stands out to me is that in Luke “catch” is referring to bringing others into the Kingdom. For those who may not know the story, please take a moment to read Luke 5:1-11 for the full context, but long story short, Luke had been fishing all night without catching anything, but after finally obeying Jesus’ command to “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch,” (5:4), Luke caught so many fish, they were breaking his net! Just a little side note, the word translated “catch” in this verse is not *zogreo*. It’s a totally different word that’s a noun to describe what you haul in. The word in Luke 5:10 and 2 Timothy 2:26 is a verb to describe an action. The main point is the use of *zogreo* mentioned in Luke 10 is related to bringing others into God’s Kingdom. On the other hand, *zogreo*, as used in 2 Timothy 2:26, describes how when we oppose God’s word and fail to repent, we are taken captive by the devil to do his will--in his kingdom--which takes me to the last thing I want to highlight about this definition!

When I thought about being a “prisoner of war,” I immediately thought about to all the times God allowed the Israelites to be taken captive because of their disobedience. They were prisoners of war to do the bidding of their captors. What better way for the enemy of our soul to get us to do his bidding than by the very words we speak! As a matter of fact, *zogreo* is related to two other Greek words; one of those words is used only once in the New Testament, and that’s in Mark 12:13: “Later, the Jewish leaders sent some Pharisees and some men from the group called Herodians. They wanted to **catch** him [Yeshua] saying something wrong” (bold and underline added)(ERV).

So, for every soul reading this Newsletter, to include, and most especially mine, I pray when the enemy sends a modern day Pharisee, Herodian,² or even a wolf in sheep’s clothing into our lives to “catch us saying something wrong,” we will be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16) in our speech, that we do not fling wide the gate that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13) granting our Adversary entrance into our lives! Father, I ask for forgiveness for every time I have allowed myself to be trapped by the enemy to do his will with the words of my mouth, and I thank You in advance for every time you set a guard over my mouth and keep watch over the door of my lips (Psalm 141:3) that my words will impart Your grace to all those who hear them! Amen!

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² For an explanation of the Pharisees and the Herodians, please copy and paste this link into your browser to visit “Got Questions.org): <https://www.gotquestions.org/Herodians.html>.