BREAKING THE SPIRIT OF OPPRESSION:

**Text: Exodus 1:8-14**

Exodus 1:8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

* Exodus 1:9 And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us.
* Exodus 1:10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land."
* Exodus 1:11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses.
* Exodus 1:12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel.
* Exodus 1:13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves
* Exodus 1:14 and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

**INTRO:**

* The opposite of freedom is oppression
* Freedom is the liberty to dominate the earth and fulfil God’s purpose without restricting others whilst they fulfil theirs.
* Freedom and oppression is like water and oil, they cannot go together.
* In fact the presence of oppression is the absence of freedom or vice versa.

**AIM:**

* FOR US TO UNDERSTAND OPPRESSION AND HAVE A BREAKTHROUGH FROM IT.

**I. WHAT IS OPPRESSION?**

* The imposition of external domination on another person to the point of controlling their physical, mental, and spiritual aspirations.
* Is the cancellation of self-determination and suffocation of personal potential.
* It is natural for us to fight for freedom when oppressed.
* When God gave us dominion, it was only for other creation but not to other human beings.
* Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."
* Oppression could also mean, human ruling another human.
* This was a direct result when we lost our dominion.
* Gen 3:16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire [shall be] for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

**II. THE NATURE OF OPPRESSION**

* The goal of oppression is to achieve complete control and domination over the human spirit.
* It attempts to destroy the desire for self-determination.
* This is done by a process mental conditioning called “breaking the spirit”.
* This is also called possessing the souThe soul consists of the mind, will, and emotions.
* The process usually begins with the restriction of physical freedom, movement, and exposure to the environment.
* The objective is to control physical environment so as to influence the mental, emotional, and spiritual state of the individual.
* This process also includes control of access to information and resources.
* John 15:15 "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.
* For oppression to be successful, it must be able to control the information content that enters your sub-conscious mind.
* Remember the Israelites problem, they were delivered but still possessing a slave/oppressed mind
* The ultimate goal of oppression is to dictate and control the sub-conscious mind.
* Ex. Eve was deceived by the devil

**III. THE EFFECTS OF OPPRESSION**

* Oppression begins with the destruction of an individual’s self-worth and sense of self.
* It destroys your sense of value and self-esteem.
* It breaks down your sense of purpose and meaning of life.
* It will breed hopelessness and despair.
* Self-doubt and depression becomes a lifestyle of the oppressed which leads to self-hatred, inferiority complex, fear of the oppressor.
* Due to forced labour, negative attitude to work, initiative, and motivation are developed
* Controlled lifestyles, schedules and activities ruin the spirit of creativity, constructive thinking, long range planning, & hope
* It goes down to dysfunctional leadership as it’s only either you are leading or being led by.
* This further leads to feeling of failure, frustration, and despair
* Due to depression, frustration, and failure, you will have develop anger and bitterness which is manifested in violent/antisocial behaviour, dysfunctional family relationships and domestic abuse.
* Oppression produces a deep spirit of dependency and lack of self-confidence.
* Worst of all, it will become a habit, a lifestyle, and way of living.
* In fact , oppression can become a norm among the oppressed, so much so that any attempt to thwart the oppression maybe seen as a threat to security.
* This was the reason why the Israelites were crying for freedom but on their way to it, they keep coming back.
* The final effect of oppression is the spirit of gratification at all cost.
* The passion for material possessions preoccupies their lives.

**IV. THE EFFECTS OF OPPRESSION ON THE OPPRESSOR**

* The oppressors are also oppressed with their perceptions , attitudes, and concepts developed from the oppressed.
* They suffer a false sense of security and sees his lifestyle threatened by the prospect of equality by the formerly oppressed.
* The oppressor derives his sense of superiority from the maintenance of the inferiority of the oppressed.

**V. UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF FREEDOM**

1. God always promises you freedom while you are still oppressed.
2. God always raise up a deliverer to bring the people of physical oppression.
3. God doesn’t take people from oppression straight to freedom.
4. God always leads the people into a stage of deliverance or wilderness stage.
5. First part of the wilderness phase is where the bless me club belongs.
6. The late part of the wilderness phase is the test bit as He wanted us to get rid of the oppressed mindset
7. God prefers people to die with their oppressed minds if they refused to change rather than taking them into the land of freedom with it.
8. When you arrived in your land of freedom, miracles stops and work and responsibility begins.

Ex. Joshua 5:11-12

1. In freedom you will milk the cow and scoop the beehive to enjoy Canaan’s milk & honey.
2. In the land of freedom, you will fight your own battle.
* Ex. Jericho
* Remember that deliverance is being released from the oppressors but freedom is deliverance from oppression.

**CHALLENGE:**

* Are you free from oppression?
* Is your mind not affected by oppression?

**CONCLUSION:**

* Ecclesiastes 7:7 Surely oppression destroys a wise [man's] reason, And a bribe debases the heart.