

# Inner Vows and Bitter Root Judgments

Recognizing and Releasing This "Snare of Innocence"

This teaching on inner vows and bitter root judgments is a practical application that companions the lessons set forth in "Matters of the Heart," our free [eCourse](#) for spiritual growth and emotional transformation. The 24 Main Healing Lessons from the course can be found in the downloads section in PDF and MP3 formats. They are also available in our [Store](#) as an eBook, a 176 page workbook and as CD and DVD sets of 24, 1/2 hour teachings.

## Bound by Rash Vows

### Free Will in a Real World

By the gift of free will God made us sovereign over our own hearts. This allows us to live in inner freedom even under conditions of outward bondage, as Paul and Silas experienced when in prison (Acts 16:25). However, it also creates the possibility that we will live with inner bondage even under conditions of outward freedom. Sometimes it is not the choices we make in the present that limit our freedom, but ones we have rashly made in the past.

**It is a snare for a man to devote rashly something as holy, And afterward to reconsider his vows.** Proverbs 20:25



### The Invasion of Innocence

We have been given free will in real world in which an invisible enemy has been at work to ensnare us as captives to his will (2 Timothy 2:24-26). One of the ways the evil one ensnares us is by the invasion of innocence. When hurt or injustice happened to us as children, if we were left uncovered (if there was no wise and understanding adult with us who was able to guide our heart through truth), we may have been led astray in our innocence and ignorance of God's ways into making inner vows suggested to us by temptation.

**Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge.** Isaiah 5:13

**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.** Hosea 4:6

Without knowledge we may also have formed bitter root judgments that caused us to make inner vows, thus placing our future in bondage and captivity to the past. This seems so entirely unfair! And yet God has created us in His image as a people of the word. Our words and the agreement of our wills with them have tremendous life-shaping power, whether we wish it were so or not.

**Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.** Proverbs 18:21



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## Inner Vows Backfire

Inner vows are misguided attempts to avoid repeating behaviors we reject or dislike in others or to avoid situations that we hate or fear (Such as: "I'll never speak in public again!" or "I'll never become a drunk like my father!"). They can be a way of trying to break generational patterns or correct our behavior in our own strength—but the bitter root judgment binds us to the pattern and the vow inadvertently puts all the burden of transformation on self instead of upon the Lord and therefore blocks the one who vowed from being able to receive the grace (God's help) needed to overcome the behavior. Inner vows, like outer vows, are very binding as the scriptures reveal:

**When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.** Deuteronomy 23:21-23

**Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You.** Psalms 56:12

**When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed — Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.** Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

## The Way of Escape

Fortunately, the Lord our Father and Husband has preserved a way to annul our rash vows prompted by the enemy's deceptions, by bringing them to Him (see Numbers 30:1-8). If we are willing to repent of any bitter judgements that may have prompted us to make the rash vow in the first place, forgiving all concerned and giving the situation entirely to the Lord for Him to redeem, then we can with confidence repent of and renounce the inner vow and command it to be broken off of us.

Discernment and recollection are needed. The only difficult part to breaking inner vows is realizing where we have made them. Ask the Lord for discernment and recollection. Discernment because there are vows that we may have made as freewill offerings to Him—these we would be wise to keep. Recollection because there may be other vows that the enemy used to bring us into agreement with his plans for our life that have been hidden by him in our forgetfulness—these the Father disallows if we renounce them.

## One More to Explore

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