



*"You adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world [system] is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world [system] is the enemy of God."*

– James 4:4

## STOCKHOLM SYNDROME AMERICA'S CAPTIVITY

### FORMING A BOND

Stockholm Syndrome indicates a break in a person's conscience. The label came from an incident in 1973 when four people were taken hostage during a bank robbery in Stockholm, Sweden. They were held captive for six days. After their release, the victims defended their former captors and refused to testify in court against them. In fact, they became sympathetic toward their former captors and helped raise money to support them. They had formed a mental bond with their captors during their captivity.

But why would a captive sympathize with his captors? In answering this question I hope to address a large problem manifesting itself here in America.

### A COPING MECHANISM

How does it work? Stockholm Syndrome is a psychological response to fear; a mechanism whereby people attempt to cope with their own fear or lack of courage. When people give in to an enemy without a fight, it is not uncommon for them to try to justify their actions.

By defending their captors and their crimes, they claim that what happened was OK. They don't want to appear as weak or cowardly, so they claim they were converted to their captors' point of view. In essence they say they came to agree with their captors' motives.

Thus, the victims feign a psychological alliance with their captors. That becomes their excuse to justify their action, or lack thereof, that any other time would be seen as wrong and cowardly.

People who succumb to Stockholm Syndrome can also develop a dysfunctional conscience and lose their ability to distinguish between enemies and friends; good and evil.

Our minds (our egos) don't like to admit defeat, weakness, or cowardice. When we ignore obvious standards ... when we choose to passively align with bad people or evil

systems, it damages our consciences ... when we turn away from common sense and defend evil people or systems as if they are our friends, it may be a symptom of Stockholm Syndrome.

By refusing to face the fact that we have voluntarily and passively sided with an enemy and have agreed to support things that are morally wrong, we are just lying to ourselves. If we lack courage or conviction to resist that which should be resisted, we may excuse ourselves by claiming to see benefit in the misdeeds. We side with our enemies. In effect, that turns us into our own enemy.

Some notable evil things that Americans defend and work for are the usury banking system, the government, the churches, the public school systems, police, courts, prisons, wars, immoral corporate powers, etc..

Common excuses: *"I do what I have to do. We have no choice. I have to make a living don't I? Everyone else does it so I'll lose out if I don't do it. I can't go live in a cave."*

Ever hear these excuses?

Now these excuses may be true, but they don't justify becoming a "friend of the Beast System." We may find ourselves in situations that we can't avoid, but we don't have to defend those who force those situations upon us. We don't have to defend evil institutions in an attempt to fit in. We may try to call it "making the best of a bad situation." Some folks think, to their hurt, that they can work the system to their own advantage. But Paul tells us in Galatians 6:7 that God is not mocked, we reap what we sow.

The rulers know that people quickly cave in to threats and can't "think outside the box" to resist systemic tyranny. They try to conform and that makes them captives.

### WHEN IN ROME

You might have heard the saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans." I never liked that saying. It is tantamount to saying, "When it is to your advantage, be a thief." I don't think God would approve of it.

Moses went to Egypt, but he resisted becoming an Egyptian. In fact God enabled him to rescue the Children of Israel out of their Egyptian bondage. The Children of Israel had been praying to God for relief from the Egyptian system, and that was probably why God sent Moses. The Children of Israel were captives and slaves to the Egyptian system. As slaves they were forced to work on the Pharaoh's projects. But they didn't become Egyptians. They hated their captivity. They prayed for deliverance.

23. *And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.*

24. *And God heard their groaning ...*

25. *And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.*

Exodus 2:23-25

And God said:

5. *And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.*

6. *Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:*

7. *And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*

Exodus 6:5-7

The result was that God heard their prayers and delivered them from Egypt. Do you think He would have sent Moses if the Children of Israel hadn't resisted their captivity? What if they had defended their Egyptian captors?

Abraham was another example of someone who had no country. He received the call from God and sojourned in strange lands in faith of God's promise. He did not become a citizen in those lands, and he didn't develop a psychological connection to the rulers there.

8. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles [tents] with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:*

Hebrews 11:8-9

13. *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and*

*confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth [land].*

14. *For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country [fatherland].*

15. *And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.*

16. *But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city [New Jerusalem].*

Hebrews 11:13-16

23. *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

24. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

26. *Preferring the reproach of the anointed [Children of Israel] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he was looking unto the reward. \**

27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for as seeing the unseen, he persevered. \**

Hebrews 11:23-27

Moses valued his heritage and considered God's approval to be of greater value than anything the Egyptians had to offer. The Egyptians must have thought Moses was crazy to not appreciate the mighty Egyptian system. After all, the Egyptian system offered power and comforts ... like the temptations offered to Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11).

The writer of Hebrews continues:

32. *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:*

33. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,*

34. *Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

35. *Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better raising.\**

36. *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings,*

*yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

37. *They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;*
38. *Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*
39. *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:*

Hebrews 11:32-39

These all chose to not seek after the Beast Systems of their day. For us, faith in the right things makes life valuable. Jesus offers us the opportunity to believe in, and stand for, the right things. He invites us to be citizens of New Jerusalem under his Kingship RIGHT NOW. He doesn't force us. As it was with Adam, we make the choice for ourselves. If we believe man's system (the Beast System) has more to offer than Christ's system, we can choose to accept our slavery to the Beast System. We can do that if it is what we want and believe in.

But if we prefer to believe in Jesus, and if we think citizenship in his system offers a better hope, then we can opt to choose that. But it takes courage and conviction.

## JESUS AND THE APOSTLES

Jesus and the apostles lived in lands that were not their own ... lands that were under Roman rule. But they did not seek to be Romans. They were not spiritually loyal to Caesar. Thus, they lived as strangers in foreign lands. Paul had acquired Roman citizenship earlier in his life, but after meeting Jesus he no longer thought like a Roman.

This is what we can learn today. Jesus and the apostles were outcasts from Roman society, but they managed to eat, travel, clothe and house themselves. They rejected the "advantages" of the Beast System because they knew to not trust them. Jesus and the apostles knew this.

In Daniel 1:8-16 we read of the benefits of choosing the simple healthy lifestyle rather than seeking Babylon's "luxuries." Some people may think that rejecting the Beast System's ways will put them at a disadvantage. But the opposite is true. Doing what's right is always better.

So what are we to learn from these examples? Just this: the Beast System's temptations (as in the case of Adam) are deceptions. They tempt us only if our minds are already prepared to embrace deception.

In Matthew 10:28 Jesus instructs his disciples to not fear them that can only do physical harm, but rather fear them that can harm the soul (i.e., destroy what your life stands for). When people control and destroy your "soul" (kill your convictions) that is true devastation.

Life is full of lessons to educate us. They are good for us if we learn from them. Learning hard lessons is preferable to wasting our lives by accommodating our enemies,

patronizing them, and voluntarily becoming one of them.

## WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Being proud to be a US citizen is a sad footnote to a wasted life. We are supposed to be citizens of New Jerusalem, not patriots of the Beast System. Our loyalty and obligations are to New Jerusalem ... not to the USA.

Life is fleeting. We have only a few years to step up to the plate and stand for what is right. We are given opportunities to invest our lives in those good principles. We must not waste our years neglecting to take these opportunities. If we waste our short lifespan chasing after the fake shiny things thrown at us by the Beast System, then we've wasted our chances to stand for what is right ... for the One to whom we owe our best. The One who gave his ALL so we could have that chance to make something of our lives and to show our love and loyalty ... to make our lives count for something.

Paul stated it this way:

26. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air [missing the target]:*
27. *But I keep under my body [discipline myself], and bring myself into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.\**

1 Corinthians 9:26-27

Most Americans these days are beating the air. They are wasting their lives trying to fit in with a system that is godless and hopeless. This is the thing we must avoid. Hopefully we can be ready to give a good witness to anyone seeking the path of New Jerusalem. If we can show strength to people who need strength, that is a good thing.

15. *... be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear:*
16. *Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.*
17. *For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.*

1 Peter 3:15-17

What were Jesus' words?

18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,*

Luke 4:18

This was the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. He sent them out as "sheep among wolves" (Matthew 10:16).

Jesus taught them how to be in the world, but not of the world ... and how to deal with Romans and Jews. Jesus and his friends were not children of Rome. Nonetheless, they walked in Roman lands. But learning how to avoid traps was necessary to be "wise as serpents" and yet not become serpents (Romans). They learned how to deal with enemy traps, like the one they faced at the border of Capernaum.

24. *And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?*
25. *He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?*
26. *Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.*
27. *Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*

Matthew 17:24-27

The lesson here is that they really weren't children of the systems that controlled those lands. Jesus and his friends were strangers in foreign lands. Therefore, they needed to pick their battles wisely, weighing which ones were necessary at the time. Apparently, Jesus thought that a fight with a border tax collector at that time would not serve their larger purpose. So, rather than create a scene, He had Peter go find a coin in a fish's mouth and use it to pay the tribute so they could go their way and address more important things. They didn't feel obligated to pay the tax, but they were in foreign lands that were under Beast Systems.

## STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS

As citizens of New Jerusalem we are giving our lives and loyalty to our Reigning King Jesus. We are not citizens of the Beast System ... even though our residence is in it, and controlled by it. Like Jesus and the apostles, who were NOT of the systems of the lands in which they resided ... we, today, are not citizens of this man-made system in which we reside. We are forced to deal with it, but we are not of it. We owe it NOTHING. So we don't trust it, and we don't voluntarily give ourselves to it. Like Jesus, we pick our fights so as to retain our faith and do the most good possible. In Jesus' case the Beast System, operating through the Jews and the Romans, murdered Him. Other men and women of faith have been murdered by the Beast System.

We, today, don't know if we will be murdered by the Beast System, imprisoned, or have our properties taken from us. Regardless of what the Beast System may do to us, we cannot trust it or put our faith in it.

It will serve us well to remember the words of Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego as recorded in the Book of Daniel. They were threatened by Nebuchadnezzar that they would be thrown into a fiery furnace unless they submitted and were loyal to the king of Babylon.

13. *Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.*
14. *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?*
15. *... if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*
16. *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.*
17. *If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.*
18. *But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

Daniel 3:13-18

As it turned out, God sent a messenger and saved them from the flames of the furnace. But their allegiance to God was more powerful than their fear of the Beast System.

This is the kind of faith that we see so little of today. Most people today, even those who claim to know Christ, are more concerned about pleasing the Beast System than about pleasing God. They spend their days, their lives, chasing after the shiny things of the Beast System, trying to build their security there, rather than in God's system.

But what did Jesus teach us?

30. *For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.*
31. *But rather seek ye his kingdom; and these things shall be added unto you.\**

Luke 12:30-31

Today's American captivity is, in principle, is much like the old Egyptian captivity. However, it seems that Americans are more prone to Stockholm Syndrome. They are not even aware of God's system. They only seek to advance in the Beast System. Unlike Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego they are bowing down to the idol ... making themselves friends of the world system rather than friends of God.

*Ben Williams*

[\* Scriptures ending with an asterisk have translation corrections.]