

"And the Children of Israel did evil again in The Sight of the LORD; and The LORD Delivered them into the hand of the Philistines Forty Years." Judges 13:1 KJV



Four is the biblical number of trial or testing. Jesus Was in the desert forty days and nights without food or water before He Was tried by Satan. Satan is a coward. He won't attack until you're weak. Often four is multiplied by ten or a hundred. Many times in Scripture you'll find it associated with punishment or trial. The first instance is the forty days and nights of rain preceding the flood. Israel spent four hundred and thirty years in Egypt as slaves. Then there were the first forty years of wilderness testing Israel endured until they came to Canaan and the next forty years of purging the unbelievers from the congregation. Then, Israel did not drive out the Canaanites as God Commanded. He Promised, *"They will be thorns in your side."* They didn't and God Allowed the Philistines to enslave them forty years. This is a picture of tolerated sin in a believer's life. It isn't God Who Tries us as much as the consequences of our sin and disobedience. Keep short accounts with God. Don't wait til the end of the day. You may forget. As soon as the Spirit of Truth Makes you aware, repent of sin and confess it; even in the middle of your favorite show. Prayer is to be constant. *"Pray without ceasing."* Why not avail yourself immediately of the Cleansing That Empowers you with the Righteousness of God? *"If we confess our sins, He Is Faithful And Just To Forgive us our sins, AND To Cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness."* If you get slime on your hands, do you leave it there all day? Is sin's filth less repugnant upon your soul? Unconfessed sin is the *"Canaanite in the land"* that will vex you. It will be a millstone; dragging you into the slime pit of sin and bondage. You will walk about in captivity instead of the Glorious Victory of the Liberated Saint. Faith Is The Victory That Overcomes, but Faith Is Evidenced by obedience. Righteous works/obedience will never gain Salvation nor Forgiveness, but Righteous works will verify both. *"Even so, Faith without works is dead."* If you claim to be a Christ-ian (follower of Christ) and tolerate sin, you are taking God's Name in vain. *"The LORD Will Not Hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain."* Israel had taken God's Name, but not followed His Commands. God Will Deal with you the same as He Dealt with Israel if you disobey. He'll Let you reap the consequences of your sin by withholding His Hand of Deliverance; Letting you wallow in the slime of your own captivity until you repent. True repentance is being repulsed by your sin and forsaking it. If you do not forsake it, you are not truly repulsed by it and you are still disobedient!

Captivity begins with sin,
Its cruel trial never ends,
Until repentance seeks God's face,
Forsaking all but righteousness! –CGP

Don't build altars to Baal in your life by adopting worldly habits. The entertainment industry is the biggest Canaanite of all for most believers. You'll have no time to visit the carnival booths of Vanity Fair if you fill your time with Godly pursuits like *"the ministry of the saints: Pray without ceasing; In everything give thanks; Preach the Gospel to every creature; Quench not the Spirit; Study to show thyself approved unto God, meditating Therein day and night; Casing down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God;"* and the list continues. If you truly make an effort to *"do all to The Glory of God,"* you'll have little time to build altars to Baal!

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8 KJV