

Have you heard of a “roommate lock?” Usually it is a feature or a device that prevents a container from being opened easily. But it is also fairly easy to break the lock. The roommate lock is not intended to protect valuable things from getting stolen. It is to prevent someone that you generally trust (e.g. a roommate) from pilfering something that you may not notice if it, or some of it, goes missing. My favorite example of this is the “ice cream lock.” It is a ring that locks around a pint of ice cream. Knowing the correct combination gives one easy access to the treat inside. If your roommate does not know the combination to unlock the ring, then right next to the spoon in the drawer is a knife that will readily cut open the paper container. **Easy access to the loot!** But most likely, the roommate only wanted to steal a couple of bites, and not get caught. These devices are theft deterrents and there are many of them in the world around us. Often, they are implemented to prevent the phenomenon of inanimate things “growing legs.” This happens when someone uses a common object and does not replace it when they are done. I implemented a type of this prevention in my house to **protect myself from myself!** I think I own 6 or 8 tape measures. They always grow legs and move around, but with so many in the house, when in need, I can usually find one quickly. I have heard of people deploying the same technique with reading glasses. If you have enough of them, there will always be one or more within easy reach. Surely you have been to the bank, or the post office, or some such place where signing your name is very common. I think a pen is the most common object to grow legs. People unconsciously hold on to the pen when they are done and put it in their pocket, unintentionally stealing it. So, someone a long time ago invented the pen tether. That is, a string or chain that prevents the pen from growing legs. Another example is the key to unlock a public bathroom at a gas station; it might be tethered to something large and awkward, so people don’t accidentally put the key in their pocket and leave with it. Many things get a tether: pens, dogs, drill chuck keys, sample products at a store, balloons, kites, lobster traps, boats not underway, camera lens caps, astronauts, ironworkers, deep sea divers... For the most part, a tether prevents something or someone from getting lost.

*"He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. (Genesis 49:11)*

Genesis 49 is a prophetic poem given by Jacob when he called his 12 sons to bless them. Verse 11 is addressing Judah. There is a bit of wonder at **why anyone would tether an herbivore to a choice grape vine**. Surely you would expect the animal to eat the fruit, the leaves, or even the bark of the plant, possibly destroying the it. But, the meaning of the scripture is a little clearer when examined through symbolism and after conducting an elementary word study. Based on the meanings of the words provided by Strong’s concordance, the passage could be written as, “Judah tethers the strong, newly trained progeny of his gentle offspring to the source of the best fruit.” I think the imagery of a young beast munching on choice grapes is a striking scene that the reader will remember and contemplate. When we remember God’s Word and contemplate it, we will grow. The point of the message here that I want to examine is that of the tether. How does a tether apply to us today?

As a baby grows inside a mother’s womb, it is necessarily tethered to her by the umbilical cord. This cord provides everything the baby needs to develop into an individual person. When the baby is born, the umbilical cord is cut; it is no longer needed. The baby has developed to a point where oxygen and blood and nutrients can be gathered and processed without the cord. While this separation allows for the freedom to move around, explore, and further develop, **the child continues to be completely dependent on the mother**. As we develop our spiritual lives here, while living in this physical world, we

require a similar tether that connects us with God. All that we need for proper development comes from Him and through this connection. That connection is the Messiah.

*"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. **"I am the vine, you are the branches;** he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (John 15:4-7)*

I am seeing that this physical life, this walk through the wilderness, is like our gestation period for development in the womb. **Here and now is where we are protected and nourished.** This life is where we are allowed the time and space to develop into a new creature. At the end of our development we will be re-born in a twinkling of an eye.

*Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)*

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus \*said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (John 3:3-7)*

When that day comes, surely we will need God as much as a newborn needs its mother. Our dependence on Him will always be essential to our existence. But until that day, we require a tether, a lifeline for survival. **Without the proper connection, we will perish.** Our connection to God that supplies us with spiritual nutrients and oxygen is our relationship with Messiah.

*Jesus \*said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)*

Seek out and nurture your relationship with the Son of God. He, your brother, will walk with you through this life. He will always be there to listen to your trouble, celebrate your victories, give you advice, carry your load, warn you of danger, help you decide, heal your sickness, strengthen your weakness, guide your steps, light your path, provide you with all you need, and love you unconditionally. **He is your adult umbilical cord.** Doing so is not difficult, in fact it is super-simple. But it will not be done for you. You need to seek, but if you do, there is a promise that you will find. You need to knock, but if you do, there is a promise that the door will be opened. God does not want that any of His children perish but that all would come to repentance.

*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. (Colossians 3:2)*

Peace to you and glory to God!

-Nate

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