

Rebellion and Redemption

"A man owned a dog named Itisi (pronounced I-tis-e) which he loved very much. [**SHOW SIGN WITH CORRECT SPELLING.**] He fed Itisi well and trained him to be obedient. However, Itisi became restless and longed for total freedom instead of obedience. He didn't want anyone to tell him what to do. "The master recognized that temptation and could have tied his dog to a tree, but who wants a dog chained like a criminal? That's no fun for the dog. Neither is it a joy for the owner if he can't trust his own dog. Therefore, he decided to let Itisi make the choice. The dog was not locked up but was given freedom in the back yard. Only when they walked in the neighborhood was the leash used. "Sure enough. One day Itisi decided to escape by jumping over the fence. He never noticed that his collar caught on the fence and torn off. His master's name was no longer on his neck.

"Itisi roamed the alleys and the streets confident that his new life was better than his past. He didn't worry about the damage he caused in Mrs. Smith's garden. So what if he tore open bags of garbage? Who cared if he scattered trash while seeking food from Mr. Jones' garbage cans? "Itisi thought it funny how angry the neighborhood mothers became when he pulled their laundry from clotheslines. He enjoyed his freedom and learned bad things from new friends in his dog pack. Now he didn't have to obey anyone! He could do anything he wanted.

"In those days Itisi did not realize that his once sleek fur was becoming shabby No longer was he the clean and healthy dog of his past. He had changed! With no owner to discipline him or love him, Itisi was a different dog.

"One day Itisi needed the leash that wasn't there anymore. He had played too rough with some mean children, and before he knew what happened he

bit a boy Angry neighbors cornered him and soon the dogcatcher carried him to the pound where he awaited death.

"Itisi had broken all the rules. Now he had to pay for his sins. His only hope was the master he had fled. But he couldn't escape to run home and plead for help. Itisi couldn't even tell the dogcatcher his master's name. If only he still had his collar on which was written his master's name. How proud he would be to wear it again. "Now it seemed too late. Tomorrow he must die! If only his master could find and rescue him. The end was near.

"Then he heard the wonderful sound of familiar footsteps. It was indeed his master! The man was very sad as he looked down on his beloved dog. He hardly recognized this thin, dirty dog. Would he be willing to pay a big price to redeem Itisi? He was!

"Now it was Itisi's turn to decide. The dogcatcher explained the plan. Itisi must accept the leash and obey his master. If not, he must die. And of course, Itisi decided to accept the pardon on those terms.

"In the story whom does the master represent? Who is Itisi? Hint! That's a strange name for a dog. [**SHOW SECOND SIGN. IT IS I.**]

"Itisi rebelled against his master so he could go his own way He didn't want to belong to an owner. Do you ever want to run away so you won't have to obey others responsible for you?

"The master redeemed his dog. This means to buy back. When Jesus died on the cross, He made possible our redemption. He didn't wait until we were perfect. Like the dog's master, Jesus accepted us as we are. 'But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.'

Romans 5:8