

Message Notes

“Let My People Go: I Have Plans for Them”

Exodus 1:1-14

February 16, 2014

The Presence We Seek: God’s Compassion

◆ “It’s Good to Be Silver” (A Short Story)

He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.

(Malachi 3:3a ESV)

The Place of God’s Salvation: A Kingdom of Mystery and Misery

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt.

(Exodus 1:1-5 ESV)

◆ Where His People Were Found

◆ The Situation That Drove a Patriarch

◆ A Favorite in the Family

◆ A Famine in the Land

◆ The Sins That Defined This People

◆ The Savior Who Delivered on His Promise

Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

(Exodus 1:6-7 ESV)

“That I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.”

(Genesis 17:2 ESV)

Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And the LORD made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes.

(Psalm 105:23-24 ESV)

◆ Where His Plans Were Fashioned

◆ Using Pharaoh’s Fears

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.”

(Exodus 1:8-10 ESV)

◆ Hebrews: From Privilege to Persecution

◆ Egyptians: From Partnership to Prejudice and Peril

“Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and take possession of the land.”

(Exodus 1:10 Douglas Stuart Translation)

◆ **Overcoming Hebrew Tears**

Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens.

They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

(Exodus 1:11-14 ESV)

◆ **Oppression – “From shepherds to slaves.”**

◆ **Exhaustion – “Their cruel labor in building entire cities.”**

◆ **Depletion – “Left little time for family or farming.”**

“So the Egyptians made the children of Israel *work with rigor* and made their lives bitter with hard *service* in mortar and brick and in all kinds of *work* in the field, in addition to all their (other) *work*, wherein they made them *serve with rigor*.”

(Exodus 1:14 Umberto Cassuto Translation)

◆ **Where His Preparations Were Finalized**

◆ **His Chosen Not Forgotten**

◆ **Egyptian Culpability**

◆ **Everyone Under Curse**

◆ **Everywhere God Controls**

◆ **His Chosen Were Forged Into a Community (Acts 13:17)**

◆ **His Chosen Could Forsake Egypt**

“God saw the suffering of His people and then delivered them. But why did He allow the suffering to happen in the first place? Could He not rather have simply prevented it? . . . If He had done so, would the Israelites have ever desired to leave Egypt? It was hard enough to get them to leave even when they were suffering. . . . It is hard enough for us to leave aside the treasures of this evil world even though we suffer in it. How much harder is it for us to desire the new heavens and new earth when our lives here are comfortable?”

(Dan McCartney)

◆ **His Chosen Could Be Forever Grateful**

“My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, subjecting us to harsh labor. Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; . . . Then you and the Levites and the foreigners residing among you shall rejoice in all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household.”

(Deuteronomy 26:5b-9, 11 NIV)

◆ **His Chosen Could Be Always Trusting**

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance.

(Romans 5:3 ESV)

“The first thing to emerge are the baby giraffe’s front hooves and head. A few minutes later, the plucky newborn calf is hurled forth, falls ten feet and lands on its back. Within seconds, he rolls to an upright position with his legs tucked under his body. . . . The mother giraffe lowers her head long enough to take a quick look. Then she positions herself directly over her calf. She waits for about a minute, and then she does the most unreasonable thing. She swings her long, pendulous leg outward and kicks her baby, so that it is sent sprawling head over heels. When it doesn’t get up, the violent process is repeated over and over again. . . . Why? She wants it to remember how it got up. . . . There have been many times when it seemed that I had just stood up after a trial, only to be knocked down again by the next. It was God helping me remember how it was that I got up, urging me always to walk with Him, in His shadow, under His care.”

(Gary Richmond’s “A View from the Zoo”)