

"Slavery in Egypt"

Part 1

Exodus 1

**Introduction:** Tonight, we begin a study of the life of the greatest leader that Israel ever had, his name was Moses. The Bible gives to us glimpses of his character in several verses.

**Deuteronomy 33:1**

*And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.*

Here we see that Moses is referred to as a MAN OF GOD. Moses' obituary spoke of his greatness for it says,

**Deuteronomy 34:10**

*<sup>10</sup> And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,*

His greatness gets an exclamation mark placed upon it by God Himself when God tells us Moses was a picture of the coming Messiah.

**Deuteronomy 18:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup> And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.*

*<sup>18</sup> I will raise them up a Prophet[Jesus Christ] from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.*

Moses was a man of great faith but he was also a man like Elijah in that he was a man like passions as we are.

**James 5:17a**

*<sup>17</sup> Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...*

Moses too was the very same way. Notice the words of F. B. Meyer as he high lights this truth:

*"Moses was a man like other men; with great qualities that needed to be developed and improved; with flaws that veined the pure marble of his character; with deficiencies that had rendered him powerless but for the all-sufficient grace that he learned to appropriate."*

This truth about Moses is not stated to discredit Moses and water down his greatness. Rather it is to encourage us that we, too, can by faith accomplish great things for God. Moses lived in our world and had the same struggles with the flesh as we do.

As we approach the first chapter of Exodus, we are going to be exposed to the need for a great leader to arise from the people of Israel. We are going to begin our study by looking at the details of what Israel was experiencing in the land of Egypt. It is not a glamorous picture, but it is reality and we need to see it because it has much application for our day today. Let me show you the words of Butler on Exodus 1:

*"When man turns from God and serves his own base passions, he can become like a brute beast in his treatment of his fellow man. Though society be educated, sophisticated, and computerized, without God it can become a jungle in morals and manners."*

This is certainly where we are in our society today. Very sophisticated and over computerized and brutal toward fellowman.

## **I. Israel's Presence in Egypt**

### **Notice Exodus 1:1-5**

To grasp the full picture, we need to answer some questions about Israel in Egypt.

#### **1. What was the reason why Israel was in Egypt?**

Israel was there because of a severe seven-year famine. Joseph had been sold by his brothers into slavery because they hated him. God had a plan however for Joseph and he used 13 years of Joseph's life to teach and to train him to be the Prime Minister of Egypt. When Joseph became second in command in Egypt, he prepared for the seven years of famine by stockpiling grain from seven years of plenty. When the famine hit his brothers and his fathers were in Canaan and needed food. They heard that Egypt had much grain so Jacob sent his sons to buy grain not knowing they would be dealing with Joseph. Eventually Joseph moved his brothers to Egypt and there they stayed. So, this is how Israel ended up in Egypt.

#### **Lesson:**

What started out as a great tragedy ended up being a great blessing. Our Lord is the Master of taking our darkest of circumstances and using them to bring us the greatest of light. Romans 8:28

#### **2. In what region did Israel dwell in Egypt?**

**Genesis 47:1**

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

Jacob and his family were given prime land in Egypt. They were permitted to settle in Goshen. This was a very fertile area water by the Nile River. It was perfect for their flocks and herds for there was much grass for grazing. It would be in this area that Israel would remain for over 400 years.

**Lesson:**

God knows where to put us to provide for our specific needs at the time they are especially needed.

**II. Israel's Productivity in Egypt**

**Notice Exodus 1:7**

*<sup>7</sup> And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.*

This productivity of Israel was the fulfillment of the promise which God had given to Jacob when he and his family were moving to Egypt.

**Genesis 46:1-3**

*And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.*

*<sup>2</sup> And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.*

*<sup>3</sup> And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:*

This promise gives to us some very important lessons for our everyday lives.

**1. The PLACE of fulfillment.**

**Genesis 46:3**

*<sup>3</sup> And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:*

It was God's will that Jacob and his family travel to Egypt and it would be "THERE" that God would fulfill His promise of blessing. If they would not have remained "THERE" then they would have missed the blessing of this fulfillment.

**Lesson:**

Let us learn from Israel that we must be in the place where God desires for us to be if we are going to receive His blessings. We must be "THERE", in the middle of the will of God if we are going to receive the blessings from Him. Let us notice the Words which God gave to Jeremiah:

**Jeremiah 18:1-2**

*The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,*

*<sup>2</sup> Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.*

Jeremiah had to go to the potter's house to hear the Word of the Lord. So, he had to be "THERE" in the middle of the will of God.

Let me get you back to Israel again, it would be in Egypt where they would receive the blessings of the Lord. But there is more. It would be in the place of great suffering that they would receive the blessings of the promise of God.

This is what we have been talking about on Wednesday evenings in our study of Romans 8. It is sometimes the will of God that we go through the furnace of affliction. Let me show you how God described Egypt when Israel was there.

**Deuteronomy 4:20**

*<sup>20</sup> But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.*

God saw Egypt as the iron furnace. It was in that iron furnace that God would bless them because they were in the middle of His will.

This is why surrender is so important in our lives. Too many times we do everything we can to escape the iron furnace not considering that it might just be God's will for us to be there, not considering that in the furnace we may receive great blessings.

It is so important that we be "THERE"/wherever God's will is for you to be, so that we do not miss the blessing of God upon our lives. "THERE" may not exactly be where we desire to be, but wherever "THERE" is that is where we will receive the blessing. "THERE" is certainly the best place for us to be.

**2. The PATIENCE of fulfillment.**

Jacob and his family did not become a nation overnight. It took a long time. Let me show you the words God spoke to Abram.

**Genesis 15:13**

*<sup>13</sup> And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;*

Jacob started with just seventy souls and it would take some four hundred years to become a mighty people and a great nation.

**Lesson:**

Our flesh is so impatient when it comes to God's promises. If the promise is not fulfilled quickly then we complain and doubt the faithfulness of God. We often to be reminded of the exhortation given to the Hebrew believers.

**Hebrews 10:36**

*<sup>36</sup> For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

**III. Israel's Pollution in Egypt**

Israel was in Egypt, but they were to stay separated from the spiritual pollution of Egypt. But many did not do so well at staying separated. Let me show you some verses:

**Joshua 24:14**

*<sup>14</sup> Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.*

From these words we can see that Israel became involved in idolatry while in Egypt. We see more evidence of this in Ezekiel.

**Ezekiel 20:6-8**

*<sup>6</sup> In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:*

*<sup>7</sup> Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

<sup>8</sup> *But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.*

Israel had become so attached to their idols in Egypt that God had to turn up the heat in the iron furnace in order to get them to leave. We would think they would have been more than willing to leave the slavery of Egypt, but sin had a grip on their lives. It was not long after they left Egypt that we read the account of the golden calf at Sinai. The idolatry had become rooted in Israel, so Israel not only needed to be taken out of Egypt, but Egypt also needed to be taken out of Israel. We can all agree that Israel came out of Egypt much quicker and easier than Egypt came out of Israel.

**Application:**

All of this should cause us to step back and take a look at our own lives. Egypt was a land of ease and luxury [much like where we live today] and it encouraged spiritual and moral decay in undisciplined people. Goshen would especially provide a life of ease and pleasure for it was a fertile land and a warm climate. Notice the words of F. B. Meyer:

*"Beneath the seductive influences of the Egyptian climate their character became greatly relaxed."*

I can assure you this has happened to many believers in our day. I have known believers to say they are not ready to see the return of Jesus Christ because they are having too much fun in their life on this earth. That, by the way, is a worldly believer.

**1 John 2:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

<sup>16</sup> *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

<sup>17</sup> *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

This brings to my mind the words of Paul in Romans:

**Romans 12:1-2**

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

<sup>2</sup> And **be not conformed to this world**: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Notice the words of Butler:

*"Material blessings and advantages are not wrong in themselves; but when they are used to pamper the flesh instead of promote the spirit, character will be destroyed. When this happens, God is forced to bring many and mighty afflictions upon folk in order to bring them back to Him even as He afflicted Israel in Egypt."*

**Conclusion:**

Israel needed a leader who was strong and separated to lead them out of the slavery they were in. We live in a world that is full of people who are enslaved to sin and just as there was a need for Moses to step up and be a leader so there is a need for separated people to stand up and be used of God to lead people to Jesus Christ where they can be freed from sin and self. That is what we are called to do.