

"Slavery in Egypt"

Part 3

Exodus 1

Introduction: Last week in our study of Exodus 1 we were looking at the new king in Egypt who knew not Joseph. This one change of power changed everything for the people of Israel. This king's lack of knowledge pertaining to Joseph and Joseph's God proved to be the ruin of the king and the Egyptians. Because of the new king's lack of knowledge about God he was not able to make a wise analysis and decision concerning Israel.

Notice Exodus 1:8-10a

He exaggerated when he said Israel was more and mightier than the Egyptians. This man was under the influence of Satan and he wanted to cause the people of Egypt to be fearful of the people of Israel because he had a plan to afflict them severely and he needed to get the people on his side. So, he makes an untrue statement about Israel and because of his position the people of Egypt believe what he says and so the door to persecution has been opened as we shall see.

Let me just remind you that there are alarmists in every society. Their goal is to strike fear within the people because people who are afraid will often submit to the philosophies of the alarmists. This new king announced to the Egyptians that Israel was becoming a threat and a danger, and the people believed the announcement and they became the instruments of affliction.

Last week we stopped as we were looking at the last point, so we are going to pick up where we left off.

I. The Plan of the King Part 2

Notice Exodus 1:10a

In his blindness the king believed he was acting wisely but we know that his actions were "crafty".

Acts 7:17-19

¹⁷ But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

¹⁸ Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

¹⁹ The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

The word "subtilly" means "crafty". Notice the words of Matthew Henry:

"When men deal wickedly, it is common for them to imagine that they deal wisely."

The king's actions were far from wise for they alienated the very people he should have sought as allies.

Application:

We see so much of this today in our world. People use many means of deception, which they refer to as wisdom, to gain this world's riches. They do it for power, prestige, money, position and possessions. But what they do not understand is that there is coming a day when their means and their motives will come to fruition. They will eventually reap what they sow.

Galatians 6:7-8

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Now, it is also important to note that we as believers can also get caught up in craftiness. We can allow the flesh to control us and we can begin to argue against the will of God. We can come up with some crafty arguments to justify sin in our lives. I have heard crafty arguments about how it is "OK" to marry an unsaved person, how it is "OK" to leave your spouse because you could not agree on certain things, how it is "OK" to forsake the church as long as you read your Bible and pray, how it is "OK" to practice deception because everyone else does it and the arguments go on and on.

We need to keep in mind what Paul wrote in Galatians 6 because we will reap that which we sow. No one can set themselves against the will of God without colliding with consequences connected to their decisions.

Notice Exodus 1:10-13

The Egyptians afflicted them with burdens, and they made them serve with rigor. Let me show you what Rawlinson says concerning the word "rigor" in verse 13:

"The meaning of the word "rigor" in verse 13 summarizes the cruelty and the purpose of slavery. The word translated "rigor" is a very rare one. It is derived from a root which means "to break in pieces, to crush".

The Egyptians placed the Israelites under such severe work in treasure cities Pithom and Raamses. These were cities which were built to store military supplies. Let us also keep in mind this "rigor" which they were forced to endure came under the hot Egyptian sun. They were forced to work in the oppressive heat from daylight until dark.

The slavery which the Israelites were placed under is a picture of the work of sin upon mankind. There are three important points to see here:

1. Sin enslaves

Unsaved people see themselves as free people, but the truth is, they are enslaved to sin. They cannot possibly stop sinning even if they wanted to.

John 8:31-34

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

³³ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Israel was enslaved in Egypt and without God's intervention and power it would be impossible for them to escape. So, it is also true of the unsaved of our world. They are enslaved to sin and without God's intervention and power they are helpless. Only Jesus Christ can set people free from sin.

John 8:36

³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

2. Sin embitters

Notice Exodus 1:14

The enslavement and the rigor made the lives of the people very bitter. There was nothing for them to look forward to. Every day was filled with nothing but oppressive heat and labor. No matter how much they were able to do it was never enough.

This is a clear picture of sin. Sin always advertises itself as that which brings satisfaction and contentment. It presents itself in a way that people believe they will be much better

if they can just attain that which God has said is forbidden. This is exactly how Satan enticed Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:1-5

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan made it look like God was keeping something from her that would bring great pleasure. But he lied. Sin only brought bitterness into the lives of Adam and Eve. Not long after this we read of the terrible bitterness which Adam and Eve experienced.

Genesis 4:8

⁸ And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

Now sin does provide pleasure for a short season.

Hebrews 11:24-25

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

²⁵ Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

The pleasures of sin are short lived. Then the bitterness sets in.

I have known people who made the choice to step onto the forbidden path. In the beginning there was a rush of adrenalin and then came the excitement that people feel as they believe they are getting away with something. But some of these people shared with

me the bitterness that came after the sin was committed. Sin is deceptive. It promises joy and lasting pleasure, but it cannot deliver. It leaves its victims in bitterness.

Just as Israel could never do enough so the sinful appetite is never satisfied. No matter how great the feeling there is always a desire for more. It is only Jesus Christ who can satisfy the soul.

John 6:35

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

3. Sin extracts

At the end of each day the Israelites had little strength left for anything else.

Sin does the very same thing in a person's life. It will always extract the best of you. It bankrupts morally and spiritually. It takes a person's energy, their time, their character, their interests, their health, and their happiness. If a believer falls into sin it takes their fellowship with the Lord and it takes their power. When believers allow sin to gain control of their lives, they lose interest and energy to serve the Lord.

Notice Exodus 1:12

The more Israel was afflicted the more they grew. The death rate may have increased under the affliction, but the birth rate increased even more. Notice the words of Butler concerning affliction:

"How this reflects the work of affliction. Affliction often looks to destroy us. But instead it builds us up. Afflictions are not pleasant experiences. They are bitter and painful. But God uses them to benefit us."

The affliction which came upon Israel had several purposes. It would help them to pull up their roots in Egypt. It would also help to take Egypt out of them. Let us remember they had fallen into complacency which allowed them to accept and adopt the idolatry of Egypt. This affliction would serve to purify and clean them up. It would help them to turn back to God.

Hosea 5:15

¹⁵ I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.

The affliction which Israel was experiencing was a fulfillment of God's promise.

Genesis 15:13

¹³ 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;

We cling to promises about blessings, but we tend to ignore the promises concerning affliction. But affliction is often needed in our lives. We can experience affliction for several reasons:

1. It can be for chastening.

Hebrews 12:5-6

⁵ And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Psalm 119:67

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

2. It can be for the purpose of bearing fruit in our lives.

John 15:1-2

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

God can and does use affliction to prune out of our lives that which hinders the production of fruit.

Affliction also comes as permitted by God so that we will die to the desires of the flesh so that the life of Jesus Christ will be seen in us. We have talked about this in our Romans study and we seen how death produces life and fruit.

John 12:24

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

3. It can be to take us into a deeper relationship with our Lord.

Psalm 119:71

⁷¹ It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Philippians 3:8-10

⁸ *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

⁹ *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

¹⁰ *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Let us consider one more verse.

Notice Exodus 1:12

The word "grieved" here means "to abhor or to be weary of". The more the Egyptians afflicted the people of Israel the more they came to abhor them.

Application:

Butler brings this thought right into our lives:

"The more you mistreat anything the more you will come to abhor it. If you do not give God due honor, you will end up scorning God and loathing the things of God. If you do not honor your church, you will scorn it. This explains why many professing Christians have so little interest in church. Also, we would add here that when a husband and a wife mistreat each other, they will discover their love for each other will diminish and their marriage will be imperiled. In our land we have mistreated so many things we ought to be honoring, and the results have been very ugly. We now loathe virtue, integrity, industry, religion, authority, and godliness because we have not honored these things. But on the other hand, we give respect and honor to the vilest of practices because we refuse to take a strong stand against these evils."

Conclusion:

Again, all of this came about because of a lack of knowledge on the king's part. He did not know Joseph or Joseph's God, so he made very foolish decisions. We need God's wisdom to keep us from making foolish decisions. Our children need to have a knowledge of the Scriptures and the God of the Scriptures if they are going to have stability in this world. Let us therefore be determined to learn the Bible and to stand upon the Truth no matter the cost.