



“From Paradise To Prison”

Exodus 1:1-22

#1 in a series on Exodus

March 29, 2009

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From Clan To Nation.

1. Getting up to speed from Genesis. (chapters 37-50)
2. “The land was filled with them”. (7)

From Blessing To Suffering.

1. Regime change in Egypt. (8-10)
2. The plans to deal with the Israelites. (11-22)

From History To Principles.

1. God always keeps His word.
2. God’s blessings do not *put us on easy street*.
3. God rewards faithfulness.
4. God’s promises are seen more clearly looking back than when watching them unfold.

In My Life This Week

(As you use this daily guide, write out your observations and responses on a separate piece of paper and save them with this sheet for reference.)

Monday. Read Exodus 1:1-22. Remember that Exodus picks up the story from the end of Genesis. Think through the highlights of Joseph's life and how the people of Israel came to be in Egypt (Genesis 37-50).

Zero in on verse 7. God blessed Israel, taking them from a clan to a nation. This was a fulfillment of His promise to Abraham, first given in Genesis 13:16, which God reaffirmed to Abraham's son Isaac (Genesis 26:24), and to Isaac's son Jacob (Genesis 28:14-14). God was faithful. God is faithful. God will be faithful ... to you. Thank Him.

Tuesday. Israel enjoyed special status and prime real estate in Egypt because of Joseph. But when a regime change took place, their situation went from *paradise to prison*, from *blessing to suffering*.

Review the Pharaoh's various plans of ethnic cleansing or genocide toward the Israelites in 1:1-22. As horrific as this was, also remember the *cosmic struggle* involved with Satan's forces attacking God's purposes and people. What evidences do you see of God protecting the people during this?

Wednesday. Today we turn from history to principles. The first principle is that God always keeps His word. That is evident in the multiplication in numbers of Israel and in God not allowing Pharaoh's regime to annihilate His people. One of Jesus' names is "Faithful and True" (Revelation 19:11). God always keeps His word ... to you.

The second principle is that God's blessings do not *put us on easy street*. God blessed Israel *in* Egypt—in the real world marred by sin, *in* the midst of intense spiritual conflict, *in* the sea of sinful humanity. God blesses His people today *in* our real world. Check your perspective on what His blessings mean as you thank Him.

Thursday. The third principle is that God rewards faithfulness. Shiphrah and Puah (1:15-21) most likely were the head midwives of Israel. They "feared God" (17). They knew it was wrong to take the lives of the newborn sons. While some things here are hard to understand as precisely as we would like, it is clear that God blessed them for preserving lives (20). God will enable you to be faithful and will reward you for your faithfulness.

Then there is the principle that God's promises are seen more clearly looking back than when watching them unfold. Try to put yourself in their situation: a distinct, privileged, blessed and prosperous immigrant people who now are enslaved and the targets of genocide. Can you see God's presence, power and faithfulness in the midst of this? The Exodus account is a powerful encouragement today as we *look back* and see God's presence and provision. That is perspective. Ask God to help you see and be encouraged by the promises He has fulfilled to you in the past.

Friday/Saturday. Sunday is Palm Sunday. We plan to look at Zechariah 9:9-10. Read that alongside a Gospel account, such as Matthew 21:1-11 as you prepare yourself for our time together.