

Exodus

The Affliction: Exodus 1-2

- If you have your bibles, you can go ahead and turn to the Book of Exodus chapter 1.
- So the past 3 weeks we have been looking at the life of Joseph and we saw how he and his family ended up in Egypt.
- So because of what God brought Joseph through—Through the Pit, Through the Prison and into the Palace:
 - Jacob and his 12 sons and all of their families are brought into Egypt and Pharaoh gives them a very generous portion of the land to live on.
- Verse 5 says that there is about 70 of them in total. Then verse 6-7 says, ***“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)***
 - I love the dramatic language here, and a few times later in this chapter we’ll see references to the Israelites multiplying, spreading abroad, and growing strong.
- I like this because the writer is showing that another portion of God’s promise to Abraham is being fulfilled. In Genesis 13 God says to Abraham, ***“I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.” -Genesis 13:16 (ESV)***
- Then in chapter 15, Abraham is getting confused because he’s pretty old, and he still doesn’t have any children. What’s going on here God?? And in verse 5 it says, ***“And He brought [Abraham] outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then He said to him, “So shall your offspring***

be.” And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.” -Genesis 15:5-6 (ESV)

- That’s beautiful, but also at the same time, God goes on to say in verse 13, ***“Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.” -Genesis 15:13-16 (ESV)***
- So God is saying, KNOW FOR CERTAIN that its not going to be all sunshine and rainbows, there is actually going to be a large portion of time where your decedents will be afflicted, but I’ll work it all out and you don’t have to worry about it because you’ll be dead and gone by then.
 - Ummmmm....cool? Like why does God have to throw that detail in there, let’s keep this positive God!
- But God is never shy about letting us know the challenges and the hardships that will come with following Him. Now He always promises deliverance, but He’s always clear about the struggle and hardships that accompany the process and life in general
- So God gives a promise, explains that hardships will accompany that promise, but then promises ultimate deliverance on top of it.
- Why does God do that?? He wants us to understand two things.
 - 1. That He Always Keeps His Word
 - 2. That He is Always in Control.
- Nothing will ever catch Him off guard. God told Abraham what would happen here in the book of exodus, long before it ever took place.
- Here in Chapter 1, we see them sojourning in a foreign land, and we’re about to see the affliction begin:

- ***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.” 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: 8-14 (ESV)***

- PRAY

- There has been a regime change that has happened here in Egypt—It is believed that Joseph was brought into Egypt during the Hyksos Dynasty that ruled for about a century and a half.
 - The name Hyksos means “Rulers of Foreign Lands.” They were described as a conglomeration of ethnic groups who infiltrated Egypt over a long period of time in large numbers.
 - So this Dynasty that ruled Egypt during the time of Joseph, weren’t in fact themselves Egyptians.
 - And because of that they were much more welcoming to outsiders—they had no problem being good, generous, and welcoming to Joseph, his family, and all of the Hebrew people because they were foreign people once themselves
- However, centuries go by, about 400 years to be precise—the Israelites are flourishing, that number of 70 has grown, as some scholars believe, up to about 2 million.

- But now a new Dynasty has risen to power in Egypt who are actually indigenous Egyptians this time. They have taken their nation back.
- And now the new Pharaoh, doesn't know or really care about the history of Joseph and Israelites—but he probably does know the history of how the foreigners had taken over before and doesn't want that to happen again.
- So when he sees the nation of Israel growing in such large numbers, it terrifies him because he could be thinking back to how the Hyksos Dynasty had come to power.
- So something has to be done about these Israelites
- The first thing he does is gather his people and begins to spread the propaganda about his “Hebrew Problem”
- He says, “let us deal shrewdly with them”...he's saying “we gotta be smart about this, because if they become too many, they could turn on us and help take us over at any moment.”
- This is oddly similar to the propaganda that the Nazi party impressed in the 30's and 40's that was referred to as the “Jewish Question” or the “Jewish Problem”
 - Where they portrayed the Jews not as a religious group —but as a social threat that would negatively effect their politics and economies
 - They argued that there was no way that these Jews could be assimilated into German society—they needed to be dealt with before they became too big of a problem
- And I do not say this lightly at all, but this Pharaoh could be seen as the Adolph Hitler of his day
- And Moses, who is the writer here, wants us to feel the seriousness, the heaviness, and the darkness of the affliction that these Hebrews are about to experience

- Because we, as the readers, need to understand the desperate need for the deliverance of God's people here.
- Hitler had his plan that he introduced that he called "The final solution to the Jewish problem," that became what we now know as the Holocaust
- And here, Pharaoh is implementing his own plan as well. And in his plan, we see that he is attempting to do two things:
 - 1. Break their spirit
 - 2. Destroy their future.
- So his first step is to set "Taskmasters" or "slave drivers" over them to put them into forced labor and had them build supply cities for them.
 - His plan was to break their spirit by making them slaves, the lowest class citizens, and rob them of their significance and humanity.
- However this plan was not working because verse 12 says, ***"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."* -Exodus 1:12 (ESV)**
- This should give us as believers so much confidence, hope, and peace because what this tells me is that:
- **THE SCHEMES OF MAN CAN NEVER THWART THE PURPOSES OF GOD**
- All throughout history there have been groups of men, under demonic influence (because we wrestle not against flesh and blood) that have attempted to scheme against the purposes and people of God.
- But as history has shown, persecution has only ever made the the people of God, or the church, stronger.

- In the late 1940's the communist party in China attempted to halt all Christianity in the country—the thought was that Christianity would flicker out considerably.
 - However, the opposite was found to be true —when it was found that the church has only continued to grow and there are upwards of 100 million practicing Christians in China today.
- Every year Christianity Today publishes their top 50 most dangerous countries in the world to be a Christian.
- Those 50 nations contain 309 million Christians living in places with very high or extreme levels of persecution, which was actually up from 260 million the previous year.
 - So even in the most extremely persecuted areas in the world, the church still grew by about 50 million in those areas alone in just one year.
 - And in one article they give the statistics that every day on average:
 - 13 Christians are killed for their faith
 - 12 Church buildings are attacked
 - 12 Christians are falsely imprisoned
 - 5 Christians are abducted
- The article goes on to say, ***“You might think the [list] is all about oppression. ... But the [list] is really all about resilience. The numbers of God’s people who are suffering should mean the Church is dying—that Christians are keeping quiet, losing their faith, and turning away from one another,”...“But that’s not what’s happening. Instead, in living color, we see the words of God recorded in the prophet Isaiah: ‘I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert’” (Isa. 43:19, ESV). -David Curry: Open Doors USA (Christianity Today)***

- You see, the enemy wants us as comfortable Christians to buy into the propaganda that the church is dying, Christianity is fizzling out, and the Gospel is losing its power and influence.
 - The enemy does this to try and break our spirit...why? because
- The enemies of hell live in dread of the sons and daughters of God who continue to flourish in the face of affliction
- You know — the enemy knows the power of the Holy Spirit that lives within us as believers better than we do.
 - And they loath it, they live in dread of it, and the only thing they can attempt to do is leave us oblivious to it.
- *I PRAY THAT THE ENEMY LIVES IN DREAD OF US*
 - *I pray that we become a such dangerous church to the enemy's agenda.*
 - *I pray we become so sound in our understanding of who God is and who we are in Him that it throws the enemy into a panic whenever we gather for worship and live on mission.*
 - *The enemy doesn't want you to know the implications of your identity in Christ.*
 - *satan is the father of lies, and the only power that a liar has is getting people to believe a lie, that's why the truth set you free.*
 - *So we need believers who are able to understand the truth —that there is no scheme that satan can ever concoct that can have any power over us or stop the plans and purposes of God.*
- He's tried over and over again! Nothing ever works for him!
- It goes back to Genesis when God said that from the seed of Adam would come a Savior that would crush his head.
 - So satan tries to destroy that seed: He starts with getting Cain to kill Abel, that doesn't work, he tries to corrupt the whole world before the

flood, that doesn't work, he tries to get Esau to kill Jacob, that doesn't work,

- As we're going to see here in a second, he tries to get Pharaoh to kill all of the Hebrews boys, that doesn't work
- Fast forward to the NT, we see Herod trying to do the same thing by killing all of the infant boys in and around Bethlehem, that still doesn't work!
 - But then he finally thought he had done it. He thought all of his hard work had paid off when they finally put Jesus onto the cross and then into the grave.
 - But then we know that Jesus sent all of hell into a panic, when He walked out of that grave, ascended into Heaven, and set His Holy Spirit loose on the world!
- Not only do each and every one of satan's schemes fail miserably, God in the ultimate power move, just uses them to further His purposes and make His people even stronger...
 - That's why we are more than conquerors through Him who Loves us... because whenever the enemy attacks, whenever we stand our ground in the Truth of Jesus Chris— their attack can only make us stronger in our faith and further our influence.
- Pharaoh began to notice that his enslaving tactics weren't working the way that he thought, because the Hebrews just kept growing stronger
- So now he moves onto phase 2: — Destroying their future
- He brings in the midwives. These were Hebrew women, who did not have families of their own, but their sole job was to help other families deliver their babies.
- He tells these women in verse 16, ***“When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you***

***shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” -Exodus 1:16
(ESV)***

- Imagine this...how many of you work in the medical field. Imagine you work in a hospital, you're told to help deliver babies in the birthing center. But the hospital administration calls you into the office and tells you—if you have any woman who come in here pregnant with a boy, we want you to abort it immediately
 - If they come to find out a gender reveal and you see that it's a boy, give them a shot—whatever it takes to kill that baby in the womb
 - If a baby boy comes to full term and is born—you do not let that baby leave the hospital alive
 - Do whatever you gotta do, tell the family whatever you want to tell them—but those baby boys don't live
- Now we here at Hope Hickory Church believe firmly in the sanctity of life. We believe that God cherishes and we should cherish every single life, from the womb to the tomb.
 - And you know how we feel about there being the option of abortion in our country, however, this is a whole other level. This is mandated abortion...and he wanted them to keep it quiet
 - Again, he is trying to do is destroy their future
- This is a level of evil that we cannot relate to...these woman are under direct orders from the most powerful and dangerous man in the world to kill these baby boys...but what's their response??
- They Feared God More!
- ***“But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and let the male children live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for***

they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.” -Exodus 1:17-21 (ESV)

- Here's another beautiful principle:
- **GOD BLESSES IN THE MIDST OF THE MESSES**
- Now, I know that it's corny to do the rhyming point, but I want this to stick in our minds and remember this
- It's very easy for us to get caught up with everything else going on around us that we miss the opportunity to appreciate the way that He is blessing us in the midst of it.
 - How often can we get caught up in the fear or the mess around us that we miss the beautiful blessings of God?
 - We can even be reading this passage and blow past the way that God is blessing these people
- Because everything about this scenario is messy and there is definitely blood being drawn as they are slaves who are being beaten and killed every day... and it's not even going to get better, it's actually going to get worse
 - Yet — we see that when the people were put into slavery, God still blessed them and continued to grow them.
- But Pharaoh didn't give up, verse 13 says that they ruthlessly oppressed them even more.
 - The situation didn't change, but they are still being blessed in the midst of it and God is still growing His people
 - The more they are oppressed, the stronger they get
- Then with the midwives, are given this heinous task, — and this seems like a lose-lose situation.

- Carry out this evil command and go against God. Or obey God and go against the their ruler and probably die.
- They choose the latter. Most likely the way that this went— is that they would go in to help deliver the baby and if they saw that it was a boy, they would get out of there as quickly as possible and say, “Hey, I was never here”
- Then Pharaoh catches wind that these babies aren’t dying, calls them in to see what’s going on, and their response is, “Hey these Hebrew woman are tough, and they give birth to these babies before we even get there, we don’t even get to help with the delivery”
- And a common question here is, “They lied! Why would God bless them if they lied?”
 - And my answer would be...shut up....
 - This is an impossible situation, and we cannot begin to know the pressure that they are under or how we would respond in those situations
 - And there may not have been a 100% right thing to do here, but they did the better thing...and you know what? God blessed them for it.
 - And he got them out of that situation by blessing them with families of their own. So they didn’t have to do that job anymore.
- But the overall situation got even worse, Pharaoh’s secret covert Operation-Midwife didn’t work so now he’s not going to worry about handling this genocide discreetly anymore
- In verse 22, chapter 1 ends with Pharaoh giving the same command that he gave the midwives, but this time he gives it to the entire Egyptian population, it says, ***“Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.” -Exodus 1:22 (ESV)***
- His sinister plan has gone to another level again

- And God is not going to forget this either. Later on we'll see Pharaoh reaping what he sowed when we see God issue the final plague on Pharaoh's kingdom.
- But first, in chapter 2, we see how God flips Pharaoh's plan completely on its head...
- Chapter 2 begins saying, ***"Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months."* -Exodus 2:1-2 (ESV)**
- Now this phrase "fine child" is also translated "beautiful child," the NLT says, when she saw that he was a "Special baby"...so it's interesting here that the writer here is, who? Moses. So Moses wants us to know that he was a beautiful child and a special boy....ok Mo...
- Verse 3 says, ***"But when she could no longer hide him, she got a basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River. The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him."* -Exodus 2:3-4 (NLT)**
- Now this is smart. Because mom was probably feeling the heat. They had been hiding this child for 3 months, now the baby is getting a little more rambunctious. And there are Egyptian eyes everywhere and someone is probably clueing in that there is a baby boy in that house.
 - So things are getting a little too dangerous— so she takes the baby to the one place that no one would look for a Hebrew boy. The Nile River, the very place these babies had been being executed.
- Now his sister, Miriam, is standing by keeping watch— and her heart probably sinks when she sees a group of Egyptians coming out to the river...She's probably thinking "I told mom, this is a stupid plan..." (You know how teenagers are)

- And to make things worse, its the princess! The daughter of the man who has ordered the execution of these children!
 - Miriam has to be praying that no one notices....but the princess inevitably sees the basket and tells one of her servants to go fetch it... Miriam's heart has to be beating out of her chest...
- Then Miriam hears little Moses begin to cry, her heart begins to break... but then she sees the princesses demeanor. She can tell the princess doesn't want this baby to die.
- Verse 6 goes on to say, ***"When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.' Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?'" -Exodus 2:6-7 (ESV)***
- Now this is bold on a number of levels...first off this Hebrew girl just pops out of nowhere right in the middle of the princess' bath time..."Like hey, I'm here"...that's not weird I guess
 - But then she has the audacity to suggest that the princess keep the baby for herself!
- I guess we're swinging for the fences here...but the princess agrees! ***"And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go.'" So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.'" So the woman took the child and nursed him."* -Exodus 2:8-9 (ESV)**
- Can you see the irony here?! Pharaoh orders this child's death. The child escapes death, is found by Pharaoh's own daughter. So not only is this child saved, but Pharaoh's daughter is going to use Pharaoh's money to pay Moses' real mother to raise him. This is awesome!

- And then when he comes of age, this Hebrew child that he wanted dead is going to grow up and be educated in his own palace, under Pharaoh's own roof...and this hated Hebrew boy is going to learn everything he needs to, to help prepare him to come back and take Pharaoh's Hebrew slaves away from him.
 - The very thing he was trying to prevent in the first place.
- Don't you love how God works sometimes??...This is the **Providence** of God, that can be defined this way:
- **God Takes Natural Events, and Weaves Them Together for Supernatural Purposes.**
 - This truth is relayed again in Romans 8:28 when Paul says that God works ALL THINGS out for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.
- God uses the sinister plans of an evil man, turned his plan on itself and set it up so that the deliverer of God's people would go to live in this man's own house...and there is nothing that Pharaoh could do about it
 - It makes me think of whenever God became a man, and came to satan's back yard when he came to the planet to deliver us from the clutches of sin and death, and there wasn't a thing that satan could do about it.
- The writer of Hebrews talks about Jesus being the greater Moses, when he writes in chapter 3, ***"But Jesus deserves far more glory than Moses...Moses was certainly faithful in God's house as a servant. His work was an illustration of the truths God would reveal later. But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God's entire house. And we are God's house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ."*** -Hebrews 3:3a, 5-6 (NLT)

- Keep in mind as we walk through this book together over the next 8 weeks or so, that all of this is an illustration of what would take place in and through Jesus.
- Even in these first 2 chapters, we see some foreshadowing of the True Deliver to come:
 - Moses survived the child genocide of Pharaoh
 - Jesus survived the child genocide of Herod
 - Moses was the servant who grew up in the palace
 - But Jesus was the King who grew up as a servant
- If you keep reading chapter 2, (We don't have time to get into that today...but we see Moses spending 40 years in the wilderness of Midian being prepared for his time of ministry
 - Which reminds me of Jesus spending 40 days fasting and being tempted in the wilderness preparing for His time ministry
 - Above all: Moses was risen up to deliver the people of Israel from the bondage of Egypt
 - But Jesus was risen up from the Grave to deliver us ALL from the bondage of sin and death.
- Chapter 2 ends with saying, ***“During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.” -Exodus 2: 23-25 (ESV)***
- No matter how difficult life may get, or how many twists and turns this world may throw at you...remember:
- **God Hears, God Remembers, God Sees, and God Knows**

- Many of us cry out to God because of the afflictions of life or the darkness of our culture
- And He hears... don't you ever fall into believing the lie that God doesn't hear you or doesn't want to hear from you.
 - That is exactly why when Jesus died on the cross, the temple veil was torn in two, to show all of us that there is no more separation between God and man, and Romans tells us that we have DIRECT ACCESS to the Father now
 - No matter what you have gone through, are going through or what you have done...it hasn't caught Him off guard, He saw it coming, and He hears you and He wants to Hear from you.
- Not only does He hear, He Remembers His Promises and His People,
 - He remembers His promise—To never leave you or forsake you
 - He remembers His promise—To give you life and life abundantly
 - He remembers His promise—To work ALL THINGS out for your good and His glory
- But above all— He remembers His promise of eternal life:
- Where for those who accept Him will experience life with Him forever,
 - Where He will make all things new and wipe every tear from every eye. Where there will be no more pain and no more suffering.
 - He knows that this life is just a vapor, the suffering of this present time is just a season—He promises deliverance, whether it comes in this life time or the next.
- He Sees
 - God see's what you're going through. He sees why you feel the way that you feel. But God also sees the big picture.

Sunday, October 4, 2026

- God can see your present suffering and the same time He sees the future deliverance.
- He sees how the past or current hardships have been used for your good and His glory
- He's already worked it out long before we ever see it...because
- He Knows
 - Nothing ever catches Him off guard.
 - God always wants you to remember that He Always Keeps His Word, and He's Always in Control
 - Hebrews tell us that nothing in all of creation is Hidden from God
 - And that includes you. You may have times in your life or may have felt your entire life that you are far from God.
 - But Acts 17:27 says that He is not far from you. He's never been far from you, He will never be far from you
- Because He Hears you, He Remembers you, He Sees you, He Knows you.....AND HE LOVES YOU.