



Devotion on Exodus, Chapter 1, 18 October 2014 Anno Domini

¹ Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob. ² Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, ³ Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, ⁴ Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. ⁵ And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already. ⁶ And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. ⁷ And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. ⁸ Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

⁹ And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

¹⁰ Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

¹¹ Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

¹² But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

¹³ And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

¹⁴ And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

¹⁵ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiprah, and the name of the other Puah:

¹⁶ And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

¹⁷ But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

¹⁸ And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive. (Ex 1:1-22)

Joseph, the benefactor of Egypt and of his father's family, has died in Egypt exacting a promise from his brethren that his bones would be carried back to Canaan when they returned there (for he knew they would return). The Hebrews fared quite well in Egypt – even better than the Egyptians – for Joseph had assigned them the choice lands of Egypt in Goshen where the rich waters of the Nile overflowed her banks and deposited there the nutrients gathered from over 4,000 miles of her course from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean Sea. The land was so very rich that it is even today referred to as the Fertile Crescent. There was, apparently, something in the water of Egypt that promoted fertility among men and beast. It was common for women to have twins or triplets there in that day. So Israel grew in numbers. They were so content in Egypt, that they overstayed their welcome!

But just as the selling of Joseph into bondage was an ill-intended deed of his brethren, and God had meant it for the good of Joseph and his brethren; so, the bondage of Israel in Egypt was by the will and foreknowledge of God for their supreme good. Keeping our faith and focus on God in all circumstances will insure a satisfied heart and a clear conscience. Israel was enabled to grow into the several millions while in Egypt – a feat it is doubtless that they could have accomplished in Canaan. Now they could field an army of several hundred thousand in the permanent and sole occupancy of Canaan. Moreover, they had well learned the lesson of physical bondage, and would now be prepared to learn the lesson of spiritual bondage upon the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai.

Something happens next that will interrupt the bliss of Israel in Goshen. "*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.*" (Ex 1:8) It is not likely that this new king had not known about Joseph and his wisdom, but he did not kindly regard his record as savior of Egypt. Most governments are jealous of the influence of those who have either formed, or saved, the nation. We witness that clearly in the political history of our own beloved nation. We have witnessed, from the passing of the Founding Fathers, a continual degeneration in the honor and statesmanship of our Presidents and National Leaders - with only few exceptions. Seeking to satisfy a minority or some special interest group, as does this new Pharaoh, they begin to erode the very principles that made the nation great. This new Pharaoh did wish to honor one of the Hebrews of the "now majority party" with the favors of past Pharaohs.

And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. (Ex 1:9-10) Let us, in other words, conspire to subjugate them by any means that comes to mind. Perhaps they could have adopted a system of taxation that would have rendered them of no consequence – some governments have taken that approach in our own day; or perhaps they would adopt a system of enslavement to hard labors and birth control through such an inglorious

method as abortion – partial birth or even post birth! Does this sound a bit familiar as a parallel to our day?

So what plan did the Egyptians adopt? *Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.* (Ex 1:1) Fortunately, slavery has never succeeded at drying up the gene pool; so something more severe seemed necessary. Herein lies another principle of bad government: if one egregious and sadistic plan fails, go to the next most awful of the imagination. *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.* (Ex 1:12) This is true of the Church of Christ as well. When subjected to dismal persecution, the church grows phenomenally. This is a principle that the lily-livered politicians can never understand. They are enraged by it. They are trying to stomp out a presumed fire, but the more they stomp upon it, the greater it spreads. They would rather destroy the entire field than allow the fire to better them.

And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour. (Ex 1:13-14) If moderate slavery does not work, let us force a brutal form of slavery upon them. An insane government knows no limits on forcing its totalitarian will on its people. If the people resist not, the result is certain.

And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. (Ex 1:15-16) Governments which attempt to appropriate the role of God to themselves never win. Their days are immediately numbered toward a destined tumble into the trash-heap of history. The limitation of births of either boys or girls has been attempted by many governments of our day with abysmal results. China has tried and failed. The Republic of Korea enacted stiff fines for families who had more than one child. The result? Total failure and frustration! In Korea, a son is cherished, so a woman would have an abortion if she were aware of a daughter in her womb. After a generation of that sordid policy, the Korean government realized its error. The percentage of males in the population was in total imbalance with females. The nation was approaching the irreversible point of a complete demise of the Korean race. They have since reversed their policy and are feverishly promoting births of all kinds in their population.

But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. (Ex 1:17) These midwives of the Hebrews had greater courage and faith than most clergy of our day who will not so much as utter a word against abortion in their sermons or writings. Most are preoccupied with market research and money-grubbing rather than the absolute preaching of the Word. (Joel Osteen comes to mind along with a host of others). Maybe you believe my distrust is misplaced? No, it is because I am sick and tired of the easy-believism that has gotten our church and nation in such a deplorable state of affairs over the past few generations. It is due time to stand up and be counted, or crawl into the warm, comfortable pew of some luke-warm church and cringingly see if you can hide from the devastation that shall surely follow. God will not forever overlook our foolish disregard of His Word – of that I am certain!

And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye

done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. (Ex 1:18-19) These two verses remind us anew that the Law of God takes precedence of the laws of man. We are not to lay aside our Christian shield and sword at the courthouse door – PERIOD! It was God, acting through the hands and hearts of the midwives, who saved the male children.

How will God view the courage and defiance against Caesar of all who exercise faith in the face of immoral government rule? *Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.* (Ex 1:20-21)

And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive. (Ex 1:22) Ungodly government will turn citizen against the defenseless if it is ever challenged or threatened by the authority of God. Of course, that is a foolish thing to do and can result in the death of many first-born sons of the land. All of the egregious actions of Pharaoh are following precisely the plan of God in redeeming His people, Israel. It is my prayer that God would raise up a Moses in our midst, and may midwives from the common folk of America in our day.