

"God's Righteous Purpose"  
Exodus 1:8-14  
(Preached at Trinity, June 18, 2006)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As I pointed out last time, the study of the Book of Exodus shows us the reality of the problem of human sin, the continuing demonstration of **Genesis 3:15**  
**Genesis 3:15** – "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
  - A. The enmity between the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman continues. It is the great conflict between good and evil – righteousness and wickedness.
  - B. As we continue in Exodus evil continues to raise its ugly head as we find Israel under terrible oppression.
2. As the years passed all knowledge of Joseph and Jacob faded from the memories of the Egyptians. The great deliverance from the famine that Joseph accomplished was forgotten. Prosperity had turned to persecution and oppression.
  - A. They were in Egypt for 430 years  
**Exodus 12:40-41** – "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. <sup>41</sup> And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
  - B. According to Stephen in Acts, all but 30 of these years Israel was under oppression  
**Acts 7:6** – "And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years."
    1. Perhaps at first the oppression was simply the conflicts that arose because of the hatred the Egyptians had for shepherds
    2. As the years passed however the Israelites became slaves and the oppression turned to cruel bondage.
3. Why did God allow His people to suffer in Egypt so long?
  - A. Part of God's purpose was to prepare His people to enter Canaan
    1. He was preparing them to receive their inheritance  
Through their servitude they were being strengthened – God often uses adversity to strengthen His people  
Pink – "Times of severest trial have always been seasons of blessing to the people of God. The more fiercely have burned the fires of persecution the stronger has faith waxed."
    2. Also, Canaan was a large land. It would take many people to possess it. God was increasing His people so that they might seize the land. By the time they left Egypt their number had grown from was over two million

- B. Their was another reason God waited all of these years. We must remember that Exodus is a continuation of Genesis – in it we find the continued fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham.
- Genesis 15:13-16** – “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; <sup>14</sup> And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. <sup>15</sup> And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. <sup>16</sup> But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full.”
4. For 430 years the Amorites were continuing in their wickedness heaping wrath upon wrath. Now it was time for God to execute His righteous judgment.
  5. This is testimony to the mercy and longsuffering of God as well as His righteous judgment.
- I. God is merciful and longsuffering in His dealings with man upon the earth
- A. We can witness this from the beginning of time
1. The wages of sin is death, yet God postponed Adam's death
  2. Noah preached righteousness for a hundred and twenty years calling all men to repentance – testimony to God's sovereign mercy.  
For 120 years the sun shined upon them and they pursued their course of life – and then suddenly judgment came.
  3. Not only does God allow men to live their lives, He blesses them with His goodness. This goodness and mercy of God is for them an opportunity for repentance.  
**Romans 2:4** – “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
- B. God’s longsuffering will not continue forever - the time for repentance will end
1. God had demonstrated great patience towards the Amorites
  2. For four hundred years they continued to prosper under the kind mercies
    - a. The Canaanites continued to grow into a mighty and wealthy empire
    - b. From external observation they did not appear to be under the wrath of God
      - They became great in number and mighty in war
      - They were great in wealth and possessions
      - They enjoyed the merciful goodness of God – Remember, they were dwelling in a land flowing with milk and honey
- Exodus 3:17** – “And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.”

3. In spite of the goodness of God they continued in wickedness. They continued in their idolatry. They never showed mercy, kindness, compassion – only cruelty.
  4. In a time God's choosing, they were overthrown
- C. Even though the Canaanites were cursed of God they were given adequate opportunity to repent and be saved – They were granted over 400 years of mercy - God is longsuffering and full of mercy.
1. Finally, When their iniquity became full God used the Israelites to defeat them  
**Numbers 21:21-25** – “And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, <sup>22</sup> Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: *but* we will go along by the king's *high* way, until we be past thy borders. <sup>23</sup> And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel. <sup>24</sup> And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong. <sup>25</sup> And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites,”
  2. The same warning is directed to the unrepentant today  
 God will give a man over to himself  
**Hebrews 3:7-12** – “Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”
- II. With God's dealings with the Amorites we can also clearly see the doctrine of election
- A. God shows mercy to the elect while he gives the wicked over to their sin
    1. This isn't always clear from our perspective
      - a. The Amorites were prospering while Israel was in cruel servitude
      - b. From the human eye it was the Amorites who were being blessed of God
      - c. God's delayed judgment can appear like no judgment at all
    2. The truth is there is a multitude of people who have been chosen of God from eternity to be vessels of His mercy  
**2 Thessalonians 2:13** – “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”
    3. God is pleased to deliver them from the dominion and penalty of sin

- B. The reality was the Amorites were under God's judgment the whole time  
**Joshua 11:20** – “For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.”
1. God had delivered them to destruction
  2. Jude spoke of the reality of God's ordained judgment  
**Jude 1:4** – “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”
  3. Nowhere do we see it taught clearer than with the Amorites  
The Amorites were a people marked for destruction
    - a. When their sin reached its fullness God judged them
    - b. God actually hardened their hearts so that they would refuse peace so that they would be destroyed?
  4. This was according to God's sovereign purpose
    - a. Why didn't God command Joshua to teach the Canaanites the law of God and to sacrifice to the one true God?  
Because God purposed to leave them in their sin
    - b. God's choice of Israel as a nation is a picture of God's sovereign election  
Prior to Christ Israel was the only nation to which God revealed Himself - all others were left to themselves  
**Acts 14:15-16** - “God which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.”
- C. GOD'S PURPOSE - God created all things and does all for His glory  
**Proverbs 16:4** - “The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.”
1. This is not to say that God purposed to take innocent creatures and make them wicked. No – we sin because our hearts are wicked – There are none righteous, no not one.
  2. There is always harmony between Sovereignty and responsibility
    - a. God hardened their hearts, yes, but their sin was upon themselves.
    - b. They were left to their own devices and they gladly continued to fulfil the desires of their wicked hearts.
    - c. God demonstrated great mercy in withholding judgment for 430 years – but then judgment came due.
  3. The people of Canaan were the enemies of God and He left them to themselves that He might destroy them that His holiness and justice might be magnified.

4. The 1689 Baptist Confession –  
 “As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as the righteous judge, for former sin doth blind and harden; from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth shame to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin; and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, under those means which God useth for the softening of others.”

### III. How must this speak to sinners today?

- A. For believers it is a reminder that we must view this life from the perspective of God’s eternal plan
  1. There were Israelites who were born and died in slavery, yet God was working out His purpose
  2. We must keep an eternal perspective  
 As Christians, we must be careful to use each day wisely  
**Psalm 90:12** – “So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.”  
**John 9:4** – “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.”
- B. For the Unbeliever
  1. Don’t presume upon another day  
 Matthew Henry – “We should be alarmed if we were not sure to live a month and yet we are careless though we are not sure to live a day.”
  2. Today must draw our attention to eternity  
**Hebrews 3:7** - “Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts”  
**2 Corinthians 6:2** – “(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)”
  3. If a man is not in hell at this very moment it is only by God’s mercy

Conclusion:

1. The invitation is still “Come”  
**Revelation 22:17** – “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”
2. We need to understand clearly, God is not under obligation to suspend His judgment until the measure of wickedness is full.
  - a. God is not obligated to suspend judgment for one minute.
  - b. The death sentence is already handed down. The life of every sinner is already forfeited.
  - c. The young must not take comfort that perhaps the fullness of iniquity is far off. It may be today.
3. It is only by God’s mercy that we are not in hell at this very moment  
**Lamentations 3:22** – “*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed*”
4. Just because we are enjoying life in fullness and goodness doesn’t mean we are not under the wrath and curse of God.  
Every impenitent sinner is constantly filling up the measure of his iniquity. God’s delay of judgment should bring no comfort.  
Today is the day of repentance.