

Evening Worship January 8, 2017  
"From Slavery to Slavery to Slavery ..."  
Exodus 21:1-11

When we consider what the Bible says about slavery, the more I study these passages, the more I believe slavery to be one of the themes MOST INTENTIONALLY DISTORTED! Does the Bible promote slavery? NO! At least not the kind of slavery most people today have in mind when they ask such a question.

I. Biblical history of the slavery of God's people –

1. A prophesied part of God's plan for Abram's children –

Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is not theirs*, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. <sup>14</sup> "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. (Genesis 15:13-14 NKJ)

A. These verses show that slavery was part of God's decreative will for Israel, so also was Christ's crucifixion, this does not make slavery right in and of itself any more than crucifixion would be right!

B. There is affliction mentioned, four hundred years' worth! The fact that God's punished Egypt for this is proof that though God allowed this, Egypt was not right to afflict God's people.

2. The real world / human move toward this "slavery" in Egypt begins with the plan of Joseph's brothers (Israel's / Jacob's sons) –

So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of *many* colors that was on him. <sup>24</sup> Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; *there* was no water in it. <sup>25</sup> And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry *them* down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit *is there* if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? <sup>27</sup> "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh." And his brothers listened. <sup>28</sup> Then Midianite traders passed by; so *the brothers* pulled Joseph up and lifted him

out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt. (Genesis 37:23-28 NKJ)

A. There is nothing righteous here on Joseph's brother's part, however Judah saves Joseph from death by recommending slavery instead of murder!

B. This was something Joseph's brothers meant for evil but God used for good –

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. (Genesis 50:20 NKJ)

3. This saving of "many people alive" – Genesis 50:20 also was connected to slavery, which Joseph in Egypt oversaw, the people sold themselves to Pharaoh through Joseph –

"Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give *us* seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate." (Genesis 47:19 NKJ)

A. This slavery was agreed upon, initiated by those who would be slaves ↑

B. This slavery was regulated by Joseph's God given wisdom and grace –

Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's. <sup>21</sup> And as for the people, he moved them into the cities, from *one* end of the borders of Egypt to the *other* end. <sup>22</sup> Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *allotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands. <sup>23</sup> Then Joseph said to the people, "Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land. <sup>24</sup> "And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones." <sup>25</sup> So they said, "You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants." (Genesis 47:20-25 NKJ)

4. The Pharaoh in Joseph's day did not treat Joseph's brother's like slaves –

Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. <sup>6</sup> "The land of Egypt *is* before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know *any* competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock." (Genesis 47:5-6 NKJ)

5. *Slavery of God's people under a later Pharaoh becomes blatantly sinful –*

Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. (Exodus 1:11 NKJ)

So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. (Exodus 1:13 NKJ)

So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive." (Exodus 1:22 NKJ)

## II. *Why is slavery even an issue in Exodus 21?*

1. *God had free His people from slavery –*

And God spoke all these words, saying: <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (Exodus 20:1-2 NKJ)

2. *However, in a sin-filled world a certain kind of slavery could be beneficial –*

A. *The people surrounding Egypt during a famine thought it such –*  
So they said, "You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants." (Genesis 47:25 NKJ)

B. *Exodus 21 starts application of the Ten Commandments Exodus 20 to life situations.*

## III. *Slavery of your fellow Israelite male –*

"Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them: <sup>2</sup> "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing. <sup>3</sup> "If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he comes *in* married, then his wife shall go out with him. <sup>4</sup> "If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. <sup>5</sup> "But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' <sup>6</sup> "then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. (Exodus 21:1-6 NKJ)

1. *A limited time, six years – Exodus 21:2, slavery was a payment of debt*

2. *A single slave, stays such, a married slave also stays such - Exodus 21:3*

3. *A wife given by the master, remains with the master – Exodus 21:4 ... why?*

A. *Protection of the woman and children*

B. *The possibility of redemption – Leviticus 25:47-55, Ruth*

C. *The option of staying – Exodus 21:5-6, a permanent slave, after six years you would KNOW!*

## IV. *Slavery of the female –*

"And if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. (Exodus 21:7 NKJ)

*Women are different and are to be treated differently! Some say this is HORRIBLE, they say WOMEN should be in combat, they say there is no real difference between a man and a woman!*

- *All the differences ordered here were for the woman's benefit:*

"If she does not please her master, who has betrothed her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her. (Exodus 21:8 NKJ)

- *Note the word betrothed used here meant the woman being sold here was like a wife, the master who bought her was to be like a husband or father to her, a certain level of provision and care was expected!*

"And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. <sup>10</sup> "If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights. (Exodus 21:9-10 NKJ)

- *Possibilities for a female slave to leave:*

1. *Redemption – Exodus 21:8 see the Book of Ruth*

2. *Marriage rights – Exodus 21:10*

3. *Freedom –*

"And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without paying money. (Exodus 21:11 NKJ)

## V. *Bondservants of Christ –*

Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, ... (Philippians 1:1 NKJ)

*Arnold Brevick*