

## God Knows And God Delivers

Join me in going back in time. It's soon after Joseph helped save the region of Egypt and Canaan from famine. He's the hero. He is allowed to bring his modest sized family of 75 to Egypt. For the next several decades, Joseph and the Israelites were held in high esteem. You can imagine, Hey that's one of Joseph's family members who helped us all survive the huge famine.

The years turn into decades and the decades turn in to centuries. The Israelites had it ok. They had their own land area under the Egyptians. They worked hard and grew in population and accumulation of property. They served the purposes of the Egyptians and had time off on weekends, which back then was every 10 days. They could pass down their stories of how God called one man to follow him and how this same God showed Joseph the meaning of a dream which saved many people from starving.

But then there came a time in Egypt where none of the Egyptians knew of this Joseph and what he had done for their people. The Egyptians looked at Joseph's family, the Israelites, and saw a threat. The dominant people of the region tighten the grip of their command upon the Israelites. Using ruthless force, the Israelite's are forced into hard service making bricks and mortar or working long hot days in the field in the dessert sun. They are slaves to the Egyptians. This continues for 80 years. That's a LONG time ago. The Israelites get up every morning and perform back breaking work. They were whipped if they didn't comply, then went back home and got up and did it again the next day. Day after day, year after year for 80 years.

This isn't supposed to happen to the Israelites. After all this was a family of people started by a promise from God to one man. This man and his wife had only one child together. And this child came after they were extremely old, past the regular time for having children. Because God had promised to them that he would raise up a nation of people who would be great upon the earth and whom everyone else would look to for blessing. Yet here they are 40 years in chains and bondage, day after day after day.

If we zoom in, we come to a baby named Moses, who was born at this time. It was also a time when the Egyptian Pharaoh had ordered all of the newborn male babies to be killed right after birth. But one Hebrew mother, placed her son in a basket and pushed him to the daughter of the Pharaoh when she was at the river in hopes that Moses may find mercy and not be killed. Moses did find mercy and grew up in the palace with all of its privileges. Yet he knew he belonged to the Israelites and as he saw the oppression they encountered day after day at the hands of his adopted people he got the idea that perhaps he could help them. One day as he saw an Egyptian man unfairly beating an Israelite, this Moses struck down the Egyptian and buried him in the sand. That resulted in making Moses a wanted and marked man. So instead of using his special status to help his people, he was forced to leave the area in order to save his own life. He fled away and built a new life as a shepherd and continued there for 40 years.

40 Years of one man hiding in fear for his life, 80 years of a people forced to serve another people more powerful than them. And now we arrive back at our passage.

### **God hears, remembers, sees and knows**

80 years seems like a long time. For young people, the length of time from one Christmas to the next seems like a very long time. For us as humans, patience does not come naturally. We are aware that the Lord's patience is at a whole another level because his relationship to time is so different. One day to him is like 1000 years and 1000 years is like one day to Him.

Once Pharaoh turned up the pressure on the Israelites, they began to groan to God. At least 80 years of being in this tough spot. It seemed like the promises of greatness to their patriarch, Abraham, were going to go unfulfilled. It had been 80 years and God had not delivered them, what circumstantial sign was there that things were going to change? The callouses on their hands, the bruises in their body, and the scars on their backs all reminded them of their daily sufferings.

And then we come to this convincing description of God's response to the Israelites groaning at the end of chapter 2. There is a fourfold underscore here of God receiving their cry for rescue.

He heard their groaning. Their cries for mercy and help reached God's ears. They did not fall to the ground unheard. They were crying out to him in the privacy of their hearts inside their homes without raising their voices, and God heard. In India there are plenty of wayside shrines on street corners where one can approach various idols. None of these idols can hear because none of them are living. But God hears!

As He is hearing their cries, He remembers his covenant with the patriarchs. How he promised them a land of their own, a great nation, and that they would bless the entire earth. God was going to be faithful to that promise even if patience is required to get there. May this be a comfort to us that God's moving is not fully dependent on our ability to obey or be faithful to God. He is faithful to his own promises and his own character which is gracious, loving, and steadfast.

Then it says he saw them or looked upon them. This communicates that his attention is turned towards them. It's not just that he heard their cries but then directed no attention to them. This is not the little child pulling on his mother's arm as she is talking with a friend. The mother knows the child is there asking for something but is still engaged in her conversation with her friend. She is not yet ready to be interrupted. God saw the spot the Israelites were in and focused in on helping his children.

But it is not just that God saw it, he knew. Some translate this as took notice of them. The Hebrew word here is Yada which means, to acknowledge, be aware of, or to care. God fully understood the position his Israelites were suffering in and he cared about them being

delivered from that spot. “Just because Jesus loves us and knows how to fix our problems doesn’t mean he takes a shortcut through our grief.” Scott Hubbard

What about us? All of us at numerous times in our life will go through times when we feel like we can identify with the Israelites and Moses at this point in time. We feel trapped and confused. Sometimes we are just plain suffering. We can have mental and emotional discouragement. This fourfold account of God’s response is meant to lift us up. Even at these times, when none of our circumstances seem to change, none of the suffering seems to be reduced, God hears, remembers, sees and knows.

Our charge is to go to him, cry out to him. And when we think there is nothing but silence then we go to him and cry out to him. And when we think that is returned with silence, then we go to him and cry out to him. Ask for God’s mercy and help, Wait by asking for God’s mercy and help

This isn’t anything we haven’t heard before or don’t already know. But this is faith. AN active faith is the difference between comprehending a reality and actually believing in it and applying it in our lives.

We all experience those seasons in our life where we give up in going to Jesus. Whether we grow impatient, stop believing that it works or will work. Maybe we decide we will figure it out according to our own resources. It’s like the dentist who goes on a mission trip and no one comes to see him.

One of my Big Takeaways from Gentle and Lowly by Dane Ortlund is how he expanded on the reality that Jesus derives great joy, comfort, and glory the more he is able to show grace and mercy, comfort and relieve. We may think “I don’t want to trouble God again.” But it’s not trouble for him. He is not weary, frustrated, or agitated by you taking your brokenness, need, emptiness and burdens on him. It’s the whole point of His coming, to set us free in every way.

God had purpose to allow the Israelites to cry out for 40 long years, and this is the final point today: He hears, remembers, sees, and knows with a mind to deliver us!

### God delivers

Look at verse 6 and 7, we see this four-fold reinforcement of how much God cares. I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians. God is in the business of delivering his people and that still applies to us today.

Why is God ever moved to deliver us? *God delivers us because he cares for us.* We already looked at what the Hebrew word Knows mean that is in this passage. God stands ready to give us mercy in our time of need. When Jesus was at the tomb of Lazarus, Mary came to him crying and fell at his feet. Even though Jesus knew what he was going to do in raising Lazarus up, it says that he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And next is the first verse that

we all memorized in Sunday school classes, Jesus wept. Then when he went to the tomb, Jesus was deeply moved again. He is not unfeeling or heartless towards our cries for help. He delights in setting us free, raising us up, healing our brokenness for our good and His glory.

God also delivers because it displays his great power. Vs 15 "This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations." God delivers in mighty ways because it gives him glory. He will do things so people continue to talk about his greatness. This episode was turned into multiple songs that were sung periodically in celebration of His greatness. There was an annual feast established because of this event that the families of Israel gathered to remember what God had done for them. The connection is we need to see the greatness of God in a mighty way because our natural tenancy is to grow cool and passive towards God. But when we have a big marker in our life to look at, it helps us fan the flames in our hearts again towards God. We heard Joshua McClure's healing testimony a few Sunday's ago. That is a deliverance marker that they can come back to over and over again. And we also having heard it can by extension too. "See what God did here, Isn't he Great!"

God delivers to keep us depending on him. In this passage, Moses presents at least three objections to God's plan. He makes these objections based on an assessment of his own resources. V 11 Who am I to do this? and God answers with I am with you, who we are is not nearly as critical as who He is and what He wants to do. Then Moses says 4:1, They are not going to believe me, and God says I will do certain signs to convince them that I am behind you. Then he says 4:10 but I am not eloquent and slow to form my words. And God says, we'll use Aaron. God's deliverance builds our trust and confidence to rely on him for all things. We just need to keep in mind that when God delivers, he must get credit for all of the glory. When he allows us to be a part of the success, we don't need to try to take credit for what he did.

Finally, when God delivers, it comes with abundant blessings. V 8. Not only was he going to take them out of their suffering but he would lead them into blessing. And he had a blessing for them in their going out. V 21. It happened in 12:35 that they got whatever they asked of the Egyptians. They plundered the Egyptians. Let's think about this for a second, here you have the Egyptians getting the benefit from the Israelites for at least 40 years and giving out little to no wages or rewards. And God so worked it out that they in essence got paid for this service on the way out. What a pendulum swing, the Egyptians went from you cant leave to now take whatever you want. It's in God's nature to go beyond what we expect in order to deliver and bless us.

Let me quickly address a couple more questions that some of you may have. This is all good, but it hasn't happened for me yet. Sometimes our complete deliverance doesn't come while we are living. It's not a cop out, it's just part of God's economy. God does not owe us anything. But I believe that all of this really will seem like light momentary affliction compared to the surpassing weight of glory which will be beyond all comparison. A second question may be, well my deliverance didn't last. Sometimes our deliverance here on earth may be temporary. Let's remember that the Israelite's found themselves centuries later captive to another nation, the Babylonians for 70 years. In either case what then do we do? Keep casting ourselves upon

God, keep waiting, keep starting over with going to God when we have given up. When he delivers, for however long it is, we keep reminding ourselves of his greatness. Keep trusting in and depending on His goodness and power, and keep giving thanks for his abundant blessings. There a day coming when he will indeed wipe every tear form our eye never to come back again!