

# **Trinity Covenant RCUS**

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## **"Serving with Rigor" Exodus 1**

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I intend a lengthy series on this great book of the Bible. The book was written by Moses and at one time the Jews considered it a part of the book of Genesis. Moses penned the first five books of the Bible, except those parts that were written by scribes, recording his death and burial.

Genesis is the book of beginnings. It begins with the creation of the world and man in the Garden of Eden. It ends with the death of Joseph and his burial in a coffin in Egypt, a fitting symbol of the curse that came upon man because of sin.

Genesis gives us the promise of the redeemer and the judgment of the ancient world in the flood and the unfolding of God's purpose of redemption in the calling of Abraham and the promise concerning Abraham's seed. We have the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the birth of the twelve patriarchs from which the Twelve Tribes of Israel descended.

God had promised to give to Abraham the land of Canaan, but because it was not yet time for Abraham to receive that earthly inheritance, God predicted that it would be necessary for his family to be nurtured in Egypt for a time, but after some 400 years God would deliver them from Egypt with a strong hand and bring them to the land of Canaan. We see these things beginning to be fulfilled in the book of Exodus, which means "bringing out."

The sojourn of Israel in Egypt began with the selling of Joseph by his brothers into bondage in Egypt. After some twenty years, Joseph was raised to governor over all the land of Egypt. In this capacity he was able to provide food and safety for his father and his brothers and their families and children during the terrible seven years of famine that God brought upon the land.

Jacob came to Egypt and was reunited with Joseph and blessed his sons. He died in Egypt, but Joseph took him back to Canaan to be buried in the sepulcher that Abraham had purchased from the Hittites, where Sarah and Isaac were buried. Joseph, however, died in Egypt, and was buried in a coffin in Egypt. But Joseph believed the promise of the Redeemer and the promise to Abraham that God would bring Israel out of Egypt, and so he made the Israelites promise to carry his bones with them when they left Egypt and

to bury them in Canaan.

To miss the promise of God to Adam and Eve concerning the Redeemer, and to miss the promise of God to Abraham will be to miss the whole meaning of the book of Exodus, which otherwise becomes a rather sorry history of failure and sin and rebellion by the Israelites against God and His provisions for them. This is what we will concentrate on in these sermons and not the minutiae that unbelieving pseudo-scholars have fussed over to no profit. But we need to look at the text, to make several observations and then some applications.

#### I. The events from the death of Joseph to the Exodus. Vs. 1-7.

A. Gen. 46:3,4. God had said to Jacob when he journeyed to Egypt after hearing that Joseph was ruler over all Egypt: 3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: 4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

B. Seventy souls. Acts 7:14: Stephen says 75. This is easily reconciled. There were 66 who came with Jacob; Joseph and his wife and two children were in Egypt. That makes 70. Joseph had 5 grandchildren, making 75, as recorded in the Septuagint, quoted by Stephen. Inspiration guarantees that Stephen actually said 75, but does not guarantee what measurement he was using, but it would have been perfectly clear to those who heard him. Included in the final tally were Jacob, his children and grandchildren.

C. They were tremendously fruitful. At the time of the Exodus there were 600,000 able-bodied males besides women and children and the aged who came out of Egypt. God's promise to Abraham that He would make him a great nation as the stars of the heavens is beginning to be fulfilled, although it would only be literally fulfilled in the spiritual seed of Abraham, those born of the Spirit.

#### II. The beginning of their bondage. The rise of kings that did not know Joseph, the history of the past events.

A. When Jacob and his family came to Egypt, the land was being ruled by usurpers, known as the Hyksos kings, or shepherd kings. This may have been one reason Jacob and his family were so warmly received. Shepherds were abomination to the Egyptians and Pharaoh settled the Jews in Goshen, where they would be in a way buffered against the prejudice of the Egyptians.

B. The Egyptians no doubt resented the presence of the Israelites among them, but could do nothing as long as the Hyksos reigned. This is speculation, of course, but it fits all the details of the narrative. This would have occurred in the third year of the reign of Amosis, who expelled the Hyksos and reigned over Egypt as the head of the 18th Dynasty. This was maybe 250 years after the death of Joseph which is

a slightly longer time than the signing of our Declaration of Independence until this year 2010. It was during this time that Egypt rose to its greatest power and wealth and influence in the world.

C. But it was not a good time for Israel.

1. Their numbers and prosperity were considered a threat to the new rulers and the Egyptians.
2. They dealt "wisely" with them, putting them under bondage, to build the treasure cities. Even today large numbers of ancient bricks are found by archeologists in these regions.
3. Their measures were counter-productive: Whom God blesses, man cannot unbless. The Egyptians added to their burdens vs. 14. Some speculate that the building of pyramids was part of their labor during this time. Their labor was very harsh and bitter.
4. When these measures did not work, more direct measures were ordered: The death of the male babies.
5. The midwives [probably those of note, who perhaps trained others] to do partial birth abortions on the male babies. The midwives feared God, and did not do the murders.
6. The midwives gave a plausible excuse.
7. God was good to the midwives.
8. God gave great numbers to Israel. Made them houses: refers to the families of Israel. As David's house.... They multiplied exceedingly. It is a blessing to have many children.
9. Pharaoh's evil and vicious decree to all the Egyptians.

III. Let us make some applications.

A. God's blessing to Israel was of grace, not foreseen faith. Hosea 11:1,2.

1. Two children are here

a): An adopted Son: Israel. "6 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were

the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." (De 7:6-8)

b) The Only Begotten Son: Matt. 2:15

2. Hosea speaks primarily of Christ, the begotten Son. God loved his adopted son because of His only begotten Son.

B. Man cannot unbless what God has blessed. The blessing of God to Israel was by grace and predestination and it could not be changed by the actions of men. Ps. 37: 1 A Psalm of David. Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

C. God had two things to do:

1. Get His people out of the land of Egypt, as He had promised Abraham.

2. Get Egypt out of His people. This was a much harder job, and was not accomplished even when Jesus had come, or they would not have rejected Christ. Stephen said that they did always resist the Holy Spirit. Coming out of Egypt and going to heaven are not the same thing. None of the adults that came out of Egypt entered into the promised land; their carcasses fell in the wilderness because of unbelief.

D. The devil hates babies and children and he wars specifically upon them. God has a special care for the little ones.

1. Angels watch over them: Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

2. Jesus pronounces a curse on those who offend the little ones: "2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Mt 18:2-6)

- a) Those who hate the future hate children and babies.
- b) Those who hate the kingdom of God hate children and babies, for they symbolize those who enter the kingdom of God.
- c) Satan is bloodthirsty and will devise any means to destroy the young.
- d) The midwives feared God: only the fear of God will thwart the wiles of the devil, but there will always be those who do.
- e) How much more evil would be done by humanists were it not for those godly ones to work against the spirit of the age: Thank God for Christians in public schools; how much more propaganda there were by except for those godly Christian teachers and administrators who subvert the evolutionists and humanists.

3. The deceit of the midwives. Calvin, I think, has the very best take on this.

- a) He does not excuse the deceit, even the lie, of the midwives, for truth is exceeding precious.
- b) But it is better to do good in a flawed way than to do evil perfectly. God justifies His people. He saw the faith that moved the midwives, even though they could be faulted by the purists.
- c) This, and Rahab's hiding of the spies, are acts of faith. I am reminded of the proverb, "Where there are no oxen, there the crib is clean." You will no doubt find sin in every action of the godly, for we are not in heaven yet. You can have such a fear of sin that you will do nothing and will be paralyzed.
- d) These events must not be used as an excuse to habitual and practiced deceit, for all liars will have their part in the lake of fire. Isa 32:6 For the vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.
- e) Illustration: Man molesting his nieces: his mother in law told the nieces that it was ok to lie to protect their uncle. The end does not justify the means, for the means are also ordered by God.
- f) Life does not come in nice, neat little packages;

E. The triumph of Grace. The election was of grace, as the Scripture tells us. "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated." The blessing came to Jacob because of Christ and God's mercy, not because of their integrity of heart and faithfulness.

F. These things were written for our admonition: 1Cor. 10.

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. (1Co 10:1-5)

G. We also stand by faith, as Paul tells us in Romans 11:

18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: (Ro 11:18-20)

Amen and Amen  
God bless you.