

Exodus 1 – Fruitfulness And Obedience In Affliction.

I. Fruitfulness: 7,12,17.

The story of the Exodus (**going out**) begins where the story Genesis ends: a large family with a crucial place in God's eternal plan and their migration to Egypt.

Joseph was the remarkable great-grandson of Abraham who saved Egypt – and the world – from terrible famine because he listened to God's voice speaking through Pharaoh's dream. Because of his wisdom and administration, he was lifted to high and honored office in Egypt. Yet eventually, **Joseph died** and the status his family enjoyed died with him.

The ancient Egyptians felt racial superiority over all other people. At the time, the Egyptians feared invasion from the Hittites of the north. If the Hebrews among them joined with the Hittites, it posed a significant threat to their security.

They 'were fruitful...swarmed...became numerous'." (Cole)

When the children of Israel were set to slave labor they built many of the great cities and monuments in Egypt – though not the pyramids. *This growth in the face of affliction has consistently been the story of God's people, throughout all ages – the more they are afflicted, the more they grow. As the ancient Christian writer Tertullian said, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."*

Genesis 22:15-17 - Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—"blessing I will bless you, and **multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.**

Genesis 47:27 - So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and **grew and multiplied exceedingly.**

Luke 7:21 - And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, **afflictions**, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

2 Timothy 3:10-11 - But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, **perseverance, persecutions, afflictions**, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all, the Lord delivered me.

“Suffering and persecution are like a great wave that comes upon a ship and looks as if it will destroy it; but the ship catches the wave and just uses it to speed along.”

2 Timothy 4:5 - *But you be watchful in all things, **endure afflictions**, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

John 15:4-5 - *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

II. Obedience: 17.

“The king of Egypt commanded them to kill all the male babies, to utterly weaken and practically destroy the people of Israel within a generation. Satan knew that the Messiah – the Seed of the Woman, the One who would crush his head ([Genesis 3:15](#)) – would come from the children of Israel. Therefore he tried to destroy the whole nation in one generation by ordering all the male children killed.”

They obviously feared Pharaoh and his power; but they feared God more. For them, the choice was clear. The civil government commanded something that was clearly against God’s command. The midwives did the only right thing: they obeyed God rather than men.

“Instant obedience is the only kind of obedience there is; delayed obedience is disobedience. Whoever strives to withdraw from obedience, withdraws from Grace.”
Thomas a Kempis.

Dr. B.J. Miller once said, “It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do, no matter how hard it is, than to face the responsibilities of not doing it.”

Exodus 19:5 - *‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.*

Acts 5:29 - *But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.”*