

**“This World Is Not Our Home”**  
**Exodus 1:1-14**

We have been given the privilege of following God’s work of reconciling the world to Himself from its very beginning, which means before time began and before the foundation of the world, from eternity past moving into His creation of all things in Genesis 1, to the last book of the Bible where we can see that work coming to an end. I had never thought of the progress of redemption that way until this past Friday morning around 6 am sitting with my computer on my patio.

God’s work of reconciling us to Himself involved everything we find in His written word and a whole lot more. On our end of God’s work there is so much that we weren’t meant to understand but there is also so much we are supposed to understand. Don’t let anyone tell you that we can’t understand the Bible. This is what the Spirit gave us through the apostle Paul, first Corinthians 2: <sup>9</sup> *but just as it is written, “THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”*

<sup>10</sup> *For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; (1 Cor. 2:9-10 NAU)*

<sup>12</sup> *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, (1 Cor. 2:12 NAU)*

*But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16 NAU)*

With God’s written revelation to the church in our hands and the Holy Spirit in our hearts to teach us, turn to the second book of the Bible, Exodus and chapter 1 and v.1. That’s exciting. We have the mind of Christ because we have the Holy Spirit. And there’s nothing in the Bible beyond our grasp if we will pray and seek God when we turn to it. **Exodus 1:1** *Now these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob; they came each one with his household:*

<sup>2</sup> *Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah;*

<sup>3</sup> *Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin;*

<sup>4</sup> *Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.*

<sup>5</sup> *All the persons who came from the loins of Jacob were seventy in number, but Joseph was already in Egypt.*

<sup>6</sup> *Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.*

<sup>7</sup> *But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.*

<sup>8</sup> *Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.*

<sup>9</sup> *He said to his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we.*

<sup>10</sup> *"Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land."*

<sup>11</sup> *So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor. And they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses.*

<sup>12</sup> *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel.*

<sup>13</sup> *The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously;*

<sup>14</sup> *and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them.*

*(Exod. 1:1-14 NAU)*

### **The Holy Spirit loves context**

Those of you who know me know that I emphasize the essential idea of context when we're studying the word of God. Context can open up a whole new Bible for us. Whenever you're studying the word of God on your own and you come to a verse or passage that you don't immediately grasp, check its context. Context involves the historical setting of what you're reading as well as the meaning of words you find that you need to define, and it involves the author and his audience.

What the student of the Bible wants to get at is really simple and two-fold, what did the author mean and how did the original audience understand what he wrote. And I've said all that to bring us to **Exodus 1:1-14**.

Note this, these 14 verses are context. The author of the second book of the Bible ties us immediately to the first book of the Bible, which he also wrote. So what we have here is an historical account of the life and times of the children of Abraham and Sara, warts and all, the good times and the bad times, the blessings of God and the wrath of God and the sovereignty of God. And if one has a problem with the sovereignty of God, one has a problem with God and His written word.

Lets begin with v.6, Exodus 1:6,  
*Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.*

I have a question for you. How comfortable are you with your life and the lives of your family members and other loved ones? Do you feel at home with your life situation? Beloved, the passage we are studying this morning speaks to our lives as they are right now. And how is it that words written thousands of years ago can speak to us? I hope my first observation will help answer that question. Here it is,

**“The children of Israel were precisely where they were supposed to be, but not where they were supposed to stay.”**

Now here’s what we know about this family thus far. Joseph and his eleven brothers were the sons of Jacob the son of Isaac who was known as Israel, the son of Abraham. These brothers in our text were the children of the promise that God had made to Abraham that He would make him the father of many nations. Joseph and the boys were not the fulfillment of that promise but they were steps toward its fulfillment. And at the time of their deaths they were living in the lap of luxury in Egypt on Joseph’s tab where Joseph was second in charge of the entire nation.

You remember that God had sovereignly worked in the lives of the sons of Jacob in order to get Joseph into Egypt to save the lives of Jacob’s entire family during the great famine and drought that left the promised land in ruins, and the only way to do that was to make Joseph second only to Pharaoh in that strange land and that He did. The brothers threw their younger smarter brother into a deep pit and then sold him to a passing caravan that belonged to one of their cousin’s clans, the

Ishmaelites. And after Joseph had gained the second highest position in Egypt, he forgave his wicked brothers and embraced them. Remember Joseph's great line, "you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good?"

There's no way to know the time that passed from Joseph's death and all that generation and the rising up of a new king in Egypt who didn't know Joseph or any of his kin. But we can proffer an educated guess. It was more than likely over 100 years from that generation's death to the day of the new king, taking into account that "all that generation" would have included the children named in Genesis 50 who knew their father Joseph and who lived well past his death and then their children as well, it could have easily taken a minimum of at least 100 years for that generation to die out.

*<sup>7</sup> But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.* That didn't happen overnight. V.7 implies that a long time had passed in order for the sons of Israel to be that numerous so that *"the land was filled with them."*

"The children of Israel were precisely where they were supposed to be, but not where they were supposed to stay."

And us? And you? Did you know that you and I are precisely where we're supposed to be even as we speak? And did you know that this is not where we're supposed to stay?

"But, pastor, how can that be where the Israeli's were supposed to be when they were suffering so horribly and cruelly at the hands of this new king? And how can you say that that's where God wanted them to be? And that's God's will for them to suffer all that nightmare for so long? I don't get it?"

Let me help. Turn back to the first book, Genesis and chapter 15 and you'll see the answer to your questions. <sup>13</sup> *God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.*

<sup>14</sup> *"But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.*

*(Gen. 15:13-14 NAU)*

Do you see it now? The children of Abraham were living in Egypt because God Himself had engineered their being there. And they were suffering in Egypt because God Himself had engineered the rising of a king who was paranoid and evil and who would afflict the children of Israel for God's purpose and their eternal good. Read this, <sup>17</sup> *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE IN YOU MY POWER, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."* (Rom. 9:17 NAU)

As I said earlier, if one has a problem with the sovereignty of God, one will have a problem with the whole of Scripture and ultimately with God's work of redemption through His chosen vessels beginning with His Son.

<sup>14</sup> *"But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.*

Did you catch that last phrase, "and afterward they will come out with many possessions?"

***Here's the lesson, the people of God had settled down in the wrong place and God was doing what was necessary to motivate them to leave the familiar. And God never moves His children without blessing them in their going.***

<sup>18</sup> *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

<sup>19</sup> *For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.*

<sup>20</sup> *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope*

<sup>21</sup> *that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (Rom. 8:18-21 NAU)*

**Beloved, we are where we're supposed to be, but not where we're supposed to stay.** The bad times of this life are simply a reminder of that truth. And God never moves His children without blessing them in their going. <sup>18</sup> *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* <sup>21</sup> *that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

My question is this, and I close, “Have you settled down in your own personal Egypt? Have you settled down in the wrong place? Have you made this world your home? Do you have the possessions of this world and none of the treasures in heaven you're supposed to be building up? Do you have both? That's great.

But it may be that some of you harbor resentment toward God because of the sufferings you have gone through and you're going through right now?” That's understandable but it needs to change. Beloved, “everything's gonna be alright.”

In Jesus' name. Amen.