

Introduction: Injustice is everywhere. Sometimes it is small and only irritating. But some injustices are intense and oppressive. The majority of Americans have never experienced such oppression, so they are ignorant of people suffering severe oppression. This ignorance contributes to indifference. *** The majority can take steps to address their ignorance by getting to know people of oppressed minorities. True stories, told to people willing to listen, will move these people more effectively than rhetoric about generalities. When people take time to really listen to other people's stories their hearts are opened to learn more, and eventually take action on the side of God's Justice. (See *Exodus 12:33-38*) *** This is why hundreds of stories about real people were given by The Holy Spirit in The Bible. They are intended to show us God acts in all that happens on earth. Revelations about God's character are also woven in with succinct subtlety. We learn God not only knows everything, but He cares about human suffering. He is with His afflicted people to deliver them. Because of this, He desires His people worship Him as an expression of thanksgiving for who He is and all He does. *** In the stories we heard today, we learn The Power of God preserves and grows His people despite increasing oppression. Then, He appears to Moses in holy fire to declare His intention to rescue His people; and, identifies Himself as the eternally existing One who does not change from generation to generation. *** One thousand five hundred year later, His Son – The Savior, challenges people to know the stories in Scripture and to know God's Power. In doing this, they will be given faith to receive, and grow in, life out of spiritual death.

I. When the sons of Israel were in bondage in Egypt, Yahweh appeared to Moses to say He would deliver them.

(Exodus 1:8-14; 3:1-15)

- A. More than one hundred years after Joseph died a new king in Egypt afflicted the sons of Israel in his fear. (*Exodus 1:8-14*)
1. The new king of Egypt did not know Joseph. (*Verse 8*)
Dates: Joseph died in 1800 BC. It is now 1650 BC. In one hundred fifty years what a foreigner did in the famine was forgotten. Looking forward, Moses was born in 1530 BC; and, he heard Yahweh from the burning bush in 1450 BC.
 2. He is concerned the 'sons of Israel' are more numerous and mighty; and, tells the Egyptians to be wise so they do not multiply and assist enemies when they war with us, and go from the land. (*Verses 9-10*)
Fear: The king fears the numbers and power of the Israelites will lead them to 'add to' an enemy army attacking Egypt. This is the first of many times the Israelites are called 'the sons of Israel'.
 3. He appointed masters of slaves to afflict them as they built the storage cities of Pithom ('city of justice') and Raamses ('child of the sun'); but, this caused more growth of numbers and they dreaded 'the sons of Israel'. (*Verses 11-12*)
Afflict: The word affliction ('*ah-nee*') is more about suffering of the soul than of the body. Did you know that Bethany (*Mark 11; John 11*) means 'house of affliction'? The oppression was two-fold.
Not 'logical': God is the ultimate paradox. It is illogical that severe affliction would result in more strength for the afflicted. But, this is hope for all God's people in all ages, even now!
 4. Their lives were made bitter with the hard labor and bondage of forced slavery. (*Verses 13-14*)
Increased oppression: In an effort to reduce the 'sons of Israel' in both numbers and strength, the Egyptians further escalated their oppression.
- B. When Moses was eighty years old Yahweh appeared to him in fire to say He would rescue His people from affliction to worship Him. (*Exodus 3:1-15*)
1. As Moses watched the sheep of Jethro ('his abundance') his father-in-law in Midian ('strife') near Mt. Horeb ('desert'), an angel of Yahweh appeared in a flame of fire not consuming the bush. (*Verses 1-2*)
God's mountain: Mt. Horeb is the mountain on which Yahweh made His covenant with all Israel. (*Deuteronomy 5:1-2*)
Angel of Yahweh: This angel of Yahweh may be the pre-incarnate Savior-Messiah, Jesus Christ.
 2. Moses went to look at this great sight and when Yahweh saw him turn, God called him twice and Moses replied 'Here I am'; and, God told Moses to stand back for the ground is holy. (*Verses 3-5*)
Great wonder: The intense fire coming from a bush not consumed is a 'great wonder'!
Open to God: Moses' response to God's call is a fully surrendered 'Yes' to God's will. It is a good example for all God's people to follow.
God IS Holy: God is too Holy for people to approach. Even at a distance, people must remove whatever God requests. This story of Moses warns Christians who think of God as a familiar friend who does not require reverence.
 3. God says He is The Father of Moses' ancestors and he hides his face, afraid to look. (*Verse 6*)
Awesome holiness: This is the awesome paradox of God: Moses fears to see His face, and David desires to gaze at the beauty of Yahweh's face in His Temple (*Psalms 27*).
 4. He says He has seen and knows the affliction of His people and has heard their cry because of the slave masters, so He will rescue them and bring them to a good land with six nations. (*Verses 7-8*)
God knows: God always knows everything about His people, including their afflictions. This is true even when they question why He is not acting on their behalf.
Rescue: He will rescue His afflicted people; and, in addition give them the land 'flowing with milk and honey' He had promised to Abraham. (*Genesis 15:7-21*)

Title: *The Holy God rescues the afflicted.* (#1)

Six nations: Canaan ('zealous'), Ham's son, was cursed by his grandfather Noah (*Genesis 9:18-27*). The Hittites, Jebusites and Hivites were descendents of his second, third and sixth sons respectively. The Amorites ('sayers') lived east of Canaan; and, the Perizzites ('villagers') lived south of Canaan.

5. I am now sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people out of Egypt; but Moses said, 'Who am I that I should go and bring 'the sons of Israel' out of Egypt?' (*Verses 9-11*)

Bring out of Egypt: Like all people, Moses had less than full faith in The Awesome and Holy God. Based on his past life (*Exodus 2*), he had no confidence in himself. But all people must learn that: God does what He says; and, He will set His people free from the bondage of their slavery!

God frees His people from bondage and death

6. Because I will be with you, and the sign that I have sent you will be that you will serve God on this mountain. (*Verse 12*)

Presence: God's Awesome Presence with His people guarantees all His words of promise.

Worship: Serving God by discerning and doing His will is at the heart of all worship.

7. Moses asks God's Name because the 'sons of Israel' may question him on this; and, the answer God gives is: I will be who I will be. (*Verses 13-14*)

Name: The fact that God's Covenant Name is future focused gives His people hope for the future, even in difficult times of affliction. The four letters of His written Name could be an acronym for: He will be, He has been, and He is being. This ties the future with the past in the present.

8. Say, Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has sent me, and this is My remembrance Name to generation (and) generation. (*Verse 15*)

All generations: For all generations until The Judgment Day, The Eternal Covenant God will always deliver His people to freedom from slavery to people, sin, and death.

God frees His people from bondage and death

II. Jesus told the Sadducees they are in error because the dead are being raised, and Abraham is alive IN Him.

(*Mark 12:24-27*)

- A. Jesus was telling the Sadducees they were in error concerning the raising of the dead. (*Verses 24-25*)

1. Jesus was answering the Sadducees, 'You all are being led astray because of this: you have not known The Scriptures, nor The Power of God'. (*Verse 24*)

Two errors: Before this they had given Jesus a parable about a woman who had been married to seven brothers who died and then said the resurrection of the dead is foolish, because who would she have for her husband? They have not been continually immersed in Scripture so they do not know God's Power.

2. Because when people rise from the dead, there is no marriage, they are as angels in heaven. (*Verse 25*)

Transformed body: The resurrected body will be transformed to be like Jesus' Resurrected Body. (*1Corinthians 15:42-49; Philippians 3:20-21*) So everything will be beyond what we know now.

- B. He then recounts the story of Moses at the burning bush when God said I am The God of your patriarchs, speaking of them as still living. (*Verses 26-27*)

1. But about the dead that are being raised (*Verse 26a*)

Dead already being raised: These are the people who are already crossing over from spiritual death to life IN Jesus by hearing His words and believing The One who sent Him. (*John 5:24-25*)

2. ... haven't you read in the book of Moses, in the bush, how God spoke to him ... (*Verse 26b*)

Burning bush: This is the very account we have just considered. Jesus is about to teach the application of it.

3. ... I (am) The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? (*Verse 26c*)

4. He is not being the God of the dead, but of those who are living. (*Verse 27a*)

God's people: Jesus is saying that over five hundred years after Abraham died and was gathered to his people (*Genesis 25:8*), he was still alive to God, along with his son and grandson!

Always alive: All who believe IN Jesus live, even though they die (*John 11:25-26*).

Homiletical Idea: God frees His people from bondage and death. (3)

5. You all are being greatly led astray. (*Verse 27b*)

Bottom Line: May we all be delivered from the error resulting from NOT knowing The Scriptures and The Power of God BY taking more time to hear God's Word and to be with Him in prayer.

Conclusion: The Holy God provides for His people in their afflictions. He knows their situation and will rescue them in His time because He is the same from generation to generation. All who have received grace to know The Scriptures and The Power of God are no longer in error, but crossing over from death to life.

God frees His people from bondage and death