

## The Glory of the Hard Place

### *The Israelites Oppressed: Slavery in Egypt*

**Exodus 1:9-12** - 9 And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; 10 come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel.

**Vs 12, "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew."**

- I'd like for you to get the picture of what's happening now.

**Here's the children of Israel:**

- They went down into Egypt during the time of Joseph.
- **Joseph** had been sold into slavery and sold off into Egypt.
- There they are down in Egypt, and **the famine comes to the land of Canaan**.
- **Joseph's brethren** finally must go to Egypt in order to get food.
- They wind up living in Egypt.
- The years pass, and **finally Joseph dies**.

A new generation comes on, and then finally there's **a new Pharaoh over Egypt** that **didn't know Joseph**, **didn't remember** the way **God had used him** to preserve that nation of Egypt during the time of the famine. **So he said:**

- "I'll tell you what we're going to have to do."
- **"These Israelites, there's too many of them."**
- "If we get into some kind of a battle, ***it's going to get rough*** because they'll side in with the other armies, and **we'll be defeated**, and they'll get their liberty."
- **"They won't have to serve us anymore.**
- **Let's afflict them with heavy burdens."**

**And the Bible said, "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew."**

I'd like to preach by the help of God this morning on **The glory of the hard place.**

- Well, here they are, **the children of Israel.**
- They're God's people.
- They're not just ordinary people. **That's God's people. And now -**
- They have worked the land, and they have produced, and **everything should be going great** for them.
- When Joseph died, they no longer became the children of Joseph, but **they became the children of Israel again.**
- They were outsiders.

**They weren't supposed to be in that place as far as the Egyptians considered.** So when Pharaoh came and he said, **"Now, I don't owe these people anything."** He said, **"They're mightier than we are, and we're going to have to do something about it."**

- **"Let's work them from early in the morning until late at night."**
- **"Let's put such a load of burden upon them that they'll be hard pressed."**
- **"When night comes, they'll go home and eat and fall in the bed."**
- **"The next morning we'll come and sound revelry, and we'll get them out of that bed, and we'll make them hit the fields and work and labor and toil, and we'll keep them bowed down under a heavy burden."**

But you know what? **The Bible said the more they afflicted them:**

- The more of a load they placed on them
- The more responsibilities they gave them in the fields
- The harder they worked them
- The more lashes across their backs they got from the whip

**The Bible said the more they multiplied and grew.**

**I want to tell you something about the church.**

- The church **had never in its history prospered** when everything was going well for the church.
- There has never been a day, not one moment, **when everything was going good for the church** that the church really had a glorious revival.

**It was when:**

- They began to **kill the Christians** in Jerusalem
- They began to **chop the heads off** the Apostles
- They began to **persecute them** and **throw them into the dungeons.**

**That's when the church began to spread.**

**It never would have left Jerusalem if it had not been that some affliction came to the church.**

I don't know about you, but I'm willing to pay any price to see a real Holy Ghost revival with this great nation of ours.

- I want to see something ***happen to my generation.***
- I want to see something happen ***to kids that I grew up with.***
- I want to see my generation ***touched by the power of the Holy Spirit!***

**There hasn't been a real revival.**

I'm talking about **a real revival** since back near **the early 40s when:**

- ***The Depression*** days came
- **People didn't have airplanes to fly in and sports cars to wheel around in**
- They **didn't have money** jingling in their pockets
- They got to a place **they didn't know where the next meal was coming from.**

**You know where they turned, don't you?**

- **They turned back to God,** and they said, "**We need help.**
- **We need food.**
- **Somebody's got to help us, and there's nobody to help us but God."**

**I do not want Depression to come.** There's a lot of talk about it, you know.

- They're talking about **recession** and **depression** and **obsession** and private **possession** and everything, you know.
- **Let the church say ... I want to make it.**

**The children of Israel, the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew.**

**God knows what it takes to get us really in the place we ought to be.**

As far as I can determine, ***I don't believe the church is ready for the rapture.***

- There are people **ready**.
- There are people right here that are **ready to go**.
- **I believe that** with all my heart.

There are people probably *in every church in America*, practically *every church*, *that love God* and *are sincere*, they're **welcoming God** and they're **ready to go**.

*Something's going to have to happen. There are too many people:*

- **Sitting on the perimeter**
- **Sitting on the outer circle**
- **Too many people pretend to be serving God and they're not serving God**
- **They sit on the outside and they criticize!**
- **They fight and they pick, and they talk, and they gossip, and they slander...**
- **They fail to pay their tithes, and they don't give offerings.**
- **Too many people that are trying to hang on to an experience they received 20 years ago, 10 years ago, 5 years ago.**

**What we need is for THE church to be on fire for God –**

- **that it becomes a bomb every time a sinner walks in...**
- They need **a touch of the Spirit and the power** of God.
- I'm telling you the truth.
- **I'm tired of being ordinary.**
- **I want my soul set on fire. A follower of the Holy Spirit!!!!**

The Bible says that **when the Lord comes back** the **bride hath made herself ready**.

### **Matthew 25:1-13 - The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins**

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

6 “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

**The Meaning: *The parable is interpreted as a warning to be ready for the coming of Christ, who will return at an unknown hour.***

It also teaches that **people should prepare** for the Second Coming **as if it could happen at any time.**

**The prepared** virgins are rewarded, while **the unprepared** virgins miss the bridegroom and **are NOT allowed to enter** the wedding feast.

**Live a life actively anticipating Christ's return and DO NOT become complacent in faith.**

**If it takes affliction, if it takes *some kind of trouble coming into our lives.***

- If that's what it takes to **get me ready and get you ready.**
- **"Come on Lord, give us what we need.**
- We want to go all the way. ***We want to make it."* RIGHT???**

***I believe that before the Lord comes,*** I believe that there's going to be a distinct line drawn between **those that really love Him** and **those that don't love Him.**

If it takes it, **let affliction come.**

**Because the children of Israel had all their affliction. When:**

- The **heavy load** was placed upon them
- While they **worked at the mill**
- While they **drove the oxen in the fields**
- While they **cultivated**, while they **picked crops** and fresh wheat
- **They worked and they built cities** and **hauled blocks.**
- When they **built the cities** of Ramses and Pithom

Behind all of that, and ***underneath the groaning of the children of Israel, there was some glory that was going to be revealed.***

**In that hard place in the history of Israel.**

***God chooses Moses:***

***If you read on a few more chapters, you'll find that the Lord spoke to a man by the name of Moses.***

- And he said, "***I have heard the cry and the groaning of my people in Egypt. And I have come down to deliver them.***"

**Exodus 3:7** - 7 The Lord said: I have seen how my people are suffering as slaves in Egypt, and I have heard them beg for my help because of the way they are being mistreated. I feel sorry for them,

**I believe hard times move us closer to Christ and make us dependent on Him.**

- We may be saying, "***Come on, Lord. Come and take us out of here.***"
- Even so, ***come quickly,*** Lord Jesus."

**John said, Revelation 21:2** - I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

- We're going to a city that ***knows no night.***
- We're going to a city that ***knows no ending.***

***Aren't you glad for that blessed hope you have in Jesus?***

**There was glory to be revealed in the heartbreak.**

**In their hardest hour of affliction, there came their greatest delivery.**

- It was from that ***bitter bondage***
- God was going to lead them out ***with the plaques.***

**He was going to lead them:**

- ***Through the Red Sea*** that was to ***open and roll backward far enough*** that three and a half million people ***could go through on dry ground.***
- He was going to ***take them out of that affliction*** and ***lead them into the wilderness*** where ***their leader would smite a rock,***
- And ***water would gush out of that rock enough to quench the thirst of three and a half million people*** plus all the animals...

***He was going to lead them out of that affliction!***

- ***There was miraculous bread out of Heaven*** that came down when the dew fell and melted when the sun came up.
- ***That has sustained the children of Israel throughout all their years of wandering*** in the wilderness.

Let affliction come **because if it comes**, we can be assured **there's going to be some glory to be revealed** in the hard place.

The Gospel is still living on today!

After they had been beaten, and their backs were bloody, ***they were sitting there in a dungeon in Philippi***, in that murky, dark, stinky jail.

They sat there, and at midnight,

- **When their greatest affliction had just happened to them—**
- They faced what a lot of us probably **wouldn't have been able to face**
- **They took it all and never regretted, never grumbled.**

The Bible says, Acts 16:25-26 - 25 ***But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God***, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were loosed.

- While **their backs were stripped**
- While **their character had been ruined**
- While they were **in that place of deep humiliation and suffering**
- **In the middle of all of that, something glorious happened!**

While they began to worship God:

- **The foundations** of that jail began to shake—hallelujah!
- The **old door creaked open**, and ***they were set free***
- As a result of that, **they baptized the Philippian jailer.**
  
- You know, **somebody got baptized**—thank God, **they had a good service!**
- But you know, **what's the big deal** about just baptizing somebody?
- Well, his whole family got baptized! **But what's the big deal?**

What kind of revival was that? Did they really have something?

Where did the Philippian church come from?

I'll tell you where it came from:

- It came from ***backs beaten blood red***.
- It came from ***a hard place in the lives of two people who suffered for the name of Jesus***.
- Because a jailer got baptized, ***a church was birthed in Philippi***.
- That's glory ***to be revealed in the hard place!***

CLOSE:

The Man who was born blind: John 9:25 - He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. **One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!**"

He may not have known if Jesus was a sinner,

- But he is certain that ***he was once blind and now can see***,
- Highlighting the ***undeniable transformation*** brought about by Jesus' healing power...
- It's a statement of ***personal experience over speculation*** about Jesus' character.

You might as well ***be assured of one thing***:

***If you trust God in your hour of deepest affliction and suffering, somewhere down the road, your eyes are going to be opened.***

You're going to see the glory of God revealed ***in that hard place!***

***And in the book of Philippians, Paul said, Philippians 4:4 - Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice!***

Do you know why he could say that?

Because when he wrote to them:

- He was thinking about ***the hard place***
- Then he looked down at his hand, saw the pen, and ***realized he was writing to a church that was born out of suffering.***

Thank God for The Glory of the Hard Place.