

## In the Midst of Misery

### *Exodus 3:7-17*

Rev. Gene Tarver

1-18-04

This morning when we read the scripture, I want you to ask yourself this question. "What is the vision of God in this passage"?

Do you know why? God is always there! It is His word for us! Throughout the bible, you will see at different times, God is the creator, a Good Father, a Redeemer, a Husband, a King or a Savior – As you read in the Old Testament scriptures, the narrative (story) you find three levels or as an example a "three tier cake" –

The top layer is God's universal plan for His creation. This includes some good topics and some bad ones; the fall of man, the power and pollution of sin, man's rejection of God, the need for redemption, and Jesus' incarnation and His sacrifice for sin at the cross.

The middle layer with its key aspects focused and centered on Israel (God's children). Here we find the progression from the call of Abraham, to God's deliverance from bondage and the conquest of the promised land of Canaan. You find Israel's repeated sin of disobedience and grumbling, and God's patient protection when they repent and seek His face.

The bottom layer has what I'll call a "mini-series" and the bible is loaded with them – and the best part is they make up the other two levels. Each individual narrative or "mini-series" is a part of the other two layers. The best part, it all points to Jesus in the New Testament.

Let's now cut the cake and take slice!

### Exodus 3: 7-17

7 The LORD said, "***I have*** indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. ***I have heard*** them crying out because of their slave drivers, and ***I am concerned*** about their suffering.

8 So ***I have*** come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey — the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

12 And God said, "***I will be with you.*** And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

13 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob — has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

16 "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers — the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — appeared to me and said: ***I have*** watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.

17 And ***I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt*** into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites — a land flowing with milk and honey.' NIV

### **In the Midst of Misery!**

Do you remember the 1<sup>st</sup> question I asked?

***Hold that thought!!***

REMEMBER WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ISRAEL:

Let's go back for a second – turn to the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter V. 8 – 14 (Read)

This was a change from the old King who found favor upon Joseph and the people of Israel. You see, this new king did not acknowledge Joseph, his great merits in relation to Egypt and also a great lapse of time had passed since Joseph's death. This new king did not trouble himself about the past, nor did he want to know anything about his predecessors or the events of their reigns. This new king enslaved God's people to build storage cities and many other types of public works, yet the more the Pharaoh pushed the more the people increased thus fulfilling the promise have to Abraham found in:

Genesis 12:3

I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.

Have you ever felt like the Israelites?

- Maybe you started a new job and your new boss is harder on you than your old one?
- Maybe you have a family situation that is burning out of control and you know you there is nothing you can do so you feel helpless?
- Maybe you are in a relationship that has damaged your walk with Christ?
- Maybe you are involved or trapped in some sort of sin and cannot find a way out?
- Maybe you are so consumed with worldly things that you have no time to read your bible or sit at the feet of Jesus?
- Maybe you are caught in the web of pornography, playing lotto, or lying or cheating the state to gain some type benefit

### **In the Midst of Misery!**

Does the bible give us examples of people in the midst of misery?

**Moses** – he murdered an Egyptian and had to flee in fear to the desert.

- His misery was self-inflicted.

**David** – he had sex with someone else's wife (Bathsheba) got her pregnant and then had the husband killed! Confronted by Nathan the prophet – Listen!

2 Samuel 12:9-14

9 *Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. 10 Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'*

11 *"This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12 You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.'"*

13 *Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."*

Nathan replied, *"The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. 14 But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die."* NIV

- His misery was self-inflicted

**Daniel** – He was thrown into the lions den's for not praying to King Nebuchadnezzar

- His misery came from being obedient to God.

**Job** – He lost his children, his family, his home, his livestock, his wife told him to curse God & die, and if this was not enough, his own body was inflicted with boils!

- His misery came from being obedient to God

What about in the New Testament?

**Peter** – he denied ever knowing Jesus and afterward had to look into the face of Christ.

**The Apostles** – considered a cult, jailed, flogged and imprisoned.

**The Apostle Paul** – 2 Corinthians 11:23-29

23 *Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. 28 Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?* NIV

Do you remember the 1<sup>st</sup> question I asked?

**“What is the vision of God in this passage?”**

What do all these people have in common?

**They are in the Midst of Misery!**

Let's go back to Exodus 3 starting with verse 7. Let's look closely and see if we can answer the question. The key verses are 7,8,12 & 17

7 The LORD said, "***I have*** indeed ***seen the misery*** of my people in Egypt. ***I have heard*** them crying out because of their slave drivers, and ***I am concerned*** about their suffering. 8 So ***I have*** come down ***to rescue*** them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey — the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites

12 And God said, "***I will be with you***. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

17 And ***I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt*** into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites — a land flowing with milk and honey.' NIV

**Here lies the vision of God in this passage!**

Verse 7. If you are in the midst of misery.

- God sees it.
- God hears your cries.
- God is concerned over your suffering.

Verse 8. If you are in the midst of misery.

- God's plan is to rescue you from the midst of your turmoil

Verse 12. If you are in the midst of misery.

- God wants you to know that you are not alone He said "I'll be with you" – He is Immanuel – God is with us!

Just as God promised, he did bring the Israelites out of their misery in Egypt. This was done to show them it is He who is the Savior, He is the hero.

Look now at verse 14 - God said to Moses, "***I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'***" NIV

When God said to Moses, "I am who I am", He was announcing the name by which He wished to be known and worshiped in Israel....

Today we live in a world surrounded by misery, people in misery, and sadly, many of us live in misery every day.

When the Israelites were in the midst of misery they knew what to do – they cried out to God!

Today, Let us learn from this passage, just as God spoke to Moses those words of comfort, hope and promise, in the midst of misery, God has come in the person of Jesus the Christ!

*There once was a rich man who was near death. He was very grieved because he had worked so hard for his money and he wanted to be able to take it with him to heaven. So he began to pray that he might be able to take some of his wealth with him.  
(He should have Read PS 49:17)*

*An angel hears his plea and appears to him, "Sorry, but you can't take your wealth with you."*

*The man implores the angel to speak to God to see if He might bend the rules.*

*The man continues to pray that his wealth could follow him. The angel reappears and informs the man that God has decided to allow him to take one suitcase with him. Overjoyed, the man gathers his largest suitcase and fills it with pure gold bars and places it beside his bed.*

*Soon afterward the man dies and shows up at the Gates of Heaven to greet St. Peter. Seeing the suitcase Peter says, "Hold on, you can't bring that in here!"*

*But the man explains to him that he has permission and asks him to verify his story with the Lord. Sure enough,. Peter checks and comes back saying, "You're right. You are allowed one carry-on bag, but I'm supposed to check its contents before letting it through."*

*Peter opens the suitcase to inspect the worldly items that the man found too precious to leave behind and exclaims, "You brought pavement? [forwarded by Nancy Gale]*

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)

- Jesus is the One who sustains physical and spiritual life.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am the Light of the World" (John 8:12)

- Jesus is the source of spiritual enlightenment.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am the Gate for the sheep" (John 10:7)

- Jesus provides access to God and salvation.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11)

- Jesus lays down His life for us, His sheep.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25)

- Jesus is the source and giver of life eternal.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6).

- Jesus alone provides access to God the Father and all of the Father's good gifts to humankind.

### **Are you in the Midst of Misery!**

Jesus said "I am" the true vine (John 15:1).

- Jesus is the source of spiritual life & vitality. By remaining close to Him we are enabled to bring forth fruit and so glorify God.

To paraphrase the words the Apostle Paul used in Romans 8:38-39

*For I am convinced that no misery, neither the present misery, nor any future misery, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor any other type of misery in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Jesus said in the Midst of Misery**

**"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."**