

Lessons from Torah 55 - Exodus 1:1-2:10

When the World No Longer Knows Your Brother

1. Exodus 1:1-7 – Exodus opens with a review of the family of Israel – who are the focus of the rest of the Torah
2. Exodus 1:8 – Israel shifts from favored to feared
 - a. The ‘new king’ refers to a new dynasty
 - b. This dynasty may well have represented a new nationality of leaders – not just a new family
 - c. Rulers feared other cultures – perhaps especially after the famine, when outside nations (like the family of Israel) came to Egypt for food and then settled there
 - d. Nations today often fear large populations of immigrants from a particular culture (as the antebellum South feared the large number of slaves and were progressively harsh in dealing with them as they grew in numbers – as nations throughout history have feared the Jews or used them as ‘scapegoats’)
3. Exodus 1:9-14 - Their solution was progressively repressive laws – like Hitler used in pre-war Germany
 - a. Exodus 9:12 – Instead of limiting the number of Israelites, the measures resulted in a higher birthrate
 - b. So the Egyptians fear and ‘loathe’ the Israelites more
4. Exodus 1:15-22 – This led to attempts at population control – in particular, the forced killing of sons
 - a. Similar to the Holocaust and ‘one-child’ forced abortion policies in China
 - b. Abortion has been promoted by people wanting to limit the number of “undesirable” people (handicapped, specific races, nationalities, the poor)
 - c. Some recent candidates for president advocate forced abortions in third-world countries
5. Exodus 2:1-10 – When the government becomes an enemy of a particular group of people, civil disobedience often becomes necessary – how that is done requires wisdom, caution, and a large dose of bravery (as during the Holocaust)
6. What, then, does the rest of the Bible teach us in light of Exodus 1:1-2:10?
 - a. Christians are commanded to respect, be subject to and pray for those in power:
 - i. Romans 13:1, Titus 3:1, 1 Peter 2:13-17
 - ii. 1 Timothy 2:1-3
 - b. But there are limits to our obedience - we must not give the world more allegiance or attention that we give God
 - i. Matthew 16:23, 23:2-3
 - ii. John 15:19
 - iii. Romans 8:5-8
 - iv. Romans 12:2
 - v. 2 Corinthians 11:3
 - vi. Galatians 1:10
 - c. The danger is that the world, like the sin nature within us, will gradually draw us away from God
 - i. Philippians 3:19
 - ii. 1 Timothy 1:6
 - iii. 1 Timothy 5:11
 - iv. 1 Timothy 6:10
 - v. 1 Timothy 6:20-21
 - vi. 2 Timothy 4:3-4
 - vii. 2 Timothy 4:10
 - viii. James 4:4
 - ix. 1 John 2:15
 - x. Revelation 3:17
 - xi. Revelation 19:20-21
 - d. So we must actively keep our heart and mind on ‘things above’
 - i. Colossians 3:1-2
 - ii. Hebrews 2:1
 - iii. Hebrews 3:12-13
 - e. When the world and God conflict – follow God
 - i. Exodus 1:17
 - ii. Acts 4:19-20
 - f. But with respect, not arrogantly
 - i. Exodus 1:15-2:1-10
 - ii. Daniel 1:8-14
 - g. Because God promises to preserve the faithful
 - i. Revelation 3:11
 - ii. Revelation 20:4