

September 11th, 2022

The House of Slavery

Exodus 1:8-14

Summa Theologica

Last week we how the children of Israel were fulfilling the cultural mandate to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth. Those first seven verses showed us *why* Egypt opposed Israel. Ancient Egypt and the New Egypt today are engaged in a war against children. Why? Because as God's people multiply and fill the earth, Christ's Kingdom expands. Families are the essential building block of culture. They establish an alternative culture, one built on the Covenant of Grace. As the Kingdom of Christ grows, all other kingdoms are threatened. Those first seven verses show us why Egypt opposed Israel, and why the world opposes the Church today.

The House of Slavery

This morning, we look at the second seven verses (**v.8-14**) and we see *why* God opposed Egypt. When Pharaoh and all of Egypt saw that these Israelites were growing faster and stronger than them, Egypt transformed into a house of slavery. In fact, when God delivers Israel and takes them to Mt. Sinai proclaiming the 10 commandments to them, He says this, **Exodus 20:2** "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, *out of the house of slavery.*" Nations that don't fear the LORD—if they last long enough—*always* turn to tyranny and slavery. It is as certain as the law of gravity. When a nation doesn't depend upon the power of God, they exercise cruel and depraved power. And the Lord God since the very beginning has opposed this. God does not *merely* punish individuals for their rebellion against Him—for their thinking that they can be their own gods (**Genesis 3:5**). He also punishes nations. **Psalms 58:6-8** "O God, break their teeth in their mouth...Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime."

The Big Idea...

Wicked nations are houses of slavery which God has *always* opposed throughout history for the sake of His people

★ Our Doctrine

★ Our Duty

★ Our Delight

I. Our Doctrine

Profile of wicked nations

In these seven verses, we *not only* have a description of Egypt's wickedness *but* the profile of *every* wicked nation. Consider 7 characteristics of Egypt and every nation that has set itself against the Lord.

Characteristic #1: Wicked nations will have their names blotted out forever

Look at v.8 "Now there arose *a new king over Egypt*, who did not know Joseph." Isn't that interesting? Joseph is named. Pharaoh is not. This has caused no end to speculation as to who this Pharaoh was. But consider this one fact: Moses (our author) knew his name.¹ But he doesn't give it. Why? The most powerful man on earth at the time—the darling of the world—goes unnamed. Why? This omission is on purpose. It is both a fulfillment of prophecy and a dire warning. **Psalm 9:5-6** "You have rebuked the nations; you have made the wicked perish; *you have blotted out their name forever and ever...the*

¹ And the name of the next Pharaoh who succeeded him—the one whom the 10 plagues fell.

very memory of them has perished."² The NT picks up this same pattern. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, *the rich man is not named* but Lazarus is.³ That's the **first characteristic** of wicked nations *and* their rulers: *God will cause the very memory of them to perish.*

Characteristic #2: Wicked nations are covenant breakers

The end of **v.8** says that this Pharaoh "...*did not know Joseph.*" Either this means that Pharaoh was *ignorant* of Joseph saving Egypt or he chose to *ignore* it.⁴ Which one was it? I don't believe Pharaoh was ignorant. In **Amos 3:2** God tells Israel "You only *have I known* of all the families of the earth," God wasn't saying that He was *ignorant* of the other nations, rather he was declaring His special love for Israel—He knew them like Adam knew his wife (**Genesis 4:1**). Likewise when **v.8** says that Pharaoh "...*did not know Joseph*" it doesn't mean Pharaoh was ignorant of him, it means he didn't care. He didn't acknowledge Joseph or his nightly exploits. Even if Pharaoh was ignorant of what Joseph did, would it have made any difference? Imagine if one of Pharaoh's officials had been searching the Egyptian historical archives and found out about the wonderful things Joseph did for Egypt, and he reported it to Pharaoh, would it have curbed Pharaoh's wickedness?⁵ No he is of the seed of the serpent—born a liar and a covenant breaker (**Psalms 58:3**). Though the previous Pharaoh had covenanted with Joseph and all Israel and gave them the land of Goshen to be a free people (**Genesis 45:17-20**⁶), this Pharaoh was breaking that covenant. He refused to acknowledge it, he didn't care. That's the **second characteristic** of wicked nations *and* their rulers: *they are covenant breakers.*

² also cf. Job 18:17; Psalm 109:13-15

³ Luke 16:19-20

⁴ Either Pharaoh *didn't know* the great exploits Joseph accomplished through the Lord of consolidating all the land of Egypt under Pharaoh's power (**Genesis 47:20**) or Pharaoh *didn't care*.

⁵ After all if he was willing to enslave and kill them, would he not be willing to do the lesser thing and ignore the covenant and lie to them?

⁶ also cf. Genesis 41:39-45

Characteristic #3: Wicked nations hate the cultural mandate⁷

Wicked nations war against God's command to be fruitful and fill the earth. Look at v.9 "And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are *too many* and *too mighty* for us." Obviously Egypt was not keeping up with Israel's birthrate. Their own theology of babies was *apparently* not to be fruitful and fill the earth. One author says here "Pharaoh declared Egypt had a problem, *over-population*. This is a recurring myth in history, and a political myth. For man, the world is always over-populated when there are people in it who are disliked."⁸ Our family just finished listening to *Killer Angel* a biography of Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood and the most prolific serial killer in world history. One of her greatest lies to advance the cause of abortion is that population had to be controlled. She was the daughter of Pharaoh. Over-population can never be a problem in God's world. God was not stupid when He commanded us to be fruitful and fill the earth. Nor is He powerless to continue to make the earth bring forth resources for a thousand generations. That's the **third characteristic** of wicked nations *and* their rulers: *they hate the cultural mandate*.

Characteristic #4: Wicked nations demand to be worshipped

Look at v.10, Pharaoh says "Come, let us deal *shrewdly* with them...[v.11] Therefore they set *taskmasters* over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses." Note carefully, this is *not* a political move, it's a religious move.⁹ One author says here: "Pharaoh claimed to be the incarnate Son of Re—the sun God—who was the primary

⁷ Babel refused it (Genesis 11:1-4); when Abel was fruitful - Cain killed him (Gen. 4); when Israel was fruitful - the nations gathered against them (Josh. 9-10); when Jesus was fruitful - the Pharisees plotted to kill him (John 11:45-53); when the Church was fruitful - the Jews came against them (cf. the book of Acts).

⁸ Rousas John Rushdoony, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch: Exodus*, (Vallecito, CA.: Ross House Books), pg. 9

⁹ John A. Wilson says here "The king of Egypt was himself one of the gods and was the land's representative among the gods. Furthermore, he was the one official intermediary between the people and the gods, the one recognized priest of all the gods." quoted in Gary North, *Moses & Pharaoh: Dominion Religion Versus Power Religion*, (Tyler, TX.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1985), pg. 31

deity in the Egyptian pantheon...the Hebrews would not serve their own God—they would work for him...In effect, Pharaoh was claiming to be the lord of Israel... ”¹⁰ That’s *why* in v.11, Pharaoh place *taskmasters* over them. He wanted them to know they had a new master. That’s *why* at the end of v.11 Pharaoh had them build Pithom and Raamses. These were massive public works projects—statist enterprises built by slaves— so that Pharaoh’s glory could be seen.¹¹ This is the way of all nations not ruled by the Lord God: the state—in this case Pharaoh—becomes the all- powerful god of that nation.¹² This is not an accident or a coincidence. This is an inescapable concept. It’s not *whether* a nation will worship a god, but only *which* god will a nation worship?¹³ Any nation that doesn’t worship the LORD—if it exists long enough—will turn to state worship. Ancient Assyria worshipped itself (**Isaiah 10:12-15**). Ancient Babylon worshipped itself (**Isaiah 4:4-14**). Ancient Rome worshipped itself evidenced by the execution of Christians who refused to confess “Caesar is Lord.” The same thing is seen today in nations such as North Korea and China and increasingly in America. Because Pharaoh claimed deity he concluded that Israel should be forced to serve him. That’s the **fourth characteristic** of wicked nations and their rulers: *they claim deity and turn their citizens into slaves.*

Characteristic #5: Wicked nations are covetous

Look at all of v.10 again, Pharaoh says “Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight

¹⁰ Philip Graham Ryken, *Preaching the Word: Exodus, Saved for God’s Glory*, (Wheaton, IL.,: Crossway, 2015), pg. 30

¹¹ Just like how the people of Babel built a tower for their name (Genesis 11) and how Nebuchadnezzar built a monument for his (Daniel 3).

¹² “When men deify mankind, they almost always wind up deifying the State, the highest collective of mankind, the apotheosis of man’s power. They become adherents of the power religion.” North, pg. xii

¹³ Herbert Schlossberg says here “...anyone with a hierarchy of values has placed something at its apex, and whatever that [something] is, is the god he serves.” Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols For Destruction: The Conflict of Christian Faith and American Culture*, (Wheaton, IL.,: Crossway, 1990), pg. 5 From this it necessarily follows that every nation is inherently religious, ruled by some god, in other words every nation is a theocracy. Just as every OT nation served gods, which the Bible calls idols, so every nation today worships some god or gods.

against us *and escape from the land*.” If Pharaoh felt so threatened by Israel, *why* didn’t he just kick him out of Egypt? Why did he want to prevent them from *escaping from the land*? Because he was greedy for their production value. Pharaoh saw dollar signs by keeping Israel in the land. So he attempted to kill two birds with one stone. He believed that by enslaving the Israelites he not only gained economically from forced labor, but certainly this would discourage them from continuing to multiply in the land. After all, he thought, ‘who wants to have children under the bondage of slavery?’ This is why dictators today refuse to let any part of their people go free—they are covetous. That’s the **fifth characteristic** of wicked nations and their rulers: *they are exceedingly greedy*.

Characteristic #6: Wicked nations are ruthless

Just like there was a 7-fold increase in Israel’s population in **v.7**, so there is a 7-fold oppression—complete or perfect oppression—that Egypt ruthlessly pours out on Israel. Look at seven distinct terms in **v.13-14** “So they *ruthlessly*(1) made the people of Israel *work* (2) as *slaves*(3)¹⁴ and made their lives *bitter*(4) with *hard*(5) *service*(6), in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of *work*(7) in the field.” Moses emphasizes it by repeating the beginning of **v.13** at the end of **v.14** “In all their work they *ruthlessly* made them work as *slaves*.”¹⁴ This ruthlessness was documented in ancient Egyptian texts. Philip Ryken reports on an ancient Egyptian text “...which describes an Egyptian master traveling down to the Nile to inspect his slaves.”¹⁵ The master had private bodyguards who were armed with clubs. Grain was demanded one of the slaves. The slave answered “‘There is none.’ He is beaten savagely... His wife is bound in his presence. His children are in fetters...He is bound, thrown in the well, submerged head down.”¹⁶ That’s the **sixth characteristic** of wicked nations and their rulers: *they are absolutely ruthless*.

¹⁴ At least 80 years, cf. North, pg. 50

¹⁵ Ryken, pg. 30

¹⁶ *Ibid*

Characteristic #7: Wicked nations are willfully stupid

In spite of all this savage abuse, Israel still continued to be fruitful and multiply. Look at **v.12** “**But** the more they were oppressed, *the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad*. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel.” How was it that Israel continued to multiply in spite of the ruthless slavery, in spite of a parent’s natural instinct not to raise their children in slavery? *This was the hand of God*. God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob “Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a company of peoples” (**Genesis 48:4**). So do the mental math.

Egypt oppresses Israel hoping to cut down their birth rates.

Instead Israel’s birth rates increase pointing to Divine intervention.

As a result (end of **v.12**) Egypt is filled with more fear.

So what do they do? **v.13-14** — they oppress Israel more.

What does this teach us? That wicked nations are willfully stupid. The *only* explanation for Israel’s greater increase *is God*. Pharaoh willfully waged war against God himself. That’s the **seventh characteristic** of wicked nations and their rulers: *they willfully stupid because they knowingly wage war against God himself*.

Our Doctrine: God opposes nations that are houses of slavery

That brings us to **our doctrine**: *Wicked nations are houses of slavery which God has always opposed throughout history for the sake of His people*. **v.12** in our passage is the firstfruits of God’s opposition to Egypt. The rest of Exodus is the harvest. But the proof of our doctrine I want to show elsewhere from Scripture. Consider 3 proofs that God has always opposed wicked nations for the sake of His people.

Proof #1: The Lions

Please turn to **2 Kings 17:24-25**. This is after God sent the northern kingdom of Israel into Assyrian captivity in 722 BC. The Assyrians migrated

their prisoners from other nations into the land. v.14 “And the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the people of Israel. And they took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities. ²⁵ And at the beginning of their dwelling there, *they did not fear the Lord. Therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them.*” God sent lions upon this new people who did not fear the Lord. He punished that nation for their wickedness.

Proof #2: Famine, Beasts, Sword & Pestilence

Please turn to **Ezekiel 14:12-14**. This book is a prophecy against disobedient Judah for their apostasy that led to the Babylonian captivity in 587 B.C. Here the Lord is using a lesser greater argument. If he is willing to punish pagan nations for their sin, then He will certainly do the same to Jerusalem for her apostasy v.12 “And the word of the Lord came to me: ¹³ “Son of man, *when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast,* ¹⁴ even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord God.” Note in v.13 the Lord says “...*when a land sins against me...*” meaning if any nation sins against God then he may send famine—v.13; or wild beasts—v.15; or sword—v.17; or pestilence—v.19.¹⁷ Dear congregation, this verse explains *why* there’s third world countries and *why* developed nations fall.¹⁸ God is opposed to wicked nations who do not revere Him and His law.

¹⁷ v.21 makes the *how much more* connection to Jerusalem: “For thus says the Lord God: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four disastrous acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast!”

¹⁸ That He doesn’t punish every nation using the same time table *or* the same type of judgment is irrelevant. The witness of Scripture is clear: every nation has covenantal obligations placed on them from the Lord of Heaven and Earth. God blesses or punishes every nation in proportion to their fidelity to the terms of the covenant. The terms of national covenant could be spoken in the same words that were spoke to Israel in Isaiah 1:19-20 If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” See Week 1 of my “Christ, Caesar, and the Church” series entitled “Christ: Lord Over the Church and Caesar.”

Proof #3: The Fall of Jerusalem in AD 70

Please turn to **Luke 21:20-22**. These are Jesus' words as He prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 for their rebellion against the Lord. "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, ²² *for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.*" Look halfway through **v.23** "For there will be great distress upon the earth *and wrath against this people.*" God punished Jerusalem because it became a house of slavery for sin and a den of iniquity.

For the sake of His people

This is the witness of all of Scripture. **Job 12:23** says "He makes nations great, and he destroys them." **Amos 3:6** "Does disaster come to a city, unless the Lord has done it?" "But" you say, "Pastor Josh you haven't proved that God does this for the sake of His people." Ah but that is just it. God cuts off wicked nations like a rotting and diseased branch, so that His people can flourish. In **Jeremiah 24**, God tells us that the Babylonian captivity was His separating the bad rotten figs—representing the wicked king and false prophets in Jerusalem, from the good ripe figs—representing those elect exiles He was preserving. Jerusalem had become so corrupt, that God overthrew it in order to spare His people. Likewise in the overthrow of Jerusalem in AD 70, God had His elect people in mind. Jerusalem had become the most wicked city on earth—persecuting and murdering God's people. When God overthrew her, He rescued His elect. That's what **Revelation 7** teaches. The 144,000 thousand—a symbolic number representing the fulness of the Christians then living in Jerusalem—were provided a way of escape, in between the awful judgments being poured out, just as Jesus had prophesied in **Matthew 24:15-20**. This is what God has always been doing. He's overthrows the seed of the serpent, in order to preserve the seed of the woman. That's **our doctrine**: God overthrows wicked nations all for the sake of preserving, protecting, and propagating His beloved.

II. Our Duty

Experimental use

Only only duty this morning is to *examine* ourselves. A couple weeks ago I asked the question “...*who* are we in this story?” I said that if we scoff and roll our eyes at the stupidity and rebellion of the Israelites we are accusing ourselves, *because we are the Israelites*. We are not the heroes. But this passage cuts us even deeper. Beloved, before God’s grace found you, you *were* Pharaoh. I was Pharaoh. Think on those 7 characteristics. Which one of those didn’t describe you?

Pharaoh broke covenant, he betrayed Joseph. Who have you betrayed? Who have you broken faith with? Does God count your lies as less damning than Pharaohs? **Revelation 21:8** says “But as...*the faithless... and all liars*, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Pharaoh hated the cultural mandate. He hated children. Have you ever been guilty of that? Have you ever put your own ambition, your own selfishness ahead of your children? **Psalms 127:3** “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.” Have you despised the heritage of the Lord?

Pharaoh demanded worship. He acted like a god. When was the last time you put yourself in the center and demanded all to serve you? **Jonah 2:8** says “Those who worship false gods *turn their backs on all God’s mercies*.”¹⁹

Pharaoh was covetous and greedy. He provided for his needs at the expense of others. Generous was *never* a word attributed to Pharaoh.

¹⁹ NLT

Ephesians 5:5 says “For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is... who is *covetous* (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

Pharaoh was ruthless and heartless. Whose blood have you spilt? Or have you only murdered people with your tongue? **1 John 3:15** “Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, *and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.*”

Pharaoh was willfully stupid. He knew that God was opposing him, and yet he rebelled against him anyway. How many times have you done that? Your conscience is warning you to stop, that God forbids this thing, and you just run into anyway.

You see, like Pharaoh you and I deserve to have our names blotted out. We deserve to go unnamed into the abyss and have our memory perish from the earth.

Celebratory Use

But God didn't allow you to continue as Pharaoh. He passed over the Pharaoh of old and let him perish forever. But shockingly, though you bore the same guilt, He saved you. He saved *you*? Not by ignoring your sin. By sending His only begotten Son in the world. Who is this Son? Scripture says He is God, the Alpha and Omega, Jehovah, the Author of Life. He is true God from true God. And this Divine Person came and put on flesh. His name is Jesus Christ. He was not only mad as hell at Pharaoh's sin, but at your sin. So what did he do? He became a servant—a slave. **Philippians 2:7** “...[He] made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.” Who did he become a servant for? For your sake loved one. Unless you obtain the righteousness of a Man who never sinned, the whole world could not save you. That's what Christ—the God Man—obtained for you. He obeyed God to

earn a righteousness, not for Himself, but for you. **Philippians 3:9** says that *we do not have* "...a righteousness of [our] own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, *the righteousness from God that depends on faith.*" And what did this Great God Man receive from you? All your sin. **2 Corinthians 5:21** "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus became *Pharaoh incarnate* on the cross—when all your iniquity was imputed to Him. For your sake He became a curse and died a wretched death. He bore your sins on the tree and then rose again on the third day claiming victory of over death. Dear believer He did that for you, though you were like Pharaoh. "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."²⁰ This passage should bring us to our knees. We see our guilt. We know the death and condemnation that is coming for Pharaoh. But it's not coming for us. Why? Because we are better? No. Because we have a God who is "...rich in mercy, [and] because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."²¹

Summa Theologica

Those are our two duties 1) To examine ourselves in order to see that we have been just as guilty as Pharaoh 2) To celebrate the fact that God did not pass us by, but saved us by the death of His own Son.

III. Our Delight

Consolatory Use

Children, boys and girls, I want to ask you something. If everything I said is true. If God destroys wicked nations for our sake. If we so are precious in

²⁰ 1 John 4:9

²¹ Ephesians 2:5

God's sight that He would send His only Son for us, *then* why does He allow His people to suffer so long? This ruthless slavery that Pharaoh adopted could have lasted well over a century. It was at least 80 years from the birth of Moses in chapter 2 to the exodus—the departure—from Egypt in chapter 12. A century of brutal slavery. Why did God allow His people to suffer? 2 reasons.

1) Suffering helped them hate the evil of Egypt

That generation got a lot of things wrong. **Joshua 24:14** says that they had adopted many of the gods of Egypt.²² Charles Spurgeon says here “In all probability, if they had been left to themselves, they would have been melted and absorbed into the Egyptian race, and lost their identity as God's special people. They were content to be in Egypt, and they began to adopt the superstitions, and idolatries, and iniquities of Egypt.”²³ Another author asks here: “If [God had simply prevented their suffering] would the Israelites have ever desired to leave Egypt? It was hard enough to get them to leave even when they were suffering.”²⁴ Loved ones, how many of our lives drastically changed in 2020. How many of us were being Egyptianized. How many of us had subtly started worshipping some of the gods of the Egyptians? What did God use to break us of those things? Suffering in the form of Covid, statism, and the rampant sexual immorality of our culture.²⁵ That's one reason God allows His people to suffer for long periods: to cause us to hate the evil of Egypt—this world—and be separate from it.

²² cf. Ezekiel 20:8

²³ quoted in Ryken, pg. 32

²⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 33

²⁵ God hardened the hearts of the Egyptians against His people (Psalm 105:25) to wean them from the world.

2) Suffering helped them long for salvation

God had already promised to make Israel a nation in Genesis. This was to be the nation that was to give birth to Christ. Had Israel been assimilated into Egypt, the seed of the woman would have been lost. Israel up to this point, it seems, had no intention on leaving Egypt. For many of them, it was the only home they ever had. Generations had been born and had died in Goshen. Why would they leave? As a whole, they were not praying for God to bring them into their own land. The first time we see them praying is at the end of chapter 2. Loved ones, do you pray for evil to be destroyed and Jesus to hasten the day of His return when all is well? No. Our prayer lives are most in danger when all is well. Suffering helps us long for Jesus. It tunes our heart. It helps us long to be free from the house of slavery, and to be brought into the promised land.

Hortatory Use

Let's conclude our time with an exhortation. Beloved *hope in God*. Christian *hope in God*. You are not a defeated people. It doesn't matter what you think you see in the world today. It only matters what the Word of God says about the world today. Some of you listen to the news more than you read your Bible. No wonder you are down. What does God say about the wicked nations of the world today? He says "...when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly...I [will] stretch out my hand against it..." (**Ezekiel 12:13**). *Hope in God* loved ones. The nations of the world today are just as much in God's hands as Pharaoh was. "But Pastor Josh, they are persecuting the Church." True. But what has God promised? The more the persecute, the more the Church grows and grows and grows. Spurgeon again says here:

"Whenever there has been a great persecution raised against the Christian church, God has overruled it, as he did in the case of Pharaoh's oppression of

the Israelites, by making the aggrieved community more largely increase. The early persecutions in Judea promoted the spread of the gospel; hence, when after the death of Stephen the disciples were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles, the result is thus given: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." So, too, when Herod stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church, and killed James, the brother of John with the sword; what came of it? Why Luke tells us in almost the same words that Moses had used: "The Word of God grew and multiplied."²⁶

Beloved *hope in God*. Be patient in suffering. We have nothing to fear. It is the world who is afraid. Just as the Egyptians dread the Israelites and feared them so the Egyptians of this world fear God's people today. And just as Pharaoh stupidly waged war against God and failed, we can expect the exact same thing in our time. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church.

²⁶ quoted in Ryken, pg. 32