

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

24 July 2016

## Topics

### A.M. Bible Class:

Christ's Sacrifice (Hebrews 10)

### A.M. Lesson:

Led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14)

### P.M. Lesson:

Labels (Acts 11:26)

### Wednesday:

Covenant study

### Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

### Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Sunday Bible Class          | 10:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Morning Worship      | 11:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Evening Worship      | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Wednesday Evening Class     | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Thursday Ladies Bible Class | 10:00 A.M. |

*Great are the works of the Lord,  
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2  
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.*

## It's all a part of God's plan?

Neil Short

Have you ever heard someone tell another who is going through a nasty life circumstance that "It's all a part of God's grand plan?" If that theory were even true, I don't see how it would be comforting. I don't see how the theory would make God out to be more trustworthy than if nasty circumstances were not in God's plan!

The burden of proof that God sends nasty circumstances to the righteous is extremely steep while the view that nasty circumstances for the righteous happen against God's will is quite evident in the Bible.

Consider Exodus 5 (World English Bible).

<sup>1</sup> Afterward Moses and Aaron came, and said to Pharaoh, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.'"

<sup>2</sup> Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh, that I should listen to his voice to let Israel go? I don't know Yahweh, and moreover I will not let Israel go." ... <sup>4</sup> The king of Egypt said to them, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, take the people from their work? Get back to your

burdens!" <sup>5</sup> Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens." <sup>6</sup> The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, <sup>7</sup> "You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick, as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves." <sup>8</sup> The number of the bricks, which they made before, you require from them. You shall not diminish anything of it, for they are idle; therefore they cry, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' <sup>9</sup> Let heavier work be laid on the men, that they may labor therein; and don't let them pay any attention to lying words." <sup>10</sup> The taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying, This is what Pharaoh says: "I will not give you straw. <sup>11</sup> Go yourselves, get straw where you can find it, for nothing of your work shall be diminished." <sup>12</sup> So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. <sup>13</sup> The taskmasters were urgent saying, "Fulfill your work quota daily, as when there

was straw!" <sup>14</sup> The officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, "Why haven't you fulfilled your quota both yesterday and today, in making brick as before?" <sup>15</sup> Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you deal this way with your servants? <sup>16</sup> No straw is given to your servants, and they tell us, 'Make brick!' and, behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is in your own people." <sup>17</sup> But he said, "You are idle! You are idle! Therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to Yahweh.' <sup>18</sup> Go therefore now, and work, for no straw shall be given to you, yet shall you deliver the same number of bricks!" <sup>19</sup> The officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in trouble, when it was said, "You shall not diminish anything from your daily quota of bricks!" <sup>20</sup> They met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: <sup>21</sup> and they said to them, "May Yahweh look at you, and judge, because you have made us a stench to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us." <sup>22</sup> Moses returned to Yahweh, and said, "Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Why is it that you have sent me? <sup>23</sup> For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people; neither have you delivered your people at all." <sup>6:1</sup> Yahweh said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh, for by a strong hand he shall let them go, and by a strong hand he shall drive them out of his land."

The above (rather lengthy) reading reinforces in the Book of Exodus the great need the Israelites had for deliverance. The people's suffering, as emphasized by the additional suffering imposed in this chapter, was never God's will. God did not want this situation at all

(cf. Exodus 3:7; Isaiah 30:1; Hosea 8:4)! God, beginning here, worked through Moses and Aaron to turn the difficult situation into a powerful deliverance.

But (says someone) what about Genesis 15:13 (NRSV)? "Then the LORD said to Abram, 'Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years....'" God told Abraham about the Egyptian slavery way back in Genesis 15!

There is a lot that can be studied about that little prophecy in Genesis 15. I will just say for now that the prophecy does not come close to implying that slavery in Egypt was all part of God's grand plan.

God grieved with the Israelites over their plight and he worked through appointed human agents to solve the problem.

When nasty circumstances come our way, know that God is grieved along with us and he is working with us and through us to bring about healing.

### **News:**

*The special 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday contribution is next Sunday.*

*Robin and Tamara Richards really are on vacation this time... two weeks.*

*George Appleton, Sam and Rita's son from Texas, has been diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia.*

*Tatyana Knowlton is, by now, in Russia.*

### **Prayer list:**

*Christian Children's Home in Portales, NM*

*Dan Keele—mission work*

*Healing: Robin Richards, Sam Appleton, John Cunningha, Norma Robinson, Linda Boling, H.L. Boling, Tatyana Knowlton*

*Health and personal: Nic and Ani Self*

