

Monday, January 19, 2009

Our world's population is growing by about 1 million people every 4 days (net growth). Depending on the web site you check, about 6.725 billion humans are on our planet today! While some are twins, triplets and even 'quads', no two are totally identical. You are UNIQUE. In fact, never in all history has there been someone exactly like you! Congratulations! Read Psalm 139 carefully and be amazed.

Now add to that Isaiah 46:3,4. While God was speaking to His people Israel through Mr. Isaiah, we can make the direct application to every human being . . . because no life exists without God first creating it, then sustaining it hourly! Give that some deeper thought . . . how much do you know about your DNA, the developmental process God worked on you when you were in your mother's womb, the process by which you were born, some of the unique experiences your mother had with you in those first few weeks of your life? Oh, by the way . . . how many times will your heart beat today, or how many gallons of blood will it push through your veins, or how many breaths will you breathe and how does it work that those big breaths get divided into tiny oxygen bubbles that are sent all the way to the smallest living cell in your body that needs to breathe?

Our theme verse this year, found in Exodus 9:16 says "I have raised you up . . ." I urge you to spend some time reflecting on what a miracle you are, by God's design, and the fact that He LOVED designing and creating you. Consider this, . . . while still in the womb, He chose your eye color, hair color, personality, fingerprint, birth date and death date! (Psalm 139) Do you have any idea how much happiness it brings God to sustain your life? I urge you to spend some time worshiping Him right now, in gratitude for the fact that He chose to create you, He chooses daily to sustain your life . . . and He loves you! How do you thank God for that?? Why not try your hand at writing a new Psalm?

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Today our world bids farewell to President and Laura Bush, and welcomes a new president of the USA. Regardless of your political persuasion, I urge you to spend some time praying for both the Bush and Obama families today. I imagine before the end of this week, the ripples of a new leadership team in Washington will begin impacting our nation and world. How?

Our second theme verse for 2009 is Exodus 9:16. God was speaking through Moses to the most powerful man on earth . . . the Pharaoh of Egypt. The pyramids and many more ancient marvels still stand today as tangible evidence of the accomplishments of the massive slave population and their construction accomplishments for the Pharaohs.

If you haven't read Exodus 1-14 yet, I urge you to do so this week, it will help you understand the context of our verse. The "exodus" of 2 million Hebrew slaves from Egypt, through the Red Sea, to Mount Sinai, stands as much more impressive than pyramids! It is also the foundational experience which shapes the nation of Israel, even today, celebrated each year by the Passover.

When Pharaoh is first confronted with Moses' preposterous request to "let the Hebrew slaves go", look at his response (Exodus 4:29-5:9) and the Israelites' response (Exodus 5:10-23). How many times have you felt God's way simply didn't work? Being honest in business or education, being compassionate and humble in relationships, being generous financially . . . backfired on you? What was your attitude then, what did you do?

Surely we can't blame the Israelite slaves for their disappointment, anger, confusion, even rejection of Moses and his idea of God rescuing them, can we? Look at Ex. 6:1-9. Do you see God's insistence that He understands their pain, and is determined to do something no one will ever forget? The key is verse 6 & 7. Is God doing a similar but unique work in your life these days? How's your attitude?

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

As a new president shows up for his first full day "in the office" today, what would you make as your priority? Hanging pictures on the wall, setting up your desk? Can you imagine the issues he will face today?

Consider that second phrase of our theme verse "I have raised you up for this very purpose . . ." (Ex. 9:16) God is ALWAYS working His larger, eternal plan and He delights to involve "those whose hearts are fully devoted to Him" (2 Chronicles 16:9). But with Pharaoh, we find God often uses a person who doesn't know or want to know God! This unique, powerful emperor was created, his life sustained, and positioned into global leadership "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14), and after 400 years of the descendants of Jacob living in Egypt, it was time for God to bring them out . . . thus the clash of Moses and Pharaoh! From the slaves' perspective, however, life just got more and more miserable . . . they didn't understand the bigger picture of what God was doing with the plagues nor could they imagine the Red Sea escape God was planning. Learn from that friends . . . we ALWAYS have a very limited, self centered perspective, as compared to God's perspective.

Isaiah 46:10 says "*I am God, there is no other, and I say My purpose will stand, I will do as I please.*" Is that a boastful, egotistical statement, or simply a statement of fact for a Sovereign, Creator God? So what is God's purpose in our world this day? How does January 21, 2009 fit into all the days of this year, decade, century . . . by God's larger plan? What's keeping God from simply removing His hand of control and allowing the universe to implode? Why is God working so hard to provide all we need for life on this planet, and keep 6.7 billion of us alive?

When Moses first encountered God and received the challenge to confront Pharaoh, do you see God's assurance that He was fully aware of the situation? (Ex. 3) Are you confident God is fully aware of your situation?

Thursday, January 22, 2009

The third phrase of our Exodus 9:16 theme verse says "that I might show you My power . . ." Pharaoh understood the power of military might / massive force of slave labor / the authority of an emperor, but he had no comprehension of what happens when God reaches to earth and focuses His universe creating power on us!

You'll notice the Egyptian magicians duplicated the first three demonstrations of God's power through Moses and Aaron (Exodus 7:8-8:15). How? Do you understand that Satan is the second most powerful force in the universe, second only to Jesus Christ? Colossians 1 and 2 give many direct statements about Jesus' identity, His rescue of us from Satan's dominion and humiliation of the demonic forces with His atonement on the cross. We understand Jesus' victorious resurrection from the dead is His ultimate defeat of Satan's power and He demonstrated His authority over them with His repeated defeat of demons in the Gospel accounts. (Mark 5, Matthew 17, etc.)

These Egyptian magicians were not illusionists, they were sorcerers whose "magic" was accomplished by the power of Satan, as is done even today. Dabbling with the power of the dark kingdom is very, very dangerous my friends . . . believe me, I've lived among it as you know as a missionary in Haiti, but I've also seen a tremendous amount of it here in America. Do you see how God carefully worked His plan . . . with the gnat plague, the power of Satan was stopped by God, note what the magicians said in Ex. 8:18,19 "this is the finger of God"!

God wasn't finished . . . note His specific work of distinguishing between the Israelites whom He was working to rescue and the Egyptians, as the rest of the plagues ONLY struck the Egyptians. "I will make a distinction between My people and your people". (Ex. 8:22,23; 9:4) Note too, God struck every aspect of Egypt life . . . Nile river, crops, flocks, even home life. God's power knows no limit!!

Friday, January 23, 2009

"I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you My power and that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth." (Ex. 9:16) Would you link that with 1 Samuel 2:35 "I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do . . ." What is God telling us??

You'll note a progression as God develops his harsh work with Pharaoh in achieving the Israelite slave release. Ex. 6:7 "YOU will know that I am the LORD your God." God began with making sure Moses and His people would lift their eyes from their hopeless existence and KNOW God. Then God expands His purpose to include the Egyptians, Ex.7:5. Then Pharaoh himself (Ex. 7:17), then the magicians (Ex. 8:19), and finally the 'gods' of Egypt (Ex. 12:12). Do you see the progression?

But God's plan was bigger than that brief moment in time, and so He challenged Moses to be sure those who experienced this remarkable involvement of God in their rescue would tell their children . . . in fact a ceremonial meal was integrated into God's rescue plan (the Passover, Ex. 12) so they would pass it from generation to generation as a worship experience, celebrating Jehovah God as the God of His people, Israel. When at Mount Sinai, God re-iterated the unique significance of this experience, I urge you to read it. (Deuteronomy 4:32-40).

And finally, God's plan was even bigger . . . it would include ALL the nations. Ezekiel 36:23b "then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show Myself Holy through you before their eyes." And His ultimate purpose, of course, is that all men would know Him and find their greatest delight and life fulfillment in a personal relationship with this Holy God. That, of course, is the purpose of Jesus' visit to earth. Consider Jesus' summary statement "I have completed the work You (God the Father) gave Me to do . . ." (John 17:4)

So . . . how is God working His plan involving you today?

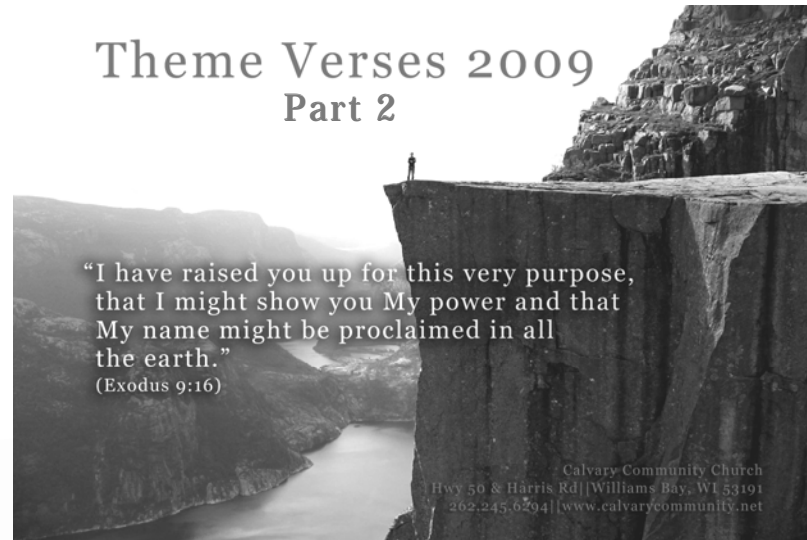


Pastor Doug Anderson

January 19 - 23, 2009

Life on Purpose

Theme Verses 2009
Part 2



"I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you My power and that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth."
(Exodus 9:16)

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