

Exodus 3:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Analysis

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה בָּאֵת אֲתִ-עָנֵי עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרָיִם וְאֲתִ-צְעָקָתִם שְׁמֻעָתִי (vayomer YHWH ra'oh ra'iti et-oni ami asher beMitsrayim ve'et-tsa'akatam shamati mipnei nogasav ki yadati et-makh'ovav)—The emphatic Hebrew **surely seen** (בָּאֵת, ra'oh ra'iti, infinitive + perfect) intensifies: "seeing I have seen" or "I have most certainly seen." **My people** (עַמִּי, ami)—God claims covenant relationship. Three verbs—**seen, heard, know**—show God's comprehensive awareness. **Affliction** (עָנֵי, oni), **cry** (צְעָקָה, tsa'akah), **sorrows** (מְקַבֵּב, makh'ov, "pains") describe Israel's suffering. God's compassion motivates the Exodus—not mere humanitarian concern but covenant faithfulness to His chosen people.

Historical Context

This verse echoes 2:24-25 where God "heard," "remembered," "looked," and "knew." The repetition emphasizes that the Exodus springs from God's initiative, not human merit. Israel's cry has reached God (2:23); now He responds. The phrase "my people" establishes the relationship that will be developed through Sinai covenant: "You shall be My people, and I will be your God" (Exodus 6:7, Leviticus 26:12).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's emphatic 'I have surely seen' encourage you that He is aware of suffering even when He seems silent?
2. What does God calling Israel 'My people' before they've done anything to earn it teach about the basis of His covenant love?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר יְהֹוָה אֶת־
said And the LORD I have surely I have surely H853 the affliction
H559 H3068 H7200 H7200 H6040

עַמּוֹ רֹאשׁ בְּמִצְרָיִם וְאֶת־צְעָקָתָם וְשִׁמְעָנָה
of my people which are in Egypt H853 their cry and have heard H5971 H834 H4714 H6818 H8085

מִכְאָבִיוֹ אֶת־יְדֵעָתִי כִּי מִפְנֵי
by reason of their taskmasters H3588 for I know H853 their sorrows H6440 H5065 H3045 H4341

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 145:19 (Parallel theme): He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Psalms 106:44 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

Psalms 34:6 (References Lord): This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Nehemiah 9:9 (References Egypt): And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red sea;

Exodus 22:23 (Parallel theme): If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;

Isaiah 63:9 (Parallel theme): In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Psalms 34:4 (References Lord): I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Exodus 1:11 (Parallel theme): Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

Genesis 29:32 (References Lord): And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

1 Samuel 9:16 (Parallel theme): To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.