

The Plagues of Egypt - Bumps over Blessings

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Nathaniel Bronner: Far too often with us in our lives, we speak of and we focus on our bumps over our blessings.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is Part 1 of the series titled, "The Plagues of Egypt," subtitled, "Bumps over Blessings" by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5860.

(Music Playing: 00:00:20 - 00:00:32)

Female: And now for The Plagues of Egypt - Part 1 - Bumps over Blessings.

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word. And today, I am actually beginning a new series and it's something that God spoke for me to begin in this season. And it's simply entitled, The Plagues of Egypt. And with each of the plagues that hit Egypt, there is a natural and there is a spiritual correspondence that relates to us in this modern time, in this day and age. And so far, I've counted 13 plagues of Egypt. Now I know, you say, "Well, it's only 10." Well, there was only ten with Moses and the rod, and between him and Pharaoh, but there was some other stuff happened both before and after the children of Israel were in Egypt. And I saw very clearly how these things that happened in Egypt still plague us today. And today we're going to deal with Plague 1 of the plagues of Egypt, simply called, Bumps over Blessings.

Bumps over Blessings. There was a gang of thieves, and they broke into a jewelry store but they didn't steal anything. When they broke in, instead, they switched the price tags. And they put the cheap price tags on the expensive stuff, and they put the expensive price tags on the cheap stuff. And when customers came in, they didn't know the difference. Because you know if you look at costume jewelry, you can't really tell how much it's worth. It takes a jeweler with a loupe looking at it who really knows what they're doing, who can run some tests to find out whether something is real or fake. I've got on a jade wedding ring, and I bought this in China. But you know, it's hard to tell real jade from glass. And I had to look up and see how do I tell whether this is real jade or not. And they got some tests that you run through; you can tap on it and see if it rings, you can drop it and see if it breaks. I said, "Well, if it breaks, it's busted." So it's really hard to tell if you're not a real expert, whether it's real jade or whether it's fake jade. So the people who went in, they didn't know the cheap stuff from the expensive stuff. But you know, this

is the way it's often in life. The price tags have been switched by the world. And the things that we think are valuable, in the long haul ain't worth a quarter. And the things that we put so little value on, those are the real treasures. But it takes some spiritual understanding just to even see and to even understand that.

Did you know most folk don't put much value on accepting Jesus? But if you gave them \$100,000, that's worth a whole, whole lot. Money is transient, and it is temporary. But we put so much time, we put so much focus, we put so much of our life into something that's going to fade, and we cannot take with us. The thieves have switched the price tags.

A survey asked mothers to keep track of how many times they told their children something negative versus how many times they told their children something positive. You know, "Don't do that, don't sit there, clean that up". How many times they told their children something negative, versus something positive. And when the mothers actually tallied it up, they found out they were telling 10 times more negative than positive. Recently there was a city school that actually did a survey, and they found that 75% of teachers' words directed to students were negative. But they found that it took four positive statements to overcome the effect of one negative. This is true not just with children, it's true with adults. You know, if somebody tell you something negative, it takes a whole lot to overcome that.

So, today's plague of bumps over bruises -- I'm going to open something up to you just dealing within that in terms of the plagues of Egypt. Now, Jacob brought one of the first curses to Egypt. Let me refresh your memory on who exactly Jacob was, just in case you haven't been to church ever. Because if you've been to church, you've heard of Jacob. But some,

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maybe not. Maybe some of you just your first time coming to church. Well anyway, the three patriarchs of the Bible, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob basically was Abraham's son. And some of you say, "I don't know who Abraham is." Sometimes you can't just assume everybody knows biblical history. But these were the old, original patriarchs of the Bible, and Jacob was the one who got promised that I would spread your seed throughout all the earth. You would have descendants more numerous than the

stars in the sky. So this was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Jacob is the one I want to focus on today.

Jacob was really the son of Isaac, the grandson of Abraham, but if you know the story, Jacob deceived his brother Esau, and stole his birthright. When he did that, Esau got mad, Esau was going to kill him. Jacob then fled to his uncle Laban's. He worked for Uncle Laban for 20 years. Uncle Laban gave him two of his daughters as wives and then two of the handmaidens he eventually had as concubines. And after 20 years, Jacob then left Laban, he had all his stuff, he went to Esau his brother because his brother's going to kill him, he brought him a whole lot of gifts to appease him so he wouldn't kill him. He had 12 sons who originally became kind of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. One of the sons, the youngest one, Joseph, his brother's got jealous of, threw him in a pit, sold him to the Ishmaelites who took him into Egypt. Eventually he got to be a counselor to Pharaoh, became the second most powerful person in Egypt, because he interpreted Pharaoh's dream that there will be seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. So in the midst of the seven years of famine, nobody around had any food. And then Jacob had his sons go into Egypt to get food, and they didn't know that the child that they had sold into slavery was now second on the throne of Egypt, and they didn't recognize him. So it went through all the stories, it's in Genesis, one of the most powerful and heart-wrenching stories in the Bible.

But anyway, after all that is, they finally -- it revealed and they understood that it was Joseph their brother who was on the palace, ruling over Egypt. And they went back to tell their father Jacob that Joseph was not dead, he was still alive. And here, when Jacob went to Egypt, and Joseph brought him before Pharaoh. And it is here that one of the curses of Egypt came about. When Jacob spoke unto Pharaoh, and when he told him, in Genesis 47, 7, "And Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, 'How old art thou?' And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, 'The days of my years of my pilgrimage are in hundred and thirty years. Few and evil had the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained until the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.' And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out before Pharaoh."

So I want to talk to you about this curse, that's still on so many of our lives today, of bumps over blessings.

Now, imagine you get a chance to go before the most powerful man in the land. And Egypt at the time was the most powerful nation in the world. And the man asked you, the king, and it's way beyond the President of the United States, because Pharaoh had absolute power and he had absolute authority over life or death. See, that was one of the dreams that Joseph interpreted with the baker and the wine bearer, the cupbearer. He said to one of them, Pharaoh's going to bring you up and restore you. The other one, he's going to chop your head off. He didn't have the power just to fire you, he had the power to chop your head off. So they had absolute power over life and death. And so here, in the wealthiest and the most mighty nation on the face of the earth, here Jacob gets a chance to stand before Pharaoh, and Pharaoh asked him a simple question. How old are you? Simple, basic question.

Have you ever asked somebody how you're doing, and all of a sudden, they pour all this stuff they got? You know, have you ever had somebody that just come out with all this stuff? He asked Jacob a very simple question, "How old are you?" Jacob answers and he says, I'm 130. But. And see, it's always the but that mess folk up. I'm 130, "but my days have been few and evil. And I have not lived as long as my fathers". These were the words that Jacob spoke unto Pharaoh. And far too often with us in our lives, we speak of and we focus on our bumps over our blessings.

Let me tell you how much Jacob had been blessed. First of all, he was 130. That's the first thing about -- it's like, you know, somebody saying, you know, I'm 90, but I'm not going to live as long as my momma did, who was 100. I'm only 90.

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I am only 130. My days have been few compared to who? And I have not lived as long as my fathers, Abraham lived to 175, his son Isaac lived five years longer than Abraham. He lived to 180. Jacob, however only lived to 147. He died 33 years younger than his daddy. He spoke it. See, some of us in this mess because of the power of our word, he spoke it. That's why I'm speaking, I only lived 116, I don't care how I'm feeling. When you speak it,

your cells in your body hear your decoration. When you speak life, you get life. When you speak death, you get death.

I had several people ask me this morning, “Hi, I’m doing excellent. I’m really feeling good.” Sometime I stand and just holler how good I’m feeling. Your body hears how you’re feeling and sometimes when the world, the people asked you how you’re doing, then ask you how old are you, “Child, I’m just barely making it. I’m just barely hanging on. I had a hard time.”

We focus on our butts, over our blessings and we have so many blessings and here God has spoken to Jacob directly, “I’m going to be with you, your descendants will be like the stars in the sky, I’m going to bless you” and see, He blessed Jacob tremendously.

Now, when Jacob did his brother wrong and he had to flee to his uncle Laban, he saw his uncle Laban’s daughter Rachel and he really liked this one. In one word, beautiful, and he made a deal with Laban to work for seven years for Rachel and then when he woke up the next morning after the wedding night, he had been switched out with Leah who wasn’t as pretty as Rachel and he got all mad about that, back it to daddy saying, “I had to give you the oldest before I give you the youngest. You had to get the old one before you get the young one. You had to get one the one that’s pretty before you can get the pretty ones. We had to work another seven years for Rachel but he got both of them and he didn’t just get Rachel and Leah, he got the two handmaidens also as a minimum.

You had to read in that, he had four women and all of these women were vying for his attention at night. They were even paying some of the other women to be with him at night. Some men they fussing about they don’t have but one woman and that woman have seeing bout him, he had four women minimum because sometimes some of the concubines they had not even listed. That’s why I said look to Abraham and said Abraham gave gifts to the children of his concubines, ain’t it listed.

So he had a minimum of four women who was vying for his attention every night. What some men would consider to be just paradise. Jacob, telling my day just have been evil, I ain’t got four women, my day just has been evil. That’s why how you view and speak in life can determine your whole vibration. You sometimes blind yourself to the blessings of God.

Then when Jacob went to meet his brother Esau, he sent ahead some gifts to appease Esau because he was afraid Esau was going to be mad at him, going to try kill him. So when you look at the list of the animals that Jacob sent ahead to appease Esau, it was like 200 cows and 300 sheep and all that.

I've looked up and added up the amount of dollars it could be worth in today's dollars. He sent ahead as a gift, now you know if he was giving a gift, this went all his stuff, it was just a piece of his stuff because God has so blessed Jacob while he worked for labor, he had multiplied his plots. So he left Laban not just with four women, he left with four women, a bunch of children and a whole bunch of stuff.

See, money in that day was valued in your cattle and your livestock. You didn't have banks or that. Your sheep and your ox and your donkey, all that was your money. So he sent ahead to give to his brother a peace offering six hundred fifty thousand dollars' worth of stuff. That's how much it would be worth in today's equivalent. He basically sent a million dollars almost to his brother and that was just part of what he has.

So this man had a minimum of four women, he had twelve children minimum, and he had six hundred and fifty thousand dollars just to give away to his brother. So he had plenty of money, he had plenty of children, he had plenty of women.

Most men would consider that pretty reasonable but Jacob looked at the most powerful man in the land when they asked him how old was he, I only had these few years of a 130 years and my life had just been evil. He was valuing his bumps over his blessings.

How many of us do that? I mean, God has just given us so much and yet we focus on -- and the first of all people, let me explain something to you. You will have bumps. Some of you are going to have a mountain, you have some bumps because it's no question that Jacob didn't have bumps. He had bumps when he had to run away from his brother Esau but he didn't do his brother wrong. See that's the part we don't talk about. He didn't mention that to the Pharaoh.

So he said, "My life had just been evil." He didn't mention I did evil, that's why stuff happened to me. He didn't mention that to

Pharaoh, he just said my life has been evil, he didn't say that Laban tricked him because he had tricked his brother. He didn't mention that seed was just reaping what he had already sow. He didn't mention that to Pharaoh.

See, a lot of times when we gone through this stuff, we don't mention what we may have done to cause somebody stuff to happen, we just tell by the bumps. We just tell him, "Lord, I just gone went through this stuff, I don't know what happened, it just happened." So here we have Jacob who has yes gone through some bumps. The woman who he loved, who he worked those 14 years after she had the two children, she died after Benjamin the youngest and this was the woman he loves. So he lost one of his four women.

Then Joseph had been taken away and sold but they brought back his coat full of blood and they told the daddy that he had been killed by wild animals. So he had lost his spouse, he had a lost a wife and he had lost a child.

Those are tough bumps. Death of a spouse is the number one psychological trauma that psychology says that you can go through and that's probably true when you really love your spouse.

Now, some folks we know kill the spouse. So that's true when you really love the spouse. So death of a spouse is the number one psychological thing that psychology says the number one trauma. Death of a child is the number three trauma. What is number two? Divorce is number two. So those are the three top traumas and all of them deal with loss of relationship in one form or another.

So here, Jacob had gone through number one, he had gone through number three. So he had gone through some real bumps in life but my momma has gone through the same bumps. My momma has lost her one and only husband. Twenty years ago, my momma has lost one of her six children, Jacob had twelve, he had twice as many of my momma did.

I went out to Pastor Saul to his new church yesterday and my mother went with me and Pastor Saul just spent an hour just showing us around and my mother was just as joyous and we walked all over that place, she was walking just as bouncing, she

didn't focus on the bumps. She is 86 years old, we walked for over an hour, she didn't complain about anything hurt and she kept up with us and the matter of fact in some cases she was in front of us, we went out to the backdoor that just been raining so there was a puddle of water and Pastor Saul said, "Ms. Bronner, you can stay in here because you got to hop over this water." My momma, "I can hop over there." She went and she jumped right over that. She does not focus on bumps.

If you call and talked to my mother, it won't take her long before she will begin to talk about, "I've got four sons in the ministry, does me so much good every Sunday, I can see four of my sons in the ministry and one of them is the president." She couldn't say, "You know I lost one of my children. He's no longer into Earth and I just can't make it. I lost my husband." That's not what she said. She said, "I had the best husband in the world. The man was so unique, the man was a genius. The man taught all but she talks about her blessings over her bumps.

We're going to all have bumps but when you focus on the bumps, your world is going to be like Jacob and it will cut your life short because I don't have as many years as my daddy and sure enough, he didn't. He lost 33 years and I believe he lost 33 years because of the words of his mouth. If he just spoken, I'm going to live longer than my daddy, God has blessed me with all of this stuff. You're always going to have bumps. It is absolutely unavoidable in life.

As a matter of fact, it is necessary in life to help you appreciate the blessings. You're going to have bumps but when you put your bumps over blessings it becomes a curse and out of the words by mouth, that you go and read the book of James, it talks about how difficult it is to master and to control the tongue in his life and death in the tongue and you could speak life and death into your word about whether you focus on your bumps or your blessings.

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We all have them but it is natural for us to gravitate to the negative. C. Elijah preached in his last message, he's doing a series called, "Abiding in God" and oh it was powerful. And C. Elijah, in his last message he talked about, oh how it is to abide in God and he went through scripture after scripture, it was just so powerful. And then, he said, he was watching this crazy movie

and he said that in this crazy movie called, Ice Sharks. It was the sharks that were living in the ice and they had mutated and they were busting up through the ice and eating folk. And there was this weather station out there in the ice and the weather station was floating out and they had to drop and anchor to keep the weather station from floating out in the ocean, where the sharks are going to eat them up. And C. Elijah used that to show how you sometimes have to anchor yourself in God to keep you from floating away.

And I talked to C. Elijah yesterday and C. Elijah was in the gym and he said, "What did you last --?" "Well, tell you the truth, I checked and been watching Ice Sharks." So now, I did not go to read all of the power scripture by the body, he just mentioned that one time, he seen this crazy movie called Ice Sharks. So, I avoided all of the great scripture that C. Elijah talked about, all of the abiding in God, all in it and went to watch this crazy movie. See, sometimes, we do this we got all this good stuff all around us and we gravitate to the negative crazy stuff in life. People, we put bumps over blessings and it becomes a curse, and it was the first curse of Egypt and Jacob, when he spoke into Pharaoh, spoke like many us, speak. You are not -- oh, you're blessed because what's the alternative. I'll be glad about my age. You know, every time I'm a -- that's a curse because I'm old. First of all, I'm not old, that's a relative thing, I've got 52 years and two months to go. I am not old.

So, it depends on how you look at this thing and it depends on how you view this thing as a bumper, how you view it as a blessing and I want us to gear our minds, so that we're not cursed with that plague that so many of us are cursed with, that we look at our bumps and ignore all of the blessings that God has brought to us. (00:22:29), instrumentalist who played for us this morning, his first song was by Louis Armstrong and it was through the eyes of Louis, who can – perhaps his most famous song, "What a Wonderful World". Don't you think Louis had some bumps as a black man growing up back then? He had -- had tons of bumps, but what he chose to do was see all of the beauty in the world, what a wonderful world. And I tell you and I declare that to you, you got a wonderful world. Yeah, you got some bumps. The Earth standing in the midst of it, you can see mountains and valleys, but when you move out into space, the Earth surface is as smooth as a ball bearing. Because the diameter of the Earth is 25,000 miles through the Earth, but yet the highest mountain peak is

only about five miles. There's no ball bearing that man can make that is as smooth as the Earth is, but it feels rough to us when you're going down the mountains.

From God's perspective, it's smooth. From our perspective, it's rough and we focus on the bumps and not on the blessings. You are blessed people. You're blessed beyond measure. You got blessings that you ain't even recognized yet. You are so blessed and when someone asks you how you are doing, you need to say, "I'm doing excellent. I am blessed". You need to talk about all of the things that are going right in your world, not the stuff that you think is going wrong. And where your focus is, where your words are, your situations will start to line up with. It's just the power within. And even in your relationship, when some of you say, "My relationship is --", you're speaking after the thing. You're saying it's just evil, it's not evil. Even the worst of relationships got some good stuff in it, but it becomes a matter of what you focus on and when you focus on the negative, you magnify the negative. And when a person hears you talk about the negative all the time, they get more and more negative.

It takes at least four positives to overcome one negative. We have got to input our blessings over our bumps because it's just a blessing to even be able to get over the bump. Do you understand? It's a blessing to be able to get over the bump. And when we understand this, it changes our world and it moves us from a cursed mentality, to a blessed mentality. I thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word. You can go to brothersoftheword.com and you can hear the entire series of the Plagues of Egypt, in particular today's message, Bumps over Blessings absolutely free at brothersoftheword.com. Thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word, because bother, you need the word.

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