

*“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I’ll send you out to fish for people.”<sup>1</sup>*

This is a very popular saying of Christ. The context gives us hints as to why Jesus referred to his future disciples as future “fishers of men”. They were *fishermen*, after all. Jesus was being creative with His language, utilizing a play on words that would resonate with the new calling the disciples were receiving. But, was that all that this was? Or was there more to the title of “fishers of people”?

Before I answer that question, we must look to the greater OT narrative. As we have seen in Genesis, Abraham’s descendants have settled in the land of Goshen. What we will soon see in Exodus is that Joseph will be forgotten and the prophesy of Genesis 15:13 will come true. Israel will be enslaved in Egypt.

This simply sets the stage for God to unleash His glory in redeeming His people from the land of Egypt! Out of their bondage, He brings them into His freedom. Out of their torment, He brings them into His rest. Out of their death, He brings them into His life.

It’s impossible to overstate the impact the events of the Exodus have upon the rest of the scripture. It became the way the Israelites described God. He was the God *who brought us up out of the land of Egypt*. That is the way that Israel described God, that is, until Jeremiah 16. Notice:

*Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.<sup>2</sup>*

God is promising that there is going to be greater salvation of mankind than the Exodus. The prophet goes on.

*“Behold, I am sending for many fishers declares the Lord, and they shall catch them.”... “Therefore, behold, I will make them know, this once I will*

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 1:17

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 16:14-15

*make them know, my power and my might, and they shall know that my name is the Lord.”<sup>3</sup>*

So not only is God working a greater salvation than the Exodus, but He is also preparing agents to usher in the salvation. These *fishers* will go out and catch His people to bring them to His salvation. This is what the prophet Jeremiah is anticipating!

This is also what Jesus was looking back to when he referred to His disciples as *fishers of people*. He was the servant of the Lord sent to bring the new deliverance. His disciples were going to be his foot soldiers. What a privilege!

A privilege, I might add, that is ours as well! Notice:

*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”<sup>4</sup>*

Fish catching fish until He comes back. This is our mission, and what a richly biblical mission it is!

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<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 16:16; 21

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 28:18-20