

**Third Presbyterian Church**  
**Midweek Bible Study**  
**Miracle Series – Omnipresence of God**  
**Lesson 22 – Vantage Point**

Exodus 5:1-23 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'" <sup>2</sup> Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go." <sup>3</sup> Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword." <sup>4</sup> But the king of Egypt said, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!"

<sup>5</sup> Then Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working." <sup>6</sup> That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and foremen in charge of the people:

<sup>7</sup> "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. <sup>8</sup> But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' <sup>9</sup> Make the work harder for the men so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies." <sup>10</sup> Then the slave drivers and the foremen went out and said to the people, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you any more straw. <sup>11</sup> Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all.'" <sup>12</sup> So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. <sup>13</sup> The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, "Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw." <sup>14</sup> The Israelite foremen appointed by Pharaoh's slave drivers were beaten and were asked, "Why didn't you meet your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?" <sup>15</sup> Then the Israelite foremen went and appealed to Pharaoh:

"Why have you treated your servants this way? <sup>16</sup> Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, 'Make bricks!' Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people." <sup>17</sup>

Pharaoh said, "Lazy, that's what you are--lazy! That is why you keep saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' <sup>18</sup> Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks." <sup>19</sup> The Israelite foremen realized they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day." <sup>20</sup>

When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them,

<sup>21</sup> and they said, "May the LORD look upon you and judge you! You have made us a stench to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." <sup>22</sup> Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, why have you brought trouble upon this people? Is this why you sent me? <sup>23</sup> Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."

1. What does the miracle of the Omnipresence of God mean and what does it mean to you?
2. Discuss the following truth: “My deliverance is not just about me”
  - a. Is this an encouragement or discouragement and why?
  - b. How does this fact change the way you endure storms?
3. What does it mean to have a Pharaoh mentality and discuss its dangers?
4. What is the biggest challenge you have ever faced and how did you depend on God for strength to overcome this challenge?
  - a. How do you explain to someone what it means (looks like specifically) to rely on God?
5. I heard from God, God gave me my assignment, God promised to be with me in the accomplishment of the assignment!!
  - a. Does this mean I will have no challenges, problems or seeming failure in the accomplishment of the assignment?
  - b. How can we explain to someone that does not know better that difficulties does not mean God is not with me or that God has not called me for this assignment?
6. The Israelites were enslaved for 400 years and they cried out to God. God responded with a plan of deliverance that took several years.
  - a. Why does God not deliver us until we cry out to Him?
  - b. What does it mean to cry out to God? (not just the words but the condition of the heart)
  - c. Respond to the following truth: “The enemy that has us enslaved will not give us up without a fight.”
    - i. How does knowing this change our mindset when walking with someone thru their deliverance?
7. Before the Israelites were delivered things went from bad to worse.
  - a. Why do things in our life get worse before deliverance comes?
  - b. Share a testimony of this truth in your life or the life of someone you have witnessed.
8. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

(5:1-23) **Introduction:** freedom, liberty, and justice for all is God's will for man. Man's heart cries out for freedom, the freedom to live and worship as he chooses. Yet, there have always been those persons who oppose God's will, who seek power over the lives of others, who want...

- their egos boosted by forcing their wills and ways upon others.
- their wealth increased by the forced and cheap labor of others.
- their names and fame known through the conquest of others.

This is the subject now to be studied: *The First Confrontation of Moses with Pharaoh: Opposing God's Will for His People, The Right of Man to Live and Worship God in Freedom, Exodus 5:1-23.*

**1. (5:1) Freedom— Liberty— Will, of God:** there was the declaration of God's will: that God's people be freed, set at liberty so they could worship and serve God.

Picture the scene within the royal palace and court of Egypt. There sat the great king Pharaoh upon his throne. And there before him stood Moses, a simple shepherd, and Aaron, a slave. Pharaoh was most likely the most powerful man upon earth. The elders of Israel were probably also with Moses and Aaron, for God had told Moses to take them with him (Exodus 3:18). Pharaoh would no doubt have granted an interview to the elders of the nation, thinking that some official business needed to be discussed. Whatever the case, there stood a group of slaves before the great king of Egypt, and for what purpose? To demand that he free God's people so they could make a religious pilgrimage to worship and serve God out in the wilderness.

**Thought 1.** The point to see is this: God's will for His people—yea, for all people—is to have liberty, freedom, and justice. God wanted Israel freed just as He wants all enslaved people freed. God wants no people enslaved, and no people upon earth should ever be enslaved. God created people to live in freedom, to be free to work and play, but primarily to be free to worship and serve Him in all they do. Therefore, God wanted Israel freed, and God wants us to be free no matter who we are—as stated, so that we can live in freedom, worshipping and serving Him in all that we do.

**"The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all" (Proverbs 22:2).**

**"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1).**

**2. (5:2-14) Will, of God— Liberty— Freedom— Persecution— Oppression:** there was the rejection of God's will. The whole scene was ridiculous to Pharaoh, an affront to his position, a misuse of his time and authority. His response was sharp, cynical, and severe. His response shows exactly how he felt about such a ridiculous request. No doubt, his thoughts ran something like this: "Imagine! A group of slaves appearing before me demanding that I free them to go on a religious pilgrimage. Do they take me for a fool? And the audacity, trying to strike fear in me by claiming that their God sent them with such a ridiculous request. I'll teach them a lesson they will never forget."

Now, why did Pharaoh not take the request of Moses and Aaron seriously? Why did he enslave God's people, mistreat them so unjustly? Why did he not believe in the only living and true God? Why did he not rule Egypt with liberty, freedom, and justice for all peoples, including God's people? There were five reasons, and the same five reasons are the very reasons so many persons mistreat and persecute God's people today.

1. Pharaoh was ignorant of God—of the only living and true God—and he did not fear God (Exodus 5:2).
  - a. His response to the request for freedom was immediate, crisp, and cynical. He declared in no uncertain terms: he did not know the LORD; he would not let Israel go.

**Thought 1.** The world does not know God; therefore, the world will often persecute believers. A person who truly knows God will never persecute other believers, nor will he persecute anyone else. He knows that all men are the offspring of God

**"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (John 15:21).**

**"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (John 16:3).**

- b. At that point, the messengers of God warned Pharaoh: God had truly revealed Himself to them. He demanded that Israel be freed to worship and serve Him. Pharaoh must free them or else the judgment of God would fall upon him and the Egyptians (Exodus 5:3). Note what they suggested: that God might send upon the Egyptians some form of disease or some foreign invader across the eastern border where Israel lived.

This angered Pharaoh beyond measure. What now happened shows this.

**Thought 1.** The judgment of God will fall upon all who persecute and enslave God's people.

**"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thes. 1:6-10).**

2. Pharaoh accused God's messengers (Moses and Aaron) with disturbing the peace, accused them of interfering with the people's work (Exodus 5:4-5). He demanded that they get back to work, for these messengers were hindering the work. Keep in mind that the work produced by Israel was enormous, for the people had grown to an estimated two million plus population.

3. Pharaoh was mean-spirited, hard-hearted, malicious, and ruthless. He reacted, instructing the slave-drivers to oppress God's people more and more (Exodus 5:6-8).

- a. Pharaoh no longer supplied straw for the bricks, but instead forced the people to gather their own straw (Exodus 5:7). This took an enormous amount of labor and time, labor and time that had previously been used to make brick.
- b. Pharaoh forced the people to produce the same quota of bricks per day despite the extra labor necessary to gather the straw (Exodus 5:8).

4. Pharaoh dismissed the message of God's messengers as a lie (Exodus 5:9b).

**Thought 1.** How many people today believe that the message of God's preachers and teachers is a lie, that the message of God's Word is...

- false?
- empty?
- meaningless?
- useless?

- a waste of time?
- of no value in the real world?

**"But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy" (2 Chron. 36:16).**

**"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise [godly] wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7).**

**"And say, How have I hated [godly] instruction, and my heart despised reproof" (Proverbs 5:12).**

5. Pharaoh misused his authority and power: he made the oppression of God's people the law of the land, "Thus says Pharaoh, the king...." (Exodus 5:10-14). He sent the slave-masters to carry out his orders:

- ⇒ The slave-masters made the people gather their own straw, yet the people had to maintain their work level and quota of bricks (Exodus 5:11).
- ⇒ God's people were scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw (Exodus 5:11). This meant that many were displaced and separated from their families.
- ⇒ The slave-drivers continually pressed God's people to fill their daily quota (Exodus 5:13).
- ⇒ The Israelite foremen were beaten because the people failed to meet the set quotas (Exodus 5:14).

**Thought 1.** One of the great problems within society is the misuse of authority and power. Authority can range from the authority of a king over to the authority of a supervisor who is over just one person. God is clear about the authority or rule a person holds: the person must not misuse his authority or rule.

**"How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?" (Psalm 82:2).**

**"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor" (Proverbs 14:31).**

**"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they" (Eccles. 5:8).**

**3. (5:15-19) Will, of God— Freedom— Justice:** there was the rejection of an appeal for justice, the rejection of reason, understanding, and compassion. What now happened shows just how hard-hearted and malicious Pharaoh was.

1. The Israelite foremen appealed to Pharaoh for justice: that he be reasonable and understanding, showing some compassion for God's people (Exodus 5:15-16). There were obviously thousands of foremen overseeing the work of the Israelite slaves. Keep in mind that all the people—both males and females—would be forced to work, beginning somewhere around ten to twelve years old, perhaps even younger. This meant there were over one million Israelite slaves at work for the Egyptians. Thus, the foremen who requested an audience with Pharaoh were a representative group appointed to represent the whole corps of Israelite foremen.

2. The reaction of Pharaoh was twofold.

⇒ He made a sarcastic and false accusation: God's people were lazy and had no need to worship (Exodus 5:17).

⇒ He demonstrated a spirit of injustice, unreasonableness, and lack of compassion (Exodus 5:18).

3. The effect upon the foremen was exactly what would be expected by such a reaction from Pharaoh: they were overwhelmed with a spirit of hopelessness and helplessness (Exodus 5:19). They could expect only more severe abuse, oppression, and brutality.

**Thought 1.** All who are in authority are to supervise and rule with justice: to be reasonable, understanding, and compassionate as they oversee the work of people.

**"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land [symbol of heaven] which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Deut. 16:20).**

**"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (2 Samuel 23:3).**

**"And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment" (2 Chron. 19:6).**

**4. (5:20-23) Prayer— Ministering:** the cry of the messenger of God. He cried out to God in behalf of God's people.

1. Moses, along with Aaron, went out to meet the foremen representatives, anxiously hoping for a favorable response from Pharaoh (Exodus 5:21). What happened shocked Moses. The foremen bitterly blamed Moses and Aaron for the brutal and savage abuse being heaped upon them. Nevertheless, as a true minister of God, Moses stood there and listened to their complaints and needs.

In no uncertain terms, the foremen told Moses that he was personally to blame, that he had made them stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his officials, that Pharaoh might take up the sword and kill them at any moment (Exodus 5:21).

2. Having his own people viciously attack him disturbed Moses to no end. He was obviously crushed, in a state of shock. He did all he could do: he got alone with God and cried out to Him in prayer (Exodus 5:22). He asked why God had allowed such trouble to fall upon the people. And note, he questioned his own call to the ministry: Why had God called him?

Moses was blaming himself for having brought such trouble upon the people. He was in despair, questioning and wondering what was going on, why God was allowing such trouble when He had promised to deliver the people. Then, as always with God's dear servants, Moses cried out to God: "You have not delivered your people, not as You promised. Deliver them" (Exodus 5:23).

**Thought 1.** All ministers—yea all believers—are to do just what Moses did:

- 1) Listen to the complaints and needs of people when they face difficulty.
- 2) Get alone with God, crying out in prayer for God to deliver His people from their trouble.

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

**"Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy" (Psalms 61:1-3).**

**"When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For**

**the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them" (Deut. 4:30-31).**

**"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Psalms 91:15).**

**"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).**