

Bible study

March 10.21
Pastor

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Read Exodus 5.1-21



“Things get worse before they get better.”

For the past few weeks I’ve been thinking of Jesus, our perfect King. The Christian calendar is pointing to Easter. Thinking of the King of kings, who chose a crown of thorns, I started thinking of earthly kings who were so unlike Jesus.

Overview: God tells Moses and his brother Aaron that they should tell the king, Pharaoh, to “Let My people go.”

They appear before Pharaoh (see 5:1-9), and he utterly refuses their request.

In fact, Pharaoh tells his taskmasters (or slavedrivers) to command the people to make the same number of bricks, but without having the straw provided. (10-14)

The Hebrew slaves at first bow down to worship the LORD when Moses and Aaron tell them of His plans for them (see 4.29-31). But they react against Pharaoh and especially, against Moses and Aaron when they realize that their lives are getting worse instead of better (15-21).

Consider:

How would one be able to talk to a king like Pharaoh? (how did they set that up?)

What is Moses' and Aaron's request? Is this reasonable? Why should Pharaoh listen to their request?

What can we learn about Pharaoh from his initial response in verse 2?

Do you think the second part of verse 3 was accurate?

What is the main reason Pharaoh doesn't want to let the people go to worship? Do you think if he really wanted to, he could have tried to find a way to do it and still ensure the people's return?

What is Pharaoh's revenge for this request? Is this new requirement feasible? Why do you think he makes this change?

Some notes and applications

Moses and Aaron lodge their official, formal request to allow the people of Israel to worship God in the wilderness. This was the first of many times they would appear before Pharaoh. The fact that they (Moses being a murderer who had escaped from the country many years before) were even allowed into his

presence demonstrates God's sovereignty, because throughout all of history, rulers have been hard to access.

- Where have you noticed God at work behind the scenes in your own life?

Notice the authority behind their request. It is not the people of Israel, Aaron, or Moses demanding this. It is God. A prophet speaks, "Thus says the Lord." He acts as a messenger of God. Therefore, Moses is called a prophet; this authority from God gives Moses and Aaron's request true legitimacy. Because it is from God Himself, it demands attention.

Pharaoh is not impressed by this. He claims no knowledge of this God. The LORD wasn't among the many gods that the Egyptians worshiped. In fact, Pharaoh considered himself to be a god.

Pharaoh is arrogant. In his pride, he disdains this unknown God. This is the height of arrogance. We learn from the Bible that pride goes before the fall. It is also said "The bigger they are, the harder they fall." Pharaoh raised himself up to be greater than God and therefore his fall would be historic, one of epic proportions.

He unilaterally rejects their request.

- We don't like to think of ourselves as prideful or arrogant. But sometimes we live as though we ourselves are 'god'. In the past few weeks, have you put anything or anyone before the LORD? Have you decided that your plans are better than His?
- Do you think it's true that the LORD would have struck the Hebrew slaves with a plague or the sword if they didn't worship Him? (Do you see any 'foreshadowing' of the future of Egypt in this threat of punishment for not putting the LORD first?)

Pharaoh not only rejects them again (verse 4), but decides to punish their perceived laziness by upping their work load. They would be required to make the same number of bricks, but they wouldn't be given the materials to make them from.

- Contrast the arrogance of Pharaoh with the humility of Jesus, our True King. Jesus, creator of the universe, chose to live as a human – a poor human, in a poor country, among oppressed people.

- Contrast the cruelty of Pharaoh with the kindness of Jesus. What is your favourite example of Jesus' kindness?

If you have questions or feedback, please contact me. 😊

I have adapted the notes from *Free Inductive Bible Studies Book By Book* at studyandobey.com