

# Part 6: From Bad To Worse, Exodus 5:1-23

## **SERMON SERIES: EXODUS - FINDING FREEDOM** **From Bad To Worse Exodus 5:1-23**

**Devotion Emphasis: Hope and Slavery**

**MONDAY – Moses Increases Israel’s Hopes**

**Exodus 5:1-5** Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” **2** But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.” **3** Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” **4** But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens.” **5** And Pharaoh said, “Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!”

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for years. They were discouraged, their burdens were heavy, and they were hopeless. A life of slavery as we understand it, and what the Israelites really experienced, is one of regular torment, few pleasures, and little reason for living. Day after day the Israelites mourned for freedom and found none. Moses and Aaron showing up as representatives of the Israelites and asking for their freedom was the first ray of hope the people of God had seen in years! Imagine yourself in a position of being enslaved for most of your life. What would you feel in that situation if someone came and requested your freedom? You would be overjoyed and you would turn to the individual giving you hope and cry out to them in thankfulness! We have access to the hope of God everyday. How do we respond to Him?

**Discipleship Challenge: Hope is one of the most powerful things God gives us and the great news is that we have access to hope everyday! God gives us hope through Jesus, through the Bible, and through the church. When we immerse our lives in the things of God, we have an abundance of hope. When God and His will for our life is not prioritized, we usually lack hope. Take an honest look at your life today. What things in your life take priority**

over God and His will? Spend time in prayer asking God to help you prioritize Him above all other things.

## **TUESDAY – The Pharaoh Increases Israel’s Burden**

**Exodus 5:6-23** 6 The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, 7 “You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. 8 But the number of bricks that they made in the past you shall impose on them, you shall by no means reduce it, for they are idle. Therefore they cry, ‘Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.’ 9 Let heavier work be laid on the men that they may labor at it and pay no regard to lying words.” 10 So the taskmasters and the foremen of the people went out and said to the people, “Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I will not give you straw. 11 Go and get your straw yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced in the least.’” 12 So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. 13 The taskmasters were urgent, saying, “Complete your work, your daily task each day, as when there was straw.” 14 And the foremen of the people of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, “Why have you not done all your task of making bricks today and yesterday, as in the past?” 15 Then the foremen of the people of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, “Why do you treat your servants like this? 16 No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, ‘Make bricks!’ And behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is in your own people.” 17 But he said, “You are idle, you are idle; that is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.’ 18 Go now and work. No straw will be given you, but you must still deliver the same number of bricks.” 19 The foremen of the people of Israel saw that they were in trouble when they said, “You shall by no means reduce your number of bricks, your daily task each day.” 20 They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them, as they came out from Pharaoh; 21 and they said to them, “The Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.” 22 Then Moses turned to the Lord and said, “O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? 23 For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.”

Even though Moses and Aaron came as a source of hope for the Israelites, their request ended up bringing greater hardship and burden to the Israelites. Not only did the Israelites probably feel more hopeless than ever, but even Moses felt hopeless! When circumstances in our own lives get tough, we are often tempted to succumb to hopelessness as well. Have you ever made a decision to follow Jesus in a new way and your life immediately became harder? Nowhere in the Bible are we promised easy lives for following Jesus but we are promised that God never abandons us in times of great

burden and we are even promised that God always grows us in those times. One of the greatest blessings God bestowed on the Israelites that they completely missed was the fact that God allowed them to multiply into a huge and mighty nation in Egypt. During their time of burden He was preparing them for what He had planned. How has God used your times of burden to work in your life?

**Discipleship Challenge: What burden in your life can you ask God to take and use to grow you? When our eyes are on the hope of God, He can even take the small burdens in our lives as use them to do incredible things in us. Think of two burdens in your life today. Think of one big burden and one small one. Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal to you how He is going to use those in your life and commit to focusing on God's hope as you walk through those burdens!**

### **WEDNESDAY – Two Masters**

**Romans 6:16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?**

What are some things people can become enslaved to? We can certainly enslave one another but slavery can reach much further than even that! People can become slaves to all kinds of things. We can become enslaved to drugs, alcohol, food, and any kind of habit, but most often we should just say we were born enslaved to sin. All people are born with sin natures which literally lead us toward sinning. Sin is like a bad slave master that wrecks our lives and controls everything we do! The greatest hope we have is the truth of Jesus buying us out of slavery to sin. Jesus is our new master who leads us into hope, blessing, and eternal joy in Him! If a person was enslaved by a horrible person who beat them, controlled everything they did, and ruined their life, why in the world would they ever return to their former owner if they were given freedom? We have two choices in life. We can either choose to follow Jesus as our Lord or we can choose to live in slavery to sin.

**Worship Challenge: What are some things Jesus has specifically saved you from? We all have different sin issues we have struggled with and Jesus transforms us and helps us leave those sins in the past. Spend time reflecting on how Jesus has worked in your life and praise Him for the areas of sin He has helped you overcome. If you can't think of any, it's time to ask Him to reveal to you the sins in your own life and to help you overcome them.**

## **THURSDAY – Slavery To Christ**

**1 Corinthians 7:22-23 22 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.**

Our understanding of slavery is only one of negativity because of what we have experienced through history. Did you know there is a form of slavery that is wholly beautiful? The lives of Christians have been bought by Christ and the price He paid for us was great! We make ourselves slaves to Christ when we choose to accept Him as our Lord and savior. The Christian life is not one that says I will take the blessings of Jesus without following Him as our Lord. That kind of life cannot exist because it is through our obedience to Christ that His blessings are found. The only time we have true freedom in this life is when we choose to make ourselves slaves to Christ.

**Discipleship Challenge: Being a slave to anyone is not how any of us naturally want to live because we desire to be the gods of our own lives. Even as Christians we try to sit on God's throne and take His role. Spend time today reflecting on how true freedom only comes through making yourself a slave to Jesus. Take some extra time discussing this truth with another Christian!**

## **FRIDAY – Spiritual Sight And Freedom**

**John 9:25 One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.**

Without Jesus we are spiritually blind. Without being able to see Jesus, we are unable to see real hope. Let's be completely real for a minute. We all know people who have not been saved by Jesus. Think of them as being completely incapable of seeing the greatest beauty the universe has to offer. They see the world but without God everything might as well be gray and void of color. They live in a reality of complete blindness to God and therefore are blind to their very reason for existing! As Christians we see the world as it is meant to be seen because we look at the world as Jesus sees the world. The reason you first encountered God and came to a saving understanding of Him is because your eyes were opened by someone who cared enough about you to share Jesus with you. God has saved you so you can be used by Him to lead others to Jesus. God has already equipped you to show others Jesus. Now, who will you engage and help see Him for the first time?

**Evangelism Challenge: Show someone who does not know God what He has been doing in your life. Invite them to church and show them how God is alive and doing miracles in our church. When Christians help unbelievers see God and His good work, they often want to see more of Him!**