Exodus Chapter 5 Verses 1 – 3

* I can’t help but wonder what it was like for Moses walking ***again*** into the royal palace. Forty years before, this was his home. This was his *way of life.* It was ***familiar*** but also so ***very distant*** to him now. Seeing where he played as young boy…perhaps a stain in the rug still from his pomegranate and lentil soup so many years ago. And here he is again and we read that he and Aaron *went in to Pharaoh.*
* No doubt the most severe case of anxiety he has ever had. In that culture, Pharaoh wasn’t king…**he was a god.** He would sit in the company of the gods in the temples and receive worship from the people. He was accepted as a son of the sun (pretty hot, HA!) and exceeded supreme authority, ***he was divine.*** There were *no laws, no boundaries, no guidelines* for Pharaoh, he was entirely sovereign over the nation of Egypt…and Moses had fled forty years before because he was condemned to death…by whom? **Pharaoh.**
* Yet, even in the most astonishing tests of our limits, ***heeding the Word of God will result in many times unexpected outcomes.*** (Copy machine illustration)
* And notice this, the primary message of our God…***the single request…is for the freedom of God’s people.*** I really really like this. *First, let me make this clear, they are Mine*…says the Lord of Lords. Let **MY** people…go. ***My people will be free.*** This is the primary request, the fundamental demand of God to the sovereign ruler of the earth…*freedom for His people.* That today remains His primary demand. That two thousand years ago is why Jesus gave Himself in the place of all men on the cross…
* One last thing…Pharaoh responds in integrity and honesty. *“I do not know the Lord.”* Here’s my question, if he had, do you think he would have made a different decision? Do you think he would have said, *“Go on then!”* Maybe you’re thinking that through. If he had complied, his nation would not have suffered. His son would have lived. He would not have met his own doom. But, ***he made a terrible decision***, why? Simple, ***he does not know the One who has asked for his obedience…***

Exodus Chapter 5 Verses 4 – 9

* Moses and Aaron return to the elders of Israel, *“So guys, how did it go with Pharaoh?”* *Do you want the good news or the bad? We’re still alive…yeaaaaaa!* **HA!** I’m sure this news went over like ***a ton of bricks*** (pardon the pun) with the children of Israel. Why do this? Why would Pharaoh make it harder on his **own** workforce to carry out his will? **Ego**. Moses and Aaron, slaves, peasants had made a request of Pharaoh…one that he would never make of himself…and just like ego…its not *enough* to answer, there must be some sort of punitive consideration…
* Don’t be like this…do you do this? Are folks punished for asking things of you…or even ***just living*** around you…don’t do that. There are some that even when someone is trying to serve them or build a bridge of sorts or do something nice, there are some that just have a bad attitude or are just rude…what you’re doing is punishing those around you for living…***don’t be that person.*** *(Kindness builds credit)*

Exodus Chapter 5 Verses 10 – 14

* Many times when evil is confronted, sin is ***turned on*** instead of ***turned to***, many times things don’t get immediately better. Here, Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh, a picture of the world and the flesh and ***almost instantly, things get harder.*** But what is coming? **Freedom.** There is always a cost associated with sin…and the sickness of it all is that a portion of the cost is registered **when the sin is forsaken.**  It costs you to get into sin, it costs you to stay in sin, and *it costs you to get out of it*…but, without the confrontation of Pharaoh, without this scene and season of overwhelming difficulty, there will be zero freedom…

Exodus Chapter 5 Verses 15 – 19

* Notice this, instead of turning to God and crying out to God, the people turn to Pharaoh and cry out to him…and what is the result? ***Insult added to injury.*** It seems reasonable to go to the source of the problem and plead, in this case Pharaoh, but wisdom would say, ***don’t call out to the source, call out to the cure.*** Address issues, confront wolves, take offense to the doorstep of the brother or sister who has offended (just as we are told to do in Matthew Chapter 18) but before any and all of that…**take it to the Lord.**
* Pharaoh goes off here and not only does he not recognize their struggle, he denies it completely and calls them lazy! In reality, ***they gained nothing but more heart-ache and discouragement by turning to the world***…and its still the same today…

Exodus Chapter 55 Verses 20 – 21

* I wonder what their approach to Moses and Aaron would have been if they had gone to a *prayer meeting* rather than a *Pharaoh meeting*? It is so the case that ***cruelty tends to spread***…***criticism and calamity tends to spread*** even in the children of God…even in the church…when people are prayerless…was Moses ***at all*** in the wrong? Absolutely not. Was he ***at all*** outside of the will of God…absolutely not…but look what they say, *“Moses, you stink man…God will judge you.”* In that moment, Moses no doubt discouraged…where can he turn…God will judge me? For what, for my absolute obedience? He should have said to them, *“Get saved!”*
* But I love what Moses does…dejected and beaten up and sad in the spirit…he takes his concern to *Instaheiroglyph, Facescroll, Egyptian Twitter!* Not at all. He takes it to the Lord! He doesn’t search for someone to tell him what he wants to hear…he doesn’t go and tell ***person after person*** the business of the officers which are none of their business at all!!! He doesn’t seek to make himself feel better by indulging in gossip…he takes himself, feeling all terrible, right to the Lord…and the Lord gives him perhaps some of the **best promises** contained in the pages of scripture!

Exodus Chapter 5 Verses 22 – 23

* An honest cry to the Lord for help. A heartfelt genuine truthful call to God for help. ***None of that is possible after gossip.*** None of that is possible after turning first to the world for support. This is ***right out of the box pain*** and this type of faith and dependence will be met with eternal truths and promises…