

From Bad To Worse - Exodus 5:1-23

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[0 : 00] Good morning. You can open your Bibles to Exodus chapter 5. This is where we're currently at. So we've been, you know, going through Exodus and we've seen God preparing his deliverer.

We've seen the need for a deliverer. Moses has been called, Moses has been prepared, and Moses has been sent. And at the end of the chapter last week, him and Aaron, they go back and they meet up with the elders of Israel, just as God commanded them to. And lo and behold, just as God said, what happened, they believe him. They didn't have to do all the signs. They believed them. And it says that they bowed their head and worshiped. And I think in this moment, Moses and Aaron are thinking, yes, step one, tell the elders. Step two, go into Pharaoh. Step three, leave. I mean, thank you, God. You work so quickly and so amazingly. But Moses had another promise. Maybe he's thinking about it right now. Maybe he's not, which was Pharaoh's not going to listen to you. Pharaoh's going to harden his heart and he's not going to let you go except by a mighty hand. And maybe Moses is thinking, that's fine. I know what mighty hand is going to be. Boom, leprosy. Boom, clean. You know, throw down my staff. He thinks, hey, I know how this is going to work. By next week, we're out of here.

Sometimes it can seem like things go from bad to worse, don't they? It seems like the hope that I had of God doing something, we were right on the cusp of it. And then, man, everything just fell off the cliff. You know, this went from bad to way worse than I could have ever imagined. As we look at this chapter, we're going to get to meet Pharaoh for the first time. Remember, this isn't the same Pharaoh that Moses was born under, the reign of that Pharaoh, who would have been his adopted grandfather. That Pharaoh died. It says at the end of chapter two that the king of Egypt died. And then the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage. So this is a Pharaoh now that for the last 40 years has been ruling in Egypt. Maybe the Israelites thought, oh, good, if we could just get a different guy in here, a different Pharaoh, then the oppression would cease, the killing of the baby boys would cease. If only we had a different Pharaoh and a different administration, things would turn around. Well, what at one point was just somebody's ideologies and ideas, the one Pharaoh who put this oppression on God's people, now seems to be codified into law. It seems to be just how Egypt operates with the Hebrews. And so for the last 40 years, Israel's still under oppression. Are they still throwing the Hebrew boys into the river? I don't know, but I don't have any reason to think that stopped.

So there's still this oppression. There's still the world in Egypt that is keeping God's people oppressed. But they've learned to live with it, right? God's deliverance often comes through affliction.

And that's just how it is. Look what happened with Abraham. He was given this promise of a son years later. The promise seemed to have died. Abraham could no longer bear children, neither could Sarah before God's promise was fulfilled. Look at Joseph, the dreams that he has. God speaking to him, envisions in dreams as a child, as a 17-year-old, years later before that comes to fruition. He goes through affliction. But I think God delivers not out of affliction. God delivers in affliction and through affliction because affliction, one, it draws us closer to God. But two, it shows us this world is broken. And right now we have God's people living in Egypt for hundreds of years. If the previous Pharaoh had not decided to oppress them, what would have happened to them? If Egypt had not decided to keep the Hebrews separate, we saw that all through this, they're a separate class. There's the Hebrews and then there's the Egyptians. What if Egypt had just said, you know what, guys, you're just like us.

[3 : 55] Come and join with us. What would have happened to God's people? I think they would have disappeared. I think they would have become just like the world. And so when we feel this

affliction and we see like, man, the world hates us. That's God's mercy. It's God's mercy to show us the world is broken.

You need to find another deliverer, another source. So this is not a happy chapter. It kind of starts here and seemingly ends down here. Remember a couple weeks ago when we talked about allegory and typology, and we said an allegory is reading into the text. I want an idea that I'm going to read into the text. I'm going to make the text say that, whether it does or not. Typology is simply observing what's in the text and seeing the types, the pictures that are in Scripture, primarily in the Old Testament and seeing the pictures in the New Testament. Well, as we study the Old Testament, the study of the Old Testament must be viewed through the lens and the revelation of the New Testament. When we come to God's Word and we're coming to the Old Testament, we must view it through the cross. That's our filter. That's our lens we're looking back with. Psalm 40 verse 7 says, Then said I, lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me. We know that's speaking of Jesus.

It's a prophecy of the Messiah. In the volume of the book it's written of me. The whole thing is Jesus. Romans 15, Paul quotes this in verse 2. He says, well, first he says, let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. Like, hey, our heart should be to edify one another. What's his reason for that? He states a principle and then he finds a place to anchor it in Scripture. He says, for even as Christ pleased not himself. Why should I seek the benefit of my neighbor? Because that's what Jesus did. But as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope. What's Paul doing there? Paul's laying out a principle that we should live by, anchoring it in the life of Christ, and then showing how that was reflected in the Old Testament. He says, for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. What was written aforetime? Psalm 69, verses 7 through 9. Because for thy sake I have borne reproach. Shame has covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproach thee are fallen on me. Paul says what that means is Jesus chose not to live for himself, but instead to seek the edification of his neighbor by taking the reproach upon them.

[6 : 32] And how did he do that? By looking in the Scripture and seeing this is exemplified in the life of Christ and anchored in the Old Testament. It's the same thing we do as we go through the Old Testament. The volume of the book is written of Jesus. We're going to see principles and truths in the Old Testament, and we're going to anchor them in the New Testament. You don't want my word for it. You don't want me just to say, well, this is because I think this means this. You want to be able to anchor it in the truth of the Scripture. So let's pick up in verse 1.

And afterward, so after Moses has just come talking to the elders of Israel, and they believed him, and they've worshipped, and they're all excited about what God's going to do, Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

It doesn't say, and Moses and Aaron went in and said, pretty please, please, Pharaoh, and asked. They went in and they told. They're coming in. They're marching in. They were not asking Pharaoh to let Pharaoh's people go. They were telling Pharaoh to let God's people go. And we're going to see that rub begin to happen. Pharaoh says, wait, who's God? Who is this God?

And Pharaoh said, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? God is giving Pharaoh an opportunity, even Pharaoh, an opportunity to obey his word, to surrender to his word, and to be yielded to his word. Listen, whether Pharaoh lets God's people go or not, was God's plan going to move forward? Irregardless. Well, we all know what's coming next. Yes. Pharaoh had a choice of how he was going to partake in that plan. God said, I'm going to deliver my people. I'm going to move my plan forward. Do you want to participate? Do you want to obey? God was giving Pharaoh a choice. He could have obeyed or he could have disobeyed. We're going to see he's going to disobey. You and I have the same opportunity every day. God's plan is going to move forward. We're not like the first human ever created out of the billions and billions of people to come on the scene where God hits the brakes and goes, oh my word, I can't move my plan forward because Jared won't obey. What are we going to do now? Now, that's not what happens, right? We talked about before, God's will is almost like a stream.

Right? In the middle of it, the current is so strong and you can be in that and you can be moving with it. Whether you're in it or not, it's going to move. Or you can kind of come along the bank and you can sit there and maybe you're moving really slowly or maybe you get caught behind a log and you're just kind of sitting there, right? God's plan is going to move forward. Nothing we do is going to stop that. Are we going to partake in it? And that's where Paul talks about when he says, hey, there's going to be those that on the day of judgment, not the day of judgment for our sins, but the day of rewards when we stand before Christ and you say, hey, they've just built wood.

[9 : 14] Hey, it's double and all burns up because they're all about their own plan, but not getting on board with God's plan. Here though, Pharaoh, this isn't just where he's saying, well, who is the Lord? I've never heard about him. Tell me about him. This is very disrespectful. He's saying, who is the Lord?

Like, dude, who are you? Who are you to tell me what to do? Who is God? Who is the Lord? That I should obey his voice. Specifically, I'm not going to listen to his word. To let Israel go. I know not the Lord. Neither will I let Israel go. Pharaoh had no respect for God or God's people here. To Pharaoh, the God of the Hebrews, what was that? A God of slaves. Why am I going to respect your God? What has he done for you yet? What has he done for your people? There's still slaves here. Yeah, Pharaoh, but have you been able to crush them? Have you been able to kill them? Have you been able to do anything to stop the growth of this people? No, God is still blessing this people, Pharaoh. Both Israel and Pharaoh need to learn a lesson. They both need to know that God is greater than Pharaoh. Israel doesn't realize this, right? They're thinking, all we need is a change of scenery.

God's going to get us out of here. Just, you know what, God? If you can't make Egypt great again, take us to a new country that can be great. It's going to be wonderful. All we need is a new place. Is that how it works out? When they get out of Egypt, does everything go swimmingly? Do they follow the Lord in obedience? No. When they get in the promised land, man, is it just smooth sailing after that? No. They eventually get taken captive by the Assyrians and the Babylonians because it's not about their location, is it? It's about their condition of their heart. They don't realize that.

Right now, all they can see is their circumstances. So Pharaoh, Pharaoh and Israel both need to know that God is greater than Pharaoh. Pharaoh says, I know not the Lord. Well, I beg to differ because the Bible tells us in Romans chapter 1, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. What is the unrighteousness that they hold the truth in? The fact that because that which may be known of God is manifest to them, for God has showed it unto them. But then they choose not to acknowledge that. God has showed it unto them.

[11 : 28] God has made manifest to Pharaoh enough of his truth that Pharaoh could respond to. Pharaoh did have the opportunity here to respect God and his word and to respect God's people.

Maybe Pharaoh didn't know the Lord, but you know what? He knew what he was doing to God's people was wrong, and he could have chosen to respect them. That could have been step one on the path of coming to know the Lord. But the light that was given him, he did not live up to.

So obedience, specifically, is a response to what we respect. We obey what we respect. If you have a policeman come up to you in a parking lot and say, hey, put your hands behind your back, you're under arrest, what are you going to do? You might be kind of surprised, well, why?

But you're not going to be like, who are you? Get out of here and just walk away, right? You're going to respect that, and you're going to obey. Now, if somebody comes up to you, you have no idea who they are, and they just say, hey, citizens arrest.

Put your hands behind your back, you're under arrest. Then you'd be like, this is really weird, I need to get out of here, right? Because you don't respect that. But we also only respect what we know.

[12 : 34] If we don't know that I should respect the policeman, if you're from another country or culture, and you don't realize what this policeman is, you're not going to respect it. We only obey what we respect, but we only respect what we know.

So Pharaoh was saying, I'm not going to obey God. I don't know him. I'm not going to respect him. Who is this? And then they said to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron now answer, and they don't answer him according to his words specifically.

They don't engage in his unbelief on the same level that he's bringing this to. He's saying, who is the Lord with this disrespect? Look how they engage him. They said, the God of the Hebrews has met with us, saying, let us go, we pray thee.

Three days journey into the desert and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword. Interesting. When did God ever say he was going to fall upon them with pestilence and the sword?

I don't remember that, Moses. You're just making this up. I don't think so. Moses and Aaron, they engage Pharaoh's unbelief by just simply restating the reality of God. They're saying, hey, Pharaoh, whatever.

[13:39] But this is who God is. What do we see in this text? God is to be obeyed. We have to obey him, Pharaoh. God is calling us to obey him. God is to be served. We need to go out and we need to serve God.

God is to be worshipped. And then lastly, I don't think they're saying God's going to wipe us out. But what they're saying is if we don't obey him, serve him, and worship him, we are accountable to him. God is the judge, Pharaoh. And we will be judged.

Pharaoh, your unbelief is not just affecting you. It's also keeping other people from coming to the Lord. Your unbelief is going to be accountable, put you in a place of accountability, but you're also making it hard for other people to come as well.

Remember when Jesus ran into the scribes and Pharisees one of those times, and he begins to pronounce woe upon them. And he says, woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut up the kingdom of heaven against men.

For neither you go in yourselves, and neither do you suffer them to enter in either. He says, man, you're not even going into heaven, and then what are you doing? You're putting up roadblocks.

Why would someone do that? Why does unbelief put up a roadblock for other people to believe?

[14:47] Because unbelief needs validation. It's not, I'm not believing the truth. It's a lie. So I don't have the assurance of the truth. Man, I'm going to have to validate myself. Oh my word, if you're going to be in belief, if you're going to believe the truth, that completely invalidates my position.

I can't let you believe. Because then, I'm going to have to acknowledge I'm wrong. That completely undercuts my unbelief. So unbelief is always seeking to invalidate and to block belief.

And here you see the same thing with Pharaoh. Pharaoh's like, no, I don't believe in God. I don't respect God. And I'm not going to let you go and believe and respect God either. I'm not going to let you obey God. And yet, God remarkably continues to give Pharaoh this choice, this chance to be part of his plan.

He doesn't say, well, that's it, Pharaoh. It's over. We're done. We're going to see page after page after page of God's mercy. So you know, it's God's judgment. Yes, it's God's judgment. So that God can display his mercy to those who would respond to his judgment.

In Ezekiel chapter 33, verse 11, we read, saying to them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked would turn from his way and live.

[16:00] God has no pleasure in destroying Pharaoh, destroying Egypt. God has no pleasure in that. God's not just up there waiting like, just wait till you see what I do to Pharaoh.

Not at all. God's heart is breaking. God loves Egypt. God loves these people. And the king of Egypt said unto them, all right, guys, you know what? I've been a little stubborn. Go and do your thing and then come on back.

The king of Egypt, no, he said to them, wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their burdens? Who do you think you are? I don't know who your God is. And wait a minute. Who are you?

I don't even know who you are. I doubt he does. This is 40 years later. The other Pharaoh's passed away. I don't think anybody's like, wait, wait, I remember Moses. I don't think they have any idea who Moses is. I don't think he could care less.

And look what he does here. He attempts to flip the script. This is what the enemy always does. He attempts to convince us to view things from his perspective, right? Moses and Aaron have their perspective. This is what God has said.

[16:58] Well, the enemy can't meet with us on the level of God's word and the truth. So he's going to flip the script. Wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works get you unto your burdens?

He imposes a false morality, doesn't he? You're doing wrong, Moses and Aaron. Look what you've done. You've taken them from what they should be doing. There's a false morality he's imposing here.

The world does the same thing. They impose upon us a false perspective, a false morality, which leads then to what? False accusations. Moses and Aaron, you are so out of line here. Look what you're doing, Christian.

How dare you do that? Don't you know the world has legalized that? Don't you know that you're just stepping in the way of people's bodily autonomy? How could you say that's wrong, that that's murder?

They love each other. Who cares if they want to be married? Is it hurting you? How could you say that, Christian? You are so out of line. Listen, just because something's been historically practiced and accepted and tolerated for years as normal, it doesn't make it right.

[18:00] Didn't we learn that with slavery in our culture? But no, now what are we doing? We're watching as the world enslaves people again to sin, to inordered affections, to murder, and calling it freedom.

A false perspective, a false morality will lead to false accusations as the enemy attempts to place upon God's people a responsibility that only belongs to God. Moses and Aaron, this is your fault this is happening.

Wait, wait, well, no, actually, I'm just following God's word. They try to place upon us as if we are responsible for the word of God. Now we are responsible, like Moses, to speak the word of God, and then we let it fall where it will.

In Daniel, chapter 2, Daniel has just been given the revelation of the interpretation of the dream that Nebuchadnezzar has. Nebuchadnezzar has this dream of the statue.

And then he says, well, someone tell me what it is. And so all of his soothsayers and dream tellers come, and they say, tell us the dream, and we will tell you. He said, no, I think you're a bunch of crooks and liars. You tell me what the dream is, and then the interpretation, and then I'll let you live.

[19:09] Otherwise, instead of getting a bonus, I'm going to kill you. So Daniel eventually hears of this, along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They go and pray, and God reveals to Daniel what the dream is.

And then Daniel responds, realizing what this dream is, that God is showing Daniel his plan for the ages, his plan that is going to move forward, no matter who's on board with it or not. And Daniel says, blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his, and he changes the times and seasons.

He removes kings and sets up kings. Who changes the times and seasons? God. Who sets up kings? Who removes kings? God does.

It's God who does. Now, whether he chooses to do that through a monarchy or a democracy, it's still God who does that. God is the one who sets up kings and puts down kings.

God is the one who allows and puts people in their position. They are then responsible to God for the position they've been given. We are not responsible for the choices other people make.

[20:11] And we're living in a day where the world and parts of the church are attempting to put upon God's people the responsibility of the sin of other people.

It is not our responsibility for the choices other people make. It's our responsibility for the choices we make. We are responsible to God to live according to his word.

We are not responsible to God for others who don't live according to his word, who have chosen to reject it. Moses and Aaron are not responsible for Pharaoh's decision. Pharaoh is not going to make good decisions.

They are not responsible for that, even though they are the ones bringing the truth. And the world today is telling us, you Christian, you people, you church, you are responsible if evil happens in this world because you didn't do your duty.

And that is not true. That is not true. God sets up one and removes another. The enemy places the focus upon limited man instead of an unlimited God. They say, what can we do?

[21:08] We can't do anything, but God can do everything. And Pharaoh said, behold, the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest from their burdens. Pharaoh is saying, listen, this is the way I've learned to deal with these people, to keep them under control.

I keep them busy, and I keep them burdened, and I can control them. And Moses, by bringing them into rest, you're bringing them out from under the bondage. They're going to wake up and realize there's a deliverer.

Pharaoh cannot allow Moses, God's deliverer, to upset the means by which he controls God's people. And how does he do that? By constantly keeping them burdened and busy, by keeping them away from the rest that God's deliverer wants to bring.

Jesus says in Matthew chapter 11, at the end of that chapter, he said, come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest under your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. The deliverer seeks to lift our burdens, seeks to give us a burden that's light, to bring us into rest. The enemy combats that by keeping us so burdened and so busy that we have no time to enter into that rest.

[22 : 21] And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, you shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore. Let them go and gather straw for themselves.

And here now, the enemy begins to push back hard in response to the truth of God's word and God's command that Moses has brought. You shall no more give the people straw.

Let them go and gather straw for themselves. Man, things are going from bad to worse. It was bad enough we were under the bondage of Egypt. Now they're taking away our resources, and now we have to go and in our own efforts and our own strength, try and supply this.

And that's what the enemy does. He wants to refocus us into our own efforts, the strength of our flesh, to try and supply resources ourselves. And the nearer that God's deliverance draws, the more active the enemy will do that.

The more active the enemy becomes as God's deliverance draws near. We can think, God, you were supposed to be my deliverer. I thought you said that all things work together for good. Why are things getting worse? It doesn't mean that God's word has failed.

[23 : 28] It means the enemy is just getting more active, which means God's deliverance is drawing even closer. Remember when Jesus came, when he was born of a virgin, and he was born in the stable in Bethlehem? And remember, as he begins his ministry 30 years later, think of all the demonic activity.

There's never another time in history like that. If you look then in Acts, which is only a few years afterwards, you don't see anything close to that. But as the deliverer drew near, the enemy ramped up his activity and his pushback.

In 2 Corinthians 2.14, we read this. Paul says, Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ.

No matter how things may appear on the surface, like they're getting worse, that in Christ, we know they're always getting better. Always causes us to triumph. Always and in all things, we can triumph in Christ, no matter how bad the circumstances look.

And they said to them, the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them. I'm sorry, Pharaoh saying this to the officers of the Egyptians. He said, the amount of bricks which they made, you got to require of them the same amount.

[24 : 36] They shall not diminish, for they be idle. Therefore they cry, saying, let us go and sacrifice unto our God. So here Pharaoh saying, well, the problem is they're just, they're idle.

They're lazy. They're not listening. I mean, they're listening to false words. In verse 9, Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labor therein, and let them not regard vain words. The purpose of the enemy, of his burdens and his busyness he places on us, is to distract us from God's word, to keep us from focusing upon God's word. The enemy and the world will always belittle God's word.

You don't have time for that. You can't go to church. Do you know what you have going on? You are so busy and so burdened. If you don't stay home and do this, how are you going to ever catch up? You need a day of rest. You don't need to be going anywhere.

You can't be doing that. The enemy puts unrealistic expectations on us. He puts demands on us we can't keep. And he uses that to distract us from God's word.

[25 : 35] Whereas God always asks us only to give what what? What we already have. God never asks us to give what we don't have. And then not only that, we have the amazing promise that God supplies what we give.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 9, Paul is talking about giving. And we quote, I love quoting verse 8 all the time. And God is able to make all grace abound towards you. That you, always having all

sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

I love that. That God's grace is sufficient for everything I need, for every work he gives me. But this is specifically talking about giving. Like giving financially. Giving of your time.

Giving of your resources. That it is God who specifically will make up what you give. That you can't out give him. There's no possible way. That God will make all grace abound towards you so that you have the means to give.

God doesn't ask of us what we don't have. And then, he only asks of us what he's first willing to give of himself. He said, whoever would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.

[26 : 38] Whoever would seek to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses it for my sake will find it. Well, that's asking an awful lot. Yeah, but he doesn't ask what he hasn't already given. As he's given his own life for us.

Let there more work be laid upon the men. That they may labor therein. And let them not regard vain words. And the taskmasters of the people went out. And their officers and they spake to the people saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

And all the people are probably like, what? What is going on? What's this new work policy? We never did this before. What is going on here? Go you, get you straw where you can find it. Yet not all of your works shall be diminished.

Hey, make sure you're meeting your quota. Remember what Jesus said in John 10? In John 10.10, Jesus says, The thief comes not but to steal, to kill, and to destroy. But contrary to that, Jesus says, I am come that you may have life and have it more abundantly.

The enemy, what little resources we have, he seeks to take them away. And it's interesting how the enemy demands of us what he himself is no longer willing to give. He's like, hey, give me bricks, give me straw.

[27 : 46] Well, he wouldn't do that himself. Very much like the Pharisees. So the people then are scattered. The effect of chasing after the world's resources is to scatter us where God wants to draw us and gather us.

So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. Why? What's the big deal about straw and bricks? So we think of Egypt.

We think of things being made of stone. We think of the pyramids or maybe the Sphinx or some of the monuments that the pharaohs had built. But Egypt was primarily built out of bricks.

They had a lot of mud. They had straw. You make bricks. Straw, there's a property in the straw that there's an acid that when it breaks down that infuses the bricks and makes it stronger. And you also have the tensile strength of the straw being in there and giving you cross sections within the brick to make it stronger.

So much of Egypt was built out of bricks. It's a lot quicker. It takes a long time to build out of stone. There are, like this picture today, there are still walls and structures that remain built out of brick.

[28 : 50] And so for the people now, they're being scattered throughout all the land to gather stubble instead of straw. So what was once given to them by Pharaoh, now he is withholding. Why is he withholding it?

Because God's deliverance is drawing closer. Because he can't have God's people focused on God. He can't have God's people listening to God's word. He's got to keep them busy. He's got to keep them burdened. Or before he knows it, they're going to be gone.

And the taskmasters hastened them, saying, Fulfill your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw. Where do they get this authority? Where do they get this idea that they're somehow in charge of God's people?

Well, I think the enemy, the only way the enemy can have authority over us is what we yield to him through oppression. The enemy brings in oppression, and through that oppression, he demands, and he then pushes these burdens upon us.

A taskmaster said, Fulfill your works, as when there was straw. Fulfill your daily tasks. Who's the one who set those works and those daily tasks? Did God's people determine them for themselves?

[29 : 49] Did God put them on them? No, it was simply the oppression of the enemy. And the officer of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, the officers, I'm sorry.

So you have this whole, you have careers now based upon the condition that was in Egypt. You have entire people's livelihoods based on the oppression of the enemy in this governmental

structure.

You have Pharaoh's taskmasters, Pharaoh's officers. You have God's people who are now officers as well. This whole system is now supporting the careers and lives of many people, the system of oppression.

And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmaster had set over them, were what? They were beaten and demanded, Wherefore have you not fulfilled your task in making brick, both yesterday and today, as before.

The world is never going to accept us. No matter what position it gives us, no matter what position it raises us up to, it's never going to accept us. Maybe these guys thought, Hey, you know what? We'll work with Pharaoh.

[30 : 52] We'll work with the Egyptians. And you know what? If we keep them happy, we'll still have good schools. We'll have good homes. Everything will be provided for us. It'll work out fine. Or maybe it was, You know what?

I think I'm going to climb the ladder. I'm going to be an officer, and then I'm going to be a taskmaster, and before you know it, I'm going to be Pharaoh. But the world will never accept us. No matter what position they may give us, this is always the end with God's people. And again, what looks like going from bad to worse is simply God's mercy. He says, No, I'm not going to allow that.

You are separate. You are a people wholly separated apart for my purposes. God's people do not obtain their authority from the world, but from the word. Our authority comes from God's word.

In John chapter 12, verse 49 through 50, Jesus, he says, I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me commandment, what I should say and what I should speak.

[31 : 49] Jesus says, My authority came from God's word, from the word the Father spoke to me. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Our authority comes from God's word, directly, direct chain of command, paper trail, through God's word, through Jesus, from the Father. We don't speak on our own behalf, and neither are Moses and Aaron.

The world unjustly then condemns God's people, because they will never be satisfied with the service that we bring them. Right? Look what the world's doing. They're using God's people's time, resources, and lives to build their kingdom.

And even then, they turn around and unjustly condemn them. And then the officers of the children of Israel, they came and they cried unto who? Pharaoh.

And this is where we see that the deliverance that needs to happen needs to start internal before it can external. The officers of the children of Israel are coming and crying unto Pharaoh. They're seeking deliverance from the same place they're receiving oppression.

[32 : 53] How foolish is that? Think of that. Imagine looking to a system or a government that's oppressing you. Imagine looking to them for deliverance. I mean, who would ever do that?

We definitely wouldn't in this nation. The officers of the Pharaoh, the children of Israel, came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Why do you deal thus with thy servants? They have a legitimate question. But they were expecting understanding and justice from a world that oppressed them. They weren't going to get justice and they weren't going to get understanding from the same source that oppressed them. There's two things here. There's the negative. There's also a positive. The positive is that God's deliverance must begin internal before it can be experienced external. It must begin in the heart and in the mind before it can be experienced in the life. Deliverance begins when there's a change. We call that what? Repentance. Repentance just means to change, to change one's mind, to change one's view, to change one's understanding or belief about something.

Psalms 62, verses 5 and 6, says, My soul wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from him. As the officers of the children of Israel were coming to Pharaoh expecting understanding and justice and deliverance from the source of their oppression.

[34 : 10] My soul wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense. I shall not be moved. And so part of the deliverance that God is doing as he is opening the eyes of the people of God is realizing we need to be delivered.

We need to be delivered not just from our circumstances but from where we are placing our hope and our expectation. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians chapter 10, he speaks about the mind, that it is the battleground of the enemy.

He says, For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He says, Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the what?

The knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. There we have three things, imaginations, knowledge, and thought, all those in the mind. The mind is the battleground of the enemy.

If the enemy can capture our minds, then he can scatter us, he can keep us under burdens, he can keep us busy, he's got us. But God brings in what looks like things going from bad to worse. God brings that to bring deliverance first and foremost in the way we approach the things of this world.

[35 : 22] We are allowed to see that this world is broken and it is not going to be our hope. There is no straw given unto your servants. What are you, crazy, Pharaoh? And they say to us, make bricks. And behold, your servants are beaten, but the fault is thine own people.

Look what these officers, look how they're referring to Pharaoh. Look what they're calling themselves. Your servants, Pharaoh. We are your servants, Pharaoh.

Behold your servants. The enemy is never going to act reasonable or rational towards God's people.

The enemy makes a terrible taskmaster. And here they are expecting to have reason, to have reasonableness from the enemy, calling him their Lord, essentially.

Pharaoh now responds to this accusation. Isn't it an accusation? Well, I guess, but it's a true accusation, isn't it? Pharaoh, this is ridiculous. You're trying to hold me accountable for something, a condition that you put me in.

[36 : 28] Right? That's crazy. What do we see in our world today? The same thing. That we are being held accountable for problems other people have made for us.

I'm sorry, I just don't have the funds for that anymore. I mean, I can't even hardly buy groceries. Well, you need to figure out a way to do that. But wait, it's not my fault. It's your fault because you have imposed this upon us.

But he said, you are idle, you are idle. Therefore, you say, let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. Pharaoh responds not in humility.

Pharaoh does not respond in honesty. What does he do? He blame shifts. He tries to put the faults for his actions upon God's people. Why would he do that? Because pride can never accept a fault. Pride never accepts fault. Proverbs 29, 23 says, a man's pride shall bring him low, but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit. What does that mean? A man's pride shall bring him low.

[37 : 28] Well, pride and humility are mutually exclusive, right? The two can't be together. It's like love and hate. I love you and I hate you. They don't go together. Or pride and humility, it's like oil and water. They can't go together. To confess a fault, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confess just means to say the same thing as to confess a fault, a fault can only be confessed in humility. You cannot confess a fault in pride. I'm sure you've experienced that before. Sorry. Maybe your kids say you're sorry, Johnny, to Susie. Sorry. Well, he may have apologized, but he did not confess because confession can only happen in humility. And without the presence of humility, there's no confession.

So pride cannot accept a fault. Look what happens if Pharaoh does. You know what? You guys, you're right. I did withhold all the straw. I'll give it back to you. I was wrong in withholding the straw. Well, that starts a chain reaction. Oh, if I admit I was wrong in withholding the straw, that I didn't have the authority and the place to do that, well, I was wrong in oppressing you too.

[38 : 32] Oh, if I was wrong in oppressing you, that means it's wrong the way that I've been treating you the last 40 plus years. And if that's wrong, well, I've also killed your children. You just see it's just going to snowball. He has to maintain his position and pride.

How does he do that? Through denial. They come in honesty and in truth and the enemy responds with denial. The enemy would then keep us so busy chasing his denial and trying to combat him at the place of denial that we never have time then to focus upon God.

He says, you are idle. I want to keep you so busy. I want to keep you so ramped up that you will never have time to stop and think about one, Almighty God and two, what I'm doing to you. Go therefore now and work for there shall no straw be given you yet you shall deliver the tale of bricks the same. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were evil in an evil case after it was said you shall not diminish aught from your bricks of your daily tasks. So the officers' eyes through God's mercy their eyes are opened and they're beginning to see. Now they begin to see that the world is broken and that they're in a bad place but this is a process. [39 : 41] They're not going to just instantly be like oh praise God this is wonderful. But this is what God is doing. He's beginning to open their eyes as he allows the world to turn against God's people and these hardships to come into their lives they begin to see that the world is not their source of deliverance.

And they met Moses and Aaron who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh. So as these guys come out from talking to Pharaoh there's Moses and Aaron out there and they said to Moses and Aaron the Lord look upon you and judge because you have made our savor to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh.

Literally means you've made us to smell. You've made us stink. Moses and Aaron this stinks and it's because of you and in the eyes of his servants have you made us stink and you've put a sword in their hand to slay us.

I think this cut Moses pretty deep. If you remember in Exodus chapter 2 when he went out to try and reconcile the two Hebrew men because he thought well I'm God's deliverer I'm God's man of the hour and they said who made you a prince and a judge over us?

I think that probably cut pretty deep and Moses is remembering that moment as they said the Lord judge you the Lord look upon you and judge you. You expected to be God's judge look what you've done to us.

[40 : 54] What they don't understand while their eyes are being opened and they're beginning to understand the world they live in what they don't understand is that it's God's mercy to be hated by the world. Did you know that? It's God's mercy for the world to hate us.

I don't want the world to hate me. I want everybody to like me. It's God's mercy for the world to hate us for the sake of God's deliverer. Matthew chapter 5 verses 11 through 12 Jesus said in the Beatitudes blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely and lay burdens upon you and accuse you for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad. Why? Because it's proof of your citizenship. It's proof of where your identity is. It's proof of where your true value lies for great is your reward in heaven.

Why do we rejoice when the world hates us? Because I have a great reward in heaven. That reminds me that my reward's in heaven. When the world oppresses me, when the world the mask is taken off and I'm allowed to see them for what they are, it reminds me of where my true value lies. For great is my reward in heaven for so persecuted they are the prophets which were before you. Hey, the greatest men to ever walk this earth, the prophets, Jesus himself, they treated them the same way.

[42 : 12] You are in good company. You can identify with God's people. God delivers in affliction. Why? Because affliction draws us to the things of God by showing us the things of this world are broken.

Things are going from bad to worse. It seems like. It seems like. But what God is doing is he's drawing his people from looking at the things of this world as their hope and fixing their eyes on God.

The same thing is happening in our world today. Our world is not going to be fixed by an election. It's not going to be fixed by the right person or the wrong person getting in office.

It's not going to. It's going to continue the way it's going because it's a world that's hard is not towards God. And it's as simple as that. The world hates us because it hates God. Whether Pharaoh is in office, the Pharaoh of old or the new Pharaoh, and whether no matter how well we try to get along with that system, the world unjustly blames God's people for the problems that it creates.

We become the scapegoat. God's people are always unjustly blamed and the sad thing is they then turn around and begin to blame one another as we see here. They turn and they blame Moses.

[43 : 27] They blame Aaron. They unjustly blame God's messenger who's just coming and saying, God wants to deliver you. Stop looking to Egypt for your deliverance. It's a broken system. God will

deliver you. And as the enemy ramps up his work, as he tries to push back on that, then they begin to blame God's people.

This is your fault. This is your fault this ended up this way. Why did you have to stir things up, Moses and Aaron? You've placed a sword in their hand. Maybe he has placed a sword in their hand, but we have a promise that no weapon formed against us shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise against us in judgment we shall condemn.

This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and the righteousness of me, saith the Lord. There's no weapon formed against us that can prosper. There's nothing this world can do against God's people.

And Moses now, Moses does something really amazing and really positive. Atta boy Moses, he returned unto the Lord. That's the place to go. He doesn't go to Pharaoh.

He doesn't go talk to Aaron. He returns to the Lord and then comes the negative part and said, Lord, why have you so evil treated this people?

[44 : 35] Why have you treated this people so evilly? Why is it that you've sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people. Neither hast thou delivered your people at all.

Moses returned to the Lord, but what was his question? God, I came to you for help. Why didn't you fix the world system? Why didn't you fix Pharaoh?

This wasn't supposed to happen. It seems like it's gotten worse. I can't believe the world that has oppressed God's people, hates God's people, and killed God's people is now treating them worse in response to God's word.

We shouldn't be surprised by that. Moses turns to God, but where Moses was unjustly accused, he then passes that on to God, doesn't he? As he unjustly accuses God in his doubt.

Does God get mad at him? No. Does God get angry with him? No. We're not going to see it this week, but next week in chapter 6, the Lord pretty much comes in and says, alright Moses, now you watch what I'm going to do. Here's my answer.

[45 : 35] Moses, get ready. This is going to be great. Why? Because Moses needed to know God was greater than Pharaoh, and Moses still needs to know that God is greater than his abilities and inabilities. Moses' doubt was based upon his circumstances.

He looked around and he said, this is going from bad to worse. Did God's word change? Did God's promise change? Was God still going to deliver? Of course he was. None of that changed. The only thing that changed was circumstances.

circumstances. Psalm 33, 4 says, for the word of the Lord is right and all his works are done in truth. Moses, the word of the Lord is right. God's word is right.

Everything else is wrong. Doesn't matter what the circumstances are. Doubt is based upon circumstances. Faith is based upon God's word. Faith and circumstances most of the time are opposed to one another.

That our faith is completely contrary to what we see. Scripture tells us that, doesn't it? We walk by faith, not by sight. What does the enemy want to do? If I can get you focused on what you see, if I can get you so busy and so burdened and so caught up with what's going on in the world, you're not going to walk by faith.

[46 : 38] You're going to walk by sight. You're going to begin to doubt. Oh, if Jared looks at his circumstances and how difficult things are, maybe I can get him to doubt God's word. Maybe I can get him to doubt what God is doing in this world.

But God's word never returns void. In Isaiah 55, 11, Isaiah writes, So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth, speaking for the Lord, speaking forth God's revelation.

It shall not return unto me void. Pharaoh, it is not empty words. Those are not vain words. But it shall accomplish that which I please. And it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it.

God's word doesn't return void. God's word is right. And then in Psalm 119, I mean the whole psalm is about God's word. But just a snapshot of some of the scripture. Verse 102, I have not departed from your judgments, for thou hast taught me.

God teaches us his word. And if we hold to his word and don't depart from them, his word is a lamp into my feet, verse 105, and a light into my path. Nobody's going to blow that light out. I am thy servant.

[47 : 40] Give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies, independent of circumstances. You see, Moses was doing exactly what God sent him to do. He was doing exactly what he was supposed to do.

Moses, in the next chapter, God's essentially going to say, attaboy, Moses. You're doing everything I've asked you to do. And it seemed to be, though, that despite the fact Moses was doing everything he was asked to do, it looked like the enemy was getting the upper hand.

It appeared like, despite Moses faithfully speaking God's word, bringing revelation to Egypt and to God's people, it appeared that the enemy was getting the upper hand.

I think, in essence, Moses was saying to the Lord, what kind of deliverance is this? Things are getting better. I mean, things are getting worse, not better. What kind of deliverance is this, God? But you know, what appears to be the enemy, I mean, what appears to be the enemy getting the upper hand is simply God setting the stage for deliverance. As Jesus was lying there being nailed to the cross, do you know there was nobody, I don't think the angels in heaven even realized.

[48 : 47] I think it was between the Father and Son alone who realized what was happening. I think the angels were standing there and going, the enemy just won. He just got the upper hand.

As Satan and his minions are cheering, I don't know where Satan is in the world, he's not omnipresent, but I know that day he was standing there at the cross as the nails were being hammered into Jesus' hands and feet.

And what looked like the enemy was getting the upper hand, it was just simply a setup. For God's deliverance. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

He's blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and took it out of the way. In other words, he's delivered you. God delivered you.

He took away our sins. He's blotted out the handwriting of ordinances against us. And how did he deliver us? Well, in a moment when it looked like at that time, the enemy was gaining the upper hand by nailing it to his cross.

[49 : 48] But did the enemy gain the upper hand? No, he did not. And he spoiled principalities and powers. It means he pulled the rug right out from under them. You know, he came in and picked their pockets.

Satan was standing there empty-handed as Jesus came and took the victory. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.

What appeared to be the enemy getting the upper hand was simply God setting the stage for deliverance. Today, it looks like the enemy's getting the upper hand in our world, doesn't it? It's just God setting the stage for his deliverance. And what is that deliverance? In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trump will sound and the dead in Christ will be raised, and then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them.

And there we shall ever be with the Lord. That is our deliverance. And so as the enemy begins to, it seems like, press in on us. Seems like he's ramping up. It seems like things are going from bad to worse.

Man, what does Jesus say? Well, look up. Lift up your head. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad. Look up, for your redemption draws near. We must not, in the meantime, let the burdens and busyness of this world keep us from believing that God's promise and God's word will come to pass.

[51 : 03] The busyness and the burdens of this world would distract us. The enemy would lay burdens on us. God would lift our burdens. The enemy would distract us with work and effort. God would have us enter into rest.

The enemy would remove and steal our resources. God supplies all resources. The enemy scatters. God gathers. The enemy belittles God's word. God would have us to believe his word. And man, the enemy brings us into bondage where God leads us to deliverance. Father, we thank you that this morning, Lord, we have been delivered. Not the easiest chapter to go through, Lord, to see the plight of your people, to understand, Lord, what's happening between this friction between God's people and the world, to see you working, Lord, in the hearts of your people, to see Moses and Aaron, to see Moses at this place, Lord, discouraged.

And Lord, I think your heart is breaking. I don't think you were aloof. I think you were right there with them, that your heart was breaking as you saw the distress that your people were under, as their eyes are being opened to their condition, Lord, as Moses in despair comes to you and says, why

did you send me?

I told you I would fail. Lord, I think your heart breaks as you see that, just as your heart was breaking, Lord, when your son was upon the cross. Father, as you looked down upon him as the nails were being driven in his hands and feet, your heart was breaking, even though you knew deliverance was coming, even though you knew the enemy was having his pockets picked, your heart was breaking.

[52 : 31] And Lord, I think it's the same, even though you know in chapter six, you're about to encourage Moses, you're about to speak your word, and you're about to turn things around. And Lord, you're with us now too, as we look at a world that's going from bad to worse, as we look at our place in the world, our position in the world, all of a sudden being called into question, being blamed and falsely accused and having responsibilities placed upon us for the sins of others.

And yet, Lord Jesus, you took upon yourself all of our sin. You so graciously bore it. When you were reviled, you reviled not again, but you committed yourself unto him that judges justly.

And I pray, Lord, we would be your people in this world today. We would not strike back, we would not fight back, we would not revile again, we would not jump up off our cross and begin to beat down the enemies of God.

We would recognize that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but Lord, we would allow ourselves to die that you might live through us.

Thank you so much, Lord. Where it looks like the enemy's getting the upper hand, it just means victory is about to come. And Lord, we would walk by faith and not by circumstances. We thank you, Lord, that you are the God of Israel, and you are the God of your promises, and you are the God of our lives.

[53 : 50] In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. And it was like a, it was a heavy, heavy section to go through. Be encouraged that the enemy would have us discouraged by the circumstances that we're in, where God would tell us to use those circumstances as a reason to look to him as our deliverer.

That we have a deliverer, we've been delivered, and we're going to be delivered. God is doing great and mighty things. So, the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up the light of his crowns upon you and give you peace. May he do that, he has done that, and he will do that. God bless you.