

Moses – part 5

Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh
by Victor Torres

In the story of Moses, we are shown once again how God controls everything. The Lord promised Moses how Israel would react to him.

Exo 3:18 (ESV) **And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him,** 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.'

The Lord also told Moses how the Pharaoh would react to him.

Exo 3:19 (CEV) But I know that the king of Egypt won't let you go unless something forces him to.

How does the Lord know that the Pharaoh will not let Israel go at first? That's because it is what He wrote in the life of the Pharaoh. We are like actors in God's movie. He has written the script, and we are just living out what He has written.

The Lord tells Moses what He's going to do after the Pharaoh resists Him at first.

Exo 3:20 (CEV) So I will use my mighty power to perform all kinds of miracles and strike down the Egyptians. Then the king will send you away.

The apostle Paul explains what God did to Moses and to Pharaoh.

Rom 9:17 (CEV) In the Scriptures the Lord says to Pharaoh of Egypt, "I let you become king, so that I could show you my power and be praised by all people on earth."

Rom 9:18 Everything depends on what God decides to do, **and he can either have pity on people or make them stubborn.**

And reminds us that we are just clay in the Potter's hand. We have no right to complain what He wants to make of us.

Rom 9:20 (CEV) But, my friend, I ask, "Who do you think you are to question God? Does the clay have the right to ask the potter why he shaped it the way he did?"

After seeing several powerful miracles and being reassured by the Lord, Moses got convinced and sought permission from Jethro to leave with his family.

Exo 4:17 (ESV) And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs."

Exo 4:18 Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Please let me go

back to my brothers in Egypt to see whether they are still alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

Exo 4:19 And the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead."

Exo 4:20 So Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

Exo 4:21 And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. **But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.**

There it is again, clear as daylight. The Lord will harden Pharaoh's heart. Where's the free will in that?

Exo 4:22 (CEV) Then tell him [the Pharaoh] that I have said, "Israel is my first-born son,

Exo 4:23 and I commanded you to release him, so he could worship me. But you refused, and now I will kill your first-born son."

Of course we know that Christ is the Father's true first-born son. "Israel is my first-born son" is just telling us that the Lord identifies with His people. "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you have done it unto me".

Even with the threat of his first-born son dying, the Pharaoh will still refuse to let go of Israel. That's how powerful God is in shaping us in whatever way He pleases.

Exo 4:24 (BBE) Now on the journey, at the night's resting-place, the Lord came in his way and would have put him to death.

Exo 4:25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, **and cutting off the skin of her son's private parts**, and touching his feet with it, she said, Truly you are a husband of blood to me.

Exo 4:26 So he let him go. Then she said, You are a husband of blood because of the circumcision.

Many people misunderstand this part of the story thinking that the Lord wanted to kill Moses. But verse 25 makes it clear that the Lord wanted to kill Moses' son because he was not circumcised. Circumcision is a sign that the Lord commanded His people back then, starting with Abraham. We can deduce that Zipporah was not willing to circumcise her son at first, but she was forced seeing that the Lord

will kill him if he is not circumcised. Circumcision is a sign of letting go of the desires of the flesh. We are all like Zipporah who don't want to give up our desires at first until we are forced by the Lord to do so.

You should notice this by now. Moses did not want to lead God's people, but he was forced to do so. The Pharaoh will not want to let Israel go until he is forced to do so. Zipporah did not want to circumcise her son until she was forced to do so. It doesn't matter what we want, what's going to happen is what God wants.

Exo 4:27 (BBE) The LORD said to Aaron [Moses' brother], "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.

Exo 4:28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him to speak, and all the signs that he had commanded him to do.

Exo 4:29 Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel.

Exo 4:30 Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people.

Exo 4:31 And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Just like what the Lord said would happen, the people believed. They were all so happy that the Lord had heard all their prayers and will now free them that they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Exo 5:1 (ESV) 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.'"

Exo 5:2 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.**"

Again, just what the Lord said would happen, the Pharaoh will refuse.

Exo 5:3 (ESV) 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."

This three-day journey is a symbol of our separation from what the flesh wants. This is a process which takes a long time. We just don't wake up one day and we are completely rid of all our guilty pleasures. We have to struggle with some of them.

Exo 5:4 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."

Exo 5:5 And Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!"

Exo 5:6 The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen,

Exo 5:7 "You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves.

The Pharaoh's resistance is showing us how our flesh will fight God's message, and it will fight hard. Once we decided to be free of a bad habit or addiction, the battle is just beginning. Be prepared to suffer more when you decide not to give in to the flesh.

Exo 5:6 (CEV) That same day the king gave orders to his slave bosses and to the men directly in charge of the Israelite slaves. He told them:

Exo 5:7 Don't give the slaves any more straw to put in their bricks. Force them to find their own straw wherever they can,

Exo 5:8 but they must make the same number of bricks as before. They are lazy, or else they would not beg me to let them go and sacrifice to their God.

Exo 5:9 Make them work so hard that they won't have time to listen to these lies.

Exo 5:10 The slave bosses and the men in charge of the slaves went out and told them, "The king says he will not give you any more straw.

Exo 5:11 Go and find your own straw wherever you can, but you must still make as many bricks as before."

Exo 5:12 The slaves went all over Egypt, looking for straw.

Exo 5:13 But the slave bosses were hard on them and kept saying, "Each day you have to make as many bricks as you did when you were given straw."

Exo 5:14 The bosses beat the men in charge of the slaves and said, "Why didn't you force the slaves to make as many bricks yesterday and today as they did before?"

Exo 5:15 Finally, the men in charge of the slaves went to the king and said, "Why are you treating us like this?"

Exo 5:16 No one brings us any straw, but we are still ordered to make the same number of bricks. We are beaten with whips, and your own people are to blame."

Exo 5:17 The king replied, "You are lazy--nothing but lazy! That's why you keep asking me to let you go and sacrifice to your LORD.

Exo 5:18 Get back to work! You won't be given straw, but you must still make the same number of bricks."

Exo 5:19 The men knew they were in deep trouble when they were ordered to make the same number of bricks each day.

Exo 5:20 After they left the king, they went to see Moses and Aaron, who had been waiting for them.

Exo 5:21 Then the men said, "We hope the LORD will punish both of you for making the king and his officials hate us. Now they even have an excuse to kill us."

Exo 5:22 Moses left them and prayed, "Our LORD, why have you brought so much trouble on your people? Is that why you sent me here?"

Exo 5:23 Ever since you told me to speak to the king, he has caused nothing but trouble for these people. And you haven't done a thing to help."

It is very hard to resist our nature. And it is in this struggle that we sometimes forget the promises of God to free us from whatever vice or bad habit we want to stop.

Like Moses, we sometimes forget the promise of God to free us from our sins. We think that He hasn't done anything to help, but we must not lose hope. We must remember that He will accomplish what He has planned for us.

Php 1:6 (ESV) And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.