

Series: The Life of Moses

AND AFTERWARD

EXODUS 5

Text: Exodus 5:1

Exodus 5:1

¹ **And afterward** *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.*

Introduction:

Have you ever had a day that went from bad to worse?

If so you will be able to identify with Moses.

Moses had accepted the call of God and had secured the release of his father-in-law and began his journey back to Egypt. On the way Moses met up with Aaron whom God had sent out to meet him.

Exodus 4:27

²⁷ *And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.*

It is always encouraging to note how God works from both ends to make his plans come into being. When

Moses and Aaron arrive they summon a meeting of the elders where they revealed all the words that God had given him and showed them the signs of God's power (4:28-30).

Exodus 4:28-30

²⁸ And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. ²⁹ And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: ³⁰ And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

The people believed (4:31) and now the easy was over and it was time to relay to Pharaoh the message of God. The acceptance of the people was very reassuring but confronting Pharaoh was another story. In fact Moses' bad day began when he gained an audience with the King!

Note:

1. WHEN YOU HAVE A BAD DAY RECOGNIZE THAT THE PRESENCE OF PROBLEMS IS NOT ALWAYS AN INDICATION THAT WE ARE NOT IN GOD'S WILL

The scene is a dramatic one as two eighty year old men stand before the most powerful man on earth. Chapter five begins with, "Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

That was the start of a bad day and it all went down hill from here. In verse two we find Pharaoh's response.

Exodus 5:2

² *And Pharaoh said, **Who is the LORD**, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? **I know not the LORD**, neither will I let Israel go.*

Pharaoh's response is completely negative.

At once the situation worsened for the Children of Israel. That same day Pharaoh communicated with the taskmasters of the people.

Exodus 5:6-9

⁶ *And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying,*

⁷ Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁸ And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof: for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. ⁹ Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.

As bad as their situation was it was about to get worse.

The answer to the request of Aaron and Moses came in the form of addition work in order that the people would no longer have the time to consider such ideas.

What had been difficult now became impossible. All day long all the people tried to carry out the order of Pharaoh (v. 12-14), to make the same quota of bricks, but having to gather their own straw.

Finally they could stand it no longer and decided to make a direct appeal to Pharaoh.

Exodus 5:15-19

¹⁵ Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? ¹⁶ There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people. ¹⁷ But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle:

therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the LORD.

¹⁸ Go therefore now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

¹⁹ And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish ought from your bricks of your daily task.

When they leave this meeting they then question Moses authority.

Exodus 5:20-21

²⁰ And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: ²¹ And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

Note also:

2. WHEN YOU HAVE A BAD DAY RECOGNIZE THAT GOD DOESN'T HAVE TO WORK ACCORDING TO OUR PLANS OR OUR TIMETABLE

The mistake of the foreman and perhaps the children of Israel as a whole is they presumed how God would work. He did not work the way they anticipated and they were offended.

As Christians we too can grow discouraged if God doesn't do things like we think that He should.

Moses should not have been surprised by Pharaoh's reaction, in fact God had warned him what would happen.

Exodus 3:18-19

*¹⁸ And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. ¹⁹ **And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go**, no, not by a mighty hand.*

If he thought that he was to announce that Pharaoh should release the children of Israel and that Pharaoh would immediately consent, then he had not been listening to what God had told him.

No one should think that the Christian life will always be easy and go as we think that it should go.

Note also:

3. WHEN YOU HAVE A BAD DAY RECOGNIZE THAT WHEN PROBLEMS AROUND BE CAREFUL WHICH WAY YOU RUN

Consider for a moment how the response of the people must have affected Moses. All those memories of rejection and inadequacy came flooding backing to the heart of Moses.

He must have had a strong urge to again run and hide to escape back to the quiet life of a shepherd. Moses did run!! But this time he ran straight to his source of strength.

Note:

Exodus 5:22

²² ***And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me?***

Note God didn't reprimand Moses but rather reassured him.

Exodus 6:1-2

¹ *Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.* ² *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:*

God's response was that it was time to impress Pharaoh.

The King would now see God's power.

Notice also:

4. WHEN YOU HAVE A BAD DAY RECOGNIZE THE GOD'S PLANS AND PURPOSES HAVE NOT CHANGED

No matter how beat down we are, how crushed, or how broken and desperate we become God still cares. He has great compassion for us and for our need. No matter what our problem, sin or shame is he desires to help us.

We are more important to God than what we have done or accomplished. This may be difficult to understand in a world that measures us by our accomplishments or the lack of them.

Too many times we allow ourselves to focus on the difficulties of the moment instead of the God of the Universe. He is saying get your eyes back on Me. Remember who I am!

Until we fix your eyes upon Jesus we will not be able to handle those days that go from bad to worse.

In verses 6-8 God reminds Moses of His promises.

Exodus 6:6-9

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: ⁷ And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD. ⁹ And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

In spite of all of these reassurance from the Lord things just kept getting worse. According to verse nine, when he told the children of Israel what God had revealed to him they would not listen.

Pharaoh had already refused his request, and now he found out he no longer had any credibility with the Israelites. The Israelites heard all of these words but could not believe them. Their “anguish of spirit and cruel bondage” (v. 9) stifled their faith.

So what does Moses do when his bad day takes a turn for the worse? You can't beat Moses' plan. He came back to the Lord.

Moses had been discouraged, he was frustrated, he felt helpless, but he kept coming back. And the Lord met him every time.

Illustration:

William Cowper, an English poet found himself so deep in discouragement and despair he tried to put an end to it all by drinking poison. But God graciously led someone to find him. His stomach was pumped, and he was delivered.

As soon as he recovered, the despairing writer hired a coach to take him down to the Thames River in which he intended to plunge himself into the dark, swirling waters. The driver of the coach, however, would have none of it. He restrained Cowper, got him back into the coach, and drove him home.

Frustrated with that attempt, found a knife in the privacy of this house and attempted to fall upon it. If you can believe it, the blade broke.

Still not deterred, he rigged up a rope in the basement, put his neck in the noose, and dropped into thin air.

But someone found him before he strangled and took him down. He couldn't even kill himself.

Finally, in the depth of sorrow, he drove himself to the book of Romans. In the pages of that book, he found a passage that brought him to his knees and to faith in Jesus Christ.

Years later, as a mature man of God, Cowper penned this now familiar hymn:

God moves in mysterious ways
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.
Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Close:

Moses, armed only with a piece of wood he had found in the desert to use as a staff and assisted by his brother Aaron, began waging war on the mightiest force in the world at that time, a war that ultimately left the throne of Egypt vacant, the pharaoh dead, all of Egypt in mourning and the children of Israel free.