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Exodus 5:1-6:9 – God Saves to Make Known His Glorious Power

- I. Introduction:
 - A. Why does God save sinners?
 - 1. Because he loves his creation. – John 3:16
 - 2. Because he loves to bring glory to Himself. – Ephesians 1:3-14
 - B. Does God want us to suffer?
 - 1. No, he wants us to have life.
 - 2. Yes, he wants us to share in the sufferings of Christ in order to be made like him.
 - C. Fallen Condition Focus:
 - 1. As sinners, we constantly fall back into a works-righteousness mindset.
 - 2. This causes us to see salvation as something God owes us.
 - 3. This causes bitterness and anger toward God when suffering comes.
 - 4. This turns our hearts to seek comfort and pleasure apart from Christ.
 - 5. This leads to despising leaders for telling us that following Christ is a hard road of suffering.
 - D. What we need is a new vision of God's purposes in suffering and salvation.
- II. **Organizational Sentence**: This morning, we are going to two look at two kings and their subjects, and in doing so, we are going to learn about how God works.
 - A. Context:
 - 1. Last week, we saw Moses and God spoke on Mount Sinai. Moses asked God questions, that led him to take his eyes off of himself to see who God is.
 - 2. We learned that God saves us from our self absorption.
 - 3. At the end of lasts weeks passage, we saw that Moses and Aaron went to the elders of Israel to tell them what God was going to do and to show them signs to prove God's presence with Moses and Aaron.
 - 4. The result was that Israel believed God and worshipped.
 - B. Where we are going:
 - 1. This week's passage raises one of the most central questions of the book that gets answered by God through his signs and wonders and the deliverance of Israel.
 - 2. Next week we will see God work powerfully to defeat Pharaoh.
 - C. Today:
 - 1. This week, we are going to see how Israel responds as the king of Egypt and the king of creation come head to head.
 - 2. We will also see the response of God's people.
- III. **The King of Egypt: God makes himself known through our suffering. (5.1-6.1)**
 - A. As God commanded, Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh and tells him that the Lord says, 'Let my people go.'

- B. Pharaoh responds arrogantly. He asks, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?”
1. He is being sarcastic. Pharaoh is highlighting that he is the king of Egypt, one of the most powerful nations ever. He doesn’t take orders from anyone. He is a god, according to Egyptian thought. His answer is no.
 2. However, Pharaoh’s answer is also very telling. He does not know God. When he asked, ‘Who is the Lord?’ he unwittingly set the stage for God to make himself known as he has already done to Moses and later will do to Israel at Mount Sinai.
- C. Moses and Aaron tell Pharaoh that it is the God of Israel who sent them and they are to go into the wilderness to worship God. They make the request as God commanded Moses in 3.18.
1. Moses implies that if Israel does not go, God will judge them with pestilence and the sword.
 2. It is not clear why Moses adds this comment. It might be a way to suggest to Pharaoh that misfortune might spill over onto Egypt if they do not go. It might be a way to simply try and convince Pharaoh.
 3. As mentioned before, the reason God commanded Moses and Aaron to request only a three day leave is to grade the requests to show the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart. Pharaoh is not asked to let them go completely until later. But, Pharaoh won’t even allow them to go for a three day’s journey.
- D. Pharaoh’s response to the request is to increase the burden of Israel since Moses and Aaron have apparently disrupted their work. The Hebrews are no longer given straw to make their bricks.
1. There is ample archeological evidence that slaves in Egypt made bricks and used straw in the making of bricks.
 2. Furthermore, there is ample evidence that Egypt structured their labor force as we see described in the text. Apparently, Egyptians were set over their slaves as slave drivers. However, some slaves served as foremen, managing groups of slaves. Verse 13 shows the taskmasters were Egyptians who demanded that the quota of bricks be made. Verse 14 shows the foremen were beaten, probably because they were Hebrew slaves.
 3. The text describes the conditions of Egypt in a way that fits perfectly what we know of the time from archeology.
- E. So, as a result of the faithfulness of Moses and Aaron, the workload of Israel is increased and they are warned not to listen to Moses and Aaron. The people had to search for straw throughout Egypt and yet their quota remained the same.
- F.** Instead of crying out to God, the foremen cry out to Pharaoh for help. Instead of going to God for help, they turn to their oppressor for help.
1. Philip Ryken points out that slavery not only binds us but blinds us. Why would slaves seek relief from their masters from their masters?
 2. Sin has the same affect on us. It binds us so that we are mastered by our sin, and it blinds us from seeing that there is a savior. Instead of seeking release, we go back to our oppressor as a savior.
 - a. Addiction to food: Food controls us and makes us obese. We get depressed about our obesity and turn to food to control our depression. It is a vicious cycle.

- b. Success: We turn to success to be happy. We constantly and endlessly strive to be the best. When we fail and are destroyed, we just try harder to overcome our shortcomings, only to be let down again.
 - c. Feeling loved: We turn to the affection of others to feel good about ourselves. When someone hurts us or doesn't show us affection, we feel insecure, which drives us to find the love of someone else.
 - d. Lust: We seek intimacy in pornography, but this leads us to feel ashamed. So we hide and isolate ourselves. This leads us to want intimacy, and so we run right back to pornography.
3. *What we need is a savior who takes all the initiative to free us.*
- G. Pharaoh is a wicked master, just like sin, and so he tells them they are lazy and that their condition is their own fault.
- H. **Theological Point** (6.1): God uses the suffering of his people to make himself known. God says, "Now, you will see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land."
- 1. God does not immediately deliver Israel.
 - 2. Israel's suffering increases.
 - 3. Through the suffering of Israel, Pharaoh's greatness and power is made clear.
 - 4. Through Israel's deliverance from this great suffering at the hand of Pharaoh, God's power is revealed and his glory made known.
 - "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." Romans 9:17
 - Pharaoh's great power and oppression of Israel was used by God so that God's name might be proclaimed in the earth.
 - 5. Pharaoh is extremely hardened to letting Israel go. He causes them to suffer at the idea of leaving, but God says that Pharaoh will be so defeated that he will send Israel out with a strong hand.
- I. 2 Responses:
- 1. Israel – They went to God's chosen leaders and called down condemnation and judgment.
 - a. Anger at God and his chosen leaders shows self-righteousness.
 - b. We think God owes us comfort and deliverance. If it doesn't come, we become bitter and angry at God.
 - c. **Application**: Test yourself to see if you are in the faith. Guard your hearts from bitterness and turn to God in humility.
 - 2. Moses – He takes his doubts to God and asks in hope why God has allowed this.
 - a. Moses acts as an intercessor for Israel. He takes the complaint of Israel to God. He intercedes on their behalf. He is like Christ. Christ sees our weaknesses and our suffering, and he intercedes for us in prayer at the right hand of the Father.
 - b. Moses' orientation shows hope that God will save.
 - c. **Application**: We have a better intercessor than Moses. We can be honest about God about our suffering. We can come to him with our anger and ask him to do something about it. Because of Christ, God will relieve our suffering. It might not be in our timing, but God will be faithful to raise us up on the last day and wipe every tear from our eyes.

J. **Application:** God is concerned about bringing glory to his name. Our suffering is part of the process.

1. It is in suffering that we learn the sufficiency of Christ. He alone satisfies, and he can satisfy when all other comforts are taken away.
2. It is in suffering that God shows his power over evil so that we can enjoy him as a powerful savior.
3. Philippians 3:7-21

⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith- ¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have attained. ¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

IV. **The King of Creation: God alone saves so his glory might be known. (6.2-9)**

A. Again, God speaks to Moses in response to Moses' questions. Again, God reminds Moses of who he is and what he will do.

B. Verse 3 – Did Israel know God's name, YHWH?

1. Last week I mentioned that some people believe that Israel did not know the name YHWH until God revealed it to Moses. This verse is used to support that idea.
2. Many translations read something like, 'I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name, the Lord, I did not make myself known to them.'
3. Like I said last week, it could be that God did not reveal himself as YHWH until he spoke with Moses. However, it seems odd that Moses would ask for God's name for credibility before Israel and God would give him a name no one knew.
4. It seems more likely that they did know God's name YHWH before.
5. This verse can be translated differently. It is just as likely grammatically. The context has to determine which way to translate it.
 - "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty. I am YHWH. Did I not make myself known to them?"

- This seems to make more sense with what follows since he continues by saying, ‘I also...’
- It makes little sense for God to throw in a detail that does not serve to answer Moses’ questions of doubt.

C. Who is God?

1. Moses again is told that YHWH (the Lord) is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
2. He is God Almighty. All might and power belong to God.
3. He is YHWH, the God who made himself know to the fathers.
4. He is the God who established a covenant with them that involved giving them the Promise Land.

D. What has God seen?

1. God has seen the suffering of his covenant people.
2. God has remembered the covenant he made to prosper the people in the land of Canaan.

E. What will God do?

1. Finally, the time has come where God will save his people.
2. So he tells Moses to report to the people of Israel what he will do.
3. God promises to save them.

F. 7 ‘I will’ statements showing God alone brings salvation. He starts and ends with, ‘I am the Lord.’

1. I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians
2. I will deliver you from slavery to them
3. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment
4. I will take you to be my people
5. I will be your God
6. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
7. I will give it to you for a possession.

G. The Salvation of God:

1. Redemption – Legal Status

- a. **Romans 3:21-25** ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it- ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.
- b. **Ephesians 1:7** ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,
- c. **Colossians 1:13-14** ³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- d. **Revelation 1:5** from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

2. Adoption – Relational Status

- a. **Galatians 4:4-7** ⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the

law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

- b. **Romans 8:23** ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
 - c. **John 1:12-13** ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
3. Inheritance – Possession Status
- a. **Ephesians 1:11-14** ¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
 - b. **1 Peter 1:3-5** ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- H. Despite God's description of salvation, the people do not believe any longer that God will now act to save them. Fortunately for them and for us, God does not save because of our faith. He applies salvation to us through our faith. This means God saves apart from us completely, and faith is the means by which the salvation is applied to us.
- V. **Basic Message:** Though our suffering is often great, we can rejoice in our sufferings because God's glory can be enjoyed all the more fully when we are saved.