“A Thanksgiving Disaster?”

*Exodus 5*

Opening Question(s) – choose (a) or (b)

1. Which Thanksgiving holiday stands out as particularly memorable for you (for good or bad reasons) and why?
2. Who has been the most difficult boss, teacher, or coach that you’ve ever had? What made it so challenging and how did you respond?

Discussion Questions

1. **Read Exodus 5:1-23.** What do you think Moses was thinking and feeling as he approached Pharaoh, and why?
2. Why did Moses & Aaron confront Pharaoh the way they did, and with this specific request? Do you think their request was disingenuous or genuine?[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. What was Pharaoh’s initial response (v.2)? Do you think they were surprised by it?
4. What do Moses & Aaron add (or subtract) in their follow up request (v.3)? Why do you think they made no follow up to Pharaoh’s response in vv. 4-9?
5. When a plan you've made goes off the rails, what do you tend to do (Quit? Make the best of it? Complain? Freeze? Other?)?
6. What do you think the slave drivers and Israelite foreman were thinking or feeling when they were tasked with delivering Pharoah’s new work order?
7. How did the people say or do in response to the new work order?

If you were one of these slaves, what would you say to your friends or family when you got home that day?

1. What appeal to the Israelite foreman make to Pharaoh? What response were they hoping for? What response did they get?
2. Who do the Israelite foreman blame for their plight? Are they right? Who’s responsible for solving this problem?
3. When have you suffered for something that was not your fault? What difference did/does your faith make in times of discouragement and doubt?
4. How can this group pray for you this week?

**Exodus 5** – NIV

1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.’”

**2**Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go.”

**3**Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword.”

**4**But the king of Egypt said, “Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!” **5**Then Pharaoh said, “Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working.”

**6**That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and overseers in charge of the people: **7**“You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. **8**But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don’t reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to our God.’ **9**Make the work harder for the people so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies.”

**10**Then the slave drivers and the overseers went out and said to the people, “This is what Pharaoh says: ‘I will not give you any more straw. **11**Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all.’” **12**So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. **13**The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, “Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw.” **14**And Pharaoh’s slave drivers beat the Israelite overseers they had appointed, demanding, “Why haven’t you met your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?”

**15**Then the Israelite overseers went and appealed to Pharaoh: “Why have you treated your servants this way? **16**Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, ‘Make bricks!’ Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people.”

**17**Pharaoh said, “Lazy, that’s what you are—lazy! That is why you keep saying, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.’ **18**Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks.”

**19**The Israelite overseers realized they were in trouble when they were told, “You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day.” **20**When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, **21**and they said, “May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

**22**Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me? **23**Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all.”

1. i.e. If Pharaoh had granted their request, would they have returned after the Holy Day celebration or made a run for it? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)