

LENT 2024

JOURNEY to FREEDOM

FRIDAY 23RD FEBRUARY

READ: Exodus 5:10-23

'Then Moses turned again to the Lord and said, 'O Lord, why have you mistreated this people? Why did you ever send me?'' Exodus 5:22

The demand for God's justice has seemed to make everything worse. This has been true throughout the ages. God's reaction to injustice, through His people, has often been such a stark contrast to the rulers of the world that it causes them to become angry. Whether Moses, standing before Pharaoh, Esther before the throne of the king of Persia, Oscar Romero calling out the dictators of San Salvador, or Martin Luther King Jr, declaring his dream. When God's people call out injustice in their society, it can scare those who profit from injustice so much that they do everything in their power to quiet God's people.

In response to the call for justice Pharaoh has decided to increase the oppression of God's people. On top of all of their other back-breaking labour, they must now find their own straw without slowing down their work. This task is meant to be impossible. It is meant to cause misery for God's people so that they will be put off listening to Moses and Aaron and, initially, it seems to work. The Israelite supervisors are angry at Moses for rousing Pharaoh's anger. Even Moses seems to be giving up hope on God's plan as he says 'O my Lord, why have you mistreated this people? Why did you ever send me?' (v.22).

How often do we give up on justice when things get hard? When we think of Exodus, we often think of the liberation and we forget about the apparent hopelessness at the beginning. Yet just as many of us today struggle and become discouraged as we try to push for a more just society; so too did Moses struggle and become discouraged. If you are in a situation in your life in which you feel that you are suffering whilst trying to do the right thing, remember that God's people suffered too when Moses proclaimed God's demands to Pharaoh, as have many other Christians throughout the centuries. Remember that God is at work in the darkest of places, and you are not alone.

The Revd Jordan Bentliff, Church Planting Curate, St George's & All Saints', Chorley