

LENT 2024

# JOURNEY to FREEDOM

THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY

**READ: Exodus 5:1-9**

***‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness.’ Exodus 5:1***

The point of Exodus chapters 5 and 6 is to reveal God’s name to Moses and to Israel, to God’s own people. To be God’s people they must first know who He is. The same stands true for us, as God’s people today. In Exodus 5:1-9 we see things go from bad to worse for our brothers and sisters. I’m sure we’ve all had the thought ‘things can’t get any worse’ only to see them do just that. That’s why it’s crucial we know who the Lord is both in our good and bad times, in our mountain top and valley/desert places. He is, always has been and always will be our refuge and shelter from the storms of life.

Chapter 5 opens with Moses and Aaron saying to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Let my people go’ (v1). In the verse following today’s reading, 5:10, the slave drivers and the overseers tell the people ‘This is what Pharaoh says...’. So God’s word and rule is up against Pharaoh’s word and rule. God commands Israel to rest in Him more (hence the three day break to worship Him). Pharaoh commands Israel to work more. This conflict is not so much Egypt vs Israel but Pharaoh vs The Lord with Israel stuck in the middle.

We should not miss the point for us. We were created to be God-pleasers not people-pleasers. Ultimately we need to explore, honestly, who we are trying to please through our work. Whose approval are we seeking to gain or whose disapproval are we seeking to avoid? Is it our employers, our partners, our friends, our parents, our congregations, our colleagues, our own, or is it God’s approval we seek? Take some time to sit prayerfully with these questions.

Whose approval am I trying to gain? Whose disapproval makes me feel crushed? These will both be clear pointers to who you truly worship. Then be prepared to shift your focus back to our beautiful creator God by prioritising time with Him in prayer and study.

Take heart brothers and sisters, as we journey through Lent, because getting our eyes back on God and His approval is a real game changer.

**Let us pray:** *Ever loving, ever living God give us ears to hear You and a heart to please You this Advent. In Jesus’ precious name we pray, Amen*

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