

# A Tale of Two Men

## Exodus 5-11

### INTRODUCTION:

The frontline of the battle for truth has shifted a number of times throughout history. It has been necessary for the church to pivot and get its footing on a number of issues - then to speak to those issues with great resolve.

Certain dates mark the key battles -

- **1925** - the Scopes Monkey Trial as it was called took place in Dayton, TN. It determined the legality of teaching Atheistic Evolution in our Public Schools.
- **1962** - The Supreme Court in the case of Engal vrs. Vitale determined in a 6–1 decision, that reciting government-written prayers in public schools was unconstitutional. This was quickly interpreted by many school systems as a forbidding of all prayer in public schools.
- **1981** - Marks the start of the aids epidemic in our Nation. Churches were suddenly forced to determine how they would respond to this ever expanding LGBTQ community many of whom were now fighting for their life.
- **2015** - the US Supreme Court struck down all state bans on homosexual marriage redefining the legal definition of marriage for the Nation as a whole.
- **Today** - the next major battleground will be over the nature and reality of **GENDER**. Proponents of girls sports are being forced to take sides over the issue.

Today is **Father's Day** - the early salvos are now being fired against the celebration of Father's by the extreme left. It is described as EXCLUSIONARY, politically incorrect, antiquated.

Never before has been vitally important that we have a Biblical lens through which to view GENDER issues.

**RESTROOMS** - 5 years ago, in 2016, major retailers like Target began to allow transgender people to enter into the restrooms of their choice.

Have you been in a restroom built in the last 5 years in a major city? This week I have been in Atlanta and Nashville - in both cities we ate at restaurants that were less than 5 years old. Going to the restroom was quite confusing. There is no separation between the Men's Room and the Ladies Room - rather there is a large Coed area with sinks and private spaces for toilets that men and women share.

**Architecture is perhaps the most brutally honest cultural commentary.** We are not talking about changing \$10 signs, we are talking about completely changing structures that are more or less permanent.

**CONTEXT:** Texts like the one we have before us will not allow us to surf the wave of political correctness. In the Exodus story we see some of the most beautiful pictures of pure femininity in all of ancient history with examples like Miriam, Jochebed, and Bithia. But when it comes to masculinity we read Exodus as the story of two primary characters.

- **Ramses II Pharaoh of Egypt**
- **Moses - the Servant of Yahweh**

These two character provide us with two approaches to Manhood. Every Father, son or brother, reflects, to some degree either Moses or Ramses. And possibly at different times in life we have reflected both.

**TEXT: Exodus 7:1–7 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. <sup>2</sup> You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. <sup>3</sup> But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, <sup>4</sup> Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. <sup>5</sup> The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them." <sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the Lord commanded them. <sup>7</sup> Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

The role of Moses in this passage hearkens back to the role of the first man - ADAM.

ADAM was the first King to Rule upon the Earth.

- Adam was given **Image** - He was made in the image of God. When you looked at Adam, you saw a reflection of his Creator. Adam was not Divine, but he, as far as a man could reflected the nature of God out to all of Creation.
- Adam was given **Dominion** - and he was to rule as an under shepherd of the Most High. He named the animals - in scripture the right of naming signifies authority. Thus, when God changes someone's name, it indicates a shift in allegiance and direction.
- Adam was given **Commission** - he was expand the city of Eden until it covered the whole earth. The picture we get is of Eden, a city set upon a hill - with a river running through it. A virtual paradise, but outside of Eden it was uninhabitable. Adam's job like his Creator before him, he was to improve things. Expand the boundaries of Eden.

ADAM - was the ultimate portrait of Masculinity, perfectly reflecting his Creator. That is until, that mournful day when he believed the word of the enemy over the Word of God.

THE FALL - When Adam sinned the pristine reflection of God bore by man, was shattered into a million fragments. The residual ability to reflect was there, but it had been corrupted, devastated.

Woven into the fabric of creation was the fact that **like, begets like**. So when Eve gave birth to Cain and Able - those boys were not blank slates, neither were they innocent image bearers. Since Adam was shattered, they too would be shattered and every man who would walk the face of the earth after them.

Earth would not see a perfect man, until the one called the **2nd ADAM** - the Lord Jesus Christ walked upon the Earth - we'll get back to him in moment.

**The path for men to follow as we progress generation after generation is TYPIFIED in these two men Ramses II and Moses.**

One is a portrait of REINTEGRATION the other a portrait of DISINTEGRATION. You life my dear brother is either a portrait of REINTEGRATION or DISINTEGRATION.

Let's look first at the

## **1. Portrait of DISINTEGRATION - Ramses II**

### **Exodus 5:1–2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.' " <sup>2</sup> But Pharaoh said, **"Who is the Lord,** that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

Who is the LORD? Who is YAHWEH? That I Ramses should OBEY?

All of Egypt fancied Pharaoh as Divine. To speak to Pharaoh was to speak to a god in the flesh.

**ILLUSTRATION:** One of the protocol of the ancient world was that if Pharaoh was a god he was omniscient, or at least he knew more than everyone else. The courtiers had to practice a delicate dance to portray this - they would never inform Pharaoh of anything... but rather they would say, "as you already know my Lord".

You can't teach the all knowing one anything, you can only remind him of what he already knows.

In the Disney Movie **Aladdin**, Jaffar knows exactly how this works... Remember you know this Sire...

So for Pharaoh to say, "I don't know Yahweh" was to say - this God doesn't exist or I would know him.

Now for all of the evil Pharaoh had done - this was really the final straw that brought the Wrath of God down on Egypt.

## **STEPS OF DISINTEGRATION:**

- a. **A Denial of God's Authority** - Echoing the words of that Ancient Serpent Satan, "has God really said this?"

God can't command me. I don't even know Him.

- b. **A Personal Experience of God's Judgement** - One of the things you will see throughout the subsequent chapters is switching of language between the words, "Pharaoh hardened his heart" and "God hardened Pharaoh's heart".

Well which is it? Did God subvert the free will of Pharaoh in such a way that God made Pharaoh sin? God forbid - never. What is happening here is much like what Paul refers to in Romans 1 - the ultimate judgement of God in life is to be handed over to your sin.

### **Romans 1:18–25 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

### **c. A Corporate Experience of God's Judgement -**

Since Pharaoh has disintegrated internally, now his kingdom will experience corporate disintegration.

The signs that follow are in REVERSE of the 6 days of creation. Creation move from Chaos to Order, Egypt is experience the reverse from order to Chaos.

IN GENESIS: Creation progresses from Water to Light to Vegetation to Animals and Insects, then finally to Man.

IN EXODUS: That order is reversed - Water turned to blood, crops die due to lack of irrigation, animals and insects are decimated, Light is taken and darkness covers the land, then ultimately the firstborn is killed.

There is a sense in which - when we reject God's authority in our lives, we personally experience a "handing over" then as a result our corporate experience whether that is a family, a business, a church... begins to disintegrate around us.

Pharaoh is a living example of some of the people listening to this message.

Next we see a...

## 2. Portrait of REINTEGRATION - Moses

The story begins with God telling Moses - do exactly what I say. You will be like me before Pharaoh - a living reflection of my Glory.

Does Moses obey God perfectly? Not really - he's already gained an accommodation for his lack of eloquence in God calling Aaron.

Beyond that - God tells him to go get the Elders of Israel and take them to Pharaoh, but the text tells us only Moses and Aaron went.

Then you see the first exchange in...

### **Exodus 5:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us (ISRAEL) with pestilence or with the sword."

Did God say anything about falling on Israel with pestilence of the sword? No - do you see.

Pharaoh makes life worse for Israel after this meeting - causing them to have to find their own straw for the bricks, no longer providing it for them.

### **Exodus 5:22-23 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> Then Moses turned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? <sup>23</sup> For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all."

Even in the best of reflections, you see evidence of the fall.

Dear brother, don't let the fact that you are not a perfect father cause you to stop being a progressing father.

## **STEPS OF INTEGRATION:**

- a. Faith in God's Word - Despite his imperfection and struggle the bent of Moses life was that when God spoke, he believed.
- b. Personal Experience of God's Grace - Passover
- c. Cooperate Experience of God's Restoration - As they leave they plunder the Egyptians, God restoring all that had been taken from them.

It is very important that we recognize that Ramses and Moses were not held up as one guy who did it all wrong and things fell apart, and another sharp intelligent leader that got it all right and prospered as a result. But rather, they are held up primarily as one

leader who didn't believe God and suffered, and another who believed and trusted and followed and was used mightily as a result.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION: You see 1,300 years later - another man would enter the picture. The one we called the 2nd ADAM. Jesus of Nazareth. His entire life had been about INTEGRATION - he GAVE LIFE, healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the hungry.

But then he would hang upon a Roman Cross and experience a DISINTEGRATION that he did not deserve.

Again we see the wrath of God falling - note the similarities - water mixed with blood, darkness over the face of the earth, death of the firstborn.

With his work complete God raised him from the dead - and gave him a name that is above every name - the final words we have from Jesus recorded in scripture say this - "Behold, I make all things new".

FATHERS - Jesus was disintegrated so you can be reintegrated.

That's the first step - do you believe this?