

Series: **Exodus: Seeing God in the Journey**
Title: **What to do when things go from bad to worse**
Text: **Exodus 4:18-6:13**

Consecrated and Connected before service Ex. 4:18- 31

Consecrated before Service

Exodus 4:22-26

²² Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, ²³ and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'"

²⁴ At a lodging place on the way the Lord met him and sought to put him to death. ²⁵ Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it and said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" ²⁶ So he let him alone. It was then that she said, "A bridegroom of blood," because of the circumcision.

- Israel is my firstborn son (vs 22-23)
- Moses' first born (vs 24-26)
- Circumcision: The biblical explanation for this commandment states quite clearly that the circumcision acts as an outward physical sign of the eternal covenant between God and the Jewish people.
 - With this seal of the covenant having major theological importance, the first council of the church dealing directly with its practice, and the fact one runs across this concept over a hundred times in both the Old and New Testament, I thought a primer on circumcision could be helpful.

Three reasons for circumcision

Barry York - Sinner by Nature - Saved by Grace.

<https://gentlereformation.com/2021/04/19/why-circumcision/>

It signifies that sin needs to be removed.

- With the removal of this portion of the male anatomy often associated with uncleanness, by this act God was showing to Abraham and those who would be blessed through him that sin needed to be removed in order for salvation to occur.
- The prophet Jeremiah spoke God's Word to Judah using this imagery when he told them to "*circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your hearts*" by repenting of their sins (Jer. 4:4).
- That this work of sin removal was ultimately one of a spiritual nature of the Lord's doing is seen in these words: "*Moreover, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul, so that you may live*" (Deut. 30:6).

It signifies that this salvation would come through blood and pain.

- Just as the other sacrifices and rituals of the sacrificial system of the Old Testament taught that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin, so did circumcision.

- Certainly it was bloody. When Moses' wife Zipporah was forced to circumcise their son, she threw the remains at Moses' feet and called him "a bridegroom of blood" (Ex. 4:25-26).
- Certainly it was painful. Jacob's sons tricked the men of Shechem to circumcise themselves, then attacked them "on the third day, when they were in pain" (Gen. 34:25).

It signifies that a seed of Abraham would bring this deliverance.

- At the time of the fall, God promised that the seed of the woman - a descendant of Eve - would destroy the devil and his works.
- With the choosing of Abraham, the Lord showed by promise and sign that this seed would come through his lineage.
- For as the Lord told him upon his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, only for God to stay his hand and promise to provide, "...in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 22:18).
- By placing this sign on the male reproductive organ of Abraham and his descendants, the Lord was without doubt telling Israel and the world the Savior would come as a son of Abraham.
- These reasons for circumcision find their culmination in Christ Jesus.
 - He came to remove our sin by becoming sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - He purchased us with his own blood and suffered Calvary's agonies for us (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24).
 - He was the singular seed of Abraham through whom all the promises came (Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16).
- Anyone in any nation who believes the same gospel preached to Abraham (Gal. 3:8), seen through Abraham's circumcision, will be justified by faith just like he was and become one of his true children (Gal. 3:6-7).

Connected before service

Exodus 4:27

The Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.

- Aaron comes and meets Moses
 - And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord with which he had sent him to speak, and all the signs that he had commanded him to do.
 - Moses and Aaron meet with the elders...
 - And the people believed.

We are not meant to go on this spiritual journey alone

Go With the Holy – the Holy Spirit

- To guide, direct, rebuke, teach, comfort, bring to maturity in fruits, empower with gifts

The House of God – the Church –

- Uplift, pray, encourage, supplement where you are short.

The Helper - A Partner

- Iron sharpens iron (Prov. 27:17).
- A spouse, a sibling, a mentor, a friend
- Jesus sent them out in twos.
- Paul always had a companion.

- You are not to go it alone.

Not just consecrated and connected before service,
But obedience must be given in spite of opposition.

Have you ever felt like when you start doing something good... and everything falls apart?

There is a story about a request for sick leave to the U.S.S. Saratoga. It read:

Dear Captain, When I got home I found that my father's brick silo had been struck by lightning, knocking some of the bricks off at the top. I decided to fix the silo, and so I rigged up a beam, with a pulley and whip at the top of the silo, and hoisted a couple of barrels full of bricks to the top. When I got through fixing the silo there were a lot of bricks left over. I hoisted the barrel back up again, secured the line at the bottom, and then went up and filled the barrel with extra bricks. Then I went down to the bottom and cast off the line. Unfortunately, the barrel of bricks was heavier than I was and before I knew what was happening, the barrel started down and jerked me off the ground. I decided to hang on, and halfway up I met the barrel coming down and received a severe blow on the shoulder. I then continued on up to the top, banging my head against the beam and getting my fingers jammed in the pulley. When the barrel hit the ground it busted the bottom, allowing all the bricks to spill out. I was now heavier than the barrel and so started down again at high speed. Halfway down I again met the barrel of bricks and received severe injuries to my shins. When I hit the ground I landed on the bricks, getting numerous painful cuts from the sharp edges.

At this point I must have lost my presence of mind because I let go of the rope. The barrel then came down and struck me with another heavy blow on the head, putting me in the hospital for three days. I respectfully request five days extension of leave...And the moral of the story is that there is pain living & working among the bricks!

Obedience is met with Opposition Ex. 5:1-6:13

- Moses and Aaron make God's command known (v 1)
- Pharaoh refuses (v 2)
- God has told us and we must comply (v 3)
 - *"Let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."*
 - Their desire was to worship God.
 - The enemy will stand against you worshipping the Lord.
- Pharaoh makes it worse (vs 4-15).
 - *"Why do you take the people away from their work?"* (v 4)
 - No straw, same number of bricks
- We did what you said and now it's worse.
- We stink in front of the people.

You do the right thing and it goes badly for the people around you.

Exodus 5:21

"The Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

You do the right thing and it goes badly for you.

Exodus 6:12

But Moses said to the Lord, "Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me?"

What was Moses' response? He goes to the Lord.

Exodus 5:22-23

²² Then Moses turned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? ²³ 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."

He questioned God's goodness (v 22)

He questioned God's call (v 22)

He questioned God's ability (v 23)

Not one of his best moments, but it is very human.

- He did what was asked. It got bad.
- He questioned God.
- But at least he went to the Lord.
 - David cries out to the Lord.
 - Elijah despaired unto life.
- It is ok to go to the Lord with questions.
- Just realize...God is sovereign – His timing is sovereign as well.
 - If He says something will be done – He shall be who he shall be and it will be done.

There is an idea out there and even in the church of America that when you start doing things right or if you come to Jesus, then all things are going to be rosy and get better.

The response for that in the Hebrew is

HA!

In the Greek it is

Bologna!

When you do the right thing, you can expect it to get worse.

It is called spiritual warfare.

- The enemy does not want you worshipping or serving God
- He is the father of lies and wants to kill, steal and destroy.
- He attacks those who would move forward in their worship and service to the Lord
 - If you are not feeling the pressure...you may not be on his radar as a threat. (That should cause some concern.)
 - That my worship, walk, and witness is so irrelevant that the enemy lets me alone.
 - If you are feeling the heat... you are likely on the right path.
 - You have made some decisions to be obedient.
 - You have been praying for victory over sinful habits.
 - You have come back to church, started reading your Bible, praying.

- You can expect the heat.
- The victory is in the name of Jesus and standing against the enemy. Press ON!

God gives us a Reminder Ex. 6:1-13

Reminder One:

Who I AM - I Am the Lord

Exodus 6:2

² God spoke to Moses and said to him, "I am the Lord. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them."

- v2,6,7,8
- **My name is now known.**

Reminder Two:

I Will Do What I have said

Exodus 6:1

But the Lord said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do..."

- I will bring you out. (v 6)
- I will deliver you. (v 6)
- I will redeem you. (v 6)
- I will take you to be my people. (v 7)
- I will be your God. (v 7)
- I will bring you into the land that I swore to give. (v 8)
- I will give it to you. (v 8)

We need to be reminded of Who said what and what He said.

The Assignment hasn't changed.

- The Lord still charges you to obey

Exodus 6:13

But the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh, king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Challenge:

- I will give my heart to Jesus and be purified from my sin.
- I will connect with the church and be strengthened for the journey set before me.
- I will stand against the spiritual warfare that opposes me in the power of the Name of Jesus.
- I will go to God with my questions and rely on His Sovereignty and timing.
- I will be obedient to the assignment the Lord has given me.