

Exodus 016
The Morning Star
Exodus 5:20-23
September 21, 2025
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Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 5:20-23.. The title of our message this morning is "The Morning Star."

The Book of Exodus is the story of the redemption of a nation, the Nation of Israel, from Egyptian bondage. That really happens in the first 18 chapters of the book. Then in the remaining part of the book, beginning in Exodus 19 through the end of the book, God is teaching His redeemed nation how to live for Him. Those are the two major parts of the book.

Exodus Structure/Outline
■ Redemption (1–18) ◆ Redemption (1:1–12:30) ◆ Liberation (12:31–15:21) ◆ Preservation (15:22–18:27) ■ Mosaic Covenant (19–40) ◆ Law (19–24) ◆ Tabernacle instructions (25–31) ◆ Apostasy (32–34) ◆ Tabernacle building (35–40)

When you look at part one, we have redemption. Exodus 1 is really a description of why the nation needed redemption. They needed redemption because they were in bondage. By way of analogy, we need redemption personally, because we are in a state of bondage because of original sin before we meet Christ.

In Exodus 2-4 God raises up the instrument through which He will work, a very likable man in many ways, because we see so much of ourselves in him—his insecurities and why he felt he was not qualified to be used by God. All those issues get dealt with in

Exodus 2-4. Now Moses is ready to go. He returns from Midian at the age of 80. He does exactly what God calls him to do.

He has his first confrontation with Pharaoh in Exodus 5. Everything from a human standpoint that can go wrong, goes wrong. We have Moses' problem with Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1-19). "Pharaoh, let My people go," the Lord says. Pharaoh responds and says, "I do not know the Lord." He takes their slavery that they were already under for 400 years, and he makes it worse.

First Meeting with Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1-23)

- I. Problem with Pharaoh (1-19)
- II. Problem with Israel (20-23)
 - A. Israel complains to Moses (20-21)
 - 1. The meeting (2)
 - 2. The complaint (21)
 - B. Moses complains to God (22-23)
 - 1. Worsening situation (22)
 - 2. No deliverance (23)

They are making bricks and they are mixing straw with clay to strengthen the bricks. Pharaoh says, "No longer is the straw going to be brought to you. Go get it yourself. By the way, the quota is not going to be reduced." The same quota, more work. It is like your boss reducing your pay, but doubling your schedule. That is essentially what happened. Of course, Pharaoh applies daily pain through discipline against the Hebrews. This whole thing is happening, and Moses probably thought it would be smooth sailing because after all, he is called by God.

After this problem with Pharaoh is exposed, the Israelites start to grumble against Moses. "You do not know what you are doing" kind of thing. "If you knew what you were doing, things would not be deteriorating." He has to deal with that issue (Exodus 5:20-23). As we look at Exodus 5:20-23, the Israel problem, you have Moses being complained to (Exodus 5:20-21). He is being complained against by the people. Then Moses starts to complain to God (Exodus 5:21-23).

What can we learn from these verses? We will see as we get into this. First of all, notice that Israel complains to Moses. There is a meeting (Exodus 5:20), and then the complaint is given (Exodus 5:21). Notice the meeting:

"When they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting for them" (Exodus 5:20).

The Hebrew foremen, as they are described here, who are working under the taskmasters to keep the Nation of Israel in line during this time of bondage, had gone and complained to Pharaoh. Pharaoh abused them. Exodus 5:14 and other verses make it very clear that they were beaten.

That Hebrew group, these four men, leave Pharaoh, who is non-compliant. They go to Moses and Aaron, the leadership of the nation at that time. These Hebrews are now complaining to the Hebrew leadership. They make a complaint, which you see in Exodus 5:21.

"They said to them, 'May the Lord look upon you and judge you, for you have made us odious in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us'" (Exodus 5:21).

Basically what they say to Moses is, "It is your fault. You caused this problem. If you had not come into our lives, everything would be smooth sailing. Yes, we would still be slaves, but it would not be as bad as the type of slavery we are under now." This then becomes the burden of leadership.

This is why church government and how you try to figure out how a church should be led is such a big deal. Let me let you in on a little secret concerning the ministry: the ministry is the only profession or occupation that I know of where you can go from, in the eyes of people, being the fourth member of the Trinity to the Antichrist's brother-in-law in less than 24 hours. It is just shocking how people will love you and then they will hate you.

I think that is germane to the ministry. I have a lot of my friends that have their churches set up in what they call the Moses model, where they are in charge of everything. I am thinking to myself, "Do you really want the Moses model? Look at all of the abuse that Moses put up with here."

When you start to see this, you see that there is a lot of wisdom that God has in having leadership by a group rather than an individual. That is why we embrace here what we think is the proper model for church government: it is the elder led model. When people are upset about something—which happens in churches—it is not just one person taking the fire. It is a group of people taking the fire.

You are able to decentralize things, and it makes life from that standpoint a lot easier. Everybody would like to be a monarch. "Let me be king for a day and I will fix the world's problems." If you are king for a day, then you are also responsible for the world's problems and you are the person to blame.

As you probably know, there are different views of church leadership. The Episcopalian model is the model I grew up with, where there is a bishop and he is exercising authority over several churches. Then there is the congregational model, which I call Mobocracy. It is letting the inmates run the asylum, so to speak. The congregation—those you are supposed to be bringing to maturity in Christ—have all of the say, and there are all of these votes and all of these kinds of things.

Then there is what we think is the model of leadership that has the best biblical support, which is really the issue. It is a church governed by a plurality of godly men, which is

what we have here at Sugar Land Bible Church. We embrace that not just because of its practicality, but we embrace it because we believe it to be biblical.

"From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17).

"Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery" (1 Timothy 4:14).

It was the elders, plural, recognizing Timothy's calling and giftedness as a pastor teacher.

"The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17).

"Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two to three witnesses" (1 Timothy 5:19).

These are all New Testament passages I am reading. Paul writes to Titus on the island of Crete:

"For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you" (Titus 1:5).

"Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witnesses of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory which is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness, nor yet as lording it over those who are allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:1-4).

So what are elders? Elders function much like shepherds in the natural world. What does a shepherd do? A shepherd has three jobs. These all begin with the letter G. Number one, to guard the flock. In other words, we try to protect you from all kinds of false doctrine and things that can come into a church, problematic people, for example. As you probably know, churches are targets for pedophiles, particularly ones that want to work in the nursery. We have all of these screening and background checks that we use to try to keep all of that deleterious stuff out. Number two, to guide the flock, which is to give you guidance. Number three, one of the things I am doing right now to graze the flock, feed the flock through the teaching of God's Word.

Jesus said, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by what? Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). Different elders have different giftings and callings, but that is the big idea.

We do not embrace here the Moses method. This is not some kind of one-man show. Some people think that about me because I am probably the most visible of the elders, since I am in the pulpit frequently and regularly. Sugar Land Bible Church is governed by a plurality of godly men. Currently we have five elders; sometimes we have had as many as six or seven. No particular number is given in Scripture.

We try to make decisions based on a consensus, not on one elder through charisma or a domineering personality trying to overpower the other elders. It is a plurality of godly men seeking the Lord in prayer. When decisions are made—and sometimes decisions are made that people are unhappy about—that protects the elders, because you cannot just blame everything on one person.

Moses did not have that. The reason he did not have that yet is because Israel's governmental structure had not been set up yet. For people to argue we need to go to the Moses method is to try to argue for something that is not for the age of the church.

There is a complaint. Everybody is upset, and everybody goes right after Moses. "Moses, it is your fault we are in this mess." As you look at Exodus 5:21, they accuse Moses of *"making us [the Israelites] odious in Pharaoh's sight."* In other words, "Moses, if you had just kept your mouth shut, Pharaoh would not be upset. You have made us odious in his sight, and he has increased the burden on us."

This idea of becoming odious in the sight of man is actually an idea that goes back to Genesis 34:30. You might remember that Jacob was accused of this. In fact, Jacob, to put it more correctly, accused his sons, Simeon and Levi, of doing this in Canaan, because remember how they slaughtered the Shechemites?

"Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and my men being few in number, they will gather together against me and attack me and I will be destroyed, I and my household'" (Genesis 34:30).

"Because you slaughtered all of these Canaanites in Shechem, the rest of the Canaanites are angry at us. You, through your overreaction, have made us odious in the eyes of the Canaanites."

This is the same accusation that is now leveled at Moses. They probably remembered this from their history, and they now aimed it at Moses. "Because you are speaking up and saying to Pharaoh, 'Let My people go,' Pharaoh is tightening the grip. You have made us odious in the eyes of Pharaoh, and you have made things worse."

So this chapter is filled with problems. Pharaoh does not want to listen to Moses, and neither do the Israelites. They are very upset at Moses at this point.

"...to put a sword in their hand to kill us" (Exodus 5:21).

That is the definition of tyranny. Tyranny exists when the government has the weapons and the people do not. That is the very definition of tyranny. Liberty exists when the government is afraid of the people; tyranny exists when the people are afraid of the government. The Egyptians had the weapons and the Israelites did not.

Joseph Story, who was a very influential commentator on our early constitution, wrote this concerning the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution:

"The next amendment is: 'A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.' The importance of this article will scarcely be doubted by any persons, who have truly reflected upon the subject...The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered as the palladium of the liberties of a republic since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers and will generally, even if these are successful in the first instance, enable the people to resist and triumph over them...There is certainly no small danger, that indifference may lead to disgust, and disgust to contempt; and thus gradually undermine all protection intended by this clause of our national bill of rights."¹

I had to look up the word "palladium." These older guys used all of these words that we do not know anymore. It is the ultimate guard is what he is saying—the final guard.

What Joseph Story is saying is that the Second Amendment, which allows you to keep and bear arms, exists in the United States Constitution not to help your hobby of hunting—if you want to go hunting, that is fine, but that is not the purpose of the Second Amendment. The Second Amendment exists as the last obstacle or bastion against tyranny. What he is saying is this: If you do not have a Second Amendment, you do not have any means to enforce the First Amendment, or any other amendment for that matter.

You may have heard of the name Granville Sharp. If you are a student of Greek, you learn a grammatical principle from a man named Granville Sharp. He was a Greek scholar who came up with a law of grammar. It is basically the idea that when you have two nouns joined by a conjunction, and the first noun has the definite article in front of it, then the two nouns are equal. You can use this to argue for the deity of Christ, for example, because it calls Him our Lord and our God. When you look at it in Greek, the

¹ Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston, MA: Hilliard, Gray, 1833), 3:746-747, sections 1889-1890.

Granville Sharp rule is in play. Most people, when they study beginning Greek, learn something about Granville Sharp.

But here is something that is hardly known of Granville Sharp: he was a political activist. You might recognize the name William Wilberforce, who used his position in Parliament as an evangelical Christian to speak against the slave trade and ultimately got the slave trade abolished after many setbacks in that goal. Granville Sharp was one of the guys working with him, and Granville Sharp also wrote this:

"No Englishman can be truly loyal who opposed the principles of English law whereby the peoples are required to have arms of defense in peace, for mutual as well as private defence...The laws of England always required the people to be armed, and not only armed, but to be expert in arms."²

What he is saying here is this: If you are a devout person under English law—and actually what he is saying is, if you are a devout Christian—then you should own a weapon, know how to use a weapon, and you should be proficient in using the weapon. According to Joseph Story, that is what keeps you out of tyranny.

I understand that 99% of the pulpits in this country would never touch this issue, but I cannot help myself. It talks here about the very definition of tyranny: the Egyptians had the weapons and the Hebrews did not. That is, in essence, why they were enslaved.

Jesus said this in Luke 22:36-38. This will never be mentioned in any social justice type church. No progressive church will touch this verse. But Jesus said it, and this is where He is sending out the disciples to do His work.

"And He said to them, 'But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one'...They said, 'Lord, look, here are two swords.' And He said to them, 'It is enough'" (Luke 22:36, 38).

Islam teaches conquest to the subjugation of the sword. That is why Islam grows. It subjugates cultures. Christianity does not know any such doctrine. We do not teach subjugation through the sword because people have a volition. They are going to receive Christ or not, and we honor their decision.

But when it comes to the issue of self-defense—someone breaking into your house in the dark of night and putting your family or yourself in imminent bodily threat on the authority of the Word of God—you have the authority to defend yourself. Sometimes you need someone behind a pulpit to tell you that, because all you hear today from the progressive social justice movement are a bunch of verses out of context that make you feel guilty if you have an interest in owning a weapon.

² Les Adams, *The Second Amendment Primer: A Citizen's Guidebook to the History, Sources, and Authorities for the Constitutional Guarantee of the Right to Keep and Bear Arms* (NY: Skyhorse, 2013), 63.

Obviously, we are not advocating the misuse of weapons. What we are advocating for is what the Bible teaches, what the United States Constitution stands for, what Jesus Himself said, and what Joseph Story articulated very well.

That is why the Israelites were enslaved here. Gun control works great. Just ask the experts. It is always the same pattern over and over again. There is some kind of dictator that takes control, and then they want all the weapons registered. Once they have the weapons registered, they know where the weapons are and registration moves to confiscation—Adolf Hitler, Fidel Castro, Qaddafi, Stalin, Idi Amin, Mao Tse Tung, Pol Pot, Kim Jong IL.



As that happens, as God is my witness, the blood pours because you cannot defend yourself against tyranny if you are disarmed. Stalin took away guns from his citizens in 1929 and then murdered 20 million of them, once defenseless. Do you see the pattern here? Pot took guns away from his citizens in 1956 and then murdered 2 million of them, once defenseless. Hitler took guns away from his citizens in 1938 and then murdered 13 million of them, once defenseless. Mao took guns away from his citizens in 1935 and then murdered 20 million of them, once Defenseless.

One of the ways this is starting to happen in our culture is the attack over and over again against what the Declaration of Independence calls unalienable rights. Senator Tim Kaine, who was Hillary's vice presidential pick in 2016, recently said this. It is a fairly new article dated September 3, 2025: "Senator Tim Kaine Tells Americans Their Rights Come From Government."³

³ Dmitri Bold, "Senator Tim Kaine Tells Americans Their Rights Come From Government," *Townhall*, September 03, 2025.

You might remember Janet Reno. She was the attorney general in the Clinton Justice Department. Do you remember the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas? The "Wacko from Waco" and all of that stuff. This is what she said in the wake of that:

"You are part of a government that has given its people more freedom...than any other government in the history of the world."⁴

I hope you can see the error in this. Both Kaine and Reno are basically saying that the rights we have come from the state. I hope you do not think that way, because what the state giveth, the state can taketh away. That is why this concept of unalienable rights is such a big deal. All you do is read the Declaration of Independence, and you see very clearly that our rights come from God. That is what is meant by an unalienable right.

What is an unalienable right? Do you recognize the word lien? If I have a lien against your property, you do not own the property. If the property is sold, I get the proceeds of the sale. The lien takes your ownership away. When our founding fathers—Thomas Jefferson and the rest of them—talked about unalienable rights, they talked about rights without a lien on them because they come from God. What God giveth, the state cannot remove.

The United States government is different from the governments of the earth because it does not grant rights. If you think the United States government grants rights, you do not understand the foundation of the United States. The United States government does not grant rights. The United States government recognizes preexisting rights coming from God. The Declaration of Independence roots our rights—the Second Amendment included—in "the laws of nature and Nature's God."

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are evolved—" Whoops. It does not say that. "—created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions...with a firm reliance on Divine Providence."⁵

I think John Adams would understand the Constitution a lot better than Tim Kaine, John Adams being our second president. It is a great quote here:

"Rights [are] antecedent to all earthly government; Rights...cannot be repealed or restrained by human laws; Rights [are] derived from the great Legislature of the universe."⁶

⁴ Speech by Attorney General Janet Reno, Newark, New Jersey, May 5, 1995. Quoted in James Bovard, "Waco Must Get a Hearing," *Wall Street Journal*, May 15, 1995.

⁵ *Church of the Holy Trinity v. U.S.*, 143 U.S. 457, 467-68 (1892)

⁶ John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, 10 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1856), 3:449.

The fact of the matter is that in this country you enjoy, by design, rights that are yours, that cannot be taken away because they come from God Himself. Once you understand this, you understand why it is always: "Get God out of everything. Get God out of the schools. Let us promote evolution. Let us promote atheism."

There is a consequence to that, because if you do not have God, you do not have God given rights. If you do not have God-given rights, then what the state giveth, the state can take away. "Just turn your weapons in for two weeks. We just want to flatten the curve. We will give them right back, we promise." If we fall for that, folks, we are falling for the historical lie that is perpetrated everywhere to bring in tyranny, the kind of tyranny that the Israelites are under here. They were disarmed.

I will post something on social media about the right to keep and bear arms, and I get all these people coming on. They want to promote their statistics, which are debatable: "Don't you know this is going to happen and that is going to happen." I say, "This is a right I have from God that you cannot take away. I do not care about your statistics." I have every right to keep and bear arms, just like I have every right to step into this church and be a member of this church and preach the gospel, and the state has absolutely no right to take that away.

You have to understand that four of the five of the world's most populous nations right now are persecuting Christians. Do you realize that? Do you realize that the fact that we are sitting here, meeting here in freedom is an anomaly around the world? If you look at the most populous nations of the Earth, 80% of them have Christians under the thumb of persecution through something called the Red-Green Axis—green, Islamic; red, Marxism. The two are cooperating with each other across the globe.

Why do they get along so well? Marxists and Muslims? Because the enemy of my enemy is my friend. They get along well with each other because they are both promoting basically the same idea, which is government control of people's lives. In fact, if you read the Quran, the Hadith, and the founding documents of Islam what you will discover is that very little of it deals with religion; most of it deals with politics.

This guy in Houston, who walked into a shop owned by Muslims and said, "You cannot promote gambling here, you cannot sell alcohol here, you cannot sell this. You cannot sell that because it violates Sharia Law"—that is what Islam by and large deals with, government type issues, putting non-compliant people under something called the Jizya. It is a tax you have to pay to survive.

You might look at me and say, "You are going crazy now with all of this stuff." It is just a matter of looking at the pattern throughout the world. This is how the Red-Green Axis operates. Most of our brothers and sisters in Christ right now do not enjoy the freedom that we are enjoying because they are coming out of systems that told them that the state gives rights, and then all of a sudden the state revokes the right.

That is not supposed to be the way it works in the United States. If the state gave the right, the state could take it away. But go back to John Adams; go back to Joseph Story; go back to our birth certificate in the Declaration of Independence. You will see very clearly that our rights come from God. What God giveth, man cannot take away.

We can quote statistics all we want, but the truth of the matter is that they are irrelevant at the end of the day. In this country, our government has recognized that from the beginning God gave people the right to keep and bear arms—responsibly, of course. That is the very thing that keeps us out of tyranny.

You see the very definition of tyranny at the end of Exodus 5:21, "You put a sword in the hands of Pharaoh, and we are not allowed to defend ourselves."

These are the kinds of things you need to think about when you vote for somebody. Do they believe in unalienable rights or not? Apparently a lot of people do not. You have to get that figured out, and you have to get that figured out really quickly, because that will largely dictate the type of country your children and your grandchildren are going to grow up in.

I am 59 years old today. I have lived a great life, but it is not about me. I have a daughter who is sitting in the front row. You have children, you have grandchildren. The most important thing to think about, other than salvation itself, is what exactly are we handing off to them?

They complain against Moses, and then Moses complains to God (Exodus 5:22-23). He says, "God, the situation is worsening."

"Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, 'O Lord, why have you brought harm to this people? Why did you ever send me?'" (Exodus 5:21).

On one end of the stick, I have to commend Moses because he goes to the Lord with his problem. That is not what the Hebrew foremen did in Exodus 5:15. They did not go to the Lord; they went to Pharaoh. Moses does not do that; he goes to the Lord.

Moses is a lot like Daniel. We talked about this a little bit last time. Daniel was involved in the events of Daniel 2, where Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a dream. In that dream he saw the giant statue—the different body parts of the statue would represent the different kingdoms that would trample Israel down during a time period called the Times of the Gentiles.

It starts with the Babylonian captivity and goes right on through the Second Coming. The head of gold would represent Nebuchadnezzar's Neo-Babylonian Empire. The chest and arms of silver would represent the Persian Empire. The belly and thighs of bronze would represent Greece. The two legs of iron represent Rome. The feet, mixed with iron and clay, would represent the kingdom of the Antichrist, yet future. The stone cut without human hands would represent the Second Advent—the immediate,

cataclysmic, instantaneous overthrow of the Antichrist's kingdom. The stone cut without human hands grows and grows till it fills the whole earth. It is an indispensable piece of prophecy. It is hard to understand prophecy, it is hard to understand the direction of our world, unless you understand that dream.

Nebuchadnezzar said to his wise men, "I had my dream. Now tell me what it means." The wise men of Babylon said, "Just tell us the dream, and we will give you the interpretation." Nebuchadnezzar says, "No. It does not work that way. You tell me what I dreamed, tell me what I dreamed, and then you interpret it."

That is a pretty hard boss, is it not? That is an impossible burden. "Just give us a dream," they kept asking him. "Just give us the dream. We will interpret it for you." He says, "That is not how it is going to work. You tell me what I dreamed. Let us put your powers to the mettle here and see if they are true. By the way, if you do not do what I said—tell me what I dreamed last night—you are all dead."

Daniel was in that group. What did Daniel do when he hit this problem? What would you do? What would I do? What would we start? Would we get on social media and start a campaign? Would we complain? Daniel, when he is dealt an impossible hand, goes right to the Lord with it. That is what Moses is doing, he goes right to the Lord.

"Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, about the matter, so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon" (Daniel 2:17-18).

It is an impossible situation. Only God knows the answer. He goes right to the Lord. Moses is in an impossible situation. He goes right to the Lord. The foremen are in an impossible situation, and they do not go right to the Lord. They try to fix it in their own strength. May we be like Moses here; may we be like Daniel.

Have you ever prayed a Nehemiah prayer? You remember Nehemiah, how he wanted to leave? At this time the Persians had conquered the Babylonians, and he wanted to leave Susa of Persia and go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls around the city.

"I said to the king, 'Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?' Then the king said to me, 'What would you request?'" (Nehemiah 2:3-4).

"What do you want me to do?" That is Nehemiah's boss, a man named Artaxerxes. What does Nehemiah do? What would you do? Your boss says, "What do you want?"

"Then the king said to me, 'What would you request?' So I prayed to the God of heaven" (Nehemiah 2:4).

That is the right response. When an opportunity is thrown your direction, a situation comes into your life that you cannot handle, not the last order of business, but the first order of business is to take it directly to the Lord. I do not practice this perfectly any more than you do. I am the kind of person that likes to try to fix my problems. When nothing else works, I say, "I guess maybe I should pray."

That is not what the Lord wants of us. He wants us to go right into His presence through prayer. That is what Moses does; that is what Daniel does; that is what Nehemiah does; that is what the foremen do not do. These are negative and positive examples for us.

"Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, 'O Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did you ever send me?'" (Exodus 5:21).

"My presence here is making things worse. You told me I was going to be the deliverer of Israel, and that is not happening. Things are getting worse. Why did You send me in the first place?"

Have you ever wondered that from the Lord? "Lord, you got the wrong guy. The more I touch things, the more they get worse." I will be honest with you, I felt that way when I first came here. This church had been through some difficulties, and I thought I was here to help heal, and no more than a few weeks to a month or two within my time here, a whole bunch of people got mad at me for different reasons and ended up leaving.

I said to myself, "Why even be here?" The thing about it is, if you can just hang in there with the Lord for a little while and not become despondent, not become discouraged, you will start to see the big picture. God, when you walk into those situations, wants you to just stay close to Him. "I called you to be here. You are supposed to be here. The doors have opened. There are things that I am going to do that you do not see right now, and you do not have to see it."

It is like when somebody picks you up from the airport in another town or city or state and is taking you to your destination. You do not have to demand from the person, "Let me see a map. Where are we going to go? When are we going to turn left? When are we going to turn right? When are we going to get there?" You do not even need to know that. As long as you trust the character of the person driving the car. If you trust the character of the person driving the car, you do not have to have all the answers up front.

That is what a walk with the Lord is like. You do not have to have every answer. In fact, many times God is not even going to give you the answer because He wants you to walk by faith. *"And without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6)*. All you have to do is trust His character and that He knows exactly what He is doing.

Moses, unfortunately, is not doing this. He is getting despondent as is easy when your own people start to turn on you. It is one thing when the pagans turn on you; it is a totally different matter when God's people turn on you. That one hurts because you are

not ready for that. That is what Moses is dealing with here. He starts to complain about no deliverance (Exodus 5:23).

"Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done harm to this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all" (Exodus 5:23).

He says "at all." Not only has deliverance not happened, it has not happened at all. First of all, it has not happened, and it has not happened, at all. The problem with Moses is that he is stuck in Exodus 5 right now. He did not see Exodus 6. He did not see Exodus 7. He did not see Exodus 8. He did not see Exodus 9. He did not see Exodus 10. He did not see Exodus 11. He did not see Exodus 12. He did not see what was coming—the ten plagues. God, in a certain sense, told him what was coming through various plagues, but he really did not have all of the details.

Moses should have just hung in there with the Lord, knowing that his vision was limited. He certainly did not see coming Exodus 12 and 13, the parting of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians. He did not see Exodus 15 coming where they celebrated on the other side of the Red Sea. He did not see Exodus 16, 17, and 18 where God is going to come through time and time again with provision to help them in the wilderness wanderings. He certainly did not see Exodus 19, the giving of the Law and then the Tabernacle.

That is what it is like to walk with the Lord. You cannot see what is around the corner, but God can see it. Even though you cannot see what is coming, what He asks us to do, what he commands us to do, is to walk with Him when we cannot see what is happening.

You know the problem with Job? You read the story of Job and you read everything that he went through. The guy lost everything—health, other than coming within an inch of his life, and he lost his livelihood. The one member of his family that did not die was his wife, and she says to him, "Why don't you curse God and die?" "Hey, thanks for the encouragement. I appreciate that." Then he has all these people telling him, "The reason you are in these problems is your own fault," not understanding that there was a conversation between God and Satan in heaven that Job and the rest of them did not know anything about.

You can see how despondent Job is getting as he is walking through these trials. He was despondent because he did not see Job 42, where everything is restored to Job several times over. Why could he not see Job 42? Because Job 42 had not occurred. Yet God knew it was coming. God knew it was right around the corner.

I heard this story once, and it is always stuck with me, of somebody that was an Olympian type long distance swimmer. They were swimming some vast distance. That particular day when they were finishing, there was a dark cloud cover where they could not see the other side. As they were swimming, they fell into exhaustion. It became so

tiring that they just quit. They did not realize that because of the cloud covering, they were just a few feet away from the shore.

That is what the Christian life is like: you want to quit, you want to throw in the towel because you cannot see what the cloud covering is taking away from you. That is where the walk of faith becomes so important. That is why we need to learn the practice of waiting on the Lord.

I hate waiting on the Lord. I will be honest with you. My idea is, "Lord, give me patience and give it to me right now." But the Lord says, "Wait."

*"He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous men stumble badly,
Yet those who wait for the Lord
Will renew their strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary" (Isaiah 40:29-31).*

*"Wait for the Lord;
Be strong and let your heart take courage;
Yes, wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).*

When things are going south in your life, when things are falling apart, when things are not going according to schedule, wait on the Lord. You do not know what the Lord has right around the corner for you.

When I first came to this church, it was within maybe two weeks, I was sitting in my office on a Friday. The church secretary at the time said, "There is a guy in the lobby that wants to know about suicide options." I thought, "What in the world is this all about?" He comes in, he sits down, and he says to me, "Do not preach the gospel to me. I already know it. So no preaching or teaching for me. I just want to know one thing. I am ready to kill myself."

I said, "Why do you want to kill yourself?" "I am an engineer—" the economy at that time was not doing well—"I cannot find a job, and I am ready." He gave some kind of date. "By this time, I am going to commit suicide." I said, "Can I pray for you?" "No, you cannot pray for me. What I want to know is what you think about that."

This is a guy I have never seen before, and I have never seen him since. I am thinking to myself, "How do you answer something like this?" I am going through my mental Rolodex from seminary. I do not think they covered this kind of situation. So I did a Nehemiah prayer, trying to pray for wisdom. It occurred to me, I said, "How do you know you are not going to get employed tomorrow?" Employment was his big issue—

finances. "How do you know that the economy is not going to turn around next month? How do you know it is not going to turn around next year?"

I thought of Job who could not see Job 42. I tried to explain this to this guy. He says to me, "Is that all you have to say?" I said, "That is all I have to say." He got up, and he left. I searched the local papers. I have no idea what happened to him. Sometimes I would like to think that maybe the guy took note of that. I did say to him, "You are going to look really dumb having killed yourself over a job, when a job is right around the corner. Do you really want to do something this drastic?" You kill yourself, and that is kind of irreversible.

I sensed that the guy was hopeless because, like most of us that lose hope, we cannot see what is coming. Those are the times that we need to wait upon the Lord—trust the Lord. The Lord knows what He is doing. That is what Moses is struggling with.

When it says, "You have not delivered Your people at all," this is why I titled this message "The Morning Star." I believe this is a type, if you will, of planet Earth today. It is in a totally hopeless condition. The problems that our world is facing are so big that a human mind cannot solve them.

Paul says concerning Creation and the effects of original sin:

"For the anxious longing of creation awaits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:19-23).

This is the world right now. It is in bondage. It is in a state of chains. People without the biblical worldview are turning to anything and everything to numb the pain—materialism, let us see if that works; pleasure, let us see if that works; power. Let us see if that works. The bars of this city are packed to the brim on the weekends. What are people doing? They are trying to numb the pain.

I do not dispute the fact that they are in pain, because the devil, ever since Eden is the ruler of this world. This is why Scripture calls Satan the prince of this world, the God of this age, the prince of the power of the air, the one that we wrestle with, a roaring lion who roams about seeking someone to devour.

"We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

Names & Titles Demonstrating
Satan's Post-Fall, Earthly Authority
(Job 1:7; 2:2; Luke 4:5-8; Rom. 8:19-22)



- Prince of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
- God of this age (2 Cor. 4:4)
- Prince and power of the air (Eph. 2:2)
- Who the believer wrestles with (Eph. 6:12)
- Roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8)
- Whole world lies in his power (1 John 5:19)

That is the situation that the Israelites were in—completely and totally hopeless. Yet God, in the rest of this book, shows up. That is when God shows up, when everything is not working right. That is why, when you study the Book of Revelation, so many of the judgments in the Book of Revelation mirror plagues that you have read about in the Book of Exodus—sores, plague six and the first bowl judgment; rivers to blood, same reality; darkness; frogs; hail.

Why does John keep paralleling the judgments in the Book of Revelation with the judgments that you read about in the Book of Exodus? The answer is it is a type. Just as God took the whole whole nation out of Egyptian bondage in the Book of Exodus, the Book of Revelation is the same story, but He is taking the whole world out of the bondage that it has been in ever since the Fall of man in Eden.

When you see that, you do not despair in the midst of it, because there is hope. Three times in the New Testament Jesus is called the bright and morning star. The first time He is called that is in 2 Peter 1:19:

"So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you would do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

What is the morning star? In Revelation 2:28, you have the same designation for Jesus:

"And I will give him the morning star" (Revelation 2:28).

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to you to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright and morning star" (Revelation 22:16).

Jesus says, "I am the bright morning star." What is the morning star? The morning star is the star that appears when it is the most pitch black. When you think that night will never end, the morning star appears. The morning star signals that the dawn is about to break. That is why Jesus is called the bright morning Star. He appears, just like the

morning star, at the blackest of the black. At the time when humanity is in its worst state, Jesus shows up.

Do you want to take someone, Charlie Kirk, and gun him down in cold blood? That is terrible, but maybe that is the kind of thing that has to happen to paint the canvas the right way. For the bright morning star to show up. If you do not have this hope, I would have lost my sanity a long time ago. The only thing that keeps me sane in this insane world is the hope that Jesus is about to show up. That is a glorious thing.

When we walk with God we need to look at life through that vantage point, because the more you get tunnel vision like Moses had here, and you are just focused on your problems and the "nasty now and now"; when you are focused on Exodus 5 but you cannot see Exodus 6; the more you become despondent and the more you can become despondent, the more you are going to turn to some other source—occultism, alcohol, drugs, you name it—to numb the pain.

How different the Christian walk is. That is why we are called people of hope. Hope is not an "I hope so" thing; it is an "I know so" thing. I know Jesus is going to show up because He has made His promise in His Word. I would encourage you this week to walk in hope; walk in victory. You are on the winning side of history. It is almost like you are living World War II behind enemy lines, but the Allied invasion is just around the corner. It has not happened yet, but it is coming.

Let us pray. Father, we are grateful for Your truth. Grateful for Your Word. Grateful for its admonitions and instructions to us. I do pray, Lord, that if anybody within the sound of my voice does not know You personally through Jesus Christ, that for them today would be the day of salvation, that they would receive what You offer them, and all of us, as a free gift. Your final words on the cross were, "*It is finished!*" (John 19:30).

You command us not to trust in ourselves for the forgiveness of our sins and our arrival in glory, but to trust in what You did 2,000 years ago. We no longer trust in our good works, but we trust in the good work that You did for us. As we trust in it, we understand that we are receiving from You a free gift.

I pray that many, many people, even as I am speaking, within the sound of my voice would be placing their personal faith and trust into the finished work of the God-Man, the eternally existent second member of the Trinity, that for them today would be the day of salvation, dialing us into Your countless promises for us, not the least of which is this promise of the bright and morning star. We will be careful, Lord, to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name and God's people said. Amen.