

Title: "I CAN SMILE AT SATAN'S RAGE"  
Text: Exodus 5:1-6:1  
Subject: *The Warfare between Christ and Satan*  
Date: Tuesday Evening — February 20, 2007  
Tape # Exodus 39

**Introduction:**

**Revelation 12 tells us of a great warfare that has been waged since the dawn of creation.** It is not a warfare waged between men and nations, though it is the cause of all wars. The warfare of which John speaks in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is a war waged against the Son of God by the prince of this world, a war between Satan and our Savior, a war between the fiend of hell and the Friend of sinners, a war between the deceiver and our Deliverer.

The war John saw in his vision is **described as a great "wonder in heaven."** As soon as God's purpose of grace was revealed to the angels of heaven, as soon as the triune God announced to the angels of light that he had created them to be servants to men who would be the heirs of his salvation, servants to his chosen, Satan was enraged and led a revolt against the throne of God. One third of the heavenly angels followed him in his rebellion. As soon as Satan raised his head in pride and sought to overthrow the throne and purpose of God, the Lord Jesus cast him and the fallen angels out of heaven, overturned their first estate, and reserved them "*in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*" (Jude 6).

**Though his doom is sure, Satan's rage against God is relentless and ever-increasing.** He does not often appear in open as one enraged. He is subtle and cunning, like a snake. That is how he deceived Eve in the Garden, when he launched his first attack against Christ upon the earth. But the fiend of hell is a fire-breathing dragon, bent upon the destruction of the Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Savior.

**He sought to devour our God-man Mediator as soon as he came into the world.** He tried to destroy him in the wilderness of temptation. He stirred the wrath of the world against him all the days of his earthly ministry. Oh, how he assaulted our Substitute in Gethsemane with the prospect of being made sin for us! But he had no power against our Savior. He who was born to rule all nations for the salvation of his people "*was caught up unto God and his throne*" (Revelation 12:5), and was given

power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to blood-bought sinners everywhere.

**The exalted Savior, being out of Satan’s reach, he now turns his rage toward God’s elect,** usurping authority over the souls of chosen sinners, who are by nature his willing captives, persecuting and making war against the woman’s seed (God’s elect). When John saw these things, he cried, — *“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time”* (Revelation 12:12). Yet, as **Isaac Watts**, wrote...

“Should earth against my soul engage  
And fiery darts be hurled,  
Still I can smile at Satan’s rage  
And face a frowning world.”

That is the title of my message tonight. — **“I CAN SMILE AT SATAN’S RAGE.”** Do you ask how? The answer is given in that same vision. — Our great Savior has bound the devil and cast him out, by his triumphant accomplishments as our crucified Substitute (Revelation 12:7-10).

(Revelation 12:7-10) “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, (8) And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. (9) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (10) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”

**The warfare John describes in Revelation 12 is a warfare between the Lord Jesus Christ and Apollyon; and it is a warfare for my soul.** “*The angel of the bottomless pit*” seeks to destroy my soul; but Christ is determined to save me by his omnipotent grace. I can smile at Satan’s rage because I know what the outcome of this warfare shall be. — *“Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end”* (Isaiah 45:17).

**It is this warfare and its glorious outcome that is depicted in the Book of Exodus. Turn with me to Exodus chapter 5, and you will see a vivid picture of the war’s commencement in the souls of men, in the experience of grace, when the Captain of our Salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ comes to bind the strong man and sit captive sinners free.**

### **THE CONFRONTATION**

The Lord Jesus sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, not to plead with him, but to confront him, as the ambassadors of the King of heaven, and demand that he let his people go (vv. 1-2).

(Exodus 5:1-2) “And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. (2) And Pharaoh said, Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.”

Pharaoh was the title of the Egyptian rulers. **The title, “Pharaoh,” comes from a word that conveys the idea of “one who is a destroyer.”** And Pharaoh is held before us as a type of Satan, the great destroyer of men. Egypt, the place of Pharaoh’s domain, is typical of the world. And Israel’s bondage in Egypt typifies the bondage of darkness, sin and death into which Adam plunged our race.

**At God’s appointed time,** the Lord Jesus Christ comes to overthrow Satan’s usurped dominion in the hearts of chosen, redeemed sinners by his omnipotent grace. But **Satan will never willingly relinquish his captives.** So a great struggle takes place in the City of Mansoul. That is the picture we have before us in Exodus 5.

**The fact is, God never works like we think he should. He never does things the way we expect him to do them** (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6-8; Job 5:18; Hosea 6:1).

(Deuteronomy 32:39) “See now that I, *even I, am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.”

(1 Samuel 2:6-8) “The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth

down to the grave, and bringeth up. (7) The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. (8) He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth *are* the Lord’s, and he hath set the world upon them.”

(Job 5:18) “For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.”

(Hosea 6:1) “Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.”

**The result of Moses’ first meeting with Pharaoh was not very encouraging.** The thought of losing Israel made Pharaoh more determined than ever to hold them. He tightened his grip and resolved to make their escape impossible. So it is in the initial experience of grace. **When Satan’s dominion is threatened, his rage increases.**

That is what we see here. The fiery furnace is about to be quenched by the hand of redeeming love; but, before it is, it blazes forth with greater fierceness and intensity than ever. **Satan will never release his captives, until Christ breaks his grip.** Our Lord Jesus describes him as “*a strong man armed,*” and while he “*keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.*” But, blessed be God, there is “*a stronger than he,*” who has taken from him “*his armour wherein he trusted,*” and divided the spoils among the favored objects of his everlasting love.

## **GOD’S DETERMINATION**

The determination of the triune God is the complete deliverance, redemption and salvation of his elect. **Everything else is subservient to that great purpose and determination of our God.** When he sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, that was the message he gave, the command he issued.

- He identified himself as “*the LORD God of Israel.*”
- The Lord God owned Israel as his own people, peculiarly and distinctly his people. — “*My People!*”

- He demanded that Pharaoh let his people go, so that they might worship and serve him. — “*That they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.*”

That was Jehovah’s message to Pharaoh. **He demanded the full deliverance of Israel, on the ground that they belonged to him.** And our Lord Jesus Christ (the Lord God who sent Moses to Pharaoh) demands the full deliverance of his elect from sin, Satan, the curse of the law, death, and hell, on the ground that we belong to him exclusively.

- By His Own Choice
- By the Father’s Gift
- By Lawful Purchase

**Nothing can ever satisfy God our Savior in reference to his elect, but their entire emancipation from the yoke of bondage.** His command is — “*Loose him, and let him go!*”

- That is the command of omnipotent mercy and irresistible grace.
- Though held in bondage by Satan, God’s elect are his, the objects of his eternal love, and they shall be loosed.

## **OUR CONDITION**

Yet, when we see Israel working as slaves in the brick-kilns of Egypt, we behold a graphic figure of the condition of every child of Adam by nature, even God’s chosen. There we were, crushed beneath Satan’s galling yoke, and having no power to deliver ourselves. The thought of liberty in our minds made our bonds tighter and our burdens greater. **If deliverance was to be obtained, it was absolutely necessary that it come from without.** But from where? Where can ransom be found? Where is the power to break our chains? Where can one be found with the price, and the power, and the will to deliver our souls? Then, when we were without strength, without hope, and in utter despair, God the Holy Spirit turned us and caused us to look out of ourselves, to look away to Christ (Job 33:18-30; Psalm 89:19; Isaiah 45:22).

(Job 33:18-30) “**He keepeth back his soul from the pit,** and his life from perishing by the sword. (19) He is **chastened also with pain upon his bed,** and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*: (20) So that **his life abhorreth bread,** and his soul dainty meat. (21)

**His flesh is consumed** away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones *that* were not seen stick out. (22) Yea, his soul **draweth near unto the grave**, and his life to the destroyers. (23) If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness: (24) **Then** he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. (25) **His flesh** shall be fresher than a child’s: he shall return to the days of his youth: (26) **He shall pray** unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall **see his face with joy**: for he will **render unto man his righteousness**. (27) He looketh upon men, and **if any say, I have sinned**, and perverted *that which was* right, and it profited me not; (28) **He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light**. (29) Lo, all these *things* worketh God oftentimes with man, (30) To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.”

(Psalms 89:19) “Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.”

(Isaiah 45:22) “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.”

Thus is it in every case. **Christ is the Deliverer we must have**. — “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4: 12).

**Fallen sinners are under the usurped tyranny and dominion of Satan**, “sold under sin,” “led captive by Satan at his will,” bound in the fetters of their own hearts’ lusts, “without strength,” without God,” “without Christ,” “without hope!” That is the condition of all men by nature. How, then, can they help themselves? What can they do? **The sinner’s thoughts, his words, his deeds, are the thoughts, words, and deeds of a slave**. Should he weep and sigh for emancipation, his very tears and sighs are melancholy proofs of his slavery. He may struggle for freedom; but his very struggle declares his bondage.

## **OUR NATURE**

Man’s condition is slavery. But his slavery is not a mere outward, physical bondage. It is a moral, spiritual, inward bondage, the bondage of a radically corrupt, completely fallen, totally depraved nature, entirely enslaved to and under the power of Satan. Our nature, by birth, is the nature of one enslaved. **Sinners need something more than a new condition. We need a new nature!**

**If it were possible for the sinner to improve his condition, he would still be a slave.** The Lord Jesus Christ freed his elect from Satan’s clutches, freed us from sin and death, and freed us from the curse of the law when he died as our Substitute on Calvary’s cursed tree (Colossians 2:10-15; Galatians 3:13).

(Colossians 2:10-15) “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (11) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh **by the circumcision of Christ:** (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he **quickeneth together with him,** having forgiven you all trespasses; (14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) **And having spoiled** principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

(Galatians 3:13) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.”

**But our Savior’s work on the cross did not, in any way, change our nature.** We were still “*dead in trespasses and in sins,*” walking “*according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others*” (Ephesians 2:1-3). We were still in bondage in our souls. We had to have a new nature imparted to us and created in us before we could live in liberty.

## OUR STANDING

The Lord Jesus Christ has, by the invincible power and grace of God the Holy Spirit, brought us experimentally into an entirely new condition, giving us a new nature to match the condition. — **Free born children!** We stand before God in Christ and in grace. — *“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”* (Romans 4:25-5:2).

**We stand before God in Christ without sin, without guilt, without condemnation, “complete in him,” in a state of perfect and everlasting justification.** That is to say, not only has the Lord God fully pardoned us from all sin (past, present, and future), he has made us completely and perfectly righteous in his Son, **giving us in Christ such perfect righteousness that his infinite holiness cannot find so much as a single stain upon us!** He has taken us out of our former condition of guilt, and placed us, absolutely and eternally, in a new condition of unspotted righteousness.

**Justification is not an improvement of standing. It is a totally new standing! And the new birth is not an improvement of our fallen nature! It is the creation of a new nature, “a new creature”** (2 Corinthians 5:17). — *“That which is crooked cannot be made straight.”* And that which is unholy cannot be made holy. — *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh.”* The old man cannot be made clean. — *“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?”* **The new birth is Christ coming into us,** *“Christ in you the hope of glory,”* by which we are made *“partakers of the divine nature.”* **It is the birth of a new man,** *“created in righteousness and true holiness,”* a man who can walk before God in freedom!

**Man is born in a slavery. Until he is “born again” he cannot know anything else.** You may try to improve yourself. You may resolve to be better in the future, “turn over a new leaf,” and live a better life. You may give up this vice or that, and begin to practice this or that virtue; but you can do nothing to change your condition as a sinner, a bondman, a slave to Satan and to sin. — **You may scream,** “No, I’m good!” But your heart and

conscience screams back, “You’re a liar! The outside may be clean, but inside you are as vile as hell itself!”

You may get a little dose of religion, and start going to church, reading your Bible, praying, and doing good things for other people. You may get baptized, join the church, take the Lord’s Supper, teach Sunday School, preach, and become a zealous missionary. — But “*ye must be born again*” or perish in bondage under the wrath of God.

**How can this new birth be had? It can be had only by the Son of God saying to Satan, “Let my people go!”** It can be had only by the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the dead and saying, “*Live!*” And **when he does that, the heaven born soul believes on the Son of God receiving him gladly** (John 1:12-13; 3:36; 5:24; 17:3; 1 John 5:11-12).

(John 1:12-13) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

(John 3:36) “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

(John 5:24) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

(John 17:3) “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

(1 John 5:11-12) “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (12) He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

Upon what basis does the Lord God deal with sinners in such grace? Upon what basis dares any sinner hope that he can ever walk before God in freedom, without guilt, fearing no condemnation, finding acceptance with him? Read Exodus 5:3. **The only basis upon which anyone can ever entertain such hope is a blood Sacrifice, the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

(Exodus 5:3) “And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days’ journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.”

- “*The God of the Hebrews hath met with us.*” — It was God who came to Israel, not Israel that came to God.
- “*Let us go three days’ journey.*” — Three days is the time between the death of Christ and his resurrection as our Substitute.
- “*Sacrifice unto the LORD.*” — The Lord God requires that we bring a sacrifice to him, but only the Sacrifice he requires, the Sacrifice he provides, the Sacrifice he accepts, the Sacrifice he is — The Lord Jesus Christ!
- “*Lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.*” — If we do not come to him and worship him in and by Christ, he will fall upon us in his wrath!

**That is the plain, universal doctrine of Holy Scripture. Everything turns on, rests on, and depends upon this one thing. — “Jesus died and rose again.”** Blessed are they who can truthfully say, “*We believe that Jesus died and rose again.*” The ever-blessed Son of God came down into this world of guilt and sin, took on him the likeness of sinful flesh, and died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, under the full weight of his people’s sins, being made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!

- By his one sacrifice, by his obedience and blood, the Lord Jesus Christ met all that was or could be demanded of us, and removed all that was or could be against us.
- He magnified the law and made it honorable.
- In his sacrifice “*Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*”

- Infinite justice was satisfied.
- And, from the crucified Son of God, infinite love flows out in all its infinite fullness to poor needy sinners, to sit the captive free!

The crucified Christ is the Sacrifice God provided and God accepted, the Sacrifice that perfectly meets all the cravings of my needy soul and all the demands of a screaming conscience. The Lord Jesus, on the cross, died in my place. He died as my Representative, bearing my sin. **He died my death to give me his life!**

**I am forever linked to him** by my Father’s decree, by his own eternal espousal of my soul, by covenant union, and by the living union of grace, linking my soul and his! **That is the great freedom of life and grace that belongs to every believer!** — “*As he is so are we in this world*” (1 John 4:17).

**That is our joy, our peace, our assurance, our hope, our confidence before God in the blessed experience of his saving grace.** — “*We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement*” (Romans 5:11). **What blessed power and beauty I see in those emancipating words of our Savior!** — “*Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness!*” — (See Luke 4:18).

(Luke 4:18) “The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,”

The good news of grace is the announcement of full deliverance from every yoke of bondage. Peace and liberty are the boons Christ bestows upon his people in saving mercy.

### **DETERMINED DESTROYER**

But this liberty and freedom of grace does not come without pain. **I do not know that babies suffer any pain during the process of birth. But I do know that God’s children do suffer much pain in the experience of grace, in the experience of all that is associated with the new birth** — (Conviction, — Conversion, — Repentance, Taking Up The Cross, —

Losing Your Life). **If the seed of life is planted in the heart, the heart must be plowed; and the plowing of the heart is painful work.**

Christ is determined to save, determined to set his people free; but **Satan is determined to destroy**. Christ will prevail; but Satan never relents. That is what we see in the rest of this chapter. Pharaoh (the Destroyer) refused to let Israel go. Instead, he acted like an enraged tyrant who senses he is losing control. Knowing that he was losing control, the enraged king of Egypt demanded that the children of Israel make bricks without straw, and beat them because they could not produce the bricks he required (Exodus 5:4-19).

(Exodus 5:6-9) “And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, (7) Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. (8) And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God. (9) Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.”

(Exodus 5:11) “Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished.”

(Exodus 5:13-14) “And the taskmasters hastened *them*, saying, Fulfil your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw. (14) And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to day, as heretofore?”

(Exodus 5:18-19) “Go therefore now, *and* work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. (19) And the officers of the children of Israel did see *that* they *were* in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task.”

**Pharaoh’s severe measures illustrate the malignant efforts of Satan against the soul when the Lord begins to deal with him in grace.** When

Satan sees Christ coming to spoil him of his goods, coming in mercy to a poor sinner, he puts forth every effort to hold his house and his goods in tact. **The fiend of hell is never more violently malicious than now.** He spares no pain. Satan never gives up his prey without a fierce struggle. When a soul is convicted of sin, and brought to long after liberty and peace with God, the Devil endeavors, just as Pharaoh did with the Israelites, to expel all such desires from his heart.

There is a vivid example of what I have in mind in **Luke 9:42.** — “*And as he was yet a coming, the demon threw him down, and tare him.*” That poor soul was coming to Christ, and as he was coming, the demon sought to destroy. **So long as a person has no desire after Christ Satan pretty much leaves him alone, but once a soul is awakened to his need of a Savior and begins to seriously seek him, Satan will put forth every effort to destroy him.** This is why so many convicted souls find that **their case gets worse before it gets better.** So it was here with the Hebrews.

Just as hope was awakened, their misery was increased. Just when deliverance seemed at hand, their bondage was made more bitter. **John Trapp** observed, “Things commonly go backward with the saints before they come forward, as the corn groweth downward ere it grow upward.”

**It seems to me that the fiend of hell most commonly seeks to destroy the souls of men by putting the sinner who seeks grace upon the footing of works.** He takes the place of pretended holiness and righteousness, and demands that the sinner produce bricks by which he can build a stair case to the altar of God, saying, “*Go, therefore, and work!*”

- God requires righteousness. Produce some.
- God requires repentance. Where is yours?
- God requires you to believe. Produce a little faith.
- God demands mourning; but you have not really mourned.
- God requires a sincere heart; but your heart is full of deceit and hypocrisy.

The most profound darkness and depressing gloom always precedes the rising of “*the Sun of Righteousness*” from behind the thick clouds, with healing in his wings, to heal eternally, “*the hurt of the daughter of his people.*”

**MESSENGER DESPISED**

When guilt and oppression of soul increases, when bitterness increases, when the commandment comes and sin revives, the poor sinner often begins to despise the messenger of deliverance. I have seen that happen many times, just as it is described in Exodus 5:20-21.

“And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.”

Hunting dogs will often, in the heat of the hunt, snarl at and bite their best friends. And sinners, when sin is made bitter to them, often snarl at and bite the man who delivers the message of redemption and grace to him.

### **MOSES’ PRAYER**

We are told by the Spirit of God...

(2 Timothy 2:24-26) “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, (25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; (26) And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

Rather than striving with the people, Moses turned to his Master, speaking to the Lord God as a man speaks to his friend, he unburdened his heavy, breaking heart (Exodus 5:22-23).

“And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou *so* evil entreated this people? why *is* it *that* thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.”

Many would chastise Moses severely for his words here. Everything I have read on these verses suggests that Moses’ faith should have been stronger, his will more broken, and his resignation more complete. And those are the nicer things men have said about the prophet. **But there is no indication**

**from God, before whom Moses poured out his soul, that he was displeased at all. In fact we are encouraged, both by God’s own command and by example to do exactly what Moses did** (Isaiah 37:14-16, 20; 43:25-26; 45:11; Hebrews 4:16).

(Isaiah 37:14-16) “And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. (15) And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying, (16) O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.”

(Isaiah 37:20) “Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.”

(Isaiah 43:25-26) “I, *even* I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. (26) Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.”

(Isaiah 45:11) “Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.”

(Hebrews 4:16) “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

## **GOD’S ANSWER**

I am sure that the Lord God was not angered by Moses’ honesty in opening his heart before him, because the answer the Lord gave him did not have the slightest hint of disapproval or rebuke. It was all grace. Moses sought grace to help in time of need, and God gave it (Exodus 6:1).

(Exodus 6:1) “Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see

what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.”

We often get in a hurry. God never does. There is no need for him to hurry. **His delays** (or what we think are delays) **are always wise and good. He did not deliver Israel immediately, and he purposed that they must endure greater afflictions than they had known before, because he was determined to be gracious to them and to do them the best good possible.**

- He did not destroy Pharaoh until Pharaoh made it clear that justice demanded his overthrow.
- His tolerance of Pharaoh and Egypt for so long, displayed his greatness who “*bears with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.*”
- And, the more they were afflicted the more his people would appreciate the deliverance when the appointed time arrived.

(Habakkuk 2:3) “For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

(Isaiah 40:27-31) “Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? (28) Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding. (29) He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength. (30) Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: (31) But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.”

Amen.