

WATCH WHAT YOU SAY
Exodus 5:1-14

We are happy to be here with you today, welcome and thank you for joining us. We are Heralds of Hope, and our goal is to use media, like radio, internet, and books, to make disciples of Jesus Christ to accomplish the great commission in our lifetime. Think about that, do you think it is possible to accomplish the great commission? Can we go everywhere and teach all nations? Do you think we have the resources necessary to accomplish this? Yes absolutely, planes make it possible to travel anywhere in 1 day, our communication is instant and it's possible to have a conversation with anyone in the world, no matter where they are. Do we have the funds to accomplish this? If God's people will align our hearts with His heart, funding will not be a problem. The hard part is keeping our hearts in line. As followers of Jesus, we must focus on going and teaching. Here at Heralds of Hope we believe it is possible and we plan to do our part as God leads us.

This belief leads us to teach the Bible via radio, like this. If you can, turn with us now to Exodus. We will continue our journey through this Old Testament book with our Bible Teacher J Mark Horst, and here he is to teach us today's lesson.

Words are important. Without words it is hard to communicate. Words form commands. Words bring comfort, but they can also bring pain. When I was a child, we had a saying; "sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me." But you know, that's not quite true. Words may not hurt us physically, but they have the power to hurt us emotionally and spiritually. We really need to think carefully about the words we use; they're powerful.

Because words are powerful, God chose to reveal Himself to us in words. In fact, Jesus is referred to as the Word, capital W. And He said, *"The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* So, words are important, and we must be careful how we use them. That's why, in my teaching for today I am giving a warning to you in this title: WATCH WHAT YOU SAY!

Pharaoh was a man who did not watch his words. He spoke out of his pride and human wisdom. He didn't properly think about the consequences his words might have. What he did though prepared the way for God to deal very severely with him. That's why it is so important for you and me to watch what we say. The Scripture text is found in Exodus 5:1-14.

1. *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.*

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.*

4. *And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.*

5. *And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.*

6. *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.*

10. *And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.*

11. *Go ye, get your straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished.*

12. *So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw.*

13. *And the taskmasters hasted 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 today, as heretofore?*

We see here several OUTCOMES in Pharaoh's conversation which ought to help us watch what we say.

The first outcome was,

I. The Challenge

When Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh to make their request they said, "The LORD God of Israel makes a request of you." Now that sounds strange, doesn't it, that the God of Israel would ask a favor of the King of Egypt. But that's the way the words come to us. Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh, "Let my people go..." and they said it in the name of the LORD. God wanted His people to go out into the wilderness and hold a feast unto Him.

Now, notice Pharaoh's reply. He said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice?" It is very possible that he did not know anything about the true God, the LORD God of Israel. He knew about the gods of Egypt, but Pharaoh confessed he did not know Israel's God, and therefore refused to grant this request. He said, "I do not know the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." Pharaoh didn't know it, but God was setting him up in order that God would be glorified.

But Moses warned him, "The LORD will fall upon us with pestilence or with sword unless we do what He says." Instead of Pharaoh agreeing with Moses he refused completely to cooperate. He analyzed the situation like this: the people of Israel don't have enough to do. That's the problem. Let's lay more work on them. In fact, he accused Moses and Aaron of creating the problem distracting them from their work so that they would not cooperate with the taskmasters; because of that, Pharaoh thought they did not have enough to do.

Well, there is the challenge: Who is the LORD that I should obey Him? Pharaoh should have been more careful with his words. That's why I repeat, watch what you say.

We observe a second outcome which is,

II. The Charge

Pharaoh commanded his taskmasters to make it more difficult for those Hebrew slaves by withholding from them the straw they were using in the making of bricks. We do not know what all this involved but experience tells us that wheat straw adds a certain quality in brickmaking. Pharaoh saw the opportunity of making things more difficult for the slaves of Israel by withholding straw from them and making them search for it.

So, he said, "Do not give them anymore straw. Let them go and gather it wherever they can find it." But he also added, "Do not reduce the number of bricks that must be made in a day's time." With less materials they were to produce the same amount of product. He said, "Now that's the way we'll get rid of their request. We'll make them work so hard they won't have time to think of anything else."

You would think he should have known his harsh response would simply aggravate their request. But he did not reason that way. He reasoned the other way: if we make them work real hard, they won't have time to think about going and sacrificing to their God. So, he required them to produce as many bricks in the day without straw as they had produced with straw.

He said to the taskmasters, "Don't take any excuses from them. Don't pay attention to their complaints. Lay upon the men the labor that they had before and do not accept anything from them but their full number of bricks." We could say to Pharaoh, "Watch what you say because you are preparing the way for something which you don't really expect."

We observe a third outcome, there was

III. The Choice.

The taskmasters of the people and the officers presented this charge to the people, "Let there be no straw provided." That left the people with only one choice and that was to search for this material wherever they could find it. The Bible tells us here that the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather the stubble instead of the straw. Even the materials that they could find were less desirable for their job than those that had been furnished to them before. They had no other choice than to do the best they could under the circumstances.

They labored now with more difficulty than before. It had been hard work and now it was much harder work. They were unable to fulfill the requirements that Pharaoh had laid down for them. They were unable to make as many bricks as they had made before. As a result, the officers that had been placed over the people were beaten by the task masters. There was no other choice; there was no other way; there were no alternatives. So, there was greater affliction because Pharaoh, king of Egypt, did not watch what he said.

Yes, words are important. Words carry weight. By them we convey commands. By them we can offer comfort. God marks your words. Yes, He does. Jesus said in Matthew 12:36 and 37, "*But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*"

God marked Pharaoh's words, and by the words that Pharaoh spoke he set the stage for a battle with God. He should have been more careful with his words in the presence of the LORD God of Israel. That's why I issue this warning to you: Watch what you say, because the LORD God is listening. He is keeping a record of what you say.

Beware, lest you talk proudly or foolishly in His presence. You may indeed be setting a stage for your own downfall as Pharaoh did. So, watch what you say!

Thanks J Mark for teaching us more from Exodus and thank you for being there. If you would like this teaching or if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us, I'll give you our information shortly.

I love how Exodus teaches us that God is in control and He's at work, He always has been, and He always will be. We can trust Him right now no matter what we are experiencing. We won't always understand Him, but we can trust Him. His timing might be different than ours, think about Moses and He may not do what we think He should be doing, remember what happened to Joseph. However, we have the benefit of looking back at many years of history and we can see God is Sovereign, His purposes will be accomplished. This is His story, and He is the author.

If you are interested, we have a study guide for Exodus available. It is a small booklet designed to help you learn more from each of these lessons. We call it the Hope Herald and if you would like one all you have to do is ask.

Here is how you can connect with us. One of the best ways is via email. Our email is mail@heraldsofhope.org. If you don't have email, you could send us a letter, our address is Hope for Today, Box 3, Breezewood, PA 15533. Or you can connect with us on our website. Our website is Heraldsofhope.org. While you are there, please look around for more teaching like this. On our website you will also find other resources available from Heralds of Hope. Again, the website is www.Heraldsofhope.org.

Thanks again for joining us for today's program. I encourage you to join us again next week as we continue our study in Exodus. We look forward to being with you then and will leave you with a verse from I Corinthians 10, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, Do it all for the glory of God!" Blessings to you as you glorify Him.