TALKING POINTS

Exodus

Quarter 3, Lesson 3
"Rough Start"

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MEMORY VERSE: "Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness."'And Pharaoh said, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.'" Exodus 5:1, 2, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This week's study examines Moses's return to Egypt and initial interactions with the Israelites and Pharaoh as recorded primarily in Exodus 5 and 6.

1. Pharaoh's Egypt embodied disbelieving defiance of God (Sun)

- Moses and His God were a threat to Pharaoh's pride.
    - "The Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was a god on earth, the son of the god Ra (or Osiris or Horus). Ra was considered the highest Egyptian deity, the sun god himself." Qtly, Lesson 1, Tue, par 3
    - Moses was likely Pharaoh's adopted older brother (see TE Qtly, p. 41, par 1). Moses' return, especially claiming to bear a message and directive from the true God, was deeply offensive to Pharaoh.
    - "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?... I do not know the Lord nor will I let Israel go." (Ex. 5:2)
        - This is the type of not knowing like that of Pharaoh years earlier "who did not know Joseph" (Ex. 1:8)—not of ignorance but of arrogance. Less "I don't know" than "I won't know."
- The disbelieving defiance of Egypt under this Pharaoh is used as a symbol of arrogant, aggressive atheism in Bible prophecy, particularly as manifest in the French Revolution (Rev. 11:8).

> Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God and resisted His commands… This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance. GC 269 (Qtly, Sun, par 7)

2. Following God is rarely easy or popular (Mon, Wed)

- One reform Moses revived was seventh-day Sabbath rest. (Ex. 4:29-31; Ex. 5:4, 5, 17).

- "The Hebrew word shabat is pointing to the Sabbath rest, according to some Jewish and Christian interpreters. The phrase 'rest from' work is found only in one other place, namely in Genesis 2:2, 3." (TE Qtly, p. 40, par 4)

In their bondage the Israelites had to some extent lost the knowledge of God's law, and they had departed from its precepts. The Sabbath had been generally disregarded, and the exactions of their taskmasters made its observance apparently impossible. But Moses had shown his people that obedience to God was the first condition of deliverance; and the efforts made to restore the observance of the Sabbath had come to the notice of their oppressors. PP 258 (see also PP 757, Note 1, and EP 549)

- Pharaoh regarded this rest as mere idleness and religious refreshment, both of which threatened his ambitions.

- Instead of immediate deliverance, Israel faced increased persecution, and their faith faltered (compare Ex. 4:29-31 w/ Ex. 5:20, 21 and Ex. 6:9).

3. A prophet is a spokesperson for God (Thu)

- In the relation of Aaron to Moses, the Bible makes explicitly clear that the work of a prophet is a spokesperson (Ex. 4:10-16; Ex. 7:1, 2).
  - The prophet's role is to express and explain the Word of the Lord—to literally be a messenger of the Lord.
  - We should believe and obey a prophet not out of reverence for the prophet, but for the Lord whose messenger he or she is. (2 Chr. 20:20).

To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I can not call myself other than a messenger sent to bear a message from the Lord to his people, and to take up work in any line that he points out. RH, July 26, 1906

CONCLUSION

Read Exodus 6:1-8; "God will no longer only speak; He will now mightily intervene in favor of His people" Qtly, Tue, par 4