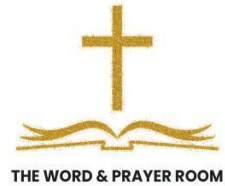


The Uncomfortable Call Series

The Call of Moses



Day 5: When Obedience Meets Opposition

Because every divine assignment will test whether you trust His word or your results.

Key Scripture: Exodus 5:22–23 (NLT)

“Then Moses went back to the Lord and protested, ‘Why have You brought all this trouble on Your own people, Lord? Why did You send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh as Your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to Your people. And You have done nothing to rescue them!’”

Context: When Obedience Makes Life Harder, Not Easier

Moses finally obeys. After all the hesitations, the questions, and the trembling at the burning bush - he steps out. Aaron joins him, signs and wonders follow, and for a brief moment it feels as though everything is finally aligning. The people believe. Worship rises. The promise finally seems in motion. But it doesn't last.

The obedience that started in fire quickly runs into fury. Pharaoh mocks their message: “Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?” (Exodus 5:2). The same mouth that once commanded “Let there be” now meets the human heart that dares to say, “I won't.” When God spoke to creation, everything responded - light appeared, seas parted, life began - but when He spoke to a human being, that human resisted. It's the tragedy of free will: the Creator's word, which shaped galaxies, is now contested by the creature He formed from dust. Instead of release, Pharaoh responds with retaliation. He doubles the workload and demands the same quota of bricks. The Israelites - already exhausted - are crushed. The hands that were raised in worship now tremble in resentment. And the same people who once celebrated Moses now curse his name.

Moses expected resistance from Pharaoh, but not from his own people. That's often how obedience breaks us - not through external opposition, but through the disappointment of those we thought would support us. It's

one thing to fight the world; it's another to be misunderstood by the ones you're fighting for.

The weight of leadership hits fast. The people's pain becomes his burden, their anger becomes his guilt. He turns to God in confusion: "Why have You brought all this trouble on Your own people? Why did You send me?" (Exodus 5:22). It's an honest, exhausted prayer. He isn't defiant - he's disillusioned. He finally said yes to God, and all it earned him was blame.

This is the unspoken side of calling - when obedience makes life harder, not easier. We assume saying "yes" to God should simplify things, when in truth it exposes everything that's been waiting to resist His will. Obedience shakes the systems that have learned to live comfortably with oppression. It doesn't just disturb Pharaoh's palace - it stirs everything inside you that still fears rejection, still craves validation, still hates conflict.

And Pharaoh's resistance isn't random - it's strategic. His tactics are not brute force alone; they're manipulation wrapped in diplomacy. Pharaoh begins to play what can only be called "Pharaoh games" - subtle mind-games designed to make Moses question his discernment, his progress, and his sanity. Each time Moses demands full release, Pharaoh offers partial freedom.

"Go, but not too far." (Exodus 8:28)

"Go, but only the men." (Exodus 10:11)

"Go, but leave your cattle behind." (Exodus 10:24)

Every compromise sounds reasonable - almost spiritual. Pharaoh doesn't outright reject God's will; he just tries to redefine it. He knows if he can't stop Moses, he can slow him down. If he can't keep Israel enslaved, he can keep them limited. That's how the enemy still works. He doesn't always attack your obedience - sometimes he negotiates it. He whispers, "Go ahead and serve God, but don't get too serious. Step out in faith, but keep one foot in safety. Obey, but only if it still makes sense." He'll never say, "don't obey" - he'll just say, "not fully." Because partial obedience feels safer than none, but it leads to the same bondage.

For Moses and Aaron, this was exhausting. They faced a ruler who kept changing the rules - “Go, stay, go, not far, go, but not all of you.” It was a cycle of hope and heartbreak. Each time God moved, Pharaoh manipulated. And in between every conversation, Moses had to face the people - frustrated, fearful, suspicious. Their faith dwindled. Their gratitude turned to grumbling.

Imagine the tension: Moses was caught in a game of spiritual tug-of-war - between a God who promised deliverance and a king who refused to let go. This was not just a political battle; it was a psychological war. Pharaoh’s offers of compromise were designed to wear them down — to make them question the cost of obedience. That’s how compromise works: not through one grand temptation, but through fatigue that whispers, “Maybe this is good enough.” And if Moses had accepted any of those deals, Israel would have left Egypt free in body but still enslaved in spirit. They would have crossed borders without breaking chains. Pharaoh didn’t care if they worshipped, as long as they stayed within reach. The enemy doesn’t mind if you go to church, pray, or sing - as long as you never go far enough to be changed.

God wanted total deliverance - not convenience disguised as obedience. Moses’s call was not to negotiate freedom but to demand it. But that came at a price. The more he obeyed, the heavier the opposition. The more he trusted, the deeper the isolation. Pharaoh’s strategy was to drain confidence and delay courage until obedience felt foolish. That same tactic still works today. The enemy can’t cancel your calling, but he can exhaust your conviction. He uses disappointment to dull your faith, criticism to cloud your vision, and compromise to quiet your obedience. He doesn’t need you to quit - he just needs you to settle.

For Moses, the temptation to settle must have been real. He could have reasoned, “Maybe leaving the cattle isn’t so bad. Maybe I should just take whoever wants to come.” That’s how subtle compromise sounds when you’re tired. But God had made it clear: “Not a hoof will be left behind.” (Exodus 10:26). This story teaches us that obedience is not proven by agreement; it’s proven by endurance. You don’t just say yes once - you say yes repeatedly, every time compromise knocks.

Focus of the Day: When Doing Right Feels Wrong

Obedience is thrilling when it works, and crushing when it doesn't. Moses learns that faith isn't tested in the miracle - it's tested in the waiting between miracles. He obeys, and Pharaoh retaliates. He speaks, and the people lose heart. He prays, and nothing changes. That's the wilderness between command and completion. God could have softened Pharaoh's heart instantly, but He didn't. Because this moment isn't about proving power to Pharaoh; it's about shaping perseverance in Moses.

Moses's cry in Exodus 5:22 - "Why did You send me?" - is not rebellion; it's exhaustion. He isn't quitting; he's confused. His obedience produced pain, and he's brave enough to tell God so. That's faith in its truest form — honesty that refuses to walk away. God answers not with explanation but with assurance: "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh." (Exodus 6:1). When obedience meets opposition, God doesn't change His instruction; He deepens His intention. Obedience isn't about outcome; it's about alignment. God is building endurance, not efficiency. Because obedience that survives disappointment becomes authority that carries deliverance.

Why We Struggle When Obedience Hurts

- Because we expect obedience to bring reward, not resistance - and when pain comes, we assume we've misheard God.
- Because waiting feels like punishment when you've done everything right.
- Because we confuse progress with approval, as though visible results prove divine favour.
- Because silence after obedience feels cruel when we crave confirmation.
- Because we measure faithfulness by comfort instead of consistency.

Detailed Scripture Breakdown: Exodus 5:22–23 (NLT)

- **In verse 22, the silence finally breaks** - not from heaven, but from Moses. The same man who once stood speechless before the burning bush now finds his voice again, only this time it's laced with pain. "Then Moses went back to the Lord and protested, 'Why have

You brought all this trouble on Your own people, Lord? Why did You send me?”

- **This is not defiance;** it's despair wrapped in devotion. The weight of disappointment pushes Moses into the rawest kind of prayer - the kind that stops performing and starts bleeding. He's not just asking why the plan failed; he's asking why he was chosen at all. It's a cry from the very core of obedience and outcome - where faith has done everything right, and life still feels wrong.
- **Notice the sequence:** "Moses went back to the Lord." Even in frustration, he returns to the same God who sent him. That movement matters. He doesn't retreat into silence or vent to the people; he takes his confusion to the One who can bear it. When faith wounds you, returning to God is the first act of recovery. This verse also unmask a quiet truth: calling will confront your assumptions about God. Moses thought obedience would make the mission smoother; instead, it made it harder. He thought obedience guaranteed success; instead, it exposed systems and hearts that refused to change. Sometimes, obedience doesn't open doors - it reveals resistance.
- **Moses's words, "Why did You send me?"** show the fracture between divine purpose and human expectation. The question isn't about Egypt; it's about identity. Beneath the frustration lies fear - "Maybe I was never the right person for this." Every leader knows that echo. When obedience seems to fail, insecurity rises from the ashes of disappointment.
- **In verse 23, the lament sharpens into accusation:** "Ever since I came to Pharaoh as Your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to Your people. And You have done nothing to rescue them!" This is one of the most brutally honest sentences in all of Scripture. Moses, the man who saw God's fire, now tells that same God, "You have done nothing." His words are raw, but they are real - and that's what makes them holy. God allows this honesty to remain in Scripture because He values authenticity over appearance.

- **Here we see the inner collapse** that often follows courageous obedience. Moses expected God to act quickly; instead, he's met with silence. Every miracle feels meaningless, every word wasted. He can't see that God's delay is deliberate - that the resistance is preparing the stage for greater revelation. The situation hasn't failed; it's fermenting.
- **The tension in this verse isn't just between Moses and Pharaoh** - it's between faith and feeling. Moses knows God is powerful, but what he sees doesn't match what he believes. That's the crisis every believer faces when obedience doesn't yield results. What do you do when God's promise and your pain coexist? Yet even here, notice what Moses gets right: he keeps talking to God. He doesn't abandon his assignment or rewrite the vision. He stays in conversation. This is faith at its most fragile and its most mature - not faith that shouts victory, but faith that refuses silence. True faith doesn't always sound strong; sometimes it sounds like this - tired, honest, but still directed toward heaven.
- **As the chapter closes, God doesn't correct Moses;** He lets him speak. There's no thunder, no rebuke, no lecture on reverence - just space. Holy space. The kind that lets pain breathe before purpose resumes. Between verse 23 and the opening of chapter 6 lies a silence that only grace can hold. Because sometimes, before God reveals what He's doing, He lets you release what you're feeling.

What Can We Learn for Our Calling Today?

- Partial obedience is still disobedience; discern the compromises that look harmless.
- Obedience often triggers opposition because truth confronts control.
- When resistance rises, don't question your calling - question your compromise.
- God's silence after obedience is never absence; it's strategy.
- Faith matures when results delay but obedience continues.

- Discernment protects deliverance; watch out for Pharaoh's subtle offers.

Key Themes

- Obedience attracts resistance; resistance develops resilience.
- The enemy negotiates before he concedes.
- Waiting after obedience refines trust.
- Discernment is the safeguard of destiny.
- God's faithfulness outlasts every false offer.

Practical Application

- **Step 1: Recognise the Pharaoh Games.** Watch for subtle deals that ask you to settle - "not too far," "not too much," "not right now."
- **Step 2: Discern Partial Freedom.** Ask, "What am I leaving behind that God told me to bring?" True freedom costs everything.
- **Step 3: Bring Your Frustration to God.** Like Moses, turn protest into prayer. He prefers honesty to performance.
- **Step 4: Refuse to Negotiate Your Calling.** The enemy will always offer less than what God promised. Don't sign the deal.
- **Step 5: Stay Steady in Silence.** When God seems quiet, He's strategising your victory. Patience is participation in His plan.

Declarations

- My obedience is not for sale.
- I will not negotiate with compromise.
- God is working through the resistance I face.
- Even in delay, He is delivering something deeper in me.
- Not a hoof will be left behind - my freedom will be whole.

Prayer

Father, Thank You that Your plans cannot be bargained down by fear or control. When obedience makes life harder, remind me that You are still in the story. Teach me to see through the Pharaoh games - those offers that sound harmless but that keep me half free.

When I am tired of resistance, strengthen me to stand. When I am tempted to settle, whisper, “Not a hoof will be left behind.” When I am blamed for obeying, help me remember that You measure faithfulness by my “Yes,” not by applause.

Today, I choose to trust Your timing even when the battle feels long. Make me discerning enough to spot deception, humble enough to stay obedient, and strong enough to wait for complete deliverance.

You are the God who finishes what You start. Keep me from half-freedom, half-faith, and half-obedience. Let my life say that Your Word is worth every fight. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Final Reflection

Obedience will always expose opposition, and opposition will always reveal what kind of obedience you carry. Pharaoh’s tactics didn’t end in Egypt - they live on in every compromise that tells you partial surrender is enough.

Moses learned that the hardest part of leadership isn’t facing Pharaoh; it’s refusing to make peace with him. God’s people were meant for full deliverance, not comfortable captivity. So, when resistance rises and the offers sound reasonable, remember: every false deal delays true freedom. Don’t negotiate with what God told you to leave behind, and don’t leave behind what God told you to take forward. Because faith that endures opposition becomes fire that cannot be extinguished.

In tomorrow’s study, we will step into the turning point - where pressure produces power and God’s judgment becomes Israel’s deliverance. Blessings as you meditate, hear what the Lord is saying, and act in obedience.