When Obedience Makes Life Harder
Companion Bible Study · Participant Guide
A People for His Presence · Exodus 5:1–6:13 · Study 8

Central truth: When obedience makes life harder, God's promises have not failed, because the LORD remains faithful to accomplish his redemptive purposes.

Before you begin
Read Exodus 5:1–6:13 in your Bible. This study can be completed whether or not you heard the Sunday sermon. Work from the text itself: notice who speaks, what changes, and what God actually promises. For individual study, allow approximately 25–35 minutes; a group can use the questions in 50–60 minutes. You do not need to share personal hardships to participate.

1. God's Claim and Pharaoh's Resistance
Read Exodus 5:1–9; compare Exodus 4:22–23 and 3:19–20.

1. What does Moses announce in 5:1, and what do the phrases “Thus says the LORD” and “my people” tell us about the authority and relationship at stake?
2. How does Pharaoh answer in 5:2? What does his question, “Who is the LORD?”, reveal about the conflict between Pharaoh's authority and God's claim?
3. What changes in Pharaoh's orders in 5:6–9, and why does he impose heavier work? How does God's earlier warning in 3:19–20 help us evaluate whether the resistance was unexpected?

2. When Suffering Changes What People Can See
Read Exodus 5:10–23; compare Exodus 4:31.

4. What happens to the workers and foremen when the brick quotas remain unchanged? Identify the concrete burdens rather than assuming how each person felt.
5. Compare the people's worship in 4:31 with the foremen's accusation in 5:21. What changed in their circumstances? What does the narrative say—and not say—about their understanding of God's promise?
6. Read Moses' questions in 5:22–23. What does he accurately observe about the suffering? What conclusion does he draw about God's deliverance? Why does it matter that he turns to the LORD with his complaint?

3. God's Answer: His Name and His Promises
Read Exodus 6:1–8; compare Genesis 15:13–14.

7. How does 6:1 respond to the apparent power of Pharaoh? What does the LORD direct Moses to expect from God's action?
8. List what God recalls about the patriarchs and his covenant in 6:2–5. How does this longer history challenge Moses' judgment based only on recent events? In 6:3, what is clear about

God's covenant faithfulness even though the wording has been interpreted differently?
9. Mark every “I will” statement in 6:6–8. Which promises concern rescue, which concern belonging to God, and which concern the land promised to Israel's ancestors? Why is “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God” (6:7) central to the purpose of deliverance?

4. Discouragement and the Greater Redeemer
Read Exodus 6:9–13; Titus 2:14; Acts 2:23–24; 1 Peter 1:3–5.

10. According to 6:9, why do the Israelites not listen to Moses? How should that explanation affect the way believers respond to someone overwhelmed by suffering?
11. What concern does Moses express in 6:12, and what does God do in 6:13? What remains unchanged when Moses and the people struggle?
12. Compare the purpose of Israel's redemption in Exodus 6:7 with Christ's work in Titus 2:14. What does Christ accomplish that deliverance from an earthly ruler alone could not?
13. According to Acts 2:23–24, what did Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection reveal about God's saving purpose, despite wicked human actions? What hope does 1 Peter 1:3–5 promise believers—and what immediate earthly outcomes does it not promise?

5. So What? The Difference This Truth Makes
Read Exodus 5:22–6:8 again.

14. When a hardship remains unresolved, what difference does knowing God's character and Christ's completed redemption make to the way we interpret the difficulty? How is trusting God's actual promises different from expecting a particular outcome?
15. What difference could this passage make to your ability to obey faithfully, face uncertainty, worship, or encourage a weary Christian? Identify a conclusion grounded in these passages rather than a prediction about how circumstances will change.

For reflection or group prayer
The LORD does not promise an easy path to those who obey him. Where would you benefit from distinguishing his revealed promises from your preferred timetable? What help could you offer someone whose burdens make encouragement hard to receive? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.

Closing prayer
Father, thank you that your faithfulness rests on your character and promises. Teach us to bring our confusion to you, to trust your Word rather than the conclusions our circumstances tempt us to draw, and to care gently for those who are weary. Fix our hope in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, whose death and resurrection secure our future with you. Amen.

Related teaching: “When Obedience Makes Life Harder,” Exodus 5:1–6:13 · Watch the sermon: https://youtu.be/XDJf_mzzm9I · Living Way Church Teaching Library: https://tlw.church/teaching/