

Exodus 5:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Moses and Aaron's first confrontation uses the covenant name יהוה (YHWH) and the title 'God of Israel,' asserting divine authority over Pharaoh. The request for a three-day journey to 'hold a feast' (חגָג, chagag) subtly tests Pharaoh's willingness to acknowledge Israel's God. This diplomatic approach demonstrates that hardening comes from Pharaoh's rejection, not arbitrary divine action.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern protocol required approaching kings through formal channels. Moses and Aaron's direct access to Pharaoh suggests their standing as Egyptian-educated leaders. The request to worship in the wilderness follows patterns of religious pilgrimages common in the ancient world.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. When have you witnessed God's authority confronting worldly power structures?
2. How does Moses's respectful but firm approach model engaging with hostile authorities?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	בְּאֹתֶן	מֹשֶׁה	וְאַבְרָהָם	אָמַר רַא	אָמַר	פְּרָעָה הָאָלָה
And afterward	went in	Moses	and Aaron	Thus saith	H413	Pharaoh
H310	H935	H4872	H175	H559		H3541
Thus saith	the LORD	God	of Israel	go	H853	Let my people
H559	H3068	H430	H3478	H7971		H5971
בְּמִדְבָּר:	לִכְיָד:					
that they may hold a feast	H2287	H0	unto me in the wilderness	H4057		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 10:9 (References Lord): And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD.

Acts 4:29 (References Lord): And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

Isaiah 25:6 (References Lord): And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

Psalms 119:46 (Parallel theme): I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

Exodus 3:18 (References God): And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

1 Corinthians 5:8 (Parallel theme): Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Matthew 10:18 (Parallel theme): And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

Matthew 10:28 (Parallel theme): And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Ezekiel 2:6 (Parallel theme): And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

1 Kings 21:20 (References Lord): And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.