

THE EXODUS FIVE

Part 2 • May 25, 2025 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

DELIVERANCE - LET MY PEOPLE GO

In Part 1 of our Exodus study, we stood at the burning bush. We saw that when God shows up, it's not explainable. It's not comfortable. **It's supernatural. It breaks the rules. Defies logic. Confronts culture.** And when Moses saw that fire, he said, **"This... I've got to see."**

That moment launched a journey—not just for Moses, but for us. A journey to encounter the fire of God, pass through fear and insecurity, through the lodging place of compromise, **and into obedience.** We also saw the hidden danger—that between the fire and the fulfillment of purpose, there is the Lodging Place (**Exodus 4:24**), where disobedience must die. Many are stuck there—still called, still marked—but unwilling to surrender.

OPPRESSION:

Concurrently to the encounter that Moses was having with the power, person, and fire of God. So were the people. Again, oppression doesn't happen in a vacuum. There is never just one reason why oppression exists. Many people will rightfully pick out what's wrong with the modern day leadership of the American Church. They will point, often times at real issues, against the Moses' of their generation. Immorality, greed, and manipulation have been in place instead of correction, love, rebuke, and righteousness. **But, deliverance wasn't just God preparing the leaders, it was God preparing the people.** While God deals with the leaders, he prepares his people. **It takes three groups of people to experience a move of God:**

First and foremost it takes God in His sovereignty to move towards us. Newsflash: He already has! Secondly, it takes leaders becoming who they are intended to become. It doesn't happen overnight. The journey is painful. Lastly and just as important, is the preparing of the people for freedom. Scripture documents the moment where the people began to turn towards freedom.

EXODUS 2:23 (KJV) ... Their cry came up unto God...

When their cry turned to God, everything changed. After many years of oppression, the people of Israel began to call desperately on God for help. When they turned to the Lord, he responded to them. He always rewards the seekers. Oppression is more than hardship. **Oppression is a systematic dehumanization, designed to strip identity, agency, and hope.**

It's what Egypt used to control God's people—and it's what still works today. Oppression's intention is to keep people from fulfilling their God-given purpose. Focusing on the noise and bondage of culture instead of the Freedom found in Christ.

The oppression the Israelites were living under in Egypt was multi-dimensional, and it mirrors many of the spiritual and cultural pressures we see in society today. Here's how that looked in Exodus—and what it still looks like today:

1. Physical Oppression – Forced Labor & Exhaustion

EXODUS 1:14 (KJV) And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick...

They were worked ruthlessly without rest. Their energy was being stolen to build someone else's kingdom, not God's. **Today?** Many are stuck in cycles of burnout, consumerism, and survival.

77% of U.S. workers report feeling burned out regularly. (Gallup, 2023)

2. Economic Oppression – Generational Poverty

Egypt profited from Israel's pain. Israel had no ownership, no inheritance, and no economic dignity.

Today? People are kept dependent on broken systems that benefit the powerful while the poor remain poor. Largely people are kept dependent on broken systems because of a lack of knowledge and poor personal disciplines.

12.4% of Americans live below the poverty line. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). 63% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck—even among those earning over \$100K. (PYMNTS.com / LendingClub, 2023)

3. Political Oppression – No Voice, No Rights

EXODUS 1:10 (NIV) *Come, we must deal shrewdly with them...*

Pharaoh feared their numbers and strength, so he silenced and controlled them. **Today?** There are still forces that suppress voices, limit freedom, and maintain control through fear and manipulation. We live in a world that desires the inclusivity that elevates their voice and silences opposition. Worship our gods and you will be included, worship your God and you will be excluded. **Reverse Censorship is here.** The demonic forces that cry for inclusivity are actually trying to squash it. Demonic tolerance is upon us, we are in a 'choose this day whom you will serve' moment. The world's tolerance is an ideology that promotes all forms of perversion and seeks to silence Godly morality.

Social censorship is rising: 1 in 3 Americans say they self-censor their political or religious beliefs. (Cato Institute, 2023)

4. Spiritual Oppression – Worship Was Forbidden

EXODUS 8:1 (NIV) *Let My people go, so that they may worship Me.*

Pharaoh wouldn't let them worship freely. True worship was seen as a threat to political control. The problems we face politically are actual spiritual issues. **Today?** We see increasing opposition to biblical worship, truth, and holiness, especially when it challenges culture. The economic, political, and social pressure forces Christians to practice in secret. The declaration of independence is let my people go....so that they may worship Me. You can never worship Him wholly until you break free from the systems of the world freely.

In 2023, 27% of Americans said they were afraid to express their religious beliefs publicly. (Pew Research Center). Christian student groups are increasingly denied access on some college campuses unless they alter doctrine to meet inclusion standards. (ADF Legal, 2023)

5. Cultural Oppression – Identity Erased

They were called "slaves," not "sons of Abraham." Egypt tried to erase their heritage and redefine them by their function (laborers) instead of their covenant identity. **Today?** The enemy works overtime to distort identity—telling people they are their race, their gender, their trauma, their productivity... anything but who God says they are.

Nearly 1 in 3 U.S. teens say they are unsure of their gender or identity. (Barna Research, 2023). A study found that 56% of Gen Z say they "struggle to know who they are." (Springtide Research Institute)

6. Infanticide – Destruction of the Next Generation

EXODUS 1:22 (NIV) *Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile...*

Pharaoh targeted the future—killing children to destroy destiny. **Today?** Our generation sees abortion, abuse, identity confusion, and spiritual apathy as attacks on the youth.

Over 1 million abortions occurred in the U.S. in 2023. (Guttmacher Institute, 2024). Teen suicide rates have increased by 60% in the past 10 years. (CDC, 2023). Over 1 in 4 teens report symptoms of depression or anxiety due to identity confusion, social pressure, and trauma. (JAMA Pediatrics, 2022)

Here is the truth: **Egypt was not just a place—it was a system. A demonic design to keep God's people bound, busy, blind, and broken.** But the same God who said "Let My people go" is still speaking today. **Oppression thrives where purpose is hidden, but freedom begins when God shows up and calls you by name.**

God says through Moses, enough is enough. I am going to confront the Egyptian god's and show my power and might. **The plagues weren't just punishments. They were divine showdowns—each one targeting a false god. God was not only freeing His people from physical slavery but also exposing the futility and powerlessness of Egypt's entire religious system.**

EXODUS 12:12 (NASB) *(makes this very clear) Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord.*

JOHN 17:14-16 (NIV) ¹⁴ *I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* ¹⁵ *My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one.* ¹⁶ *They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world*

The plagues weren't just to get Israel out of Egypt—they were God's courtroom where He tried and

judged every false god and belief. In America’s version of Christianity we serve only a loving God. He is loving but He is always JUST. When Jesus returns He will return ready to right the wrongs done against His people.

They revealed: God’s supremacy over nature. God’s authority over life and death. God’s heart to redeem His people and expose evil

Just like God dethroned Egypt’s gods through the plagues, He’s calling out modern-day idols in America that have taken His place. These are the strongholds we’ve bowed to—often unknowingly—and like in Egypt, they must fall before freedom can rise.

Here’s a breakdown of how each plague challenged a specific Egyptian deity or class of gods compared to the modern American idols showing what God may be confronting again today:

PLAGUE	EGYPT'S GODS	MODERN AMERICAN IDOL
1. WATER TO BLOOD <i>Exodus 7:14–24</i> Idol of Self-Sufficiency and Systems	Hapi – god of the Nile (source of life). God turned their “life source” into death, showing He alone controls life and nature.	Our trust in systems—economic, medical, educational—thinking man is the source.
	<i>God's Message: “I can shut it down in a moment. I am the source of life—not your economy, not your government, not your degrees.”</i>	
2. FROGS <i>Exodus 8:1–15</i> Idol of Over-Sexualization and Fertility Worship	Heqet – goddess of fertility, symbolized by a frog. Frogs were sacred and not to be killed. God sent so many that they became a curse, then caused them to die in heaps. He showed He could overwhelm and destroy what they revered.	America’s obsession with sex, sensuality, and identity confusion. We’ve turned intimacy into an idol.
	<i>God's Message: “What you worship as beautiful becomes overwhelming and grotesque when it's outside My design.”</i>	
3. GNATS/LICE <i>Exodus 8:16–19</i> Idol of Control and Cleanliness	Geb – god of the earth. Gnats came from the dust of the ground, demonstrating God’s authority over the earth and its creatures. Egyptian magicians couldn't replicate this one, and even said, “This is the finger of God.”	Obsession with control, perfection, image, cleanliness—the curated life, Instagram filters, the illusion of flawlessness.
	<i>God's Message: “I can turn your dust into discomfort and prove that nothing is under your control but Me.”</i>	
4. FLIES <i>Exodus 8:20–32</i> Idol of Chaos Disguised as Freedom	Khepri, god of creation, movement of the sun, and rebirth (depicted with a fly head). Swarms of flies showed that what they worshiped as a symbol of life was being used by God to bring ruin.	The idea that freedom = no rules, where chaos, lawlessness, and rebellion are glorified.
	<i>God's Message: “You wanted freedom without Me; now watch freedom rot in your hands.”</i>	
5. DEATH OF LIVESTOCK <i>Exodus 9:1–7</i> Idol of Wealth and Productivity	Hathor (cow goddess of love & protection) and Apis (bull god of strength and fertility). These animals were sacred and often deified. Their death showed God's power over agriculture, strength, and wealth.	Capitalism worshiped, where you work, status, and materialism are the measures of success.
	<i>God's Message: “Your hustle can't save you. I am your Provider, not your portfolio.”</i>	

PLAGUE	EGYPT'S GODS	MODERN AMERICAN IDOL
6. BOILS <i>Exodus 9:8–12</i> Idol of Body Image, Medicine, and Wellness as Savior	Imhotep: god of medicine and healing. The priests themselves couldn't stand before Moses because of the boils. God struck at their bodies and their trusted healers.	Worship of the body, beauty, health, and medical science as ultimate hope
	<i>God's Message: "Your body is not your god. I will show you who the true Healer is."</i>	
7. HAIL <i>Exodus 9:13–35</i> Idol of Climate and Nature Worship	Nut (sky goddess), Osiris (god of crops/agriculture), and Set (storm god). God brought hail and fire from heaven, devastating crops and fields. This plague shattered their belief in gods who supposedly controlled the weather and agriculture.	Environmentalism elevated to religion, where the created world is worshipped, not the Creator
	<i>God's Message: "You can't save the planet without Me. I rule the skies and command the storm."</i>	
8. LOCUSTS <i>Exodus 10:1–20</i> Idol of Security and Abundance	Osiris again and other gods of agriculture. After hail destroyed what was in the field, locusts came and finished it off. God was declaring, "Your gods can't protect your future."	The false sense of economic security, food stability, and resource control
	<i>God's Message: "In one moment I can expose your dependence and show you how frail your storehouses are."</i>	
9. DARKNESS <i>Exodus 10:21–29</i> Idol of Reason, Enlightenment, and Progress	Ra, the sun god, source of light and clarity, and chief of the Egyptian pantheon. Three days of total darkness, a direct attack on the most worshiped god in Egypt. God turned off their sun—something no human or idol could reverse.	Worship of human intellect, secularism, science-only thinking, and rejecting God as truth
	<i>God's Message: "Without Me, even the brightest minds sit in darkness."</i>	
10. DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN <i>Exodus 11:1–12:36</i> Idol of Legacy, Youth, and the Next Generation	Pharaoh himself (considered a god) and his lineage, plus gods like Isis (protector of children). The firstborn represented strength, legacy, and future. In killing them, God broke Egypt's pride, showed His justice, and redeemed His own firstborn—Israel (Ex. 4:22).	Worship of self through our children, career legacies, fame, and generational pride
	<i>God's Message: "I gave you your future—and I alone can redeem it or remove it. You must surrender even what you love most."</i>	

Final Word:

Just like in Egypt, God is not content to coexist with idols. He wants to dethrone everything that falsely claims authority, power, or hope—and reestablish Himself as Lord over a nation.

- **What in your life is sitting on God's throne?**
- **What are we trusting, fearing, loving, or obeying more than Him?**

When those idols fall, the world will look again and say: **"This... I've got to see."**