

From Genesis to Jesus: Unveiling the Heart of God — Power  
Exodus 5:1-2, 6:1-9  
Covenant Church  
June 14, 2026

## **Outline**

**MBI:** Because God is unrivaled in power expressed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, I can journey onward in faith no matter what comes.

**FCF:** Just like the Israelites, God's promises of powerful rescue can fall on our deaf ears because of our broken spirits and harsh slavery

**CRW:** God exercises his unrivaled power to glorify himself and rescue his people.

## **Introduction**

### **Arouse Attention**

Growing up, I had a lot of fun playing tennis at my small-town high school. We were never very competitive, but we all enjoyed the sport and the team camaraderie.

As each fall season began the game schedule came out and there was always one team we looked at with dread: The Northeast Dubois Jeeps.

### **Surface FCF**

If a town could be smaller, the town of Dubois, Indiana was, but their tennis team was mighty. In our minds, they were unbeatable.

One season, our hopes began to dawn. As the fall practices began an unknown athlete appeared hitting balls on our courts. None of us had seen this kid before, nor had we seen the furry of such power on the court.

Come to find out Thomas was a new international exchange student and was eager to play tennis during his stint in Indiana. All the sudden, with our new champion, our rivals looked smaller.

That season turned out to be one marked by a few more W's than we were accustomed to - and much of it was due to our #1 singles player, Thomas.

### **Connect to Audience**

Have you ever been on a team, project, or crew that's been rescued by a dark horse, an unexpected champion? Today we're going to read about one such story from the Bible.

### **Introduce Topic/Scripture**

The second book in the Bible, Exodus, tells the story of how God unexpectedly rescued his people, the Israelites, from forced slavery and oppression in Egypt in order to bring them into relationship with himself. Open your Bibles or Bible Apps and take a look at Exodus chapter 5 with me. For starters, we'll be in verses 1 & 2. Follow along as I read...

Read Exodus 5:1-2

**(Ex 5:1-2 ESV)**

<sup>1</sup>Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh [King of Egypt], “Thus says YHWH, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” <sup>2</sup>But Pharaoh said, “Who is YHWH, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know YHWH, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.”

**Point 1: Adjusting our Lenses**

We pick up the story of the Exodus with Moses and his spokesperson, Aaron, appearing to Pharaoh with YHWH's demands. There are two key ideas that will help us make sense of the interaction we just read. Much like a pair of binoculars, we need to make some adjustments if we're going to peer backwards 3,500 years and see clearly.

Firstly,

The world of ancient people was just like ours; however, their conception of the divine was a bit different.

To them, gods were regional, supernatural powers. Each kingdom, each tribe, each family had their own deities whom they trusted to protect and provide for them. The idea of one, singular God simply didn't exist yet.

Egypt is a classic example of a polytheistic society. There was a god of the Nile River, the lifeblood of the Egyptian civilization. There was a god of the sun, moon, and fertility...even Pharaoh himself was considered divine. If there was an important arena of life, you could be sure there was a supernatural deity to appease.

So, as we read our text this morning, we can see how it is a completely understandable for Pharaoh to ridicule Moses and YHWH, right? He's an unknown god, apparently powerless compared to the mighty gods of Egypt. It was a ridiculous request.

Second,

Ancient people attached significant theological value to all aspects of life. They had a perspective that we seem to have lost since the Enlightenment.

To them, the natural and supernatural world was connected, intermixing all the time.

For example, two years ago an eclipse basically shut down our state...Crowds gathered, workplaces closed, Indiana even issued a special license plate - just to observe the moon crossing in front of the sun. To us, this phenomenon is a regular, predictable process of nature we get to observe.

For an ancient person, an eclipse would shut down the state, but for an entirely different reason. Think about it...this dark object all the sudden blocks out the sun. It is as if something was eating, destroying their sun god. Something terrible is happening in the heavens. Instead of a state-wide holiday, it would have been time to hold solemn religious services in order to help set the heavens back in order.

So, understanding that the world of the Exodus was polytheistic and that ancient people attached theological significance to every aspect of life helps us make sense of what we're about to read.

**Transition:** In the face of Pharaoh's mockery, what is YHWH to do? His first request has been refused and, between our reading in chapter 5 and chapter 6, Pharaoh flexes his muscles by greatly increasing the workload on the Israelite slaves. Now, as we enter into chapter 6, Moses and the people are ready to give up hope. Who can stand against Pharaoh and the gods of mighty Egypt?

## Point 2: Divine Showdown

Follow along as I read Exodus 6 beginning in verse 1.

### (Ex 6:1-2, 5-9 ESV)

<sup>1</sup>But YHWH said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send [the Israelites] out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land."

Jump down to verse 5

<sup>5</sup>...I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.

<sup>6</sup>Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am YHWH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup>I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am YHWH your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am YHWH.'"

<sup>9</sup> Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

Who can stand against Pharaoh and all the gods empowering this great kingdom? YHWH tells us he can.

In verse 6 we read that the mechanism of their salvation is YHWH's unrivaled power. He reassures them with these words, "I am YHWH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment."

This phrase "outstretched arm" points us to God's unrivaled power.

Think about it this way: An outstretched arm was the vehicle by which kings conquered. In today's day and age, it's technology and intelligence that wins battles. Then, it was a warrior's power, their strength, their arms.<sup>1</sup> Arms bend bows, swing swords, and throw punches. A warrior certainly wanted strong arms.

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Arm of God Verses the Arm of Pharaoh" by James Hoffmeier

We see this phrase again in Jeremiah 32. There, Jeremiah exclaims, “Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who has made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.” (Jeremiah 32:17 ESV)

It is God’s powerful outstretched arm with concurred the primordial chaos and created all things. It is this same warrior God who steps into Egypt and prepares for battle.

So, the stage is set. YHWH proverbially throws down the gauntlet and challenges the world’s mightiest gods to a contest. The winner takes Israel.

Over the next seven chapters we see YHWY step into ring and go toe to toe in eleven rounds with Pharaoh and all the god’s of Egypt. Each round in the ring come to us as supernatural wonders - the battle between deities in the heavens manifests itself on earth.

Exodus 7-12 details the story, but here’s a summary...

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh’s magicians when Moses’ staff-turned-snake swallows up theirs. He is powerful.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he turns the Nile River into blood. He is powerful over their source of life, The Nile.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he sends plagues of frogs, gnats, flies, and disease on livestock. He is powerful over animals.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he afflicts the Egyptians with painful boils. He is powerful over human health.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he rains hail down on Egypt, destroying their people, animals, and crops. He is powerful over the weather.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he sends locusts to destroy what’s left of the vegetation. He is powerful over natural disasters.

YHWH humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when he darkens the sun for three days, leaving a darkness so oppressive it can be felt. He is powerful over Re, their highest deity.

So far, YHWY has gone round after round with Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, and each round has gone to YHWY. Yet, Pharaoh still refuses YHWY’s demands to let his people go.

So, there is one last plague, one last judgement, one last round. Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, battered and bloodied, but with fierce determination, sit nursing their wounds in the corner of the ring. No, they’re not ready to yield to YHWH, not yet.

Listen to what YHWH says as he prepares his people for this last round...

Ex 12:12 “On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn son and firstborn male animal in the land of Egypt. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am YHWH!” (NLT)

Only those whose doorpost is covered with the blood of a sacrificed Passover Lamb will escape this judgment.

In one last round, God humiliates Pharaoh and his gods when The Destroying Angel kills every firstborn not covered by the blood. He is powerful over all.

This last plague is definite. It’s final. Pharaoh and his gods were not able to protect the people, even Pharaoh’s own son who was heir to the throne and a god himself.

Three rings from the bell. YHWH is victorious.

In grief and shame Pharaoh lets the people go - They “go out” of Egypt, set free by YHWH’s great power.

The Exodus Showdown gives us valuable insight into God’s exercising of his power. This isn’t a fun allegory to make a point. God, in his Word, tells us that there were serious problems that needed his attention. I want to highlight three.

First, his chosen people, his beloved, had been forcefully oppressed and humiliated by terrible slavery.

Second, Countless precious Israelite babies had been murdered, thrown into the Nile, as “population control.”

And Lastly, Pharaoh, and the demonic spiritual forces behind the Egyptian pantheon, spiritually enslaved people and lied saying they were powerful and able to give life. A direct affront to the One True Creator God, YHWY.

When it comes to the Plagues in Exodus, we see the Holy God exercising his power in measured ways to reclaim his throne in the eyes of all people.

The Exodus teaches us that God exercise his unrivaled power to glorify himself and rescue his people. The Exodus teaches us that God exercise his unrivaled power to glorify himself and rescue his people.

**Transition:** This series is all about revealing the heart of God in the Old Testament and seeing its fullest picture in Jesus Christ. As we turn the pages to the New Testament, we see Jesus of Nazareth coming to exercise YHWH’s power for the same reasons: to glorify God and rescue YHWH’s people.

### **Point 3:** Jesus, an Unexpected Champion

The Gospels tell us the story where this same YHWY becomes a man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. His way of life, his teaching, and his healings are unlike anything that the world has ever seen.

Moreover, Jesus exercises power that belonged to YHWH alone:

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus humiliates the religious experts of the day when he taught as one with authority. Jesus is powerful.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his power over nature by calming the raging sea.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his power over spiritual forces by driving out demons.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his power over human health by healing incurable diseases and infirmities.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his power to support life by feeding thousands from the lunch of a small boy.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his power over death itself by raising back loved ones from the grave.

Like YHWH in the Exodus, Jesus shows his spiritual authority by forgiving sin. Jesus is powerful.

Just like the Exodus, Jesus, YHWH himself, proved to be unrivaled in power, wisdom, and authority.

And Just like the Exodus, Jesus would fight one last round to take his prize. This time, it wasn't just Israel on the line, but a beloved people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Jesus' last round would be the last round ever - it would be the defining battle between YHWH God and the true enemies of his people: sin, death, and Satan.

*(quiet, intimate)*

Do you know the story of this last round? Jesus of Nazareth, at the height of his popularity, was betrayed by his friend into the hands of the religious leaders. Instead of recognizing him as YHWH, they turned him over to be killed by the state.

Jesus' greatest battle...

that which could lead his people on a spiritual Exodus from slavery to sin, death, and the Devil into the Kingdom of God ...

happened at 3pm on Passover Friday...the time when they were celebrating the Exodus from Egypt. Jesus died: shamed, bruised and beaten on a Roman Cross.

*(incredulous)*

Had YHWY just lost? Did the evil spiritual forces and the system of the world just conquer and deliver the K.O. punch?

It appeared that way, until Easter morning, when God raised Christ from the dead.

In the death of Jesus, YHWH pours out his final judgment in power on humanity's sin and strips the evil spiritual forces, like the gods of Egypt, of their spiritual power.

What looked like defeat, blossomed into victory as Jesus emerges alive and glorified from tomb.

The Exodus and the cross teach us that God exercise his unrivaled power to glorify himself and rescue his people. The Exodus and the cross teach us that God exercise his unrivaled power to glorify himself and rescue his people.

## Conclusion

Today we read how the Israelites were unable to believe Moses because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery. Friend, do you find yourself, like them, unable to listen to God's promises because of the oppression you face? Do you share the same broken spirit with the slaves in Egypt?

There are going to be times, and you may indeed be in one right now, where you and I cannot listen to God because of our broken spirit and harsh circumstances. We get in these places where we cannot even imagine God setting right what sin and evil has broken in our lives.

This has been a hard season in the life of our congregation. We've seen death, illnesses, conflicts, lingering brokenness, injustice, inadequacies in ourselves and in our world.

All of this can make us groan and cause us to feel like we're back in Egypt under Pharaoh's harsh whip.

If that is you I want to remind you of the cross, "Look to the cross. Look to the cross."

The cross of Christ is our assurance that our Exodus is underway. Our exodus is underway. Victory has been declared and God Triumphant is leading us out towards our eternal Promised land.

Death, illness, conflicts, lingering brokenness, injustice, inadequacies — none of these oppose Jesus' power in our life.

Death, illness, conflicts, lingering brokenness, injustice, inadequacies — none of these can possibly thwart God's plan to bring us to full maturity in Christ and into his presence on That Day.

As we close, listen to Paul in Ephesians 1:19-20, "I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms." (NLT)

Pray with me...

Father, I can imagine two types of people hearing these words today.

One is languishing under some burden. The other feels enslaved to sin and death.

For our languishing friends, Father bring the cross into focus and refresh them with your tender love. I pray they will see you as their powerful companion guaranteeing your promises to them by that same mighty power.

For our friends feeling enslaved to sin and death, Father I pray you would focus them in on the cross too. I pray they will see that you are powerful to free them, and indeed are ready to if they will trust in you.

For all of us, Father, open our eyes to see and trust in your sovereign power which you always wield for your glory and our good.

in Jesus' name, Amen.