**4**

**The Difficulties of Moses and Aaron**

**Rebuff and Resolution**

***Exodus 5:1–7:7***

**Purpose:** To find resources in God when everything seems to be going wrong. If group members have read this week's passage prior to the meeting, scan the material during the session, rather than reading it verse by verse. Cover the factual questions quickly so you will have ample time for discussing questions of interpretation and application.

The Christian student group discovered a sure-fire winner for its reachout meeting. Here was a famous businessman who was sure to attract a crowd. Confidently, the Christians plugged away at inviting their friends, and their work was rewarded with a packed room. An hour or so later they fled the room in defeat. They had tried to obey God but their venture failed. In a word, their hero speaker bombed. Discouragement enveloped the group like a dense fog. No doubt, Moses felt the same way, except the stakes were higher. In this study, he and Aaron are soundly rebuffed, though they doggedly pursue God's will with obedient courage.

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**1.**  What various qualities of leadership are required to overcome adversity?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**2.** Read Exodus 5. What were the major outcomes of the first encounter between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh?

How did Pharaoh interpret their demand (vv. 8, 17)?

**————————————————————————————————————**

***Question 2****. “Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert” (v. 1) is a test case. Israel had to leave Egypt to sacrifice because their sacrifices were offensive to the Egyptians (8:26). Pharaoh's refusal reveals his hostility, previously predicted by God (3:19).*

*“Access to Pharaoh: Rameses II is known to have made himself available even to ordinary petitioners (compare 5:11ff.). Moses, brought up in the harem, had a special claim to Pharaoh's attention” (David Alexander and Patricia Alexander, eds., Eerdmans' Handbook to the Bible [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1973], p. 157).*

**————————————————————————————————————**

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**3.** From his actions, what kind of a person do you think Pharaoh was?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**4.** From a human perspective, why do you think Pharaoh rejected the word of God given through his messengers?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**5.** What things in your life might obscure an authentic word from the Lord?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**6.** Describe Moses' feelings and the logic of his cry to God (vv. 22–23)?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**7.** When your path of obedience to God seems blocked, how do you react? Explain.

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**8.** Read Exodus 6:1–27. The statement “I am the Lord” is repeated four times in verses 1–8. What does God emphasize about himself in response to Moses' complaint (vv. 1–5)?

**————————————————————————————————————**

***Question 8.*** *The name the Lord (v. 3) was not unknown to the patriarchs, but they did not know all that the name implied. The full significance of God's character would be revealed to these helpless slaves.*

*A “covenant” (v. 4) is a promise and an agreement (see Gen 15:18). To “redeem” (v. 6) means “to buy back.” Because the Israelites were slaves, God (as it were) bought them back their freedom. This is the pattern of Christ's redemption of sinners on the cross.*

*The genealogy (6:14–25) shows the lineage of Moses and Aaron. It shows the steadily unfolding plan of God. With 7:1 the story picks up and God reveals his plan for the confrontation with Pharaoh.*

**————————————————————————————————————**

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**9.** What does the Lord's message to Israel emphasize about his plans for them (vv. 6–8)?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**10.**  How does Israel's response to Moses (v. 9) contrast with their initial response (4:31)?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**11**. Give an example from your life when discouragement blurted the clarity of God's power and promises.

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**12.** Read Exodus 6:28–7:7. Moses is concerned that Pharaoh won't listen to him (6:30). Yet how will Pharaoh's stubbornness help to fulfill God's plans for Egypt (7:3–5)?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**13.** In spite of defeat and discouragement (5:2; 6:9, 12, 30) Moses “did just as the Lord commanded” (7:6). What do you think brought him to this decisive obedience?

**———————————————————————————————————————**

**14.**  What definitive spiritual decisions have you made during your life as a Christian?

**————————————————————————————————————**

***Question 14.*** *Conclude your time together with prayer, thanking God for significant people and circumstances*.

**————————————————————————————————————**

Thank God for the people and circumstances he used.