

## The King of Egypt

### Scripture Reading — Exodus 5:1-5

*“Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go?” — Exodus 5:2*

The big story of the Bible is the story of God’s kingdom. God is the King over everything.

The human king in Egypt was called Pharaoh, and this particular pharaoh had no respect for the Lord, the one true God. This pharaoh was cruel and oppressive and had made the people of Israel his slaves.

Back in the book of Genesis, an earlier pharaoh had assigned Joseph, a grandson of Abraham, to be second in command during a time of famine. And with God’s help, Joseph had worked to ensure life, justice, and harmony (see Genesis 41:41-57). That was what a ruler was supposed to do.

But in the book of Exodus, a few hundred years later, the situation changed dramatically. “A new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt” (Exodus 1:8). This pharaoh saw the descendants of Israel as a threat rather than as a people to protect. So he enslaved and oppressed them.

Lord Acton, a British historian, is known to have said, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” The king of Egypt in Exodus embodied the human spirit of rebellion against the reign of God. That pharaoh had great power, and he was not interested in the way of justice and life, so he oppressed and killed people instead.

God’s rule over the world, and his way of ruling the world, are always facing the resistance of human rebellion.

### Prayer

*Father, forgive us when we follow the foolish ways of the world. Bring us into the kingdom of your Son, we pray. Amen.*

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