

1 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.

Ps. 105. 26, 27: He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen: they showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.

Exod. 3. 19: I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.

Exod. 10. 9: 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. Deut. 28. 15, 21, 22: But it shall come to the voice of the Lord thy God... the Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee... the Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

Worshipped. Not an act of obeisance to Moses and Aaron, but of thankfulness and prayer to God. (5) Notice the steps of faith: 1. Hearing; 2. Beholding; 3. Believing; 4. Praying; 5. Praising.

1. **Went in.** To the presence of the king, doubtless accompanied by a delegation of the elders of Israel. **Pharaoh.** Probably Thotmes II., who was residing at Zoan or Tanis, in Lower Egypt, adjoining the land of Goshen. He was a man of vacillating character, but influenced by the stronger nature of his wife Hatason, who was also his sister, such marriages being not unusual in ancient Egypt. **Thus saith the Lord God.** It would be preferable to read, "Jehovah God of Israel." To his countryman, Moses speaks of "the God of their fathers;" to Pharaoh, he employs the title, "God of Israel." (6) God is never ashamed to own his people, even when they are abused. (7) That nation is loftier than all others, whatever its earthly estate, which can call Jehovah its God. **Let my people go.** The request at first is not for independence and privileges of departure, but for toleration of religious worship, since the offerings would consist of animals never slain by the Egyptians. Yet it contained the principle of recognizing the supremacy of Israel's God and his right to obedience even from Pharaoh and his subjects. **A feast.** A sacred festival with worship and sacrifice. The petition was offered, with the foreknowledge of its rejection, because a slight matter would show the arrogant and unbelieving character of Pharaoh as well as a great demand.

2. **Who is the Lord.** "Who is Jehovah?" that is, what right has the God of so low and helpless a people to expect me to heed his requests? (8) He greatly errs who estimates the power of God by the earthly condition of his people. **I know not the Lord.** "I know not Jehovah." Not that he had never heard of him, though that is possible, but rather that he recognized no allegiance to him. (9) Slaves of sin are always boasting of their independence of God.

3. **The God of the Hebrews.** The Israelites were generally called Hebrews by other nations, and hence so called themselves in dealing with strangers. See notes on Lesson II., ver. 6. **Met with us.** They recognized the voice of God in the messengers whom he had sent. **We pray thee.** They do not meet scorn for scorn, but continue a respectful form of address. **Three days' Journey.** About fifty or sixty miles. **Into the desert.** The wilderness, not necessarily an arid waste of sand. **Sacrifice.** As nothing about forsaking Egypt altogether, perhaps with a view to prospect they would have in urging a greater. **Fall upon us** one avenger. The plague has been known from immemorial time in the East. **Or the sword.** As Goshen was on the frontier, it was exposed to invasion more than any other part of Egypt.

4. **Wherefore... let the people.** The word "let" has here its old meaning of "hinder." He treated them as seditious demagogues, stirring up a spirit of discontent among the working-class. **Get you to your burdens.** This was addressed to the Israelite elders who were with Moses and Aaron, though it may indicate that the leaders, too, ought to be at work among their people. The first result of their effort at liberation was an increase in their burdens, since, with no decrease in the "tale of bricks," they were compelled to find their own straw.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Moses and Aaron. Exod. 4. 27-5. 4.
Th. The command to Moses. Exod. 3. 15-22.
W. The tokens of authority. Exod. 4. 1-9.
Th. The mission of Aaron. Exod. 4. 10-23.
F. The Lord and the idols. Isa. 44. 1-20.
S. The Lord's covenant. Jer. 31. 31-37.
S. The acceptable sacrifice. Ps. 50. 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen. Ps. 105. 26.

Time.—B. C. 1491.

Place.—Egypt, probably Zoan.