

Is it Really Idle Worship?

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Exodus chapter 5. The title is, Is It Really Idol Worship?

Is It Really Idol Worship? Read with me if you would chapter 5. You're going to have to skip along because we're going to read chapter 5 and half of chapter 6. But you're only going to get the highlights.

So go with me if you would. Verse 1. The Bible says, 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.

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.

And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us. Let us go. We pray thee three days journey into the wilderness, into the desert, And sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

[0 : 58] 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? Verse 5. You make them rest from their burdens.

Verse 7. I will not let them have any more straw. They'll have to go get the straw, and they've got to give the same amount of bricks. Verse 8. We shall not diminish.

But I want you to read verse 8 with me, So you'll get the idea of the message. Is it really idol worship? Verse 8. And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, You shall lay upon them, You shall not diminish aught thereof, For they be idol.

Therefore they cry, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. They be idol. That's why they want to go and sacrifice to their God.

Verse 9. Common way the world talks to us is, Whatever God says are vain words. Look at it. Let the more work be laid upon the men, That they may labor them, And let them not regard vain words.

[2 : 07] I hope they won't hear any more empty, Workless words. Verse 10. I will not give you straw. Verse 14. He says that they beat and demanded of them, To bring the bricks to them.

In verse 15. They go to Pharaoh and they say, Pharaoh please, Why are you mistreating us like you are? Go to verse 17. Verse 17. Ye are idol.

Ye are idol. Therefore you say, Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord. Underline. Ye are idol. Ye are idol.

When Moses and Aaron come out from talking to Pharaoh, The people are being mistreated. The people are being made to make bricks without any straw. People have to look for the straw to be able to make the bricks.

So they meet with them in verse 20. They meet Moses and Aaron and they say, You know, this is really bad. What you've done has brought more trouble on us than we had before.

[3 : 06] It was better before you ever got your nose involved in this. Look at verse 22. And Moses returned to the Lord. And Moses said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people?

God, why have you let this? I came here to bring good news. And good news has brought bad news. Verse 23. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, He has done evil to this people.

And you haven't delivered the people at all. You haven't done anything to help them. Chapter 6, verse 1. Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now will you see, now shalt thou see, what I will do to Pharaoh.

Because I'm going to use my strong hand. I'm going to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt. And God spake unto Moses. I wish you'd underline these words right here in your Bible.

Verse 2. Find the words, I am the Lord. Look at verse 2. God spake unto Moses and said, I am the Lord. Verse 3. I appeared unto Abraham and your family.

[4 : 14] Verse 4. I established my covenant. I, verse 5, heard them groaning. Verse 6. Go read verse 6 to me. In verse 6 he said, I am the Lord.

And I will bring you out. I am the Lord. And I will bring you out. I will rid you of their bondage. I will redeem you.

Verse 7. I will take you for my people. I will be to you a God. I am the Lord your God. Verse 8. I will bring you out.

Last part of verse 8. I will give it to you. I give it to you an heritage. I am the Lord. So is it out of worship? They're in Egypt.

God tells Moses, go tell Pharaoh. I want him to let my people go for three days into the wilderness to worship me. Pharaoh's response, I don't know who your God is.

[5 : 13] There's 8,700 gods in this country. And I happen to be one of them. And I don't even know who your God is. I don't even know who your God is. And you come and you tell me.

You're not supposed to let you go worship. It's just because you guys are lazy bums. I have no intentions of letting you go. You are just lazy.

You are idle. I don't know how many times in Peru I heard parents say, I don't want my children going to church. They should be going to work. I don't want my kids being in the ministry.

They should get a job. It's just idle. It's just being lazy. And that's exactly what God's dealing with in this chapter. Let's bow our heads for prayer. And let's learn just a little bit about what goes on in these two chapters.

Father, I love you. And I pray that you would help us tonight to realize that worship isn't a waste of time. I pray you'd help us realize that serving you is not a waste of time.

[6 : 08] I pray you'd help us to realize that worshiping you and serving you is of utmost value to our lives and everyone. And I will give you praise and honor and glory in Jesus' precious name.

Amen. If you take notes, number one, Pharaoh has no respect for God. Pharaoh has no respect for God. And by the way, that's the attitude of the world in general.

Pharaoh has no respect of God. In verse 2, he said, I know not the Lord. I don't know who your God is. And Moses and them have gone to talk to him in chapter 5 and verse 1.

And here's the problem. In Egypt, they got a slew of gods. There are up to 8,000 gods his people worship. They've got all sorts of gods, gods of everything.

They've done studies. They can't even find out how many gods they had. And the God of the Bible wasn't one of them, nor will he ever be accepted as being one of the gods.

[7 : 08] So Pharaoh responds, Who is the Lord? Who is Jehovah? He said he didn't know who he was, and he said he would not obey him.

What's one more God when I'm a God? That's what Pharaoh's thinking. I want you to run down to verse 9 and make sure you underlined it. Because when he said, I don't know God. When you don't know God, you don't respect God's word.

And he says, Those are vain words. Look in verse 9. He said, Let them not regard vain words. Moses comes and says, We spoke to God. And God said for us to do some things.

And Pharaoh says, I don't know you, God. And I don't believe those words. I don't know you, God. And I think those words are vain, empty, valueless words.

That's exactly how the world feels about the Lord, the God of heaven. Who is the God we worship? What does he have to do with my life? They don't know him.

[8 : 06] They don't want to obey him. Most people want to act as God, deciding what's right and wrong for themselves. We want to be our own God. The world feels if they listen to the words of God, they're listening to vain, empty, worthless words.

If they listen to the word of God, they're listening to vain, empty, worthless words. And here's the first question of the night. Do you respect God? Do you respect God?

Do you feel like he is real? Do you feel like he has power? He's in control? And he's able to bless? And he's able to discipline? Do you believe that he's worth your worship, even if it costs you?

Do you question whether God is anyone that can direct and guide your life? Here's a major question I think everybody has to answer. In this chapter, chapter 5, Pharaoh starts the chapter by saying, I don't know your God.

I don't respect your God. I don't look up to your God. I think what he has to say is a waste of time. And I would question how many of us fall into the same chapter, the same verse, the same truth, the same error, the same mistake that we don't respect God and think of him like he ought to be.

[9 : 19] Moses and Aaron, they reiterate that God is God. Look at verse 3 if you would. In chapter 5, verse 3, the Bible says, And they said, The God of the Hebrews, he has met with us.

Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword. They knew that God was real, and obeying God had consequences, and disobeying God had consequences.

And in the day of easy grace that sometimes we begin to fall into, we begin to think God's way out there, and I'm down here, and God's not that interested in my life. But in this passage of Scripture, Moses and Aaron said, No, sir, Pharaoh, you don't know who we're talking about.

We're talking about a real God. We're talking about the God of the Hebrews. And let me just explain something to you. Y'all got a lot of gods, and you can set them on the shelf, and you can let them get dusty, and they don't count, and they don't matter.

This is the real God, and He's going to discipline us if we don't do right. There are consequences because He is really God. God wants Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel to know that He is God.

[10 : 36] God wants it clear that it is God, the Lord, that is speaking, and that there is no other God. I love the way, and I want you to just check this out. If you're a Bible believer, God is saying to the Israelites, God is saying to Moses and Aaron, it's so repetitive.

He's saying, I'm God. I'm God. I'm God. Understand something. I'm God. I'm God. God. Somewhere in here, God wants us to back up and say, I recognize you are God.

Look at the verses. We read through them a second ago, but look at the verses. Chapter 6 and verse 2. God's speaking to Moses, and He said, look at this. This is just wild. First off, this big God's talking to him.

I think probably Moses could have gathered that he was not just a regular guy. But God looks at Moses and said, I am. I am the Lord, Moses.

I am the Lord. It will go down to chapter 6 and verse 3, and he says, by the way, Moses, I am the one who appeared unto Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

[11 : 42] I am the God Almighty. Now, they didn't know my name is Jehovah. I didn't tell them that, but that's the same God that I am. And I'm a God that says what He means and means what He says, and I keep my word.

Look at what he said in chapter 6 and verse 4. And I have established my covenant with them. To give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

And God says, I heard you crying. I heard you praying. I know the people are hurting. Verse 5, I heard the groaning, and I remembered my covenant. And I want you to know who I am.

I am God. Look if you would. Look if you would. Look if you would in verse 6. Wherefore, say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord.

He said, see, Moses, did you hear me? Moses, do you know who I am? I'm the Lord. Moses, do you know who I am? I'm the same guy who spoke to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Are you listening to me, Moses?

[12 : 41] I'm the one that gave my word. I'm the one that keeps my word. Do you understand who I am? Now, Moses, turn around and go tell those Israelites, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out.

Look at verse 6. I am the Lord, and I will bring you out. I will rid you. I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, with great judgment. I will take you to me for a people.

I will be to you a God. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God. I will bring you into the land. And concern the Lord, which I swear to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

I will give it to you for an heritage. I am the Lord. God makes it abundantly clear that He is God.

And He wants them to know it. He is God. And He wants them to know it. He is a God that is truly able to do things. He hears and He answers prayers.

[13 : 41] He meets needs. He fears no one. I don't know if you see this with me, but do you see how hungry God is to be known as the God of heaven and the God of creation and the God of power?

I mean, over and over in one little passage of Scripture. Hey, I'm God. Hey, I'm God. Hey, I'm God. I'm God. I'm God. Go tell Him. I said, I'm God.

Go tell Him. Well, He's God. And He wants us to know that. He wants Him and us to know that He is God. And that He's the one that has accomplished all the great things in our lives.

Do we give Him glory? Could you stop with me just for a minute and think about this? This is a God writing a Bible and saying repeatedly, get one thing straight.

I'm God. Our God repeatedly says, I'm God. And sometimes we tend to be like, okay, we know He's a God. We know He's up in heaven and we know all these things.

[14 : 43] But He's like, this is like a very personal, intimate relationship where God's looking at Moses and said, get something straight. I'm God. I don't know if you get that.

I don't even know if you can see what I see. But to me, it's like God said, would you look at me and know who I am? Would you look at me and realize who I am? Would you realize I'm God? You fussed with me in chapter 4.

He said, you didn't want to do what I wanted you to do. By the way, He's going to do it again into chapter 6. He said, but let's get something straight before we get going. I'm God. I'm God. Pharaoh simply believes that they don't want to work.

He doesn't believe in God. He doesn't accept that. Go with me to chapter 5 and verse 4 if you would. The king of Egypt said unto them, wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, let the people from the work?

Why do you try to get them out of work? Why are you trying to get them out of work? And Pharaoh said, you make them rest from their burdens. All you're trying to get them to do is to take a day off.

[15 : 41] You want them to take a three-day picnic. You just want to go out in the desert and have a picnic. The only reason that they want to go worship according to Pharaoh was so they could quit working.

In verse 8 he says, And the tail of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them and you shall not. Don't you cut one corner for them because they are not busy enough.

They are idle. If they got time to worship God, they got too much time. If they got time to go take a three-day trip, they got too much time. And that's why they're saying, let us go and sacrifice to our God.

Chapter 5 and verse 9. Pharaoh doesn't believe that God is anybody. And he believes that what they hear that God's saying or what the men are saying, he thinks they're lies. He thinks they're empty words.

In chapter 5 and verse 9. Let there more work be led upon them that they may labor therein. And let them not regard vain words. Because I'll be honest with you, that's the kind of verse that just makes my blood boil.

[16 : 46] I would like to take a whole, if we weren't preaching through the whole Bible, I'd just like to stop and say, I think some of us think that. I think that's one of the reasons we don't spend enough time reading our Bibles. They're not worth much.

That's why you don't have a real Bible reading plan, a real Bible reading program. That's why we miss church services. That's why we don't listen. Because it's not really that important. It's just the Bible and everybody's heard the Bible and they're vain words.

We sound like a Pharaoh when we talk like that. Can you say amen right there? That's harsh, but it's the truth. Somebody who would have the nerve to say, those are vain words. Those are worthless words.

Those are empty words. You can get more out of Dr. Phil and Oprah than you can get out of the Bible. That's what Pharaoh was saying. They're vain words. The very idea of wanting to go and worship, according to Pharaoh, was based in laziness.

Chapter 5 and verse 17. You're idle. You're idle. He says it twice. Ye are idle. Ye are idle. That's why you say, let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord.

[17 : 46] The world never respects the worship of God. They don't understand why we do this. Why in the world? In fact, in all honesty, most of the churches don't have a midweek service anymore.

Most of the churches aren't going to have a Sunday night service anymore. We're so close to God and got so much of Him. Now we can cut it down to one hour on Sunday morning. They feel like serving God, worshiping God, studying the Bible is a waste of time.

They feel like it's someone trying to get the money out of us. They feel like serving God and believing in Him is because we're weak. Many have told young men I know to get a real job, not to be lazy, not to seek the easy way to live.

They seem to think that preaching is only for those that are idle or lazy. How do you regard worshiping and serving God? Is it as important as your job?

Do you feel like worship is somehow less than what you do for a living? I don't know if you catch this. That's a major truth here. Most of us look at our job and say, well, this is what I've got to do, and I enjoy going to hear a little bit about God every now and then, but this is what's important.

[18 : 59] This isn't that important, but this is what's important. I don't know if I'm going to get idle words, vain words, empty words, God words, money that puts bread on my table.

Do you think that worship is a waste of time? Do you find God getting in the way of what you really want to do? The fourth thing, go with me if you would to chapter 5 and verse 6.

Whenever Moses started saying we're going to go worship, the world, Pharaoh started punishing them and being mean to them. In chapter 5 and verse 6, Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmaster saying, don't give them any more straw to make brick and don't cut down on the work.

Chapter 5 and verse 9, he said, let more work be laid on them because they are listening to worthless words. Tell them to go get their own straw. Pharaoh in chapter 5 and verse 10, beat them.

Beat them and demand from them in verse 14. The Bible said, the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had sent over them, were beaten and demanded, wherefore have you not fulfilled your task?

[20 : 12] So now Pharaoh said, you want to worship God? I'll make your life miserable because you want to worship God. I'll make your life miserable. They'd go to Pharaoh and they'd say, Pharaoh, why are you mistreating us?

We're good slaves. We've been working hard. Chapter 5 and verse 15, they said, why are you treating your servants this way? They said, the reason we can't keep up with the brick load is because your people won't give us a straw.

It's not our fault, it's your fault. You're people's fault. That's what he says in verse 16. And Pharaoh said, I'll tell you why. Because you're lazy. Because you're idle. You be idle.

You be idle. By the way, worship will cost us one way or another. If you're going to serve and worship God, you don't have to be ready to pay the price.

Because you will be mocked. People will think you strange, especially if you let your worship get outside the doors of your church. If we really worship him.

[21 : 14] Now let me explain to you how we do it in America before I go to the last thing here. Here's how we do it in America. We have this life and that life. We have what we do inside these doors. We come in here. We act like we love God.

We act like we love the Bible. We sing the Psalms. We get all excited. We talk about Jesus. We step through the door. We forget who Jesus is. We forget serving God. His name won't be mentioned because it might cut into my paycheck.

His name won't be mentioned because it might cut me out of a friend. So our worship is really kind of cornered into one little spot. Well, this was a whole different ballgame. All the nation of Israel said, we want to go three days out and worship.

And it brought about trouble. By the way, when trouble comes, God's people begin to doubt God. As soon as things start going wrong, everybody begins to doubt.

Look at chapter 5 and verse 19. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were an evil case. Well, we're in bad shape because we've got to keep giving the same number of bricks.

[22 : 12] So they blamed the men of God. In chapter 5 and verse 20, Moses is kind of feeling, the pressure of having to deal with Pharaoh.

Moses is by nature a coward. He's scared to death. He doesn't really want to talk to the Israelites. He definitely doesn't want to talk to Pharaoh. He goes in and he talks to Pharaoh. When he gets through talking to Pharaoh, he's probably a pretty whipped puppy right now.

He's coming out the door and he's kind of thinking like, I know God just told me he's God. By the way, we're going to find out that he's a whipped puppy because by the next Sunday night, you're going to find out. You know what he's going to say? You really want me to go talk to Pharaoh?

He ain't going to believe me. So he's fixing to go right back into it. I mean, he's back into that cycle of doubt. He comes out the door and when he does, here come the leaders of the Israelites and they say, look what you've done to us.

Until you brought up worshiping God, we were doing pretty good. We might have been slaves, but we were doing pretty good. And if you hadn't asked for us to go out for three days, now we've got to go get straw and now we're getting beat and now everything's going wrong and it's all because you pushed us.

[23 : 39] You pushed us to do that. You brought that on us. Here's a really bad thing. Now Moses begins to doubt. Look at what happens in chapter 5 and verse 22. When things go wrong, it's easy to doubt God.

In chapter 5 verse 22, Moses returned unto the Lord and he said, Lord, why have you been mistreating your people so much? Why is it that you sent me?

Why did you send me? Wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why did you send me? Look at verse 23. Because for since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he's done evil to this people and you haven't done anything about it.

God, you called me, I was just taking care of my sheep and you told me to come back here and you told me you were going to deliver your people and I went and I talked to the people and I was feeling real good about it because hey, oh, Aaron was putting his hand in his robe and pulling it out and it was going leprousous and not leprousous anymore and he was turning the rod into a snake and picking up the snake and we were picking up the water and turning it into blood and everything was going pretty good so I went in to talk to Pharaoh and Pharaoh was mad and now the people are getting mistreated and God, ever since you told me something to do for you, nothing's working.

Why is that happening, God? And Moses doubts again now. He's not ready to handle the meeting with Pharaoh. Look at chapter 6 and verse 10. The Lord spake unto Moses saying, Go in and speak unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of this land.

[25 : 15] And Moses spake before the Lord saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me. How then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips?

Look, God, the Israelites don't like me. Pharaoh don't like me. Your people wouldn't listen to me.

You can mark it down. He ain't going to listen to me. Chapter 6, verse 1. Chapter 6, verse 1. The Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh in the deepest, darkest, doubting moment of your life when things don't seem to be working out and you've been honoring God and trusting God and believing God, God says, I'm fixing to show you how big I am.

Because it wasn't about how big you were. It was about how big I am. Moses, watch. You are about to see the real God let go of his hand. He's fixing to do something.

Watch what I'm going to do to Pharaoh. You're scared of Pharaoh. Pharaoh, watch me. Because with a strong hand, verse 1, shall he let them go. With a strong hand, shall he drive them out.

[26 : 29] And God sends Moses to do what he told him to do in the beginning. Chapter 6, verse 13. The Lord spake unto Moses unto Aaron and gave them charge of the children of Israel and of the Pharaoh of Egypt to bring the children out and into the land, into the land, out of the land of Egypt.

God said, Get them out. That's what I brought you here for. And that's what's going to happen. One question left, and I'm through, but I would ask you this. Is it idol worship? Are we wasting our time when we come to church on a Thursday night?

Should I get another job and should we all just meet maybe once a week or once a month? Is it a waste of time to serve God? Is it a waste of time for us to study the Bible?

Is it a waste of time for us to be involved in discipleship? Is it a waste of money for us to be giving money? Is it idol worship? And I would tell you that in this story, the only one who thinks it's idol worship is Pharaoh, who is anti-God.

And God said, Watch me. This is not a waste. And my words are not empty. And before the story is done, you will know that I am a big God.

[27 : 40] When things go wrong, we always want to doubt God. We try to figure out what is wrong. We need someone to blame. We blame God. We blame the church.

We blame God's messengers. But here's what the truth of the story is. In that dark moment, Moses, I know it don't look good. The people don't believe you.

And Pharaoh doesn't believe you. Get over here and stand still just a minute. Did I tell you who I was? I am the Lord. I give my word and I keep my word. Now watch me.

Father in heaven, I pray you'd help us to honor and serve you. And I pray you'd help us to carry your word around the world. And I pray you'd let our lives be of value to you. That you'd let us surrender ourselves.

That your grace would work in and through us. I pray that your name would be glorified and magnified. And God, I pray for somebody who's discouraged here tonight that you would help them to trust you.

[28 : 36] And help them to believe. Somebody who's going through a hard time is beginning to wonder is it worth it? Beginning to say that I've been doing what God told me to do and it's not working. I pray that tonight would be the night you would encourage them through this story as you did Moses when you looked at him and said, you are God and you keep your word.

And I'll give you praise. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.