



...going deeper

a guide for your own study during the week

Who is the Lord? (Exodus 5:1-11; 7:8-24)

to think about

Those who want to follow God face challenges of many kinds - how should we respond when we face opposition? Though it may seem a long way from our experience, Moses faced a very similar challenge - following God's way was not easy, what should he do?

Moses had a dramatic encounter with God when God told him that he would lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. He took a bit of convincing, but God had promised to be with him in this challenging task. But it would turn out to be a bit more difficult than it sounded when Moses decided to follow God in this way...

Read Exodus 5:1-11

Picture the scene . . .A slave workforce is building a vast complex of buildings, pyramids and temples for Egypt - the most powerful empire of the day ..two leaders from the slave workforce come to Pharaoh (the king of Egypt) and ask for time off to hold a religious festival ...Pharaoh is not a man who takes orders from anyone else. Pharaoh's words 'Who is the Lord?' say it all.

Why did Pharaoh react the way he reacted?

How do you think Moses and Aaron felt as they walked away, and when they heard that the Israelites would now have to make bricks without straw?

Read Exodus 7:8-13

Moses and Aaron must have felt relieved when they were able to perform the miracle that God had showed them, and especially when Aaron's staff ate up the other staffs. Why did God give them miracles to perform?

What was Pharaoh's reaction?

Read Exodus 7:14-24

Pharaoh's question 'Who is the Lord?' is about to get an answer in the form of ten 'power encounters' [traditionally known as the 'Ten Plagues']. The river Nile was the sustainer of life in Egypt - and religious worship was associated with the Nile, so this was a showdown with the powers and with gods of Egypt.

What happened when Aaron 'raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh'?

How did Pharaoh respond?

[Many commentators have detailed studies of the way in which each of the power encounters was a direct confrontation with one of more of the gods of Egypt - see, for example, http://www.padfield.com/2002/egypt_1.html].

taking it further

Are there areas of your life in which you find it hard to follow God? What are they?

What do you find helpful in following God when you face opposition?