



RCCG OCEANIA

Identity & Purpose

Let My People Go to Serve

At a Glance

BIG IDEA

Exodus 7:16 centers on a clear, repeated message from the LORD to Pharaoh: release God's people. The purpose of their freedom is not aimless independence, but devoted service to God. This study traces how God's word confronts resistance and calls His people into obedient worship, even in the wilderness.

PRIMARY PASSAGES

Exodus 7:16

Exodus 5:1

Exodus 8:1

Exodus 3:12

Exodus 9:1

Key Takeaways

- God's command is clear: His people must be released to serve Him.
- Freedom in this text has a purpose—service to the LORD, not self-rule.
- God sends His word through a messenger (Moses) to confront entrenched power (Pharaoh).
- “Wilderness” highlights separation from oppression and space to obey God’s direction.
- Resistance to God’s command does not cancel God’s claim over His people.
- Serving God is presented as a non-negotiable outcome of God’s deliverance.

Introduction

Exodus presents a conflict of claims: Pharaoh treats Israel as his workforce, but the LORD declares they belong to Him. The repeated command—“Let my people go”—is not merely about movement from one location to another. It is about release from bondage for the purpose of worshipful service. This study traces how God’s clear word, delivered through Moses, confronts resistance and calls God’s people into obedient service in the wilderness, where God directs their worship.

Scripture Reading

- **Exodus 7:14-16** — The LORD instructs Moses about Pharaoh’s hardness and gives the exact words Moses must speak: “Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.” This frames God’s command as direct and purposeful.
- **Exodus 5:1-2** — Moses and Aaron deliver the demand to Pharaoh. Pharaoh rejects the LORD’s authority and refuses to release the people, establishing the central tension between Pharaoh’s resistance and God’s command.
- **Exodus 8:1** — The LORD repeats the same message and purpose clause: release is required “that they may serve me,” showing persistence and clarity in God’s claim.
- **Exodus 3:10-12** — At Moses’ calling, God links deliverance to worship: bringing the people out leads to serving/worshiping God. This shows the goal was stated from the beginning.
- **Exodus 9:1** — Again the LORD commands Pharaoh to let the people go “that they may serve me,” reinforcing that service to God is not optional or negotiable.

Key Points

1. God Speaks a Direct Command — The LORD's message to Pharaoh is not vague or experimental.

The command is clear and repeated: "Let my people go." God initiates the confrontation, and Moses functions as a messenger who speaks God's words rather than his own agenda. This clarity matters because bondage often normalizes itself. Oppression can become "how things are," but God names what must change and states what must happen. The command also identifies ownership: the people are not Pharaoh's; they are God's. God's direct word forces a decision. Pharaoh is not asked for advice or invited to negotiate God's authority. The LORD speaks as the rightful King, and the command stands regardless of the hearer's response.

- Identify areas where you have accepted bondage-like patterns as normal; bring them under the light of God's clear word.
- Practice obeying God's instructions without rewriting them into something more comfortable or convenient.
- When communicating God's truth, aim to speak faithfully (as Moses did), not defensively or self-promotingly.
- Remember that God's claims over His people are grounded in who He is, not in human permission.

Scripture: Exodus 7:16 Exodus 5:1

2. Deliverance Has a Purpose: Service — In these passages, freedom is never presented as freedom-from with no freedom-to. The stated goal is explicit: "that they may serve me." The LORD does not merely break chains; He calls His people into a new allegiance expressed through obedience and worship. This challenges a common misunderstanding: that liberation means self-rule. Exodus presents liberation as transfer of belonging—from Pharaoh's oppressive rule to the LORD's good and rightful rule. God's people are released so they can live under God's direction. The repetition of the purpose clause ("serve") in multiple confrontations emphasizes that serving the LORD is non-negotiable. It is central to what deliverance means in this story.

- Ask what your freedom is for: name specific ways you are called to serve the LORD rather than simply seek comfort.
- Replace "I am free to do what I want" with "I am free to obey God" in daily decisions and priorities.
- Evaluate commitments, habits, and schedules by whether they support serving God or subtly return you to bondage.
- When facing pressure from others, reaffirm that your primary allegiance is to the LORD's command.

Scripture: Exodus 7:16 Exodus 8:1 Exodus 9:1

Key Points (cont.)

3. The Wilderness as a Place of Obedience — God’s command includes a destination: the wilderness. This is not presented as a random detour, but as a purposeful setting. The wilderness represents separation from oppressive control and a space where the LORD directs how His people will worship and serve. In Exodus 3, the LORD connects deliverance and worship: after being brought out, the people will serve God. The wilderness highlights that service is learned and practiced under God’s leadership, not under Pharaoh’s demands. The wilderness theme also teaches that obedience may involve unfamiliar terrain. God’s people are not freed only to return to what is comfortable; they are freed to follow God where He leads, even when the path requires trust.

- Create intentional “wilderness” space—time and boundaries that separate you from oppressive influences and make room to obey God.
- Treat transitions and uncertain seasons as opportunities to learn deeper dependence and faithful service to the LORD.
- Name what you must leave behind to serve God wholeheartedly (patterns, pressures, or loyalties that echo Pharaoh’s control).
- Practice obedience in small, concrete steps, trusting God to guide as you go.

Scripture: Exodus 7:16 Exodus 3:12

4. God’s Word Confronts Resistance — Pharaoh’s response in Exodus 5 shows open resistance: he rejects the LORD’s authority and refuses to let the people go. This resistance is not merely personal disagreement; it is a contest of rule—who has the right to command God’s people. The narrative trains readers not to be surprised when God’s commands meet opposition. Entrenched power does not yield easily, and hardened resistance can persist even when God’s word is plainly spoken. Yet the repeated command underscores a crucial truth: resistance does not cancel God’s claim. The LORD continues to speak, and His purpose remains steady—His people are to be released to serve Him.

- When facing pushback for obeying God, refuse to interpret resistance as proof that God’s command has changed.
- Distinguish between human authority and God’s authority; do not let fear of people silence obedience to the LORD.
- Pray for courage to remain faithful when obedience is costly or misunderstood.
- Encourage others by reminding them that God’s purposes persist even when opposition feels strong.

Scripture: Exodus 5:1-2 Exodus 7:16

Group Discussion

Tip: Use these questions to guide the group from seeing → understanding → applying.

Observation

- What exact words does the LORD command Moses to speak to Pharaoh in Exodus 7:16, and what purpose is stated?
- In Exodus 5:1-2, what does Pharaoh's response reveal about how he views the LORD and the people?
- How many times is the command to "let my people go" connected with the reason "that they may serve me" in the listed passages?
- What role does Moses play in delivering the message, and how does that shape the confrontation?
- What details in the passages show that "wilderness" is part of the command, not an afterthought?

Interpretation

- Why might the LORD emphasize "my people" when speaking to Pharaoh, and what does it imply about ownership and identity?
- What does "serve" communicate in these passages about the goal of freedom and the nature of worship?
- How does the repeated command across Exodus 5, 7, 8, and 9 shape the reader's understanding of God's persistence and authority?
- What is the significance of the wilderness as a setting for service to the LORD rather than remaining under Pharaoh's control?
- What does Pharaoh's resistance teach about how God's word interacts with entrenched power?

Application

- Where is there pressure in your life that resembles Pharaoh's control—demands that compete with serving the LORD?
- What would it look like for you to treat freedom as “freedom to serve God” rather than simply “freedom to choose”?
- What boundaries or practices could create a “wilderness” space that helps you obey God more consistently?
- How can you respond faithfully when others resist or dismiss your commitment to obey the LORD’s direction?
- Who can you encourage this week with the reminder that God’s claim and purpose for His people persist despite resistance?

Prayer Focus

- Ask the LORD to expose any bondage-like patterns you have accepted as normal.
- Surrender your freedom back to God as a call to worshipful service, not self-rule.
- Pray for courage to obey God’s word when there is resistance or pressure.
- Ask for grace to follow the LORD faithfully through wilderness seasons of dependence.

Next Step

Identify one area where you feel bound, then take one concrete step of obedience that aligns your life with serving the LORD.

Conclusion

The LORD's repeated command—"Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness"—clarifies both the problem and the goal: bondage must end, and devoted service to God must begin. Moses delivers God's word to Pharaoh, resistance rises, and yet God's claim remains unchanged. True release in these passages is not aimless independence; it is belonging to the LORD and learning obedience where God directs. The call is to receive God's freedom as a summons to worshipful service, even when the path leads through the wilderness.