

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

Today we are continuing in the second book of the Torah, which tells the story of **God's prophet, Moses, and the people of Israel in Egypt**. In past lessons, we saw how Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, persecuted the Israelites, making them his slaves. However, God had a plan to overturn the evil that Pharaoh was doing. God planned to use Moses, a man from among the children of Israel, to deliver the Israelites from the hand of Pharaoh.

We learned that Moses was educated in all the knowledge of Egypt. When Moses was forty years old, he attempted to deliver his people by his own methods. Moses' efforts, however, produced only problems, forcing him to flee from Pharaoh and hide in the wilderness. Moses had to learn that in himself, he was only a man and that he had no power to deliver the people of Israel unless God gave it to him. Thus, Moses lived in the wilderness for forty years, caring for his father-in-law's flock.

One day, **when Moses was eighty years old, God appeared to him on a mountain called Sinai**, in the flames of a burning bush. The bush was on fire, but it did not burn up. When Moses saw it, he was amazed. As he drew near to investigate, he heard the voice of God saying, *"I am the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."* Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look. Then God said, *"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their*

*complaints. So I have come down to rescue them. So now, go. **I am sending you to Egypt.**"*

Now, let us continue in the Torah to see how God concluded His talk with Moses and sent him to the king of Egypt. In chapter three, we heard how God promised to be with Moses, to give him wisdom and authority before Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. Yet in chapter four we will see that Moses was afraid to go.

In the book of Exodus, chapter four, the Scripture says:

*Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'" Then the Lord said to him, "**What is that in your hand?**" "A staff," he replied. The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. "**This," said the Lord, "is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers-the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob-has appeared to you."***

*Moses said to the Lord, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." The Lord said to him, "**Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.**" But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, **Aaron** the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; **I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do...** But take this staff in your hand so that you can perform miraculous signs with it."*

*Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive." Jethro said, "Go, and I wish you well." Now the Lord had said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who wanted to kill you are dead." So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started **back to Egypt**. And he took the staff of God in his hand. The Lord said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do... Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, "Let my son go, so that he may worship me."*

*The Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet Moses." So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. Then Moses told Aaron everything the Lord had sent him to say, and also about all the miraculous signs he had commanded him to perform. **Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites**, and Aaron told them everything the Lord had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. **And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.***

*Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **Let my people go**, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'" Pharaoh said, "**Who is the Lord**, that I should obey him and let Israel go? **I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go!**"*

Let us stop here briefly. We see how God spoke to Pharaoh through the mouth of Moses and Aaron {*Harun* in Arabic}. Did Pharaoh believe the word of God? No, he did not! Did you hear how he answered Moses and Aaron? He said, "**Who is the Lord**, that I should obey him and let Israel go? **I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go!**"

Pharaoh did not know the Lord {Lit. *the Eternal One*}. Pharaoh and all the people of Egypt **had a religion**, but **they did not know God**. They only cared about following the religion of their ancestors. They did not care about knowing the living and true God-the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Pharaoh and the Egyptians put their confidence in their customs, their idols, their fetishes and their religious leaders, but they did **not** put their confidence **in the Lord and His Eternal Word**.

Thus, in chapter six we read:

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "**Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country.**" God also said to Moses, "**I am the Lord**. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant. "Therefore, say to the Israelites: '**I am the Lord**, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that **I am the Lord** your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. **I am the Lord.**"*

Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites. And the Egyptians will know that **I am the Lord** when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the

Israelites out of it." Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded them. ⁷Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.

So, we see how the Lord planned to judge Pharaoh and the people of Egypt with mighty acts of judgment. God, in His righteousness, purposed to pay back the Egyptians for the hundreds of years of suffering which they had brought on the Israelites. Also, through the miracles that God planned to perform by the hand of Moses, the Lord wanted to display His glory and power. Thus, He would show the people of Egypt and the whole world, that **the Lord God who spoke to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses is the living and true God!**

As we have already learned, God is the Merciful One and does not want anyone to perish, but wants everyone to repent and to know and receive the truth. That was why He planned to perform miracles that would confirm the word He spoke through Moses. The Lord wanted everyone **to know beyond any doubt** that the God who was speaking through Moses is **the one true God!**

We need to remember that in Egypt there were hundreds of idols that the Egyptians considered gods. However, God wanted them to know that there is only one true God. God wanted them to know that **the one true God is the God who established His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**--promising to make of them a nation through which God would channel the prophets, the Scriptures and the Savior of the world.

However, Pharaoh was not interested in knowing the one true God. That is why, when God sought to speak to Pharaoh through His prophets, Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh answered them, saying, **"Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go!"** (Exod. 5:2)

Pharaoh spoke the truth when he said that he did not know the Lord! He did not know the God who established an eternal covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Pharaoh had **a religion**, but he did not have **a relationship** with God. Pharaoh's heart was closed to the truth that came from the one true God. Thus, he ignored the message that God spoke to him through Moses and Aaron.

To this very day, most people in the world follow the way of Pharaoh. They talk about God, but they pay no attention to the Word of the Lord. Consequently, **they do not know God**. They know some things **about God**, but they do not know **God Himself**. They have a **religion** handed down to them by their ancestors, but they do not have a true **relationship** with the living God who revealed Himself to Moses.

How about you? **Do you know the Lord?** Do you really know what He has said through His prophets? Have you ever sincerely looked into the Writings of God's prophets? Do you really know the Lord God? Do you love Him with all your heart? Do you want to obey Him? Or are you, like Pharaoh, just following the religion of your ancestors?

Oh dear friends, may not even one of us be like Pharaoh who refused to listen to and believe the Word of the Eternal God! Listen to this warning from God's Word: *"See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God!"* Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as did Pharaoh who said, *"Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?"*

Thank you for listening. God willing, in our next study we will continue this captivating story and see how God brought upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians ten plagues so that they might know that He is the Lord!...

God bless you as you heed this solemn warning from His holy Word:

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts!"

We hope you've enjoyed *The Way of Righteousness*. Please tell us what you think of this series, originally written by P.D. Bramsen.

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