

CONFRONTING THE FINGER OF GOD

Exodus 6-15

We've considered how God kept His promises to Abraham. **He is faithful.**

Just as God was faithful to keep His promises to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob,

God was faithful to keep His promises to Moses also.

God sends Moses to Pharaoh to ask him to free His people.

Aaron would be the messenger to tell Pharaoh what God tells Moses.

After God called Moses at the bush, Moses had second thoughts!

The job seemed insurmountable

5:1-2 => 5:22-6:1

Twice Moses asks, "*If the Israelites won't listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen, since I speak with faltering lips?*" 6:28-30

That was a good question.

Fact of the matter is: Pharaoh won't ever listen to Moses.

This isn't about listening to Moses!

God responds: Let me reassure you. **He WON'T listen to you!** 7:1-5

In spite of the clear evidence of God's authority, and the repeated warnings, Pharaoh rejects God's message.

Pharaoh is about to become a sign, to represent God's sovereignty over nature and the nations.

Moses and Aaron obey God and go to speak to Pharaoh 7:6-7

Moses struggled with the same kinds of feelings we struggle with.

He was afraid of failing again.

He knew he couldn't pull it off.

He didn't enjoy being looked down on by those around him

Nevertheless, God had promised to be with him and work through him.

REALIZATION OF LIBERATION 7:8-13:16 God sends the plagues.

Pharaoh's question answered 7:8-12:51

"Who is this YAHWEH, that I should obey Him?"

I will act and the Egyptians will know that I AM YAHWEH

9:14-16; 10:1-2

Pharaoh is about to learn *Who He is!*

This wasn't about Pharaoh listening to Moses.

Moses wasn't going to pull this off!

This was about **God revealing Himself to the Egyptians and to His own people**

Two observations about the signs presented:

- 1) **Pharaoh's sorcerers were able to imitate Moses' signs, BUT,**
even when they imitated the signs, ...
... their serpents were swallowed up by Moses' serpent.
... they couldn't stop the plagues God started!

They could add to the problem; but couldn't stop it!

2) **The signs God uses correspond to the gods of Egypt.**

Each one is related to one of their gods and demonstrates

Yahweh's superiority to the gods of Egypt.

Confrontation with their gods answers Pharaoh's question:

Yahweh is greater than any of the gods of Egypt.

Evidence demonstrates the authority of God, and His messenger.

In spite of the evidence, Pharaoh rejects the message.

Over and over again, he sees the evidence, backs down, then

changes his mind--even when his own religious authorities tell

him: *"This is the finger of God!"* **8:19**

Repeatedly: he sees the evidence.

"God hardens his heart!"

So that, "you may know . . .

"that I am Yahweh!"

"that there is no one like Yahweh!"

"that I, Yahweh, am in this land!"

*"that I might show you my power and that my name might be
proclaimed in all the earth."*

"that you may know that the earth is Yahweh's!"

Final plague: last evidence--even affected Israel.

God's people tested; they had to respond in faith and obedience to

God's revealed plan--Or they too would lose firstborn son!

Israel's memorial established 13:1-16

13:3, 14-16 => 14:4, 10-14, 17b-18, 31

The bottom line is that it was GOD who worked among them.

He gets ALL the credit.

Moses didn't pull it off. He NEVER could have done this.

All Moses could do was speak with faltering lips!

If you have any question about people you minister to paying attention to you and
turning to God, let me reassure you.

There isn't a CHANCE they'll be convinced by our great logic!

So, what hope do we have of accomplishing anything of value?

God will work through His Word.

He assures us that *HIS WORD* won't come back empty.

It WILL do what He sent it out to do: draw people to Him!

Journey to the sea 13:17-14:14

13:20-22 God didn't leave them to find their own way.

He went with them.

Though we don't have the same *physical* guides (cloud/pillar)--we do have His Spirit to guide us--the quiet conviction of what He wants from us TODAY.

God's will isn't lost. We don't have to find it!

We just have to obey what we *DO* know He wants us to do today.

Pharoah's persecution 14:1-9

Israel's fear 14:10-14

Their backs were up against the wall (of water, that is) 14:10-14

Pharoah was convinced they were through. So were they.

They had no where else to go. They were finished!

They began to complain about how God had failed them.

"Did you bring us out here to die?"

There was no way they could escape from Pharoah.

There was only one thing left to do: *Trust God!*

When all else fails, be still and *watch God work!*

It's only when our backs are up against the wall, with *nowhere* to go that we're ready to hear: **"Stand firm. Be still. And WATCH what God is going to do!"**

One little phrase I want us to consider this morning.

In case we miss the point, he repeats it **3 Xs!**

3 Xs he tells us He will gain glory for Himself.

3 Xs He says He's going to gain that glory ***"through Pharoah!"***

14:4, 17, 18

God doesn't say He will gain glory *without* Pharoah.

He doesn't say that he's going to *take Pharoah away* so they don't have to worry about him anymore.

God often brings glory to Himself, through Pharoah.

God allows an adversary, difficult circumstances, affliction, persecution, hard times in our lives, so He can say to us, ***"Now WATCH ME handle this!"***

This summer we have several short-term missions trips-one team is in Turkey now; another leaving for the Czech republic in 3 weeks; Emily Dieken is leaving next weekend for Ireland; some will go to Mexico

Over the years I have been involved with a lot of missions trips, one way or another.

My experience has taught me something about the high points of missions trips:

The high points are never the times when everything goes the way we planned! NEVER!

The times you come back talking about are the times when you meet Pharoah at the Red Sea—when the unexpected, frustrating, interruption, ruins your plan and you don't have the foggiest idea what to do next. The only thing left to do: **be quiet, and watch God work, to get glory through Pharoah.**

I've been praying for our summer trips.

If you're going on one you might want to ask me to stop praying for you anytime!

Because **I'm praying that God will bring on Pharoah!** — so you can **stand firm. Be still. Watch God glorify Himself through Pharoah.**

Andraé Crouch understood the point:

I thank God for the mountains, and I thank Him for the valleys,

I thank Him for the storms He brought me through;

For if I'd never had a problem I wouldn't know that He could solve them,

I'd never know what faith in God could do.

*Through it all, **Through** it all,* I've learned to trust in Jesus, I've learned to trust in God;

*Through it all, **Through** it all,* I've learned to depend upon His Word.

A couple of years ago we often sang a chorus that has become one of my favorites:

God will make a way, *where there seems to be NO way.*

If we can find our own way, we don't need for Him to make the way for us.

We can just do it ourselves.

But GOD makes a way, where there *doesn't* seem to be one!

God says: I will gain glory for myself **through** Pharoah and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen, and the Egyptians will know that ***I am YAHWEH!***

I'm praying that God will bring some Pharoahs into *OUR* life this week.

So God can show us how He can glorify Himself *through* OUR Pharoah.

If you never have to face a "Pharoah," you'll never learn for yourself that

He can deal with the "Pharoahs" in your life.

When you stand face to face with Pharoah, *Stand firm. Be quiet. And watch God make a way for you.*

He will glorify Himself through Pharoah!

14:31 15:11