

Fighter Moses

Exodus 7:8 – 13:16

Key verse 10:3

„So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, “This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me.’”

Last week we learned God's heart and will for the salvation of the Israelites who cried out to God in their slavery and oppression. God heard their prayers, participated in their suffering, and finally appointed Moses as a leader for them, to lead them out of slavery and to establish them as his own people, as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Today we learn how Moses became a fighter who went to Pharaoh 10 times, called him to repentance, made no compromises and finally led the Israelites out of Egypt. God revealed his omnipotence by punishing Pharaoh with 10 successive plagues and bringing about the glorious exodus of his people from slavery, which by human imagination, was unfathomable. God has called us as spiritual leaders for the revival in Germany and Europe. Let us as spiritual warriors consistently challenge humanism, relativism and the godless Zeitgeist which keeps young people imprisoned in sin, so that they may make an exodus, come back to life spiritually, and rise as a great army of God for world mission.

1. Let my people go to serve me (7:8 – 10:29)

In chapter 5 Moses challenged Pharaoh for the first time: "Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert". God's will was clear. But Pharaoh disobeyed God's command. As a result, he even increased the pressure of suffering on the Israelites by demanding constant productivity from them, although he no longer provided the necessary raw materials. In this time of crisis Moses was ac-

cused by his own people. He himself was also in a deep inner crisis, in which he doubted everything. But he came to God in prayer. Then the Lord encouraged and strengthened him until Moses could accept God's calling anew and believe that God would give victory to his people and lead them to freedom.

1) Moses' unrelenting struggle

In today's lesson we learn that Moses stepped before Pharaoh with confidence and courage. This time he not only brought the Word of God, but he demonstrated the power of God. Let us read verse 10: "So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake." Aaron showed Pharaoh the omnipotence of God. But Pharaoh wanted to be God himself and therefore he called for his sorcerers. The Egyptian sorcerers were connected with dark powers and could imitate the miracle of God. Their staffs were also transformed into snakes. Verse 12 says: "Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs." Yet Pharaoh hardened his heart and he did not listen to Moses and Aaron (14). Then Moses had to go to Pharaoh 10 times, proclaim God's word to him and announce the judgment of God. Normally we can try something 2 or 3 times, then we give up. But Moses went to Pharaoh 10 times by obeying God's Word absolutely. Each time he was ready to obey God's instruction. Moses had overcome his former self-doubts and could courageously stand before the most powerful man in the world at that time,

and challenge him with the Word of God and with the power of God. Moses could do this because he believed in God and simply obeyed the Word of God.

How often do we feel weak and fearful and only look at ourselves or at what other people think about us? But we learn here from Moses that he simply obeyed the command of God and thus experienced the power of God. God's Word has the power to bring spiritually dead young people back to life and to set them up as a large army of God for world mission. God has often revealed this power through our Bible study. We have seen and experienced for ourselves how young people have been changed by a Word of God. Let us not therefore remain helpless, but challenge the spiritual work of resurrection through faith. Like Moses, let us courageously and resolutely fight 10 rounds and thus experience the mighty work of God.

2) The hardened heart of Pharaoh

Verse 13 says, "Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to them, just as the Lord had said." Pharaoh's heart was hardened. Fear out of stubbornness is a deliberate and malicious rebellion against the dominion of God. It was not a matter of innocent ignorance. Rather, he wanted to be God himself and not submit to the will of God. So he hardened his heart. When he repeatedly disobeyed, his heart was so hardened that in the end he could no longer repent. That is why the Bible says that God had hardened his heart.

3) God's power through ten plagues

When Pharaoh rejected God's rule and disobeyed God, God struck him one after the other through ten different plagues. God revealed his power ten times to make Pharaoh repent. First he turned all the water of the Nile into blood, so that they had nothing to drink. Then frogs came, which penetrated everywhere and annoyed Pharaoh even while sleeping. These were disgusting plagues. In the next plague, God revealed his life-giving power by turning dust into mosquitoes. The sorcerers could no longer

imitate this and confessed: "This is the finger of God". This was followed by biting flies. From the 5th plague on, health was attacked, first by a plague of cattle among the grazing animals, and then by festering boils on the people. Finally fundamentals for life were attacked through hail, which killed many animals, grasshoppers, which devoured everything green, and darkness, so that nobody could move any more. They actually had to acknowledge their complete helplessness. When Pharaoh still did not repent, all the firstborn Egyptians had to die in the 10th plague. Only through this was Pharaoh moved to let them go.

These 10 plagues were no accidental catastrophes, but God's hand. Every single plague was announced, it came and ended again. Whenever Moses prayed, the plague was stopped. The message to Pharaoh always remained the same: "Accept God's Lordship. Let God's people go so that they can serve God." Moses called on Pharaoh to repent until the end. God also used these plagues to reveal Himself as the Lord. 7:17 says that Pharaoh would know that God is the Lord. 10:2 says that all Israel was to know that God is the Lord. In this sense, each of these plagues served the glory of God. God wanted to save Israel. Through the process of salvation, God's name was proclaimed throughout the world.

4) Pharaoh's fake repentance

These 10 plagues threatened Pharaoh existentially. Again and again he came to Moses with an emergency repentance and asked him for intercession. But this kind of repentance is not true repentance. Pharaoh continued not to accept the Word of God and only tried to avoid the punishment of God. Every time his situation improved and he could breathe again, he fell back into his old rebelliousness. The terrible consequence of his impenitence was that Egypt was devastated by one plague after another. Even the king's officials warned that Egypt would perish. The result of impenitence is the punishment and judgment of God. The last consequence of sin is death. Therefore, we should not remain in disobe-

dience like Pharaoh, but live our lives in obedience to faith like Moses. Disobedience brings the curse of God upon us, upon our families, and even upon our people, but the obedience of faith brings the overflowing blessing of God.

5) God makes a difference

Starting with the 4th plague, we find that God made a clear difference between His people and the Egyptians. While the Egyptians experienced one plague after another, the people of Israel were protected and God did not allow anything to happen to them. God's heart is not punishment or destruction. God's heart is salvation, healing and renewal. In the midst of the announcement of judgment, God repeatedly showed His love. God repeatedly showed Pharaoh the way out by repentance. Those who feared God's Word could bring themselves to safety.

Some may ask why God judges people. But here we see that people judge themselves. God did his best to warn Pharaoh again and again and to lead him to repentance. But when he hardened his heart, he loaded the plagues of God upon himself. In 9:9 we see that many Egyptians accepted the warnings of God and let their people and their animals flee into the houses so that they were not struck by the hailstorm. God always makes a difference. Those who humble themselves before God and obey His Word will experience the abundant blessing of God. But those who deliberately ignore God's Word and remain unrepentant will experience the judgment of God. John 3:16 says about the way of salvation: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Whoever accepts Jesus and believes in Him is saved from the terrible consequences of sin and receives eternal life. But the one who rejects the light of God remains in darkness and will be judged by God.

6) Moses did not compromise

Moses was a fighter who fought hard against Pharaoh's self-determination and

rebellion. Many times he had to ask the Pharaoh to repent, warn and admonish him and keep God's judgment before his eyes. But Pharaoh ignored the warnings of God by Moses. He tried several times to make clever compromises with Moses: You can sacrifice in Egypt, only the men should go or only the people, but the cattle and their belongings remain here. Satan also tries us again and again to compromise, e.g. not necessarily to leave the old life, to serve the work of God alone or to keep our material for ourselves. But Moses never gave in into Pharaoh's compromise proposals, but insisted that he had to obey God 100% and let the people go. In the course of time Moses became a courageous and strong man. In the beginning he had shown great respect for Pharaoh, but in the end he left Pharaoh "with fierce anger". He knew God's heart, which was angry with Pharaoh. He was humble before God, but courageous and challenging before men, even before Pharaoh.

The Zeitgeist of unbelief, relativism, and humanism is very strong. But God wants to use us as spiritual fighters who challenge this Pharaoh through our one-to-one Bible study. God wants the students to come out of the clutches of sin and the spirit of the time, to be spiritually awakened and to be able to rise as a vast army of God for world mission.

Moses fought with the power of God against the hardened Pharaoh to free his people from Egypt. Ezra struggled with Bible study to lead his people back to obedience of faith and to spiritual awakening. God's work is always done by a spiritual leader who fights consistently against the Pharaoh of his time. Humanism declares that one person is unimportant and that everybody should just live according to his own ideas. But although in modern society everybody is trying to fulfill his own dreams, they search in vain for the meaning of their lives, and many eventually commit suicide. But in God's eyes one person is very important. God created each person according to his own image. "God saw all that he had made, and

it was very good." (Gen 1:31) One person who obeys God changes the flow of history. It may be a leader like Moses, a prayer mother like Monica, or a bible teacher like Ezra. I pray that I and each of us, as fighters of faith, will fight without compromise against the spirit of the times and thus be used for the work of spiritual revival and the establishment of Germany and Europe as shepherd nations.

A young man was very comfortable and not very disciplined. For a long time, he could not make any progress in his studies. But his shepherd fought for him many rounds to lead him to the word of God and to teach him faith in God and to fight to the end. Last week we heard the good news that he successfully passed his final exam. It was because his shepherd and many coworkers fought for him in prayer. May God help him to thank God for his grace and to also stand up as a fighter for the young people.

Another young man was very attracted to money, the fun and the sporting events that captured his heart again and again. But his shepherd did not give up the spiritual fight against the worldly spirit and helped him through many rounds to obey God. He fought for him to accept God's plan for his life and to receive spiritual training. Because his shepherd never gave up, he could decide to accept God's mission and now he is growing as a Noah of the 21st century, especially for the students of the Bonn-Rhine-Sieg University of Applied Sciences.

In our time, many spiritual leaders are fearful and would rather apologize than rebuke sin clearly or even take action against it. I was one of those who lived deceived by humanism and therefore had no spiritual authority. But here I may learn from Moses to consistently challenge the Pharaoh of that time, especially humanism and unbelief, and to plant the obedience of faith in the hearts of young people. God wants to use us as spiritual fighters like Moses, that through us young people may come to spiritual revival, that Europe may again be used as a shepherd nation for world mission.

2. The killing of the firstborn and the exodus of the Israelites (11:1 – 13:16)

Let us read 11:1: "Now the Lord had said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely". Moses announced the last plague, the killing of the firstborn of all the Egyptians. God had waited so patiently for Pharaoh's repentance. But when he would not obey, God had to force him to his knees. If they experienced the plague of death, they would eventually drive the Israelites away.

In preparation, all Israelites, men and women, were to borrow gold jewelry from their neighbors for the sacrificial feast. They would later take it with them as booty from Egypt. Moses announced the plan exactly to Pharaoh: the angel of the Lord would strike all the firstborn of man and cattle in Egypt, and not even a dog would bark against Israel. Then Pharaoh himself would drive them away and Moses and the people would move out. This time Moses left Pharaoh with fierce anger, because Pharaoh was so hardened against the Word of God.

Chapter 12 contains a detailed description of how the Israelites should prepare for the Passover and the Exodus. A male lamb had to be slaughtered in each house. With the blood of the lamb the doorposts and the threshold were painted, as a sign for the angel of death to pass by this house. The flesh was roasted over the fire and was to be eaten completely that night. Let us read verses 11 to 13. God would kill all the firstborn of the Egyptians, but among the Israelites who relied on the blood of the Lamb and painted it on their doorposts, he would pass by and spare them. "Passa" means "to pass". God's angel of judgment would pass over the Israelites and save them. The day of judgment over Egypt was also the day of redemption for Israel.

God gave the Israelites detailed instructions for the Passover that they would celebrate each year in remembrance of the Exodus. They were to celebrate the Passover in each family annually on 14th day of the 1st month, remembering God's wonderful grace of salvation. They should remember the power of God. The unleavened breads reminded them of how they had fled completely unprepared. And they thanked God who had saved them from the plague of death.

It is also very important for us to keep reminding ourselves of God's grace of salvation. We can always thank God for this and make this event the basis of our life of faith. God saved us from the power of sin through Jesus and gave us the new life. We should die because of our sin and be eternally condemned, but our Lord Jesus took upon Himself all the curse of sin and died in our place on the Cross. He also rose from the dead and thereby opened the way for us to eternal life in the kingdom of God. All who believe in the blood of the Lamb Jesus Christ are saved from the plague of death. Without Jesus I was a cold-hearted computer guy who could only hurt others and live as a curse. I rebelled against God and had forsaken him and had to be condemned forever. But God took pity on me and visited me through Bible study and restored me as his child. Through Jesus I received God's forgiveness grace, and even his calling as a shepherd and Bible teacher for the students. Now I have a new life that I can participate in the spiritual fight against the lies of atheism and the zeitgeist so that Germany and Europe can be spiritually revived.

Let's look at 12:29: "At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well." At midnight the terrible plague came upon Egypt. The angel of the LORD went through all the land and the firstborn died in all the houses. There was crying and crying all over Egypt. In every house, whether in Pharaoh's palace or in

prison, there was a dead man. Only the Israelites, who had painted their doorposts with the blood of the Lamb, were spared. Now Pharaoh and all the officials asked Moses to go out with all the people. 12:51 says, "And on that very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions."

This Exodus was the unimaginable work of God according to human judgement. Even the Israelites were taken by surprise and had not prepared any food at all. When God opened the door after 430 years of slavery, they moved out. It was watchful night for the Lord, who led them out of Egyptian land. God saved this slave people and raised them as a kingdom of priests through which God's blessing would flow to all nations. God's grace of salvation goes far beyond our imagination.

In chapter 13 the Israelites are commanded to consecrate the firstborn to the Lord out of gratitude and to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread. This shows for what God had saved the people: namely to establish them as his holy people. God also wants to do something unimaginable in our generation and establish Europe as a shepherd nation.

We have learned today that God raised Moses as a fighter who fought 10 rounds against the stubbornly hardened Pharaoh and finally brought about the Exodus of the Israelites. God revealed his power through 10 plagues with which he struck Egypt, until Pharaoh finally had to give up. God also wants to set us up as spiritual warriors in this time, to fight against the lies of humanism and relativism and to bring about the spiritual revival among the students so that Germany and Europe can rise as a great army of God and be used as a shepherd nation for the world mission. God bless each one of you as a fighter of faith to be u

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