

Russell Kelfer

**Moses:
Let My People Go!**

717-A

Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org

Let My People Go!

Lord,

We bow before You in utter adoration and praise and we acknowledge that all things belong to You and that we belong to You. We come into Your presence, Father, with an awareness that apart from You we can do nothing. But we are aware, as well, Father, that in Your power, we can be energized by Your Spirit and see great things happen. We come to look at the issue of spiritual warfare and the situation with Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh.

Our prayer, Father, is that it would be more than just a story, but that You would lift from the pages of Scripture, absolutes and principles for us to live by, and that You would in the process, then take those principles, place them on the doorposts of our hearts and cause us to obey them. We love You so.

We lift up those, Father, whose hearts are breaking and who are going through times of difficulty, strife, fear and uncertainty, and we pray, Father, that Your sweet Spirit would garrison us about and guide us.

In Jesus Name,

Amen.

It's a word that some of us don't like to use. In fact, it's a word some of us have erased from our vocabulary. You can ask my wife. She will tell you that all you have to do is say this word, and I get in the car and head south. I will go all the way around the block to avoid a confrontation. That's the word. I hate it. There are other people, though, who literally thrive on confrontation. A good fight, let's have it—different personalities.

Moses, in the early days of his life, seemed to be more like me in that one regard only, and that is, he would do anything to avoid confrontation, but God was fixing to take care of that. We will see what happens as one of the most exciting chapters in history opens and we look in and see Moses and Aaron as they approach Pharaoh with one simple statement. "Thus, saith the Lord, let My people go" (Ex. 8:1). And we're going to see, of course, Pharaoh's response as he represents Satan. We're going to see Moses' and

Let My People Go!

Aaron's response as they represent God, and we are going to see, in essence, spiritual warfare as it affects our lives in the 20th century, duplicated in the physical realm.

"Let My people go." God said, "This is what I want you to tell Pharaoh and this is what Pharaoh is going to do. He's going to say, Nah" (loose translation). And the truth of the matter was, they went to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh not only refused, he gave this incredible reply—one of the most honest replies in Scripture. He said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey? I don't know the Lord."

And we try to determine how that is likened to the response of the unbeliever in the world today. We try to give them Christian principles to live on and they don't have the Holy Spirit to interpret those principles that enable them to obey. "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His name? I don't know the Lord." Well, Pharaoh is fixing to find out who the Lord is. Will he trust Him? No, he won't. Because he'll never come down from that throne of self-righteousness, so he'll never meet the King of Glory.

That's where our lesson takes up. Pharaoh says, "I will not let God's people go." The people are discouraged; God's leaders are scared. And with this scenario behind us, we look at our lesson entitled, *Let My People Go!* The passage is found in Exodus 7:3-11:10. The outline has three questions.

I- What was wrong with Pharaoh's heart? (Exodus 7:3-7)

II- How did God set his hostages free? (Exodus 7:8-11:8)

1- How to have a staff meeting.

2- Hey, Culligan Man!

3- It's enough to make you croak.

4- Gnats to you.

5- Spray, Otto, spray.

6- Anyone for salad?

7- Boiling mad.

8- Hail to the chief.

9- The locust of living in Egypt. (I didn't think anyone would get that one.)

10- Where were you when the lights went out?

11- When the clock strikes twelve.

III- Why did God wait so long?

In the interest of time we're going to relate rather than read

Let My People Go!

much of the dialogue. But, in Exodus 7, God is speaking to Moses and he's giving His quarterback a game plan. In chapter 7, verses 1-4, we see the plan, the procedure, the purpose and the prediction.

The Plan:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.

(Exodus 7:1 NAS)

(He'll be your PA system.)

The Procedure:

You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he

let the sons of Israel get out of his land. (Exodus 7:2 NAS)

The Purpose:

But I will harden Pharaoh's heart so that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.

(Exodus 7:3 NAS)

The Prediction:

When Pharaoh does not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt, and bring out My hosts,

My People, the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments.

The Egyptians shall know that the I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst."

So, Moses and Aaron did it; as the Lord commanded them, thus they did.

(And this is my favorite verse, because I can relate to it.)

Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh. (Exodus 7:4-7 NAS)

Now don't laugh. Be reminded here that old age is not a deterrent to God. It's an advantage. The years take their toll and we lose the quickness of the step if we ever had it, and it takes a toll on the body and on the mind, but from those same years comes depth of experience, the breadth of pain, the height of success and the depth of failure. To some, what comes is the surrender that leads to maximum availability. To some, comes stamina from having roots that go down deep and sets them apart like a mighty

Let My People Go!

oak that's been through the fire and through the wind.

Today's church would have relegated Moses and Aaron to the senior citizen Sunday school class and told them not to get too excited. Or, they would have shipped them off to Midnight Manor for rejects or has-beens. But God understands the principle of maturity and he raised up two elder statesmen to be His prophets and stand before the enemy.

Now, let me remind you, hostage crises are not new. The conflict here was between God and Satan. The issue was the release of hostages. A whole nation was being held in bondage against their will. Satan's representative at the bargaining table is a man named Pharaoh. God's representatives at the bargaining table are two-fold, Moses and Aaron. God's bargaining was very simple. He simply made one demand. "Let My people go." Period. No negotiation. That's the word of God. Pay attention to that. His goal was not destruction. His goal was deliverance. But there was an increasing level of pressure that had to be put on the enemy before the enemy would give in.

If you watch Israel even today, you will see remnants of God's plan for national security, but we won't get into that. The key phrase is found in verse 3; "I will harden Pharaoh's heart", though we read in verse 15 of chapter 8, Pharaoh hardened his heart, so, which is true? Did God just turn on the switch and turn off his heart, or was there response to a circumstance involved; and, if so, which passage is right or is there any conflict? Of course, there is no conflict in Scripture.

You see the answer is, that Pharaoh did harden his heart. He made a choice, but it was God whose presence, whose word, caused it to happen. It was the word of God that hardened Pharaoh's heart. You take heat and apply it to butter and what happens? It melts. You take the same heat and apply it to pottery and what happens? It hardens—same heat. The word of God will cause one heart to melt with conviction and another to harden with resistance. It was the word of God that hardened Pharaoh's heart so there is no conflict between the two statements. But either way, this guy had hardening of the arteries big time!

The Master Physician decided to start a kind of treatment to see what He could do. He could have done what we would have done, which is amputate about the neck and it would have been over, but God had a different plan and purpose. He wanted

Let My People Go!

to allow his rebellion to increase because with each stage of rebellion, there would be heightened conflict. With each stage of conflict there would be a greater visible difference between the plan of God and the plan of the enemy. With each miracle there would come rejection and the atmosphere would be charged with expectancy until the issue would become clear. Can God deliver His people in this kind of situation?

Seated in the grandstands were all the people who would ever live and in particular, all the skeptics of the world. God's plan was not just to deliver His people, but to shout His Name to the nations that He is the I AM. The way He goes about it will give us some patterns to follow about spiritual warfare in our own lives.

Conflict number one took the form of a staff meeting.

Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh at God's command. Pharaoh is much like the world is today. He was always ready for a miracle. That's what the world is looking for. They think God is a magnanimous magician who is supposed to do tricks. And Moses obliged. He puts his staff down, the rod of God, and Rudolph the Reptile appeared. So, Pharaoh called his personal magicians and each of them threw down a staff and their staffs turned into serpents, too. Snakes were everywhere. Pharaoh was delighted, but Pharaoh's delight was not what God was after. Glory is what God was after. So, Aaron's staff swallowed up the other staffs. End of staff meeting. Exit snake show. Verse 13 says:

Yet, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord had said. (Exodus 7:13 NAS)

Some of you have friends perhaps, or relatives or people you have prayed for. You've prayed that God would do things in their lives to demonstrate who He is and things would happen that are so amazing to you that you just can't believe that upon seeing this, they wouldn't fall on their knees and worship God and yet, it's just like... "So?" And that was Pharaoh's answer. "So?" Loose translation. So, God moves on.

Conflict number two is the first plague.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is stubborn; he refuses to let My people go." (Exodus 7:14 NAS)

So, the first of ten plagues took place. The first one was the turning of the water of the Nile into blood. Here's how it happened. Moses and Aaron were to go to the Nile early in the morning. They

Let My People Go!

were waiting for Pharaoh to come, but Pharaoh wasn't coming to bathe as Moses' mother had. He was coming to worship because the Nile River was honored by the Egyptians as the supreme deity. We ought to remember that each of these plagues, though they represent physical circumstances, if you look carefully, attacks one of the pagan gods the Egyptians worshipped. God was chipping away at the integrity of their gods. This was spiritual warfare. Circumstances are physical, warfare is spiritual. Remember that.

So, Pharaoh came to the river. Moses and Aaron took the rod of God, they struck the river and guess what? It turned to blood. The fish died. The streams began to smell. No water to drink, no water to clean with, no water to cook with. Even the storage vessels of wood where the water had been drawn out in days past turned to blood. So much for the god of Egypt!

You see, it's a picture of how the blood of God's Son would lead to Satan's eventual destruction. Parenthetically, anyone who worships a river can expect his fortunes to rise and fall. The reason is because his god is running all the time.

Enter Pharaoh's traveling magicians with their magic show. They found a vessel of clean water which God had left clean just for this purpose and they turned it into blood. They are really bright! The only drinking water left in the country, and in order to prove their power they turn it into blood, too. They just compounded the problem, but if you think about it, this is all Satan is able to do. You think about it when God is working.

Anyway, Pharaoh's heart is hardened. Verse 23 says he is totally unconcerned. In Verse 24 you have a picture of the Egyptians out at night digging holes all over Egypt looking for water. They drilled everywhere, but couldn't find any water. Why not? The water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and there is no water of life until you first come to the blood of the Lamb. So, there is no solution to the water problem. They had hard water because they had a hard-hearted king. Verse 25 said God waited seven days and then what happened? Chapter 8, verse 1. This is a mess.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord, 'Let My people go that they may serve me.

But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite your whole territory with frogs.

The Nile will swarm with frogs, which will come up and go

Let My People Go!

into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed,
and into the houses of your servants and on your people,
and into your ovens and in your kneading bowls.’ ”

(Exodus 8:1-3 NAS)

Sounds exciting! Isn't this a natural for Hollywood? Can't you just see it? *The Invasion of the Frog Brigade*, starring Hedda Hopper. You can see the ads, *Amazing Critters Give King the Jitters*. Anyhow, Pharaoh refuses. Aaron obeys and the whole country is a slimy sea of frogs. Now, I would remind you, the frog god was another one of Egypt's dynamic deities. They worshipped frogs. So, here is another picture of how the false gods of this world that you thought were the key to your happiness, begin to multiply until they strangle you and take hold over your life.

Anyhow, you couldn't walk in Egypt without squashing a frog and who wants to squash a god, so you didn't want to walk on them anyhow. Imagine trying to sleep. They were all over the place. Can't you just hear it? "Never mind, dear, I'll turn out the light." Squish. Or, "Dear your hand is clammy tonight." It's enough to make you croak!

Now here comes Pharaoh's magnificent masters of the mystical arts and these dummies add their two cents worth. They wave their wands and get more frogs. Just what they needed. We'll get back to them in a minute. Moses says to Pharaoh, "You name the time and God will tell all these frogs to go bye-bye. You can have barbecued frog legs for the rest of your life." Pharaoh scratches his head and says, "Make it tomorrow." I'm sure his people appreciated that.

May it be according to your word that you may know that
there is no one like the Lord our God. (Exodus 8:10b NAS)

So, the Lord executes the frogs in verse 13, piles them in heaps, and the original language says they "stinketh much."

Meanwhile in verse 15, when Pharaoh saw there was relief, he hardened his heart, and did not listen. Now, let me suggest that as a memory verse, only instead of Pharaoh, put your name, because everyone of us suffers from this problem when we're in a tight situation. We cry out to the Lord, and when there is relief, we harden our heart and will not listen. We forget the reason it happened. You say, "How could he still resist?" Oh, you ain't seen nothing yet!

The truth of the matter is, there is no logic to a mind that's

Let My People Go!

been blinded by Satan. A heart that is hardened has no logic at all. You'll explain away obvious miracles as coincidences. Or, you'll acknowledge that maybe God did that, but as soon as you get a little relief from the circumstances, BAM, you forget the whole thing.

Pharaoh didn't need blind faith now. He only needed enough common sense to realize God did it. But, a mind under Satan's control makes no sense at all. So, the frogs died and the Egyptians were hopping mad. The magicians were about to croak, and Pharaoh said, "*No way.*"

God's next move was to bug Pharaoh with gnats. Now, it happened this way. Aaron struck the dust with his rod again and the dust turned to gnats. These are mosquito-like varmints that swarm and buzz and sting. "Gnats to you, Pharaoh.", in other words. There were gnats everywhere on man and beast the Scripture says. And, in verse 18, here came our traveling magic show again.

The magicians tried with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, (Exodus 8:18a)

(Boy, that would be a help wouldn't it? More gnats?)

but they could not; so, there were gnats on man and beast.

Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen them as the Lord had said. (Exodus 8:18b-19 NAS)

Now, let's stop and look at these magicians for a second. They have come to end of themselves. They are Satan's counterfeit to the real thing. They represent his attempt to imitate the miracles of God, but there are some principles involved. I'd have to say, if you get nothing else out of this lesson, please pay attention to these three points.

1- Satan can imitate, but he cannot originate. Have you ever thought about that? He has never done an original thing in his rotten life. Never! He can't create anything. God sent snakes; Satan sent snakes. God sent frogs; Satan sent frogs. All he could do is try to copy the miracles of the spirit. He does a poor job, but he can duplicate certain things in the spirit realm. He has some supernatural ability, but we are expecting something different and all he does is mimic God. Remember that.

2- Though Satan can duplicate, he cannot negate anything

Let My People Go!

God does. God made frogs, the magicians made more frogs. God made blood, the magicians, more blood, snakes and so forth, but they were powerless to stop God even to stay His hand one ten trillionth of an inch. They couldn't. So, when God finally moves into the pages of history in the last days, Satan will again be powerless to stop Him.

On a personal level, Beloved, Satan may confuse you or confound you, and from time to time circumstantially even seem to duplicate the works of God. You may be looking for the will of God about your job, or about a relationship and you pray, and a door opens. And you say, "Oh God opened that door." Maybe not. Satan can do that to confuse you when you are looking for the will of God.

You pray for peace and Satan is able to give you an artificial kind of peace. It is not the peace of God that passes all understanding. You jump at it and you use it to make a wrong decision. He can give you certain emotions to confuse you, but I would remind you, whenever God moves in to take control, Satan is paralyzed. He can duplicate, but he can never negate the power of God. He can imitate but not originate, duplicate but not negate.

3- Most importantly, even Satan's ability to imitate and duplicate must be allowed and controlled by a Sovereign God. When God has had enough, that's it. You remember that. That's the most important principle you can ever remember. Satan can play his game just so long but when the Omnipotent God with a glance of His glory, says "STOP!", Satan can do nothing at all. NOTHING! You see that here. The magicians duplicated the snakes and the frogs and the blood. God let them. They tried to duplicate the gnats but God said, "Wait a minute. That's enough. Stop! The party is over.", and they could not. They turned to Pharaoh and said, "This is the finger of God.", but Pharaoh would not listen.

4- So, God bugged Pharaoh again. This time He brought swarms of crawling insects. It's a gross passage, I know that. But it's true. They covered the land; they destroyed the land. Pharaoh said, "Wait a minute. I'll make you a counter offer." God wasn't interested in counter offers. He doesn't deal with the enemy. Pharaoh said the Israelites could sacrifice, but they had to stay in the land to do it. "I'll build you a nice little altar over here, you do your thing and that will be it." Moses said, "Wait a minute, the word of God is the word of God! It shall come to pass."

Let My People Go!

Beloved, you and I need to learn that we don't negotiate with the enemy. He has nothing we need. We don't negotiate. We defeat, in Christ. Moses understood. God said, "You go three days journey into the wilderness and there you sacrifice. That's My word." Moses said, "I know the word of God. I give up nothing in return for the hostages. They belong to God." He dealt kindly at first, the plot thickened, the heat went up. It's almost like God was entertaining Pharaoh although that's not what He was doing. But now He was getting serious. You see, God is never in a hurry to destroy. He's always in a hurry to discipline without destruction, but now the annoyance turned into drastic discipline. First, He'll have to affect their livelihood, then their health, then finally life itself. But, what a patient God.

5- Plague number five all but crumbled the golden arches. God sent a severe disease that took care of all the cattle and animals in Egypt. I read between the lines and hamburger probably went up to \$300 a pound. Even the horses died, so Alpo was out of the question. This time, God added another dimension, so he separated the children of Israel from the people of Egypt to heighten the contrast of the reality of His miracle. In chapter 9, verse 6, it says "Of the livestock of the sons of Israel, not one died." The Hebrew veterinarians went on a picnic and the Egyptians went into a panic and still Pharaoh did not respond.

6- Plague number six made Pharaoh boil. Moses and Aaron threw handfuls of soot in the air and the result was a dermatologist's delight. Boils were everywhere. Even the magicians were boiling mad. That's what it says in verse 11. Pharaoh did not melt. In verse 16, God makes this incredible statement:

But indeed, for this reason, I have allowed you to remain,
in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My
name through all the earth. (Exodus 9:16 NAS)

"Pharaoh, that's the only reason you're there. Big fellow, you are awfully impressed by that big throne, but the only reason you are there is two-fold: I want to show You my power and I want to proclaim My name."

7- Having stated the reason, He unveils plague number seven. I can see the Cairo marching band in the background playing "Hail to the Chief." The heavens let loose and there was hail such as Egypt had never seen before or since. The Scripture says every man, woman, child or animal who didn't stay inside, died. It

Let My People Go!

says the hail was accompanied by thunder and the thunder held hands with huge lightning bolts that flew down from the heavens like fire running to the earth. The Scripture says every man and beast outdoors was killed, every plant was demolished and every tree was shattered.

Meanwhile, in Goshen, radio station WORD was broadcasting the weather report. John Willing here, News Central. Our radar shows there is no let up on the horrendous storm in the land of Egypt, but the forecast for the Goshen area is continued fair skies. No rain at all. Verse 26 says in Goshen, there was not even a hint of a storm.

Now at this stage Pharaoh calls Dial-A-Prayer for the first time. He sends for Moses and Aaron and makes this superficial religious statement. This would be a good verse to memorize because if you want to tell the difference between real repentance and partial repentance, this gives you an idea. He said, "I have sinned this time." What a guy!

...I have sinned this time; the Lord is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.

Make supplication to the Lord, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail; (Exodus 9:27, 28a NAS)

(There's the reason He wants you to pray.)

and I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer. Moses said to him, "As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease and there will be hail no longer, that you may know that the earth is the Lord's.

But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the Lord God." (Exodus 28b-30 NAS)

So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread out his hands to the Lord, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and rain no longer poured on the earth. But, when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. (Exodus 9:33-34 NAS)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them,

(Exodus 10:1 NAS)

(And this is the other reason, verse 2, that I want you to

Let My People Go!

consider memorizing)

and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians, and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.” (Exodus 10:2 NAS)

Again, God reveals His purpose and His plan.

8- Plague eight was to send locusts to finish the job on the landscape. He used His powers and sent an east wind and blew the radar screen into oblivion, and in the wind was a kind of locust no one had ever seen before. Scripture says everything missed by the disease or the hail was destroyed. Everything! There wasn't one leaf, one flower, one blade of grass. Goshen looked like a tropical paradise. Pharaoh rang up Moses one more time and he sang the *I Am A Sinner* song and asked for a little prayer support in exchange for a group passport out of town. This time he bargained differently. He said, “You can send the men, but leave the woman and children here”, and of course, they would have had to come back to get the women and children. Moses, said “No.” So, finally Pharaoh said, “Okay. I'll agree to the whole package if you'll get rid of the locusts.” So, God caused the wind to shift and the locusts blew out to Red Sea.

But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go. (Exodus 10:20 NAS)

9- In Plague number nine, God unscrewed the light bulb in the sun and the entire land of Egypt was in total darkness for three days. Scripture says it was so dark you could go outside and not see another person. Verse 23 says, all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings. Thomas Edison, how far behind the times you were.

You see, inside, the light of God lit the home of the tent of every Israeli. What a preview of heaven. Outside it was pitch black, inside light. A characteristic of God lit up the room. Pharaoh called Moses one more time and he said, “Okay, you can even take the children and your wives.” Moses said, “Yeah, I'm going to take the cattle, too, to sacrifice to the Lord.”

But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. (Exodus 10:27 NAS)

What do you think guys? Has God been patient? What an understatement! He is long-suffering to us, not willing that any should perish. But, Beloved, the patience of God has a limit. It

Let My People Go!

probably took seven weeks, we don't know. It took at least nine plagues and now God says "Enough is enough." The tension is a ten on the Richter scale. The clock is at 11:59 and holding. In another lesson, we will look at the last plague, the Passover, and the beginning of the way out.

But I would say, God has been patient. Now, Pharaoh would let God's people go and they will go out with honor and dignity. It's been a long story, but Moses and Aaron feel like boomerangs. They've been bounced around so much the children of Israel must be in a state of shock. And it brings us to our closing question. Why in the world did God wait so long? If He knew Pharaoh's heart was going to be hardened and all these things would happen, why? This question has direct, personal, spiritual implications. Why doesn't God just zap the enemy, snatch us up, ride off into the sunset and take us to Heaven. Why this long drawn out spiritual warfare stuff; warfare where God seems to put pressure on the enemy and the enemy intensifies his pressure on us? God begins to perform miracles and Satan tries to counterfeit the miracles to confuse us. God puts more pressure on the enemy and the enemy tends to give in, only to fight more. And sometimes, it seems like the victory is never going to come. Why?

Well, I think several passages in this lesson answer those questions for Moses and for us. I think they tell us why God sometimes seems to postpone the victory celebration beyond the time when we feel comfortable. I think they explain why the battle gets more intense when we thought we should be set free.

Five reasons why God's wonderful delays seem so slow.

1- Delays magnify the glory of God by intensifying the resistance of the enemy.

I will harden Pharaoh's heart so I may multiply my signs and wonders in the Land of Egypt. (Exodus 7:3 NAS)

In other words, if Pharaoh had given in, you'd never get a chance to see what your God can do. In chapter 11, verse 9, God tells Moses, Pharaoh won't listen so that "My wonders may be multiplied." The truth is resistance amplifies and requires power. If you drive one of these new sports cars that's designed specifically to have minimum wind resistance, it takes less power to go further faster, because there's so little resistance. But you pile a bunch of suitcases on top of it and strap them on and you start trying to drive the same speed, you will find it takes much

Let My People Go!

more power because the resistance created requires more power to go the same distance. And each time Pharaoh said, “No.”, it required greater resistance. This greater resistance required more power; more power meant more glory. And it was building up to the grand finale, which would bring glory to God.

God may do that in your life and my life. Sometimes, He’ll let problems go on and on and we pray, Lord, take it away and the warfare just intensifies. The problems get worse and we say God, “What have you done? You’ve forgotten your promise.” He says, “No. I’m delaying the process to create more resistance to magnify My Name and multiply My wonders.” Oh, that we could see it.

2- When God delays, He wants to reveal to an unbelieving world as well, who He is. Sometimes the miracles need to come, and they can only come when He delays.

The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out My hosts...

(Exodus 7:5 NAS)

Pharaoh, God says I will do what you ask now, that you may know there is no one like the Lord our God.

(Exodus 8:10 paraphrase)

But, indeed, for this reason, I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name throughout the earth.

(Exodus 9:16 NAS)

The question God had to ask Moses was, “Are you willing to take the long way, the painful way, if it means the possible salvation of the ones the enemy is using; if it means that others outside God’s family might stand in awe? Are you willing, then, to go through the fire if one person that’s on the other end of the thing, who may be the one persecuting you and causing the problem, might come to Christ?”

3- God allows delays so an unbelieving world may not only come to God, but know that God is sovereign.

The thunder and the hail will cease, Pharaoh, as you asked that you may know that the earth belongs to the Lord.

(Exodus 9:29 paraphrased)

In other words, so that you can know that God is not only everything, He can do anything He chooses.

The earth is the Lord’s and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.

(Psalm 24:1 NAS)

Let My People Go!

Remember Elijah on Mount Carmel? That's what the elements can do. That's why, as we come to the end of this age, the Scripture says the working of the elements is going to multiply—volcanoes, tornadoes, earthquakes. God's power is going to be manifest in a way it has never been before.

4- Greater battles mean greater victories and often greater ministries to your children. You may wonder where we get that.

I have hardened his heart to provide these signs that you may tell your children and your children's children how I made a mockery of the enemy. (Exodus 10:1-2 paraphrase)

Do you write down the incredible things God has done in your life so you can share them with your children? Do you keep a family book of miracles? One reason God intensifies the warfare is to increase the glory so we will have a story to tell to those who follow after us.

5- Deeper warfare is designed to increase our faith as well.

...that you may know that I am the Lord.

(Exodus 10:2 NAS)

Moses and Aaron were never the same after this. The confidence they had in God and His message and His ministry would sharpen Moses's life in a thousand different ways. God did it His way. He changed the course of history, but isn't His way different? It's so slow, but it always works. Don't ever forget how God delivered Israel.

Remember and meditate on these four facts:

1- God does control the elements of this world. God controls the frogs, the flies, the locusts, the storms, the thunder, the lightening, the rain, the hail. All were created to bring glory to God. He can use the rain to water the crops or He can use it to destroy the crops. It's His doing. Everything in the world belongs to Him.

2- He has absolute authority over Satan and all his hosts. Satan can imitate but not originate. He can duplicate but never negate the miracles of God. When God says "Stop", it's over.

3- God never negotiates with the enemy and neither should we. He gradually intensifies His pressure, but He never reduces the condition of His demands, because those Satan holds hostage are His, and He plans to set them free.

Let My People Go!

4- God always ultimately keeps His word. He promised Moses to lead them out. He led them out. It took longer than Moses expected. It was harder than Moses expected. It was different than Moses expected. But Beloved, He kept His promise and He will keep His promise to you; even that promise you've had so long that the pages it's written on has turned yellow with age. He will keep His word and He will keep it in His time for His glory.

Perhaps, Beloved, there is someone reading this or someone you love, who is in the midst of intense spiritual conflict right now. God probably won't send snakes, or flies, or boils or locusts in the process of delivering you. I'm pretty sure He won't. But whatever it takes He'll do it. He may do it ever so slowly. The battle may intensify when you think it should be over. I believe, Beloved, if you listen carefully in the midst of the struggle you will hear God say to Satan, "Let My people go. Let My child go."

Maybe it will take a long time. Maybe the battle will seem to go on endlessly. Maybe that disease will not heal. Maybe that child will not respond. Maybe that marriage will not come together. Maybe that relationship will suffer. Maybe that job will not turn out the way you thought it should. In the midst of the struggle, you will hear God say, "*But, let my child go, Satan.*" And He'll give Satan just enough rope to hang himself, and set you free. It may take a series of encounters before your Pharaoh, Satan, turns you loose, but God will never negotiate for your release. He will simply keep the pressure on until the enemy is finished and set you free. And, Beloved, when the Son, shall set you free, you shall be free indeed.

LET MY PEOPLE GO

Moses cried to Pharaoh,
"Let my people go.
Set them free to sacrifice
To the one true God they know."

But Pharaoh's hardened heart cried out
"I will not set them free.
I'm the captain of their fate.
They must bow to me."

So, God released a little taste
Of His Almighty power
Putting pressure on the king
Hour after hour

Let My People Go!

From the rod there came the snakes
The water turned to blood
But still this king with hardened heart
In his rebellion stood.

So, God intensified His plan,
An emblem of His care
He used the rod of God again
And frogs were everywhere.

But Pharaoh would not heed as yet
Or to God's plan resign
So, gnats at first and insects next
Became God's deeper sign.

The cattle fell, the boils came
And God, through hail, destroyed
But Pharaoh's hardened heart was just
A little bit annoyed.

The locusts came, the lights went out
And Pharaoh promised more
And still he'd break his word to God
When every threat was o'er.

So, God had finally had enough
And with His mighty hand
He smote Egypt's firstborn
As His children fled the land.

"Let My people go!" He cried.
"Hostages they are."
But wicked Pharaoh never thought
He'd take the fight that far.

For Satan never seems to learn
Though he battles so
That God will never stop until
He lets His people go.

Let's pray.

Our Father and our God,

There may be many reading or listening who are engaged in spiritual warfare; in stages of discouragement. Disillusionment and disappointment have flooded their hearts. They are crying

Let My People Go!

out to God, "Will we be in bondage forever? Is there no hope?"

Father, you have reminded us of Your higher ways; that sometimes the warfare must intensify in order to better glorify the name of our God. But when the moment is right, and the time has come, Satan will be powerless and we will be free.

Dear God, may we gain much comfort from the living legend of Moses and from a God who will always, given a chance, set His people free.

In Jesus' Name we pray and for His glory,

Amen.

For Focus and Application

1- What was God's "Plan B" regarding Aaron as a replacement for Moses? Who was going to decide what to say? Who was going to tell who what to say? Who was going to say it? How can this be likened to how the Spirit takes the Word and leads men to preach and teach?

2- What guarantee did God give Moses regarding Pharaoh's response?

3- Why would God use men past Social Security age to deliver a nation from the clutches of the most powerful man in the world? Why didn't he use some prominent, educated orator? Why doesn't the church today utilize its senior citizens more fully? Where does that philosophy come from?

4- Can you explain the relationship between God's hardening Pharaoh's heart and Pharaoh hardening his own heart? Is it still true?

5- Review the plagues that God used to set His people free. Consider the following:

- a- How God used them to demean the gods of the Egyptians.
- b- The progressive nature of the discipline.
- c- The protection of His own.
- d- The magicians' abilities and limits.

6- Pharaoh experienced God's miracles, yet refused to believe. How can this be? Is it still true today? Why are the miracles not enough?

7- As the magicians duplicated God's miracles, they only made

Let My People Go!

matters worse. Why? When did they reach their limits? What did they say then? What did Pharaoh say?

8- Review the three principles regarding Satan's limits on pages 8 and 9 of the lesson. Put them in your own words and apply them to the warfare that goes on today between Satan and God.

9- How did the plagues progressively demonstrate the attributes of God and His power over the elements and the animal kingdom? Can God still do this kind of thing? Will He ever again?

10- When God's patience ended, His anger began. Why do we so test His patience as believers? Do we no longer believe His anger can discipline us?

11- Why did God wait so long? Look at the five reasons on pages 14-16. Consider them in the light of your own experience.

- a- Delays increase Satan's resistance and thus bring more glory to God when he acts.
- b- The unbelieving world is more prone to see who God is, as the battle intensifies.
- c- God's sovereignty begins to make sense when His timing brings such glory to His name.
- d- Greater battles mean greater victories.
- e- Deeper warfare strengthens our faith.

12- Meditate on the four facts at the end of the lesson this week. Ask God to give you verses to claim and illustrations to remember. Praise Him morning, noon and night that He is *always* the victor over the enemy, when the time is right. Praise Him that one day soon, *ultimate victory will be ours*.

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer

(10.01.19.dvd)