

approaching people and Pharaoh, Moses tried to remember everything to say the words exactly as God told him.

After a while of silence, God explained that Pharaoh would not permit the people go until the whole world learned about all signs and miracles performed there. Also, the sons of Israel will take with them all the reaches of Egypt to the promised land. The promises were wonderful, and Moses would love to see them happen. But he began to think how he would convince his brethren to believe that the promise was not too big to be true. Then he asked what he should do if people did not believe him that he met with God. Then God asked him what he had in hand, and Moses answered that he had a staff. He carried it for many years, and he knew exactly what it was. Then God asked him to drop it. Moses wondered what it was for, but he dropped it next to his feet, and the staff became a serpent. Moses saw many serpents in his life, and he knew what to do when a serpent got close to one's feet. He ran away from it to avoid a deadly bite. But God told him to catch it by its tail, and he did — the serpent became a staff again. Moses never performed miracles or magic tricks, but he was not very impressed with this miracle because he saw Pharaoh's magicians doing similar tricks. Then God asked him to put his hand under his garment and take it out. Moses was shocked by this miracle because he could not run away from his hand and did not know how to get rid of leprosy, but God asked him to put his hand again under his garment, and the hand was healed.

God knew that Moses was not very impressed with the signs that he saw, but the signs were, in fact, for his brethren; therefore, God focused on them at the time when Moses would speak with them. He said: when you talk to people, and they still do not believe that you come in my name, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the ground; it will become blood. Moses spent some time thinking about it and concluded that this miracle was too difficult to deny and would be very useful to convince his brethren that it was God who performed this miracle.

Then Moses tried to visualise himself in Egypt and going to Pharaoh to ask him to let God's people go. He remembered that God gave him a template for his speech, but after 40 years in some distant country, dwelling far from royal courts, his language and manners may be inadequate for Pharaoh's courts. He then presented his case to God: "Lord, you know that I have never been eloquent, neither recently in this land nor previously in the courts of Egypt, nor even now when I speak with you. I cannot speak fast enough and cannot find appropriate words."³⁴

Moses tried to wiggle out from the task, although God knew he was the only one who could do it. Therefore He said: «who makes a man speak or deaf, see or be blind? Isn't it me that want to be with your mouth?» Unfortunately, Moses did not think anymore but stubbornly resisted whatever God said to the point where he was not polite: «Send whomever you want, but not me!» Then Moses realised that after God made such wonderful promises, satisfied all objections, and assured to be with him all the time, he was very silly to look for excuses and began to tremble. Having such a bad first-hand experience, he would not like anyone to fall into a similar predicament. Therefore, sometime later, when he wrote Torah on the way to the Promised Land, he

³⁴ Ex4:10

warned everybody with strong language to never resist God because our minds can paint inappropriate pictures of the God of love.³⁵

God did not want to leave Moses in the trembling mode for too long, especially after he learned the lesson; therefore, He began with an exciting voice as if He was taken by surprise: «who is coming here? Can you recognise him? Maybe you should go and meet him. He is an excellent speaker, and he can be your mouthpiece if you like. Tell him what to say to Pharaoh and admire his speech. And I will teach you what to do. Aaron will also speak for you to people because they highly respect him. And he will treat you as God. One more thing — do not forget your staff. You will perform all wonders and miracles with it.³⁶ Now go.»

Moses made some steps away from the holy ground, sat down on a boulder and began to lace up his sandals. The scene of speaking with God was still in his mind.

Moses's mouthpiece

Many years after God not only saved Egypt from an economic disaster but escalated it to a superpower, people forgot about him. They also forgot that the sons of Israel were friendly people and possessed the land that Egyptians did not want to have. Pharaoh began to realise that the number of the sons of Israel grew faster than the Egyptians and may cause danger for the nation because they may join the enemy army and win freedom. To keep Egypt safe, he employed Israelites to do the hard labour of building storage cities. Despite hard labour, Israelites still multiplied faster than Egyptians because God blessed them, and for them, blessing meant having many children. Next, Pharaoh decided that all newborn boys were to be killed, but this idea backfired because he needed men to work, and without men, there would be no nation of Israel and no one to build the cities. Also, the Hebrew midwives would not kill newborn boys. One of those boys was adopted by Pharaoh's only daughter, and his brother was left to grow because he was already 3years old.

Aaron, one of many boys who were not thrown to the Nile, became a young man, and when he was old enough, his mother Yochebed told him about his brother Moses who could become the king of Egypt and free his people from slavery. On a few occasions, Aaron saw Moses, but both brothers pretended not to see each other. Some years later, Aaron could not see Moses for a long time. Later on, he learned that Moses had to flee Egypt because he got upset with one of the soldiers who kept beating one of the Hebrew slaves until Moses killed the Egyptian and had to flee before Pharaoh learned about it.

Aaron observed the situation in the royal courts as much as he could. His position as a representative of his people allowed him to learn about some important events like visits of dignitaries from other countries or the deaths of important people. He was unsure but expected that soon all people who sought Moses's death would be dead, and Moses could safely return to his people. Also, he inquired merchants if anyone had heard about an Egyptian working somewhere in far countries. One day he learned that one Egyptian soldier lives with a Median priest's family. An Egyptian in a foreign land? Would it be Moses?

³⁵ I understand that "the anger of the LORD burned against Moses" is Moses's perception and description, not God's behaviour.

³⁶ Ex4:17

As a representative of his people, Aaron had a little more freedom than other Hebrews, and Pharaoh's soldiers could not track him all the time. One day he purchased slave clothes from some far country, left them with a merchant and asked him not to show them to anybody. When the caravan was to depart, Aaron watched them from a distance, and before they were to pass the border, he quickly changed into his new slave clothes. When the soldiers stopped the caravan to check if they did not smuggle any Hebrew slaves, he spoke some Arabic words and required translators. The soldiers took him for a slave whom nobody wanted to buy, so Aaron safely left the borders of Egypt.

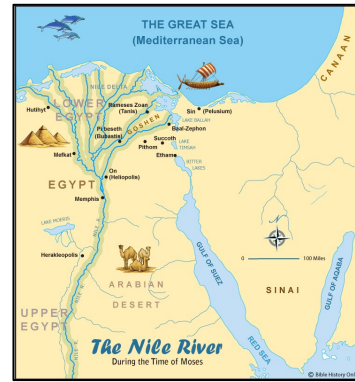
Passing the Red Sea on their right side, the caravan began to travel South, and, in a few days, it approached North Median. Aaron asked everywhere if anybody knew of an Egyptian who lived in the Median, but nobody knew about such a person. Or at least everybody felt afraid to tell where Moses lived just in case someone was chasing him for revenge. But after many trials, Aaron was sent to a Midianite prince because the priest would know how to deal with the matter. The whole caravan moved to find the community where the priest lived and maybe attract some people interested in the goods.

Sometime later during the day, the caravan arrived at a little village and found the priest Jethro. Aaron began to ask about Moses, but the priest was careful not to say anything until he made sure that Aaron had good intentions. Then he invited people for a meal, and his seven daughters began to prepare it, but Aaron insisted on seeing Moses as soon as he could. The priest asked Zipporah to help Aaron find his brother, and they left in a hurry. They passed the well and began to walk uphill towards the mount of God. Zipporah was stunned and prepared for the worst when she saw a little green bush with some flickering flames still dancing on its top. But at this time, Aaron asked her if this man lacing up his sandals might be her husband. Zipporah, as waken up from a bad dream, looked and saw her husband. Yes, it was him! Aaron did not wait any longer and began to race towards Moses. Soon he will embrace his brother.

Moses finished lacing up his sandals and began to look for his flock. The burning bush was slowly extinguishing. Suddenly he saw someone coming from the distance next to Zipporah. It must be Aaron; God just told him about it. "Is it you, Aaron?" he shouted. Now Aaron knew that God had arranged the meeting and called back: "yes, Moses, it is me." Soon brothers embraced each other, trying to comprehend the time since they saw each other secretly. Now they were walking lively and rejoicing greatly, Moses inside, looking at each other often and trying to capture the magic of the moment.

Moses's Mission

When they arrived home, Aaron was the most important figure, Moses was close behind him, then the family, merchants and neighbours. After 40 years of not seeing each other, the brothers are reunited. When everyone had something to eat, Moses began to talk about his encounter with the God of the Hebrews who lives on the mountain and how He sent Moses to Egypt to rescue Hebrew slaves from the oppression of Egyptians. He also mentioned that the same God inspired his brother Aaron to find him and come to the Median at exactly the same time as He appeared to Moses in the burning bush. All people understood the importance of the mission and the great honour that God placed on Moses and Aaron. Zipporah was not too happy about it, but she was to join the Israelites after they left Egypt.³⁷



Journey to Egypt

After a few days of great celebrations at Jethro's house, the time came for Moses to travel to Egypt. It just happened that a caravan travelling to the land of pyramids stopped overnight in Jethro's camp and was willing to have Moses and Aaron travel with them. It was well equipped with animals, food, water, and some attractive goods for sale in the land of the Nile. Moses and Aaron waited for the caravan to depart the Median.

In a few days, all people from Jethro's household farewelled the two brothers, who began their mission to rescue the Hebrew slaves from slavery to the Egyptians. For the first few days, they travelled North towards the Great Sea, then turned West towards the land of Goshen. It was the first trip of the caravan to Egypt, and people eagerly listened to Moses and Aaron, who described the land of hundreds of gods and giant pyramids. In turn, they heard a lot of stories from India and Babylon. The weather was pleasant without sand storms, and the trip appeared much shorter than expected. On the border, Aaron was accepted as one of the trusted inhabitants, and other travellers were let in without any suspicion. In the meantime, border guards could see and buy some goods carried to Egypt for sale.

Soon after the caravan passed the border and continued to the South, Moses and Aaron turned West to the land of Goshen, where most Israelites lived. Aaron avoided stopping and talking to anybody until they arrived at the place where they relaxed, and Moses met his sister Miriam. After enjoying a great surprise for everyone, Miriam prepared a meal, and they reminisced about when Miriam offered Pharaoh's daughter to find someone who would nurse a child. Yochebed, who had already passed away, received wages from the Pharaoh's daughter for nursing Moses,³⁸ knowing that he would become a member of a royal family after a few years. For a few years, Yochebed taught Moses and his siblings to love God and trust Him unconditionally. After the Pharaoh's daughter requested Moses to live in the palace, the family could see Moses

³⁷ Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God. Ex18:5NASB

³⁸ Ex2:9

on rare occasions without disclosing any family ties. Now they were openly united without worrying about any consequences of the past events.

Moses meets Israelites

The following day Aaron invited all leaders to meet in the place built by Joseph as a gathering place. After a long day of working on Pharaoh's project, many people arrived to listen to a special messenger sent by the God of the Hebrews. People were excited about leaving slavery in Egypt but were afraid to raise their hopes in case the event failed to come true.

One of the first questions people asked was the name of the God who sent Moses. Aaron began to answer the question but realised that it would be better when Moses himself told his own story. After a lengthy report, Moses threw his staff that changed into a serpent and showed his leprous hand, which was later brought back to health. People did not see such miracles before and were more open to believing that God himself sent Moses.

Among hundreds of gods worshipped by Egyptians, it was important that the God of the Hebrews had a name. Moses explained that God told him His personal name, but this name is too holy to be pronounced by anybody. It means **I AM**, and this is the name that anybody can use but with great respect. This name, **I AM**, can also be used by Egyptians and other nations. Only people selected by God Himself will know the pronunciation of God's personal name.

People were still afraid to fully support the project, but Aaron explained that they just needed to watch as God would negotiate with Pharaoh on their behalf. Aaron reminded people that before they leave Egypt, they need to take the mummy of Joseph,³⁹ who rested in a grave in the shape of a small pyramid next to the gathering place.

Moses told the people that at first, Pharaoh would not let people go, but after God showed many signs and wonders, they would leave with many of the riches of Egypt and go to the Promised Land, the land overflowing with milk and honey. For us, the land overflowing with milk and honey may not sound attractive at all, but for the slaves who hardly ever tasted fish from the Nile, otherwise eating only bread and cucumbers, milk and honey promised an abundance of all kinds of food. And most importantly, they would be free to enjoy the fruits of their labours.

These last thoughts filled people's hearts with realism and hope; therefore, everyone was ready to leave the meeting and go home. Freedom from taskmasters' tyranny was the most important thought of the day.

Moses and Aaron ready to see Pharaoh

The next day after the freedom meeting, Moses and Aaron were on the way to meet Pharaoh, who considered himself to be the king of the Earth, representative of the highest Egyptian god Ra, and the high priest of all priesthood who was eating from his table. It may be difficult for such a figure to humiliate in front of the unknown god and deny the work of several dynasties who established elaborate deity structures for every area of Egyptian life. For God to destroy all the structures based on elevating a human being to the position of god was easy, the only obstacle being those who desired to believe it.

³⁹ Gn50:25

0 — Serpent (just a little challenge)

I AM said to Moses: Pharaoh will not want to listen to you, therefore, go to the Nile when Pharaoh walks to bow down to the Nile as if it was a god, and very kindly tell him: Thus says **I AM**, the God of Israel: "Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness." It was a very gentle request.⁴⁰ The trip to the wilderness could last a few days, and the sons of Israel would be back; this was not a big ask. Moses paid attention to every word that God told him, and he repeated the message word for word to Aaron, as God commanded him. Aaron asked: «do you think that Pharaoh will permit people to go?» «No,» answered Moses. «Of course not. God told me that Pharaoh would disagree. He uses people to build his storage cities, and if people were allowed to go and celebrate, he would lose some days of work, and maybe people would not want to come back to hard labour afterwards.» Aaron asked: «If we talk to him and he will not let Israel go, what should we do?» Moses replied: «I may tell him that our God may slay us if we do not listen to Him, and he may realise that if he does not let us go, he may have thousands of dead people who cannot build the cities.» After a while, Aaron asked: «Do you think that Pharaoh will be sensible enough to let us go?»

The next day, Moses took "the staff of God" and, together with Aaron, went to meet Pharaoh. As God promised — as soon as they reached the waters of the Nile, they could see Pharaoh with his company entertaining him and enjoying beautiful weather. Pharaoh was in a good mood, and when he saw Aaron and Moses slowly approaching him, he waved to them to come closer and asked them if they wanted anything. Aaron said: We have seen **I AM**, the God of Israel, and this is what he says: "Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness." Immediately, Pharaoh's face changed. He angrily said: "who is **I AM** that I should obey him and let Israelites go? I do not know **I AM**, and even if I did, I would not let Israel go."⁴¹ Aaron and Moses quickly learned who they were dealing with. Aaron tried all his diplomacy to calm the angry Pharaoh down and said: "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God; otherwise He will fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword." For a sensible person, this argument should be sufficient to learn that if God got angry and killed all Israelites, there would be nobody to work for Pharaoh. But for Pharaoh, it was more important to stick to his thoughtless words than to lose more than a million workers.

Moses and Aaron were thinking about how to clear off the scene, but Pharaoh continued: "why do you draw the people away from their work? Get *back* to your labors!". It seemed that Pharaoh did not hear what Aaron said to him. But this was not the end. He said: «There are many people working on my projects, and you would have them cease from their labors!» It was too much for Moses and Aaron; they could not make any sense of it and left the case to God.

Aaron explained to Moses that he was sure that God would not harm his people in any way, but he had to describe God to Pharaoh in a way that he could understand. This is why he said that God might fall upon His people with pestilence or with the sword. Moses responded: «You are right; never say anything wrong about God.» After a while, he added: «God told me that Pharaoh would not let the people go. But

⁴⁰ The term (נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) used by Moses may be translated 'I pray.' Ex3:18

⁴¹ Ex5:2NAS95

I never expected he would be so angry. He seems to think about himself to be bigger than the great **I AM**.» Aaron responded: «And I have not seen anybody get so angry and so quickly. He was happy before we approached him.» Moses continued: «God said that Pharaoh would not permit people to go unless under compulsion, and then he would drive us out.» Aaron: «I cannot imagine how angry he will be then.»

In addition to taskmasters supervising the building of the cities, Pharaoh elected some foremen from among Hebrew slaves to help the taskmasters. He also called a meeting to extend his control over the people. Aaron was one of the newly elected foremen and was commanded to announce that there would be no straw given for making bricks from this day on, but the quota of bricks made per day will not change. This change comes as a result of lazy people who want to sacrifice to their God. This statement enraged people who, in turn, unloaded their anger onto Moses and Aaron. Then Moses and Aaron complained to God, who caused so much trouble to everyone.

It all began with a nonsense command to not give people straws for bricks and demand the same quota. This idea would not make people stop thinking about freedom but raise their anger and desire for freedom. People did not see God's bigger plan of disclosing all false gods of the Nile and making the whole world learn the truth. Moses and Aaron did not expect God to rescue His people from slavery to Egyptians yet, because Egyptians were far from joining God's people, and God did not make Himself known to all people of the Earth that He is the Lord **I AM**.

No straw for bricks

Pharaoh's new rule for the Hebrew slaves to collect straws and make the same quota of bricks does not prove that the Hebrew God was powerless; it only shows that Pharaoh was afraid of the challenge and wanted to crush people's desire to leave slavery. God is patient and does not mind that some people, like glory-angry Pharaoh, want to play a puppet show. The request to have a few days off to go and celebrate a feast in the wilderness was to gently inform Pharaoh that the slaves wanted some freedom from heavy labour for a few days. This information already made Pharaoh furious, and he began to strengthen his control over the slaves by demanding more work. God knew that it would happen; this is why He told Moses and Aaron to speak very gently with Pharaoh.

Foremen are beaten by taskmasters

Hebrew slaves could not collect straw for the bricks and produce the same number of bricks as before. As a result, the foremen were beaten by taskmasters because the daily quota of bricks was not met. It became apparent that Pharaoh intended to make the sons of Israel suffer more, even if it was for the price of losing some workforce and slowing the projects of building the storage cities. The foremen came to Pharaoh to complain about the inhuman treatment of those who otherwise provided good service. But Pharaoh was unstoppable and reinforced the new rules of no straw and the same quota.⁴²

The foremen left the meeting and met Moses and Aaron, who waited for them.⁴³ They blamed Moses and Aaron for making them "odious in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us." This blame broke Moses

⁴² Ex5:19

⁴³ Ex5:20

and Aaron, who complained to God: “O Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did You ever send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done harm to this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all.”

The Lord is good and can understand the frustration and pain of His people. Although He told Moses how stubborn Pharaoh was and how hard it would be to convince him to let the people go, they did not know how to apply it in real life. Instead of lecturing them, He promised that from now on, they would see the deliverance happening, although it may take some time for God to show Egyptians who the true God is and to whom they should run away.⁴⁴ He repeated the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jakob, and said that He did not really show them who He was.⁴⁵ Another privilege that His people will enjoy is knowing His personal name that He gave to Moses, and now everybody will know how it is written, although only the high priest will know how to pronounce it. God also informed His people that they would be given the land of Canaan, which their ancestors sojourned. To summarise everything, God said that He would call to justice all the oppressors.⁴⁶

With renewed strength and enthusiasm, Moses began to warm up the sons of Israel; however, they did not listen to him because of the great oppression they suffered.⁴⁷ God could not do anything at the moment to heal their sadness. Instead, He asked Moses to see Pharaoh and tell him to let the people go. Moses: «How will Pharaoh listen to me if my brethren turned away from me? Also, I do not know how to speak to Pharaoh.»⁴⁸ Then the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to bring the people out of Egypt. Moses remembered that he must not look for excuses and decided to meet Pharaoh no matter what.⁴⁹ Aaron said that he would go with his brother no matter what. With these decisions, the brothers went to sleep.

Encouragement by the Lord

The next day, the Lord said to Moses: «I make you *as* God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.» Moses felt more confident now. God continued: «But remember that Pharaoh would again refuse to let my people go. There is nothing to do with you; it is between him and me. His pride will not allow him to listen to me, but then I will show the world more signs and wonders to prove that all pagan gods are false and powerless. All Egyptians will see that **I AM** the Lord.⁵⁰ So, Moses and Aaron were ready to go and ask Pharaoh to let the people go, although they did not see further than the next step.

Moses and Aaron were walking along the Nile. Some merchants waited for their animals to drink water before settling for a journey. Lush reeds grew along the waterline of the Nile. Rich fields were ripening under the blue horizon decorated with lamb-like clouds. Some animals grazed peacefully on green patches; people here and

⁴⁴ Ex6:1

⁴⁵ Ex6:3

⁴⁶ Ex6:6

⁴⁷ Ex6:9

⁴⁸ Ex6:12

⁴⁹ Ex6:13

⁵⁰ Ex7:6

there were going after their business. Moses and Aaron heard a happy crowd accompanying Pharaoh from the palace through the bushes to the river that many people worshipped as a life-giving wonder of Egypt. They stood and waited for Pharaoh to come close to them and tried to figure out what to say. But they did not have to say anything because Pharaoh saw them already and began to talk about this god of theirs to his companions. When they were close enough, he said: «Moses and Aaron, where is this god of yours? Where was he for many years when his people worked for me like animals? Does he have any power? Can you show me some sign of his existence? Does he exist at all? I forced his people to heavier labour than before, «and he keeps silent!»

Aaron was planning to repeat his request because nothing better came to his mind, but they heard the voice saying to their ears: «When Pharaoh challenges you to show him the sign of power and wisdom of your God, let Aaron throw Moses's staff in front of Pharaoh.»⁵¹ Moses wondered if Aaron's staff would turn into a serpent because so far, God declared only Moses's staff to be "the staff of God," but he did not dare to question it. Aaron made a step forward and threw his staff at the Pharaoh's feet.

Aaron's staff changed to a ferocious serpent who began to hiss and frighten Pharaoh and his companions with long prangs. Pharaoh jumped at first but later on retained his composure. Most likely, the serpent was more frightening than his magician's serpents. In any case, Pharaoh did not want to show he was frightened and kept his artificial smile on his face. He called for his magicians to come with their staffs to be able to refute publicly the sign of power performed by **I AM**.

Some people gathered around the serpent and Pharaoh who tried to mock the God of Moses and Aaron. Despite what Pharaoh tried to portray, people figured out that he felt uncomfortable. The emotions became more intense when Pharaoh's magicians came to confront Aaron's serpent. Pharaoh showed the first magician to throw his staff, and he did. Before the new serpent had a chance to lift his head, Aaron's serpent swallowed it alive. The same happened with the second and third serpents. Then Pharaoh asked the remaining seven magicians to throw their staffs at once, believing that Aaron's serpent would not be able to battle all seven serpents at once. But his serpent was so quick that magicians' serpents had no chance. People began to whisper because they had witnessed an apparent defeat of Pharaoh's magicians.⁵² Pharaoh showed with a gesture to go back to the palace. Aaron stretched out his hand to pick up his serpent, who lay patiently and as thin as it was before swallowing ten snakes of magicians. And magicians were considering finding and training new serpents.

People who waited for a boat to travel to other cities along the Nile and witnessed the serpent of the Hebrew God devouring all serpents of Pharaoh's magicians and witches⁵³ passed the story to all people they met on boats or markets and their friends and families. On the same day, many people learned about the God of Hebrews and the failure of Pharaoh's servants.

1 — Water turned to blood (it is not the Nile that gives life to Egyptians)

In the evening, Moses and Aaron met with the Hebrew people, who were eager to learn any news about the conversation with Pharaoh. Aaron told them about his staff,

⁵¹ Ex7:9

⁵² Ex7:12

⁵³ Ex7:13

which changed to a serpent and swallowed all ten serpents of Pharaoh's magicians. The meeting brought hope to some people, while others remained unconvinced. Moses tried to convince people that the Lord promised them to begin to see the power of **I AM**, and this is exactly what happened.

Soon after the meeting, the Lord spoke to Moses: «I know that Pharaoh's heart is stubborn but do not worry.⁵⁴ Tomorrow morning Pharaoh will go to the Nile to worship it. Be there earlier to meet him close to the water. Do not forget to take the staff that Aaron used this morning. Tomorrow you will keep it in your hand. Pharaoh will need to learn that he is not a god; you will be like a god to him, and Aaron will be your prophet who speaks to him on behalf of his new god. This time it will be you who speak to him.

Before Pharaoh enters the water, before he tells you anything, tell him: "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness. But behold, you have not listened until now."⁵⁵ Therefore thus says the Lord: Today you will learn that I am the Lord. With this staff of God, I will strike the water in the Nile, and it will turn to blood. All fish will die, the water in all rivers and streams and reservoirs of Egypt will become foul, all Egyptians will have trouble finding drinking water, and even water in your stone or wood vessels will turn to blood.⁵⁶

As the Lord said, Moses and Aaron did. They stopped in the area where Pharaoh usually performed rituals at the side of the Nile and waited. As always, merchants and farmers were filling their water cisterns while animals drank as much as they desired. The Nile provided nutritious sediments for the surrounding fields at springtime, and farmers grew abundant crops to feed their families and for sale. Although Egypt consisted of many deserts, the vibrant life around the Nile, and the existence of the nation, depended heavily on the Nile floods. The Nile itself provided directly a lot of food, mainly fish. Many fishing boats decorated the Nile landscape.

Pharaoh was coming to take a bath in the fresh water of the Nile. He was followed by magicians, musicians, and servants... until the procession suddenly stopped. Moses and Aaron marched toward him, and before he managed to say anything, Moses, Pharaoh's future "god" said:

"The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness. But behold, you have not listened until now. Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will be turned to blood."⁵⁷ Pharaoh was speechless. Nobody has ever talked to him with such authority. Next, Moses said to Aaron, his future prophet: "Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their reservoirs of water, that they may become blood; and there will be blood throughout all the land of Egypt.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Ex7:14

⁵⁵ Ex7:16

⁵⁶ Ex7:18

⁵⁷ Ex7:17

⁵⁸ Ex7:19