

Exodus Chapter 6 Continued

Verses 14-27

The immediate context of (verses 14-25), is surrounded by two sections (verses 10-12 and 28-30), that contain essentially the same material expressed as “Go in, speak unto Pharaoh ... And Moses spake ... how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips”?

This expresses Moses’ feeling of inadequacy for the task at hand.

The function of the genealogy is to encourage Moses.

It lists only three of Jacobs sons (Reuben, Simeon and Levi), instead of the usual 12 sons, because the object is to go only as far as needed to get both Moses’ and Aaron’s appearance on the list.

Each of the three men had committed grievous sin, and yet they had also received God’s forgiving grace and so had Moses.

He had murdered a man and fled.

Thus, when Moses balks at further confrontations with Pharaoh, God gently reminds the reader not to think as highly about the channels (Moses and Aaron), as about the God who calls and equips men.

Exodus 6:14 "These [be] the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: these [be] the families of Reuben."

The genealogy presented from here down to verse 27 (which is probably a shortened one), follows that of (Genesis 46:8-15), and Lists “Aaron and Moses” in the line of “Levi”.

Levi’s descendants were especially important, because from them came the true priests in Israel.

The genealogy information formally identified Moses and Aaron as descendants of Levi, third son of Jacob by Leah.

It also listed Aaron’s son, Eleazar, and grandson, Phinehas, both of whom would become Israel’s High-Priests.

Mention of Levi in company with Reuben and Simeon recalled, perhaps the unsavory background belonging to these three tribal fathers (Gen. 49:3-7), and emphasized that the choice of Moses and Aaron was not due to an exemplary lineage.

This is intended to be a representative genealogy, not a complete one.

Reuben was listed first because he was the first child of Jacob and Leah, not because he was a wholesome person.

Reuben in fact, had a very bad record.

He had lain with his father's concubine, Bilhah.

The best thing we can remember about him was that he saved Joseph's life when the brothers wanted to kill him.

Reuben's sons were a mixed lot.

"Hanoch" means initiated,

"Pallu" means distinguished,

"Carmi" means vine dresser.

Exodus 6:15 "And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these [are] the families of Simeon."

These are the heads. We have in the following verses, not a complete genealogy, but a summary account of the family of the two brothers.

Moses records for the satisfaction of Hebrew readers, to whom genealogical questions were always interesting.

The descent and position of the designated leaders of the nation (see Exodus 6:26-27).

Simeon along with his brother Levi, in trying to avenge the rape of their sister, had done cruel things which brought shame to their father, Jacob.

He was known as a cruel, fierce man.

"Jemuel" means day of God.

"Jamin" means right hand,

"Ohad" means unity.

"Jachin" means He (God) establishes.

"Zohar" means whiteness, and

"Shaul" means asked of God.

Simeon married a non-Hebrew woman as we see above.

Exodus 6:16 "And these [are] the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi [were] a hundred thirty and seven years."

The age of Levi, Kohath, and Amram, the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of Moses, is here recorded.

And they all lived to a great age; Levi to one hundred thirty-seven, Kohath to one hundred thirty-three, and Amram to one hundred thirty-seven (verse 18).

Moses himself came much short of them, and fixed seventy or eighty for the ordinary stretch of human life (Psalm 90:10).

For now Israel was multiplied, and become a great nation, and divine revelation was by the hand of Moses committed to writing, and no longer trusted to tradition.

Therefore the two great reasons for the long lives of the patriarchs were ceased, and from henceforward fewer years to serve men.

We see here in the family of Levi, that this was the first to mention the years of the son of Israel.

We will see more of this family as we go along, because of the large part they play in God's work.

This tribe of Levi was the family Moses and Aaron were born into.

The Levitical tribe (descendants of Levi), would not inherit land, because they were set aside for duties in the temple.

Even though Levi disappointed Jacob in the cruel act of revenge on the family of the rapist of his sister, Dinah, God called this family to care and administer the Holy things in the temple (see Num. 3:5).

These Levites were consecrated to Jehovah as His peculiar property, instead of the firstborn of each family.

The lineage was from Levi to Kohath, to Amram, to Aaron and Moses.

We read that Jochebed, the mother of Aaron and Moses, was a Levite as well.

So Moses and Aaron were both Levites.

We need especially to look at Kohath, because he was the grandfather of Aaron and Moses.

Kohath's descendants through Aaron were a priestly family.

This priestly family's duties were to bear the ark and the sacred vessels (Num. 4:15 and 7:9).

We must watch carefully the family of Levi.

They were like ministers who should not be worldly, but consecrated to God.

Exodus 6:17 "The sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families."

From this point the genealogy is no longer a recapitulation, but an original historical document of first-rate importance, which is confirmed by Numbers (Numbers 3:18-33), and Chronicles (1 Chron. 6:17-19).

It is remarkable that Gershon had but two sons, Kohath but four, and Merari but two.

Yet the Levites in the year after the Exodus numbered 22,300 males (Numbers 3:22; 3:28; 3:34).

This increase could only have taken place, at the rate indicated, in the course of some ten or eleven generations.

Here we see this family of Levi specifically went on to the children and grandchildren, because of their special role they played with God.

Exodus 6:18 "And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: and the years of the life of Kohath [were] a hundred thirty and three years."

So they are reckoned (in 1 Chronicles 6:18), though only the family of the Hebronites are mentioned (in Numbers 26:58).

"And the years of the life of Kohath were one hundred and thirty three years":

The same names are given (in 1 Chronicles 6:2 and 15).

The years of the life of Kohath, who was probably about twenty at the time of the descent into Egypt, must have considerably outlived Joseph, who died about seventy years after the descent.

His eldest son, Amram, is not likely to have been born much later than his father's thirtieth year (see Genesis 11:12-24.)

Amram would thus have been contemporary with Joseph for above fifty years.

In this verse, we see Amram, the father of Moses.

We also see that Kohath lived to be 133 years old.

"Izhar":

This means anointing and

"Uzziel":

This means God is strength.

Exodus 6:19 "And the sons of Merari; Mahali and Mushi: these [are] the families of Levi according to their generations."

From whence sprung the families of the Mahalites, and Mushites (Num. 3:33).

"These are the families of Levi, according to their generations":

The families that descended from him and his sons, according to the order of their birth.

This family did not have much written about them.

Exodus 6:20 "And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram [were] a hundred and thirty and seven years."

Marriages with aunts and nieces were not unlawful before the giving of the Law.

"The years of the life of Amram":

The long lives of Levi, Kohath, and Amram, the father of Moses, are not recorded for any chronological purpose, but to show that the blessing of God rested in an especial way on the house of Levi, even before it became the priestly tribe.

Life in Egypt at the time not unfrequently reached 120 years.

But the 137 of Levi, the 133 of Kohath, and the 137 of Amram, the father of Moses, would, even in Egypt, have been abnormal.

We see here that Amram, the father of Aaron and Moses, married his aunt on his father's side.

Both Amram and Jochebed were from the tribe of Levi.

Aaron and Moses then had a rich heritage with God through their parents.

Exodus 6:21 "And the sons of Izhar; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri."

These seem to be mentioned for the sake of Korah, concerning who has a remarkable history in the following book; for the other two are nowhere else spoken of.

Here again, for our study, this family was not followed closely.

Exodus 6:22 "And the sons of Uzziel; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri."

The two first of these were the men that were ordered by Moses to carry out of the camp the two sons of Aaron, who were killed by lightning for offering strange fire (Lev. 10:4).

Exodus 6:23 "And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar."

Amminadab and Naashon were among the ancestors of David (Ruth 4:19-20; 1 Chronicles 2:10-15), and their names are consequently found in the genealogies of our Lord (see Matthew 1:4; Luke 3:32-33).

Naashon was "prince of Judah" at the time of the Exodus (Num. 1:7; 1:16).

"And she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar":

The two first of these died by fire from heaven in their father's lifetime, for offering strange fire to the LORD (Lev. 10:1).

Eleazar succeeded his father in the priesthood (Num. 20:26), and of the sons of Ithamar executing the priest's office (see 1 Chron. 24:2).

This Amminadab was prince of the tribe of Judah.

His daughter, Elisheba, would be mother of the priestly tribe of Aaron.

This Naashon, brother of Elisheba, must be taken note of.

He was a prince of Judah, and was the father-in-law of Rahab.

Naashon's son, Salmon, married Rahab.

This Naashon was captain of Judah's host, and was given the first place in encampment in the order of the march, when dealing with the tabernacle.

You can read further Scriptures about him (in Numbers 1:7, 1 Chronicles 2:10-11; Matthew 1:4, and Numbers 2:3).

He most probably died in the wilderness since there was no mention of him after those wilderness wanderings.

Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, along with Aaron were anointed to be priests of the temple.

We read about this (in Exodus 28:1).

We will read (in Leviticus 10:1), where Nadab and Abihu (probably drunk), brought strange fire in the temple and were killed for this.

Eleazar became high priest at the death of his two brothers.

The priesthood went down through his family.

Ithamar was a priest, also.

He took an additional part of the place of the priesthood when his brothers died.

His duty was the property of the tabernacle, such as the curtains, hangings, pillars, cords, and also boards.

You may find this (in Exodus 38:21).

Ithamar and his descendants were common priests, until the high priesthood passed to his family in Eli.

Exodus 6:24 "And the sons of Korah; Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these [are] the families of the Korhites."

The eldest son of Izhar, who, though he proved a bad man, yet many of his posterity were good men, and are often mentioned in general in the titles of some of the psalms of David: the immediate sons of Korah were:

"Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph":

Aben Ezra says that Samuel the prophet was of the sons of Korah; perhaps what might lead him to it was, because his father's name was Elkanah, the name of one of these sons of Korah, but cannot be this Elkanah.

"These are the families of the Korhites":

The heads of them, or from whom they descended.

This Korah was jealous of Aaron and his priesthood and lost his life for this jealousy.

We will read about him more in Numbers.

He was swallowed up when God opened the earth in punishment of him.

Exodus 6:25 "And Eleazar Aaron's son took him [one] of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas: these [are] the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their families."

This was Aaron's eldest son.

Putiel is not elsewhere mentioned.

The name is thought to be half Egyptian (compare Poti-phar) and means "dedicated to God."

She bare him Phinehas.

This Phinehas became high priest on the death of Eleazar (Judges 20:28).

"These are the heads of the Levites, according to their families":

From whence the Levites sprung, and their several families.

It may be observed, that Moses says nothing of his own offspring, only that of his brother Aaron.

This was partly out of modesty and humility, but partly because the priesthood was successive in the family of Aaron and not the civil government in the family of Moses.

And that he proceeds no further to give the genealogy of the remaining tribes, his chief view being to show the descent of Aaron and himself, that it might be with certainty known in after times who they were that were instruments of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, which would be matter of inquiry, and very desirable to be known.

This was just showing the lineage of this priestly tribe.

I would like to mention just one thing in passing, these priests and high priests were married.

It seemed God was not offended by them being married.

Remember that the Levites, through Aaron's family, were the priestly tribe.

Exodus 6:26 "These [are] that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies."

This expression is here used of the Israelites for the first time.

It seems to refer to that organization of a quasi-military character, which was given to the people by the order of Moses during the long struggle with Pharaoh.

Thus enabling them to at last quit Egypt, not as a disorderly mob, but "harnessed," or "in military array" (Exodus 13:18). The expression is repeated (in Exodus 7:4; 12:17; 12:51).

This has wandered a bit from where Moses was talking to God about this deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, so now we are told again, that this Moses and Aaron were the same ones.

It is also stated as fact that they would bring them out.

Exodus 6:27 "These [are] they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these [are] that Moses and Aaron."

Verse 27 is very similar to (verse 26), above.

It is a statement of the fact that Moses and Aaron would lead Israel out of bondage.

Verses 28-30

This expresses Moses' feeling of inadequacy for the task at hand.

The function of the genealogy is to encourage Moses.

From 6:28 to 7:5: A summary of the mission to Egypt resumes the narrative after the genealogical aside on Moses and Aaron.

Exodus 6:28 "And it came to pass on the day [when] the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,"

These next three verses are most closely connected with (Exodus 7).

They are a recapitulation of main points (in Exodus 6), rendered necessary by the long parenthesis (Exodus 6:14-27), and serve to unite (Exodus 7), with the previous narrative.

They contain no new information.

Exodus 6:29 "That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I [am] the LORD: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee."

This and the following verses belong to the next chapter.

They mark distinctly the beginning of a subdivision of the narrative.

God (in verse 28 and 29), was reminding Moses that He told him from the beginning, even out in the wilderness, who He was.

He also never promised Moses that this task was going to be easy.

The God of all eternity, the I AM, is sufficient to carry through any plans that He has.

He even promised Moses that He would tell him exactly what to say.

As we said before, Moses was not responsible for the outcome, but He was responsible to say every word that God told him to say to the Pharaoh on the behalf of these people which was in the name of God.

Exodus 6:30 "And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I [am] of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?"

As he had done (Exodus 6:13), and this is only a repetition of what is there said, in order to lead on to what is related in the following chapter.

"How shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?"

So mean a person, and so poor a speaker, and he a mighty king, surrounded with wise counsellors and eloquent orators.

Perhaps, God told Moses each time over again who He was to build Moses' faith.

Moses was full of excuses, as many of us are when we are called to the ministry.

I have said this before, but it bears repeating.

Moses and all ministers who are really called of God must remember that God did not choose us for our great abilities.

God wants us to love Him more than we love anything, or anyone.

He wants us to totally submit ourselves to Him.

He will fill us with Himself to the point that it will not be us speaking, but will rather be "Thus saith the Lord".

God will give us the place to go, and the words to say once we get there.

The Holy Spirit woos the prospects; and when we preach the words God gives, these words convict them, and they are saved.

We are not the one who saves (delivers), them; we are just the mouthpiece for God.

All the rest of the work is His.

We are only responsible to say the words He gives us.

Exodus Chapter 6 Continued Questions

1. What was Reuben to Jacob and Leah?
2. Name Reuben's sons.
3. What terrible sin had Reuben committed?
4. What good thing can we remember about Reuben?
5. What does "Pallu" mean?
6. What does "Carmi" mean?
7. What terrible thing can we remember about Reuben?
8. Simeon was known as a _____ Man.
9. "Jemuel" means what?
10. "Shaul" means what?
11. "Zohar" means what?
12. Who did Simeon marry?
13. Who were Levi's sons?
14. How long did Levi live?
15. Moses' mother and dad were from what tribe?
16. What was Levi's sister's name?
17. What did God call the family of Levi to do?
18. Which tribe's own family all belong to God in place of the firstborn in each family?
19. What were Moses' parent's names?
20. Who was Kohath to Moses and Aaron?
21. The priestly family was through whom?
22. "Izhar" means what?
23. "Uzziell" means what?
24. What relation was Jochebed to Amram before she married him?
25. Who was Aaron's wife?

26. Who was her father?
27. Amminadab was _____ of the tribe of _____.
28. What would Elisheba be known as?
29. Naashon was the brother of whom?
30. Who was his daughter-in-law?
31. Name Aaron's four sons that were anointed to be priests with him.
32. Which two carried strange fire into the temple?
33. What did God do to them?
34. Which one of Aaron's sons became high priest?
35. How did Korah lose his life?
36. What was one thing to take note of about these priests and high priests?
37. Why does God choose someone for the ministry?
38. What are preachers responsible for?
39. What are we for God?