

Exodus Chapter 6

Exodus 6:1 "Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

“Now shalt thou see” The Lord announced in response to Moses’ prayer that finally the stage had been set for dealing with Pharaoh, who, in consequence, would only be able to urge Israel to leave.

Here we see that God was not angry with Moses for his outcry of when was God going to free these people. The word "now" indicated there would be no further delay. God reassured Moses that he would punish Pharaoh. God's strong hand would force Pharaoh not only to let them go, but Pharaoh would insist on their going when God got through with him.

Verses 2-5: God spoke to Moses and reminded him of His promises to the patriarchs. Once again, the focal point of the covenant was the land of Canaan deeded to their descendants by divine decree. The fact that this covenant was remembered meant obvious removal from Egypt!

Exodus 6:2 "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I [am] the LORD:"

“I am the Lord”: The same self-existent, eternal God, Yahweh, had been there in the past with the patriarchs. No change had occurred in Him, either in His covenant or promises.

We see Jehovah here, the Eternal One. God reassured Moses of His power and eternity. When He said "I am the LORD", it also means I am Jehovah, the Eternal One.

Exodus 6:3 "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name of] God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them."

“God Almighty ... JEHOVAH ... was I not known to them”: Since the name Yahweh was spoken before the Flood (Gen. 4:26), and later by the patriarchs (Gen. 9:26; 12:8; 22:14; 24:12). The special significance of Yahweh, unknown to them, but to be known by their descendants, must arise from what God would reveal of Himself in keeping the covenant and in redeeming Israel (see notes on 3:13-14).

The statement “but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them” is filled with meaning and has been one of the focal points of debate tween the liberal critic and the conservative scholar for several centuries. There are three basic views:

- (1) In the early patriarchal period the tribal name of God was El Shaddai, but Moses was now about to reveal for the first time the name Yahweh as the God of Israel (yet note Genesis 4:26; 12:1, 4; 13:4).

(2) The phrase should be expressed as a question: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty [El Shaddai]; but by my name Yahweh was I not known to them!"

(3) There is a special revelation of the name Yahweh, not its first introduction. Cowles says, "The meaning is, not that the name [Yahweh] was never used by them or given of God to them: but that its special significance had not been manifested to them as He was now about to make it manifest," (see the previous comments on 3:7-22 for the import of the divine name).

The name "God Almighty" conveys the concept of power and might, whereas "Yahweh" emphasizes God's revealing Himself in His actions through history and in a unique way now of redeeming them from bondage and meeting their needs as they enter into a covenant with Him in chapter 19.

We see God Almighty in Genesis.

Genesis 17:1 "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."

This was His name with Abraham (in Genesis 35).

Genesis 35:11 "And God said unto him, I [am] God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins."

Genesis 28:3 "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;"

We understand from all this, that God was first revealed to Moses and these Israelites as I AM and Jehovah. This is a new working of God toward His covenant people and therefore another name. Jehovah is the Jewish national name of God. God had been called by Jehovah before (Genesis 15-7), but it appears the perfect revealing of what this name means had not been clear before Moses.

Exodus 6:4 "And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers."

"My covenant": The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15:1-21; 17:1-8).

This covenant was an unbreakable covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendants forever. They lived in Canaan before they went to Egypt; but the land was controlled by others and these Hebrews were strangers there. However, God promised Abraham this land and now was the time to receive it.

Exodus 6:5 "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant."

He means their groaning on occasion of the late hardships put upon them. God takes notice of the increase of his people's calamities, and observes how their enemies grow upon them. I will bring you out: I will redeem you: I will bring you into the land of Canaan; and I will give it to you.

God told Moses all over again, that He had heard their cry of misery, and He remembered His covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This statement just meant that in the very near future, God would deliver them.

Exodus 6:6 "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I [am] the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:"

God instructed Moses to remind Israel of what they had previously been told: of God's remembering the covenant with Abraham, of His seeing their misery, of His delivering them from it. Of His granting to them the land of Canaan, and thus taking them there. The repetitive "I will" (7 times), marked God's personal, direct involvement in Israel's affairs. Bracketed, as they were, by the declaration, "I am Yahweh," denoted certainty of fulfillment.

We see that God reminded the Israelites that it would not be by their efforts that they will be redeemed. The intervention of God was what would redeem them. Just as salvation is a free gift and no works of ours get us saved, so they (the children of Israel), could do nothing to redeem themselves either. God was going to judge Egypt for the cruelty to His people and God would punish Egypt.

Exodus 6:7 "And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

There are four key expressions relating to God's design for the people of Israel in this portion of Scripture:

- (1) Initially, His design is deliverance as expressed in verse 6;
- (2) His desire to form a godly community in 7a: "And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God": then He expresses His intention that:
- (3) There should be an ongoing relationship with His people: "And ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians", and finally;
- (4) His intention for His people is that they enjoy the good life: "An I will bring you in unto the land ... and I will give it you for an heritage" (verse 8).

These Hebrews, while in Egypt, had wandered away from God. One of the reasons God did not just run in there and immediately change the situation was because He wanted these Israelites to know, beyond a shadow of doubt, that it was God who brought them out.

Exodus 6:8 "And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I [am] the LORD."

The whole is one sentence, and implies that, as being Immutable and Eternal, He would assuredly give it them.

We see from this, that God was again telling Moses that He was a God of covenant. God was not angry at Moses because He felt that there was no progress made. To look at this from a Christian point of view, we see the minister who goes and builds a church in a place God has told him to go and where God has told him thousands will be saved. The church instead of growing seems to be completely stalemated. It is very difficult while you are in the flesh, to believe that God is still going to build this church to a mighty working.

From time to time God has to reassure this minister that this will be a success story someday. This was the same thing on a different level here. God was going to establish the Holy Land for His people Israel. Even this speaking of Moses and Aaron to the Pharaoh was the first step. Even though the first meeting seemed to take them backwards, this was still the first step to success. God would give them the land as he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Exodus 6:9 "And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage."

“For anguish of spirit”: The bondage was so great that it blocked out even the stirring words Moses had just delivered to them (verses 6-8).

The children of Israel were so caught up in the middle of the problem that they could not see beyond this immediate hardship.

Exodus 6:10 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"

At another time, and renewed His orders to him to go again to Pharaoh, and require their release.

Exodus 6:11 "Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land."

The second message was an advance upon the first. The first asked only for permission to enter the wilderness, much of which was within the limits of Egypt; the second was a demand that the Israelites should be allowed “to go out of the land.” Such is the way of Providence generally. If we refuse a light cross, a heavier cross is laid on us.

Here God gave Moses his second mission. Moses was speaking directly to God. There was no question in Moses' mind who God was and what God was capable of doing, but Moses was disappointed in the outcome so far.

Exodus 6:12 "And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who [am] of uncircumcised lips?"

They gave no heed to what I have said; so how then shall Pharaoh hear me? If the anguish of their spirit makes them deaf to that which would compose and comfort them, how much more will his pride and insolence make him deaf to that which will but exasperate him?

“Who am of uncircumcised lips”: He was conscious to himself that he had not the gift of utterance. The Lord gave them a charge to the children of Israel and to Pharaoh. God’s authority is sufficient to answer all objections, and binds us to obedience without murmuring or disputing (see notes on 4:10).

It is so plain to me the similarity here to a minister who is preaching, and he feels no one is listening. And then the Lord commissions him to go out and win total strangers to the church. He was saying, my own little flock won't even hear me, what makes you think people I don't even know and who do not believe in God, would receive me? Now Moses said his lips were worldly and not dedicated as they should be to the Lord. Moses and this example of a minister were both having a pity party. They were saying, "I am a failure. Get someone more capable for the job."

Exodus 6:13 "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt."

The faith of Moses was so feeble that he could scarcely be kept to his work. Ready obedience is always according to the strength of our faith. Though our weaknesses ought to humble us, yet they ought not to discourage us from doing our best in any service we have to do for God. When Moses repeats his baffled arguments, he is argued with no longer, but God gives him and Aaron a charge, both to the children of Israel, and to Pharaoh. God's authority is sufficient to answer all objections, and binds all to obey, without murmuring or disputing (Phil. 2:14).

God didn't even listen to all of this. He told Moses and Aaron all over again, what the job was He had called them to do and told them to get on with it. Moses and Aaron were capable of doing this or God would not have called them. This is the same with ministers today. When God calls you for a job you are capable of doing it or God would not have called you.

Let us look back just a little bit at this lesson, and see what was really happening here. At the very beginning, we saw a servant of God, who had done what God told him to do and who felt that he had failed, because it brought results opposite than those planned. His friends and family had turned on him and told him, if you were truly sent of God why didn't this work? Why are we in worse shape now than when you began? You're not a man of God or else this wouldn't have happened.

The first thing Moses did, and we should do in similar circumstances, was go to God with this problem. If you or Moses have done exactly what God told you to do, you have done your job. You are not responsible for the outcome. Our job is to do exactly what God tells us to do. God is

responsible for the results. We see here, when Moses went to God, that God totally reassured him that He was still I AM; and that Moses would surely lead these rebellious Israelites to the Promised Land.

God reminded Moses that His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was that they would receive the Promised Land and God (who cannot lie), swore upon Himself that it would happen. Now God sent Moses again to these people. They had lost confidence in Moses because the first effort did not free them. Then God gave them all over again, the commission to go to Pharaoh and win the release of these Israelites.

Exodus Chapter 6 Questions

1. When Moses complained to God of Moses' proposed failure, what did God tell him?
2. What did the word "now" indicate?
3. Whose strong hand would let them go?
4. In verse 2 God says I ____ ____ _____.
5. Who do we see in this?
6. "I am the LORD" means what?
7. God was known to Abraham by what name?
8. When was God first revealed as "I AM"?
9. What is the Jewish national name of God?
10. In the covenant God made with the Israelites, what land were they promised?
11. Who had the Israelites in bondage?
12. God heard what from the Israelites?
13. Who would bring the Israelites out from under the burdens of the Egyptians?
14. How would He redeem them?
15. What actually would redeem them?
16. Who would judge Egypt?
17. God took them as His people, and He would be their _____.
18. Why didn't God just rush in there, and redeem them immediately?

19. How can we relate this that had happened to Moses, to our modern ministers?
20. When Moses conveyed God's message, why did the children of Israel not listen? Two reasons?
21. Why could they not see beyond this immediate hardship?
22. What was Moses to do next?
23. What reply did Moses give God?
24. How did Moses describe his lips?
25. What does that mean?
26. Compare this second mission of Moses with some modern minister.
27. What charge did God give Moses and Aaron?
28. Will God call you to do something, that you are not capable of doing?
29. When a minister seems to fail, who usually turns on them and begins to question their call?
30. When we seem to fail, what is the first thing we must do?
31. Who is responsible for the outcome?