

Exodus 6:1-8
The Mosaic Covenant
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EXHORDIUM

In the beginning, God spoke to Adam and Eve, telling them to fill the earth. That task was repeated to Noah. But men were evil instead of faithful to God Almighty and there were few who called upon God. So God took it upon Himself to call upon mankind. He called Abraham and promised him and inheritance, a heritage of numerous offspring and the land of promise.

But the promises were to come directly through the line of Abraham, through the son of his old age and the dead womb of his aged wife. Isaac was born and from him, Jacob and huge number of people. But the people were not in the land of promise and they were not their own.

They were slaves of the mighty Egyptians in a land far away from the land God had promised them. Part of the promise had been granted, descendants like the stars in the sky but the promise of the land still seemed impossible. Although Israel had now become a numerous people, they were still a weak people. They were under the control of the tyrant of Egypt and had no way to determine their own destiny.

This condition was the impetus for them to call out to God Almighty. In the midst of the seemingly powerful Egyptian gods, they cried out, they groaned to God for deliverance.

When their deliverance seemed impossible, God raised up a deliverer, the man Moses, to bring them out of the land of Egypt and to bring them to the land of promise.

Keep in mind some of these time frames. From the time God called Abraham to the deliverance from Egypt, this was about 430 years. The children of Israel had been in Egypt about 215 years. The dating of the Exodus is 1446 BC. This means that the time of Abraham was about 1880 BC. So, from the time of Abraham to our day is a little over 3900 years.

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EXEGESIS

6 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.

When God speaks these words to Moses, He leaves no doubt as to what is going to be accomplished. God is going to do something great. It is interesting that God says that He will do this ‘to Pharaoh.’ When Egypt is destroyed, the destruction falls upon the entire nation. But God speaks as if this is a judgment on Pharaoh. Pharaoh represents the nation and is apparently a good representative. Judgment falls upon the entire nation as a result of this man but we should not think that God judges an innocent nation because of a guilty leader. The nation is guilty and their leader represents them.

In a similar manner, our leaders represent us well. In our nation, more than most, we get exactly what we deserve, since we, as a people, vote our leaders into office. We should not be surprised when our leaders act out the very sins that are common in the people.

But God is able to override even the wickedness of a people and her leaders. God says that ‘with a strong hand’ he will let them go. It is God’s strong hand that delivers His people. Pharaoh held onto Israel as long as he could but God was able and willing to be stronger than Pharaoh. Since Pharaoh was a wicked tyrant of a ruler, it took great efforts and judgments by God to cause Pharaoh to relent.

In the process, God showed Himself not only stronger than Pharaoh but also stronger than all the gods of Egypt.

The final judgment on Egypt is the same judgment delivered upon Israel, the death of the firstborn. The deliverance requires this death. All firstborn sons must die. If this is the case, and the promises are delivered through the first born, then the promises are gone. There is no way to receive the promises. But God has another way. He provides deliverance. He provides salvation. This salvation comes through blood. A firstborn lamb is substituted for a first born son and thus, the sons can live.

The deliverance is provided for friends and strangers. All those who believe God and apply the blood by faith are saved from the deserved death. But all those who do not believe God and do not apply the blood of the

covenant are condemned to death. This was true of the children of Israel as well as those from Egypt.

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: 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 revealed Himself in a more glorious way. He had been know by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as El Shaddai, that is, God Almighty. But He had not revealed His name as I AM. That is a new revelation to Moses. This name, I AM, or Yaweh, is a new revelation. This name refers to God above and beyond El Shaddai, God Almighty. He is not only a mighty God, or the mightiest God, but He expressly reveals Himself as the God, who always was, is and shall be. This is new information.

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.

God again promises to give them the land. He is going to do this even if the Israelites do not cooperate.

It is important for us to remember that the covenant is not just a spiritual one. God promised to be the God of Israel. Thus, they could have held onto that promise and been saved no matter where they were. But the promise included the land. Without Israel occupying the land, they could not partake of God's promise.

In Egypt, they had been a long time separated from this promise. But they did not lose sight of it. When they go through the Wilderness, they take Joseph's bones with them.

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.

God knows our suffering. The children of Israel were suffering in the land of Egypt. As a result of their suffering, the called upon God.

We do not really know the condition of religion among Israel at this time. The Hebrew midwives were faithful to God. Because of this, they would not kill the male Hebrew babies as Pharaoh commanded them to do. But we do know that the fact of their suffering causes them to call upon Yahweh to deliver them from their oppressors.

When God delivers His people, He judges their enemies. But the enemies of God can become His friends through repentance and belief. Although we speak covenantal promises to parents for their children, it is not automatic. We do not presume upon God this way. The promises have always been received by grace through faith. Thus, whoever attaches themselves to God and His people through faith are the true children of God. The promise never was received in a nationalistic or racial way. The promise is for God's people, not for a particular nation or race of people.

The ancient race was the children of Abraham, marked by circumcision. The new race is the children of God, marked by baptism.

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: 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.

God swears by His own name. That is why we should not swear by anything except the name of God. A stack of Bibles is unnecessary. One will do.

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 God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is a great name of God. Now, God reveals a name to Moses that will become the new standard throughout the Old and into the New Testament. The God that delivered you from the Egyptians. He is not merely the God of the Patriarchs that promises to give

them a name but He is the God who can defeat every other power of the Earth and gain the victory.

EXHORTATION

I am the Yahweh. God uses this as an oath. He is saying, “Shall I not do this? I am Yahweh.”

It is almost like saying, “Do you doubt my word?”

We can count on God. What sort of things can we count on Him for? For all that is revealed. We do not know the secret things, the details of our lives. But we can gain confidence in God for what He is doing on a bigger and grander scale. Furthermore, we can gain confidence that He is using us to accomplish His glorious ends.

These ends include God building a Kingdom that will never end. God says that He is going to establish the children of Israel in the land of Canaan, the land of promise. This was the land that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were pilgrims. It was their land by promise, they had occupied little tiny pieces of it but they had never been the main occupants.

Their part as sojourners in the land was to believe that God would do what He said He would do, that is, give the land to His children, forever.

Abraham believed God and God came through on His promises.

Why should we lay this to heart? It may not give us relief as we suffer in this life. But God has spoken for this land. He is keeping it until He gives it to us. One day, our children will occupy the land, never to relinquish it.

Even Canaan, which eventually is occupied by the children of Israel, is not God’s ultimate goal. They could not inherit the full promise to Abraham apart from us, the Gentiles on the whom the light has dawned. The promises are much bigger than Abraham even imagined.

When God says, I AM Yahweh, we need to enlarge our vision and include our present suffering, individual and corporate, into what God is doing to save the world.

That may not give us immediate relief but it does put some perspective on the larger glory of what God is up to.

It causes us to call upon Him to end our suffering, suffering caused by sin and death, and to deliver us from the hand of the oppressor.

It causes us to weigh the cost of our suffering in the balance of a saved world.

It causes us to remember that God does, in fact, keep His promises and that all that we do here and now, our suffering, our work, our love of God and His people, is all part of the glory of what God is going to do at the Resurrection.

Far from it all not mattering, it all begins to make sense.

God is going to do it. That much is sure. Our task is simply to remember what He has done and believe that He will continue to be faithful. We call this faith. It is not simply faith, faith by itself. That will not help us at all. It is faith in Yahweh, the one true God. It is faith in Jesus Christ, His only Son, who has saved us from our sins so that we can be His children and receive the blessing of His promises. It is faith in God's Holy Spirit, who is with us now, granting us peace, hope and love, so that we can know that God is with us in this land of our pilgrimage and that He will raise us from the dead and give us this land forever.