

Exodus 6: God Promises Deliverance

I. God's Response to Moses' Questions (6:1-13)

- “Strong hand of the Lord”
 - Repeated mentions of the Lord’s ‘hand’ and Moses’ hands. Why?
 - “The strength or might of God’s hand is the means by which he will bring Israel out of Egypt. This image for God’s power working in the world to save his people recurs throughout the narrative of the plagues and the exodus (7:4, 9:3, 13:3). The use of the image may represent intentional irony because ancient Egyptian texts often described the power of Pharaoh by saying that he had a “strong hand/arm” to destroy his enemies (*ESV Study Bible*, p. 149).
 - Ezekiel 30:20-26 (context 587 BC)
 - What part(s) of the body are emphasized in this text?
 - Human hands have great power.
 - God’s hands have greater power.
 - Psalm 31:15
 - Psalm 136:12
 - Ecclesiastes 2:24
 - Isaiah 41:10
 - Isaiah 64:8
 - John 10:28
 - Luke 23:46
 - Acts 7:55
 - 1 Timothy 2:8
 - Hebrews 10:31
 - 1 Peter 5:6
 - “The hand of the Lord”
 - Ezra 7:6, 9
 - Ezekiel 37:1
 - Acts 11:21
- 6:2-8: The repeated declaration of God’s presence and identity, “I am the LORD,” frames the section (vv. 2, 6, 8) and emphasizes the significance of the plagues for Israel: the same God Almighty who made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (vv. 3-4) has heard the cries of their descendants and remembered his covenant (v. 5); he is the one who revealed himself to Moses and who will bring them out of Egypt into the land he had promised to their fathers (6:6-8) (*ESV Study Bible*, p. 153).

- 6:3: “but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.” God’s revelation to Moses is unique at this point in the biblical story. He will know God in a way that not even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew God.
- 6:5-8: **What are the “I” statements?**
- After speaking to them what the LORD spoke to him, **why did the people of Israel not listen to Moses?**
- **What is Moses’ reply to the LORD after he told Moses to go tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of the land?**
- 6:12: It is difficult to determine whether Moses intends something significantly different from his plea of being “slow of speech and of tongue” (4:10). The vocabulary may be meant to evoke the incident involving circumcision in 4:24-26. If so, Moses could be implying that he feels not only physically unable to speak (4:10) but also personally unfit or “unclean” to fulfill the task (cf. Isaiah 6:5) (*ESV Study Bible*, p. 153).

II. The Genealogy of Moses and Aaron (6:14-30).

- The genealogy of Moses and Aaron (vv. 14-25) is framed by opening and closing sections, which nearly mirror each other (vv. 10-13, 26-30). The function of the genealogy is to preserve the particular history of Moses and Aaron as the one through whom the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt (as vv. 26-27 make clear) and also of Aaron’s sons who would become the heads of the priestly line in Israel (vv. 23, 25).
- The beginning of the genealogy looks as if the sons or heads of the household of Jacob’s sons will be listed in the order of their birth (v. 14a). However, after naming the sons of Reuben (v. 14b) and Simeon (v. 15), it stops to focus on the sons of Levi (v. 16) and in particular on Aaron, Moses (v. 20), and Aaron’s sons (vv. 23, 25). The genealogy functions primarily to preserve (1) the family history of Moses and Aaron as the ones through whom the Lord led Israel out of Egypt, and (2) the history of Aaron’s sons as those who were called to be priests in Israel. Other figures in the genealogy are likely included because of their roles in events narrated in the book of Numbers: the sons of Korah (Ex. 6:24) eventually become jealous of Aaron’s role as priest and rebel (Num. 16:1-50); and Aaron’s

grandson Phinehas (Ex. 6:25) is later noted for his act of faithfulness in relation to Israel's Baal worship at Peor (Num. 25:1-9). Like many Biblical genealogies, this one does not aim to include every single generation. It only lists four generations from Jacob to Moses (Levi-Kohath-Amram-Moses); compare 1 Chronicles 7, which lists 12 generations from Jacob to Joshua (*ESV Study Bible*, p. 154).

- 6:26-27: These verses are structured to highlight the central statement that it was this particular Moses and Aaron who went before Pharaoh.