

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF MOSES

Taught in Ambassador's Class of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, California

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**Lesson #7, Exodus 6:1,-7:2 - February 17, 1980
God sends Moses to tell Pharaoh let Israelites go**

Today we are looking at Exodus Chapter 6 through Chapter 7, verse 2. We'll get to the plagues next week. This is a beautiful passage on how God uses reluctant prophets and reluctant leaders.

We have no problem when things are going our way and people come to the Lord after we have talked to them, but what we can't handle is rejection. We can handle people that won't accept our beliefs, but we can't handle situations that are threatening. None of us like to be insecure. If I had my way, everybody would have a big "E" on their forehead indicating "Elected," and I would have God only send me the elect. That way when I spread the Word of God, when I preached the gospel, when I led people to Christ, I'd win every time. I would know they were going to make it because there would be that "E" on their forehead. If I blew it and made a very bad presentation of the gospel, they would still make it because they had that "E." On the other hand, if I was the last one to talk to a dying person and they went to Hell because I didn't get through to them, it wouldn't be my fault. It would be because they didn't have an "E". No matter what I did, bad or good, it wouldn't have mattered anyway. No "E". That way I would be secure from the womb to the tomb. We all want that, and so did Moses.

We think Moses, the great Lawgiver, the great man of faith, walked on water. We forget the Red Sea was parted to let him through. We forget 3500 years have passed, and we see him at the end of his life when God has gotten through with him. This study is certainly helpful in that it allows us to see him at the beginning of his ministry when God was working on him and he was just like the rest of us.

So now he has come back to Egypt to the Children of Israel, even though very reluctantly. God had told him that, when he went back, the Children of Israel would receive him. So he went back, did the three great signs, and they did receive him. They believed him; he could be their deliverer; they worshipped God, and everything was hunky-dory. Then in Chapter 5, when he goes to Pharaoh and says, "Let My people go," Pharaoh won't do it. Well, God had already told him, "I am going to have to force Pharaoh to comply." That wouldn't have been too bad except that Pharaoh got nasty and increased the burden of the Israelites. They had to make so many bricks per day for the many Egyptian building projects, and, if they had so much time to worship, obviously they had free time, so Pharaoh would take care of that. No more straw for their bricks. Let them go find their own straw. They needed the straw to make the bricks plastic and easy to mold. So the Jews have the same quota of bricks and also have to find the necessary straw which doubles the project. When they can't meet the quota, they are beaten and consequently get angry and hostile. Now, since they can't get hostile at Pharaoh, which would get them in even more trouble, they get hostile at Moses. Things were bad enough before Moses showed up on the scene, and now, with his help, things are twice as bad. He has not only not delivered them, he has made their case worse. He has made them odious, or literally stinking, in the eyes of Pharaoh. So they jump all over Moses, "And they said to them, 'May the LORD look upon you and judge *you*, for you have made us odious in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.'" God didn't tell him about this rejection, and poor old

Moses, down the tube he goes again and blames God for the second time.

Exodus 5:22-23:

Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, why hast Thou brought harm to this people? Why didst Thou ever send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he has done harm to this people; and Thou hast not delivered Thy people at all."

"You didn't listen. I told you I wasn't the guy. I told you to send someone else, anybody else. I'm just not your man. Proof? Look at my track record. I have alienated Pharaoh. I have alienated the Jews. The Jews are twice as bad off now as they were before I showed up, and you haven't done a dog-gone thing."

Now the thing we want to note in Chapter 6 is that God doesn't slap Moses down. One of the amazing things about this long-suffering God of ours is that He is indeed long-suffering. One of the things His Scriptures requires of Christians is that we be long-suffering. There are two words for long-suffering. One is long-suffering with things, with circumstances. The other one, which I don't like, is long-suffering with people. I don't mind circumstances so much. They are kind of impersonal, but, oh boy, people! They can drive you up the wall. So Moses is a people, and it's no fair for God to lay down rules for His people that He doesn't keep Himself. So if He says we have to be long-suffering with people, then God has to be long-suffering with people.

And God is. Look at Verse 1, Chapter 6. Moses has just blamed God once more. He has told God that He was wrong, that He shouldn't have sent Moses and that He hadn't done His thing and because of that His people were hurting. You'll notice God still doesn't slap him down.

Exodus 6:1

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of his land."

God is not upset with Moses because he hurts or is dejected, or feels rejected, or even when he blames God. That doesn't bother God. God will put up with anything except rebellion. Rebellion He will not tolerate.

Looking at the sacrifices in the Old Testament is very illustrious. There are all kinds of sacrifices for sins of commission, things I do that I shouldn't have done. There are sacrifices for sins of omission, things I didn't do that I should have done when I didn't know any better. The Day of Atonement is for the sins of omission. The only sin the Scripture for which there is no sacrifice is the sin of the "high hand," rebellion.

Now Moses didn't want to go to Egypt, but he went. Even after offering five objections to God, he still went. He went, but it doesn't work out the way he thinks it should and he blames God, but he is there. God understands that Moses is not fighting Him. Moses is scared to death, and God understands that. What He doesn't put up with though are sins of rebellion. You can see that in the difference between how He deals with Moses and how He deals with Pharaoh. Moses is God's chosen one and God has given him all kinds of promises plus three tremendous signs, the rod, the leprous hand and the water that becomes blood. He has also told Moses the people will heed him and, even though Pharaoh will object, he will eventually send you and the people out. Moses knows exactly what God is going to do, but he is looking at the circumstances. He is an old man, 80 years old. He has been out of Egypt for 40 years. His first 40 years were as an Egyptian. Then he spent 40 years with the Midianites. He has never actually been a Jew. He was only born a Jew and only raised Jew as long as he was with his mother. The rest of his life, as far as the Jews are concerned, he was an Egyptian. When he fled, he didn't flee to Canaan, back to his family home, he fled to Midian with the Arabs. Midian came right out of Keturah, wife of Abraham. They were Arabs. They roamed down the Saudi Arabian Peninsula on the Eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula. They were a nomadic people, Bedouins, caravan raiders, herdsmen. They were not Jews. Moses has never been a Jew as far as the Jews are concerned. He just happened, by accident, to have been born a Jew. His life choices have all been Egyptian or Midian. Why should they accept him, an outside, a foreigner, as their deliverer when he didn't even stick around for the tough stuff? For 40 years he enjoyed being the "son of

Pharaoh's daughter" while they were suffering. Then when the suffering started for him, he fled to Midian where he settled down to a quiet, relaxed life of raising sheep for 40 years while they were back in Egypt making bricks under a harsh Pharaoh. Why indeed should the Jews accept Moses? We'll see why we have a genealogy right in the middle of this passage.

While Moses argues with God, blames God, tries to get out of going to Egypt, he never resorts to the "high hand." On the other hand, what about Pharaoh? Well, look back in Chapter 5. Remember Chapter 5, Verse 2?

Exodus 5:2:

But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides [if I did know him], I will not let Israel go."

That is the "high hand," and that is trouble! God is going to destroy Pharaoh. He is going to humiliate him first, and then He is going to destroy him. Nobody, I mean nobody, says "No" to God.

I have a little saying the truth of which I discovered the hard way. "Never say never to Jesus Christ." If you do, that is exactly what you are going to end up doing.

To return to the passage, Moses has just gotten through blaming God, and the first thing God does before going on with His program is take Moses aside and comfort him. That is called long-suffering of people, and that is God

God begins to explain to Moses why He is going to do what He is going to do because God doesn't want just a robotic leader. He wants a leader making intelligent choices, a leader who knows what God is about. God doesn't want us walking in the dark either. Blind faith is not in the Scriptures; intelligent faith is. God tells us what is going to happen or why He wants us to do something, and then asks us to do it because of a logical process of thinking realizing that God knows what is best. I may not like the short term results, but I have a God who "causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose." It doesn't say right now necessarily, but the end result, yes. If I am an intelligent person and I have a choice between my track record, my brilliance and God's infinite knowledge, well need I say more. I just lost \$5,000 on the stock market trying to preserve capital. Now, I have an MBA from Stanford with a major in investments. As of yesterday I lost \$5,000. I was not trying to speculate. I was trying to preserve capital. I was being conservative. I would suggest you skip me if you are seeking financial advice. If I'm an intelligent person, and I have that kind of a track record, my next investment is going to be after a lot of prayer. I don't know the future but God does. The only two major stock transactions in my whole life were both miserable failures. All the wisdom of Stanford teaches, "Buy Low, Sell High." I always buy high and sell low. That is my track record. God wants us to make intelligent choices so He lets us know. Look at verses 2-5.

Exodus 6:2:

God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the LORD; [Yahweh. I am the covenant making God. That's where everything starts. That is the basis for all of God's discussions, for all of God's expected actions. He is the covenant making God who keeps his word, and on that premise we are to step out by faith] and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, [El Shaddai] but by My name, [Yahweh] LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. And I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. And furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage; and I have remembered My covenant.

"My covenant. It's My covenant. It is not our covenant." It is a unilateral contract by God for man's advantage, and God takes full accountability and responsibility for it. He tells Moses, "I made this covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [Genesis chapters 17, 26 and 35]. With each one of your patriarchs I made a covenant that they would possess the land of their sojourning." However, Hebrews 11:9 tells us that Abraham lived by faith in the land of THE promise. He lived as an alien, as a foreigner. He never possessed the land of the covenant and neither did

Isaac or Jacob, we are told in that passage. Yes, God appeared as El Shaddai, God Almighty, and yes, He protected Abraham. He delivered Chedorlaomer and the coalition of kings from Mesopotamia into Abraham's hands. With a very small and inferior force Abraham and his Amorite allies routed these kings. Yes, He protected Isaac in the land of the Philistines, those vicious warlike people who were not above taking by force what they could get, and they had a far greater force than Isaac. He also kept old Jacob "the supplanter" alive after he cheated his brother Esau and Esau was going to kill him. When Uncle Laban, who was an even bigger crook than Jacob, tried to fleece him, God reversed the tables and Jacob ended up fleecing Uncle Laban. He also ended up a fat cat in Egypt because his son Joseph was sold by his brothers, Jacob's own sons, into Egypt as a slave and God raised him up to be Prime Minister. All his life the old supplanter did everything by his own tricks and his own manipulations and ended up down in Goshen, the choicest part of Egypt, and the Jews took over Goshen. All this because of the grace of God. The Egyptian hieroglyphic for a foreigner was a man with his hand tied behind his back and an open, bleeding wound down his face. They didn't like foreigners, but God gave those Jewish foreigners Goshen. He is El Shaddai. He didn't give them Canaan possessionally speaking, covenantally speaking, yes.

"Now," He says, "I'm going to start acting like Yahweh, the God of the covenant. You are going to have that land I promised you. I told Abraham you wouldn't have it for 400 years, but you are going to get it now. Secondly, I have heard the cry of My people the Israelites, and I am going to respond to that cry. The reason I am moving now, Moses, is because I promised your forefathers, and I am going to keep my covenant with them. Not only that, but I am going to respond to the cry of My people because I have a covenant with them also. That is why we are going to move, Moses." Now based on this information God wants Moses to make an intelligent choice and move out.

Exodus 6:6:

"Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, [Because He is the covenant making God and this is the time He is going to fulfill that part of the covenant, the promise of the land] **'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** [Which they never got to possess], **and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD** [Yahweh, the covenant keeping God].'"

At the beginning of all this God tells them, "I am Yahweh, and I keep my promises." At the end He reminds them, "I am Yahweh, and I keep my promises." In the middle He promises three wonderful things. Three steps. Very fascinating because they coincide with the three steps He has given us today.

Verse 6: First of all He says, "I will bring you out from the burdens of Egypt, deliver you from the bondage of Egypt and also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments." The first step, God says, "I am going to redeem you. I am going to deliver you from bondage. I am going to do it." He uses the word redeem. It is the word for "kinsman redeemer." Kinsman redeemer was provided for in the Law of Moses, see Leviticus 25. It is especially significant in the Book of Ruth. When God gave the Jews the land of THE Promise, it was forever. He gave it to the various tribes forever, and He gave it to the various families in the tribes forever. It was to be that family's possession forever. If the family got into financial difficulty and had to sell their land, they were never allowed to sell it forever. The buyer was never allowed to keep it forever. God made provisions for the family to get it back. He said, "If you have to sell your land, then a near kinsman, a kinsman closely related to you, who is willing and able to redeem it, is to redeem it. They are to buy back for you that eternal possession which I have given to you." That is the word He uses here. God says, "I am going to be your kinsman redeemer. I am going to be a near relative to you. You are going to be born unto Me, and I am willing, even up to the point of crucifying My Son. What is more, I am God Almighty, El Shaddai, and I am able to redeem it, and I am going to do it." The first step in our deliverance is to be delivered from the bondage of self and sin by God's Almighty power.

The second step. "Not only that," He says in verse 7, "I will take you for My people, and I will be your God, and

you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." He is saying to us, "I'm not going to just save you from sin, self and bondage and then leave you a neuter. I am going to identify with you. You are going to be My people, and I am going to be your God. We are going to be identified. I am going to live in you. When I look at you, I'll see Me. I am going to give you the indwelling life of God so you can live a life of positive righteousness, not just neutrality or absence of evil, but a life of power, a life of God, a life which will manifest Me in you. You are going to be My people, and I am going to be your God, and everybody is going to know it." And that is what God does in our second step. He not only pays the penalty for our sin, but He gives us a life of power to live above old Adam. We don't have to keep on sinning. He indwells us with His life, and we become identified with Christ, His death, His burial and His resurrection, so that as He walked in newness of life on the other side of the grave, so we are to walk in newness of life down here. We are to have victory in our Christian life over the old habits and the old slavery.

However, God wants something far more than that. He wants a third step. Note verse 8, "'And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you *for* a possession; I am the LORD [Yahweh]. I am going to do it.'" The land of Canaan was fought for by the Jews. God said, "It is yours. I give it to you. Go in and take it. I want you to butcher all the inhabitants. I want you to remove them totally out of the land. It is going to be a fight, but you are going to win. I have already taken it. I have already given it to you." One of Egypt's military leaders had already rammed his way through Canaan smashing their city states and breaking up their coalition of armies. He left a bunch of petty kingdoms each with its own little police force and no alliances so another nation, 40 years later, could come in and pick them off one by one without having to face some gigantic force. God says, "I broke it all up for you." In Joshua He says, "I sent the hornet before you." The hornet was the scarab very prevalent in Egypt. God said, "I've done it; It's yours; So take it. You'll have to fight for it, but I have already taken the land, and I have already given it to you. The Title Deed is yours. You are fighting a battle already won. Your activity is to be done out of My adequacy, out of My rest."

Relating step 3 to Christians, we need to know that the land of Canaan is not heaven in Scripture. It is the rest of God on earth. He wants us to enter the land of rest, the land of Canaan, a life of rest in the midst of activity. He doesn't want a constant struggle down here trying to keep ourselves clean, righteous, holy and pure or even safe, if you don't believe in eternal security. He wants us to live a life of vital activity but living it out of the rest and adequacy of the indwelling God. This particular portion of Exodus helps interpret a beautiful passage in Hebrews 4 where God points out to the professing Christians of that day, to whom the book of Hebrews was written, not to turn back to Judaism to escape persecution. They were going back into Judaism even after "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will."

So the author of the book of Hebrews is warning the Hebrews of 60 A.D. who professed Christ, "Don't exercise the same kind of unbelief that your forefathers did 1500 years ago." God gave them the land of rest, but they were never allowed to enter it because of their unbelief. He quotes Psalm 95 by David which says that very thing. "Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the wilderness; When your fathers tested Me, They tried Me, though they had seen My work. For forty years I loathed *that* generation, And said they are a people who err in their heart, And they do not know My ways. Therefore I swore in My anger, Truly they shall not enter into My rest." This Psalm is 450 years later than the time of Moses. This rest has been available ever since creation when God Himself created for six days and then on the seventh day He rested. It is that Sabbath Rest of God that He wants us to enjoy as a continual and permanent possession. That's what He points out here in Hebrews 4, verse 8. "For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that." If Joshua had given them rest after taking them into the Promised Land, 1400 years before Christ, then why 900 years before Christ would David have written about it as still being available and still not appropriated? It wasn't true in David's day either. David was not a man of peace. He was a man of war and therefore not allowed to build the temple.

It wasn't true in Solomon's day either. Solomon destroyed the nation of Israel in one generation. His reign was a disaster. The nation broke apart in his son Rehoboam's reign. It would have broken apart in Solomon's day but God wouldn't let it happen for David's sake. And so in Hebrews 4, verse 9, "There remains therefore a Sabbath

rest for the people of God. For the one, [the believer] who has entered His [God's] rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His." It says in Genesis God rested from His work. After creating for six days, how did God rest from his work? What did He say about His work? Yeah! He looked it all over and said it was "very good," and then He rested. Well, what did He do? Did He lie back in the sack and fan himself while the world wound down? No! All He needed to do was simply carry out His program for what He had already done. In other words, God sat back, looked at His creativity, His creative work, and said, "I am satisfied with what I have done. It is perfect." After that He simply maintained His perfection. In Hebrews it talks about Christ maintaining the universe by the word of His power, not creating again but maintaining the universe by the word of His power.

So, how does a believer enter into the rest of God? Exactly the same way God entered into it. What do you think of the work of God? Is it adequate? Is it sufficient? Is it complete? Is it finished? Or does it need your desperate striving, manipulating, scheming, planning efforts in order to accomplish God's purpose in your life? That is your choice. You can live a life of activity totally in the will of God while at rest in the midst of the most troubling circumstances because you are trusting in the finished work of Christ and the adequacy of the indwelling God to do whatever is out there in front of you that needs doing. You are not trying to do it. You are obeying God and stepping out by faith letting the life of God through you do the job. You will discover in the midst of your activity, in the midst of the circumstances that are driving you nuts, that you have rest, just a quiet sense of settledness and assurance. That is what God wants. He wants you to have a life of rest. Not a life of ease, a life of rest, living a very active life out of someone else's power and life. The Jews, because of their unbelief, never got that even though He intended, in His three steps, for them to have it. But look at verse 9.

Exodus 6:9:

So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage

They rejected the living God who had done those three wonderful signs which caused them temporarily to believe and worship. Then as soon as Pharaoh put the thumb screws to them, they looked at Pharaoh and chose Pharaoh. "Our God is not big enough to handle that god." So they spurned the promise of God because of their own despondency and the cruel treatment of the circumstances, and they never entered the rest of God. That is the tragedy of His people.

Where is Moses' self-worth about now? It is right back down at the bottom, isn't it? See God told him, "Hey, when you go back to the land, the Israelites are going to heed you." He didn't tell him when. "Old Pharaoh will oppose you, but the Israelites will heed you." And they did heed him temporarily, and when they did, you can almost hear Moses thinking. "Hey, I'm not really so bad. This thing may work yet. I've still got a little of the old charisma." God can't use Moses with this attitude, so He totally wipes him out. Now Moses is lower than a snake's belly, but the unbelief of the Israelites and the unbelief of Moses is not going to stop the program of God. It may prevent Moses and the Israelites from enjoying the program of God, but it will not stop that program.

Same is true of us. God is going to accomplish in our lives what He planned to do whether we like it or not. We may go through our whole Christian life fighting God, or doing our own very best for God, and have a miserable Christian life, up and down and up and down with no rest. The thing we overlook is that when it is all through we'll be right where God wanted us all the time, but our enjoyment will have been zilch, like going to the opera all the time.

Exodus 6:10:

Now the LORD spoke to Moses [Now that Moses is real low and wiped out God moves], **saying, "Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the sons of Israel go out of his land." But Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, "Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me** [My own people have not listened to me]; **how then will Pharaoh listen to me, for I am unskilled in speech?"** [There is that old old excuse again, but God goes right on and ignores him] **Then the LORD spoke to Moses and to**

Aaron, and gave them a charge to the sons of Israel and to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

God is not going to be blocked by them. Their unbelief is not going to stop Him. Have you noticed what Moses does? When Moses is overwhelmed by the circumstances, what is his view of God? When you and I let circumstances dictate our response, what happens to our view of God? Here we have a fellow sitting on a big throne, it is true. But he has to get eight hours of sleep at night. He has to eat three meals a day. He has to get up and shave and dress just like the rest of us. He is only a man, an exalted man, big deal man, sure, but he has to do everything that Moses has to do. On the other hand, over here is a God who is totally complete, period. Unfortunately Moses doesn't see this God. He only sees this exalted, big man on a throne. When he looks at the circumstances, he brings his God down to below the level of man. At the moment, Pharaoh is bigger than Yahweh in Moses' sight. That is the tragedy of unbelief. We make our God too small. When we make our God too small, then, of course, the world caves in on us. That is where God is, at this point, with the world caving in on Moses.

Now we come to verses 14 through 27 which is a genealogy necessary to establish Moses as an authentic leader of the Jews. I'm just going to read these verses and would like to make a couple of interesting comments on them.

The Jews need this genealogy, even though you and I don't, because Moses, although born a Jew, was 40 years an Egyptian and 40 years a Midianite. From the Israelites standpoint, he has never yet been a Jew. So God is going to establish the unqualified right of Moses to be their leader and for Aaron to be the High Priest of Israel. He starts with Reuben, the first born of Jacob. Next is Simeon, the second born. Then in verse 16 He hones in on Levi, the third born of Jacob, the third tribe of Israel. Interestingly enough the tribe of Levi has Egyptian names all through it. It is kind of intriguing. Of all the tribes, Levi has the most Egyptian names. Merari is an Egyptian name, Putiel is an Egyptian name, Phinehas is an Egyptian name, Moses is an Egyptian name. In other words, in the early days when everybody was friendly to everybody, there was probably a lot of intermarriage between the Egyptians and the Jews. Joseph himself, when he became Prime Minister, was given, by Pharaoh, Asenath daughter of Potipherah High Priest of On. On was the great center of sun worship, called Heliopolis in the Greek. You can bet the second man in all of Egypt is going to get the daughter of someone who is a real wheel in the priestly hierarchy rather than the daughter of some second rate priest. Asenath gives Joseph two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, two of the twelve tribes [or thirteen tribes if you count Levi] of Israel, and they are half Egyptian. Their granddaddy is the High Priest of paganism. He is one of the big shots in the pagan religions in Egypt.

Then down in verse 25, Eleazar, son of Aaron, married one of the daughters of Putiel, an Egyptian name undoubtedly, and she bore him Phinehas, an Egyptian word. These are heads of some of the households of the Levites. Aaron is the first High Priest of Israel. Eleazar, his son, is the second High Priest of Israel. He marries an Egyptian and apparently an Ethiopian because he has a son named Phinehas who becomes the third High Priest of Israel. Phinehas means black man, Ethiopian. It is fiction to talk about the purity of the Jewish race, as they did back in Christ's day, and to despise the Gentiles. Interesting, isn't it? Moses has two wives neither one of which is a good Jewish girl. The first one is Zipporah, the Midianite. She is an Arab. She is opposed to circumcision. She is not under the covenant of God and almost gets Moses killed with her opposition to circumcision. Moses' second wife is a Chushite. A Chushite is a Nubian or an Ethiopian or a Moor, someone from North Africa or interior Africa. He apparently marries a black woman. Verse 15 says that Simeon married a Canaanite. God eventually passes rules saying you can't do that. In other words, the chosen people of God included anybody who chose to be a "chosen person." The Pharisees and the Sadducees with their racism of the first century were totally out to lunch. The two key guys who started Israel, Aaron and Moses, had a history of mixed marriages. Very intriguing isn't it? An illustration of the grace of God.

Verse 28 picks up the story again.

Exodus 6:28:

Now it came about on the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, that the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "I am the LORD; speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I

speaking to you." But Moses said before the LORD, "Behold, I am unskilled in speech; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?" Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, 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."

We serve an interesting God. He has a reluctant prophet over here, and at the same time He has a proud Pharaoh over here. Now, how is He going to deal with both of them in one situation? How is He going to make a reluctant prophet speak without him speaking, and how is He going to make a proud Pharaoh humble?

Moses didn't want to talk to Pharaoh, and God says, "Well, don't. I'll make you as God to Pharaoh," but God doesn't speak directly to people. God speaks through a prophet who speaks to people. He says, "O.K., Moses, I want you to walk into Pharaoh's court, and I don't want you to talk to Pharaoh. I want you to stand in front of Pharaoh, and I want you to tell Aaron what I want said to Pharaoh and have Aaron tell Pharaoh." Let's face it, Pharaoh could have understood Moses. Both of them were educated in the palace court. Both of them undoubtedly knew the language of the Israelites and the language of the Egyptians. They were highly educated men. If you are Pharaoh with 2-3 million people in your land who speak a different language, you, as a rule, would know their language. What does God make old chicken little do? Confront Pharaoh in Pharaoh's court, refuse to talk to him but talk to his own prophet Aaron and have his prophet talk to Pharaoh. If you want to insult an Oriental, do something like that. And where is Moses required to do this? Right in Pharaoh's own palace. Moses would have been a lot smarter if he had said, "O.K. I'll talk to Pharaoh." He is going to insult and humiliate Pharaoh in front of the courtiers right there in Pharaoh's court.

Now why does God want to humiliate Pharaoh? Does He like to humiliate people? Doesn't God love Pharaoh? Why does He insist on humiliating him? And that is exactly what He is going to do. He is going to make Moses put up or shut up while scaring the daylights out of him, and He is going to totally humiliate Pharaoh in the process. Why? What is the one thing that is killing Pharaoh? What is the one thing that is going to put Pharaoh in hell?

Class comment: Rebellion

Bob's response: Yeah! It is possible that this was one of the proudest Pharaohs of all Egypt, the most stuck on himself, and that sin is killing him. Since God doesn't want him to die, He is going to bring a cross into his life that is going to kill what is killing him.

Why does God insist I have a cross daily? "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." That is a miserable statement. I do not like crosses. They hit me right where I don't want to be hit. As you well know, I bargain with God. When he says, "This has got to go." I say, "Oh, no. I'll give you ten of these. Just let me keep this one." But my cross is always "this one." Why does God insist on hitting us where it hurts the most? Why did He insist upon hitting Pharaoh where it hurt the most? What does He want to do with Pharaoh? What was the cross designed to do? Kill! Back in Biblical times the cross was the electric chair. It was designed to kill an evil man. And God is out to kill the evil men in us. He doesn't care what it takes as long as it gets the job done because He loves us so much. Pharaoh needs to be humble. He needs to have his nose rubbed in the dirt so he won't die. God does not do it to get even. God doesn't have to get even. He is Mr. BIG. But he doesn't want Pharaoh to go to hell. Even though he is a braggart, and he doesn't know Yahweh and even feels "to heck with Yahweh." So what does God have to do? He has to kill that part of Pharaoh which is keeping Pharaoh from salvation, and He is going to do it.

And what is He going to do with Moses? What is Moses' big problem? It is exactly the opposite, fear, lack of self-worth, not really trusting God. Well, the last thing he is eager to do is go into Pharaoh's court and make an ass out of Pharaoh. He'd just as soon flee back to Midian and be nice and safe across the Sinai Peninsula. So, solution to Moses' problem is to go stand right in front of Pharaoh and make an ass out of him.

One is exalted and one is humiliated. Both of them are finally brought into a balance. When God asks us to take a

cross, we need to remember that that cross is designed to kill what is killing us. It is designed to give us life not death. It is a gift of love not punishment. God wants us to live and to live a Christian life of rest. So He is going to kill off anything that gets in the way of what He has for us and keeps us from enjoying a Christian life of rest. That is the cross of Jesus Christ. That is God's grace. That is God's love. We ought to thank Him.

Father, we just thank You so much for the gift of Your love in Jesus Christ our Lord, that gift which cost You a cross. Christ is Your most prized possession, Your most beloved thing in all the universe, for all eternity You will love Him with an everlasting and infinite love, and He merited all that love, Father. He was never an object of grace anywhere in Scripture. He deserves all Your eternal love and yet if He was going to be a God of redemption, a God who wants to reach out and save those who are lost, be gracious to the undeserving, then there had to be a cross involved. That cross had to kill the thing that You prize the most, Father, your Son. Your principal for us is exactly the same. That cross is actually the most prized thing in our lives. So, Father, if it worked so perfectly, and so effectively and so infinitely glorious in the life of Your Son, thank you for the crosses in our lives that we might too walk as sons of the living God knowing what it means to have that which is killing us killed that we might have the life of Christ as a present experience, that in the midst of all our activity we might have a life of rest. Thank you, Father in Jesus' name.

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