

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Women’s Bible Study**  
**Week #6**

**Exodus 6:2 – 7:7**

**October 18, 2023**

**Exodus 6:2-13**

1. This section is a reaffirmation of the commission to Moses
2. Likely, the text itself is from a different historical tradition (the “Priestly” version) about the same essential story of the Exodus
3. After Moses’ initial encounter with Pharaoh, Moses is still unsure of his call or of God’s plan/ability to deliver, so he needs reassurance
4. Pharaoh has resisted and the Hebrews have too!
5. The people have a “broken spirit” – they are so beaten down that they cannot imagine a fight with Pharaoh having any positive consequences
6. Pharaoh only intensifies his oppression
7. God reiterates that he has revealed himself in a new & deeper way to Moses (from God Almighty to God “I Am”)
8. God repeats his claim on the people as his own and his plan to liberate them from oppression
9. God “ups the stakes” so to speak, now directing Moses not just to ask for 3 days off, but to demand complete freedom
10. Note the Gospel message here (vss 4-8):
  - a. God acts, establishes a covenant
  - b. The people will have a homeland
  - c. God will hear the people’s cry for relief from suffering
  - d. Yahweh will be the God of the people, not only in the act of deliverance, but in the future, into their history
  - e. The people will come to know God

**Exodus 6:14-26**

11. A genealogy is inserted at this point: why?
12. It links Moses and Aaron with the Twelve Sons of Jacob, with the history of the Patriarchs
13. It affirms that God acts according to his own timing
14. It strengthens Moses & Aaron (and by extension, all the people) in the knowledge that their own individual lives and actions of their lives are contributing to a much larger plan and story

**Exodus 6:28-7:7**

15. Moses’ objections continue, and so God adjust the equation/call for Moses:
  - a. Moses will now “be like God to Pharaoh” – meaning that he will speak for God in this situation
  - b. Aaron shall be Moses’ “prophet” – not just Moses’ spokesperson – meaning that Aaron will speak the truth about what God will do regarding Pharaoh and the Hebrew’s slavery to him
16. In all of this story, two critical things will happen:
  - a. Even the Egyptians will come to know who God really is
  - b. God’s promise of Land/Home will be fulfilled
  - c. In this ancient story there is cosmic truth being disclosed about the character, the purpose, the power of the One who is truly God
17. God “hardens” Pharaoh’s heart
  - a. Here is one of the largest theological questions of the text
  - b. Was Pharaoh a puppet in God’s hands, or did Pharaoh himself have his own free will in the matter?
    - i. The best answer is one that incorporates both possibilities
    - ii. Pharaoh’s bent is toward obstinacy regarding God’s claim, and...
    - iii. God allows Pharaoh to have his way, but this does not stop God’s plan or ability to have God’s way
    - iv. “Hardening” does not automatically preclude a change of heart – it only makes it harder!

- v. Psalm 81:11-12: “But my people did not listen to my voice; Israel would have none of me. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels.”
  - vi. NB: If Pharaoh were merely a puppet, then God’s “victory” over him would have little meaning. But Pharaoh was an independent and freely acting agent, thus presenting a real and powerful “opponent” of God, making God’s victory all the more impressive.
18. God is clearly not in absolute control of Moses, either! In the mystery of things, God accomplishes his plan even when confronted with “friends and enemies” who don’t want to follow God’s plan!

### Questions for Your Life Today

- A. Moses’ ability to follow God was often tested and required repeated reassurances from God. What is your experience of following God’s direction in your life?
- B. The Hebrew people were so beaten down that they could hardly muster the will or strength to follow Moses. Where do we see this principle of oppression at work in other, historical circumstances?
- C. How do you interpret God’s promise of a homeland for Israel? Is this literal or figurative? What did the Church begin to say about where our home truly is?
- D. A genealogy teaches history. How is your own history an encouraging or correcting word to you?
- E. Where might God be calling you to some form of action in the world that will not be accomplished unless you act? What will happen if you do not act?

Notes by The Rev. Dr. Jack Baca, Senior Pastor, The Village Church, Rancho Santa Fe, California

#### Resources:

- a. Interpretation Commentary on Exodus, Terence E. Fretheim, John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1991
- b. The Communicator’s Commentary Series, Old Testament, Exodus, Maxie D. Dunnam, Word, Inc., Waco, TX, 1987
- c. The Old Testament Library: Exodus, Brevard S. Childs, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1974