

Message #11**Exodus 6:1-9**

I recently read an article about depression in older people. I didn't realize that 1/3rd of all suicides in the United States are committed by people who are over the age of 55. In fact, the typical high risk profile of an older person who commits suicide is this: He is a white male between the ages of 55-70, who is retired. Now one of the things that I feel good about in our church is that one of the major symptoms of this depressed, suicidal man is that there is a huge loss of appetite and huge weight loss. As I looked at myself in the mirror and then looked at other white males in the church, I don't see too many of us who seem to fit the criteria (Archibald Hart, *Depression in the Elderly*, p. 177).

When we come to this passage in Exodus, Moses was an elderly man and he was very depressed. He is well over 80-years-old and he was specifically doing the will of God and it appeared as though he had failed. He had gone to Pharaoh and asked that the Hebrew people be permitted to leave and Pharaoh said, "No." Not only did he say "no," but he also made life miserable by increasing their work load.

As a result of that, Moses was being blamed by the Hebrew people for all of their increased problems. As a result of that, Moses was in total depression. He was discouraged, angry and depressed. **Now the one thing that Moses did that was a critical key to him getting out of his depression was he went straight to God in prayer (Ex. 5:22). He went to God and talked directly to Him.**

This is a major key to getting out of depression no matter what your gender or age. Go talk to God. **When you are in the depths of despair and sorrow, talk to God because sometimes you will come to understand God's Word the best and grow the most when things seem to be completely falling apart.** The point to see here is this:

WHEN MOSES WAS DEPRESSED, HE TALKED WITH GOD AND GOD REVEALED TO MOSES THAT HE WAS THE SOVEREIGN GOD WHO WAS COMPLETELY WORKING OUT HIS PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS WILL FOR HIS NATION.

When we get this perspective of God, it does tend to bring you out of depression. When we stop to consider the fact that God is in sovereign charge of even the very circumstances that are making us depressed, and when we consider that He is working out His sovereign will in those circumstances, it is a major key to getting us out of our rut.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, he said that he was confident of the fact that God, who had begun a good work in us, would complete it until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). When he wrote his epistle to the Romans, he said that God causes all things to work for our good (Rom. 8:28). This doctrine of the sovereignty of God has great application to us when we are going through low moments of depression.

Now there are five specific messages that God gives to Moses:

MESSAGE #1 – God tells Moses that he was about to see what He was going to do to Pharaoh. 6:1

Moses did not know what to do or say, so God comes to Moses and says you don't have to do anything because I am going to do everything. God said to Moses, you are about to "see" what I am going to do. This difficulty would actually enable Moses to see many things of God. **God's people will see God do more for them when they seem to be helpless and hopeless.**

God said, Moses, you are about to see exactly what I am going to do to this arrogant Pharaoh/King. The prepositional phrase "under compulsion" means you are about to see what My mighty strong hand is about to do (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 331-332). He repeats this twice for Moses to emphasize the fact that He is going to use His hand to force Pharaoh to do His will. **Israel will leave Egypt not by human manipulation, but by Divine force. God would bring ten powerful judgment plagues upon the Egyptians and in the end Pharaoh would end up unsaved and dead.**

God was specifically going to use His strong hand to powerfully and sovereignly direct the events pertaining to Pharaoh's life so that he would literally drive the Hebrews out of this land. **He won't just want them to leave; he will actually force them to leave.** All of this will be done by the mighty hand and mighty action of God. **It is impossible to stop God's will for a nation or individual. God can make enemies promote the will of God for the people of God.**

It was not until Israel lost all hope when God stepped in and freed His people. It was not until she was brought to the place where she was totally boxed in that God would set her free.

MESSAGE #2 – God identifies Himself again to Moses by the name "I AM." 6:2

God really wants to drive this point home to Moses that He is the "I AM." In Hebrew He specifically uses the pronoun "I" before the "I AM." So literally the way you read this is "I, I AM" (ANI YHWH).

Now notice how many times God uses this exact construction and reminds Moses of this fact in this context. He uses it here in **verse 2, verse 6, verse 7, and verse 8.** So four times in these verses He reminds Moses of this fact—He is the "I, I AM." **The point of reminding Moses of this name is to remind him to realize who God actually is and the power He has.**

Now we may recall that this construction not only means God is the self-existing covenant God who is everything, in and of Himself, **but it also means He is the Sovereign God who creates everything, controls everything and causes everything.** God is sovereign over everything in existence.

By reminding Moses of that here, He is basically saying, "Moses, don't forget who "I AM." I am God and I can do anything I want to do and I can cause anything I want to have happen and I am going to take action and use My hand, and Pharaoh will let My people go.

We need a good dose of this theology. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God becomes a very precious doctrine when our world seems to be falling apart. When things aren't going the way we planned them, we need to step back and remember the sovereignty of God.

There is something very comforting about accurately knowing the names of God. Jehovah, Elohim, Adonai, El Shaddai. But the most comforting name to us as individuals is "Jesus." He is our Savior, He is our Redeemer, He is our friend and He lives within every believer.

MESSAGE #3 – God informs Moses that He did not reveal this special name to Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. **6:3**

It is clear from this passage that there is a covenantal continuity between Moses and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but it is also clear that there is a revelatory difference.

The name that God made Himself known by to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was the name "God Almighty," which is **El Shaddai** and He didn't really make that name known often. Actually, God only reveals Himself by the name El Shaddai once to Abraham (Gen. 17:1) and once to Jacob (Gen. 35:11), and nowhere does God reveal Himself by this name to Isaac. The point of it is that these patriarchs recognized that God was Almighty God. They knew of His great power. However, they did not know all of the ramifications of the fact that He was the "I AM." He did not make Himself known to them by the name "I, I AM" or by what that name means.

It is not that they had never heard the name, because they had. In fact, when God called Abram, the noun "I AM" is used (Gen. 12:4, 7). In fact, Abraham built an altar to God and called upon the name of the LORD (Gen. 12:8). Isaac also had heard this name and also prayed to the LORD (Gen. 25:21). We also may observe that Jacob had also heard of this name of the LORD (Gen. 30:30). So it wasn't that they had never heard of the name.

What God means is that He had never revealed the meaning of it to them. The full, true, complete importance was not known to them. He did not fully display the power and the national, covenant significance of this name to Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. They never had a staff become a snake or a hand become leprous or water to become blood. They certainly knew God was a powerful, almighty El Shaddai, but they never grasped the I AM significance concerning the sovereignty of God and the covenantal connection to Israel that God revealed to Moses. They had never seen a national redemption as Moses was about to see.

So God is telling Moses, Moses, I have revealed and will reveal to you things about Myself I did not even reveal to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **In other words, these negative circumstances would permit God's people to see another side to God that had never been seen or experienced before.**

That is encouraging to us. When we go through terrible things, we may expect to see and experience things from God we never did before. We will get to know Him better and deeper.

MESSAGE #4 – God informs Moses He has entered into a land covenant with Israel. **6:4-5**

God makes it very clear that He made a covenant with Abraham that he was going to give Israel a specific promised land, which was the land of Canaan (Gen. 17:8). This land has very specific boundaries and the reason why Israel is guaranteed this land is not because of her faithfulness, it is because of God's covenant.

It is the same reason we are guaranteed heaven. It is not because of our faithfulness, it is because of God's grace covenant.

In **verse 5**, God informs Moses that He had heard the groaning of the sons of Israel because of what the Egyptians were doing and He remembered this covenant that was made clear back in the days of Abraham.

What comforting news God was giving to Moses.

MESSAGE #5 – God would completely deliver Israel. **6:6-8**

If you carefully look down through this context, you will notice there are seven “I will” statements. These are not “I might” statements. These are “I will” statements of what God will do. As Dr. Bush said, these “I wills” denote “absolute certainty” (*Exodus*, p. 84). These are specific things God is promising that He will do. F. B. Meyer said when you analyze these “I will” statements, they present for God’s people “The possibility of the Impossible” (*Studies in Exodus*, p. 97). God does have the power and ability to do anything and to reverse any situation.

Victor Hamilton systematizes these “I wills” into four “I will” categories: (*Exodus*, p. 102)

- 1) God's Lordship “I wills”—I AM the LORD and I will (**6:6a, 8b**)
- 2) God's Redemption “I wills”—three I wills of **verse 6**
- 3) God's Adoption “I wills”—two I wills of **verse 7**
- 4) God's Settlement “I wills”—two I wills of **verse 8**.

Dr. J. Vernon McGee called this the seven “I wills” of redemption. He said when you carefully study them, they paint a picture of the fact that we are saved to the uttermost. There is no doubt that we may make great application of these “I will” statements, but they are specifically for Israel.

Specific Promise #1 - I will bring out Israel. **6:6a**

The first “I will” promise is that when God redeems He brings His people out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. This did happen.

Specific Promise #2 - I will deliver Israel. 6:6b

The second “I will” is that when God redeems He delivers His people from their bondage. The Israelites were under terrible bondage to the Egyptian world and God was about to deliver her from it. This did happen.

Specific Promise #3 - I will redeem Israel. 6:6c

This is a new concept that God would redeem Israel by “great judgments.” This has a definite application to the judgment plagues that God would bring upon the Egyptians (Ex. 7:4). So to the people of God, the “great judgments” would be a wonderful thing, but to the Egyptians they would be horrific. This did happen.

In the mind of the Hebrew, a redeemer needed to be a close family member called “Kinsman Redeemer.” A good illustration here is the book of Ruth. Ruth was a Moabitess who linked herself to Naomi, who was her mother-in-law. Now the closest relative on earth was not willing to make the purchase price to redeem Ruth, so Boaz ended up doing it (Ruth 4:1-11). This is a beautiful picture of what God will do for Israel.

Israel has no earthly redeemer. There is no such thing as an earthly Messiah who will be able to give her the land. But there is a heavenly Messiah who has paid the full redemptive price for this nation and He will redeem her. It is Jesus Christ. He will return and He will give her all of her land.

C. I. Scofield said when you track the concept of “redemption” through the book of Exodus there are four critical things that are taught: (*Scofield Reference Bible*, NASV, p. 94)

- 1) Redemption is wholly from God.
- 2) Redemption is through a person.
- 3) Redemption is by blood.
- 4) Redemption is by power.

In order to redeem the individual sinner, there is a great judgment that is wrought by God. That judgment was wrought against Jesus Christ and when you believe on Him you are redeemed.

Specific Promise #4 - I will take you for My people . 6:7a

Think about this fact, God would not only redeem Israel but also make her His own nation. This has happened. Israel is God’s nation to this day. This has happened. Think about this fact; God has not only saved us, but made us His sons and daughters.

Specific Promise #5 - I will be your God . 6:7b

God is Israel’s God, do not every forget that. The God of the Bible is Israel’s God. God longs and loves to be our God.

Again God emphasizes that they will know that He is specifically Israel’s God when He brings her out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. This has happened.

Specific Promise #6 - I will bring you to your land . **6:8a**

This is an amazing promise, because the Israelites didn't own any land and were a bunch of slaves in Egypt. However, clear back in the book of Genesis, God promised Abraham and Isaac that his Jewish family would have an incredible amount of specific land (Gen. 15:18-21; 26:3). That specific land was inhabited by Canaanites and other powers (i.e. Ex. 3:17). God says I am going to bring you to this land and give you every inch of it. This did happen. God did bring them right to this land.

Specific Promise #7 - I will give your land to you for a possession . **6:8b**

Now God says I am going to do these things by My outstretched arm that will include “great judgments” against the Egyptians. This is exactly how God will once again deliver Israel during the Great Tribulation. He is going to use a series of judgments to force the world to realize that Israel belongs to God and she has a specific land that will be hers.

What He promises here is that He will give Israel all of the land as her possession. **This has not happened yet.**

Now this apparently did bring Moses out of depression. It gave him optimism. He was excited about this news and, according to **verse 9**, he went and told the sons of Israel all of this news. He probably thought this is fantastic. But notice their response—“they did not listen to him.” They did not believe him.

On the one hand you have God telling Moses all of these amazing things and on the other hand you have the people not believing the Word of God.

It is just like us. On the one hand we have the Word of God telling us one thing and on the other hand we have the world telling us something else. Who do we believe? Who do we trust? One thing that becomes very clear from this passage and that is when we are going through difficult things we can cling to and claim the specific promises of God, which are found in the Word of God. Even if all others around us do not believe in them, we can do this.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS:

1. When we are depressed, we need to get alone with God and talk with God.
2. We may expect to see God working more and doing more when we are at our lowest.
3. God has a very specific program with Israel that includes specific land.
4. No one can stop the sovereign will of God and God does use circumstances to even cause His enemies to do His will pertaining to His people.
5. When we have believed on Jesus Christ, we are redeemed forever.