

The Book of Exodus, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 4: Genealogy and the Charge to Confront Pharaoh

Exodus 6:14–7:13

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Doctrinally, this lesson establishes two pillars. First, it grounds God's redemptive work in real, traceable history. The genealogy is not filler; it is God signing the account. The deliverers of Israel had named parents, grandparents, and a tribe. This is the same God who later records the genealogy of Jesus, working salvation not through myth but through actual families in actual history. Students should come away convinced that the God of the Bible acts in the real world and records the names of ordinary people in His plan. Second, the lesson displays the supremacy of the LORD over every rival power. The magicians of Egypt could counterfeit the sign, but Aaron's staff swallowed theirs. There is genuine counterfeit power in the world, and there is the genuine, superior power of God that overcomes it.

The lesson also aims at the formation of the student. The genealogy quietly dignifies ordinary life: God uses named, ordinary people, and He may well use you. The recommissioning of a reluctant, slow-speaking, eighty-year-old Moses teaches that no one is too inadequate, too old, or too late to be useful to God when God commands and supplies. And the contest with the magicians warns the student to discern between counterfeit spiritual power and the true power of God, and to fear no rival once we stand with the LORD.

Keep the heaviest weight on the LORD's supremacy, and carry it forward to Christ. The serpent-swallowing staff is a small early sign of a settled truth: every power that sets itself against God will finally be swallowed up in defeat. At the cross and empty tomb, Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and triumphed over them. Pharaoh's hardened heart still resisted, and many hearts still resist, but the outcome is never in doubt. Teach students to live unafraid, trusting and obeying the risen Lord who has already won.

Question 1

Student Question:

Read Exodus 6:14–25. The narrative pauses to record a genealogy that focuses in on the tribe of Levi and the family of Moses and Aaron. Why does God ground His deliverers in a real, traceable lineage, and what does this reveal about how He works in actual human history?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The narrative pauses in Exodus 6:14–25 to insert a genealogy. It begins with Reuben and Simeon, Jacob's first two sons, and then settles into the tribe of Levi, tracing the line through Kohath to Amram, and naming Aaron and Moses. The list is selective and purposeful; it is not

trying to give a complete family tree of all Israel but to establish the credentials and lineage of the two men God is sending.

Why stop the action for a list of names? Because God is grounding His deliverers in real, verifiable history. Moses and Aaron are not legendary figures dropped from nowhere; they belong to a specific tribe and family with named ancestors. This is how God works throughout Scripture: in the real world, through real families, in traceable time. The genealogy is, in effect, God's signature on the account, certifying that these things actually happened to actual people.

There is a quiet but important apologetic here. The faith of Israel, and the Christian faith that flows from it, is not rooted in timeless myth or abstract philosophy but in history. God acts in time and space, among people with parents and grandparents and birthplaces. The same impulse later produces the careful genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke, anchoring the Savior in real human descent.

The teacher should help students see that a 'boring' genealogy is actually a declaration that God is the Lord of real history, not a teller of fables. He stepped into the world as it really is, with all its ordinary names and family lines, and worked His salvation there. That should give us confidence that He is at work in our real, ordinary lives too.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The genealogy grounds Moses and Aaron in real, traceable history
- God works salvation through actual families in actual time, not myth
- The list is selective and purposeful, establishing the deliverers' lineage
- The same pattern anchors Jesus in the genealogies of Matthew and Luke
- The Christian faith is rooted in history, not timeless legend

Discussion Prompts

- Why does it matter that God grounds His deliverers in real history?
- How is a biblical genealogy actually a statement of faith and fact?
- What confidence does it give us that God acts in the real, ordinary world?

Question 2

Student Question:

Read Exodus 6:20 about Amram and Jochebed. Moses and Aaron came from an ordinary family with named parents and grandparents. How does it shape the way you view your own family and heritage to know God uses ordinary lineage for His purposes?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Tucked into the genealogy is a small but tender detail: 'Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses.' Here are the parents of Israel's deliverer,

named at last. The mother who once hid her baby in a basket and the father who shared that faith are given their place in the record. They were an ordinary Levite couple, and from their ordinary home came the man God used to shake an empire.

This is deeply encouraging. God did not raise up His deliverers in a palace vacuum; He brought them from a family, with a heritage of faith passed down. Earlier we learned that Moses' parents hid him by faith, unafraid of the king's edict. The faith of ordinary parents shaped the deliverer. Heritage matters in God's economy, and ordinary families are the seedbed of His purposes.

The teacher can press this home. Many in the class may feel their family is too ordinary, too broken, or too unremarkable to matter to God's plans. But God's great work ran straight through Amram and Jochebed's household. The faithfulness of unknown parents and grandparents is never wasted; God weaves it into His larger purposes in ways they may never see.

There is also a gentle call here to value and invest in one's own family and heritage. The everyday faithfulness of a believing home, teaching children, hiding the truth in their hearts, shaping their character, is the kind of soil God loves to use. Your ordinary family life may be the very lineage through which God works in the next generation.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Amram and Jochebed, ordinary parents, are named as Moses and Aaron's family
- Moses' parents earlier acted in faith, hiding their child unafraid
- God brings His deliverers from ordinary, faith-shaped homes
- The faithfulness of ordinary families is never wasted in God's plan
- A call to value and invest in our own families and spiritual heritage

Discussion Prompts

- How does God's use of an ordinary family encourage you about your own?
- In what ways have the faith of parents or grandparents shaped you?
- How can you invest faithfully in your family as soil for God's purposes?

Question 3

Student Question:

Read Exodus 6:26–27. The genealogy ends by emphasizing, 'These are the Aaron and Moses,' the very ones God charged to bring Israel out. Why is it important that God identifies His servants so specifically, and what does it teach us about His call on particular people?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The genealogy concludes with emphatic identification: 'These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt... It was they who spoke to Pharaoh.' The text almost points a finger: these specific men, these and no others, are the ones God charged with this mission. The repetition underlines that the call of God lands on particular, identifiable people.

This specificity matters. God's calling is not a vague cloud of inspiration; it falls on named individuals with real responsibilities. Moses and Aaron are singled out, set apart, and held accountable for a definite task. When God calls, He calls someone in particular to do something in particular. The mission has names attached to it.

There is reassurance and there is weight here. The reassurance is that God knows His servants by name and equips the specific people He calls. The weight is that calling brings responsibility; Moses and Aaron could not pass the buck. The teacher can help students see that God's call always comes to particular people for particular service in His kingdom.

Apply it to the church. God still calls particular people to particular works, teachers, those who serve, those who lead as He has appointed. No one is merely a face in the crowd to God. He records names, He assigns tasks, and He expects His called servants to step up and do what He has given them to do, just as He expected of 'this Aaron and Moses.'

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The text emphatically identifies 'these' specific men as God's chosen servants
- God's call lands on particular, named, accountable individuals
- Calling brings both equipping and responsibility
- God knows His servants by name, not as a faceless crowd
- God still assigns particular works to particular people in His church

Discussion Prompts

- What does the specific naming of Moses and Aaron teach about God's call?
- How does it feel to be known and called by God as a particular person?
- What particular work might God be calling you specifically to do?

Question 4

Student Question:

Read Exodus 6:28–30. Moses again protests that he is of 'uncircumcised lips,' and God patiently recommissions him anyway. When have you offered God your sense of inadequacy as an excuse, and how does God's patience with Moses speak to you?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

After the genealogy, the narrative resumes by returning to Moses' objection: 'Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?' This is the same complaint Moses raised at the bush, that he is not a man of words. Even after all God has said and done, Moses still leads with his inadequacy. He is honest about his weakness, even to the point of using it as a reason to hesitate.

What is striking is God's patience. He does not blast Moses for his repeated reluctance. He simply recommissions him, restating the charge and reaffirming the plan with Aaron. God works with a flawed, fearful, stammering servant, neither pretending the weakness away nor letting it cancel the mission. Divine patience meets human inadequacy and presses on.

This is a comfort to every believer who feels unequal to what God asks. We are quick to say, like Moses, 'I am not a man of words,' 'I am not gifted that way,' 'others could do it better.' Sometimes that is honest humility, and sometimes it is an excuse. Either way, God's response is not to discard us but to supply what we lack and send us anyway.

The teacher should gently distinguish between humble dependence and excuse-making. Moses' sense of inadequacy was real, but God had already provided Aaron and promised His own presence. At some point the servant must stop pleading weakness and simply obey. God's patience is not endless permission to refuse; it is grace that carries the weak into obedience.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Moses repeats his 'uncircumcised lips' objection after all God has said
- God recommissions him patiently rather than rebuking him harshly
- God works through flawed, fearful, stammering servants
- The difference between humble dependence and excuse-making
- God's patience carries the weak into obedience rather than excusing refusal

Discussion Prompts

- What 'I am not able' do you tend to offer God as a reason to hold back?
- How does God's patience with Moses encourage you in your weakness?
- When does humility become an excuse, and how do we move into obedience?

Question 5

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:1-2. God says, 'I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.' What does this arrangement reveal about how God delegates His authority and word through chosen servants?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

God answers Moses' fear with a remarkable arrangement: 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.' Moses had worried that Pharaoh would not listen to him; God responds by elevating his standing. Moses will stand before Pharaoh bearing God's authority, and Aaron will be his mouthpiece, his prophet, speaking the words Moses gives him.

This is a picture of how God delegates His authority and word. A prophet is one who speaks for another; Aaron speaks for Moses, and Moses bears God's word and power before Pharaoh. The chain runs from God, to Moses, to Aaron, to Pharaoh. God does not usually deal with the world directly and visibly; He sends authorized representatives who carry His message and His authority.

Note carefully that being made 'like God to Pharaoh' does not mean Moses became divine; it means he stood in God's place as His authorized spokesman, with the weight of God's command behind him. The teacher should guard against any notion of a man becoming God, while affirming that God genuinely invests His servants with delegated authority to speak and act in His name.

This pattern reaches its fullness in Christ and His word. God spoke through prophets, then finally and perfectly through His Son, and now His word goes out through those He sends with the gospel. The apostles spoke with delegated authority; the Scriptures carry God's authoritative voice. We should receive the message God sends through His appointed means as the word it truly is.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Moses made 'like God to Pharaoh,' bearing delegated authority, not deity
- Aaron as 'prophet,' the spokesman who carries the message
- God works through authorized representatives, not usually direct visible dealing
- The pattern of delegated authority guards against making a man divine
- Fulfilled as God speaks finally through His Son and the apostolic word

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean that Moses was 'like God to Pharaoh' without being divine?
- How does God still send His word through authorized means today?
- How should we receive the message God sends through those He appoints?

Question 6

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:3–5. God again says He will harden Pharaoh's heart so that, through judgment, 'the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.' How does it sit with you that God means for even the resistant to come to know who He is, and where do you most need to know Him as LORD?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

God tells Moses plainly that He will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply His signs and wonders in Egypt, and that the purpose is that 'the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel.' Even the judgments have a revelatory aim: that Egypt itself would come to know who the LORD is. God's acts of power are never merely punitive; they declare His name.

It is sobering and yet strangely hopeful that God means for even the resistant to know Him. Pharaoh and Egypt would come to know the LORD, some perhaps in saving fear and some only in defeat, but all would know. God will be known. The question for every person is not whether they will acknowledge the LORD, but whether they will do so in glad submission now or in forced recognition later.

On the hardening, hold to what the whole story teaches: Pharaoh repeatedly hardens his own heart against clear signs, and God justly gives him over to that chosen hardness, using even his defiance to display His glory. This is not God forcing a willing man into sin, and it is not a denial that the gospel call is real. God's purpose to be known is good; Pharaoh's refusal to know Him is his own.

Bring it to the student's own heart. We each have areas where we have not yet truly bowed to God as LORD, places of quiet resistance, divided loyalty, or unexamined sin. The God who was determined that Egypt would know Him is determined to be fully Lord of us. Far better to come to know Him as LORD now, in willing surrender, than to have that knowledge forced upon us.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God's judgments aim at revelation: that Egypt would know He is the LORD
- God's acts of power declare His name, not merely punish
- Everyone will come to know the LORD, in glad submission or forced defeat
- Pharaoh's hardening is his own choice, justly confirmed by God
- A call to know God as LORD now in willing surrender

Discussion Prompts

- Why does God want even the resistant Egyptians to know He is the LORD?
- Where do you still need to bow to God as LORD in your own life?
- What is the difference between knowing God now and being forced to later?

Question 7

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:6–7. Moses and Aaron ‘did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them,’ at ages eighty and eighty-three. What does their simple obedience late in life teach us about the value God places on doing exactly what He says, whatever our age or season?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The text records simply, ‘Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them, so they did.’ The repetition drives the point home: they obeyed exactly, completely, without alteration. After all the objections and delays, Moses and Aaron finally do precisely what God said. This quiet obedience is the hinge on which the whole deliverance turns.

Then comes the striking note of their ages: Moses was eighty and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh. Their great work began at an age when most men would consider their best years long behind them. God’s timeline is not ours. He had spent forty years in Egypt and forty in Midian preparing Moses, and only now, at eighty, did the main mission begin.

The value God places on exact obedience runs all through Scripture. He is not honored by our improvements on His commands but by our faithful doing of them. ‘They did just as the LORD commanded’ is the highest praise. The teacher should lift up the beauty of simple, full, prompt obedience over clever adjustment or partial compliance.

And the ages preach their own sermon. No one is too old, too late, or too far along to be useful to God. The years that feel like they are running out may be exactly the years God means to use most. Whatever our season, the call is the same as Moses and Aaron’s: to do just as the LORD commands, fully and faithfully, starting now.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- ‘They did just as the LORD commanded’ as the highest praise
- God values exact, full obedience over clever adjustment
- Moses and Aaron began their great work at eighty and eighty-three
- God’s timeline of preparation is longer and different from ours
- No one is too old or too late to be used by God

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Scripture so prize doing ‘just as the LORD commanded’?
- Where are you tempted to adjust or partially obey rather than fully obey?
- How do the ages of Moses and Aaron speak to your sense of season and timing?

Question 8

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:7 again. God's great deliverers were eighty and eighty-three years old when their main work began. What does this say to you about whether you are ever too old, too late, or too far along to be useful to God?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The single verse noting that Moses was eighty and Aaron eighty-three deserves its own reflection. In a culture that prizes youth and treats usefulness as the property of the young, God hands His greatest Old Testament rescue mission to two octogenarians. The exodus, the plagues, the Red Sea, the giving of the law, all of it lay ahead of men who were already old when they started.

This dismantles the excuse that our best years are behind us. Moses spent eighty years getting ready, much of it in obscurity tending sheep, before God's call to public mission came in full. The hidden, seemingly wasted years were preparation. God is never in a hurry, and He is never finished with a willing servant simply because that servant has gotten old.

There is real pastoral comfort here for those who feel their season of usefulness has passed, whether through age, missed opportunities, or a long road of failures and detours. The same is true at the other end of life for those who feel it is too late to start over with God. The God who began with Moses at eighty is not bound by our sense of timing.

The teacher should encourage every student, young and old, that availability matters more than age. What God asks is not that we be young, impressive, or ahead of schedule, but that we be willing and obedient now. Whatever years remain, they can be given fully to the Lord, and He delights to use them.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- God entrusts His great mission to men already old
- The 'wasted' obscure years were actually preparation
- No age or season disqualifies a willing servant
- Comfort for those who feel their usefulness has passed
- Availability and willingness matter more than youth or timing

Discussion Prompts

- Do you ever feel too old or too late to be useful to God? Why?
- How can 'wasted' or obscure years actually be preparation in God's hands?
- What would it look like to offer your remaining years fully to the Lord?

Question 9

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:8–13. Aaron’s staff becomes a serpent, the magicians counterfeit the sign, yet Aaron’s staff swallows theirs, and still Pharaoh’s heart is hardened. What does this scene teach about the reality of counterfeit spiritual power and the total supremacy of the LORD over every rival, fulfilled in Christ’s victory over all powers?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal moment of the lesson. When Pharaoh demands a sign, Aaron throws down his staff and it becomes a serpent. Pharaoh summons his wise men and magicians, and they appear to do the same thing by their secret arts; their staffs also become serpents. But then comes the decisive line: ‘Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs.’ The counterfeit is consumed by the genuine, and the LORD’s supremacy is displayed.

We must take seriously that the magicians produced a real-looking imitation. Scripture does not treat all opposing spiritual power as mere trickery; there is genuine counterfeit power in the world, whether by deception, by demonic agency, or both. The New Testament names Jannes and Jambres as those who opposed Moses, and warns that such counterfeit power, though impressive, ultimately will not prevail. We should neither naively deny the reality of counterfeit spiritual power nor be intimidated by it.

The point of the swallowed staffs is supremacy. Egypt’s gods and powers could mimic the sign, but they could not stand before the LORD; their serpents were devoured. From the very first confrontation, God signals the outcome: every rival power that sets itself against Him will be swallowed up. The contest with Egypt is, at heart, a contest of the LORD against the so-called gods of Egypt, and the LORD is utterly supreme.

Notice too that even this clear sign did not soften Pharaoh; ‘Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen.’ Counterfeit power and a hardened heart often go together. Those determined to resist God will find imitations to lean on rather than submit. The sign that should have brought repentance only confirmed Pharaoh in his defiance, the very hardening pattern that runs through these chapters.

Carry this to its fulfillment in Christ. The swallowed serpents are an early picture of a settled truth: at the cross and the empty tomb, Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and triumphed over them openly. Every counterfeit power, every dark authority, every rival to God has met its match and its end in Him. The believer need not fear; we serve the Lord whose staff swallows every serpent, who has already won the decisive victory.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Aaron’s staff becomes a serpent; the magicians counterfeit the sign
- Aaron’s staff swallows theirs, displaying the LORD’s supremacy
- Counterfeit spiritual power is real (Jannes and Jambres, 2 Timothy 3:8–9)
- We should neither deny counterfeit power nor be intimidated by it

- The contest is the LORD against the gods of Egypt, and He is supreme
- Counterfeit power and a hardened heart go together (Pharaoh, 7:13)
- Fulfilled in Christ disarming all rulers and authorities (Colossians 2:15)

Discussion Prompts

- What does the image of Aaron's staff swallowing the others teach about God's supremacy?
- How should we think about counterfeit spiritual power without fearing it?
- How does Christ's victory over all powers give us confidence today?

Question 10

Student Question:

Read Exodus 7:1–13 as a whole. God grounds His servants in real history, then sends them in His authority to display His supremacy over Egypt's gods. Looking back over the whole passage, name one specific way the risen Christ, who has disarmed all rival powers, is forming you to trust and obey Him in your daily life.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Stepping back over the whole passage, we see God's method on display. He grounds His servants in real history through the genealogy, He recommissions a reluctant Moses and arranges for Aaron to be his prophet, He announces His purpose to be known as the LORD, He prizes their exact obedience, and He displays His supremacy over Egypt's powers in the swallowed staffs. Every piece declares that the LORD is sovereign, faithful, and supreme.

The thread that ties it together is the supremacy of God over every rival, the very theme that finds its climax in Christ. The early sign of the swallowing staff anticipates the great swallowing of all opposition in the victory of Jesus, who through death and resurrection disarmed the powers and triumphed over them. The God who was supreme over Egypt is supreme over every force that could ever stand against His people.

This is where the lesson must land in the heart of the student. Because the risen Christ has already disarmed every rival power, we can trust and obey Him without fear. We do not face our battles wondering who will win; the outcome is settled. Our task, like that of Moses and Aaron, is simply to do just as the Lord commands, in the confidence that He reigns.

Press each student to be specific. Where is the risen Lord, victorious over all powers, calling you to trust Him instead of fearing some rival, and to obey Him instead of hesitating? Ask each one to name one concrete way Christ is forming them through this passage to live as people who serve the supreme and victorious Lord.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The whole passage displays God as sovereign, faithful, and supreme

- The swallowing staff anticipates Christ's victory over all powers
- Because Christ has won, we trust and obey without fear
- Our task is to do just as the Lord commands, confident He reigns
- A call to name one concrete way Christ is forming us through this passage

Discussion Prompts

- How does Christ's settled victory change the way you face your battles?
- What rival power or fear is the risen Lord calling you to stop fearing?
- Name one specific way Jesus is forming you through this passage to trust and obey Him.