

The Book of Exodus

Lesson 4: Genealogy and the Charge to Confront Pharaoh -- Exodus 6:14-7:13

Right in the middle of the most dramatic story in the Old Testament, with Pharaoh defiant and Israel groaning and a confrontation looming, the narrative suddenly stops and gives us a list of names. Reuben begat these, Simeon begat those, and here are the sons of Levi by their generations. If you are honest, a genealogy can feel like a speed bump on a freeway. You came for plagues and a parted sea, and instead you get 'the sons of Kohath were Amram and Izhar.' But slow down, because this list is not a detour. It is God quietly signing His name to the history.

Watch what the names do. The genealogy runs through Reuben and Simeon and then settles down to camp on the tribe of Levi, because that is where Moses and Aaron come from. It traces their family, their father Amram, their mother Jochebed, their ancestor Kohath, all the way to the moment the text can say, 'These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, Bring out the people of Israel.' These are real men, with real grandparents, born into a real family, in real history. The deliverer of Israel was not a myth dropped from the sky. He had a lineage you could trace and a mother who once hid him in a basket.

And then the story picks right back up with a kind of holy stubbornness. Moses, who still feels like a man of uncircumcised lips, gets re-commissioned: 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.' God knows Pharaoh will not listen. He says so plainly. He is going to multiply signs and wonders, and Egypt will know that He is the LORD. The first sign comes when Aaron throws down his staff and it becomes a serpent. Pharaoh calls his magicians, and they do the same trick. But then Aaron's staff swallows theirs whole, a swallowed-up counterfeit, and Pharaoh's heart stays hard.

We are going to mine this chapter for two treasures. The first is the comfort of God recording names, that He works through ordinary families and remembers ordinary people, weaving His redemption through a lineage of folks no different from us. The second is the awesome supremacy of the LORD over every rival power. Egypt's magicians could imitate the sign, but they could not match the power; their serpents were swallowed. There is real counterfeit spiritual power in the world, and there is the genuine power of God that swallows it whole, finally and forever in the victory of Christ. Let us trace the names and then watch the staff.

Group Discussion: Read Exodus 7:8-12. The magicians could imitate the sign, but Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. What does this contest teach us about counterfeit spiritual power and the true supremacy of the LORD over every rival, then and now?

Personal Reflection: God recorded the names of ordinary people, including Moses and Aaron's parents and grandparents, as part of His redemptive plan. How does it change the way you see

your own ordinary life and family to know that God records names and works His purposes through ordinary people like you?

Read Exodus 6:14–7:13

Study Questions

1. 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?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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?
5. 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?

6. 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?
7. 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?
8. 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?
9. 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?
10. 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.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Numbers 3:1-4, the line of Aaron developed further as God establishes the priesthood from this same Levite family; Matthew 1:1-17, the genealogy of Jesus showing God works redemption through traceable human lineage; Colossians 2:15, Christ disarming the rulers and authorities and triumphing over them; 2 Timothy 3:8-9, Jannes and Jambres who opposed Moses as a picture of counterfeit power that will not prevail; Ephesians 2:8-10, ordinary people created in Christ for good works God prepared

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