

UNDERSTANDING PROMISE: Exodus 6:1-30

Introduction:

Over the last few weeks we have, in this study, spent time in five chapters, and have learned a lot about the economy of God. We've learned that God's 'preparations' are not what we expect or what we would busy ourselves with. We have learned that God's 'readiness' is not according to our measuring stick, and that 'rejection' is always part and parcel of being 'called' by God. And we've learned/experienced lots of 'corrections' which are important to our thinking, even vital, to us as Christians because we live in a time when a sea of definitions, of understanding, so often is categorically different, even completely opposed, to God's way, to God's definition, and to God's working plan. Today, we arrive at yet another, understanding 'promise'.

Before we address the Biblical definition of '**promise**', we need to consider, attend to, yes, address, our current understanding of 'promise'. The word 'promise' today is synonymous with 'the breaking of promises'. To 'promise' is associated with the broken promise. The word holds no positive weight, and little significance in today's age. The word brings to mind, for example, broken election promises, or courtrooms where one promises to tell the truth with a hand on the Bible, the bride and groom who stand up and make wedding vows, which fifty percent of the time end in divorce. If 'promises' are regularly broken so much in the sacred institution of marriage, then it is not surprising that they are broken everywhere else. We have a systemic problem with 'promises', which causes a jaded attitude. 'Promise' is the prep for brokenness. Though the concept ideal of 'promise' is such a beautiful concept, it now causes a 'rolling of the eyes'. But, Biblical 'promise', God's '**promise**', is not like our everyday promises, praise God.

We learn in Exodus 5 that Moses and Aaron have had their first encounter with Pharaoh, but have received 'rejection' from him, anger, and more work to do. And as a result, the Israelites have 'recoiled' from their initial support, the foremen now accusing and cursing Moses and Aaron of having made their situation even worse than it already was.

Exodus 5:21

"And they said to them, 'The LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.'"

Moses, in bewilderment, turns to God, and blames Him for the failure.

Exodus 5:22-23

"Then Moses turned to the LORD and said, 'O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.'"

So in response to this difficult turn of events, Moses laments, 'Why did you send me? And He accuses God. 'You have not delivered Your people at all.' In context, Moses has said, God, You have broken Your 'promise'. You said You would deliver them, but You did not deliver. But these words demonstrate that Moses misunderstands **the 'promise' of God.**

In 2020, after a year like we've had, do we too have misunderstanding about 'promise' also? Have we jumped to the same conclusion about 'promise' as Moses? Horizontal fixations will always do this. May our passage of Scripture today encourage us. Let us therefore understand '**promise**' clearly and rightly, and Biblically. In Exodus 6 we will see four characteristics that will help us to understand '**promise**' better.

I. THE POWER IN PROMISE: Exodus 6:1-8

Exodus 6:1-8

"But the LORD said to Moses, 'Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.' God spoke to Moses and said to him, 'I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. Say therefore to the people of Israel, "I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD."'"

Though deserved, God does not admonish or reprimand Moses, He patiently restates the '**promise**'. Moses, just remember My '**promise**'!

And we recall the encounter that Moses had on Mount Horeb with God when God foretold to Moses how Pharaoh would not willingly let the people go until he was compelled to do so by God, and after that Pharaoh would let them go.

Exodus 3:19-20

"But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go."

And now God confirms with Moses that He has, indeed, a 'plan of action', that He is aware of what is happening, and that He has it all under His control, just as He foretold.

Exodus 6:1

“But the LORD said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.’”

This is the power of God's omniscience. **'I KNOW'** God declares to Moses (Exodus 3:19). Unless Pharaoh is 'compelled' by a 'MIGHTY HAND', he will not let the people go. So, God's Plan has a 'sequence of events', but Moses has no patience with God's timetable. Pharaoh says NO. Moses declares THAT'S IT, GOD. YOU MESSED UP!

Exodus 5:2

“But Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.’”

Exodus 5:23b

“... you have not delivered your people at all.”

God is Sovereign. The power in God's '**promises**' are the same. Fixations, and horizontal responses to God's '**promises**' do not change this. GOD IS ALWAYS THE SAME. He does not change. So, God declares in chapter 3 how it will be, and confirms it again in chapter 6. The mighty, strong, Sovereign Hand of God will make this happen, Moses. Nothing has changed since the '**promise**' was first given on Mount Horeb. The Sovereign Almighty God has spoken. His '**promise**' is 'covenantal', is sure, is true. He assures Moses of this fact.

Exodus 6:2-5

“God spoke to Moses and said to him, ‘I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.’”

God states three important things that reveal THE POWER in His '**promise**'.

1. God says: I AM THE LORD.

The words, 'I am the Lord', provide a 'timeless marker'. I am the same God who appeared to your forefathers, Moses. I am not new. I am the 'eternal' LORD. I am the LORD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I am your LORD. That is who I AM. My name has not changed.

2. My people understand the 'power' and might of My name.

I am the great 'I AM'. This is the revelation coming, I will be known by making my full name known. I appeared as 'El Shaddai', God Almighty, in one dimension, by name, but without a display of might. But now MY people will know me as YHWH, which is not a new name, but the power and fulfillment of My name will be known, and the '**promise**' realized'.

3. The '**promise**' and fulfillment of My name is referred to as 'covenant'.

God again reminds Moses of the '**promised**' covenant. This covenant is wrapped in '**promise**'. I PROMISE!

Exodus 3:17

“And I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Nothing has changed with God. His '**promise**' now is the same as His '**promise**' to Abraham. It is a clear 'restatement' of the same.

Genesis 15:13-15

“Then the LORD said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.’”

No circumstances have changed the '**promise**' in four hundred years, in four generations. This is the 'power' in God's '**promise**'.

We live in a time when everything is changing, when nothing is fulfilled, when promises are broken, when our word means little, when the promises of spring are broken by the promises of summer. There is 'impotency' in human 'promise', but this is not so with God, with El Shaddai. Nothing changes with our God. Money amounts, Covid, riots, doctors, vaccines.... cannot and do not change the things of God; nothing changes the will and '**promise**' of God. He is eternally mighty, and with God, 'covenant' means fulfillment.

And so God reminds Moses of His '**promises**'. 'I AM' THE LORD, He declares, and 'I WILL' do these things. And all seven of these '**promises**' are soon to be fulfilled.

Exodus 6:6-8

“Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you

with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.’”

Note how the verses 'open' and 'close' with the declaration of His name. I am the LORD. This demonstrates both His character, and **the power in His 'promises'**.

The Seven Parts of the '**Promise**' Fulfilled:

1. I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians, out from the chains of slavery. And fulfillment comes from the Pharaoh's own mouth.

Exodus 12:31-32

“Then he (Pharaoh) summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, ‘Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!’”

2. I will deliver you from slavery, from the chains of bondage, to silver and gold, as they plundered Egypt.

Exodus 12:35-36

“The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.”

3. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.

And redemption is secured with might and power, and the fulfillment made with a 'memorable' marker thru the sea.

Exodus 14:21-31

“Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, ‘Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.’ Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back

upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.’ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.”

4. I will take you to be my people.

This is the '**promise**' of intimacy, of relationship. You will be My treasure.

Exodus 19:5

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.”

5. I will be your God.

This is 'relationship' established.

Jeremiah 11:4

“That I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God.”

6. I will bring you into the land.

The land, promised to Abram. Genesis 15:18.

The book of Joshua provides the fulfillment of the conquest of the '**promised**' land, with power and might.

7. I will give this land to you as an inheritance, a possession.

In a charge to Joshua, the Lord states:

Joshua 1:6

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.”

THUS WE SEE THE POWER IN THE 'PROMISE'. When God says 'I WILL', 'I WILL' MEANS FULFILLMENT, EVERY TIME!

This is Almighty God stating 'I will' liberate you, a lowly shepherd and a lowly people, from the superpower Egypt, the mightiest people of the time. With God Alone, no simple 'promise' is an impossible 'promise'. Consider your promises; consider the promises of others. Do these promises have this kind of power? NO. But when God says 'I WILL', then it happens. **GOD'S 'PROMISES' HAPPEN EVERY TIME! THERE IS POWER IN THE 'PROMISE' OF GOD.**

II. THE PATIENCE WITH PROMISE: Exodus 6:9-13

Exodus 6:9

“Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.”

1. And so we have what feels like deja-vu. Israel has responded in similar ways before, as when the foremen turned on Moses and Aaron in response to their harder than ever labour. Eyes become wrongly focused, focused on their suffering instead of on God. We know the feeling. Our tendency is to want to look at our own suffering. (I want to dwell on my suffering. Don't give me the promises of God.)

Exodus 5:21

“And they said to them, ‘The LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.’”

Circumstances caused God's people not to receive the Word of God. This is not new in Exodus, or today. Anything that disrupts our happiness, disrupts our normal, causes us to 'fail to listen' to God's Word. Insert burden, insert trial, insert struggle, and once again our focus shifts away from God, and back to self. The Apostle Paul speaks to the Corinthians on the matter.

I Corinthians 10: 1-5,11-13

“For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.... Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

2. Moses himself demonstrates this 'focus on self' as he 'protests', yet again, repeating his feelings of inadequacy in spite of God's assurances to Moses.

Exodus 4:10

“But Moses said to the LORD, ‘Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.’”

In this we are observing 'uncircumcised lips'. Moses puts forth protest after protest; the same protest revisited, but with new words each time. He promotes himself as the 'defective, the unfit'. And here again we see it happening.

Exodus 6:10-12

“So the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land.’ But Moses said to the LORD, ‘Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?’”

With 'circumcised lips' Moses would prove to be 'fit', but alas, he requires 'lip fixation' first. Moses does not get it, does not see his problem. But the Lord does not give in to the protests of Moses. Moses, we have been over this before, and you 'are' going back to Egypt.

How often is a promise broken? How often do we hear, I know what I said, but I just cannot take it anymore. Look at my situation; I just can't do it. How many versions of this play out in life? They are ongoing. This is our 'impatience' with promise.

But with God it is different. God is always '**patient**'. He does not forsake His promise. And so, to Moses' protest God responds with '**patience**' yet again.

Exodus 6:13

“But the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.”

The Lord gives them 'a charge', a command, an order, to bring the people out of Egypt. (Moses, remember the plan!) **This is God's 'PATIENCE' WITH 'PROMISE'**. Nothing deters Him from the 'promise'. Nothing averts Him from His 'promise'. Whereas, we are 'impatient' people. That is why we break our promises. But God is 'longsuffering' and 'patient'. **HE IS A FAITHFUL COVENANT GOD!** He has the divine '**patience**' that is required. Paul speaks to this '**perfect patience**'.

I Timothy 1:16

“But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.”

III. THE PEOPLE BY PROMISE: Exodus 6:14-27

The Biblical narrative pauses at this point, mid conversation, to provide a genealogy, a family tree, to authenticate this family line linked back to the Patriarchs. We are Israel. This is who we are.

Exodus 6:14-16

“These are the heads of their fathers' houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the clans of Reuben. The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the clans of Simeon. These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the years of the life of Levi being 137 years.”

Reuben is the firstborn of Jacob (Israel) and Leah. Jacob has twelve sons altogether, which in time, become the twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of the second son, Simeon, are listed next, followed by the sons of Levi. The genealogy of the twelve sons of Jacob stops here, at Levi, the third son, and then proceeds 'downward' through Levi's sons. Levi's years are noted. It is from Levi's line that the priests are established (Exodus 28). They will become the intercessors, the mediators, for the people. And this is the point of the genealogy, to authenticate the line of Moses and Aaron's family. They were not just randomly chosen to be representatives. No. They were 'preordained' mediators for His people via their lineage. Even before they are in practise, they are what they will become. God has ordered this to be.

Exodus 6:17-20

“The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their clans. The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the life of Kohath being 133 years. The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their generations. Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years.”

Kohath, Levi's son, is also singled out with the notation of his years of life. And his son Amram is noted, having taken a wife from the same clan (a practise of the time), his aunt, Jochebed, and these two, Amram and Jochebed, are noted to be the parents of Aaron and Moses.

Exodus 6:21-25

“The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the clans of the Korahites. Eleazar, Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans.”

These verses provide us with the line through Aaron. His wife and son, Eleazar, are noted, and then his grandson Phinehas. Phinehas, like 'high priest' father and grandfather, serves Israel, standing in the gap, making intercession for the nation Israel's ongoing sin. Phinehas, becomes one of Israel's heroes, and is praised by God for stopping Israel's sinful idolatry, brought on by Midianite women.

Numbers 25:1-3

“While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.”

Numbers 25:6-13

“And behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel, while they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting. When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his hand and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped. Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say, “Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel.”’”

Further, God commands Moses to destroy Midian. And Moses sends Phinehas along with the army. Phinehas, who, having previously demonstrated his concerns and zeal over the Midianite matter, was sent with the army on this 'holy war', loaded with the holy vessels and trumpets.

Numbers 31:1-8a

“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Avenge the people of Israel on the Midianites. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people.’ So Moses spoke to the people, saying, ‘Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian to execute the Lord's vengeance on Midian. You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war.’ So there were provided, out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, together with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand. They warred against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and killed every male. They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain.”

Later still, Phinehas, now serving as Promised Land priest, mediates the issue when the eastern tribes, returning home from war, build an altar which offends the other tribes of Israel. They saw it as an act of unfaithfulness to God, assuming that since it was built in the wrong place, that it was for sacrifice (to pagan gods).

Joshua 22:12-16

“And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them. Then the people of Israel sent to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel. And they came to the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to them, ‘Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, “What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away this day from following the LORD by building yourselves an altar this day in rebellion against the LORD?”’”

The eastern tribes defend their actions, assuring Phinehas that this is but a misunderstanding, and justify their building of the altar as not a place of 'sacrifice' but of 'memorial'. The mediation prevents a war that was not ordained by God.

Joshua 22:29-31,34

“‘Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD and turn away this day from following the LORD by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of the LORD our God that stands before his tabernacle!’ When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh spoke, it was good in their eyes. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh, ‘Today we know that the LORD is in our midst, because you have not committed this breach of faith against the LORD. Now you have delivered the people of Israel from the hand of the LORD.’.... The people of Reuben and the people of Gad called the altar Witness, ‘For,’ they said, ‘it is a witness between us that the LORD is God.’”

Later still we find Phinehas serving as 'high priest', as Israel seeks God's counsel in the matter of war.

Judges 20:27-28

“And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, ‘Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?’ And the LORD said, ‘Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand.’”

These are the Levites, the priests, the mediators, the interceders; the ones standing in the gap. These are the ones in view by this genealogy, three priests, singled out by way of their fathers and forefathers, Levi, Kohath, and Amram (Exodus 6:16-20), with even their particular ages noted (137+133+137=407 years), connecting the patriarchal family line, and tracing it through roughly four hundred years, to the fourth generation, that being Moses and Aaron. This is '**prophecy fulfillment**'. Remember the

promise? Four hundred years, and four generations. God said He would, and He fulfilled His **'promise'**.

Genesis 15:13-16

“Then the LORD said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.’”

So, why the genealogy here in the middle of the chapter? It demonstrates God's **'people of the promise'**. That too is unchanged. These two Levites, Moses and Aaron, who will intercede on Israel's behalf, have been pre-ordained, and all the details have been organized and orchestrated by God. This is the point of the genealogy. It is a clear 'affirmation' that God is at work. God is shaping births, deaths and events. The **'people'** are in place, and this confirms God's **'promise'**. From the genealogy, the chapter goes on to clearly state that which it set out to identify.

Exodus 6:26-27

“These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: ‘Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts.’ It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron.”

The first chapter of Matthew opens with a genealogy also, confirming the **'promise'** of the birth of 'The Saviour', Jesus Christ, through lineage. Through lineage, we are able to understand about **'the people'** through which the **'the promise'** has been 'fulfilled.

IV. THE PRACTICE OF PROMISE: Exodus 6:28-30

Exodus 6:28-30

“On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, the LORD said to Moses, ‘I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.’ But Moses said to the LORD, ‘Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?’”

Ah, Moses! Here we go again. The 'uncircumcised lips' are at it again. Moses is once again 'protesting', once again setting himself against the 'grace' of God. (Yet we will see, in chapter seven, that God is not deterred from His mission by Moses' ongoing protest; once again God responds in 'patient grace' with Moses.) And God, knowing Moses' insecurities, reinforces the plan... “The LORD said to Moses, ‘I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.’” God reiterates, 'I am the LORD'. Focus on my words, Moses. 'I AM THE LORD!' Tell Pharaoh all the words that I say, just the words that I say to

you. You just need to say 'MY WORDS', Moses. You do not need 'clever' words. You do not need 'proper lips'. Stop, Moses! You need nothing more. Just tell Pharaoh 'MY WORDS'!

Can you see the problem with 'promise'. We have a hard time practising this. We practise 'other times', 'other headlines'. We know what the anchorman says. We know movie lines. We know endless words, empty, dead temporal words. BUT WE DO NOT KNOW GOD'S WORDS, GOD'S LINES. What will uphold you? Do we practise HIS WORDS? Do we practise the living, active words, the words of '**promise**', that we can hold on to? Are we ready for this ministry, ready for that mission field? God reassures us. 'I AM THE LORD'. He tells us 'I WILL'. Nothing surprises God. He knows what is going on today. Are you interested in God's Words?

Moses, no matter what, 'REMEMBER MY WORDS,' and 'TELL MY WORDS'. Whatever the lions' den, do not focus on the Egyptian taskmasters, just remember and tell My words. Do not consider what is happening, do not dwell on your fears. Just stick to MY WORDS. Do not depart from 'MY WORDS'. Speaking to Joshua, following the death of Moses, the LORD, gives charge to Joshua. He does not offer military strategy, or fancy swords. No. The Great 'I Am' simply reassures Joshua with '**HIS PROMISE**': "Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you." Just stick to MY WORDS, Joshua. Do not depart from my WORDS!

Joshua 1:6-9

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Others also have received the LORD'S '**promise**'. We read how Joseph is promised that the baby born to Mary will be Jesus, who will save His people.

Matthew 1:21

“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

This is the '**promise**' of Salvation, of being freed from hell. Jesus Himself confirms it. This is '**RESURRECTION PROMISE**'.

John 6:39-40

“And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

We will get through this Covid pandemic, and He will raise you on that last day. HIS '**PROMISE**' WILL BE FULFILLED. This is our hope and understanding.