



I Am and I Will

Chapter 6

We are going to focus our Scripture reading from chapter 5:22-6:13.

Scripture

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

What a passage, what a story. It was late last night when Celisa and I finally got home from Nashville. We had been to Disney World with our children and grandchildren. As I got up this morning, I realized I had not taken off my magic band yet. I love that little band. When you go to Disney World, if you have one of these bands you can actually fast-pass the ride. That means instead of going into the regular line where you have to wait to get on the ride, you can literally go straight to the ride. Before we ever went, Kory had decided which days at which park we would go, and he chose the fast-pass attractions for us. I just have to say it was awesome! You are walking as fast as you can to the ride, and you pass everyone standing in the line next to you because they have to wait to get on the ride. It makes it a magical day! Now on the last Saturday and Sunday when we didn't have a fast-pass, there were some attractions that we didn't do because of the wait time. Honestly, it was just too long to have to wait. It really isn't good to stand in line and everyone else is fast passing, and you are waiting in line.

Moses Questions God

In life, we like the fast-pass lane. But have you ever noticed that as you really begin to experience life, there is a lot of waiting. There are just a lot of times when life doesn't go the way you want it to go. You get that news from nowhere, and suddenly things go from good to bad. When it is

already bad and it goes from bad to worse, inevitably you ask what Moses asked, why? I daresay there is not a person of adult age who has not at one time or another asked, "Why Lord? Are You kidding? This isn't fun anymore Lord." Our why turns to when, or we question ourselves, "Why me?"

Last week, Chris brought us through chapter 5, and because God's command to Pharaoh to let His people go, things actually got worse instead of better. It was already bad enough to be a slave in Egypt, but then it gets worse. Pharaoh decided that if they had time to go into the wilderness to worship their God for three days, and hold a feast, then evidently he wasn't working them hard enough. He thought they had life made in Egypt, so he decided to make them gather their own straw to make the bricks. But he didn't cut the production order at all; he made and required the same amount bricks. The next thing you know, there was a group of people going to Pharaoh saying it wasn't fair. When Pharaoh answers, they go to Moses. I love how chapter 5:22 opens, "So Moses returned to the LORD..." (NKJV). Wow! If there is a foundational statement about life, it should be that when things go from good to bad, or bad to worse, or worse to more worse, or worse to worse than it has ever been, instead of turning from God, you need to turn to God. Moses does. But when he comes to God, I don't think he comes the way he did at the burning bush. Do you remember what the bush said to him, "Moses, Moses, take off your shoes for you are standing on holy ground." When I read Scripture, I don't get the idea that after seeing how things are working out, Moses coming into the presence of God, stopping, taking off his sandals and approaching God. I see him rushing into the presence of God with his shoes on and crying out, "Oh Lord, why have you done evil to this people?" Whoa! Did you hear the tone of this question; why have You done evil to this people? If I didn't know the backstory, I would just think that God randomly chose to bring evil upon a certain group of people on the planet for no reason. Moses does not even acknowledge that it is God's people like he normally does. He normally calls them "Your people," but this time he just calls them "this people." Do you hear that? Then he asks why did you involve me? I mean he is saying to God, 'Pharaoh has made life harder for them, You aren't doing anything, and You made these

promises. So if You made these promises and aren't going to do anything, then why did you get me involved in this?'

Have you ever been there? You really asked the question why did God cause or allow a certain thing to happen to a certain family or person. Maybe there is a family or person that you have been ministering to and felt like God was using you in their life, and all of a sudden, things aren't going the way you thought they were going to go when you brought them the Word. Now you wonder, why God? Why did you get me involved in the middle of this? Does that sound familiar? This is a story that is recorded for a purpose, not just for the nation of Israel, but for the people of God today. From time to time, we all come to that place in life where we question God as causing or allowing bad things to happen. Ultimately, the question is why He has you in the middle of it. 'I was minding my own business and You put me there...and look, You aren't doing what You said You would do in the first place.' Whoa!

I AM

I love how the next first starts, "...Now you shall see..." You see, there is a reason why God is not letting Israel fast-pass to the Promised Land. He has them in the standby entrance, as Disney calls it. The wait time is announced on the board; 'Now you will see.' And God basically answers Moses, but honestly, He probably doesn't give the answer Moses wanted to hear. As a matter of fact, if you listen to it, it doesn't sound like an answer at all, but it really is and it is the title of the sermon; God's answer to Moses after he asks why twice, I am and I will. Amen! God said, "*I am the LORD*." He didn't say Lord; he said LORD. God is saying to Moses 'I am Yahweh.' He is using His personal name. He will remind Moses that He first appeared as God to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. But He did not appear to them as Yahweh, but as El Shaddai, translated in our English bibles as 'God Almighty.' It is the picture of a mountain, and God being God of a mountain range; therefore, a mighty God. When He first appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He appeared as El Shaddai. He did not appear by His personal name as Yahweh. We have to slow down here because something is going on. For the first time, the Bible says God is revealing Himself in a different way to His people that He did not reveal

to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is revealing Himself to Moses and the children of Israel as Yahweh. In the Hebrew, it is the famous Tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew consonants, *YHWH*, which is translated in the Bible as LORD. It is the name God revealed to Moses at the bush, "I AM WHO I AM has sent you." It literally means, 'the ever-present one.' It is speaking about the children of Israel experiencing God in a covenant relationship that will be different than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob experienced. It is saying Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew who God was, but they didn't experience Him on that deepest level of intimacy because they only had the promise of the covenant; they did not have the fulfillment of the covenant. The Bible is trying to teach that if you are one of those who actually participate in the fulfillment of the covenant promise of God, you know God on a level that those who have not experienced that know Him.

- **God to Fulfill Abrahamic Covenant**

Then God said He also made a covenant with their fathers. This phrase literally means, 'to cut a covenant, to cut a cutting.' It is the story of genesis 15 when Abraham takes the animals and splits them in two, and God walks between the cut pieces. Thus saying to Abraham, 'if I do not fulfill My part in this covenant, then you can do to Me as we have done to these animals.' Whoa! Notice that only God walked through the pieces, not Abram. The reason is because the covenant God made with Abraham was not a covenant that was based on Abraham being faithful to God; it was a covenant based on God being faithful to Abraham.

Did you hear that? What Moses and the children of Israel who have been enslaved for years will learn is that they will know God in a way that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not know God. They will know Him through His personal name, Yahweh, 'I AM the ever-present One.'

Then God said, "*I have heard their groaning and I have remembered My covenant.*" Now if you are thinking this means that for a short period of time God forgot about His covenant, you have missed it. This phrase is being used the way we use the word, 'remember,' as if we have forgotten something and all of a sudden we remember. No, that is not what this

means. God never forgot His covenant that He made with Abraham. If I can interject this, I believe it was Israel who forgot the covenant.

What did the covenant actually say? It said it would be fulfilled 400 years after God's people went into bondage. So guess how long it has been! If you are an Israelite and you were reading your 'Bible' (so to speak), you would have known when Jacob and the sons went down into Egypt and you should know it has been 400 plus years! Which means, when they heard that God said, "Go tell Pharaoh...", they should have gotten ready because a covenant keeping God will fulfill His promises. But Israel wasn't ready because they forgot the promise; they forgot the covenant, but not God.

Why can God not forget His promise? It is because he is I AM. He is Yahweh. Some of you may not have heard the name Yahweh, but you have heard Jehovah. That is not the way you pronounce the name of God. That got started several hundred years ago, but it is Yahweh, or pronounced Yahveh; I AM WHO I AM. That is the answer to why He cannot forget His promise; because God is who He is, and He has promised to be faithful to His covenant. You can bank on that. The entire integrity of God, and God being who He says He is, is based on Him always being faithful to His promise. His promise was to make Abraham's people into a mighty nation, and He used slavery to do it. You cannot get around, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, that God's pathway to glorification is always through suffering. Those of you who want to fast-pass life will never get there. You will never know God intimately until the attraction tells you the wait time. Then you will think *are you kidding me?* It is kind of tough standing when you see everyone else fast passing. That is when we start asking, "Why, Lord, did you do that to that woman? How did You let that happen?" Then ultimately, it comes back to, "If that is the way the story is going to end, why did You get me involved in this?"

I Will

I want you to listen to the answer; because "I AM," God now transitions to seven statements of "I will." I don't believe you can read these seven "I will" statements and see this as seven different acts of God. These seven

statements are actually arranged to state three things about I AM. If you read the 1st three "I will's" in verse 6, the 2nd two "I will's" in verse 7, and the 3rd two "I will's" in verse 8, they speak about three different aspects of Israel's redemption.

1. I will bring you out – Verse 6
2. I will bring you up – Verse 7
3. I will bring you in – Verse 8

- **Bring Them Out**

God will bring them out from under the burden of the Egyptians. He will rescue them from being slaves. And He will deliver them with His outstretched arm and mighty acts of judgment. We will see that over the next few weeks. I love this!

Have you ever heard that phrase, "With one hand tied behind your back?" Last night I had the privilege of flying home on the airplane between two of my grandsons. I am trying to read over Exodus and make notes for this sermon, between two small children on a plane. I am trying to read the story and listen to God, sitting in the middle of those boys, and I saw this statement, "I will deliver them with an outstretched arm."

This makes me think about what I have said to my grandsons many times. You see, when they come to the house, they like to wrestle Papaw. It's funny, when they get on top for a short period of time, they holler, "Memish, come and look, we are beating up Papaw!" By the time Memish gets into the room, I have flipped all three underneath me and I am on top. Memish says, "It looks like Papaw's winning." I have said many times, "Boys, I can whip ya'll with one hand tied behind my back!" I think I said that to their dad on many occasions too. ☺ You get that picture...Papaw is so powerful when it comes to three little grand boys; one hand tied behind my back!

That is the picture here. It isn't God with both hands outstretched in a wrestling match with Pharaoh. God is saying to the children of Israel, 'I will deliver you with one hand tied behind My back!' WOW! Amen! Their

salvation did not rest in Moses, it did not rest in Pharaoh; the salvation of Israel being out from under the burden of being a slave in Egypt rested in God being who God is, the great ever-present One!

- **Bring Them Up**

All along, God's plan was to bring them out from under. But as He was bringing them out from under, His plan was to bring them up. Verse 7 says, *"I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God..."*

There used to be a time when I did a lot of weddings, maybe fifteen or twenty a year. Now with Chris and Kory, I get maybe one a year. But I stand on the stage, the bride walks down the aisle on the arm of her father, and the groom is on the stage with me. The groom will step down and take his bride and brings her up to the stage. He brings her 'up' to where he is. The wedding is rarely down in the aisle where she was.

That is the picture here...of God where He is reaching down to a people who are in slavery. They are as low as they can possibly be. And when God brings them out from under that burden of slavery and the shackle falls off, He doesn't leave them where they are; He brings them up to where He is. They now become His people. Why? Notice what verse 7 says, "...and you shall know..." What shall they know? *That I, Yahweh, am your Elohim.* He wanted to make sure that Israel knew that it wasn't Pharaoh, it wasn't the gods of Egypt, it wasn't Moses; it was He, Yahweh, who was taking them to be His people, that was responsible for his salvation.

- **Bring Them In**

In verse 8, God said he would bring them into the land He promised their fathers and they would take possession of it. The first time God's people were in Canaan they were strangers, renters. But when they go back in the land they will not be renters, they will be landlords. They will own the land, and will take ownership of it. What a picture!

You see, God's plan of redemption for Israel was not just to get them out and get them up, but to get them into the land of Canaan. And that is His ultimate picture of our salvation. We need to be careful when we do evangelism when we just teach that God wants to save people from their

sins so they won't go to Hell. That is just part of the gospel. Yes, God wants to get you out of sin, but He wants to lift a sinner from where he was to a place of elevation where they are now a part of the body and bride of Christ. The reason is so they can ultimately take possession of the land.

I want to be careful here. Kory and I discussed this before we started this series and we are in agreement. It is ok for songwriters to take the Promised Land in Canaan and it reference Heaven, but when you read the Exodus story, I don't think you ever get the idea that Canaan is a shadow of Heaven. Life was still hard when they got to Canaan. There was still a lot of work to do. I don't want to shock anyone, but I want to pronounce that we are presenting the Exodus story in this way; yes, the reason God did what He did for you was to get you out of sin so that you become part of His people, the body, the bride, of Christ. He did it so that you could come into the Promised Land right now and be in Christ, in the Kingdom, and be a landlord, not a renter. He wants you to take possession of the Kingdom of God and realize that you play a part in the Kingdom, and God has given you a piece of real estate! God took Israel out of Egypt to the Promised Land so He could use them to be a light to the world, and bring about the birth of the Messiah so that the nations of the world could be blessed. In just the same way, God has a plan for you and me to get us out of sin and into Christ, so that ultimately we can be used for His honor and His glory. We are part of the redemption story! The Bible will teach that God not only wanted Israel to know He was Yahweh, He wanted Egypt to know that He was Yahweh, and ultimately, He will tell Pharaoh that the only reason He raised him up was for this purpose; that through Pharaoh the whole world would know that He was Yahweh! Our God not only wants us to know who He is; He wants the whole world to know who He is!

So Moses delivered the message, and Israel didn't believe! Wow...now Moses goes back to God, and God said, 'Just go tell Pharaoh to let My people go.' And Moses said, 'If my people won't listen to me, how will Pharaoh listen to me, "for I am a man of uncircumcised lips?"' How many times have you blamed your failure on yourself? Do you remember when you really used to love to speak the Word of God and tell the gospel to

people? People didn't really listen or believe, and then you begin to wonder what you are doing wrong. You thought you were doing something wrong because you saw others being successful at it. Now you have quit because there is something wrong with you. Can I just ask this? Where did Moses ever get the idea that this was about him? When did you get the idea that this was about you?

I get tickled when we target certain people, because we think if we could just get them, God could really use them! Are you kidding me? If you read the Bible, those are not the ones God goes after. Read 1st Corinthians chapter 1 where it talks about the call and choosing of God. The reason God chose you was not because of your ability. He chose you because of your inability. He wanted you just to be the mouth. The power of God is not in the mouth; the power of God is in the Word, His Word. That was good...just let that soak in for a minute! This isn't about you; it is about the Word of God. God has promised to be faithful to His covenant, and He has promised to be faithful to His Word. Some of you are carrying a big burden on your shoulders. Why don't you just drop it? Because this isn't about your ability, this is about the faithfulness of God to His Word. Just like Moses, all we have been called to do is deliver the Word of God. Then, it is between God and Pharaoh, so to speak, God and the one you deliver the Word to when you deliver the gospel.

The Genealogy of Moses and Aaron

There is a wonderful genealogy in this next section of Scripture, and I wish we had time to stop here because I know you love them! Some of you can't say that you have read through the entire Bible because you skip the genealogies. You read the first few verses and you just skip to the next chapter! This section here looks out of place. I have read scholars and commentaries who say this is an interruption to the story. Are you kidding me? This isn't an interruption. The Bible isn't telling us that Moses and Aaron had the authority to do what they were doing because of their bloodline.

When I go to a conference to listen to someone speak, someone will introduce the speaker and give his credentials on why the participant

should listen to him. If you are going to bring in someone to lead a business, you give the workers their credentials so there is faith in the one leading the organization. That is what the Bible is doing here with this genealogy. We just don't understand that, but in the biblical world, genealogy was important, the family tree was important. This is why when parents named their children, those names meant something. You didn't just pull a name out of a hat because it sounded good! There was a meaning, a history.

The Bible tells us here that the third son of Jacob was Levi, and Levi had a second son, Kohath, who had a son, Amram, who had two sons, Moses, and his brother Aaron. In Exodus, you get the picture that Aaron is the sidekick. Moses is Batman and Aaron is Robin! It is all about Moses...but in this genealogy, it starts to turn. Please hear this because this is preparing the rest of the way for the Bible. You will notice that Amram has two sons, but Moses line stops. It doesn't really stop, but it stops in the genealogy. But we trace Amram's son, Aaron, who has Eleazar, who has Phinehas. We will meet him later in the book of Numbers.

What is going on here? Notice what verse 26 says, "*These are the Aaron and Moses...*" Why doesn't it say 'the Moses and Aaron?' We aren't taking away from the priority of Moses at all, but we are now going to being to establish the priority of Aaron because God will chose Amram's firstborn son, Aaron (not his second born, Moses) to be the family who goes into the presence of God with a sacrifice on behalf of the nation of Israel. You thought it would be Moses! It's not Moses. It's Aaron, because this is not a one-man show; this is a God show. God chooses Aaron, this firstborn, to be the one who, through his family line, would take that offering into the presence of God, lay it on the Ark, and make atonement for the sins of a nation.

What is the Bible getting us ready for? It is preparing us for the truth that God's promise to Abraham was about the seed of Abraham, which was ultimately the Christ, and what He will do to guarantee that we be brought out from under slavery to sin. We will be brought up to status as a child of God, a saint of God, a person of Christ, the bride of Christ, the body of Christ; and we will come into the Promised Land! We will find our place in

the Kingdom and we will do Kingdom business. We will take the keys of the Kingdom and speak the Word of God! And it is based on the offering, not of Aaron or a Levitical priest, but of a priest after the order of Melchizedek who will take His blood not to an earthly temple, but into the heavenly Temple and lay it before God. And He will die and raise back again. Based on what God has done for us in Christ, not on what we do for Him, we will be brought out, brought up, and brought in. You can bank it, because I AM says I will!

Do you know Him as the great I AM? He wants you to know Him in a way you can't without the power of suffering. So may our 'whys' be turned to 'wows,' and instead of 'why me,' may the question be 'why not me?'