

Exodus 018
No Excuses
Exodus 6:9-13
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Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 6:9. We are continuing our verse-by-verse teaching through the Book of Exodus, which is the first major section of the book—the redemption of a nation. The purchasing back of a nation from bondage through the blood of an innocent Passover lamb whose bones were unbroken.

That sounds familiar, does it not? That is what we just finished celebrating at the Lord's Table. This book, although it is dealing with the redemption of a nation from 400 years of Egyptian bondage and slavery, is in fact given as a type of our salvation. We are purchased back from bondage, the slave market of sin, original sin, because of the blood of an innocent sacrifice, Jesus Christ, whose blood was spilled as we saw a little earlier and His bones were unbroken. It is just that the story is being given 1,500 years before it happens, as God is dealing with the nation of Israel.

Exodus Structure/Outline
■ Redemption (1–18) ◆ Redemption (1:1–12:30) ◆ Liberation (12:31–15:21) ◆ Preservation (15:22–18:27) ■ Mosaic Covenant (19–40) ◆ Law (19–24) ◆ Tabernacle instructions (25–31) ◆ Apostasy (32–34) ◆ Tabernacle building (35–40)

God has explained in Exodus 1 why redemption is necessary. Israel is enslaved by a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. We are enslaved as well by original sin. Exodus 2-4 is a description of God raising up the deliverer, the human instrument that He is going to use in this. The human instrument, as we are going to keep seeing today, does not feel

qualified for the job. God says to him, "No excuses," which is the title of this message—"No Excuses."

Moses goes out finally, after being prepared by God. He is 80 years old at this time. He has his first confrontation with Pharaoh, and everything that can go wrong from the human side goes wrong. Pharaoh not only says, "I do not know the Lord," but he says, "I will not let the Israelites go. I am going to take your workload in slavery and I am going to increase it. By the way, I am going to add the principle of pain to it. The pain is going to be inflicted when you fail to measure up to an impossible standard."

As you would think, Moses, because he believes he is in God's will, doing God's work, becomes very discouraged. It is going to take a chapter and a half to encourage Moses and assure him that he is in the will of God. That is what Exodus 6:1-7 is about.

You might feel like that today. You are doing the right thing and everything seems to be going wrong and nobody is listening. "Everybody makes fun of me. I must be outside the will of God." You might need some reassurance. This is what these chapters do for us.

God reassures Moses through promises which we studied last time (Exodus 6:1-8). Then He gives him a command: "Get back to work as My servant" (Acts 6:9-13). We are going to try to look at Exodus 6:9-13 this morning. It has four parts, as you can see.

God Reassures Moses (Exodus 6:1-30)

- I. Divine Reassurance (1-8)
- II. Divine Command (9-13)
 - A. Israel rejects reassurances (9)
 - B. God commands Moses to speak to Pharaoh (10-11)
 - C. Moses' objections (12)
 - 1. Israel's objections (12a)
 - 2. Lack of eloquence (12b)
 - D. God repeats the command to Moses and Aaron (13)
 - 1. To Israel (13a)
 - 2. To Pharaoh (13b)
- III. Moses' and Aaron's Levitical Heritage (14-27)
- IV. Conversation continued (28-30)

Israel will reject these reassurances, amazing promises in the first eight verses that God has given to Moses about Israel, regarding their deliverance from Egypt, their future in the land of Canaan, which eventually will be called the Land of Israel, not Palestine. By the way, the word Palestine is not in the Bible. It is the land of Israel.

Moses now turns around and he shares these things with the Egyptian leadership, and now watch what happens:

"So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage" (Exodus 6:9).

Notice the first part of this: *"Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel."* I have to be honest with you, we need more preachers and teachers and ministers like Moses. We need people that will take the Word of God and simply relay it in a way people can understand to God's people. We do not need any more creative preaching today. God has not called us to be creative. I understand that in different generations you communicate differently, perhaps, but the content is always the same. There are no extra bonus points from God for creativity.

It is very similar to runners in a relay race. Your whole job in a relay race, as a team member, is to take the baton from the guy before you and hand it off to the next person. You do not need to zig and zag; you do not need to do behind the back and through the legs. Just take it and run with it, complete your lap, hand it off, and you have done your job.

That is what we are doing. That is why we are in the ministry. This is what we signed up for. The greatest thing we could ever do as a church is to get the truth to the next generation. Sugar Land Bible Church has a great children's ministry—and I am not saying it to brag—but when you put kids in our children's ministry, also our youth group, they are not going to be taught a bunch of snowflake stuff. They are getting hardcore Biblical reality doctrine. In fact, query some of those kids and you will see that they probably know more about doctrine than you know.

That is what it is all about. It is about the transfer of truth from one generation to the next. It is a terrifying thing to walk around Europe, which I have had the privilege of doing, and go into these massive cathedrals and houses of worship which once hundreds, if not thousands of worshipers entered into. You walk in there on a Sunday morning and no one is there other than the janitor and maybe the preacher if he is not on vacation. What happened?

Christianity had such a strong influence in Europe. That is the cradle of the Protestant Reformation. What happened? What went wrong? The fastest growing religion in Europe is Islam, not Christianity. Christianity is in decline. It is largely over in Europe, unless God does a work. May the Lord help us not to be in that pattern, but to be an active, vibrant church that hands truth off to the next generation. Keeping it for them just like we got it ourselves. How could we do anything less since we are dealing with the inspired Word of God? Paul, writing to Timothy, says:

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

"But [Jesus] answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God"' (Matthew 4:4).

Every word in the Bible is there by divine design. The Bible is inspired not just to the word level, but to the smallest strokes of the pen. Jesus talked about that in Matthew 5:18. He talked about the letters which comprised the words and the smallest strokes of the pen, which make up the letters, which comprise the words, which comprise the sentences, which comprise the paragraphs, which comprise the chapters which comprise the books—all 66 books of the biblical canon. What a privilege we have.

Paul says:

"Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

That is what Moses is doing with the limited revelation that he had. He is speaking *"thus to the sons of Israel."* You would think that since Moses *"spoke thus to the sons of Israel,"* the children of Israel would just say, "Yay! So happy to hear everything you have to say." But they do not do that.

"...but they did not listen to Moses..." (Exodus 6:9).

This is a very interesting thing: God does not hold us responsible for the reaction of the people that we are ministering to. Paul's job was to declare the whole purpose of God. Whether people responded to it or not is their call.

It reminds me very much of what God said to Samuel. Samuel got very discouraged when they rejected God's choice for a king, and God had to minister to Samuel and said, "Samuel, you know what? They are not rejecting you." In other words, "Do not take this personally. They are rejecting Me." That is what is happening here with Moses.

We have been indoctrinated with a worldview in the West called pragmatism, meaning if it is right, it will work. There are situations in the Bible where people are doing the right thing, and it ain't working from the human perspective. Isaiah was told this on the front end of his ministry when he said, "Send me." Remember the calling of Isaiah?

*"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? [Probably a veiled reference to the triunity of God, the Us]
Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'
He said, 'Go, and tell this people:
'Keep on listening, but do not perceive;
Keep on looking, but do not understand.'
Render the hearts of this people insensitive,
Their ears dull,*

*And their eyes dim,
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
Hear with their ears,
Understand with their hearts,
And return and be healed'" (Isaiah 6:8-10).*

"Isaiah, you are called into the ministry, but you know what? You are not going to have a lot of success. I am telling you that on the front end." Yet Isaiah is the greatest of the great prophets of the writing prophets that we have. You ask people, "Who is the greatest of the writing prophets?" Everybody says it is Isaiah. His book, the Book of Isaiah, what a majestic piece of literature that is. It is unbelievable the stuff that he says and discloses under God's power. Yet he struggled every single day of his life with success or some kind of human definition of success.

In fact, you know how it ended for Isaiah? We do not have this from Scripture, but we do have it from some non-canonical apocryphal books. We think that he was actually sawed. Can you imagine this, the greatest writing prophet, they took him and they sawed him in half? Not a pleasant way to die. Pragmatism, how does that work with that? It does not work.

That is why God, in the end says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," not "thy successful servant." We all want success. We are Americans, right? But we have to start thinking more biblically than red, white, and blue constantly. There is a high premium in God for faithfulness in what He has called you to do—just sticking with it, showing up week after week after week, and just doing it over and over again, regardless of the response of people—because you are doing it unto the Lord.

Why did they reject what he said? All he said was, "Look at all of the great promises of Exodus 6:1-8." Those are great promises. We studied those last week. People said, "What a great message last week was." The reason it was a great message was because we were just dealing with the text. These are amazing promises. He took them and turned around and gave it to the leadership of Israel, and they wanted nothing to do with it. Unbelievable.

Why? If you look at the last part of Exodus 6:9, it says, "*on account of their despondency and cruel bondage.*" "Moses, the last time you opened your mouth and told us to do something, Pharaoh increased the workload and we do not want to hear anything you have to say because our eyes are focused on our physical circumstances and they are not focused on eternal things.

I am here to tell you folks that if your eyes are on the things of this world, you cannot walk in God the way you should, because this world will utterly tear you apart. You have got to keep your eyes, over and over again, focused on the eternal.

Paul the Apostle talked about this a lot in 2 Corinthians 4:18:

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Almost invariably when I get discouraged about something, I go to the Lord in prayer about it, and He says, "Where is your focus? Where is your perspective? What are you looking at?" As long as I am looking at the things of this world, I am looking at something temporary, but the moment my eyes get taken off the things of this world and move into eternal things, that is the moment I am no longer discouraged by the things of the world, because my perspective is not controlled by the things of the world. It is all about perspective.

Here Moses receives this incredible reassurance from God. He is completely and totally faithful. He transfers it as a relay runner to the children of Israel, and they just do not want anything to do with it, because they could not take their eyes off of their *"despondency and cruel bondage."* You mean they could not see the land that God had promised to them in the prior verses? You mean they could not see all the promises that God was going to take them out of Egypt and bring them into this land, that He was going to give them for their inheritance?

How do you fill a cup that is already full? It is easy to fill a cup that is empty, but how do you fill a cup that is already full? These people are already full. They are already full of something, full of the world, full of their circumstances. They could not see what God was about to do in their midst, which is the greatest redemptive act in human history other than the cross.

What is going to happen—and is going to happen in a few days, and it is going to happen in their lifetime—is the greatest piece of redemption you have anywhere in the Bible other than the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. They became so myopic and could not see anything beyond their circumstances that they were blind to it.

Moses is discouraged. I would think Noah got discouraged. Could you imagine building that boat? We have been there. We have seen it. It is in Kentucky, by the way, or at least a replica of it. They do a pretty good job with it, but could you imagine working on that thing for 120 years when the Book of Genesis talks about mist coming up from the ground and watering the plants? You will find that in Genesis 2. Here Noah is talking about a coming deluge when they did not even know what rain was.

He has been working on this thing in his driveway for 120 years. Where do we get 120 years from?

"Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years'" (Genesis 6:3).

That is half the length of America, how long he was working on this. Henry Morris, in his Genesis commentary, runs the numbers as a scientist. He says there were probably at least 7 billion people on the planet. How many converts did Noah have? Eight. One was himself; one was his wife, Mrs. Noah; and then you have the three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japheth, and their respective wives in the ark. We are told two times in 1 and 2 Peter, that it was Noah and seven others. I think it is first Peter might say eight total.

You mean after 120 years of work and building this giant thing, you cannot convert anybody outside of your own family? That is what the Bible says. Yet Noah, as he castigated in the Book of Hebrews for his lack of success, is held up as a model because the guy was faithful to what God called him to do. With all of the ridicule that he would receive, he must have lived every day of his life looking at something other than his circumstances, just to keep him going and motivated. I will tell you one thing: when the flood waters hit, he was probably the smartest man in the room. I can guarantee you that much. It pays to stick with God, does it not?

What does God do? Does he accept Moses' excuses, which are coming? No. He commands Moses to speak to Pharaoh, which is bizarre. "If Israel is not going to listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me?" God does not mess around with his excuses. He just tells him, "The Israelis will not listen to you. Go talk to the head of Egyptians." "You mean the leader of the known world? That guy? The most powerful political man in the world?" "Yes, that guy." "I cannot even get my own people to listen to me. How is he going to listen to me?" God says, "Do not worry about it. You are not responsible for the reaction, just do what I have called you to do."

Notice there is no pity party. There is no, "It is okay. It is going to work out." There is nothing like that. It is, "No excuses. Do what I told you to do."

"Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Go tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the sons of Israel go out of his hand'" (Exodus 6:10-11).

You can get to a point, as you are seeking to do God's will, that you can get despondent and you get pushed back, you get disappointment. You get to a point where you say to yourself, "I am going to shut my mouth. What is the point of talking?"

Jeremiah was right there. Jeremiah had spoken and he was put in the stocks and he was beaten. There may be some bad things in your life that have happened, but I would doubt something of this magnitude has happened to any of us. Maybe it has. He was put in the stocks, the physical constraints on your body. He was flogged, and he was flogged by the priest. It was the religious crowd that was most against what Jeremiah said.

When you read Jeremiah 20, there is a pity party there. He says what so many of us say, "I am not going to do it anymore. I quit. Nobody listens," until you get to Jeremiah 20:9.

*"But if I say, 'I will not remember Him
Or speak in His name,'
Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire
Shut up in my bones;
And I am weary of holding it in,
And I cannot endure it" (Jeremiah 20:9).*

In other words, Jeremiah got to the point where he said, "It is harder to keep my mouth shut than it is to endure the abuse I get when I open my mouth. The more I shut it off, the more the Holy Spirit inside of me says, 'Speak, speak, speak, speak.' You know what? I am a tired man, but I am really tired of holding this in. I am going to start talking again."

We need to have that mindset. We need to keep talking when the world is telling us to quit talking. Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:16 alludes to Jeremiah 20 when he was being accused of being in the ministry for money. "Paul, you do what you do because you get financially rewarded for it." I do not know what kind of reward there is to a guy that spends the day and night in the open sea. Paul said, "You know what? It really has nothing to do with popularity; it has nothing to do with money; it has to do with an inner compulsion inside of me where I said to myself, 'Woe is to me if I do not preach the gospel'" (1 Corinthians 9:16, a reference back to Jeremiah 20). "Moses, keep on talking. Keep doing what I have called you to do."

As you might imagine, Moses has some excuses. Here they come. Are you ready? Excuse number one is "Israel has rejected it. Why would the Egyptians receive it?" You see that in the first part of Exodus 6:12:

"But Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, 'Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me...'" (Exodus 6:12).

"Not only has Pharaoh not listened to me, but it actually has gotten worse as Pharaoh has upped the ante on the Egyptian bondage. When I open my mouth, not only do they not listen to me, everything seems to get worse." That was excuse number one.

Excuse number two—this should ring a bell because he is repeating it:

"...for I am unskilled in speech?" (Exodus 6:12).

If you look at Exodus 6:29, which we are not going to cover today, it says:

"That the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'I am the Lord; speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak to you.' But Moses said before the Lord, 'Behold, I am unskilled in speech...' (Exodus 6:29-30).

He is going to repeat that again at the end of the chapter. If you might recall Exodus 4:10-11 says:

"Then Moses said to the Lord, 'Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since you have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue'" (Exodus 4:10-11).

Now, here is where you get a lot of sanctified imagination on the part of a lot of commentators who go on and on about how Moses had a speech impediment—which I do not think is true because he had the greatest training you can have in Pharaoh's court (Acts 7:22). I think what he is saying is, "I am not skilled enough to go into the leader of the world, the known world. I have been a shepherd for 40 years. I am 80 years old. I do not know anything other than tending sheep. I do not have the skill set. I do not have the kind of the royal vernacular that one would need to persuade someone like that," I think, is what he is saying.

This issue of being afraid to speak, being intimidated to speak, is a big issue in the Bible. Jeremiah had the same hang-up.

"Then I said, 'Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth'" (Jeremiah 1:6).

What I am seeing here is that the Lord does not accept that as an excuse.

I have shared this with you before, but the greatest fear that people have, next to dying, is public speaking. Did you know that? What do you do when God calls you to speak to somebody? It is so easy to get intimidated. "I do not have what it takes. I am not smart enough. I do not know enough." Here is what the Lord said to Jeremiah:

"Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak'" (Jeremiah 1:7).

Do you think a fear of speaking is some problem for God? Do you think God is really worried about that if He is the One influencing what you are going to say? Remember what Jesus said to the disciples as they were being sent out, many of them being flogged and abused throughout the land of Israel, and how they were going to be brought before the kings? Jesus said to them, "Do not prepare in advance what you are going to say, because the Spirit will give you utterance" (Luke 21:14-15).

Is that not exactly what happened to Stephen, the first martyr of the Church Age? He had his life threatened, and he gave an impromptu speech in Acts 7. We have studied it in our Acts series on Wednesday nights. It is an amazing speech, where, impromptu, he weaves the whole Old Testament together, basically, and tells the nation of Israel she is a guilty nation for rejecting her King. What the Bible says is, "The greatest of the greats

could not refute what he was saying, because he spoke with such wisdom—such "sophia," which is the Greek word for "wisdom."

Any type of hang-up that you might have about, "I cannot do this, I cannot do that," we are dealing with God here. Whatever God orders, He pays for. Do you realize that? God does not go into a restaurant, order a big meal, and then try to figure out where His credit card is or if the card is going to bounce. That is not God. If He calls you to do something, He equips you to do it, whether you feel equipped or not. God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

That is what Moses is experiencing here. Do you remember what God said to Moses the first time he brought up this speech issue?

"The Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?'" (Exodus 4:11).

"Lord, my mouth is not that good." "Who gave it to you? Who gave you the vocal cords? Who gave you your tongue? Who gave you your teeth?" It is the Lord that gave you all those things. He is the One that gave you your mind. He is the One that gave you your intellect. When he calls you to do something, is it as if God cannot use these things He gave you? Does God build a car and not know how to drive it?

We disqualify ourselves, and that is what Moses is trying to do here. But no excuses; no pity party; just do it. God repeats the command here to Moses in Exodus 6:13. First to Israel, and after that to Pharaoh.

"Then the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, and gave them a charge to the sons of Israel—" (Exodus 6:13).

"But I thought Israel would not listen." "That does not matter. You are not responsible for their actions. You are responsible to be that relay runner and pass off the baton."

Then he says the same thing about Pharaoh:

"...and to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 6:13).

What the Bible teaches is 2 Corinthians 12:9. When Paul the Apostle was caught up into the third heaven he heard things that a man is not fit to hear. In other words, he knew things that other people did not know because of this experience that he had. 14 years earlier. You will notice that he did not come back and get on a talk show and write a book and talk about the afterlife. He said the things that he heard were indescribable.

When people are having these experiences today, and they immediately come back and make a movie about it, and they describe everything in great detail, I am a little skeptical. Pardon me for that. One guy I was listening to said he got in a splash fight

with Jesus in the water of life and all these kinds of things, and I am just not seeing Paul think like that.

Paul does not even want to talk about his experience. He was embarrassed by it. The only reason he brings it up is because people in Corinth were challenging his apostleship. They thought they were the super apostles and Paul was a nothing apostle, because they had had revelations from God. Finally, Paul brings it up: "I had a revelation from God too." He does not even say it is him at first. Later it is clear that it is him. He says, "I know a man."

The interesting thing about that is that when he received this understanding, the Lord had to give him something called a thorn in the flesh. Why did he have to be given a thorn in the flesh? What was the thorn in the flesh? I do not know. There is a lot of conjecture about this in the commentators. Was it a physical problem? Was it malaria? Was it loneliness? I have a tendency to think that the whole Corinthian church was this thorn in the flesh.

It was something, and I know this much: a thorn hurts. Whatever it was, it was causing him pain. He asked the Lord—in fact, it does not even say that he asked the Lord, it says that he pleaded with the Lord. He pleaded with the Lord three times to take it away. The Lord each time said, "No."

It is not until you read the rest of that paragraph that you finally figure out why God allowed this in his life. It was to keep him in a place of humility and therefore usability. If you know things other people do not know, because of some experience that you have had, does that not lead to haughtiness, arrogance, and looking down on ordinary people? That could have easily characterized Paul's life and ministry. God says, "I love you too much, and I want to use you too much to allow that to happen."

Once you move into pride, you become disqualified from being used by God. Satan is the perfect example. First comes pride, then comes a fall. Paul was given this pain to keep him humble and away from pride—to keep him in the place of prayer, to keep him in the place of dependability and usability.

If you do not have the thorn in the flesh, you do not have everything we know about the Apostle Paul. You do not have the missionary journeys that we are studying in the Book of Acts; you do not have the 13 letters that make up a big chunk of our New Testament. All of it is gone without the thorn in the flesh.

What was that movie? "The Secret of My Success." What is the secret of Paul's success? Is it education? He was educated. Is it intelligence? He was intelligent. Is it gifting and giftedness? Yes, he had all that. But those were not the secrets of his success. The secret of his success was the thorn in the flesh. As long as he was humble and dependent upon God, God just released His power through him. It is a completely different way of looking at struggles, is it not?

We as American Christians have a tendency to look at struggles as unwanted intruders. "What are you doing here?" We really do not have a doctrine of suffering as American Christians, but there is a doctrine of suffering in Scripture, and there is no better place in the Bible that reveals it than 2 Corinthians 12:1-10—Paul's thorn in the flesh. In fact, as you keep reading that paragraph, he starts to refer to this thorn—whatever it was—as a gift. Wow. "God gave this to me." He did not look at it as the enemy. He looked at it as a gift.

The reason I am bringing this up is because Jesus says something to Paul as he is struggling with this in 2 Corinthians 12:9. These are now the words of Christ. Christ said to Paul, as he is dealing with this:

"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

What a different way of thinking. We want to be used by God, where we are good. We want to be used by God, where we are strong. We want to be used by God, where we have talent and we have ability. God says, "It is not necessarily going to work that way, because if I work through you, through your talent, then your talent is going to get the glory rather than Me. So I will work through your weakness. I will work through you at your point of insecurity. I will work through you where you may not know as much or have as much to say, but I will work through you through that."

That is exactly what is happening with Moses. That is why God is not accepting any excuse. "God, I am not eloquent." "That does not matter. My power is made perfect through weakness." That word "perfect" is interesting. "My power is perfected in weakness. My power is on full display in your weakness, in your insecurity."

Maybe this week, rather than pleading with God to get me out of this—and believe me, I sympathize with that emotion. "Get me around this; get me out of this; I do not like this. I do not want to do this." Whatever the issue is, maybe the prayer is, "God, display Your power through me in this weakness." It is a heart change. This is how God encourages Moses when he is very despondent and discouraged.

In Exodus 6:14-27, he moves him into his genealogy. You are saying to yourself, "Oh, no, we are not going into a genealogy, are we? How long is the genealogy?" It is long. It goes from Exodus 6:14-27. There are a lot of names in there that you do not recognize. There are a lot of names in there that you probably cannot pronounce. I cannot pronounce half of them. Yet it is here.

You are on your one-year reading plan and you hit this section and your eyes glaze over. You just want to get through it and get it done and get to the good stuff, but I want you to understand that God encouraged Moses through a genealogy in Exodus 6:14-27. Now do not panic. We are not going to do a ten-week series on genealogy. We are not even going to be able to start the genealogy today. I just want you to understand why it is here.

It is here to remind Moses of who he is, because he is from a special tribe. He is a Levite, and his brother Aaron is a Levite, and that is a tribe within the nation of Israel that God had a special calling on. It is through the Levites that Aaron, Moses' brother, will be the spearhead of the priesthood.

If you want to be a priest, in the Old Testament sense of the word in Old Testament times, then A, you had to be a Levite, and B, you had to be a descendant from Aaron. You had to have both going for you. You had to be a Levite and a descendant of Aaron. A big deal in the Bible. "Moses and Aaron, you are one of those guys."

There is this long genealogy here documenting that. In fact, this whole genealogy of Moses was already hinted at in Exodus 2:1:

"Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi" (Exodus 2:1).

Those were Moses' parents. Mom, Levi, and Dad Levi. I said to you at the time when we were in Exodus 2, about 15 years ago, probably, I said circle that. Remember that, because God is actually going to use that genealogical heritage to encourage Moses when he is thinking of throwing in the towel.

Many times this is how God works in our lives. He reminds us of who we are.

"For he who lacks these qualities is blind or near-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins" (2 Peter 1:9).

These are people that Peter is writing to that were believers because they had been cleansed from their sins, but they had forgotten who they were. This is what Jesus will say to the church at Ephesus:

"Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent" (Revelation 2:5).

The first thing you need to do is you need to remember. Remember who you are; remember your relationship to the Lord; remember your spiritual genealogy. You might be saying to yourself, "I am no one special. I am not a Levite." Oh my goodness, you are more than a Levite. People today are so eager to trace their spiritual or their physical lineage to their family members. You try to figure out if you are related to Al Capone or someone like that. I am not against that. That is an exciting discovery. Maybe not the Al Capone stuff, but it is neat to do that.

But God has given you a spiritual genealogy. Did you know that? When you doubt about whether you are doing the right thing, whether you are in the will of God—should I take this job? Should I take that job? How do I respond to this person? How do I respond to

that person? Should I take on this project? Should I not take on this project? We get overwhelmed with it. It is just a matter of going back to our spiritual genealogy and remembering who we are.

"Moses, you can do this. You can do this because I have called you to do it and you are a Levite." What is God saying to us? "Do not forget who you are. I have called you to do it. Look at your spiritual genealogy."

You might be asking, "Do we have a spiritual genealogy?" Yes, you do. There are 33 things that you have the moment you place your trust in Christ. These are not things that you have because you had an experience. In fact, many of these things, you would not even know you had unless they were enumerated for you. The only place you can discover them is in the Bible. You cannot find them anywhere else.

Ephesians 1:3 says that we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. "Every" means "every." They are spiritual. It is not a mere earthly genealogy. When the going gets tough, you have to remember your genealogy. Remember who you are; remember what God has done for you.

These are articulated by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer in his *Systematic Theology*.¹ But do not worry about that. I am just going to read them to you without going into any real exposition of what these are. These are 33 things that are said about you the moment you place your trust in Christ. Are you ready for these?

You were foreknown, predestined, elected, chosen, called, redeemed, reconciled. You have been given something called propitiation, which is the satisfaction of divine wrath. Translation: God ain't mad at you anymore; his wrath has been satisfied. We celebrated that one a little earlier at the Lord's table.

You have been forgiven of all trespasses—the ones you already committed and cannot remember, the future ones, the sin you are going to commit this afternoon. I hope you do not, but you are already forgiven for it. Every single sin that you could commit throughout the duration of your whole life on earth is already forgiven.

You are co-joined to Christ, meaning His resurrection is mine; His death is mine; His ascension is mine. You are free from the law. You have been made a child of God. You have been adopted as a child of God into the Father household. You have been made acceptable to God—you have been made righteous; you have been sanctified; you have been perfected—consequently, you are made acceptable to Him.

You have been justified. You have been made right with God. You have been delivered from the power of darkness. You have been translated into the kingdom of God. You have been planted on the rock of Jesus Christ. You have been presented as a gift from God to Jesus. Did you know that? Did you know that one member of the Trinity

¹ Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology: Volume Three*, 234-266.

presented you as a gift to another member of the Trinity? The moment you trusted in Christ. Wow.

I feel sorry for Moses; he was living in the wrong dispensation. He has this little Levitical thing. Look at what we have!

You have been circumcised in Christ. You are a partaker of the holy and royal priesthood. You are a chosen nation, a holy nation, and a peculiar people. Maybe that is why we do not fit in here very well, because we are so different. We do not really march according to the devil's drumbeat because our identity is different.

You are a heavenly citizen. You do not even need your passport stamp for that one. You are of the royal family and household of God. You are in the fellowship of the saints. You are in a heavenly association.

You have access to God. What kind of access did Moses have? You want to go into the Most Holy Place once the Tabernacle is built? I would not advise it. The only one that can go in there is the high priest, who has to be a Levite and a descendant from Aaron. He only goes in there one day a year, on the Day of Atonement, after the proper sacrifice for the priest's sin has been administered. Something better not go wrong, because if something goes wrong with the sequence, the priest was struck dead.

This is not in the Bible, but it is in the traditions of extra-biblical Judaism that the priest had a rope tied around his leg. This is in the Bible, Exodus 28. The robe had bells on the bottom at the hem of the robe. As long as the priest is moving around and you can hear the bells, then everything is great. But what happens if the bells stop ringing? Something went wrong with the sacrifice.

I know what I will do. I will just charge right in there and get his body out. I would not advise that because you would be struck dead if you did that. We will pull him out under the curtain. That is how the Old Testament system operated.

Yet the New Testament is telling me that I have access to God unhindered and unencumbered. You have to be kidding me. That is unbelievable. You are within the much more care of God. Meaning, if God did the big stuff for you, he can handle the little things.

"But I am really worried about my house payment." That is pretty small potatoes compared to what He has already done for you through the cross. He can handle the payments or whatever.

You are God's inheritance. "Wait, not my inheritance, but God has an inheritance in me?" That is what it says. A believer has the inheritance of God Himself. You have the light in the Lord. You are vitally united to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. "But I want a down payment." You have it. It is called the Holy Spirit within you.

A believer is blessed with the earnest, or first fruits of the Spirit. We know what down payments are. Down payments guarantee that more payments are coming. I am going to get the whole package and glorification, because God already deposited a down payment in me through the work of the Holy Spirit.

I am already glorified. Do I look glorified right now? You guys do not look glorified either, to be honest with you, but the Bible says you are already in glory. Why does it say that? Because it is a done deal. You are fast-tracked. You are complete in God. "What about that one sin that I might commit that might cause me to lose my salvation?" Forget all that. You are complete, meaning past, present, and future sin debt has already been paid for.

The last one, which we actually read through, you possess every spiritual blessing. That is your genealogy. If that is your genealogy, then you know what? The nasty now and now does not look so bad, does it? That is what God is doing with Moses here in a limited sense, by giving him his earthly genealogy from the tribe of Levi.

I do not know about you guys, but I feel full and I feel blessed. I want to do things for the Lord, not to get blessed, but because I already am blessed. I want to do things for the Lord because I am blessed. Amen.

Father, we are grateful for Your truth. Grateful for Your word, grateful for its eternal value. I do pray, Lord, if anyone is here or listening or watching or listening after the fact that may not know You personally, I pray that for them, today is the day of salvation. I pray that as the Spirit convicts them, they might trust in what You have provided and what You have given, so they might, in a nanosecond, by way of faith, be brought into these immeasurable riches.

Lord, You took the poorest of the poor, and You made us rich. We have nothing to say other than that we are so grateful. Help us to leave here and think differently, to live differently because of who we are. We will be careful to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name. God's people said, Amen.