

Exodus 019
Remembrance Theology
Exodus 6:14-27
October 12, 2025
Dr. Andy Woods

Good morning, everybody. Let us take our Bibles and open them to Exodus 6:14.

Lord willing, we will be looking at Exodus 6:14-27 this morning. We are continuing our verse-by-verse teaching through the Book of Exodus. The title of our message this morning is "A Call to Remember."

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, through Moses, in the first major section of the Book of Exodus, is redeeming a nation—a nation that has been in subjection to slavery for 400 years. Being in slavery that long, it would be easy to forget who you are as God's special people. God now is doing a work to remove His nation from bondage.

God selects a man named Moses for the job. He prepares Moses for the job. About the age when most people are retiring or thinking of retiring—this would be the age 80 to age 120—those actually become the most productive years of Moses' entire life. This is a man that will, under God's power, bring the nation of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. He will write five books, the first five books of the Bible that we call Torah or Pentateuch.

Moses steps out into his calling in Exodus 5, and basically everything that can go wrong from a human perspective goes wrong. He confronts Pharaoh and says, "Let my people go," and Pharaoh—loose translation—says, "Forget it." The Spanish translation is, "No way, Jose." Moses, at that point, as you can imagine, becomes very discouraged.

III. Moses' and Aaron's Levitical Heritage (Exodus 6:14-27)

- A. Reuben (14)
- B. Simeon (15)
- C. Levi (16-25)
 - 1. Introduction (16)
 - 2. Gershonites (17)
 - 3. Kohathites (18)
 - 4. Merarites (19)
 - 5. Kohathite lineage (20-25)
 - a) Amram (20)
 - b) Izhar (21)
 - c) Uzziel (22)
 - d) Aaron (23)
 - e) Korah (24)
 - f) Eleazar (25)
- D. Genealogy's purpose (26-27)

What is happening in Exodus 6 is that God is reassuring Moses. One of the ways He reassures him is what we are moving into here in Exodus 6:14-27. He encourages Moses by reminding him of his heritage as a Levite. It is here that we get a section of Scripture that most of us just read over very quickly. It is a genealogy. Who wants to study a genealogy? Most people would not go to church saying, "Yay! We are going to study a genealogy in church today," but we get that privilege.

It is interesting that God frequently calls His people to remember who they are in the Bible. When the nation would be on the precipice, on the plains of Moab, poised to enter the Promised Land under Joshua, God, in the Book of Deuteronomy, calls the nation to remember. In Deuteronomy 8:2 He says,

"You shall remember all the way in which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not" (Deuteronomy 8:2).

"Remember what God has done. Remember how far He has taken you. Remember how He brought you out of Egyptian bondage and provided for you in the Sinai Peninsula for 40 years."

Then you go to the New Testament and you run into this church named Ephesus in the Book of Revelation (Revelation 2:1-7). This is a church that is interesting. It had lost its first love. What is that church called to do? It is called to remember.

""Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the things 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).

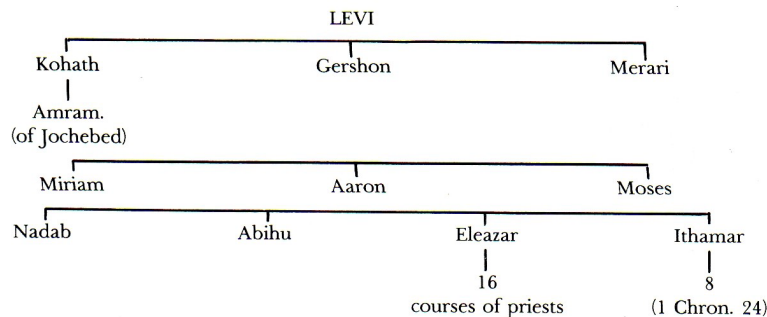
Over and over again, remember. Remember who you are. Remember your God.

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

It is very easy for us, as God's people, to forget who we are, to forget our identity, to forget what God has called us to, to forget what He has given us. You see this perpetual exhortation in Scripture for remembrance.

That is what this genealogy is doing here. It comes at a time when Moses is at one of his lowest points and God says, "Remember who you are. In this case, Moses, you are a Levite. In other words, you have Levi genes."

"You have Levi genes. In other words, you are part of something unique. You are part of something special. You are part of a special tribe that you did not originate, but it is called in the Bible to serve God in a special way. All the priests would come from this tribe. Moses, you stand in that heritage. Remember who you are."



Here is what this genealogy looks like. It starts with Reuben and goes all the way through God's purpose in giving this genealogy (Exodus 6:27). The first couple of names, Reuben and Simeon, He passes over very quickly because He wants to get to Levi, and He does not even mention the rest of the tribes—there are 12 total. He wants to show Moses his heritage. So notice, if you will, Exodus 6:14:

"These are the heads of their fathers' households. The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn: Hanoth and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi; these are the families of Reuben" (Exodus 6:14).

Who is Reuben? Reuben is the firstborn of Jacob. Here are Jacob and his wives, plural—Leah and Rachel. The Bible is not saying, "That is a great thing. Go commit

polygamy." This is just how it worked out in Jacob's life. Then there were Zilpah and Bilhah, the maidservants. Through Jacob and these four women came a group that we call Jacob's Dozen, Jacob's sons. This became the foundation of the Twelve Tribes, or the foundation of the nation of Israel. This is how Israel started.

Israel started because God gave to Abraham the patriarch, a covenant in Genesis 15. Israel is the only nation in the history of mankind that did not make a covenant with God per se, but has a covenant coming from God to them. Those promises were passed down to Isaac, and then Jacob. Through Jacob are going to come these 12 sons who will become Israel's Twelve Tribes.

Then he moves very quickly from there to the second born, Simeon, who is passed over because we are trying to get to Levi as fast as we can:

"The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the families of Simeon" (Exodus 6:15).

You might remember that concerning the firstborn, Reuben, the rights of the firstborn were passed on because he did something in Genesis 35, that he was not supposed to do involving his father's concubine. Then you get to Genesis 34 where Simeon and Levi react with great anger towards an incident that happened involving the violation of their sister. They reacted so severely that they overreacted, the Bible says. They wiped out all of the Shechemites in a particular city. It was so aggressive what they did out of anger—you can imagine that their anger was rightful in a certain sense—but it was a massive overreaction to the point where at the end of that chapter, Jacob is very displeased with them.

That is why the rights of the firstborn were transferred from Reuben to Simeon to Levi to Judah, Judah being the fourth born. Yet it is through Judah that the Messiah is going to come (Genesis 49:1). When the Messiah comes, He will come from the Tribe of Judah, not Reuben, because of Genesis 35; not Simeon and Levi because of Genesis 34.

Simeon and Levi are there in the Scriptures to a large extent, to talk about the problem of not managing one's anger. The modern vernacular is "anger management." Genesis 49:5-7 says:

*"Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Their swords are implements of violence.
Let my soul not enter into their council;
Let not my glory be united with their assembly;
Because in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they lamed oxen.
Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel.*

*I will disperse them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:5-7).*

How the Bible, over and over again, warns us of unchanneled anger.

*"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
And he who rules his own spirit, than he who captures an [entire] city"
(Proverbs 16:32).*

We all suffer from anger. We are angry over different things. A lot of times it is injustices perpetrated against us, and the human tendency is to get in the flesh, get in the sin nature, and try to settle the score. "Do not do not get mad, get even," sort of mindset. This is the very thing that cost Simeon and Levi the opportunity to be the tribe that would bring forth the Messiah—unchanneled anger.

My father, my earthly father, my biological father used to tell me all the time—because he would watch me play basketball in leagues and things when I was very young—and he would see me getting angry, he would see me getting upset. He said, "When you get angry, it is temporary insanity. You are not in your rational mind when you are angry and that just hurts you." That is the plain teaching of Scripture.

"For the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God" (James 1:20).

I understand that there is a time for anger, there is a place for anger, but the Bible is saying to monitor that very carefully, because if you let it out of the bag, so to speak, there could be some temporary consequences down the road. It goes right back to Genesis 4, where Cain was very angry that his sacrifice was rejected and his brother Abel's sacrifice was accepted. The Bible is very clear that Cain became very angry about that.

It is at that point that God speaks to Cain and He says, "Consider your ways very carefully. Your anger is trying to dominate you, but you need to dominate it. It is trying to overpower you, but you need to keep it under control." Of course, Cain did not heed that exhortation. We know how Cain murdered Abel, the first murder in human history. Cain spent the rest of his life suffering temporary consequences, a vagabond, so to speak, because of a bad decision that he made.

You look at so many people and how their lives completely and totally shift and change because of a moment of unvented rage or anger. We do things that we would not do in our more rational times and faculties. This is why it skips very quickly over Reuben. It skips very quickly over Simeon. It moves very fast into Levi, because this is where Moses' family tree is.

Notice if you will, Levi:

"These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon and Kohath and Merari; and the length of Levi's life was one hundred and thirty-seven years" (Exodus 6:16).

It is an introduction of who is coming from Levi. From Levi will come the Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites. As far as this genealogy is concerned, the focus is going to go to Kohath because from Kohath is going to come Amram, who is the father of Moses. This is demonstrating that Moses stands in this very proud Levitical genealogical heritage.

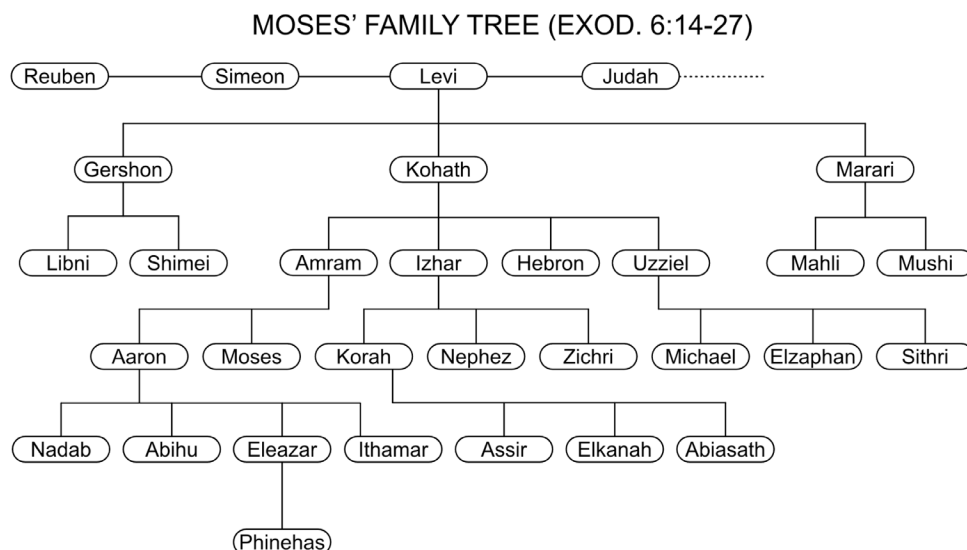
A few quick comments are made about the Gershonites to complete the family tree:

"The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, according to their families" (Exodus 6:17).

You will notice that it is information rounded out, if you will, to give a full explanation of this family tree that Moses is a very proud part of. Then it moves from there to the Kohathites (Exodus 6:18). This becomes a focus, because Moses is going to descend from the Kohathites.

"The sons of Kohath: and Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel; and the length of Kohath's life was one hundred and thirty-seven years" (Exodus 6:18).

That is a lot of specific information about when a person died. It keeps saying that over and over again. Why are these specifics mentioned in the Bible? Because it is trying to show that this actually happened. This is not "Jack and the Beanstalk" stuff. This is actual history, in this case, genealogical history, and one that is going to come from the Kohathites is Amram. That is Moses' father—that is Aaron's father, and that is his sister, Miriam's father, as well.



From there, coming from Levi, the Kohathites. Then underneath the Kohathites, you see Amram. From Amram is going to come Moses, his brother Aaron, and their sister Miriam. Then you go down to Exodus 6:19. It gives a quick overview of the Merarites.

"The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their generations" (Exodus 6:19).

The focus of the action here is the Kohathites, because Moses is not going to be a Gershonite. He is not going to be a Merarite. He is going to be a Kohathite, so let us focus on that. Here come all of the names from the Kohathites:

"Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses; and the length of Amram's life was one hundred and thirty-seven years" (Exodus 6:20).

These guys had a lot of birthday parties, I guess, back then. Apparently, from the Kohathites comes Amram, and Amram married Jochebed. Jochebed is Moses' mother, and Amram is Moses' father.

What about this stuff here, going back to Exodus 6:20, about "Amram married his father's sister"? What in the world is that all about? Dr. Ed Hindson says this in his commentary on the Book of Exodus:

"Moses' father, Amram, and mother, Jochebed, who was not only Amram's wife but also his aunt, are listed. The laws against such interfamilial marriage had not yet been given by God at Sinai."¹

Apparently, relationships that today we would call incestuous actually were allowed until you get to Mount Sinai, when God would finally condemn the practice. You often run into people that say, "Where did Cain get his wife?" I remember Jodie Foster in the movie "Contact" played the scientist, and she said something in the movie to the effect of, "I was always the kid in the Sunday School class that asked the tough questions that no Sunday School teacher could answer. I would ask questions like, 'Where did Cain get his wife?'"

Actually, there is a very simple answer to that: Cain married his sister. You say, "That is disgusting." By our standards today, it does not seem right or correct. It seems a bit odd, but the truth of the matter is that if the first generation had not intermarried, there would not be a second generation.

Dr. Henry Morris, in his Genesis commentary, says this:

¹ Hindson, E. E., & Mitchell, D. R., eds. (2010). *King James Version Bible Commentary for Today: The Most Up-to-Date Commentary on the Time-Honored Text of the King James Version* (p. 89). Thomas Nelson.

"The ancient quibble about 'Cain's wife' is thus seen to be quite trivial. Long before Cain died, there was a large population in the earth. By the time of the Deluge, 1,656 years after Creation by the Ussher chronology, even using the above conservative assumptions, the world population would have been at least seven billion people! In order to get this process of multiplication started, of course, at least one of Adam's sons had to marry one of Adam's daughters. Probably, in that first generation, all marriages were brother-sister marriages. In that early time, there were no mutant genes in the genetic systems of any of these children, so that no genetic harm could have resulted from close marriages. Many, many generations later, during the time of Moses, such mutations had accumulated to the point where such unions were genetically dangerous, so that incest was thenceforth prohibited in the Mosaic laws."²

Moses is going to take the nation of Israel to Mount Sinai. It is at Mount Sinai that the nation of Israel will receive God's Law. This is going to happen in Moses' time period, a few years down the road, and once they get to Mount Sinai, part of the Mount Sinai package is going to be the Book of Leviticus.

When you get to Leviticus 18 and 20, those sections of Scripture you will discover that God, in the strongest terms possible, condemns the practice of incest. We are dealing with pre-Mosaic Law here. We have a real tendency to take our sense of dignity, our sense of morality, and export it backwards. This kind of arrangement that you are reading about in Exodus 6:20 was not uncommon because we are pre-Mosaic Law.

According to Dr. Henry Morris, it had something to do with the effects of sin. Although there are genetic problems today that incest causes, you do not have that kind of thing in full bloom in the human race as you move backwards in time, because the effects of sin had not yet caught up with humanity. That is why there is a slightly different standard or code back then than we find today, there is a big change coming at the Mosaic Law.

You take a look there at Exodus 6:20, and what you discover is that going back a little bit here, from Levi came Kohath and Merari, and from Kohath is going to come Moses' father. Then you see Moses' mother, and from that union are going to come Moses, his brother Aaron, and his sister Miriam. Then the genealogical details continue:

"The sons of Izhar: Korah and Nepheg and Zichri" (Exodus 6:21).

Korah is going to be a big deal. What we are dealing with here is Izhar. From Izhar is going to come Korah. Korah is going to be a big deal because of something that is coming in Numbers 16. It has to do with a rebellion that will take place against the leadership of Moses, spearheaded by Korah. I will say a few words about that a little bit later, but at this point, I want us to recognize what this genealogy is doing. This genealogy is not only giving us Moses' family tree, although that is a big part of it. It is

² Dr. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 143-144.

dropping little grains of sand, so to speak, that will be developed later, because we are going to be introduced to these characters in the Bible.

At some point you might be asking, where in the world do these people come from? What is their genealogy? What is their connection to this? Who is Korah? That is why it pays dividends to actually pay attention to some of these genealogical details, because the Holy Spirit is revealing those things to us. Basically, the Holy Spirit is saying, "Stay tuned." Korah, as I will explain in just a minute, is going to become a big deal later once we get into the Transjordan. Korah is going to lead a rebellion against Moses (Numbers 16). God is not going to be happy about it, as we will see.

Then it mentions also Uzziel:

"The sons of Uzziel: Mishael and Elzaphan and Sithri" (Exodus 6:22).

Where is this Uzziel coming from? Uzziel is descended from the Kohathites. Then you go down to Exodus 6:23, and it also mentions Aaron, Moses' brother, and it mentions what lineage came from Aaron.

"Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar" (Exodus 6:23).

It gives Aaron's brother's wife. Her name was Elisheba. Now, the interesting thing about Elisheba is that she was from the Tribe of Judah, not the Tribe of Levi. You will see that in Numbers 2:3; 7:12; and 10:14. The descendants of Aaron are going to continue to be Levites because the lineage is traced through the father rather than through the wife, biblically speaking. From that lineage are going to come two guys.

Aaron is descended from the Kohathites, and from Aaron are going to come Nadab and Abihu. We are going to read about Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10:1-2.

"Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective fire pans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them" (Leviticus 10:1).

God gave extremely detailed instructions regarding the priesthood, the temple system—how things were supposed to function, how things were supposed to work. Nadab and Abihu followed more of a Frank Sinatra approach to spirituality—"I did it my way." God looks at them and says, "You are offering strange fire in My tabernacle." Was that serious? Was that jaywalking or was it serious? It was very serious because Leviticus 10:2 says:

"And fire came from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord" (Leviticus 10:2).

I look at something like that and say, "God has very specific instructions that He wants followed." We as humans really err when we do things our own way. This problem of doing spirituality one's own way is a problem that is as old as Cain and Abel.

Abel's sacrifice was accepted. Cain's sacrifice was rejected. Why? Because Abel did what God wanted. He brought a sacrifice, a blood sacrifice. Cain, by contrast, did things his own way, and he brought all kinds of things. He probably worked really hard on it, by the way, put a lot of effort into it, but he did not bring a blood sacrifice. This goes back to Genesis 4. It is very early on in the Bible, and it says, "God looked with favor on what Abel had done, and he did not look with favor on what Cain had done."

Cain got angry over this, and because his anger was not under control, Satan used him to murder Abel, I think in an attempt to prevent the birth of the Messiah. You go to the end of Genesis 4 and God got around this through the birth of Seth. Seth actually means a substitution. In other words, the Messiah will not come from Abel's line that Cain slew, but it will come from Seth's line.

This idea of just wanting to do things your own way is a big problem with God. There are many people like that in this realm of spirituality. I was listening to a pastor once speak at a public event. It was in front of a bunch of business people, and he said something to the effect of, "You are all executives, you are all accountants, you are all respected for your different professions and occupations. The problem is, when it comes to my profession as a pastor, no one really wants to listen because they are already their own expert on it."

That is how spirituality is today. "Whatever feels good, do it. Do what is right in your own eyes," not understanding that God has specific things and how things are to be done. One of His most specific things is how a person is saved. We are not free to rewrite the Bible just because it does not correspond with our prior beliefs on something.

Peter, speaking of Jesus, says:

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved"
(Acts 4:12).

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

Only Jesus could be the mediator between God the Father and man, because the mediator must be 100% God and 100% man to mediate the two sides. The last time I checked, there is only one God-Man who could even qualify as a mediator.

People hear these kinds of teachings and they say, "That is too exclusive. That is too narrow. You need to take your perspective and broaden it. After all, is not God like a giant mountain? We are all trying to get to the top. We just choose our different paths to get there"—Oprah Winfrey kind of theology. If I want to go up the Buddhist route, that should be fine as long as I am sincere. If I want to go up the Hindu route, that should be fine. If I want to go up the Mormon route, that should be fine. If I want to go up the Roman Catholic route, that should be fine. If I want to go up the atheist route, or the humanist route, or the evolutionist route, or whatever, that should be fine.

The Bible comes along and says, "You cannot do that. God has a rule book." Do not get mad at me. I did not invent the rules. Do not shoot the messenger. You have to come to God the Father through Jesus Christ by faith alone or you cannot come.

"That makes me angry." Fine. Go sit in the corner with Cain. See how far that gets you. There are specifics in spirituality that cannot be altered. God does not give us the freedom to alter His rule book. It is like someone waking up one day and saying, "You know what? I do not agree with the law of gravity today. I know it is a law that governs nature, but I do not agree with it. I think it is too exclusive. I think it is too narrow. I am just going to go live the way I want." We know how that story will end. Not well.

You cannot set aside laws of the universe. Objects are going to fall 32 feet per second whether I happen to like the law or not. When it comes to spirituality, there are laws that the Creator has ordained. Salvation is supposed to happen the way God ordained it to happen. You may have all of the Frank Sinatra songs in your heart, but it cannot change the law. You may watch New Age teachers and Oprah Winfrey type theology all day long, but it cannot change the law. It is a law. It is not coming from a person. It is coming from God.

Nadab and Abihu, coming from Aaron's lineage—these are his boys, these are his sons—decided the laws do not apply to us here. God dealt with them very severely by killing them right there on the spot. You either respect the laws of God or you do not. You respect the principles of God or you do not. After all, He is God. The last time I checked, we are not. We are His submissive creatures that are corrupted by sin nature and do not have the omniscience that He has. We do not have the omnipresence that He has. We do not have the omnipotence that He has.

I am not really here to correct the Bible. We do not have a church where we look at the Bible and try to find loopholes in it. That is what W.C. Fields was doing at the end of his life. He knew he was going to die and he was reading through the Bible, and everybody was shocked because he was not the most godly man that ever lived. "What are you doing with that?" He says, "I am looking for loopholes." There are no loopholes. There are divine principles ordained and established by God. We are not here to correct the Bible. The Bible is here to correct us. Nadab and Abihu decided to do it their own way, and they were dealt with.

Then you go to Exodus 6:24, and it mentions Korah again, who I mentioned a little earlier in Exodus 6:21. Here is Korah again:

"The sons of Korah: Assir and Elkanah and Abiasaph; these are the families of the Korahites" (Exodus 6:24).

Where does Korah fit into all of this? Right here in the genealogy. The genealogy is not only giving Moses' heritage. It is showcasing people that are going to become major players as the story develops. Who are these people from Korah? Who was Korah? Korah was one that ran a rebellion against God's ordained leadership.

"Moses, we do not like the fact that you are in charge," even though God put Moses in charge. They launch a rebellion against Moses. They came to their pastor and said, "We do not like what side of the head you part your hair on. Your sermons are too long. You use too many Bible references in your sermons. We do not like this church. It is too cold in here. The temperature is not right. The services go too long. There are not enough programs. There is not this, there is not that."

God says to Moses, "Moses, this one's on Me." He opened up the ground, and all of the disgruntled church people went right into the earth. It is amazing. It ended the problem. Korah's rebellion becomes a testimony to us in the Word of God about the need to submit to God-ordained leadership.

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

Submit to their authority, making their job a joy rather than a burden. By the way, do not spend your time looking for the perfect church, because if you find the perfect church, if you join it, you will ruin the perfect church.

"But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another" (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

I know what you are thinking. What about pastors that abuse their authority? What about pastors that end up beating the sheep rather than feeding the sheep? What about pastors that become control freaks and want to micromanage every little part of your life? There are some churches where you have to check in with the leadership if you ever want to go on vacation. That is insanity. What do you do with pastors like that?

The Bible is equally clear that a spiritual leader should not rule ruthlessly or laud authority in a un-Christlike way over God's people. This is a two-way street here.

"Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor as yet lording it over to those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock—"

"And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:1-4).

There are the under-shepherds, and there is the Chief Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd being Jesus. The Chief Shepherd is going to appear one day, and He is going to reward those under-shepherds that faithfully fulfilled their calling. In the process of describing this calling, Peter says to the shepherds, *"nor yet as lording it over to those allotted to your charge."* A pastor or an elder board is not to become tyrannical, is not to get into the business of beating the sheep, but feeding the sheep.

A pastor basically has three responsibilities. These all begin with the letter G. Number one, guard the flock. This is what a shepherd does in the natural world. He protects the flock from all kinds of things that can come into a flock—false doctrine, or very sadly we have pedophiles that cannot wait to work in a children's ministry. That is a reality or a danger in churches. That is why we have the two people in the room rule and a background check and different things that you go through should you want to be involved in children's ministry. It is a very sad, sick reality. The role of an elder board, the role of a pastor, the role of shepherds is to protect the flock from things like this.

Number two, the pastor is to graze the flock. What does that mean? It means to feed the flock. Jesus said to Peter three times, in John 21, "Peter, do you love Me more than these?" He said, "Feed My sheep, tend My sheep." In other words, the sheep do not belong to Peter, the sheep belong to the Lord, and they need to be fed.

How do you feed the sheep? We know how it works in the natural world, but how does it work in the spiritual world? Jesus was very clear:

"Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3).

The point of pastoral ministry, or one of its major thrusts, is to take the Word of God and teach it in a way that people can understand it and apply it in a way that people can understand it, so that they are fed and so that they are nourished.

When you study Ezekiel 34, you will see that God is really angry with the shepherds of Ezekiel's day because the shepherds were feeding themselves and the sheep were not being taken care of. They were not being healed. They were not being nourished the way that they should.

You guard, you graze, and then the third G is that you guide. You do not drive the sheep; you guide them just like a shepherd does in the natural world. You give them direction. Give them boundaries. "If you go this direction, this is not going to be good for you. Go this direction"—biblical counseling, biblical exhortation, and biblical interaction. It talks about this style of leadership, constantly using the shepherd in the natural world to communicate the point. Jesus, of course, is the ultimate Shepherd. He did this all of the time. He guided, He grazed, and He guarded. He did not exercise unfair oppression over people.

That is what a shepherd is to do, but the sheep have a responsibility. The sheep are to submit to the basic leadership of the pastor. There are many people that call or come here and they say, "We do not like this, or we do not like that, or we do not agree with this or we do not agree with that." I try to politely say, "Maybe this church, if you cannot submit to the leadership here, find another church." We have one on every corner, do we not, in the United States of America? You can find churches everywhere.

Do not come to a church and be miserable because you have such a dislike for something or someone. That is a sign that maybe God has somewhere else for you to go. That is okay, too. We are not in the business here of trying to hang on to people. We want people to become all that they can be in God.

The sheep's responsibility is submission to authority. The shepherd's responsibility is to not become a totalitarian, crazy person over the whole thing. I heard one pastor say, "This church is a theocracy, and my name is Theo," kind of thing. That is not of God, either.

This is why Korah is introduced, because Korah, with this rebellion that will take place, communicates a lot of this. Then you go down to Eleazar.

"Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites according to their families" (Exodus 6:25).

You have Eleazar, who is Aaron's son. Aaron is coming from the Kohath; the Kohathites are coming ultimately from Jacob's third son, Levi; and from Aaron is going to come Phinehas. What is interesting is that Eleazar ended up becoming the high priest of the nation after Aaron died. That is over in Numbers 20:28:

"After Moses had stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar, Aaron died on the mountain top. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain" (Numbers 20:28).

One of these days, Eleazar is going to die, and he is going to be replaced by Phinehas, which is not coming until Joshua 24:33,

"And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah of Phinehas his son, which was given him in the hill country of Ephraim" (Joshua 24:33).

How did you become the high priest, and how did you even become a priest? You had to be from the Tribe of Levi, and then you had to be a descendant of Aaron. You had to have those two things working for you. Aaron's direct descendants, after Aaron died, first Eleazar and then after Eleazar, Phinehas would become the high priests of the nation. Here in Exodus 6 it is introducing these names and these people that are going to get a full amplification later.

The priesthood was very specific in the Old Testament age. Not just anybody could be a priest. It was not one of these things where, "Who wants to be a priest? Put your hand up. Here is the job application. Let us send out one of those things where they figure out what your skill set is." You take the test and someone says, "You would be a great priest. You would be a heck of a priest." That is not how it worked. There had to be a specific lineage, not just from the Tribe of Levi, but a descendant from Aaron's lineage.

The priesthood was specific; the priesthood was exclusive. Now compare that to who you are. Did you know that in the age of the church you are a priest? You say, "I do not feel like a priest. I do not act like a priest." But the Bible says you are a priest. You say, "I am not from the right tribe." That does not matter. We are dealing with the Church Age now. God says all of us who are believers in Christ are priests.

"And He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Revelation 1:6).

Why the emphasis on glory? Because this is unheard of. This is completely and totally unheard of. I thought the priests were very specific and very exclusive, and here, Jesus in the New Testament concerning the Church Age believer, has taken all of us and turned us into priests. Whether you want to be a priest or not, you are a priest.

What does a priest do? A priest is an intermediary in the sense that he represents man before God and represents God before man. That is what a priest does. Of course, Jesus Christ being the ultimate Priest. We are not arguing that you need to pray through us to get to God. What we are saying is that Jesus, being the ultimate Priest after the order of Melchizedek, has underneath Him a bunch of sub-priests, which all of us are.

This means that you have a responsibility. The more you understand your identity, the more your responsibility grows. What are you supposed to do? You are supposed to represent man before God. Do you do that as a priest? Do you pray for people? Do you intercede for people? You say, "Wow, that person at work. That is so annoying. Lord, they need You. They would not be acting the way that they act if they knew You. You know what I am going to do, Lord? I am going to pray for that person. I am going to

represent them before You." the Lord says, "Thumbs up. That is what you are supposed to do." That is what a priest did.

Then the priest also represents God before man. I never liked this statement when I heard it, but it is true. It says, "You might be the only Bible someone reads." There are people that will never read the Bible, never darken the door of a church, will never listen to any of the types of programming or sermons that you listen to, but God put you in their life. God put you in their life as a representative of Him.

That, by the way, is why we are also called ambassadors. We are representatives of God. That is a tremendous calling. The question is, when people look at your life, are they getting the right picture of who God is? I have to ask myself all the time with different interactions. "If I interact this way, what are they going to think about Jesus? If I interact that way, what are they going to think about Jesus?" These people I am interacting with do not know up from down. I might be the only Bible they ever read.

"You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth" (Revelation 5:10).

A lot of people today are saying that the church is the kingdom. As my friend Thomas Ice likes to say, "If this is the kingdom, I must be living in the ghetto section of town," because we are not in the kingdom right now. The kingdom is coming. We are to pray, "Thy kingdom come." The authority is coming. The rulership is coming. It is a done deal, it just has not touched down on planet Earth.

God's whole purpose for your life is to take you as His priest and put you in a position of authority in the Kingdom Age. Therefore, everything that is happening in your life right now, every little thing is preparation for that. I like to call it as follows: "Training time for reigning time."

You look at Joseph's life between the ages of 17 and 30. A lot of issues happened to him, but every single one of those issues prepared him for the time when he would come, when he would be second-in-command of Egypt. It was character development. That is what is happening with you. That is what is happening with me. It is our destiny as a kingdom of priests.

Then the genealogy ends with its purpose:

"It was the same Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, 'Bring out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their hosts.' They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the sons of Israel from Egypt; it was the same Moses and Aaron" (Exodus 6:26-27).

The same Moses and Aaron that just had nothing but doubts in their minds when Pharaoh turned down the first offer and the nation of Israel, the leadership turned down their leadership, and they got so discouraged. God says, "Remember." A theology of

remembrance. "Remember who you are. You stand in a Levitical genealogy. Because of your purpose, step into it. Now that you know who you are, step into that."

By way of application, we could say now that you know you are a priest, act like it this week. We should all act like it because of the high calling that God has placed on our lives.

Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for the sections of Scripture that even seem a little remote to us, and yet they reveal so many life lessons. I just pray for anybody within the sound of my voice that may not know You personally and have never entered into their priesthood, that for them today would be the day of salvation. I pray that they would place their personal trust in the person of Jesus Christ and be ushered into a relationship with the God that made them.

I pray many, many people within the sound of my voice would be doing that. I pray that for them, today would be the day of salvation. I pray that they, like the rest of us, would grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Understand what we have been given so that we might live it out in an appropriate way. As Your people, we will be careful to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name, and God's people said, Amen.