

Exod 03-03-23b

Let's resume our study now in the book of Exodus where we are right at the junction between chapter 5 and chapter 6. Having heard that song by Bill and Gloria Gaither called, He Started the Whole World Singing, arranged by Fred Bach. Many, many of these wonderful arrangements that we hear Dan play are by Mr. Bach. He was, I think has served as a great blessing to many, many by those arrangements.

This section in chapter 5 that we have reviewed has one other part that I want to go over before we move into chapter 6 and that is in verse 9. Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel, but they did not heed Moses. What is the thus? He tells them everything that God tells him in these preceding several verses beginning all the way up in verse 2. I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name Lord I was not known to them.

God actually has one personal name and that is Yahweh, at least the way we vocalize it now is Yahweh. All of the other names that you find for God are actually ascriptive or descriptive terms. There are many gods with a small G that have been worshipped by human beings down through the ages.

There is only one God with a capital G, but that is the description of who God is. That is not his name. It would be like calling someone man, which people do quite frequently, hey man and that kind of thing, but it is not really your name.

If someone does not know your name, they say hey man, you got a light? Or hey man, you got a five dollar bill? Or these people that accost you on the street for various things. So El or Elohim is the description of God, what he is. He is God.

He is God Almighty. He is God Most High. And the various other ascriptive and descriptive names can attach to that, but his personal name as revealed to the patriarchs and revealed to us in the Old Testament is Yahweh.

But he says, I appeared to them as God Almighty, but by my name Lord I was not known to them. And you see the contrast between appearing to them as God Almighty and being known to them as Yahweh. It does not mean that they had never heard his name.

They most certainly had. But being known in the sense, the distinction of what his personal name represents. You can go down here after church to the mall and walk up and down and there will be many, many dozens, perhaps hundreds of strangers that you can see there.

And if you walk around long enough, you will eventually see someone you know. And when you see someone you know, you will say their name. You will say, oh Sharon or oh Bill or Bob or Ted or whoever it is that you see down there.

You call them by their name. Why? Because you have some shared knowledge. You have some relationship.

You know each other from somewhere. You have a common element. And I could go down to the mall and stand on a small box and begin to preach the gospel or begin to hold forth on some topic.

I could encourage people to spend more time on their computer or something. And I could be speaking and I would have appeared to people and they would hear me and know what I had to say. And by listening to me, they would know I knew what I was talking about if I talked about one of the two subjects I know anything about, which is either computers or the Word of God.

And that would not necessarily mean that they know me. People can listen to a speaker for years. I have listened to pastors and studied by listening to their tapes and things and felt like I had an understanding of how their mind worked and what was important to them and what their views were on a lot of subjects.

But it's different when you come to know someone on a personal level and you know them outside of their formal function. God was known to the patriarchs in terms of His formal function and they were aware of His name in the same way I could say, Hello, my name is Sam Hall and I'm here to talk to you today about Internet Protocol Networking and we're going to talk about subnets and we're going to talk about the different ways of splitting up and identifying. We're going to talk about DNS and DHCP and we're going to talk about routing and switches.

Well, you'd immediately glaze over and be lost. I may have already done so. You know my name, but you don't know me as Sam.

You know me as the computer guy. Well, that's a crude analogy to what is being referenced here. God Almighty, God All-Powerful is the God who has the power to institute and back up covenant promises.

He is the one who has the power to deliver. He is the one who has the power to create and to determine the courses of human events and human history. Yahweh, His personal name, this is knowing God in a more intimate way, personal relationship, conversation, fellowship, understanding of the, I wouldn't so much say that it parallels the human, you can know someone professionally and then you can know someone personally and there are oftentimes overlaps in that.

If you have integrity, meaning that you're consistent, then your personal values and your personal character and even your personality will often show up in your work. But there's a difference in saluting an officer when he's in uniform and having a meal with him when you're not so much on duty. There is a difference.

And so He was not known to them in the sense that they did not have the experience of His ongoing presence. And that was our conclusion last time. If there's one thing to pull out of all of that, it is the intimacy that is associated with an ongoing presence.

God did not remain present. He appeared and the flip side of that is He then disappeared. He appeared and disappeared.

He was there in a vision or there in an embodied form and then He left. Now God is going to reveal Himself to Israel and He's going to stick around. He's going to be present in the cloud.

He's going to be present in the pillar. He's going to be present in the tabernacle and later the temple. And so Israel is going to come to know God in an ongoing and more intimate way referenced by the knowledge of Him that is associated with His personal name.

I saw the general giving his first briefing on the war, General Franks, and we always hear people by their formal name and then it strikes you when you hear somebody say something else. You'll hear someone talking about an actor and we always know him as Richard Widmark or something or John Wayne. And then someone will say, well, you know, me and Duke were out having a beer the other night.

And you say, well, or they call him Duke Wayne. And you have to stop and think, oh, well, they know him by a different name because they are on intimate terms. They eat meals with him and so forth.

Or, you know, Sir Lawrence Olivier and somebody says, well, Larry and I were off at a party the other night. And you say, Larry Olivier? I mean, I just don't, you know, I wouldn't come up and say, hey, Larry. Of course, you can't say that now because he passed away.

But you get the sense here. There is a whole realm of experience that is associated with one's personal name. So Moses communicates this to the people in Israel.

And he says, let me tell you what the Lord said when I told him about your problems here. He says, I will bring you out from under. Notice there are three aspects of this salvation.

We study our salvation under three general headings, don't we? If I ask you, and if you've been in the fundamental study at all, you should be able to answer this question. What were the three aspects of salvation that were accomplished on the cross? At least this is our convenient way of organizing them. What would you say? It's not reading, writing, and arithmetic.

It's something else. Redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. We have those three aspects, and they each have a direction.

Propitiation is toward God. Reconciliation is toward us. Redemption is toward sin.

We are reconciled to God. God is propitiated. Sin's price is paid.

And so we categorize it or summarize it under those convenient headings. That does by no means exhaust the work of Christ on the cross, but it certainly gives us a starting point. In the same way here, look at verse 6. Say to the children of Israel, I am Yahweh.

I am the Lord. I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. That is Category 1. Bring you out from under the burdens.

Number 2, I will rescue you from their bondage. Number 3, I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Brought out from under the burdens, rescued from the captivity, and redeemed, purchased, brought into possession.

God says they are currently your owners and masters. I will be your God and your Lord. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, I am Yahweh, your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians and brings you into the land which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I will give it to you as a heritage. I am Yahweh. This is the initiation point of beginning to understand what that name means, what it connotes.

So in verse 9, Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel, but they did not heed Moses because of, and your translation says, anguish of spirit and cruel bondage. The New American Standard says, on account of their despondency and cruel bondage. What it literally says in Hebrew here is, on account of their shortness of breath.

On account of their mikseruach. Mikoser or mikotser. It's M-I-Q-O-T-S-E-R.

It's the best way I can transliterate that. Ruach. Their shortness of spirit or shortness of breath.

Ruach is a word that we always have to consider in context because you have Ruach Elohim. You have it representing in some cases wind or spirit. Some people say it was the wind of God that blew on the face of the waters.

Others say it was the spirit of God because it is Ruach Elohim in Genesis chapter 1. So what does this mean? We know what the kotzer portion means here. It means shortness. But why did the people not listen? This would be something that would be useful to know, would it not? Because we are subject to this same sort of thing where we hear the word of God and we cannot latch on to it.

Well, we need to understand a little bit about kotzer. Kotzer. It has the idea of a lack or a shortness.

And in particular, here it means what happens when you get excited. Some people, we call this hyperventilating. Shallow breathing, hyperventilate.

You just get in a little bit of a panic and they say breathe into a paper bag. Well, that is almost literally what we have here. Short, shallow breathing.

And yet with Ruach and the double entendre that is available to us there, it is a spiritual condition of shortness of breath. It is the hyperventilating in the physical realm that reflects hyperventilating in the spiritual realm. Shallowness of soul, shortness of spirit.

Not coming up to the mark when it is needed. We have scriptures in the New Testament that talk about, in Ephesians chapter 4, until we attain the stature of the full measure or the stature of a mature man, reaching the mark of maturity, reaching the mark of complete growth. It doesn't mean that we are perfect.

It means that we have grown to the height that we need to. We have reached the maturity that we need to in order to fulfill our functions. And that is what we have here.

They did not listen to Moses on account of, and this is an interpretive translation to say despondency or to say their anguish of spirit. It is not anguish, it is shortness. There wasn't enough there.

Well, enough of what? It is faith in the Word of God, isn't it? It is hope based on that faith and that confident expectation. We know what the Word of God says. This was not the affliction of Caleb at the other end of this journey when he goes across and goes into the land and decides he wants the high ground and wants the mountains where the enemy has not yet been defeated and he is the oldest man in Israel.

This is the exact opposite. Just the prospect of Moses and Aaron going back to Pharaoh causes them hyperventilation, shortness of breath, shortness of spirit, and cruel bondage. When you are in a situation, you can either look at what restricts you or you can look at what will free you.

And if you spend all your time looking at the problems, you might as well grab a banner and paint a peace sign on it and go march because much of what you hear, and I don't mean to be speaking politically so much, but if you think about it, listen to the arguments that are made. Listen to the arguments that the French made when they did not go along with the United Nations effort to pass a resolution. It is all about what might happen.

Oh, you might go in and destabilize the Middle East. You might go in and we lose touch with the oil and the commerce and the trade that we have in that country. It is all predictions of forebodings of what might happen.

It isn't based on fact. It's based on supposition and expectation. Many of the people who are marching now say, oh, this is just all about grabbing oil and it's about megalomania or it's about revenge and this.

Well, why don't you operate in the present and wait and see if something happens? The legislative acts to try to prevent certain freedoms, everything from school vouchers to abortion and a lot of other issues, people say, well, if you pass this law, this is what could happen. If you give this tax relief, this is what might happen. And we can't do it because that might happen or it would happen or we think it will happen.

And it's all woes and predictions about the future that aren't based in fact. Looking at all of the problems and all of the things that might go wrong instead of looking at the purpose and the hope and expectation of what problem will be solved and what deliverance will be effected and what, in the case of God, you don't have a downside. You don't have God failing in some fashion or God misjudging the options.

If God says, you know, this is the difference between the human realm and the divine realm. If God says, stick with me on this and it's going to turn out fine, you can take that to the bank. If you can't, then what's the point of being a Christian? It's the same type of promise that our eternal salvation is based on.

It's the same type of promise that our expectation of resurrection and a future life is based on. If God cannot be trusted to deliver us and to sustain us in our daily challenges, what can we expect in the eternal future? Is God going to change His mind a couple of hundred years down the road and say, well, you know, we've done this salvation thing and eternal glory for a while, but I'm kind of tired of it. I think I'm going to do something different.

So I believe I'll just speak a word and you all will separate into your individual molecules and disappear. God is consistent and God is faithful. But these people did not heed Moses because of shortness of ruach and cruel bondage.

So the Lord is not deterred. He speaks to Moses and says, go and tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to let the children of Israel go out of his land. And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, the children of Israel have not heeded me.

How then shall Pharaoh heed me? So what does the Lord do? Does He give him new information? Does He give him a fresh sign? Does He have another supernatural working of a miracle? The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a command for the children of Israel and for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, or a charge to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. God reiterates what He has been saying all along. The policy is the same.

You find this happening on your TV set here in recent days and you'll hear it in the future. We've been at war less than 72 hours and people say, well, where are the weapons of mass destruction and where is this and where is that? And our wise leadership just says the same thing they've been saying along. We're going to implement this policy.

We're going to get rid of this government. These things will come in time. Just wait.

Be patient. Just watch and see. There's no point in railing and asking all kinds of ridiculous questions.

Just wait and watch and see. Family of Moses and Aaron now is detailed in verses 14 and following. These are the heads of their father's houses.

There's quite a bit I could say about the Hebrew here because fathers is a singular possessive.

You have the apostrophe there with the S plural because they are trying to talk about the fact that the sons of Reuben and Simeon are mentioned here. But this is placing Moses and Aaron in context within Israel.

And this is sort of the chapter heading here. These are the heads of their father's houses. Then he begins at the top of the list.

The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, Hanach, Palu, Hezron and Carmi. These are the families of Reuben. Notice they are not just the sons of Reuben but they are the families.

These are the great clans within the tribe of Reuben. The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jashon, Zohar and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. I'm not real sure how to pronounce these in the English transliterations because the letters are all different in Hebrew but close enough.

These are the families of Simeon. Then in verse 16, these are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations. Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

Once again when it says according to their generations, it's telling you that there are these great clans within the tribe of Levi. The sons of Gershon were Libni and Shimei according to their families. These are the large family branches within that clan, within that tribe.

Remember how much time the book has spent telling us about the prolific nature of reproduction in Israel during the time of the captivity here. There have been scores, thousands upon thousands of children born, large families, close together, marrying young, having more children. The expansion was radical and extraordinary in this length of time.

Pretty soon there were so many people that you just couldn't keep track of. Imagine if everybody in your periphery didn't just have a few children but had 15 or 20 children. All of their children got married young and they all had 15 or 20 children.

You could not be able to keep track of your own first cousins in a very short period of time. Your nieces and nephews would just be almost so numerous. As this proliferated in Israel, they began to no longer refer to people by their immediate parentage.

Whose son are you or whose daughter are you became a difficult question because there was reduplication of names. There were just multiple multitudes of people swarming and proliferating. What they began to do was identify themselves with their family group and with their clan within their tribe.

You would typically have about three names associated with you. Your tribe, your clan, and your family group. You'll find quite often in this portion of Israel's history that you'll have someone, the son of so and so, the son of so and so.

They'll just give you a couple of antecedents to place the man somewhere in Israel. Where does

he generally fall? There will be gaps in the genealogies from this time because there are just too numerous to mention. There are too many individuals.

What you're mainly interested in is, well, what tribe are you from? Within that tribe, what's your clan? Within that clan, what's the general branch of your family? People do this today. You meet somebody whose name is a little bit off the beaten track, Schultzberger or something. It's not that common of a name.

Then you're sitting on an airplane. Somebody says, well, I'm Fred Schultzberger. You say, well, I know a Schultzberger.

You try to find out if they're related. Are they from the same family group? Well, this is what they would do in Israel. This is a general and by no means complete description of the antecedents for ultimately Moses and Aaron.

We begin by placing Levi as the third son after Reuben and Simeon. Then under him, you come down to Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. It mentions that Levi lived 137 years.

Then it gives the sons of Gershon, Libni, and Shimei, according to their families, the sons of Kohath, Amram, Ishar, Hebron, and Uzziel. So we're going to find four great divisions here of the Kohathites. The years of the life of Kohath, 133.

The sons of Merari are Mali and Mushi. These are the families of Levi according to their generations. Notice it is careful to tell you that these are houses.

These are families. Then it says in verse 20, Now Amram took for himself Jochebed, his father's sister, as wife. Some translations have tried to water this down.

If you read certain ones, it will say that this is a first cousin. Like his father's brother's daughter or something. They try to retranslate sister as niece, his father's niece, which would be his cousin.

To avoid a conflict with the law of Moses that says that this would be incest. But Amram took for himself Jochebed, his father's sister, as wife. She bore him Aaron and Moses.

The years of the life of Amram were 137. The sons of Ishar were Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Zithri.

Aaron took to himself Elisheba, daughter of Amenadab. This is essentially the same as Elizabeth. Elisheba, my God has promised.

Daughter of Amenadab, sister of Nashon, as wife. She bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. All of these names will figure prominently in our account down the road.

The sons of Korah were Asir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These are the families of the Korahites. Eleazar, Aaron's son, took for himself one of the daughters of Putiel as wife.

She bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites according to their families. This account tells us at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end that it is an account of the heads of fathers' houses of Levites.

These are the major clan groups and family groups. I say that because there is a difficulty here with Amram and Jochebed and the statement that she bore him Aaron and Moses. When you go a little bit further in the Word of God, you find that at this time, at the time of the Exodus, there are thousands of Amramites.

There are thousands of individuals at this level. Since Moses is known to have only had two sons, that means that Aaron and whatever his sons did had to account for all of these other thousands. That erroneous and obviously ridiculous conclusion is based on a misunderstanding of what is being said here.

Most commentators circumvent this difficulty by saying there were two Amrams. That there is the Amram, the son of Kohath, and then there were many intervening generations, and then there was another Amram. Well, I don't know how much benefit there is in going through all the gory details of this.

I have spent a lot of time working through all of the possibilities and the language of each of the verses in which Amram is mentioned and the evidence pro and con of the different theories. Everybody acknowledges that this is a big problem. There is not enough time in the life of Amram for him to last long enough.

In other words, there are too few generations, in his case, to get to Moses where there are 12 generations for Joshua in the same period of time. Why would everyone else be proliferating and having generation after generation, but the Amramites are so few? Yet, when the people are numbered at the point of the Exodus, there are thousands of descendants of Amram, and yet we have only had Moses and Aaron and their sons mentioned. So there is obviously a confusion here, and it is compounded by the space of years.

Suffice it to say that we can say with confidence that Moses and Aaron are in the tribe of Levi, they are in the clan of Kohath, and they have Amram as some ancestor. The Amram who is the grandson of Levi is an ancestor. If you want to believe that he is the father, that is fine.

It is not going to affect your faith or your daily walk in any way. I personally am convinced that Amram is not the father. If you want to think that there is a second Amram, that is fine.

In my view, we do not know what Moses' father's name was. If it was Amram, so be it. But to have an aunt involved in the marriage, or basically Amram married his aunt, this is something that took place way back in patriarchal days, which depending on your counting is either 200 or 400 years before this.

And with the law from Sinai coming down in very short order, prohibiting all such things and declaring them to be incest, I would be greatly surprised if it had happened just one generation

earlier in Moses' family. I do think that Amram, the grandson of Levi, married his aunt, his father's sister. But Abraham married his half-sister, and marriage within families was much more common in the patriarchal days.

But we are a couple of hundred years beyond the patriarchal days now. And I find it highly unlikely that Moses had his great-aunt as his mother. It just does not follow.

The numbers and the years don't work out right. So if you want more details on that, you can ask me sometime and I can give you the passages. We will be seeing something coming up later on.

You will remember when, I'll tell you now and remind you when we get there, after they crossed the Red Sea, there is a song and dance festival that takes place, and Miriam is mentioned. Look ahead sometime and see the way she is identified, if you want another clue as to the relationship between Moses and Aaron and Miriam. But we'll hit that when we come to it.

So, verse 26, what is the whole point? Rather than getting bogged down in the things that we may not be able to figure out completely, these are the same Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, according to their armies. Now what is particularly interesting here is, to go back to verse 23, Aaron took to himself Elisheba, daughter of Amenadab, sister of Nashon, as wife. She bore Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, from whom are all the priests in Israel descended.

Certainly from Levi, but not all Levites are priests, right? What can we say about all priests in Israel, all legitimate priests? Who are they descended from within the tribe of Levi? They are descended from Aaron. So, we would figure, well, these are Levites, they are pure as the driven snow, all the way back to Levi. Typically people married within their tribe.

However, Elisheba is not a Levite. She is from the tribe of Judah. Elisheba is from the tribe of Judah.

If you track down Amenadab and Nashon, you will find that they are listed later on in the tribe of Judah. You have sort of the reverse taking place when you get down to the time of Christ, where you have an interaction, because we know that Mary and Elizabeth are related. Who is Elizabeth married to? The mother of John the Baptist.

She is married to a priest. She is married to Zacharias, right? And John the Baptist is descended from that union. But we also know that Joseph and Mary are from the tribe of Judah.

So there has been intermarriage between the tribes of Levi and Judah in the periphery of John the Baptist and of the Lord Jesus. You have it kind of at the end of that period, just as you have it at the beginning. And the names are very similar.

Of Elizabeth, who by being related to Mary, we strongly suspect is from the tribe of Judah, and the priestly family. Elisheba, my God has promised. There is the promise.

And of course you find the great melding together of prophet, priest, and king in the Lord Jesus Himself, who has antecedents in both the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Levi. So that is part of what we glean from these verses. But verse 26 says, This is the Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies.

It is as though the story is interrupted to say, Let me tell you just a little bit more. We have had the birth narrative and the bull rushes and the meeting of Aaron and Moses and all of that. But then he goes back and places them in the context of hereditary ties to the nation.

They have a link to Israel that is specified here for some reason. Why would that be? Well, why do we have the genealogies at the beginning of the gospel narratives in Matthew and Luke? In chapter 1 of one and chapter 3 of the other, I think we have the lineage of the Lord Jesus given to us. Why is that? Why do we need that? It establishes the legitimacy of the deliverer who is from God, sent by God, commissioned by God, and yet is one of the people who are being delivered.

And it speaks of and foreshadows the role of the Lord Jesus as our kinsman redeemer, our kinsman deliverer. He is fully human. He is also a man of God.