goodfaith MAGAZINE

May 18: The Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 6:1-9)

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that God emphasizes God's name "I AM" and reminds Moses of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? How does this affect Moses' understanding of God's promise to deliver Israel?
2. In verse 9, Moses shares the people's discouragement and their inability to hear God's promises. What can we learn from the Israelites' reaction to God's promises in the midst of difficult circumstances? Have you experienced something similar?
3. Even though Moses doubts whether the people will listen to him (Exodus 6:9), God commands him to speak to them. What happens when Moses obeys? What does this tell us about the relationship between obedience and faith, especially when results are uncertain?

Good Faith Bible Study
Kathy and Nathan Maxwell
May 18, 2025
"The Mosaic Covenant"
Exodus 6:1-8
https://goodfaithmedia.org/bible-studies/

If we jump right into Exodus 6:1 this week, it sounds like things are looking up for the Hebrews who have been enslaved in Egypt. Verses 1-8 are filled with promises for the future: God's mighty hand will come to the rescue of God's people. God has not forgotten the Hebrews. God has remembered the covenant!

But the closing verses of Exodus 5 reveal that all is <u>not</u> well. God has sent Moses, Aaron and Miriam to rescue God's people … but things have just gotten worse. Pharaoh mistreats the Hebrews even more brutally than before, and the Hebrews blame Moses and Aaron.

In Exodus 5:21, the Hebrews say, "The Lord look upon you and judge! You have brought us into bad odor with Pharaoh and his officials, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." And then Moses turns around and blames God in verse 22: "O Lord, why have you mistreated this people? Why did you ever send me? Since I first came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has mistreated this people, and you have done nothing at all to deliver your people."

Exodus 6 begins in a moment of deep discouragement and a time when everyone is divided. Moses has done what God has asked—he's gone to Pharaoh, demanded freedom for the

Israelites—and things have only got worse. Pharaoh didn't budge. The people are angry. Moses is questioning. And then God speaks again in our passage, Exodus 6:1-8.

Listen to the tone here. God doesn't give Moses a strategy. God gives him a promise.

Verses 1-3: "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh ... I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name 'the Lord' I did not make myself fully known to them.'"

And what follows is a series of divine "I will" statements. Seven of them, actually. Seven promises that form the backbone of what we often call the Mosaic Covenant.

In his commentary on Exodus in "The Story of God Commentary" series, Christopher Wright observes that the first three "I will" statements, found in verse 6, describe God's redeeming work:

I will bring you out
I will free you
I will redeem you

The next two statements, in verse 7, describe the covenant relationship between God and the people:

I will take you as my people
I will be your God

And the final two statements in verse 8 focus on the promise of land that God first gave to Abraham:

I will bring you to the land
I will give it to you as a possession

Redemption, covenant, the provision of land: These themes should sound familiar by now. They echo the larger covenantal story of Scripture—the covenantal metanarrative we've been talking about in these lessons. The narrator in Exodus is building anticipation in this story. With Moses, we remember the promises of God—the faithfulness of God in the past—and we wait with bated breath—because the God who liberates remembers, too.

In verse 5: "I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant."

Now, when the Bible says God "remembers," it's not like God forgot. It's a signal that God is acting—faithfully, and in line with what was promised generations ago.

Today we hear this ancient story of liberation also as the people of God. So we might well ask: Is God still liberating? Is God still remembering promises? Is this covenantal metanarrative part of

my story, too? Where is God saying, “I will bring you out … I will deliver you … I will redeem you” today?

Because let’s be honest—there are still Pharaohs. There are still systems of brutal oppression. There are still people groaning under the weight of injustice. Sometimes we fight against these systems … and sometimes we participate in them, if only through our inaction. But if we are a part of the covenant people, and if we actually take the covenant seriously, and if we see that God is not neutral, then we cannot be neutral either.

This passage calls us to hope—and it also calls us to participation.

God does tell Moses “I will” seven times. But there are two more “will” statements in this passage. They frame verses 2-7a, and this time, God is not the subject. God says, “You will see what I will do” in verse 1 and “you will know that I am the Lord your God” (v. 7b).

When we have seen clearly, and when we truly know, then we act. God’s promises assume response. God’s liberation isn't just for the sake of freedom—it's for the sake of covenantal relationship: “I will be your God, and you will be my people.” That’s not a one-sided deal. That’s an invitation into mutuality, into identity and mission.

And for Christians, of course, we see this covenantal thread fulfilled and renewed in Christ—the new covenant, as Jesus puts it. Not abolishing the old, but fulfilling it. Where the law is written not just on tablets of stone but on our hearts.

So what does this mean for us?

It means that God is still the One who hears. Who remembers. Who acts. Who delivers. It means that covenant is not just a dusty theological idea—it is still the defining rhythm of our relationship with the Divine.

It means that God’s promises are not just for the past. Just like with the Hebrews, they are breaking into our present, and they are reshaping our future.

So let me close with this:

If you’re feeling like Moses this week—frustrated, discouraged, wondering if the promises are real—listen again to God’s words in Exodus 6:

“I am the Lord. I will bring you out. I will deliver you. I will redeem you. I will take you as my people.”

That’s covenant. That’s hope. That’s the God who never lets go.

May we trust the promise. May we live the covenant. And may we join God in the work of liberation that is still unfolding.