

The Almighty “I Am” who says “I will” (Exodus 6:1-9)

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In the book Prince Caspian, C.S. Lewis writes about a time when

- people hadn't seen Aslan at work for hundreds of years,
 - o but there were prophecies waiting to be fulfilled
- A murderous king was ruling over the Narnians.
- Messengers come from a faraway land with words of hope,
 - o but the oppressed people doubt and don't trust the messengers.

Still, Aslan came to defeat enemies mightily and set the captives free, and

- 'along the way [he'll] tenderly call more followers to his side:
 - o an awkward teenaged girl, liberated farm animals,
 - o a boy being beaten by an abusive man,
 - o a tired-looking math teacher plagued by [stubborn] schoolboys,
 - o and a little old woman who knows Aslan the moment she sees him...'¹
 - o He'll heal wounds and even put Reepicheep back together.

Lucy is the first to see the great lion, the true King. “Aslan,” said Lucy. “you're bigger.”

“That is because you are older, little one,” answered he.

[She asks] “Not because you are?”

[He replies] “I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger.”²

That's a lot like the true story of Exodus chapter 6 where we'll be today.

- Moses writes about a time there was a murderous king of Egypt
- and God's people hadn't seen the Almighty at work for hundreds of years.
- They didn't trust Aaron and Moses at the end of ch 5 where we left off last time.
- God's message of hope from a faraway land was falling on deaf ears of a doubting distrusting people.
 - o But there were unfulfilled prophecies of a lion, a serpent-crusher, and salvation
 - o For Abraham's children there's promises to be fulfilled by God conquering and liberating, helping, healing, restoring, and calling others to Himself on the way.
 - And in this story children of God will see Him as bigger the more we grow and know Him

6:1 *But the LORD said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.”* ² *God spoke to Moses and said to him, “**I am** the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶ Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘**I am** the LORD, and **I will** bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and **I will** deliver you from slavery to them, and **I will** redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. ⁷ **I will** take you to be my people, and **I will** be your God, and you shall know that **I am** the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the*

Egyptians. ⁸ **I will** bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. **I will** give it to you for a possession. **I am** the LORD.' ” ⁹ Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

The main point of the passage is repeated: 'I am' 3x, 'I will' 7x. This is the I am who says I will

- Outline:**
1. 'I am' – His name (v. 1-8)
 2. 'I will' – His promise (v. 6-9)
 3. 'You shall' – application

First 'I am': ² God spoke to Moses and said to him, "**I am the LORD...**" [v. 6:] Say therefore to the people of Israel, '**I am the LORD...**' [v. 7, middle of the verse] ... and you shall know that **I am the LORD your God...**' [and then again in v. 8, look at the end of v. 8] ... **I am the LORD.**' ”

Moses and Israel needed to hear and know, so do we. Ryken: 'Exodus is a God-centered book with a God-centered message that teaches us to have a God-centered life. Whatever problems we have, whatever difficulties we face, the most important thing is to know who God is. We are called to place our trust in the One who says, "I am the LORD." When there is trouble in the family, and we don't know how to bring peace, he says, "I am the LORD." When a relationship is broken and cannot be mended, he says, "I am the LORD." When nothing seems to go right, and it is not certain how things will ever work out—even then he says, "I am the LORD."'”³

LORD in all capital letters is the great Jehovah, or Yahweh in Hebrew.

- The purpose of all this is so that you know 'I am **Yahweh**.'
- The context of this is what Pharaoh said in chapter 5, verse 2: '*Who is **the LORD***' [more literally '*who is Yahweh that I should listen...I do not know Yahweh*'].
- Pharaoh doesn't know Him, but Israel will know Him.
- v. 22 says Moses turned to Yahweh and asked '*O Lord, why...*'
 - o This is 'Lord' not in all capital letters, Hebrew **Adonai** (Lord / Master).

In Ex 6:2 God is the Hebrew name **Elohim** and in v. 3 God Almighty is the Hebrew **El Shaddai**

Ps 91:1 says we can 'rest in the shadow of the Almighty' (Elisabeth Elliot book title)

What's in a name? A lot with God. **6:3:** *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shaddai/God Almighty, but by my name Yahweh/the LORD I did not make myself known to them.*

- The God who says 'I Am' is Almighty (therefore He can do what He says 'I will')
- Ex 17 is when Yahweh appeared to Abraham and said '*I am God Almighty*'/El Shaddai.
- In the chapters around that, God also revealed Himself as El Elyon (God Most High),
 - o El Roi (God who sees / looks after),
 - o El Olam (God everlasting, eternal, unchanging),
 - o and Jehovah-Jireh (my provider, or Yahweh will provide all I need).⁴

Michael Card put God's names to song: El Shaddai, El Shaddai, El-Elyon [Most High] Adonai [Master]

Age to age You're still the same [El Olam], By the power of the name ...

You saved the son of Abraham [Jehovah-Jireh] Through the power of Your hand ...

To the outcast on her knees You were the God who really sees [El Roi]

And by Your might You set Your children free [Yahweh in Ex 6-14]

In Job (time of Abraham), *Shaddai/Almighty* is His main name.

- The end of Job says faultfinders aren't to contend with the Almighty
- and Job says he knows this God can do all things and Job had heard of God, but now he saw God in a greater way.⁵
- I think that's the idea of Ex 6:3, in old days people knew of His power as almighty Creator, but in Exodus they'll know Him as Savior.

v. 6-8 says they'll now know experientially His delivering, redeeming, land-giving

Note: name "Yahweh" was spoken over 30x in Genesis (on lips of Abraham and others).

So why does He say in v. 3 *'by my name Yahweh/LORD I did not make myself known to them'*?

- Remember Ex 3, Moses asks for His name, reply: tell them I am who I am...Yahweh
- I am=self-sufficient, self-existent, etc. is the 1st person verb related to the noun Yahweh
- Kaiser points out this is not the Hebrew form to say 'I did not let them know my name.'⁶
- That verb *know* is deeper than in English
- a *name* in the Bible was deeper than what you're called, it was what your character is.
- The name of God is the nature of God.

Ex 6:3 isn't saying the name 'Yahweh' wasn't spoken or known before.

- Gen 4:26 says men *'called on the name of Yahweh'* (days of Seth).
- But the verse right before that gives a hint what it means for Yahweh to be made known
 - o same verb: 'Adam **knew** his wife so she gave birth to Seth...'
 - o He didn't just know how his wife's name *Eve*, she was made known to him in covenant love making a family.

I knew the name Jaime as a kid, but for 25+ years I've known Jaime as my wife

- who she is, how she thinks and feels (I'm still figuring it out).
- Israel will now know Yahweh more like that.

11 years ago this last week I brought my adopted son into our family.

- In my weeks in Congo, I showed him pictures to teach his siblings names,
- in person they made themselves known to him

My son now knew experientially and relationally the person behind their names

Ex 4 is the first time Yahweh made Himself known in this personal way: *'Israel is my son...let my son go.'*

- They had word pictures before when they were taught Yahweh's name,
 - o but now He makes Himself known in His person,
 - o in full character and covenant love, making them family.

He later talks about His adoption of Israel in Ezekiel like rescuing an orphan child from death:

*'I pledged Myself to you, entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine...the day I chose Israel, I...made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt...saying: I am Yahweh...'*⁷

It was in the land of Egypt that Yahweh made His name known, or made Himself known, as He adopts them and brings them to the covenant land. v. 7: *I will take you to be my people* [context is exodus event], *and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*⁸ *I will bring you into the land...*

Yahweh's saving covenant-fulfilling character wasn't experientially known till that happened. The exodus event will make known Yahweh

- as rescuer from burdens, as liberator of slaves, as redeemer, as adoptive Father.
- In Genesis they use the name, in the Exodus they knew the name.

Phil Ryken: 'Abraham knew God as a promise-maker; Moses came to know him as a promise-keeper. Whereas the patriarchs had to live by faith, [Moses, Israel will live more] by sight... In the exodus he was demonstrating the saving power behind his special name... made known first only now, to... the Exodus generation, who will witness [Yahweh's] mighty saving power.'⁸

That takes us from His name ("I am Yahweh") to His Promises ("I will"). v. 6-8 has seven:

- Middle of v. 6: ***I will** bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians*
- *and **I will** deliver you from slavery to them,*
- *and **I will** redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.*
- ***I will** take you to be my people, and **I will** be your God...*
- ***I will** bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*
- ***I will** give it to you for a possession.*

One writer says these 7 promises one after another are like 7 hammer blows.⁹

- God's hammering home the truth, He's driving it deeper and deeper,
- He'll keep it together and secure their future.

He'll complete what He began, full circle: '*I will bring you out...I will bring you into the land... I swore to give...I will give it to you...*' And He will deliver and redeem to take as His own son.

He says He'll do it with an outstretched arm, mightily lovingly welcoming as family

We sang how He helps, causes us to stand, upheld by His gracious omnipotent (almighty) hand.

The heart of v. 6 is the promise '*I will redeem...*' It's a word we use lightly or cheaply,

- 'redeem leftover bottles for 5 cents,' or you can redeem a coupon at Walmart,
- or a sports team that lost badly we say they get a chance to redeem themselves (working hard to get better or do better).

The biblical concept isn't recycling leftovers, it's not revenge in sports,

- and it's the opposite of human effort or anything cheap.
- God alone by precious blood buys back a slave to take as a son.

He already owned Israel, but He'll buy them back and bring them by adoption into His family.

This is the 1st time God uses the word redeem but Moses later uses this word often in the Law.

If an Israelite was sold as a slave to pay back a debt,

- a family member, the closest of kin could be a kinsman-redeemer,
 - o paying the price to restore.
 - o The kinsman redeemer takes the redeemed as his own, providing all needs, buying back what's lost, restoring as family (like Ruth's story).

Land and inheritance were also involved in redemption law, v. 8 promises land to inherit

One writer says the word redeem is 'the essence of the meaning of the entire exodus story.'¹⁰

- It defines history as redemptive history.
- It's His story of how He redeems and brings children into His family as full-heirs.

That takes us to v. 7 where He takes them as His people as their God. It's been said 'the essential meaning of the entire Book of Exodus [is]...the Lord adopted... His people and promised them that He would be their God...knowing YHWH...in the full sense'¹¹

When 6:7 says 'I will take you to be my people...' it's the same verb in ch 2

- the adoption story of baby Moses in the river, where Pharaoh's daughter had them take the basket to her and took the child to be nursed, nurtured and weaned.
- What she did for Moses, God will for Israel.
- It's the same verb in Gen 48 when Jacob takes Joseph's sons as his own.¹²
- It's often used of taking a wife by covenant
- and in Ex 12 of taking a lamb, taking its blood, etc.

In the Passover Seder to this day I'm told they take the cups and recite the promises of Ex ch 6.

v. 7 becomes the heart of the covenant, I take you as my people and I will be your God

It was at a Passover meal that Jesus held the cup in His hand and said '*this is the new covenant in my blood...*' That phrase 'new covenant' is from Jer 31, another text with 'I will' 7x: *...days are coming...when I will cut a new covenant...not like the covenant...out of the land of Egypt ... I was a husband to them,*" declares Yahweh. *"But this is the covenant which I will cut... I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it... will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more ...[the heart of it] I will be their God, and they shall be My people"*¹³

Right out of Ex 6:7, now my people and 'I will be your God.'

- Even in the OT these promises are applied to future newer covenant grace to come.
- Bigger and better than Israel out of Egypt in physical deliverance, there's spiritual deliverance for all God's people. v. 7 has future tense:

⁷ ***I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am ...***

That takes us from His name *I am* and His promise 'I will' to 'you shall' – application

Let's start with how OT Israel applied the truths of this passage, then how the NT church does.

Israel came to know their God more and the prophets repeat and apply these truths from Ex 6:

- Isa 43: *Do not fear, for I have **redeemed** you...you are **Mine!** When you pass through the waters, **I will be with you**...they will not overflow you... For **I am Yahweh**...you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you...Do not fear, for I am with you...Bring **My sons** from afar And **My daughters** from the ends of the earth...*
- 54:8 *'...with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,' says...your **Redeemer**.*
- Isa 63 says this about the Exodus: *'In His love and in His mercy He **redeemed** them, And He lifted them and carried them all the days...caused His glorious **arm** to go at the right hand of Moses...You, O LORD, are our **Father**, Our **Redeemer** from of old...*

Ps 103 celebrates God like a father having compassion on His children,

- but greater and higher than the heavens.
- It says bless the Lord, O my soul, forget none of His benefits,
- He forgives all our iniquities, and '*redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.*'¹⁴

Tony Merida writes of his friend Dennis Osmondi in Kenya. MSNBC featured their story about a little boy named Benjamin. 'Benjamin was thrown into an 18-foot hole in a Nairobi slum. The hole was the public toilet. A passing stranger heard his cry and spent hours digging down into the muck to rescue him from death. Benjamin has taken in by New Life Home Trust and eventually placed into the loving family of Dennis and Allison. What a picture of what God did for Israel! What a picture of what He has done for us!...the Father, who "redeems your life from the Pit..." ... and placed you in His eternal family... meditate on your sonship daily.'¹⁵

Sing 'redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child and forever I am!'¹⁶

How wonderful the Father's love in Ex 6:7 taking us to be His people saying He'll be our God! The NT quotes this phrase and applies it to the church in 2 Cor 6:16: '*I will be their God, and they shall be my people...I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty...all the promises of God find their yes in*' Jesus.¹⁷

In Jesus, the 'I will' of God's promises become 'I did' (or 'it is finished' as He said it)

It's been said "As we listen to Exodus, we hear the first strains of a melody that becomes a symphony in the Gospels...Jesus is the liberator...the Redeemer...Salvation is not us doing something for God; it is about what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. All that is required is to trust in Jesus, believing that he has turned the 'I wills' of salvation into the 'I have done its'¹⁸

God promised to bring Israel out from their burdens into liberty,

- in the gospel we sing 'there my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary!'¹⁹
- Jesus was 'on the cross, my burden gladly bearing'
- so I can say 'the burden of my heart rolled away...and now I am happy all the day!'²⁰

And where sin still burdens, cast your burden on the Lord, He will sustain you (Ps 55:22)

Eph 1 says God also chose us and predestined us to adoption

- and we have redemption in Christ,
- He makes known to us His will, pledges us an inheritance,
- and He has a name above all names.

Ex 6 says in old days God didn't make known His name, but Jesus prays in Jn 17: *that they may have my joy...I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.* What love, joy, in that **I will!**

That same night in the upper room Jesus made known God's name with more **I will** promises:

- *he who loves me will be loved by my Father and I will love him and manifest myself to him*²¹
- *And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father*
- *My children, I will be with you... I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you*
- *if I go and prepare a place for you [heaven], I will come back and take you to be with me*²²

Ex 6:7 says you will know that *I am the Lord your God*, but in v. 9 Israel can't hear and doubts.

- PTL this isn't the end of the story for the doubter.
- In the gospel, Thomas doubted but that's not the end of the story,
- the risen Lord meets Thomas with outstretched arm and a mighty hand with nail prints in it, and Thomas says to Jesus these words from Ex 6: '*my Lord and my God.*'²³

Yahweh said you shall know I am the Lord your God, Thomas says Jesus is his Lord and God.

Can you confess Jesus as 'my Lord and my God'? That's why the gospel was written.

If Jesus isn't your Lord, He's not your Savior, God's not your Father.

- v. 3 says God Almighty appeared in Genesis, and in Revelation He will appear again.
- The Lord of lords will come again on a white horse with a sharp sword to strike down nations, and Rev 19:15 says '*he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.*'
 - o Your only hope is Rev 5: '*Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood*'²⁴

For all who repent and believe, Jesus on the cross takes the wrath of God Almighty

- on Himself to take our place so He can take away our sin
- and take us into His family by redeeming grace.
- As our kinsman redeemer He paid the greatest price for our greatest debt
 - o to buy back all that we lost in sin.
- And there's land for us, too, not in Palestine but in Paradise, the new earth we inherit
To all who meekly receive Him, Jesus promises '*the meek will inherit the earth*' (Mt 5:5)

Ex 6 starts with God saying '*Now you shall see what I will do...*'

- The NT calls us all to see and believe what God has done for our salvation
- and it uses that word *now* in the offer of the gospel:

'*now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation...now he commands all people everywhere to repent.*'²⁵ Turn from sin now, trust Him today, let the redeemed of the Lord say it
Jesus says '*I am the bread of life...whoever comes to me I will never cast out*'²⁶

Let's end with His 'I will' promises in the end of the Bible. In the last book of Revelation, the Lamb overcomes, and His people also '*overcame by the blood of the Lamb.*' Jesus promises:²⁷

- *To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life...in the Paradise of God...*
- *I will give him a white stone, and a new name...and I will give him the morning star.*
- *He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father...*
- *I will make him a pillar...I will write on him the name of My God...and My new name.*
- *if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne* (Rev 2-3)
- Rev 21 is the new earth, '*they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God...Then He said to me, "It is done. I am...the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.*

¹ https://www.nlcwh.org/content.cfm?page_content=blogs_include.cfm&blog_id=2620

² C. S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian* (London: Fontana Books, 1980), p. 122-24.

³ Philip Graham Ryken, *Exodus: Saved for God's Glory* (Crossway, 2005), 173.

⁴ Genesis 14:18-20, 15:2, 16:13, 21:33, 22:14.

⁵ Job 40:2 LEB 'Shall a faultfinder contend with Shaddai?' See also 42:2, 5.

⁶ Walter Kaiser, Jr., *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1990), 1:342.

⁷ Ezekiel 16:8, 20:5 HCSB.

⁸ Ryken, 169.

⁹ Cassuto, *Exodus*, 81.

¹⁰ T. Desmond Alexander, *Exodus*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (InterVarsity Press, 2017), 126–127.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹² Genesis 48:9, for more on the adoption aspect of this message, see Voddie Baucham's sermon on this chapter at www.sermonaudio.com

¹³ Jeremiah 31:31-34 LSB.

¹⁴ Psalm 103:2-5, 11-13 NIV.

¹⁵ Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Exodus*, p. 44.

¹⁶ Fanny Crosby, "Redeemed."

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 1:20.

¹⁸ Ryken, 175.

¹⁹ William Newell, "At Calvary."

²⁰ Carl Boberg, "How Great Thou Art"; and Isaac Watts, "At the Cross."

²¹ John 14:21.

²² 14:14, 13:34, 14:18, 3, NIV.

²³ John 20:28, see also v. 29-31.

²⁴ v. 5, 9 NKJV.

²⁵ 2 Corinthians 6:2, Acts 17:30.

²⁶ John 6:35, 37.

²⁷ Revelation 2:7, 17, 28, 3:5, 12, 20-21 NASB95.