**Session 9: Week 5b**

**Start at 15:00**

***God of Deliverance***

**Exodus 6:1-27**

**10-11 October 2022**

**Review** – Last week we saw the deep discouragement and frustration of all the Israelites, including Moses himself, because the plan for delivering the people seemed to have utterly failed. But now we will see what God has to say to a people whose spirits have been crushed by oppression.

**A Strong Reminder for a Stricken People** – The Lord once again uses the imagery of a strong hand to tell His people that Pharaoh won’t merely *allow* the people to go, he will *command* them to leave his land. In fact, Pharaoh will *push* them out of his land, even though the people don’t see any evidence of this happening yet. And the Lord also tells His people that they will know His name (Yahweh) in a greater way than Abraham, Isaac or Jacob ever did. He reminds them that He *appeared*, He *established*, He has *heard*, and He has *remembered* all that He has promised His people down through the ages. He is not just “the God of yesterday” but also “the God of today”. Then He goes on to list all the things that He *WILL* do for them; i.e. He is “the God of tomorrow.” He was, He is, He is to come: this is Yahweh, the God of Israel. And Pharaoh? He is just “the god of the moment”, who will soon pass off the scene as all men do.

**The Need for “Muscle Memory”** – Moses faithfully gives God’s message of reassurance to his people…but they can’t believe it because of their broken spirit and the harsh slavery they are enduring. There is a lesson to be learned here: ***what we repeat in times of ease we will recall*** *[Tom’s note: “and rely on”]* ***in times of hardship***. We need “muscle memory” to help us run the race when times get tough. The nation of Israel has spent hundreds of years in a pagan culture, and they are hard pressed to remember what the true God is like, so it is difficult for them to trust Him. God is not unaware of this, and He gently leads His people. His desire is to draw out a people who can learn muscle memory so that the next time they face a trial, they will be stronger for the task.

**Uncircumcised Lips** – When God tells Moses to return to Pharaoh with a message from Him, Moses resists, saying that he has “uncircumcised lips”. What does this mean? Moses is saying that his lips are unclean, disobedient participants in this process. Isaiah would later say something similar when God said that He was looking for someone to send to His people. Isaiah said, “Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I come from a people of unclean lips.” Both Moses and Isaiah express that they feel unclean, uncircumcised, not sanctified, not set apart for God’s use. Both men need assurance that they have been called by God, and they will be equipped to do His bidding. And then God gives Moses and Aaron a direct order once again: “Bring my people out of Egypt.”

**Moses’ Genealogy** – At this point Moses includes a genealogy that traces his own family line back to Jacob. It is good to pay attention to the names he lists, because we will encounter many of them later in scripture, and it will be helpful to understand how they fit into the picture. As we read the genealogy we discover that Moses’ father married his aunt (his father’s sister). Remember that the law forbidding such a marriage had not yet been given, and at this time in history marriages between close family members were quite common. But why does Moses choose to include this information at this point in his narrative? He is showing the Israelites that God has the right leaders in place for his people, i.e. that God wanted *this* Moses and *this* Aaron to lead at this time. Moses and Aaron may be filled with self-doubt, but there is no question that in God’s eyes they are the right men for the job.

**God Equips** – Note that Moses and Aaron remain obedient to God despite their self-doubt. As the saying goes, “God does not call the equipped; He equips the called.” God’s intent in the story of Exodus is certainly to show Egypt who the one true God is, but it is also to write on the hearts of his own people that He is a faithful and trustworthy Deliverer without whose help no deliverance is possible. God is determined that this story of deliverance will preach a complete sermon about who He is. So if you find yourself in difficulties as a result of having chosen obedience to the Lord, remember that Jesus—the true and better Moses—calls you blessed. May we be identified with people like Moses and Aaron, men of faith and conviction and also men of doubt and difficulty, who placed their faith in what was unseen instead of what was seen. **They pressed forward in daily obedience, knowing that their reward was not comfort or ease or a smooth way, but was Yahweh Himself.** “You will know my Name as those who came before you did not.”