

## LITTLE THOUGHTS ABOUT OUR BIG MISSION

### A Devotional Theology of Mission — part 9

#### Exodus 6 I am the Lord..... I Will

**Exodus 6:1–3** 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.” <sup>2</sup>God spoke to Moses and said to him, “**I am the LORD (Yahweh)**. <sup>3</sup>I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty (el-shadai), but by my name **the LORD (Yahweh)** I did not make myself known to them (abraham, Isaac and jacob).

This is an unexpected dilemma — because we have the name Yahweh used all the way back in Genesis 4:26. What is going on? Why is that statement here? How do we resolve it.

One theory — Moses inserted what he knew of Yahweh into the earlier narrative of the Pentateuch.

Another theory — They might have used the name Yahweh — but until you experience the Exodus you can never truly know who Yahweh is.

Let’s carry on

**Exodus 6:4–5** I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. <sup>5</sup>Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.

Here’s where we really want to focus our attention

<sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>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.’ ” <sup>9</sup>Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

Beginning in **verse 6** we find the phrase *I am the LORD* three times. That's really important because repetition always helps us know what the author is pre-occupied with — and what he wants us to be pre-occupied with. But where an author repeats himself in a book or a chapter is really important as well. We find the phrase *I am the LORD* once at the beginning, once in the middle and once at the end. They kind of “frame out” the section. Within that framework we find another phrase repeated seven times. It's the phrase, *I will*.

## **I am the LORD — I will**

Let's look at the passage with those phrases highlighted

<sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>**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. <sup>8</sup>**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.'** ”

Let's look at it like this

### **I am the LORD (Yahweh)**

**I will** *bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians*

**I will** *deliver you from slavery to them*

**I will** *redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment*

### **I am the LORD (Yahweh)**

**I will** *take you to be my people*

**I will** *be your God*

And you shall know that

**I am the LORD (Yahweh)** your God who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians

**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** (Yahweh)

**Check this out!** In **Exodus 3** Moses essentially asked God, *Who are you?* In **Exodus 5** Pharaoh said

*Exodus 5:2 “Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.”*

### **1. The Mission of God tells the world who God is!**

The answer to WHO IS THE LORD? is seen in the unfolding miracle of God redeeming the Israelites from bondage and death in Egypt!

**Any time** you say something true about redemption — you are saying something true about **the LORD** (Yahweh).

Let’s give context to what we’re told about **the LORD** in Exodus 6.

Exodus is such a powerful narrative! We’re pulled into the story of God. Rescuing millions of men, women and children from genocide and slavery. Look at the vocabulary of the Exodus

*Exodus 1:11 Therefore they set **taskmasters** over them to **afflict** them with **heavy burdens**. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses.*

*Exodus 1:14 and made their lives **bitter** with **hard** service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they **ruthlessly** made them **work as slaves**.*

**HERE’S THE DEAL** — God **makes Himself known** in redeeming them

In **Exodus 6:5-9** we’re given the summary of the story of the Exodus — all of which tells us WHO the Lord is.

**<sup>5</sup> Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.**

In chapter 3 God told Moses

**Exodus 3:7** Then the Lord said, “I have surely **seen** the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have **heard** their cry because of their taskmasters. I **know** their sufferings,

**the LORD (YAHWEH) sees** and **hears** and **knows**. In other words: **He cares!**

If you don't know this, you don't know the truth about Yahweh.

From **Genesis 3** forward we see the formula for sin:

SIN = SEE and TAKE.

When **the LORD (YAHWEH)** sees, He doesn't take. He sees and He cares.

<sup>6</sup>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.

**the LORD (YAHWEH)** is **not only** caring — **He possess power to save!** When we look at the book of Exodus we need to understand that it's not just a story about a people going from slavery to freedom. It's the account of a cosmic conflict. In the process of liberating the descendants of Abraham from bondage and death under Pharaoh **the LORD (YAHWEH)** is going to show everyone that He is the ABSOLUTE power above all spiritual power.

*Exodus 12:12 NIV* “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and **I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD.**”

<sup>7</sup>**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. <sup>8</sup>**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.**”

**The LORD (YAHWEH)** not only cares; not only possesses ultimate power to save! **His purpose** is to **be in relationship** with those he rescues. He doesn't just want to get them OUT of slavery — He wants to bring them into relationship. Not just any relationship.

**I will take you** is marriage language! In **Exodus 19** we find Moses and the Israelites at Mt. Sinai — where God enters into this marriage covenant with those He has rescued!

**<sup>8</sup>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.**' ”

**The LORD (YAHWEH)** is **the promise keeper** who **has a place** where He will dwell with them — in the land He promised to Abraham.

*Deuteronomy 12:10–11 But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, <sup>11</sup> then to the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the Lord.*

The miraculous redeeming mission of God **tells us the truth** about **WHO the Lord** (Yahweh) is.

But **Exodus 6** has more to say about the way we understand our big mission.

We're not only told **WHO the LORD (YAHWEH)** is; we're told **HOW** accomplishes His mission.

## **2. Mission = Partnership with God in His Redeeming Mission**

After walking through the seven *I Wills* of the Lord we find **a specific genealogy**. That genealogy closes by saying

**Exodus 6:26–30** These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said: “Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts.” <sup>27</sup> It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron. <sup>28</sup> On the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, <sup>29</sup> the Lord said to Moses, “I am the Lord; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.”

**The LORD (YAHWEH)** uses men and women to be **PARTNERS** in His redeeming mission!

From the very beginning of the book of Exodus we see men and women **in partnership** with God in His redeeming mission through their choices and their actions.

In **Exodus 1** — we see how the choices and actions of midwives that were crucial to the mission of God moving forward in history. Pharaoh was attempting his campaign of genocide to wipe out the descendants of Abraham — the people through whom the redeeming plans and purposes were going to be accomplished.

*Exodus 1:15; 17 Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah,... <sup>17</sup> But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live.*

In **Exodus 2** — we see how the choices and actions of a mother and father played a part in the mission of God

*Exodus 2:1–2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months.*

In **Exodus 3** — Moses is called to be a part of the mission of God.

Then in **Exodus 6** we see we see God inviting all those he rescued to partner in His mission by re-telling how God rescued them.

*Deuteronomy 6:20–23 “When your son asks you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you?’ <sup>21</sup> then you shall say to your son, ‘We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. <sup>22</sup> And the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes. <sup>23</sup> And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.*

**DON'T MISS THIS** — HOW does all of that connect with you and me this morning?

We'll start here and work back.

Just as Moses and Aaron and all those redeemed from Egypt were partners in the mission of **the LORD (YAHWEH)** we are **partners** in HIS rescue mission.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell us that **the LORD (YAHWEH)** of Exodus came into human flesh. We see Him invite men and women to partner with Him in His mission: He chose twelve that they might be with Him so He might send them. He commissioned ALL of His followers to be in His mission.

*Mark 16:15 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.*

Every time we re-tell the story of what God has done to save us from our great enemies of sin and death, we are answering the question, Who is the Lord?

As we proclaim the good news of all He has done to redeem our broken world we are actually **telling the truth about the LORD (YAHWEH)** — telling the truth about who the Lord is!

### **3. Mission = Telling the world that God cares**

As we share the Gospel we're telling the world that no matter how things look — **the LORD sees** and **hears** and **knows** how broken we are, how broken our world is. The Gospel tells us that **He cares! The LORD** cares so much that He personally did something about it. **The LORD** came and joined us in our broken world — shared in our suffering — suffered **with** us. **The LORD** came and suffered **for** us!

**QUOTE: Matt Smethurst** — *Every religion is giving swimming lessons to drowned men. The techniques vary, but the instructors stay together, safe in the boat. Except one. He alone dives in. He alone submerges. He alone saves.*

### **4. Mission = Telling the world that God possesses the power to save us**

As we share the Gospel we're telling **the truth about the LORD** — that He **not only** cares — He actually possesses the power to save!

Christianity isn't just about God helping us be better people or helping people have a better life. We are pitted in a very real cosmic conflict. There is the Kingdom of life and light under the rule of **the LORD** and there is the kingdom of death and darkness under the rule of the one Jesus called the father lies..

*Ephesians 6:12 KJV For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

As we share the Gospel we're telling people that **the LORD** possesses ABSOLUTE power over that power

*Colossians 2:15 (The Message) He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets.*

As we share the Gospel we're telling people that **the LORD** possesses ABSOLUTE power over death itself

*Revelation 1:18 (NLT) I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.*

### **5. Mission = Telling the world that God desires relationship with us.**

As we share the Gospel, we're telling **the truth about the LORD** — That He not only possesses ultimate power to save — He actually exercises His power to saves us to **relationship** with Him — relationship that is described in the language of marriage

*Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*

### **6. Mission = Telling the world that God is the promise keeper who has a place for us to dwell with Him**

THAT has always been in the heart of God. The Garden of Eden was exactly that! It was the place where mankind would dwell with God. The pinnacle of the creation was **not** the creation of man on the 6<sup>th</sup> day.

**QUOTE: L. Michael Morales** — *“Humanity, nevertheless, is not the culmination of creation, but rather humanity in Sabbath day communion with God.”*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> L. Michael Morales; Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?



Sin removed man from that place and from the presence of God. History is the story of God's mission to make the way for man to forever be in the presence of God.

Fast forward to the book of Revelation where we find a new heaven and a new earth

*Revelation 21:3–4* And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, **the dwelling place of God is with man**. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

*Revelation 22:3–5* No longer will there be anything accursed, but **the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it**, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> **They will see his face**, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, **for the Lord God will be their light**, and they will reign forever and ever.

Everything from Genesis 3 forward is moving towards man being redeemed and restored to the 7<sup>th</sup> day of creation!

I want to close with this:

**7. Mission = re-telling the redeeming mission of God by our joyful worship and obedience.**

*Deuteronomy 26:5–11* “And you shall **make response** before **the LORD** your God, ‘A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. <sup>6</sup> And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labor. <sup>7</sup> Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. <sup>9</sup> And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup> **And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground**, which you, O LORD, have given me.’ And you shall set it down before **the LORD** your God and **worship** before the LORD your God. <sup>11</sup> **And you shall rejoice** in all the good that **the LORD** your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.

**Deuteronomy 26:16–19** “This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. **You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.** <sup>17</sup> You have declared today that **the LORD is your God**, and that you will **walk** in his ways, and **keep** his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will **obey** his voice. <sup>18</sup> And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, <sup>19</sup> and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.”