

UNIT 8

THE ASSURANCE OF DELIVERANCE

(Exodus 5:22–6:13)

INTRODUCTION ¹

Text and Textual Notes

¹ In view of the apparent failure of the mission, Moses seeks Yahweh for assurance. The answer from Yahweh not only assures him that all is well, but that there will be a great deliverance. The passage can be divided into three parts: the complaint of Moses (5:22,23), the promise of Yahweh (6:1-8), and the instructions for Moses (6:9-13). The message is a composite of these three parts: Moses complains because God has not delivered his people as he said he would, and God answers that he will because he is the sovereign covenant God who keeps his word. Therefore, Moses must keep his commission to speak God's word. See further, E. A. Martens, "Tackling Old Testament Theology," *JETS* 20 (1977):123-132.

5:22 Moses returned² to Yahweh, and said, “O Lord, why have you brought trouble to this people?³ Why did you ever⁴ send me? From the time I went to speak to Pharaoh in your name, he has caused trouble⁵ for this people, and you have certainly not rescued⁶ your people.”

² Literally, “and Moses returned”

³ The verb is *hare‘otah*, the *hiphil* perfect of *ra‘a‘*. The word itself means “to do evil,” and in this stem “to cause evil”--but evil in the sense of pain, calamity, trouble or affliction, and not always in the sense of sin. Certainly not here. How God had allowed Pharaoh to oppose them had brought greater pain to the Israelites. Moses’ question is rhetorical; the point is more of a complaint or accusation to God, although there is in it the desire to know why. Jacob comments that such frank words were a sign of the man’s closeness to God. God never has objected from such bold complaints by the devout. He then notes how God was angry with His defenders in Job rather than by Job’s heated accusations (p. 139).

⁴ The demonstrative pronoun is enclitic here, serving for emphasis in the question (see Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, par. 118). This second question continues Moses bold approach to God, more chiding than praying. He is implying that if this was the result of the call, then God had no purpose calling him (compare Jeremiah’s similar complaint in Jer. 20).

⁵ Now the verb *hera‘* has a different subject– Pharaoh. The ultimate cause of the trouble was God, but the immediate cause was Pharaoh and the way he increased the work. Moses knows all about the sovereignty of God; and as he speaks in God’s name, he sees the effect it has on pagans like Pharaoh. So the rhetorical questions are designed to prod God to act differently.

⁶ The Hebrew construction is emphatic: *w^ehatssel lo’ - hitssalta*. The verb *natsal* means “to deliver, rescue” in the sense of plucking out, even plundering. The infinitive absolute strengthens both the idea of the verb and the negative. God had not delivered this people at all.

6:1⁷ Then Yahweh said to Moses, “Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh,⁸ for by my strong hand⁹ he shall release them,¹⁰ and by my strong hand he shall drive them out of his land.” **6:2** God spoke¹¹ to Moses and said to him, “I am Yahweh,¹² **6:3** and I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as¹³ God Almighty,¹⁴ but by¹⁵ my name Yahweh I was not known to them.¹⁶ **6:3** And I

⁷ The second section begins here as God calms Moses and assures him of his presence with them, a fact that guarantees the great deliverance to come. This section has been one of the critical texts for the theories of pentateuchal criticism, and therefore warrants careful study and precise translation..

⁸ The expression “I will do to Pharaoh” always refers to the plagues. God would first show his sovereignty over Pharaoh before defeating him.

⁹ The expression “with a strong hand” (*u-b^eyad khazaqah*) could refer to God’s powerful intervention or to Pharaoh’s forceful pursuit. In Exodus 3:19 it referred to Yahweh’s strong hand, and while this seems not as grammatically clear here, it probably is what is intended. All Egypt ultimately desired that Israel be released (12:33), and when they were Pharaoh pursued them to the Sea, and so in a sense drove them out--whether that was his intent or not. But ultimately it was God’s power that was the real force behind it all.

Cassuto follows a distinctively Rabbinic approach, stating that it is unlikely that the phrase would be used in the same verse twice with the same meaning. So the first “mighty hand” is God’s, and the second “mighty hand” is Pharaoh’s (*Exodus*, p. 74). It is true that if Pharaoh acted forcefully in any way it is because God was acting forcefully in his life..

¹⁰ In Exodus 12:33 we read that the Egyptians were eager to send (release) Israel away in haste, because they all thought they were going to die.

¹¹ Literally, “and God spoke”

¹² This announcement draws in the preceding revelation in 3:15. In that place God called Moses to this task. He explained the significance of the name Yahweh by the enigmatic “I AM that I AM” exposition. “I AM,” that is *'ehyeh*, is not a name; “Yahweh” is. But the explanation of the name with this sentence indicates that Yahweh is the One who is always there, and that guarantees the future, for everything He does is consistent with His nature. He is eternal, never changing; He remains. But now, in Exodus 6, the full meaning of the name Yahweh will be unfolded (for these verses, see Jacob, *Exodus*).

¹³ The preposition *bet* in this construction should be classified as a *beth essentiae*, a beth of essence (see also GKC, par 119i).

¹⁴ The traditional rendering of the title as Almighty is reflected in LXX and Jerome. But there is still little agreement on the etymology and exact meaning of *'el-shadday*. Suggestions

have included the idea of “mountain God,” meaning the high God, as well as “the God with breasts.” But there is very little evidence to go on for such conclusions, and not much reason to question the early translations.

¹⁵ The noun *sh^emi*, “my name” (and “Yahweh” is in apposition to it), is an adverbial accusative, specifying how the patriarchs “knew” him.

¹⁶ The verb is the *niphal* form *noda‘ti*. If the text had wanted to say, “I did not make myself known,” then a *hiphil* form would have been more likely. It is saying, “but by my name Yahweh I was not known to them.”

There are a number of important issues that need clarification in the interpretation of this section. The main points of this section of notes are drawn from the commentaries by Benno Jacob and Umberto Cassuto. First, it is important to note that “I am Yahweh” is not a new revelation of a previously unknown name. That is not the way it would be written if it were. This is the identification of the covenant God as the one calling Moses--that would be proof for the people that their God had called him.

Second, the title “El Shadday” is not a name, but a title. It is true that in the patriarchal accounts “El Shadday” is used six times; in Job it is used thirty times. Many conclude that it does reflect the idea of might or power. In some of those passages that reveal God as “El Shadday,” the name “Yahweh” was also used. But Wellhausen and other proponents of the old source critical analysis used Exodus 6:3 to show that P was aware that the name “Yahweh” was not known by them, even though J wrote using the name as part of his theology. But there is a better explanation than that.

Third, a careful reading of the texts of Genesis shows that Yahweh had appeared to the patriarchs (12:1, 17:1, 18:1, 26:2, 26:24, 26:12, 35:1, 48:3), and that He spoke to each one of them (12:7, 15:1, 26:2, 28:13, 31:3). The name “Yahweh” occurs 162 times in Genesis, 34 of those times on the lips of speakers in Genesis (Walter C. Kaiser, Jr, *Exodus*, in *EBC*, pp. 340, 341). They also made proclamation of Yahweh by name (4:26, 12:8); they named places with the name (22:14). These passages cannot be ignored, or passed off as later interpretation.

Fourth, “Yahweh” revealed himself as the God of power, the sovereign God, who was true to Himself and could be believed. He would do as he said (Nu. 23:19; 14:35; Exod. 12:25; 22:24; 24:14; 36:36; 37:14).

Fifth, there is a difference between promise and fulfillment in the way revelation is apprehended. The patriarchs were individuals who received the promises; but without the fulfillment they were empty words. The fulfillment could only come after they became a nation. Now, in Egypt, they are ready to become that promised nation. The two periods were not distinguished by not having and by having the name, but by two ways God revealed the significance of His name.

“I am Yahweh” to the patriarchs indicated that He was the absolute, almighty, eternal God. The patriarchs were individuals sojourning in the land. God appeared to them in the significance of El Shadday. That was not His name; He appeared as El Shadday. So Genesis 17:1 says that “Yahweh appeared . . . and said, ‘I am El Shadday’.” See also 35:11, 48:2, 28:3.

Sixth, the verb “to know” is never used to introduce a name which had never been known or experienced. The *niphal* and *hiphil* of the verb are used only to describe the recognition of the overtones or significance of the name (see Jer. 16:21, Isa. 52:6; Ps. 83:17ff; 1 Kings 8:41ff. [people will know His name when prayers are answered]). For someone to say that he knew Yahweh meant that Yahweh had been experienced or recognized (see Exod. 33:6; 1 Kings 18:36; Jer. 28:9; and Psalm 76:2).

Seventh, “Yahweh” is not one of God’s names--it is His only name. Other titles, like “El Shadday,” are not names but means of revealing Yahweh. All the revelations to the patriarchs could not compare to this one, because God was now dealing with the nation. He would make His name known to them through His deeds (see Ezek. 20:5).

So now they will “know” the “name.” The verb *yada*‘ means more than “aware of, be knowledgeable about”; it means “to experience” the reality of the revelation by that name. This harmonizes with the usage of *shem*, “name,” which means all the attributes and actions of God. It is not simply a reference to a title, but to the way that God revealed himself--God gave meaning to his name through his acts. God is not saying that He had not revealed a name to the patriarchs (that would have used the *hiphil* of the verb). Rather, He is saying that the patriarchs did not experience what the name Yahweh actually meant, and they could not without seeing it fulfilled. When Moses came to the elders, he identified his call as from Yahweh, the God of the fathers--and they accepted him. They knew the name. But, when they were delivered from bondage, then they fully knew by experience what that name meant, for his promises were fulfilled.

Cassuto paraphrases it this way: “I revealed Myself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in My aspect that finds expression in the name Shaddai . . . I was not known to them, that is, it was not given to them to recognize Me as One that fulfils His promises” (p. 79). This generation was about to “know” the name that their ancestors knew and used, but never experienced with the fulfillment of the promises. This section of Exodus confirms this interpretation, because in it God promised to bring them out of Egypt and give them the promised land--then they would know that He is Yahweh (6:7). This meaning should have been evident from its repetition to the Egyptians throughout the plagues--that they might know Yahweh (e.g., 7:5).

See further: Robert Dick Wilson, “Yahweh [Jehovah] and Exodus 6:3,” in *Classical Evangelical Essays in OT Interpretation*, ed. by Walter Kaiser (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972), pp. 29-40; L. A. Herrboth, “Exodus 6:3b: Was God Known to the Patriarchs as Jehovah?” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 4 (1931):345-49; F. C. Smith, “Observation on the Use of the

also established my covenant with them¹⁷ to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage¹⁸ wherein they were aliens. **6:5** I¹⁹ have also heard²⁰ the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving,²¹ and I have remembered my covenant.²²

Names and Titles of God in Genesis,” *EQ* 40 (1968):103-109.

¹⁷ The statement refers to the making of the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15 and following) and confirming it with the other patriarchs. The verb *haqimoti* means “set up, establish, give effect to, conclude” a covenant agreement. The covenant promised the patriarchs a great nation, a land--Canaan, and divine blessing. They lived with those promises, but now their descendants were in bondage in Egypt. God’s reference to the covenant here is meant to show the new revelation through redemption will start to fulfill the promises and show what the reality of the name Yahweh is to them.

¹⁸ The noun *m^egurim* is a reminder that the patriarchs did not receive the promises. It is also an indication that those living in the age of promise did not experience the full meaning of the name of the covenant God. The “land of their sojournings” is the land of Canaan where the family lived without owning property or having any rights--as aliens (*garu*).

¹⁹ The addition of the independent pronoun *’ani*, “I,” emphasizes the fact that it was Yahweh who heard the cry.

²⁰ Literally, “and I also have heard”

²¹ The form is the *hiphil* participle *ma’abidim*, “causing to serve.” The participle occurs in a relative clause that modifies “the Israelites.” The clause ends with the accusative “them,” which must be combined with the relative pronoun for a good English translation: “who the Egyptians are enslaving them” > “whom the Egyptians are enslaving.”

²² As in Exodus 2:24, this verb has the significance of God’s beginning to act to fulfill the covenant promises.

6:6 Therefore, say to the Israelites, ‘I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out²³ from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you from their hard labor, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. **6:7** And I will take you to myself for a people, and I will become your God;²⁴ then you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. **6:8** and I will bring you to the land which I swore²⁵ to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob--and I will give it to you²⁶ as a possession. I am Yahweh.’” **6:9**²⁷ Moses told this²⁸ to the Israelites, but they did not listen to Moses because of their discouragement²⁹ and harsh labor. **6:10** Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, **6:11** “Go, speak to Pharaoh, the king

²³ The verb *w^ehotse’ti* is a perfect tense with the *waw* consecutive and so it receives a future translation--part of God’s promises. The word will be used later to begin the Decalogue and other covenant passages--“I am Yahweh who brought you out”

²⁴ These covenant promises are being reiterated here because they are about to be fulfilled. They are addressed to the nation, not individuals, as the plural suffixes show. Yahweh was their God already, because they had been praying to Him. But when they enter into covenant with God at Sinai, then He will be the God of Israel in a new way.

²⁵ The text simply says, “which I raised my hand to give it” The relative clause specifies which land is their goal. And the bold anthropomorphism reminds the reader that God swore that He would give the land to them. The comparison with taking an oath would have made the promise of God sure in the mind of the Israelite.

²⁶ Here is the twofold aspect again clearly depicted: God swore the promise to the patriarchs, but He is about to give what He promised to this generation. This generation will know more about Him as a result.

²⁷ The final part of this section focuses on instructions for Moses. The commission from God is the same--he is to speak to Pharaoh and he is to lead Israel out. It should have been clear to him that God would do this, for he had just been reminded how God was going to lead out, deliver, redeem, take to Himself the people as His people. It was God’s work of love from beginning to end. And so Moses simply had his task to perform.

²⁸ Literally, “and Moses spoke thus”

²⁹ The Hebrew *miqqotser ruakh* means “because of the shortness of spirit.” This means that they were discouraged, dispirited, and weary--although some have also suggested it might mean impatient. The Israelites were now just not in the frame of mind to listen to Moses.

of Egypt, that he might release³⁰ the Israelites from his land.” **6:12** But Moses spoke before Yahweh, saying, “If the Israelites did not listen to me, then³¹ how will Pharaoh listen to me, since³² I speak with difficulty?”³³ **6:13** Yahweh spoke³⁴ to Moses and to Aaron, and gave them a charge,³⁵ charged them, to the Israelites and to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt.

Composition and Context

In view of the apparent failure of the mission in the last episode, several questions come to the mind of Moses. This section of the book is given over to the LORD’s answering those questions and thereby assuring him that the deliverance will come.

³⁰ The form *wiy-shallakh* is the *piel* imperfect or jussive with a sequential *waw*; following the imperatives this will show purpose. They were to speak to Pharaoh “that he might release” Israel.

³¹ This analogy is an example of the *qal wahomer* rule in hermeneutics. It is an argument by inference from the light to the heavy, from the simple to the more difficult. If the Israelites, who are Yahwists, would not listen to him, it is highly unlikely Pharaoh would.

³² The final clause begins with a disjunctive *waw*, a *waw* on a non verb form—here a pronoun. It introduces a circumstantial causal clause.

³³ The text literally says, “and [since] I am of uncircumcised lips.” The “lips” represent his speech (metonymy of cause). The term “uncircumcised” makes a comparison between his speech and that which Israel perceived as unacceptable, unprepared, foreign, and of no use to God. Driver explains that the term means the lips are closed in, and so open and speak with difficulty. The heart is used this way when it is impervious to good impressions (Lev. 26:41; Jer. 9:26); and the ear when it hears imperfectly (Jer. 6:10). Moses has here returned to his earlier claim—he does not speak well enough to be doing this.

³⁴ Literally, “and Yahweh spoke”

³⁵ *waysawwem* is the *piel* preterite with the pronominal suffix on it. The verb *tsiwwah* means “to command” but can also have a much wider range of meanings. Here the idea of giving Moses and Aaron a charge, like a commission, to Israel and to Pharaoh, indicates that come what may they have their duty to perform.

I would divide the passage into three parts: the complaint of Moses (5:22, 23), the promise of the LORD (6:1-5), and the instruction of the LORD for Moses (6:6-12). The 13th verse is either a colophon of this section, or a heading for the list of names to follow. The message is a composite of these parts. Moses complains that God has not delivered his people as he promised, and God answers that he will because he is the sovereign covenant Lord who keeps his word. Consequently, Moses must keep his commission to speak for God in anticipation of the deliverance.

The message is not unlike that which is recorded in 1 Peter 3:1-13. The question raised there is “Where is the promise of his coming?” (v. 4). There is a long delay in the fulfillment of the promises and situations only seem to worsen. The answer given there is that the Lord is not slack concerning his promise (v. 9), but that his word of promise is sure—but a day with the Lord is like a thousand years. The charge given there is to look forward with anticipation to the day of God and speed its coming (v. 12). Faith and preparation are required because the day of deliverance is coming. God said we could count on it.

Exegetical Analysis

Summary

When Moses complained to God that the people were being oppressed all the more and were not yet delivered, the LORD declared that he was about to deliver them in fulfillment of the covenant promises and in accordance with the meaning of his name, but the people did not listen to this declaration because of their discouragement and Moses did not think that Pharaoh would listen either.

Outline

- I. Complaint: Moses boldly chided the LORD for bringing trouble on the people and not delivering them from the oppression (5:22, 23).
- II. Promise: The LORD declared that because he heard the groaning of the people he was about to deliver them from Egypt in fulfillment of the promises he made to the patriarch and in accordance with the full meaning of his name (6:1-5).

- A. The LORD promised Moses that he would deliver Israel from Egypt with a mighty hand (6:1).
- B. The LORD explained that the people had not experienced the fulness of the meaning of his name Yahweh but were about to in the fulfillment of the covenant promises (6:2-4).
- C. The LORD declared that he had heard their groaning and had come to fulfill the covenant promises (6:5).

III Instruction: The LORD instructed Moses to tell the Israelites all that God was about to do in fulfilling the promises of the covenant, but they did not believe him; and the LORD instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh to let the people go, but Moses did not think that would work either (6:6-12).

- A. The LORD instructed Moses to tell the people that he was about to redeem them from Egypt and make them his people and give them the land he promised to the fathers (6:6-8).
- B. The people did not listen to Moses because they were discouraged over the hard labor (6:9).
- C. The LORD instructed Moses to go and tell Pharaoh to let the people go (6:10, 11).
- D. Moses questioned this instruction because he did not think Pharaoh would listen to him if his own people did not (6:12).

Colophon: God commissioned Moses and Aaron to lead the Israelites out of Egypt (6:13).

Additional Resources

Jonathon Magonet, "The Bush that Never Burnt: Narrative Techniques in Exodus 3 and 6," *Heythrop Journal* 16 (1975):304-311; E. A. Martens, "Tackling Old Testament Theology," *JETS* 20 (1977):1123-32; Graham S. Ogden, "Moses and Cyrus: Literary Affinities Between the Priestly Presentation of Moses in Exodus 6-8 and the Cyrus Song in Isaiah 44:24-45:13," *VT* 28 (1978):195-203; Walter Wifall, "El Shaddai or El of the Fields," *ZAW* 92 (1980):24-32.

EXPOSITORY DEVELOPMENT

I. The enthusiasm for divine intervention turns to discouragement when the people faced increased opposition (5:22, 23).

The first section, then, is Moses' complaint, or, to correlate Peter, where is the promise of the deliverance (5:22, 23)? The section is based on two rhetorical questions: Why have you dealt evil . . . ? and Why did you send me . . . ? Moses is not looking for an answer. He is rather chiding God out of his frustration—you brought calamity on the people and had no purpose in sending me. It is comparable to Jeremiah's, "You have deceived me (Jer. 20)." Here, the verb *ra'a'* is strategic; it means "be evil" or "inflict evil." Cassuto in the discussion of the Fall says *ra'* is "pain." ("good and evil" means "care and pain"). That may be too weak in general, but captures the idea. Moses brought God's message of hope as he was instructed to do, but God brought painful toil to the people. God seemed to be working against them.

The use of *ra'a'* in these verses shows a cause-effect relationship: "Why did you do evil to this people?" is the cause; "Pharaoh did evil to this people" is the effect. So Moses knows all about God's sovereignty. He knows that if the plan is not working it is because of God. We might say if the plan of God is not working as we expected, then it must be that the plan of God is working as he planned. We may not like it, especially if it is a painful delay. And we may ask questions as to why God works the way he does. But the answer will be: trust me, I am the LORD.

The complaint is basically that the plan has not worked; Moses uses a very emphatic construction that is difficult to translate. Literally it would say "you have not delivered at all." Paraphrastically it would imply, "you haven't lifted a finger to deliver," if one may put it on that level. The charge is legitimate, but the boldness is striking. It will be greatly overshadowed by the LORD's answer.

II. The divine intervention to fulfill the covenant promises is assured by the nature of the covenant God (6:1-5).

The second section, then, is the LORD's answer, essentially, the LORD is not slack in keeping his promises (6:1-5). Here I would concentrate on the assurance of the promise as it is based on the nature of the LORD. The theme "I am the LORD," is the organizing principle. He first states the promise clearly (6:1),

and then announces “I am the LORD.” After this is expounded, he lists what he will do to fulfill his covenant promises. The point is made very clearly: “that you may know that I am the LORD.” He concludes the speech by reminding them that he swore to the promise and will keep his word. He ends with “I am the LORD.”

The promise of the deliverance is stated clearly at the outset (6:1): “Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh.” The deliverance is worded in parallelism: “by my strong hand he will send them out // by my strong hand he will drive them out.” You will have to explain the “strong hand.” The word “hand” is the hand and forearm. It became idiomatic for the strength or power. Trace through, if you have time, the things that “the hand of the LORD” does. Here it means the power of God will deliver them. “Strong” is related to a term used later to describe the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart, i.e., his strong will. The word play shows that God’s “strong hand,” i.e., the power of God, is sovereign over the will of Pharaoh. This is the point the book (and later Paul) makes.

This promise will be fulfilled because of the nature of God (6:2-5). “I am Yahweh” is the declaration that he is the sovereign covenant God. The statement calls for faith. The discussion of the names in this section has caused great confusion for some time. The LORD says he appeared to the patriarchs “as” (*beth* of essence) El Shaddai, but was not known to them as Yahweh. A surface reading of this leads some to conclude it means the patriarchs never heard of the name Yahweh; but this seems to contradict with much evidence in Genesis. For Wellhausen this problem was clear evidence of two sources (at least) of the Pentateuch. The “Yahwist” simply wrote his theology using the name, but P knew that the patriarchs’ never knew the name.

There is a more plausible solution from the point of lexicography (which does not result in sources but is a reasonable harmony). It is true that the LORD did “appear” to them as El Shaddai (see Gen. 17), an epithet that may signify either “mighty power” (Jerome translated it *omnipotens*) or “provision” (some suggest it is related etymologically to “mountain” [=the high God], or “breast” [provider]). That in itself would not demand an ignorance of the name Yahweh, especially when it was used as early as Genesis 4. The key point comes with the verb “to know.” This could mean “know” intellectually or experientially. The clue for the latter comes from this passage itself. They knew about the name; but God says “I will bring you out . . . and deliver you . . . and redeem you . . . and take you to myself . . . and be your

God . . . **that you may know that I am Yahweh.**” No one could have known the LORD fully until he fulfilled his promises. The name is the covenant name, but the covenant had not been realized. The implication of this passage is that this generation would know the name (i.e., the nature) of the LORD in a way the patriarchs never did. In fact, the exhaustive divine exposition on the holy name in these chapters shows that is what is intended. God told Moses to say “Yahweh, the God of” the patriarchs sent me. They knew the name, but this generation would know by experience the covenant name.

Pharaoh claimed also not to know the LORD. But the plagues would be designed to let him know, i.e., see and experience firsthand, the power of the LORD.

The rest of this section is a review of the covenant promises the LORD made. He had established the covenant to give the patriarchs the land of sojournings. Now he would respond to the groaning and fulfill it. The message that Moses is to deliver is an emphatic listing of the divine assurances of the covenant promises, all based on “I am Yahweh.”

*III. The servant of God must keep reminding the people
of what God has promised to do,
and warning the world not to oppose the plan of God (6:6-12).*

The third section is Moses’ responsibility, i.e., prepare for the day of God and speed its coming (6:6-13). The section traces the following development: Moses speaks to Israel as commanded, but they do not listen to him because of anguish and labor (6:6-9); then God instructs Moses to speak to Pharaoh that he send out Israel (10, 11), but Moses hesitates because if Israel did not listen to him, certainly Pharaoh will not (12). The section closes with a report that God simply laid the task before him (13). This last verse seems to summarize their whole mission: “The LORD . . . appointed them to Israel and to Pharaoh.” The verb *tsiwwah* is normally “command,” but may also be “appoint, charge, commission.” It did not matter if Israel or Pharaoh listened—they had a charge from God to lead a stubborn people out from under a stubborn monarch.

CONCLUSION

So the passage shows that in spite of the fact that Pharaoh refused their demands and Israel rejected them when no deliverance came, God's chosen leaders were charged to speak the word of the LORD, trusting in the nature of the covenant God to fulfill his promises. The messages of God must faithfully declare the promise of God as a warning to the world and a hope for the believer. The promise of God is inseparably bound up with the nature of God.

I would word the expository idea something like this:

***In spite of opposition and rejection,
God's chosen leaders must continue to declare his plan,
trusting in the nature of the covenant God to fulfill his promises.***

The messengers of God must faithfully declare the promises of God, as a hope and a challenge for the believers, but as a warning to the world. The promises of God are sure, because they are inseparably bound up with the nature of God. And what does Scripture say? God is not a man that he should lie. God stretches out his hand, but who will tell him to take it back. God remains faithful to his word, for even if we are unfaithful, he remains faithful because he cannot deny himself. God says, I do not do this for your sake, for you have made my name to stink in the land; but I do it for my own name's sake. And when he was incarnate he reiterated and expanded the promises, saying, "If it were not so, I would have told you."

