

EXODUS 7:1-7 (NOTABLE OBEDIENCE)

Introduction: In our sixth of the seven verses today, there is a special emphasis placed on the deeds of Aaron and Moses. God placed this there for a reason. He loves obedience to His word and He cherishes those who are so obedient. Throughout His word, there are records of people which center on exactly that premise.

The question is how will each of us be remembered? Is it your heart's desire to be remembered favorably by God? Listen now to our text verse for today and see how the book of Nehemiah ends...

Text Verse: Remember me, O my God, for good! Nehemiah 13:29

Is Nehemiah' prayer one that you long for in your own life? May it be so! Jesus said that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. (Matthew 12:36). Our words, our deeds, all of who we are and what we do, will be laid before our God when we stand before Him.

It's a truth which is found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Words for Pharaoh (verses 1 & 2)

1 So the Lord said to Moses: “See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh,

This follows directly after Moses' proclamation that he felt he was unqualified for the challenge ahead. In Exodus 6, he said this -

"And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, 'The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?'

13 Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them a command for the children of Israel and for Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt." Exodus 6:12, 13

This was essentially repeated later at the end of the chapter with the Lord telling Moses, "I am the Lord. Speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you." (verse 29).

Immediately following this exchange we come to this first verse of chapter 7 and the words, re'eh netatikha elohim l'paroh - "See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh." Some translations, in order to avoid this sounding somehow inappropriate say "a god" instead of God. Either could be correct, but God is probably what is intended.

The reason why this is so is because this is a modified repeat of what was said in Exodus 4:16 -

"So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God." Exodus 4:16

There, translators generally agree the intent is "God" rather than "a god." In accordance with this, Aaron is to stand in a mediatorial role between Moses and Pharaoh. He is to be the mouthpiece of Moses who would announce whatever Moses intended.

Moses, after having been assured by the Lord of his position and capabilities, would no longer have a reason to fear Pharaoh. He would have something akin to divine authority, and his word would eventually bring Pharaoh to his end.

The power he would display would be the power of the Lord, and Aaron would be the one to relay this. But even more than this, the people of Israel would come to understand that Moses was truly selected to bring about their deliverance.

They had seen the three signs and believed for a spell, but eventually they lost heart in Moses. By the time the plagues were finished, they would fully understand his position.

And isn't this a beautiful picture of Christ. The early Jews bowed their head and worshipped at the coming of Christ with His fulfillment of those three signs, but eventually they turned away from Him. But the Bible says that they will come to acknowledge Him in the end times, when the world heads into the tribulation.

We will see Pharaoh, who is proud and exalted, be brought low by what the Lord brings upon Him through Moses. Plagues will come at his command and they will end at his will as well. This is what it means that he would be as God to Pharaoh.

1 (con't) and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.

In the Old Testament, a prophet spoke the words that were put in his mouth by God. We see this in Deuteronomy 18:18 -

"I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him." Deuteronomy 18:18

It is seen also in Jeremiah 1:9 -

"Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.'" Jeremiah 1:9

It is Moses who will stand in this special position in relation to Pharaoh by speaking through a prophet and directing Aaron as to what he should say. Thus we see why Moses should be like God to Pharaoh, and why Aaron would be his prophet. And so, calling Moses "God to Pharaoh" rather than "a god to Pharaoh" is surely more accurate.

Interestingly, this role puts Aaron in the notable position of having been first a prophet and then a priest. Thus, he pictures Christ who spoke the words of God first and then fulfilled His priestly role for His people. It is the first of many times he will picture the Lord.

2 You shall speak all that I command you.

Ultimately though, despite the words of Moses being spoken by Aaron, it is the Lord, Yehovah, who will direct the affairs which will occur. Moses will obediently follow the Lord's directives, impart them to Aaron, and Aaron will speak them to Pharaoh.

2 (con't) And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land.

The word will be repeated as directed. Aaron will be the speaker directly to Pharaoh. The term "say to Aaron" or "speak to Aaron" will be repeated several

times to remind us that it is the Lord who initiates the words, and that Moses then conveys them to Aaron.

At other times, there will be exchanges with Pharaoh which will appear that Moses is speaking to him. Whether he does, or whether he speaks through Aaron at those times isn't known, but when the Lord's intended words are given, it is Aaron who receives them from Moses.

What is occurring here is very similar to that of the Trinity. The will of God the Father is expressed in a concrete manner through His Mediator Jesus. And this Mediator's duties will be articulated with eloquence through His orator, the Holy Spirit. In the case of Moses, the Lord directs what is to be said, just as Jesus relays the words of God the Father. That is from John 12 -

"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak." John 12:49, 50

From there, what is given to Moses is spoken by Aaron, just as the Holy Spirit is given to speak from what Jesus possesses. That is found in John 16 -

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." John 16:13, 14

One more point on this verse - depending on what translation you use, there are different designations for "the children of Israel." The NIV says, "let the Israelites

go." The NLT says, "let the people of Israel leave." The NASB says, "let the sons of Israel go." And the ISV says, "let the Israelis go."

In Hebrew, the term is bene yisrael, literally, "the sons of Israel." Translators choose what they believe the best intent is, but none of these are incorrect. The 12 sons of Israel are the children of Israel, and they then represent the collective group who issues from them.

The time of redemption is soon ahead
The many years of bondage are at their end
Our bodies are weary, we have toiled and bled
Soon the Lord our Deliverer He will send
The many years we have been in bondage to sin
There seemed no hope at all for any of us
But at the cross of Calvary our Savior did win
He defeated the devil! Hail the Lord Jesus!

Now we have a sure hope and the promise of glory
Because of the truth contained in the gospel story

II. My Armies; My People - the Children of Israel (verses 3-5)

3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart,

The first time Moses was told this was in Exodus 4:21, but it used a different word than here. That word was khazaq, a word used quite a few times in the exodus

account. But the word used here is qashah. It's used only here and in Exodus 13:15.

In this verse, it says that the Lord is the agent of the hardening, "I will harden." However, in 13:15, it shows that Pharaoh is the agent of the hardening. There is says -

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt." Exodus 13:15

These words are being used with definite purpose. They are given to show that the Lord is working behind the scenes to effect His purposes, and yet we are ultimately responsible for our own choices, be they stubborn or be they soft and yielding to His will.

By paying attention to the words of the Bible, we can certainly learn more about ourselves and more about how to perceive those around us who are either belligerent to the Lord or who are responsive to Him.

If we can pay attention to these things, it is even possible to use them as examples to those belligerent souls in hopes of having them change their hearts. The first time the Lord told Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, Moses didn't grasp the plan and he became disheartened, feeling that he had failed the Lord.

But the Lord knew how to manipulate Pharaoh in order to harden his heart. Moses didn't, and so he misunderstood the first rejection by both Pharaoh and the Hebrews. By making a polite request to let the people go into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was started.

When no consequences for his refusal came about, he was thus emboldened against future requests. In the coming plagues, each will have less of an effect than the one to follow. And the first two plagues will actually be repeatable by Pharaoh's magicians.

Because they are, Pharaoh will be duped into believing that his gods and his magicians are comparable to Yehovah. Thus he will harden his heart. It will be a passive hardening by the Lord which will be actively responded to by Pharaoh. And the reason for this process is given as we continue...

3 (con't) and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.

There is a truth that permeates the Bible. It is that God will receive the glory He is due. He will either receive it in a repentant heart and a bowed knee, or He will receive it in judgment upon the unrepentant sinner. In His display of the signs and wonders upon Egypt, he will be more glorified.

He will be more glorified in the eyes of His people at the majestic display of His wonders, and He will be more glorified in those who reject them because the wonders will be a witness against them in judgment. Either way, God will receive the glory.

As Egypt is a picture of the sin-filled world, the pattern holds true. Those who call on Christ give glory to God, and through those who reject Him, He is glorified. And the pattern hold true as well for the tribulation period of the end times which is pictured here.

It is through the signs and wonders that these things came about in the past, and it is through signs and wonders that they will come about in the future. The word for "signs" is *owth*. It is a sign of something. The stars in Genesis 1:14 are said to be given for signs.

They would be used, not just as pretty lights in the sky, but for signs of other things. They form the constellations which, according to the Bible, give us a story of God's redemptive plans. The Bible shows also that stars unite at certain times in history as signs of divine occurrences.

When king Ahaz was told to ask for a sign to confirm the Lord's word, he refused to do so and so Isaiah turned to the people of Israel and said this -

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

God's signs during the coming period of this exodus account are then not just for the eyes of the people of Egypt, but are signs for all to read about and remember. They can even be considered as precursor signs to the parallel events of judgment upon the world in the end times.

The sign was both an immediate promise and one which looked forward to the coming Messiah. Thus signs are given to represent other things. The other word the Lord uses here is translated as "wonders." It is the Hebrew word *mophet*. This word speaks of something out of the ordinary course of nature.

These wonders would be unusual phenomena, either natural or supernatural, which cry out for an explanation. Whether natural or supernatural, they imply that the divine hand is behind them. Thus they act as a testimonial of being a messenger of God. For example, the parting of the Red Sea is a natural event. The Bible tells how it happened - an east wind blew all night.

However, there is the implied divine hand behind it. First, the Red Sea doesn't just divide whenever there is an east wind. Secondly, the east wind doesn't just blow at any given time. But the east wind blew, and the waters were parted at the exact moment needed to deliver Israel.

Therefore, it is a supernatural occurrence, even though it came about by natural causes. The parting of the Red Sea was, in essence, God's messenger to His people that He was there for them. It was also His messenger to those who saw or heard. They would be alerted to the greatness of God through it.

4 But Pharaoh will not heed you,

Knowing in advance both the person of Pharaoh, as well as how he will respond to the series of encounters that he will have with Moses and Aaron, the Lord reminds Moses once again that there will be resistance to his words before Israel is delivered. He is being informed of this again so that the resistance won't be unexpected or to be taken as a sign of failure.

4 (con't) so that I may lay My hand on Egypt

Pharaoh represents Egypt as its leader. The actions against Pharaoh then are an action against Egypt. And so the Lord says that He will lay His hand on Egypt. Through signs and wonders, Jesus validated His office while at the same time laid His hand on the world of sin.

He defeated the devil at the cross, and through the resurrection He took away the power of sin in those He redeemed. The pattern is exactly detailed for us to see. Christ has laid His hand on the world and He has done so in a way which will allow the world to willingly follow Him in His victory.

4 (con't) and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.

The purpose of the signs and wonders was to progressively harden Pharaoh's heart in order to lay His hand on Egypt. And in that, the Lord will then bring out

His people from Egypt. Think of the church. Christ performed His wonders and He continues to do so today in each repentant soul who bows to Him.

And in this He is gathering to Himself His people, bringing them out of spiritual death and decay and into His kingdom. This is all being pictured in the events of the past. Yehovah promises Moses here that He will bring out His armies and His people, or more rightly it is translated as "My armies; My people."

The people are the armies and the second term explains the first because the people are His. At the exodus, there will be 603,550 men of fighting age who will depart. With them will be their families and their possessions. All of them will be delivered, as it says, by great judgments.

And these judgments have a purpose beyond the annihilation of Pharaoh and his armies. They are intended to stand as a memorial to the world concerning the work of the Lord. This is explained several times in the Bible, such as in Deuteronomy 2:25 -

"This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you." Deuteronomy 2:25

These judgments had the intent of calling to mind the work of God on behalf of His people so that others would hear of them and pay heed. This was certainly the case because after their years of wilderness wanderings, this is recorded in Joshua 2 -

"I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted

because of you. 10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt Joshua." 2:9, 10

And even many years later, about four hundred years or so, the surrounding people still remembered the stories of Israel's deliverance. Before a battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, we see this recorded in 1 Samuel 4 -

"So the Philistines were afraid, for they said, 'God has come into the camp!' And they said, 'Woe to us! For such a thing has never happened before. 8 Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.'" 1 Samuel 4:7, 8

The purpose of God's judgments upon the Egyptians was not limited to a short span of time or to an isolated location in the Middle East, but they were intended to show the world of His power over the elements, and His care for Israel.

In this then, they are intended even for the people of the entire world to take heed to and learn from. First, God is God and He alone controls the elements, not man. So much for global warming and man's denial that God is really in control of the world.

Secondly, God is the God of Israel. He is the God not just of Abraham as Muslims and the confused religious world states, but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the Defender of Israel whether Israel deserves His defense or not.

Third, He is Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of the pictures which we see in these signs and wonders, and who we see fulfilling the judgments that are pictured as well. Thus, He is also the Defender of His church and His called-out bride. In Him for us, there is hope, assurance, and ultimately deliverance.

5 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord,

Egypt in Hebrew is mizraim. It means "double distress." It is a picture of the world; people without God and without God's law. They are, in essence, in double distress. In this, is another purpose for what God is doing. It is so that those who are in double distress shall know that ani Yehovah - that "I am Yehovah."

In other words, God intends to demonstrate that He is who He claims to be through His signs, wonders, and judgments. I AM is the self-existent God. I AM is the Creator. I AM is the Sustainer. I AM is, and there is no other. I AM Yehovah. This is the force and intent of the words that are given.

This saying, that "XX shall know that I am the LORD," or a near form of the words, is repeated about 75 times in the Bible, and the vast number of those times are in the book of Ezekiel. A large number of those times it is referring to the nations surrounding Israel, but a very large percent of them refer to Israel herself.

In other words, it is not just the nations of the earth who need to learn this lesson, but also the very people who bear His name. The promises of future restoration and protection of Israel, which began with the return of them to the land in 1948, are included in this.

He has called them home, He is currently working on them, and He will continue to do so until they call out to Him once again. It is both a sad commentary on the Jewish people, and an immense act of love, mercy, and grace - even covenant faithfulness, on behalf of Yehovah. They nailed Him to a tree and yet He still longs for them to know Him.

But the question is, "How can we be sure that they will know Yehovah is Jesus someday?" The answer is that it is through the claims of Yehovah in the Old

Testament, and the application of those claims to Jesus in the New. There are too many to count, but one read through the book of Isaiah will show an abundant number of them. In Isaiah 44 we read -

"Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
'I am the First and I am the Last;
Besides Me there is no God.'" Isaiah 44:6

In that one verse, Yehovah says He is the King of Israel - a term applied to Jesus in the New Testament. He says He is the Redeemer, a term used of Jesus. He is the Yehovah Sabaoth, or the Lord of Hosts - a term applied to Jesus in the book of James.

He says I am the First and the Last - a term applied to Jesus in Revelation. And it says there is one God and no other. In the New Testament, that is Jesus. This is one verse, in a succession of verses in the book of Isaiah, which show this to be true of Jesus.

And Isaiah is just one of 39 books in the Old Testament which are all filled with references to Him - explicit references, implicit references, and hidden nuggets which need to be wrestled from the wisdom of God through study and prayer, but in the end, they all point to Jesus.

Everything God is doing in history brings us to the thought that humanity shall know that He is the Lord; He is Yehovah; He is Jesus. All intuitively know there is One God, and all will come to the sure realization that He is the God of the Bible; Jesus!

5 (con't) when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.”

Again, think it through from the greater panorama of the Bible. The Lord stretched out His hand upon Egypt and yet He did it in order to bring out the children of Israel out from among them. There was intent and purpose for His actions.

Throughout the Bible, the Lord is said to stretch out his hand for or against people groups. The symbolism here is that He has stretched out His hand in a negative way against Egypt, and at the same time it is in a positive way for Israel.

Mentally we can think of an arm in one motion, toppling over the enemies like bowling pins, and then at the same time that arm gathers in His cherished people as if they were loved children who will rest in the safety of His lap.

And in this is the greater picture of Christ, toppling over the enemies of addiction, deceit, adultery, bitterness, hatred, and lies, while He draws to Himself a purified people who will spend eternal days in His presence. From the land of double distress come forth a people called by His name.

And yet, there is more. Because these early Exodus stories are picturing the future during the tribulation period which comes after the rapture of the church, they again picture the Lord, the fully revealed Lord Jesus, destroying the wicked powers of the world in order to rescue and redeem Israel once again so that He may be glorified in them and among them.

The premise of the Bible which is found in Ecclesiastes 1 is seen in this repeating pattern. There it says -

"That which has been is what will be,
That which is done is what will be done,
And there is nothing new under the sun." Ecclesiastes 1:9

God does this so that we can know what is ahead by looking behind, and He does it so that when things repeat we will know that His hand was involved in the event. Every story is true, and yet every story contains more than just its immediate fulfillment. They are given for us to see the hand of the Lord in all things.

How long with you harden your heart to the truth?
How long will you dismiss the word of God?
Even since the earliest days of your youth
While as a child, on a wayward path you did tread
But patient is the Lord for those who will yield the heart
He continues to reach out hands scarred by nails
Waiting for any who desires a fresh new start
Waiting for those weary of life's many travails

So don't harden your heart and be cast away
Instead be receptive to the truth found in His word
Call out to Jesus, don't wait another day
All will find new life who call upon the Lord

III. Notable Obedience (verses 6 & 7)

6 Then Moses and Aaron did so;

These words are general in nature and they anticipate what lies ahead throughout the entire time of the plagues on Egypt. Everything that happens up until the departure of the Israelites will show obedience to what has been stated.

There will be no fear in Pharaoh's presence, and there will be no shying back from their duties. Because of this, the words of Hebrews 3 are recorded concerning the obedience of Moses to the call he has been given -

"And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant." Hebrews 3:5

And yet, even in this obedience which is recorded about Moses and Aaron, there is a picture of Christ. Continuing the same verse in Hebrews 3, we see that, yes, Moses was faithful in His house as a servant... -

"...for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, 6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." Hebrews 3:5, 6

What the Bible is repeatedly telling us is that it is all about Jesus. Every word is given to show us our precious Lord. The author of Hebrews is writing this for the Hebrew people, but particularly the words are directed to the Jews of the end times.

They are intended to open eyes long blinded, and to awaken minds long dumbed-down, to the truth of who Jesus is and to the perseverance they will need for the difficulties which lay before them. They will need to conduct themselves in a particular manner, just as Moses and Aaron did...

6 (con't) just as the Lord commanded them,

The Bible is many things, one of which is a book requiring obedience. The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron; the Lord speaks to us. The Lord commanded Moses and Aaron; the Lord commands us.

Moses and Aaron heard the word, they received the command, and they were obedient to it. The same voice speaks to us today, though it is in the written rather than the spoken word. But despite being written, it should be as audible to our hearts as that which fell upon the ears of Moses.

How often do we see it neglected though! Churches dismiss those portions which they find burdensome, outdated, or old fashioned. They make excuses for bad conduct and they rationalize away the severity of their sin. Believe it or not, this will be seen in just 25 more chapters, a time which is just a few months after the Exodus.

The faithfulness of Aaron will take a fall and he will participate in a gross display of idolatry which will be followed by one of the lamest excuses for what happened in the pages of the Bible. And even Moses will fall prey to a short disobedient spell. His failing will cost him the privilege of leading Israel across the Jordan and into the Promised Land.

It is always better to follow the Lord's commands, be ready to engage the battle with confidence, and not allow ourselves to fall prey to weakness, temptations, or

frustrations which so easily catch us in their hold, tripping us up and bringing us into God's hand of judgment.

6 (con't) so they did.

The whole verse reads, "Then Moses and Aaron did so; just as the Lord commanded them, so they did."

The final portion isn't superfluous, but rather it is emphatic and intended to show that they were fully compliant. Their actions were exact, complete, and in accord with the word of the Lord. Nothing was skipped and nothing was added.

If you wonder why words like this are recorded, and you should, then you should stop and think on why they are, in fact, recorded. What does the Lord want us to see in a few extra added words that could have been left out without changing the general meaning?

The answer is that He wants us to see that this type of obedience to His word is pleasing to Him and thus it is worthy of note. In this one verse, we can think of people like good King Josiah. Imagine these words being written about you -

"Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him." 2 Kings 23:25

How pleasing this person must have been to the Lord. Not only are they recorded after the fact, but he and his actions were actually anticipated by the Lord before they happened. In 1 Kings 13, this was written about Josiah -

"Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, 'O altar, altar! Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'" 1 Kings 13:2

Imagine that! It is as if the Lord Himself were waiting for this person to come along that He could delight in. So much so, that He told in advance that he was coming. And in contrast to that, there are other levels of adherence to His word. There is the account of Solomon. This is the Lord's evaluation of him -

"Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David." 1 Kings 11:6

And then there is the record of Manasseh -

"Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel." 2 Kings 21:1, 2

So wicked was Manasseh, that the Lord could not forgive what he did. In Jeremiah 15, this is the verdict which He pronounced -

"And I will appoint over them four forms of destruction,' says the Lord: 'the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. 4 I will hand them over to trouble, to all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.'" Jeremiah 15:3, 4

Whether you spend your time thinking about it or not, there is also a record of your actions which is being kept. Moses and Aaron were faithful in their actions before Pharaoh and we have the record of that. They failed in the wilderness and we have the record of that.

Good kings came, and bad kings replaced them, and we have their record to instruct us as well. And your life is being recorded too. There is the record of salvation which is done, once and for all. But there is also the record of deeds which is on-going. And all of your deeds will be held against the standard of God's word.

Those deeds which are worthy of reward will be rewarded. Those which aren't will be burned in the fire. But Paul says that for those in Christ, the fire will only go so far and all in Him will be saved through that time of purification. Thank God for such mercy.

***7 And Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.**

There is a lot to learn from these few words. First, we have the seemingly advanced ages of the two men. In fact, in the 90th Psalm, the oldest psalm in the Bible, and the only one written by Moses, we read this -

"For all our days have passed away in Your wrath;
We finish our years like a sigh.
10 The days of our lives are seventy years;
And if by reason of strength they are eighty years," Psalm 90:9, 10

The two men were not young by any stretch. Secondly, we know from this and from Acts 7:23 and Acts 7:30 that Moses' life has thus far been divided into two

equal portions of 40 years each. He was 40 when he first attempted to rescue Israel from bondage and was rejected. He is now 80 when he will accomplish the task.

This pictures the work of the Lord Jesus in fulfillment of His covenant promises. Moses' heart was first turned toward his people at forty in hopes of ending their time of bondage. However, they rejected him and their probation continued for another forty years. And so it was with Christ and Israel. And so they continue on to this day awaiting their final deliverance.

Thirdly, we are told in Deuteronomy 34:7 that Moses died at the age of 120 years. Thus his life is divided into three equal portions of 40 years each. This reflects the three periods of Christ's interactions with humanity.

There is the pre-advent period. Like Moses who lived in Pharaoh's house, Christ dwelt in heaven, ruling as Yehovah, and appearing only when necessary to direct events. Then there is the time of Christ's first advent where He was rejected and tended to flocks in a Gentile location. This is the Christ of the nations.

And finally, there is the third period which begins with Moses leading His people out of bondage and into a forty-year period under His rule. This is the Messiah of the Jews, who will redeem captive Israel and rule from Jerusalem for a thousand years.

Three periods of Moses' life equate to these three times of Jesus' interaction with humanity. Then forth, the dating of Moses and Aaron here, combined with the life spans of their father Amram and their grandfather Levi, show us the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham concerning the years that the people of God would be afflicted.

In total, it is 430 years from when the promise was made to Abraham until the giving of the Law. This is found in Galatians 3. Fifth, the ages of Moses and Aaron show that Aaron is older than Moses. This continues the pattern of the younger being preferred above the older.

This pattern will continue on through the Bible and help us to understand better the doctrine of divine election as well as the grand picture of Jesus replacing Adam; the second Man replacing the first.

And finally, in this we see a contrast between Joseph and Moses. Joseph rose to power under Pharaoh, second in position to him, at the age of thirty. However, Moses is said to be as God to Pharaoh at the age of eighty. The thirty years of Joseph are comparable to the thirty years of Jesus' life recorded in Luke 3:23.

The eighty years of Moses are comparable to the completion of Israel's two periods of exile and their coming exaltation during and after the tribulation period. Each thing is connected to each other thing, while building upon one another in order to show us a snapshot of what is going on in redemptive history.

All this is seen in one sentence about the age of two brothers. Great stuff! But imagine... if God has given so much for us to learn from a simple sentence about the ages of two brothers, how much more He surely wants us to know the overall message of the Bible - that He loves us enough to send His Son to redeem us!

If you have never called on Jesus to forgive you and restore you to our heavenly Father, please give me another moment to tell you what you can do to settle that, once and for all...

Closing Verse: "Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord his God, as his father David had done." 2 Kings 16:2

Ahaz was one of Israel's crummy kings. When he died, the people refused to bury him in the tombs of the kings of Israel. His life is now recorded for all to see and contemplate. As we finish today, think soberly on how you will be remembered. Live for Christ, honor the King, and hide His word in your heart that you might not sin against Him. Be remembered as one of the good guys.

Next Week: Exodus 7:8-13 (The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart) (19th Exodus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Notable Obedience

So the Lord said to Moses plainly

"See, I have made you to Pharaoh as God

And Aaron your brother shall your prophet be

So shall it be while in Egypt you trod

You shall speak all that to you I command

And Aaron your brother shall tell

Pharaoh to send out of his land

The children of Israel
And I will harden Pharaoh's heart
And multiply My signs and My wonders too
In the land of Egypt
But Pharaoh will not heed you

So that I may lay on Egypt My hand
And bring My armies and My people whom I designate
The children of Israel out of the land
Of Egypt by judgments great

And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord
When I stretch out upon Egypt My hand
And bring out the children of Israel according to my word
From among them, from out of this land

Then Moses and Aaron did so
As the Bible does to us relate
Just as the Lord commanded them so they did
Yes, as the written word to us does state

And Moses was eighty years of age
And Aaron eighty-three years old
When they spoke to Pharaoh

This is their years as we have been told
Obedience to the Lord should be our life's desire
Living our life in a manner fitting and right
Let us not get bogged down in sin's swampy mire
But may the Lord's word be our heart's delight

By applying it to all we do in our life
We will stay on the path which is correct
The one which is free from trial and strife
From God our Father, there will be no disconnect

Keep close to the word; keep in prayer always
Remember to go to church and have some fellowship there
And your life will be blessed as you live your days
In Christ there is joy and hope, not sadness and despair

Heavenly Father, we thank You for your precious word
And of the wonders and treasures in it, given to us
All of which tell of our glorious Lord
Our Savior, our Redeemer, our Friend... our Lord Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...