

# PARASHAT SHEMOT

(NAMES)

EXODUS 1:1-6:1

## ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

**Y**eshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

### Haftorah Reading

Isaiah 27:6–28:13; 29:22–23

### B'rit Chadashah

Moses at the burning bush: **Luke 20:37**

Yeshua, the I Am: **John 8:58**

Stephen on Moses: **Acts 7:17–35**

The faith of Moses: **Hebrews 11:23–27**

### Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 1:1 The Children of Israel Multiply Exceedingly
- 1:8 The New Pharaoh Is Threatened and Decides to Enslave the Israelites
- 1:15 The Murder of Israel's Newborn Boys
- 2:1 The Birth of Moses; His Deliverance From Death and Adoption by Pharaoh's Daughter
- 2:11 Moses Identifies With His People; Tries to Deliver Them by the Arm of Flesh; Flees to Midian to Save His Life
- 2:16 Moses Marries
- 2:23 The Time of YHVH's Salvation of His People Has Arrived
- 3:1 Moses the Shepherd; The Burning Bush Where YHVH Reveals Himself to Moses
- 3:11 Moses' Doubts and YHVH's Reassurance
- 3:13 The Name of Elohim Revealed; YHVH Commissions Moses
- 4:1 Moses' Doubts, Fears and Struggles With YHVH Over His Commission
- 4:18 Moses Concedes and Embarks for Egypt
- 4:24 The Circumcision of Moses' Sons
- 5:1 Moses and Aaron's First Visit to Pharaoh
- 5:6 Pharaoh Increases the Israelites' Burdens
- 5:20 The Israelites Complain to Moses and Moses Petitions YHVH
- 6:1 YHVH Promises Israel's Deliverance by His Strong Hand

(Some of the following material was gathered from Christian Bible commentator A.W. Pink's book, *Gleanings in Exodus*)

### Overview of the Books of the Torah (Main Themes)

- ☞ **Genesis (*Beresheit*)** is the book dealing with *beginnings* and eventually its overarching theme is *divine election*. YHVH is choosing certain people (according to his divine will and sovereignty) to accomplish his purposes.
- ☞ **Exodus (*Shemot*)** is the book whose principle theme is *redemption*—Israel's deliverance from Egypt (*Mitzraim*). Here we learn *how* YHVH saves his people and we are shown that his people are *redeemed* in order to *worship* him.

- **The Theme of Redemption**

Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, "I am YHVH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. **I will also redeem you** with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your Elohim; and you shall know that I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am YHVH." (Exod 6:6-8, emphasis added)

- **Worship**

And he said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be a token unto you, that I have sent you, when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, **you shall serve Elohim** upon this mountain." (Exod 3:12, emphasis added)

And I say unto you, "Let my son go, that he may **serve** [Hebr. *awwawd*, *Strong's* H5647] **me**, and if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your son, even your firstborn." (Exod 4:23, emphasis added)

And you shall say unto him, "YHVH Elohim of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, 'Let my people go, that they may **serve** [Hebr. *awwawd*, *Strong's* H5647] **me** in the wilderness, and, behold, until now you would not hear.'" (Exod 7:16, emphasis added)

- **The Basic Outline of Exodus**

**Chapters 1–6** show us the need for redemption.

**Chapters 7–11** show us the power or might of the Redeemer as the ten plagues are poured out upon Egypt.

**Chapters 12–18** show us the character of redemption; purchased by blood and emancipated by power.

**Chapters 19–24** we are taught the duty of the redeemed.

**Chapters 25–40** we see the restoration of the redeemed—provisions are made for the failures of the redeemed.

- ☞ **Leviticus (*Vayikra*)** gives instructions on how to worship YHVH.
- ☞ **Numbers (*B'midbar*)** gives us instructions pertaining to our spiritual walk and warfare in the "wilderness" of life.
- ☞ **Deuteronomy (*D'varim*)** gives instructions to the younger generation preparing them to enter the Promised Land. Contained within is a recapitulation of the main tenets of the Torah, as well as the addition of some new laws, heart and prophetic issues pertaining to Torah obedience.

### The Metaphors in Exodus

- **Egypt** is a metaphor for the world, the place of sin and bondage where one is held captive before being delivered or redeemed by the power of YHVH and the blood of Yeshua, the Lamb of Elohim. It is interesting to note that although Egypt was the land of science and art, it was similarly the land of death. Their religion was fixated with death.
- **Pharaoh** is a metaphor for Satan, a merciless taskmaster who opposes the people of YHVH every step of the way.
- **Pharaoh's magicians** is a metaphor for demonic spirits, doing Pharaoh's bidding in opposing Israel.

- **Moses** is a prophetic metaphor for Yeshua (his first coming), the Deliverer of his people from the bondage and power of sin, death and hell, which is the power of the enemy, Satan.
- **The blood of the lamb on the door posts** is a metaphor for Yeshua, the Redeemer on the cross.
- **The crossing of the Red Sea** is a metaphor for our union with Messiah Yeshua in his death and resurrection via the ritual of *tevilah* (immersion or baptism) at a *mikvah* (a gathering of waters).
- **The journey through the wilderness** is a metaphor for the trials and testing that occur during the redeemed believer's spiritual walk through this life with YHVH's provision to meet every need and his protection from every attack of the adversary.
- **The giving of the Torah** is a metaphor for the obedience and submission that we owe to YHVH, our new Master.
- **The Tabernacle with its furnishings** is a metaphor for YHVH's plan of redemption (salvation) for mankind and the steps in man's spiritual maturation into intimacy with the Father through Yeshua the Messiah.

### The Timing of the Exile?

Christian teaching says that Israel was in exile in Egypt for 400 years (Gen 15:13; Acts 7:6) or for 430 years (Gal 3:17). Some see a contradiction in these two numbers, which to nonbelievers "proves" that Scripture is not inspired by Elohim, but rather is the work of men.

The Jewish Sages, on the contrary, say that the 430-year count started when Abraham left Ur, and that the 400-year count started when Isaac was born and that the Egyptian exile lasted for four generations only, or about one-third of the 400 years. The accounting of this is found in Genesis 15:13–16,

And [YHVH] said unto Abram, "Know of a surety that your seed shall be a stranger in a land [*eretz*] that is not theirs [the land of Canaan and Egypt], and shall serve them [the last half of their bondage in Egypt]; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation [*goy*], whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And you shalt go to your fathers in peace; you shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation [after having been exiled into Egypt] they shall return again [return to the land of Canaan], for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

Another point of interest in this regard is Jochebed, the mother of Moses. She was the daughter of Levi (Exod 2:1; Num 26:59) and was married to Amram the father of Moses and the grandson of Levi. Jochebed was the aunt of Amram (Exod 6:16–20). If the Egyptian exile were 400 years, as many believe, then Jochebed would have been around 320–340 years of age at the birth of Moses. This is an unlikely scenario since the biblical record shows us that the lifespan of humans was between about 110 to 150 years at this time. However, if the time of the exile were four generation as noted above (Gen 15:16) then she could have been between 80 to 120 years of age at Moses' birth, which is in the more likely realm of possibility. The *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* confirms this math. It says Jochebed was 130 when Moses was born (p. 297) and that at the time Moses returned to Egypt Israel had been living there for 210 years, 116 since the servitude began and 86 since the beginning of the backbreaking oppression (p. 300).

### Why the Exile?

The purpose of the exile was to prepare Israel for its inheritance. Egypt was the "boot camp" to prepare them for the rigors of the wilderness journey so that they could then take the land of Canaan. Egypt was an incubator where Israel grew from 70 to more than two to four million people. Israel literally became a hardened army ready to go in and dispossess the Canaanites of their land and in turn repossess it.

Furthermore, YHVH could not allow Israel to dispossess the inhabitants of the Promised Land until the time was right. Scriptures says that the sins of the Amorites had to come to the full (Gen 15:16). YHVH is just and gives nations ample time to repent before judging them.

### The Burning Bush Incident

Exodus 3:2 states,

And the angel [or messenger] of YHVH appeared unto [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush [*seneb*, a thorn bush, *Strong's* H5572]: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

Compare this with Deuteronomy 33:16 which states,

And for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof, and for the good will of him that **dwelt** [Hebr. *shakan* (*Strong's* H7931) from whence the term *shekinah* (a rabbinic term used in the Oral Torah) is derived meaning “the indwelling or Divine Presence of YHVH”] **in the bush**: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. (emphasis added)

A. W. Pink suggests here that what Moses saw in the “burning bush” was not fire, but rather the Shekinah—glory or Divine Presence of YHVH (*Gleanings In Exodus*, p. 23). (A related word to *shakan* is *mishkan*; i.e., the Tabernacle in the wilderness. *Shakan* begins with the Hebrew letter *shin*/שׁ which is in itself representative of the name *El Shaddai*, which on the mezuzah is pictured by the Hebrew letter *shin* with a flame over the top of it representing the shekinah glory of YHVH over the top of it.)

But why a burning bush? A bush burning, yet not being consumed speaks of YHVH's grace. How can we as sinful mortals endure the fiery Presence of a just and righteous Elohim who is a consuming fire, (Heb 12:29) and who burns up all that is sinful and contrary to his nature and yet not be consumed ourselves? There for his grace go each of us!

The bush that burned was a thorn bush, which is a picture of humanity. Remember the ram caught in the thicket at the binding of Isaac? The thicket represents sinful humanity and this world—or the cares of this world. This is pictured in the Parable of the Sower where Yeshua teaches that thorns and thicket represent the cares of the world that choke out the seed of YHVH's Word (Matt 13:22). Thorns are a metaphor for sin. It was a crown of thorns that was placed on Yeshua's head for our transgressions even as the horns of the ram at the binding of Isaac were caught in the thorny thicket as a shadow picture of the coming Redeemer.

Similarly, the bush represents Israel who was in the iron furnace of Egypt (Deut 4:20), yet was not consumed, but was purified ready to be meet for the Master's use. Likewise, the three Hebrew children went through Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace without being consumed. So, the redeemed have YHVH's promise that he will stand with us as we pass through the floods and fire of life (Isa 43:2). All this is possible only through the grace of YHVH.

What amazing ways YHVH uses to get his messages across. A burning bush is such a simple thing, yet it speaks volumes metaphorically and prophetically. How easy it is to pass over these details in Scripture and miss the deep and rich meanings buried like nuggets therein. Similarly, in our lives, YHVH is constantly talking, trying to get our attention in even the small things of life. Are we listening to his voice?

### Chapter 3—The Names of Elohim

The name *Elohim* (God) is used some 2606 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and connotes strict justice. The name *Elohim* is primarily used in chapter three because YHVH was about to judge Egypt. In the three places where Elohim reveals himself to Moses, he uses the name YHVH (his covenant name), which is the name of mercy, to show that his primary intention is to save Israel in a historic demonstration of divine mercy (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 301).

### Chapter 4:2—Moses' Rod/Staff

This is a picture of the cross of Yeshua (to lean on), the redeemed believer's source of life, strength and power.

### Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

- 1 Study this Parashah (and all of Exodus) with these meanings of these metaphors in mind. Apply these terms to your own life. See how YHVH has delivered you from your “Egypt” and your “Pharaohs.” What is your testimony by which you have overcome the evil one (Rev 12:11)? Reflect, rejoice and give YHVH the praises. See if this does not brighten your day! Do it tomorrow, then the next day and every day living in the reality and joy of your redemption. Look for and expect breakthroughs and miracles. Keep pressing on, and do not grow weary. Live every day as a victorious overcomer.

- 2 Why did YHVH use a non-burning “burning” bush to get Moses’ attention? Who or what does this represent? Compare this to the ram’s horns caught in the thorny thicket (Gen 22:13); the thorns of the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:22) and the crown of thorns on Yeshua’s head (Matt 27:29). If a thorn bush characterizes our lives prior to our redemption (our leaving “Egypt”), then how is it that the fire of YHVH’s judgment does not burn up the thorns? What does this picture? (Jas 2:13 last part of the verse)
- 3 Why did Moses have to spend 40 years in the wilderness tending sheep? What does it mean to die to self in order to be ready for the Master’s use? How did Moses try to accomplish YHVH’s purposes in his own strength? What were the results? What lessons did YHVH teach Moses before Moses was ready to be a mighty instrument of YHVH? Apply this to your life and ministry. What can you learn from Moses’ failures and triumphs regarding your walk of faith?

## HAFTORAH READING — ISAIAH 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23

### YHVH Speaks Out Against Assimilation With the World

This Haftorah portion parallels the corresponding Parashah in that both deal with the degradation of Jacob at the hands of foreign powers, and both speak of Israel’s deliverance from their enemies by the hand of YHVH Elohim.

The prophet Isaiah wrote his rebukes of Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom, 27:6–28:6) and of Judah (the Southern Kingdom, 28:7–13) during the time period after the fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria in 721–723 B.C. and before the fall of the Southern Kingdom to Babylon in 586 B.C.

- 1 **27:9**, *Groves/asherim and sun images /pillars*. In this passage, Isaiah denounces the people of Ephraim for their worship of pagan deities. If Isaiah were alive today, what pagan practices within the Christian church would rankle his ire?
- 2 **28:7**, *The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink ... wine ... they err in vision, they stumble in judgment*. Here the prophet is addressing Judah. In Scripture, when wine causes spiritual degradation what is the cause of this? (Read Revelation 14:8; 17:2; 18:3.) Wine is the stuff of spiritual harlotry. What does YHVH plead with his people to do in this regard? (Read Rev 18:4.)
- 3 Through the lips of his prophets always, YHVH not only bring words of rebuke and judgment to his people, but also words of encouragement. Isaiah speaks of a time when not only will YHVH discipline his people for their idolatrous ways, but he will bring them back from exile and restore them as a people to worship him (instead of pagan deities) in their own land. In this regard, study the following passages: Isaiah 27:12–13; 28:5–6; 29:22–23. Have these prophecies yet been fulfilled with regard to both houses of Israel (Ephraim and Judah)?

What are some examples of humanistic or paganistic influences that persist in the modern Christian church (Ephraim) and in Rabbinic Judaism (Judah), which could lead to YHVH’s judgment? Here are a few examples to ponder:

(The following is excerpted from the author’s article entitled, “*Secular Humanism: The Devil’s Original Lie & the Religion of the New World Order.*” The entire article can be found at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/human.pdf>.)

#### Rabbinic Judaism and Humanism

Rabbinic Judaism went humanist at Yavneh after the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 when rabbinical authority replaced the Levitical authority. It was there, under the influences of such rabbis as Akiba, that Judaism rejected divine authority and established the rabbinical system. Some say this was necessary to insure the survival of Judaism in the wake of the destruction of the Temple and removal of Jews from Jerusalem and environs by the Romans after A.D. 135. But this reason does not explain why or how so many Jewish traditions supplanted the truth of the Bible before this time. Yeshua makes reference to this in Matthew 15:1–9. Rabbinic authority often supplanted the Word of Elohim. “*The Jewish Encyclopedia*” defines ‘Rabbinical Authority’ as “The power or right of deciding the Law, in dubious cases, or of interpreting, modifying, or amplifying, and **occasionally of abrogating**

it, as vested in the Rabbis as its teachers and expounders” (*Rabbi Akiba’s Messiah*, Daniel Gruber, p. 82, emphasis added). Some examples of this are as follow:

- ☞ The concept of the “Oral Torah/Law” came into being sometime in the second-century A.D. as being on a par with or greater than the Written Torah (Gruber, pp. 60, 76–77). This led to the traditions of the elders, which were eventually codified in the *Mishnah* and *Talmud*.
- ☞ YHVH is subject to rabbinic *halachic* (legal) rulings (Ibid., pp. 76–77).
- ☞ There are many rabbinic decrees and rulings that supplant biblical law. This was especially the case after the destruction of the Temple when the Jewish religious leaders practically reinvented their religion (Ibid., p. 78). Examples of this are:
  - Alternative means of atonement (the shedding of blood is no longer necessary; atonement is achieved through prayer [*tefilim*], charitable deeds [*mitzvoth*] and charitable giving [*tzedakah*]) along with other activities such as study of the Torah, being circumcised and giving to the rabbis (Ibid.).
  - In Matthew 23 (along with Matt 15:3–9 and Mark 7:7–13), Yeshua rebukes the Jewish leaders of his day for replacing YHVH’s Torah with man-made traditions.
  - The rabbis are allowed to make pronouncements from *Moses’ Seat* or by *beit din* (rabbinic) ruling (called *takanot* and *ma’asim*) that totally annulled the Torah (Gruber, pp. 80–81; *The Hebrew Yeshua Versus the Greek Jesus*, Nehemiah Gordon, pp. 47–53). Later these rulings were codified into the *Talmud* (Gordon, p. 52).
  - The rabbis have the right to change and control the calendar. The modern rabbinic or traditional Hebrew calendar dates to A.D. 360 (Natan Lawrence, article entitled *The Biblical Calendar and the New Moon*). For example, many times, according to the rabbinic calendar *Rosh Chodesh* (the new moon) does not fall on the actual day the new moon is sighted, and *Yom Teruah* (the Day of the Shofar Blowing), which Torah states must fall on the first day of the seventh month (i.e., the *rosh chodesh* of that month), does not actually occur on rosh chodesh.
  - One month on the Jewish calendar is named after a pagan deity (*Tammuz*) when the Torah specifically states that Israelites are not to take the name of pagan deities on their lips.
  - Rabbinic law allows a divorced and remarried woman to remarry her first husband, something Torah forbids (Gruber, p. 81).
  - The rabbis instituted the laws of postponement, which says that YHVH’s feasts cannot fall on certain days, and therefore have to be postponed.
  - The rabbis teach that baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), a leavening agent, is permissible to eat during the Days of Unleavened Bread when Torah demands that we abstain from all bread containing leavening agents.
  - The wearing of all white *tzitzits* (fringes) have replaced the Torah law that says they must have a blue thread.
  - Torah says that Israelite lineage is determined by one’s father. Modern rabbinic law says that it is determined by one’s mother.
  - The ineffable name doctrine, which states that using the Hebrew names of Elohim (e.g., YHVH) are prohibited, even though Scripture commands that we use them and not forget them.
  - Singing and playing of musical instruments is prohibited under rabbinic law at religious services (Sabbath and appointed times), yet the Torah commands that the shofar be blown on these days, and the Psalms speak of it occurring, and the biblical record states that music and singing were a big part of the Levitical priesthood system in the Temple (*Jewish Book of Why*, Alfred J. Kolatch, p. 143).
  - The shofar is never blown on the Sabbath, even when the Day of Shofar Blowing falls on a Sabbath, even though Torah commands us to do it (Kolatch, p. 228).
  - The anti-missionary movement within Judaism is the outgrowth of humanist philosophy, for it attempts to destroy the deity of Yeshua and rejects the authority and divine inspiration of the Renewed Covenant Scriptures.

## Christianity and Humanism

Christianity is not to be outdone by rabbinic Judaism when it comes to replacing the Word of Elohim with the traditions of men. To the degree that Christianity has rejected Torah, replacing it with men's traditions, is the degree that it is a humanistic religion. Christianity is becoming more humanistic all the time. That is why modern-day "prophets" like Francis Schaeffer attempted to warn the church about the perils of secular humanism. Here are some areas where the modern church has succumbed to the influences of the philosophy of secular humanism:

- The Catholic Church makes pronouncements *ex cathedra* (from the chair of papal authority) to establish doctrines and traditions that are contrary to Scripture.
- The establishment of pagan-based Christian holidays that have replaced YHVH's biblical feasts. This is a form of interfaithism and syncretism with other pagan religions.
- Sunday replaced the Sabbath as a day of formal gatherings and worship (more syncretism with pagan religions)
- Other examples of syncretism with idolatrous pagan concepts: steeples on churches, Christmas trees, Santa Claus, Easter hams and bunnies, 40 days of Lent, Mardi Gras.
- Humanistic Christian doctrines include the concept of law versus grace, dispensational/dual covenant theology, and Old versus New Testament, which originated from the pagan (Greek) concept of dualism.
- Seeker sensitive churches; becoming like the world to win the world to Christ (adopting the world's dress and hair styles, music, entertainment, etc.).
- The positivization of the gospel message; that is, a de-emphasis on sin, judgment and repentance.
- Preaching a social gospel: sermons are often pop-psychology messages to build up one's self-esteem.
- Changes in terminologies: biblical terms give way to "politically correct," "seeker sensitive" terms: e.g., the heathens are now called "the unchurched," forgiveness replaces repentance, puppet shows/skits and dramas replace hard preaching, sin is called "wrong thoughts."
- The Word of Faith movement: health and wealth (prosperity) teaching (heavy emphasis on materialism and gratification of the lust of the flesh for enjoyment in the here and now.
- Christian (Charismatic) "divination" or "witchcraft" occurs where Christians take the legitimate gifts (especially the gift of prophecy) of the Spirit of Elohim, and a) use them to control or manipulate other people for unrighteous purposes, b) operate in counterfeit gifts of the Spirit (either out of their psyches or souls—i.e., their mind, will and emotions, or under demonic influence) to control, manipulate or subvert others for unrighteous purposes, or c) attempt to ascertain the future through means other than direct revelation of the Spirit of Elohim, as he wills to make the future known to human vessels (1 Cor 12:11).
- Idolatry of formulas, programs and methodologies that are unbiblical (e.g., saying Sinners Prayer to be saved, the Four Spiritual Laws, give-to-get, the obtaining of Christian degrees, labels and accolades of men is the key to spiritual success and giftedness.

