



Your equipment as messenger of Elohim

Parashat Shemoth (13) – Names

Torah: *Shemoth* 1:1 to 6:1

Haftarah: *Yeshayahu* 27:6 to 28:13; *Yeshayahu* 29:22-23

Apostolic Writings: *Ma`asei* 3:12-15; *Ma`asei* 5:27-32

Whether or not we want to admit the fact, this *Babel*-style of life we are currently forced to live in, recently moved into another year – something of which so-called competent calendar composers do not really have clue about the actual number. Ironical that Christianity points fingers towards Judaism regarding them not being correct with their counting of the years. Yet the current secular calendar has been changed and tampered with so many times that nobody really knows whether or not this is actually 2025 years after *Yeshua* was born!

In order to survive, as the largest part of people on earth operate with this calendar as their timekeeper, we have to fall into line with the pagans. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that we have to agree with everything that goes with the calendar. We may prefer to live according to the system taught by *Torah*, while looking at the worldly calendar to keep pace with certain activities. Shortly after the secular new year, we also start with a new book from *Torah: Shemoth*, but before getting into it boots and all, it may be a good idea to find out first what the book entails, as well as where we find it in Scripture.

In general, we see two main topics, concerning a newly born nation, *Yisra'el*:

1. The redemption of the nation (1:1 tot 15:21);
2. The adoption/acceptance of the nation (15:22 tot 40:38).

The topic of redemption can be broken down as follows:

1. *YAH's* preparation of the nation as well as the training of *Mosheh* (chs. 1-4);
2. *YAH's* display of His dominion (chs. 5-11);
3. *YAH's* redemption of His people (12:1 to 13:16);
4. *YAH's* completion of the redemption of *Yisra'el* (13:17 to 15:21).

After this, while investigating the adoption of *Yisra'el*, we will study the following:

1. *YAH's* preparation commands for *Yisra'el* (15:22 to 18:27);
2. the establishment of the Mosaic covenant (19:1 to 24:11);
3. assignment regarding *YAH's* indwelling amongst His people (24:12 to 31:18);

4. the violation and renewal of the covenant (chs. 32 to 34);
5. the building and sanctification of items to be used by *Yisra'el* during their worship (chs. 35 to 40).

Apart from this breakdown of the various aspects of *Shemoth*, we will also learn three important characteristics of YAH:

1. The supremacy of YAH; this characteristic is to teach us that YAH is the ultimate sovereign of the universe.
2. Redemption of man; this is something we already encountered in *Berēshith* due to man's falling into sin. Two important activities will be highlighted here, to wit worship (cf. *Romiyim* 6:12-13; 12:1-2) and obedience (cf. *Hazon* 22:14 et al).
3. The ways YAH will effect man's redemption. This includes revelations, opportunities and choices.

Last week, when *Ya'aqob* blessed his sons, we learnt that *Yehuḏah* is appointed as leader of the nation. This was prominent in *Berēshith* 49:10, but sometimes this verse is so dominating, that the following two verses seem to be suppressed and hide until the blessing for the next son is mentioned. These two verses are mostly avoided by spiritual total abstainers and many teachers refuse to analyse them, fearing that their flock may become confused and be led astray:

Berēshith 49¹¹ "Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes. ¹²"His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

The *Sefaria* is a compendium of every Hebrew document ever published. It also includes various renditions of a spoken interpretation of the *TaNaKh*, which was later penned by professional translators and is known as *targum*. Each *targum* received the name of the person who originally rendered it; one of these men was Jonathan, hence the document is known as "*Targum Jonathan*". He translated the word '*shiloh*' in v. 10 as "*King Meshiha*", which we will understand as *Yeshua*, the Messiah. Interesting and informative articles regarding different names, as we see in *Yeshayahu*, are discussed at a slightly controversial website², controversial due to their upholding of the trinity fallacy and some other obvious problems as observed in Christianity.

This blessing for *Yehuḏah* is explained much better in *Targum Jonathan* than any other translation and we place this at [addendum A](#) for your perusal. This *targum* identifies '*Shiloh*' as the Messiah, but we also see the interesting pattern in *gematria* where *Shiloh* and *Mosheh* are found to be the same, a person whom we will get to know much better in this and following studies – both enumerate to 345.

*Shiloh*³ is שִׁילֹה, *Mosheh* is מֹשֶׁה:

ה	ל	י	ש		ה	ש	מ
5	30	10	300	345	5	300	40

According to this *targum* we learn that the robes, garments, are to be dipped in blood and not necessarily the 'blood' of grapes, as other translations render it. This is confirmed:

Hazon 19¹³ and having been dressed in a robe dipped in blood – and His Name is called: The Word of יהוה.¹⁴ And the armies in the heaven, dressed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.¹⁵ And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations. And He

1 https://www.Sefaria.org/Targum_Jonathan_on_Genesis.49.1?lang=bi

2 <https://jesusplusnothing.com/messiah-revealed>

3 This is the spelling in the modern Hebrew translation. The Hebrew study bible spelling is שִׁילֹה

shall shepherd them with a rod of iron. And He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Ėl Shaddai. [emphasis original]

The first word in the book *Shemoth* is וְאֵלֶּה (ve-`E-leh), which translates as “and these”. It can also be translated as “now, these”, keeping the meaning exactly the same. As we have learnt in the past, the letter ׀ (vav) is also used as a conjunction, and in this case, as many others, it would be ‘and’. Various other books in the *TaNaKh*, such as *Yehoshua*, *Shophetim*, *Ruth*, *Ezra*, *Neḥemyah*, *Estĕr*, as well as *Shemu'ĕl*, *Melaḳim* and *Dibrei haYamim*, the last three in their entirety, commence in a similar way. The book of *Shemoth* can therefore not be allowed to stand on its own, and we see that ‘and’ or ‘now’ takes places over some 200 years. This proves that *Shemoth* is a continuance of everything we have learnt in *Berĕshith* and that *Torah*, as a whole, is one long set of rules and history which may in no way be divided. The Greek title, Exodus (as in the Septuagint) refers more to the end of the book, in contrast to the standard Hebrew method of using the first important word of the book as the title, and in this case also this *sidrah*. According to one commentator⁴:

"The exodus is the most significant historical and theological event of the Old Testament ..."

Most historians agree that the new king in *Mitsrayim* was the result of a *coup d'état* or something similar. Many scholars also agree that he was not born in *Mitsrayim*, hence his not knowing anything about the history of *Yosĕph* and the famine, neither of *Yosĕph*'s family. He considered it his most important mission to break the power of this mighty nation. This would be accomplished by forced labour while two new supply cities, *Pithom* and *Ra'amses*, would be established, cities dedicated to their deities. It is possible that *Pithom* would be dedicated to *Nehebkau*, the primordial snake god, while *Ra'amses* would be dedicated to *Ra*, the sun god. This last city is enough reason to prove that this new, evil king would be non other than Ra'amses II, as history teaches us that this person reigned during that period. Many secular historians and archeologists dispute the rule of Ra'amses II coinciding with the time *Yisra'el* was in *Mitsrayim*; in fact, many people completely deny that *Yisra'el* was ever in *Mitsrayim* at any stage! There is also controversy over the time period *Yisra'el* spent in *Mitsrayim*, as well as their being slaves. Scripture teaches us of a period of 430 years (cf. 12:40, 41), as well as 400 years (cf. *Ma'asei* 7:6), but we find an acceptable solution:

Galatiyim 3 ¹⁷ Here is what I am saying: the legal part of the *Torah*, which came into being 430 years later, does not nullify an oath sworn by God, so as to abolish the promise. (CJB) [emphasis added]

The words “came into being ... later” provide the decisive factor, as the nation of *Yisra'el* leave *Mitsrayim* exactly 430 years after *Abraham* was given the first promise (cf. *Berĕshith* 15). In total the nation spent some 215 years in *Mitsrayim*, but they were only slaves for about 110 years. Without jumping the gun, an interesting and well-researched video teaching⁵ provides the correct information.

It is always amazing to find certain information in Scripture which may seem to be out of place, even superfluous, while in other instances no information is given, especially where our inquisitive minds would want to know more! This new king, probably Ra'amses II as mentioned earlier, now uses an expression observed in Scripture for the very first time: “the people of [the children] of *Yisra'el*”, (v. 9); he appoints his own high-ranking officials as slave-masters over them, for which Albert Barnes⁶ provides a brilliant description:

Taskmasters – The Egyptian “Chiefs of tributes.” They were men of rank, superintendents of the public works, such as are often represented on Egyptian monuments, and carefully distinguished from the subordinate overseers. The Israelites were employed in forced labor, probably in detachments, but they were not reduced to slavery, properly speaking, nor treated as captives of war. Amosis had special need of such laborers, as proved by the inscriptions.

4 Eugene H. Merrill, Kingdom of Priests, p. 57.

5 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF0F8YjT1og&t=197s>

6 Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible

Typical of any person with a low self-esteem or an intense fear, this king orders the Hebrew midwives to kill all baby boys as they are born. Scripture teaches us the names of two midwives, specifically to show us that they were in fact women from *Mitsrayim*, as their names are not inherent Hebrew. Some scholars believe these women to be the mother and sister of *Mosheh*, but this doesn't correlate with what we later learn of them having their own families. However, there is an important lesson we learn from this, something we also emphasised last week: irrespective of who you may be, in which country you were born, *YAH* will accept you as soon as you accept *Torah* with the necessary respect and obedience as He requires of us. We provide extended information regarding midwives at [addendum B](#).

Keep in mind the words *Hoshĕa* penned, "as the sand of the sea" (*cf. Hoshĕa* 1:10) and compare it to one of the verses in this *sidrah*:

Shemoth 1 ¹²But the more they afflicted them, the more they increased and grew, and they were in dread of the children of *Yisra'el*.

The largest population growth of the nation of *Yisra'el* took place outside the promised land and usually when they were oppressed or in exile. Oppression regularly leads to larger numbers and always instills fear in the enemy. We can also state this in a different way: when we are oppressed by the enemy, our blessings are multiplied, causing the enemy's plans to backfire. We should therefore never fear oppression, since we can overcome all of this by means of trust, as evidenced many times in Scripture. *Sha'ul* teaches us:

Tas'loniqim Aleph 5 ¹⁸in all circumstances give thanks, for this is the desire of *Elohim* in Messiah *יהושע* for you.

The midwives feared *YAH* and ignored the rules laid down by the king, causing them to have their own families later while the nation increased rapidly. We learn from *Torah* to obey authorities set over us (*cf. Ib'rim* 13:17 *et al*). We also learn not to commit murder (*cf. Shemoth* 20:13 *et al*). When any contradiction arises, clearly one of the commands needs to be ignored; in this case it will be that of the authorities, since life is more important. Their excuses they had for the king were not the whole truth and even if we are not to lie (*cf. Wayyiqra* 19:11-12 *et al*), the first principle of *Torah* remains valid, *פיקוח נפש* (*pi-Quach Ne-fesh*), saving a life:

Wayyiqra 18 ⁵And you shall guard My laws and My right-rulings, which a man does and lives by them. I am *יהוה*.

Yeshua followed the same principle when he healed people on a *Shabbat* (*cf. Luqas* 13:10-17 *et al*). Evidently *YAH* blessed every Hebrew woman and nobody ever had a miscarriage. When this plan of the king fails, he orders that all male babies are to be thrown into the Nile river. However, this was a short-sighted decision, as a few years along the line, no men would be available to perform hard labour. In this we also see a shadow picture of the infanticide ordered by *Herodes* (*cf. Mattithyahu* 2:16). Spiritually we realise the evilness of *hasatan* by suffocating the lives of believers, but that he would do everything possible to prevent our Redemption, *Yeshua*, from being born.

Our standard Scripture never mentions the amount of boys who ended up in the Nile, but the Book of *Yashar* states that every woman tried to hide her son as long as possible. At this time a baby boy is born to *Amram* and *Yoķebed*, both from the tribe of *Lĕwi*, from the descendants of *Qeħath*. No other description is given, except that the child is *טוב* (*tov*). It is remarkable that the same word is used by *Mosheh* when he describes Creation (*cf. Berĕshith* 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). These two parents are obedient to the word of the king, because they do actually throw their baby boy into the Nile when they can't hide him any longer. It happens in a totally different way, though, and he is never thrown into the river directly, but placed in a *תִּבְיָה* (*te-Vah*), a wicker basket and coated with tar and pitch, something that would allow the basket to stay afloat on the water. Pharaoh never prohibited people from putting their baby boys into a *tevah* or anything similar! The boy's older sister, *Miryam*, stands nearby in the reeds to keep an eye on her brother.

The shape of this basket is identical, almost a scale model, of the ark which preserved *Noah* and seven family members some 1 000 years previously from a devastating flood that covered the entire earth. It is also the only other *tevah* ever mentioned in Scripture. In this way we see *YAH* saving the entire nation of *Yisra'el* with a much smaller version. [HalleluYAH!](#)

While *Miryam* is watching over her baby brother, the king's daughter decides to go to the Nile to cool down and bathe herself. She is accompanied by young women. We read in the Book of *Yashar* that *YAH* had sent a heat wave through *Mitsrayim* to punish them for their unjustified behaviour against the growing nation of *Yisra'el*. This same source names Pharaoh's daughter as *Batyah* (cf. *Yasher* 68:17), which simply translates as "daughter of *YAH*". Some historians are convinced that this would be *Hatshepsut* who started her reign during the year of *Mosheh*'s birth. Josephus identifies her as *Thermuthis*⁷. While this may explain how she could adopt this baby boy and raise him in the palace, there is other information which doesn't always agree with certain facts. We place an excerpt with some information from "Women in Scripture" at [addendum C](#).

The king's daughter sends one of the young women to retrieve the *tevah* and when she opens it up, finds the little Hebrew boy inside. She immediately decides to adopt him, but he would need to be nursed for some time. *Miryam* intervenes and suggests to bring a Hebrew woman who could perform this task until he is old enough to go to the palace. Obviously she brings the baby's own mother and for the following three years this child and the mother will not be prosecuted. We can see in this narrative the first coming of Messiah where he comes to earth for a short while, teaching his *talmidim* concerning the Kingship of *YAH*.

When the child is weaned and old enough, he is brought to the palace and the daughter of Pharaoh, who may even reign the country of *Mitsrayim*, names him *Mosheh*, the Hebrew version of Moses. This was a common name in *Mitsrayim* and alluded to royal status, especially when comparing it to the names of previous kings: *Ahmose* (Amosis), *Thutmose* (Thutmosis) and others – note the ending of the names. According to the Book of *Yashar* he would have had ten names, but even *YAH* called him by the name of *Mosheh* for uniformity. *Mosheh* receives the best education and training available in *Mitsrayim*, but realises he is a Hebrew and according to tradition he regularly keeps in contact with his family. One day, while walking amongst his own people, he sees a *Mitsrian* striking a Hebrew. He intercedes, killing the *Mitsrian* and hides him in the sand. Shortly afterwards, when two Hebrews are having a brawl, *Mosheh* walks up to them, but when trying to intercede, he is astonished by their words:

Shemoth 2 ¹⁴ And he said, "Who made you a head and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the *Mitsrian*?" And *Mosheh* feared and said, "Truly, the matter is known!"

Every sin will be brought to light, at one time or another; we may hide it from people, but we can't hide anything from *YAH*:

Mishlë 28 ¹³ He who hides his transgressions does not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them finds compassion.

He flees *Mitsrayim* and ends up in the wilderness, but once again we encounter various versions. The Book of *Yashar* claims that he resided in *Kush*, was imprisoned and would even have been married to the queen. This apparently happened over a period of 20 years. After *Kush* he goes to *Midyan* and this is also where the standard Scripture confirms the narrative. The wilderness is a place where *YAH* meets with you and I; this is where any form of haughtiness is addressed, where we are cured of selfishness and taught to be humble. It is in the wilderness where we can hear the voice of *YAH* better than anywhere else, since there are no other interferences, interruptions or distractions. This is also where we learn to survive amongst snakes, scorpions and other dangers. Some people have probably never experienced this spiritual wilderness and live a lifestyle they consider to be acceptable to *YAH*. The longer we kick against the prods,

⁷ Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 2:9:5

the longer we will stay in the wilderness. As soon as we can learn the lessons YAH wants to teach us, we will be released from the wilderness and also become *tov*.

Mosheh eventually arrives at the household of a non-Levitical priest, *Re'u'el* (friend of YAH)⁸, with seven daughters (coincidence?) and while trying to fill the troughs of the flocks, they are driven away by evil shepherds. *Mosheh* comes to their rescue and waters the flock. When their father is told of the good deed performed by this stranger, he is invited to his house and is later given one of the daughters, *Tsipporah*, as wife. This name literally translates as (female) bird. Some sources teach us that this marriage only takes place after *Mosheh* being there for 10 years. *Tsipporah* gives birth to their first son and names him גֵרְשֹׁם (*ger-Shom*). The first syllable, *ger*, is commonly used by Hebrews and *Mitsrians* and translates as 'foreigner', even cotter. The second syllable is seen in the Coptic '*shemmo*', which translates as "foreign land". With the name of his first son, *Mosheh* considers himself a cotter in a foreign land, very similar as was the case with *Yosēph*.

In the meanwhile the king of *Mitsrayim* dies and the nation calls out to YAH to free them for their oppression. This is the end of the reign of either *Hatshepsut* or Ra'amses, whoever would have been on the throne at that time. A new king is to come and would be worse than the previous one, as we will learn during the following few studies. One remark to make here: *Mosheh* literally lived the life of a king in *Mitsrayim*. After his manslaughter ordeal, his status dropped from hero to zero, when he becomes a shepherd. He may not be in a pig sty, as we currently are, but he had to bite the bullet of humility, while quite a few other lessons were waiting to meet him. It is no wonder that his first son is called something similar to 'Outcast'!

While *Mosheh* is tending the sheep of his father-in-law, he manages to move away from his normal route and arrives at mount *Horēb*, also known as the mountain of YAH. This is in actual fact a complete mountain range and the name translates as 'desolate'. He notices a fire in a bush and it is in cases like this where many people run with stories that simply are not true. It was not the bush that was burning, but there was a fire in the bush, *Shemoth* 3:2a:

- ☞ And the Messenger of יהוה appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. (The Scriptures)
- ☞ The angel of ADONAI appeared to him in a fire blazing from the middle of a bush. (Complete Jewish Bible)
- ☞ And the angel of Yahuah appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thorn bush: (אֱלֹהִים Cephher/KJV) [emphasis original]

Most of us have seen bushes burning, and there is nothing strange about that. Obviously this is not what captivated *Mosheh's* attention. A burning bush in this area was rather quite normal, as spontaneous fire could easily start for various reasons⁹. This occurrence must certainly have been something supernatural to provoke *Mosheh's* attention. Most of the drawings and pictures we see of this phenomenon usually depicts an evening or night scene showing a burning bush. The original word is סִנְהָה (*se-Neh*), which translates to "thorny bush" and was most probably a blackberry bush or bramble. However, no shepherd in his right mind will tend to his flock during the night in an unknown field. This entire event takes place during the day and is one of the reasons why *Mosheh* steps closer to examine it. He realises that the bush is not burning, but that the fire is **inside** the bush. We must take note that this is the messenger appearing in the form of a flame to get *Mosheh's* attention. One question asked by many people: "Why a burning thorny bush? Why not any other type of growth, even a tree or a shrub?" Keep in mind what happened to *Adam* after his falling into sin:

8 *Re'u'el* is the actual name of this non-Lēwite priest, but his title was *Yithro* (Excellency).

9 Cassuto, Umberto. A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, p. 51. Translated by Israel Abrahams. Reprinted. English ed. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983.

Berēshith 3 ¹⁷ And to the man He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘Do not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you are to eat of it all the days of your life, ¹⁸ and *the ground* shall bring forth thorns and thistles for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.

Thorns and thistles were part of Creation, but were hidden and only appeared after man became disobedient to YAH – an everlasting sign that we should heed the rules of YAH and the reason we read “shall bring forth”, as it hadn’t been encountered before. The messenger appears in this bramble bush which would have been consumed in a matter of a few minutes, teaching us how quickly our sins can be forgiven, should we confess them in all honesty. Even though the bush is not consumed, *Mosheh*’s curiosity is consumed, to such an extent that he walks closer. Here we can learn two lessons: firstly, this is how *Ruach* awakens our spirit to point out the world of lies we find ourselves in, in order for YAH to speak to us. Secondly, we can’t fail to notice that the nation of *Yisra’el* is unchanged after almost 200 years! They did not succumb to the idolatry of *Mitsrayim* or their traditions – exactly what YAH expects of you and I.

Only when *Mosheh* projects his full attention to this occurrence, YAH calls him by his name and when he acknowledges, he is commanded to remove his sandals from his feet¹⁰. The ground is from which we are created and with bare feet we not only connect directly with ourselves, but also with our Creator who made it for us. This is also a token of humbleness as we will learn in a later study, when the priest is to go into the tabernacle once a year with bare feet when offering the sacrifice of atonement. To this very day people still dance before YAH with bare feet to His esteem, although there are also occasions where it is done as a sign of mourning (cf. *Shemu’el Bet* 15:30; *Yeshayahu* 20:2-4; *Mikah* 1:8).

At this bramble bush YAH introduces Himself to *Mosheh* as the *Elohim* of *Abraham*, *Yitz’chaq* en *Ya’aqob*. *Mosheh* hides his face at this stage, but as his relationship grows, he would later ask YAH to see more of Him! This should also happen in our lives: at first we may be shy, even guilty, but as we grow in our walk with YAH, we want to experience more of Him, know more about Him, in order to serve Him better. *Mosheh* is given an order to confront Pharaoh and inform him to free the nation of *Yisra’el* that they may serve יהוה. Suddenly all royal education and authority is eradicated and *Mosheh* has one excuse upon another. He lapses into a pathetic bundle of self-pity, someone with a self-esteem lower than sea level. It is obvious that he lacks faith, something all of us are guilty of at times. However, YAH has His plans in order, as well as the people He will use to accomplish them, therefore no excuses will confound them, even if it means that another person or group is called upon:

Hazon 3 ¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot.
¹⁶ “So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.

If ever YAH should call upon you for a specific task and you can’t think of enough excuses, you can learn a few from *Mosheh*:

1. Pride combined with a feeling of unworthiness;
2. fear of his fellow citizens;
3. fear of rejection;
4. influence of previous experiences;
5. lack of authority;

This is where the patience of YAH is tested to such an extent that He allows *Aharon*, *Mosheh*’s older brother, to accompany him and do all the talking. The task of *Mosheh* is now limited to perform only signs and wonders. Another first in Scripture, as far into *Torah* as the second book, is the perception of YAH’s magnitude when He declares His Character:

¹⁰ Hierdie is 'n tradisie in die ANO wat uit respek gedoen word, tot vandag toe in verskeie lande wêreldwyd. *Mosheh* wys dus respek, maar doen dit ook in gehoorsaamheid.

Shemoth 3 ¹⁴And Elohim said to Mosheh, “I am that which I am.” [אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה - 'eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh]¹¹ And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Yisra’el, ‘I am has sent me to you.’ ”

The אֶת Cephher renders it as follows:

Sh'mot 3 ¹⁴And Elohiym said unto [El-]¹²Mosheh, **Ehayah Asher Hayah:** and he said, Thus shall you say unto the children of Yashar’el, Hayah has sent me unto you. [emphasis original]

As with many other names in Scripture, this is actually a synopsis of an identity. Dialects, translators and various other factors ensure that YAH's Name expresses who He is, while also concealing it to an extent. This teaches us to examine and thoroughly search Scripture to come to the conclusion that any superficial praise or worship is not acceptable, as YAH may never be honoured in the same way as pagans exalt their gods:

Ib'rim 6 ¹¹And we desire that each one of you show the same eagerness, to the entire confirmation of expectation until the end,

The last instruction *Mosheh* receives is to take his מִטָּה (*ma-Têh*), staff, in his hand, an instrument to be used for various signs. It is important to note here that this is apparently no ordinary staff. According to tradition this staff was given to *Adam* after Creation and passed down from generation to generation. The Book of *Yashar* provides an extended narrative regarding this staff and we place a summary at [addendum D](#). When *Mosheh* eventually feels at ease, YAH assures him that everything will happen according to His plan. *Mosheh* is to start with the elders, after which he is to visit Pharaoh for the first message. Some scholars believe that the roles of *Mosheh* and *Aharon* were reversed because of his stubbornness. If he were to agree from the start, he would have become high priest, not *Aharon*. Now he will only fit into that role for a short period of time while installing and sanctifying *Aharon* as high priest.

Mosheh goes back to his father-in-law and reports everything he has experienced, after which he departs for *Mitsrayim* to meet his brother. His family accompany him and while sleeping over in a lodging place, *Mosheh* is struck with a serious illness, something which could cause his death or cause him to become bed-ridden. According to most commentaries and the Book of *Yashar*, he was unable to get out of bed. *Mosheh* orders *Tsipporah* to take a sharp stone and circumcise their oldest son. This was a custom that she was not used to, neither agreed with, hence her action of tossing her son's foreskin at the feet of *Mosheh*, calling him “a bridegroom of blood”. This causes YAH to remove His hand of judgement from over *Mosheh* and his health is restored. It is not penned anywhere, but after this event *Tsipporah* returns with their children to her father in *Midyan*. The reason for this could be as a result of the pain their oldest son was enduring; *Mosheh* therefore returns to *Mitsrayim* on his own, while *Tsipporah* and their sons would follow much later, meeting them at *Sinai*, after the exodus (*cf.* 18:2).

This entire episode teaches us another important lesson. We can never try to guide unbelievers on a lifestyle we don't follow ourselves or do not agree with. If you haven't yet experienced circumcision of the heart, *Ruach* can't work through you to convince others of their evil ways. This doesn't mean that a person should be a genius to teach others, as YAH only uses those who are willing to be used, irrespective of their being wise or not. We should operate in complete obedience and remove every form of callousness from our hearts before trying to explain the Way of Truth to someone else. That person will realise immediately that you are insecure, practising an hypocritical faith and making a fool of yourself. Only after having had a circumcision of the heart, will you receive the necessary support:

Mattithyahu 10 ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking in you.

11 The Hebrew text reads as above, the word 'eheyeh being derived from haYah which means to be, to exist, but the Aramaic text here in v. 14 reads: aYah ashar aYah.

12 The El is uncalled for, since it is already described with 'unto'.

Before going to Pharaoh, *Mosheh* and *Aharon* are to speak to the elders. These two brothers are to convince them that they were sent by *YAH* and should be recognised as such; they are not to usurp the authority of the elders by simply leading the nation of *Yisra'el* (cf. 3:16). Having the blessing of the elders, *Mosheh* and *Aharon* will have the *s'michah*¹³, the authority and power, to confront Pharaoh for their first meeting, while standing under the banner of *YAH* when they bring their first, simple charge:

Shemoth 5 ^{1b}“Thus said יהוה *Elohim* of *Yisra'el*, ‘Let My people go, so that they celebrate a festival to Me in the wilderness.’ ”

In line with the tradition and customs of *Mitsrayim*, *Yisra'el* would be allowed to worship the local idols in the land, but to worship *Elohim* they had to go outside of the land. It would therefore be a temporary exodus, but Pharaoh would not allow this, as he also refused to acknowledge *YAH*; this causes him to increase the work load of the oppressed peoples. Pharaoh is only aware of their own idols in *Mitsrayim* and is himself considered a deity by his subjects. We learn from a *midrash* that Pharaoh summoned all his sorcerers and magicians to his chambers. They opened all their books, but could not find the Name of *YAH* in any of them. For this reason, nobody had more power than Pharaoh himself. This meeting therefore results in increased pressure on the people who have been slaves for quite some time. They are to gather straw themselves, while still producing the same amount of bricks. The nation doesn't complain to *YAH*, but to *Mosheh* and *Aharon*. We see similar methods as when *Yoseph* was in prison. Every *Mitsrian* is more lazy than the next, resulting in slave-drivers being appointed from the nation of *Yisra'el*. While the people of *Mitsrayim* take it easy, the responsibilities of *Yisra'el* are increased, resulting in a much stronger nation, also causing them to become a stronger unity.

Similar things happen in the life of a believer. We fail to see the larger picture that *YAH* sees and sometimes feel like quitting early. Problems that arise seem to increase and never want to go away, urging us to make our own plans – usually to our own detriment. However, the best and easiest way would be to return to *YAH*, to make *t'shuvah*, as *Mosheh* and *Aharon* did, to hear the words that precede the redemption:

Shemoth 6 ¹“And יהוה said to *Mosheh*, “Now see what I do to Pharaoh, for with a strong hand he is going to let them go, and with a strong hand he is going to drive them out of his land.”

It is possible to hear the voice of *YAH* when we least expect to, proving the importance of always living according to His rules, in order not to miss the reply. Every person is prepared in a unique way for what *YAH* has in store for us – for some people it takes longer and for others the solution and answers are quickly given. Patience is something mastered over time, and combined with obedience and trust we will have a virtue which could save many tears and heartache, sometimes even money! We should therefore support each other, edify others and help to establish the Kingdom of *YAH* in unity as He had planned it from the start.

From the pen of *Yeshayahu* we learn of his prophecy concerning *Yisra'el*, when he explains why they were constantly defeated by their enemies, but he also gives the assurance of redemption in the future. We would like to have *Yeshua* end this study with most humble and honourable prayer in Scripture, something we mentioned last week, which we find in *Yohanan* 17. Where Pharaoh despises and rejects the Character and Authority of *YAH*, even doubts it, *Yeshua* teaches every *talmid* the characteristics we should be striving for. After entrusting everyone who loves him to *YAH*, we see the wonderful way in which he ends this supplication:

Yohanan 17 ²⁵“O righteous Father, indeed the world did not know You, but I knew You, and these knew that You sent Me. ²⁶“And I have made Your Name known to them, and shall make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me might be in them, and I in them.”

13 Derived from the word סמכות (*sam'chut*), denoting competence, authority and ability.

The words “righteous Father” is shown in Hebrew as אָבִי הַצַּדִּיק (*a-Vi ha-tze-Deq*), where ‘*avi*’, [my] Father, is a term of endearment, derived from *Abba*, as we would also use from time to time. *Yeshua* not only intercedes for the original *talmidim*, but for every other person who would follow later, including you and I. This supplication was done in the upper room, shortly before *Yeshua* paid the highest price for every person *YAH* would entrust to him – people who have ears to hear. Even Pharaoh could have been included, if he would only show *YAH* the necessary respect, humbleness and recognition.

What is in your hand? Is it the staff with authority given by *YAH*, or is it a rod with many excuses? Using it the way *YAH* expects of you, will also allow you to become *tov*.

Shabbat shalom!

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Sources:

Unless otherwise stated, all text is quoted from The Scriptures (2009)¹⁴. Due to personal belief, the word ‘God’ is replaced with the Hebrew ‘*Elohim*’ or sometimes inflections thereof.

You Can Understand the Bible: Study Guide Commentary Series – Dr. Bob Utley

Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible

Messianic *Torah* with Commentary – Gary Gardner Ph.D. (Kindle Edition)

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

The Expository Notes of Dr. Thomas L. Constable

Book of the Upright

The Word of יהוה is free, therefore this study may be distributed free of charge, provided no changes are made.

¹⁴ <https://isr-messianic.org/>

Addendum A

“Kings shall not cease from the house of Judah, nor soferim (scribes) teaching the Torah from his children’s children, until the time that the King Meshiha shall come, whose is the kingdom, and to whom all the kingdoms of the earth shall be obedient. How beautiful is the King Meshiha, who is to arise from the house of Yehudah! ... his garments will be dipped in blood, and he himself will be like the juice of the winepress. More beautiful are the eyes of the King Meshiha to behold than pure wine; they will not look upon that which is unclean, or the shedding of the blood of the innocent. His teeth are employed according to the precept rather than in eating the things of violence and rapine; his mountains shall be red with vines, and his presses with his wine, and his hills be white with much corn and with flocks of sheep.”

Targum *Jonathan* on Genesis 49:10-12

Addendum B

Midwives in the Ancient Near East

We want to use this short study to shed more light on the two midwives whose names are mentioned in Scripture shortly before the nation of *Yisra'el* is redeemed from slavery in *Mitsrayim*. It is possible that these two women could have been supervisors over a group of midwives. As we learn from Scripture, they disregarded the order of Pharaoh and upon questioning they simply replied that the Hebrew women were stronger than those of *Mitsrayim*, being able to give birth without any assistance of any kind. This is something only *Mitsrian* women would know and say, not Hebrew women. We will get back to this shortly.

The Hebrew word for midwife is **הַמִּילְדֶּת** (*ham-ya-le-Deṭ*), with the plural being **הַמִּילְדֹּת** (*ham-ya-le-Doṭ*), which makes plenty of sense as the new life, the child she helps bringing into the world, is **יֶלֶד** (*Ye-led*). The role of the midwife is not only to see this new life safely into this world, but also to see to it that the mother is comfortable and healthy.

In general, midwives, even to this day, would mostly be women who couldn't bear their own children for whatever reason. Scripture teaches us that their wombs were closed. This could be for any reason and is not necessarily part of this study. They were also women with an intense passion for new life, women who would ensure that neither the mother nor the baby endured any suffering during birth. Although in a severe minority, some males would take on the role of a midwife, even to this day. This was especially true during the middle ages, where men almost outnumbered women. Many so-called believers, especially the Roman Catholic Church, considered midwives to be witches and executed them on a pyre. However, very few of them were actually guilty of practising witchcraft.

Birth in the ancient near East was not easy. The main cause for this was man's falling into sin:

Berēshith 3 ¹⁶ **To the woman He said, "I greatly increase your sorrow and your conception – bring forth children in pain. And your desire is for your husband, and he does rule over you."**

In order to ensure that all possible help would be available to bring a living and healthy baby to its mother after birth, it was standard procedure to make use of a midwife. This person had to comply with certain qualifications and skills: literacy, she should be aware of her environment at all times, have a good memory, no disabilities, short fingernails and an affectionate personality. She was also expected to be physically strong and have the ability to handle any emergency situation.

We see from the *Ebers Papyrus* document, dating from 1550 bY, that calculations could be made to determine the expected time of delivery. Different types of birth chairs are described, as well as royal birthing halls in Luxor and other temples. These birthing chairs would be similar to a normal chair, but with a large hole in the middle, like a commode. During delivery the woman would sit on the chair, instead of lying flat on her back on a bed, as is the modern norm. The baby would then literally be caught as it dropped out of the birth canal, which is why we have the expression "catching a baby".

Less fortunate and poor women could not always afford this luxury and used two large stones, placed a distance apart the size of a baby, then sitting above the gap into which the baby would drop. In emergencies, where a midwife wasn't available or in time to help, the aspiring mother would sometimes even go down on her knees and give birth in similar fashion as many animals.

This is what these two midwives, *Shifrah* and *Pu'ah*, insinuate when Pharaoh accuses them of not helping to eliminate the young boys. They know their own nation too well in that the women of *Mitsrayim* are easy-

going, probably even lazy. They would rather allow someone else to deliver on their behalf, if that were even possible.

When they are cross-examined by Pharaoh, we find that someone like Yehudah HaChasid¹⁵ (Judah the Righteous) did a much more thorough study than most other scholars. Don Isaac Abarbanel (1437-1508) supports his theorem almost wholeheartedly. These women would under no circumstances comply with the rule of Pharaoh by killing Hebrew babies or even allow any harm to come to them – this is in contrast to the duties of a midwife. The two women in question were probably appointed in charge of *Mitsrian* and even Hebrew midwives, but under the “hidden agenda” of Pharaoh. This is confirmed in Scripture:

Shemoth 1¹⁹ And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the *Mitsrian* women. For they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.”

The midwives refer to ‘they’ and ‘them,’ while we can see wording to the effect of “we are not like the women of *Mitsrayim*, since we are strong.” Shadal¹⁶ is in full agreement with Abarbanel:

[Abarbanel’s reading] seems correct, for how could it be that [Pharaoh] could command Israelite women to annihilate their own people [by killing all the male offspring] and believe that no one will find out about the matter?

This instruction of killing the bay boys would have been given in secret to the *Mitsrites*, or they would not gain access to the women of *Yisra’el*. No woman in *Yisra’el* would allow anybody, especially the nation oppressing them, to kill their babies. Josephus, the historian, is convinced from the start that these midwives were from *Mitsrayim*¹⁷:

[The King of Egypt commanded] ... that the midwives of the Egyptians should watch carefully the pangs of childbirth of the Hebrew women and should observe closely their deliveries. For he ordered that they should be delivered of children by these who because of kinship were not likely to transgress the wish of the king. Those, however, who disregarded the decree and dared secretly to save the child that had been born to them, he ordered to be put to death together with their offspring.

In conclusion: we encounter a small technical problem because of the lack of punctuation in the ancient documents. While most translations directly refer to “the Hebrew midwives”, it is simply because of the definitive article ה (hey) which translates as ‘the’. Hebrew language rules require that a noun should have the same article as the accompanying adjective and vice versa. The text would then read “the Hebrew midwives”, but the Septuagint states it differently. When this text was translated into Greek, there was still no punctuation and the text there reads as *μαίαις τῶν εβραίων* (*maíes tón evraíon*), which translates as “the midwives of the Hebrews”. A few other translations¹⁸ render it likewise.

These women are therefore born and bred in *Mitsrayim*, trained as midwives and were possibly confidants of Pharaoh. However, as time went by, they learned about the miracles *YAH* had done for His nation and subsequently feared Him more than their own king. We should also take note that they didn’t really lie to Pharaoh, as the Hebrew women were strengthened by *YAH* to help the nation grow more rapidly.

These two midwives are specifically mentioned as an example to teach us that any person, despite gender, descent, appearance, profession or status, is welcome to join the Kingdom of *YAH*. The only requirement is to follow the rules He laid down for us, making us part of the set-apart nation and also providing a ‘house’ for us:

15 Judah ben Samuel of Regensburg, 1150-1217

16 Samuel David Luzzatto, 1800-1865

17 *Antiquities* 2:206-207, Brill ed.

18 Catholic Public Domain, Hebrew Roots (2012), Neue evangelistische Übersetzung, Bishops Bible (1568), DRC (Latin Vulgate)

Yohanan 14² “In My Father’s house are many staying places. And if not, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I shall come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, you might be too.

With the exodus from *Mitsrayim*, shortly after *Pesach*, a “mixed multitude” tagged along. The midwives were not the only ones, but their contributions ensured that they received the same blessings as the direct descendants of *Abraham*, *Yisra’el* en *Ya’aqob* – families and a house, whether physical or spiritual.

Addendum C

Who is **Pharaoh's daughter**? Based on the year that Moses was born and the ruling 18th Egyptian dynasty of the time, she is widely believed by scholars to be Hatshepsut. She was the only surviving child of Thutmose I (her other two brothers had died), whose reign began approximately in 1526 B.C. – the year Moses was born. Hatshepsut began her 22-year reign as pharaoh 14 years after her father's coronation around 1512 B.C. She is the reigning Egyptian Pharaoh's only daughter during the time Moses was floating down the Nile River. Hatshepsut, according to Egyptian rule, must have a son or husband in order to be considered his legitimate heir and successor. She, unfortunately, had neither. Hatshepsut, then, had every political motive to acquire a son, and it makes total sense that she whisks away what appears to be an orphaned infant boy when she sees him alone on the river.

Hatshepsut's 22-year reign as queen, beginning around 1512 B.C., is considered to be the most successful empire Egypt ever had. She built extensively in Thebes in a style unrivaled for over 1000 years, and is mostly noted for her grandiose ancient temple Deir el Bahri. Since she promoted peace and did not try to extend the boundaries of the empire like her father, she concentrated the country's resources into rebuilding and is thus regarded as one of the world's most prolific builders ever. She increased the mining industry, reestablished trade networks, built a huge number of statues, and successfully funded a mission to the Land of Punt, which included 5 enormous ships. These ships brought back thirty-one live myrrh trees, which later ironically served as one of the precious gifts presented to baby Yahusha, the King of Kings.

She did not have the hatred of the Israelites that her father had, as evidenced by adopting an Israelite boy, and according to Israelite scholars in 1488 B.C., when Moses is 40 years old, she chooses to serve יהוה. She celebrated the first Passover Seder with Moses in the slaves' quarters and for that, her firstborn is the only Egyptian to survive the final of the Ten Plagues of Egypt, and leaves Egypt with him for the Promised Land. In the Books of Chronicles, (1 Chronicles 4:18), she is said to have married an Israelite, indicating that she had accepted יהוה as her own god. Since Moses fled Egypt when he killed an Egyptian soldier, the Queen no longer had an heir and was forced to relinquish her throne to the next heir apparent – Thutmose III. The Queen's conversion was considered a betrayal to her family name and to the Egyptian empire as a whole, so Thutmose III was left with no choice but to reverse any success that she might have had by destroying many of her statues and works in Egypt.

Women in Scripture

Addendum D

What staff was in Moses' hand? This staff was created at twilight of the sixth day of creation and was given to Adam in the Garden of Eden, *because Adam ruled over the earth*. Adam gave it to Enoch, Enoch to Noah, Noah to Abraham, Abraham to Isaac and Isaac to Jacob. Jacob brought it with him to Egypt and gave it to Joseph. When Joseph died his house was despoiled and the staff ended up in Pharaoh's palace. Jethro, who was one of Pharaoh's soothsayers (somebody telling the future), saw the staff with the mysterious markings on it and coveted it; he took it and planted it in the garden of his home, and no man was able to come close to it. When Moses came to Jethro's house, he entered the garden and saw the staff and read the markings on it; he reached out his hand and plucked it from the ground. When Jethro saw this, he proclaimed, "This man shall redeem the people of Israel from Egypt", and gave him his daughter Zipporah as a wife.

Book of Jasher