

Sheepfold Gleanings

SHEMOT / THE NAMES

Exodus 1:1 to 6:1

Jeremiah 1:1 to 2:3

Hebrews 11:23-26

In Exodus, the second book in the Torah of the five books of Moses, Scripture has us travel forward in time. From Joseph's death, over three hundred years have passed in the continued history of Jacob's family, the Israelites.

Exodus opens with the pronouncement that even though Jacob's sons and that entire generation have passed away, their children have nevertheless been able to maintain their fathers' identities. All twelve tribes were identifiable and unified during this time while they lived in Egypt. They did not intermingle with the Egyptians but kept set apart in their tribal families. Scripture reports that they were blessed, meaning they obeyed YHVH. "The Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous" (Exodus 1:7).

As time passed and life within the Israelite camp flourished, Egypt came under the ruling and government of a new Pharaoh. This king of Egypt was not familiar with the past history of Joseph, or of Jacob's family, the Israelites. As the Israelites served YHVH in Egypt, they were very prosperous and had multiplied greatly. This roused the new Pharaoh's jealousy, and brought hatred toward YHVH's people. This king devised ways to destroy the God of the Israelites and oppress Jacob's family to bring them under *his* subjection. Pharaoh saw himself as a god chosen to lead the people and maintain order, that he might provide an important link between the Egyptian people and their gods. Worshipping the God of Israel stood in direct opposition to Pharaoh's plans and challenged his kingdom.

Pharaoh encompassed both the secular and sacred worlds, which to Egyptians were one and the same. He settled legal disputes and led the religious rituals that were the backbone of Egypt culture. In accord with his role as god-king, Pharaoh was responsible for maintaining the role of Ma'at and thus the role of balance-keeper, for Ma'at was the god who had the rule of order over "the chaos that was waiting to envelop the world." As long as king and commoner alike honored the gods and obeyed the laws they enforced, the balance was maintained and all would be well. Should the Pharaoh fail in his role, the entire world would suffer and descend into the unthinkable state of anarchy.

The god Ma'at was the patron of truth, law and universal order. The appearance of the god was that of a woman wearing a crown surmounted by a huge ostrich feather. Her totem symbol is set on a stone platform or foundation, representing the stable base on which order is built. Ma'at was described as the personification of the fundamental order of the universe, without which all of

creation would perish. The primary duty of Pharaoh was to uphold this order by maintaining the law and administering justice. To reflect this, many pharaohs took the title "Beloved of Ma'at," emphasizing their focus on justice and truth.

YHVH's plans are higher than man's ways. We will soon see that even though YHVH allowed Pharaoh to play a role in Israel's history, it was YHVH's hand alone that would deliver HIS people at HIS appointed time. He had not forgotten Israel.

Genesis 15:13-14 YHVH said to Abraham, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be *enslaved and mistreated four hundred years*. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions."

This Pharaoh began planning hardships for the Israelites designed to bring about cruelty and oppression. Insecurity in the king led to suspicion, which in turn led to his death.

James 1:14-15 "But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

In order to bring the Egyptian people onside with his plans, Pharaoh manufactured suspicion among his own people toward the Israelites. With the Egyptians incited by jealousy, the scene was set for the delivery of YHVH's people. Pharaoh said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land" (Exodus 1:9-10).

The Israelites were a flourishing, fruitful and self-sufficient people in their own right, and they had blessed Egypt through their economy and many other ways. Even still, Pharaoh's plan worked and soon the Hebrews were given Egyptian names and hard taskmasters to oppress them. In their enslavement, the Israelites were forced to build the two cities of Pithom and Rameses.

Pharaoh's plan to enslave YHVH's people first unfolded as recruitment for public service (Exodus 1:11). The second phase in Pharaoh's plan was enslavement under hard labor by making bricks with mortar, along with all kinds of field work that made their lives bitter (Exodus 1:13-14). The third phase of oppression came by changing names from Hebrew to Egyptian to cause them to lose their identity (Exodus 1:15-16). Phase four was the final solution by killing all male babies (Exodus 1:22).

The enemies of Israel have used these tactics throughout history. We have seen this in the pogroms, Inquisitions and the holocaust that have attempted to thwart YHVH's plans.

Exodus 1:16 "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birth stools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live."

Because the Israelites were so fruitful and numerous, Pharaoh went after the children. He gave orders to have the male children killed, while the female babies were allowed to live. It was here that we see Egyptian names being applied to the attending Hebrew midwives. The rabbis believe that the two midwives with the Egyptian names Shiphrah and Puah are actually Jochebed and Miriam, the mother and sister of Moses (Exodus 1:15).

Scripture states that the midwives had fear of YHVH over fear of man. Allowing the male babies to live soon had the midwives standing before Pharaoh to explain their actions. "The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." Because of their courageous actions YHVH blessed them. The Hebrews continued to flourish, which made Pharaoh even more enraged, and he said, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive" (Exodus 1:17-22).

YHVH's plan for the Israelites was about to unfold. For the great plan of redemption of all Israel, YHVH chose a baby. Moses' life was prophetic of Yeshua's life; like Moses, Yeshua came as the kinsman redeemer for Israel and He came into this world as a baby.

Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore YHVH himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, meaning God with us."

Luke 2:4-7 "Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son."

As Moses' life was threatened, so was Yeshua as a baby. "An angel of YHVH appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' And so was fulfilled what YHVH had said through the prophet: '*Out of Egypt I called my son* (Hosea 11:1).' When Herod realized that he had been outwitted, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi (Matthew 2:13, 15-16)."

Exodus 2:1-10 A Deliverer is Born

As was the case with Yeshua at His birth, so this Hebrew male baby, Moses, was likewise found to be no ordinary child. Moses' parents were exceptional as well; Amram and Jochebed were from the tribe of Levi (more to come on this in the next lesson). They hid their baby for three months, until they could hide him no longer. Jochebed, knowing Moses was purposed to live, put her trust in YHVH.

Hebrews 11:23 "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict."

She wove a basket to house him, using pitch inside and out to keep the little ark afloat. The word for pitch is the same Hebrew word used for atonement, *karph*, meaning covering, and

specifically, a covering for sins. She placed the child in the ark and put him among the reeds, along the bank of the Nile River.

The Hebrew male babies were to be thrown *into* the Nile to drown, but this child was placed *on the water* to be led by the wind, representing the Spirit of YHVH (Ecclesiastes 11:1). The waters of judgment brought this child *deliverance*. Jochebed knew YHVH would not give her a son only to then take him away from her. She also knew the Covenant given her people and the prophesy of being four hundred years in a country not their own (Genesis 15:13). She discerned the time of exile in Egypt was coming to an end and put her faith in the *faithfulness* of YHVH. Just as Noah trusted his family into the care of YHVH by sequestering them into an ark and allowing the Spirit of YHVH to lead them “*on the waters of judgment*” that they might be delivered, so too Jochebed placed Moses in an ark on the water to preserve the whole Nation of Israel, all twelve tribes. The Israelites were looking for a Savior. Moses became the forerunner of the Messiah. This ark preserved one who would redeem many, just as the Messiah would become the only Redeemer of the world with His sacrificed blood, the atonement that covered our sins (John 4:42; 1 John 4:14).

Moses was not hidden on the waters of tribulation for long, as Pharaoh’s daughter came to the river’s edge to bathe, and when she did, her eyes were opened and she beheld the basket. Water is representative of status change (or *Mikvah*); the basket (ark) represented Torah. Just as the daughter of Pharaoh had the basket brought near to her, we are to bring the Torah close to us to look into YHVH’s teaching and instruction. In the basket she discovered one of the Hebrew babies, distinguishable by the fact he was circumcised, denoting one who observed YHVH’s instructions (Torah) (Exodus 2:5-6). The baby before her would be the revealer of YHVH’s Word (Torah) to the people and the prophet (Moses) who would proclaim the coming Messiah. Looking into Torah enables us to see the Redeemer of Israel, the Messiah.

Later, in Deuteronomy, Moses relates to the Children of Israel the following declaration YHVH had made to him: “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account (Deuteronomy 18:18-19).”

John 5:46 Yeshua said, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.”

Baby Moses’ sister, who had been watching nearby, approached Pharaoh’s daughter. This took great courage on Miriam’s behalf, as she was “inferior” in both age and status to the Egyptian princess. She suggested to Pharaoh’s daughter a **Hebrew** wet nurse be brought, and, after receiving royal approval, ran for the baby’s mother, Jochebed. Imagine Jochebed’s joy in being reunited with her child and seeing the faithfulness of YHVH? Jochebed took Moses and nursed him till he was old enough to be weaned. During that time the child was taught Torah, YHVH’s principles for life, the understanding of which would keep him throughout all the days of his life. When their time together came to an end and the child was weaned, Jochebed gave him back to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. Only then was the child named *Moses*, meaning “one who is drawn out” (Exodus 2: 7-10). Pharaoh, the great persecutor of the Hebrew people, now had the one who would deliver the Israelites from his wrath living in his very own household.

Exodus 2:11-15 Moses Escapes Pharaoh

Acts 7:22-35 (From Stephen's last speech before his death) "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites. He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not. The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting (representing the Two Houses of Israel, brother against brother). He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?' But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, '*Who made you ruler and judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?*' " (Exodus 2:11-14).

"*Who made you ruler and judge over us?*" Where have we heard this before? Joseph's brothers made a similar statement: "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" (Genesis 37:8). Like Joseph's brothers, there were those near Yeshua who were so jealous over his pronouncement of being Redeemer, or, "ruling over them", that they too plot his murder.

Exodus 2:15-22 Moses Goes To Midian

When Moses learned Pharaoh had found out about the murder and wanted to kill him, he fled for his life to Midian (Acts 7:29). The Midianites came from the fourth son of Abraham, by his wife Keturah. They inhabited the desert north of the peninsula of Arabia. The peninsula of Sinai was the pasture-ground for their flocks. Being the most dominant among other tribes, they were virtually the rulers of Arabia (Genesis 25:2; 1Chronicles 1:32). Midianites were a nomadic people, and it was to one of their caravans that Joseph had been sold to many years before, when he was taken into Egypt (Genesis 37:28,36).

Arriving at Midian, Moses came to a well and sat down. The priest of Midian had seven daughters, who came to the well to draw water to fill the troughs for their father's flock. Some shepherds came along, driving them away, but Moses came to their rescue and watered the flock himself. This was prophetic of Messiah Yeshua redeeming and watering the flocks of YHVH with Living Water (Exodus 2:15-17; John 4:1-42).

We have learned through the stories of Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Rachel, that when we see stories of wells in Scripture it is prophetic language. Wells represent "Living Water" and are prophetic of drawing "Life" from the Living Water given freely by the Messiah. Wells are also a picture of walking in His Redemption and blessings.

John 7:38 Yeshua said, "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

The seven sisters represent the seven ekklesia/assemblies of YHVH. In Revelation 1:11 Yeshua declared to John, "I am Aleph and Tav, the first and the last: What you see, write it in a book, and send it to the seven *ekklesia* (Strong's #1577 - assembly)."

When the seven sisters tried to draw living water from the well, shepherds (representing false prophets) drove them away. It was Moses (representing YHVH's Word/Truth) who came forward to rescue the seven sisters (ekklesia) and water their Father's flocks. This picture represented YHVH's flocks, that is, His people. In the Messianic age, it will be those who stand up "in Moses" (YHVH's teaching given through Moses at Mount Sinai) who will be watering the Father's sheep; they are YHVH's true prophets today.

When the sisters returned ahead of time their father Reuel (Jethro) remarked, "Why have you returned so early today?" They answered, "An *Egyptian* rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock." His daughters had not recognized Moses as a man of YHVH for he was still in his Egyptian clothing, but their father discerned it, as Egyptians are not fond of sheep and would not have cared for his sheep as this man had done. Reuel had them bring Moses to their house to "break bread" together.

Moses agreed to stay with Reuel (whose name means *friend of God*). He was given Reuel's daughter Zipporah in marriage. She gave birth to a son, Gershom, saying, "I have become a stranger in a foreign land" (Exodus 2:22). (Land, people and Torah are all synonymous in the Bible.)

Exodus 2:23-24

Scripture keeps us informed as to what happened in Egypt while Moses was in Midian; time had passed and the Pharaoh during Moses time had died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery in Egypt and cry out to YHVH for help. YHVH heard their cries and remembered His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The appointed time of deliverance had come.

Exodus 3 Moses and the Burning Bush

As Moses was tending his father-in-law's flock he saw a strange thing. Coming closer, he saw that the flames did not consume a bush that was burning. As he approached, a voice called from within the flames, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." "Do not come any closer, take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (Acts 7:30-34).

It is Hebrew thought that this took place at Mount Sinai where the future Israelites would become betrothed to YHVH. "Taking off your sandals" intimates the giving and receiving of a marriage covenant. Moses was about to enter a marriage covenant with YHVH as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had done.

Exodus 3:6-10 "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey-- the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

This did not seem to thrill Moses, who was hiding his face from YHVH. Moses then shared *five* reasons why he was not a suitable leader. Not believing in YHVH's faithfulness leads to excuses that hinder His work in our lives. Not only can this affect us personally, it can also affect the lives of thousands of others. It's never just about us, but always about YHVH's people. We need to look beyond ourselves and have a greater vision for YHVH's heart toward His people.

Moses' queries and excuses with YHVH as to why YHVH should not appoint him to lead Israel out of Egypt are points of reference for all of us to study today. Fear is the largest epidemic in the world today. God knows what He is asking of us and would not ask it if it were not already in us to do. Not answering God's call on our lives will give us a different outcome than the blessings He intended to bestow on us. Settling for second best in our lives by bowing to compromise in our hearts and is never God's best.

The five excuses that kept Moses from answering YHVH's call were:

1. Exodus 3:11 - Pride in the feeling of unworthiness. Moses said to YHVH, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" YHVH said, "I will be with you. And this will be the *sign* to you that it is I that have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship YHVH *on this mountain.*"

2. Exodus 3:13 - Fear of man. Moses said to YHVH, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM (*or I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE*)." This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

3. Exodus 4:1 - Fear of rejection. Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'YHVH did not appear to you?' " With this, YHVH had him throw his staff on the ground and a snake appears. After, He had Moses pick the snake up and it turned back to a staff again. Then YHVH had Moses put his hand inside his cloak and pull it out. It was covered with a skin affliction. Repeating this healed Moses hand like the other again.

4. Exodus 4:10 - Influence of previous experiences. Moses said to YHVH, "O YHVH, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." With this, YHVH shared with Moses, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or dumb? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, YHVH? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."

5. Exodus 4:13 - Need for a mandate from YHVH. Moses said, "O YHVH, please send someone else to do it." This was the last one; five represents grace and Moses had "used up" all God's grace! YHVH's anger burned against Moses, then He sent his brother Aaron to help him, telling him, 'I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.'

Moses then took his staff and went back to Jethro and asked permission to return to his people. Jethro blessed Moses' departure, and so Moses left with his two sons and wife on a donkey, and went back to Egypt. YHVH said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so

that he will not let the people go. Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what YHVH says: *Israel is my firstborn son*, and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son' " (Exodus 4:21-23).

Exodus 4:24 Zipporah

YHVH met Moses on route while his camp was lodging for the night. When YHVH's anger again burned against Moses and He was about to kill him, it was Zipporah and her quick action that saved Moses' life. Zipporah took a flint knife and cut her son's foreskin off, touching Moses' feet with it and saying to him, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me." As the blood sacrifice put on the doorposts of the Israelite homes protected them from the angel of death on the night of the Exodus, so this act of obedience by Zipporah protected Moses. Moses had neglected the basic fundamental requirement for returning to the land, and that was circumcision. (Today, as it was then, the circumcision on the inside, of the heart, precedes any outward sign.)

YHVH sent Aaron the brother of Moses just as He promised. The two embraced as they met for the first time since childhood, and Moses shared all of what YHVH had done. They brought together the Israelite elders from the *twelve tribes* and declared that YHVH had not forgotten them. With that, Moses unveiled YHVH's plans for them that had been spoken so long ago. The elders were overwhelmed and thankfully bowed down to worship YHVH with thanksgiving (Exodus 4:27-31).

Exodus 5 Making Bricks Without the Straw

With YHVH's plan in motion, the pressure mounted, creating a force that would move an entire nation out of Egypt. At various times in our lives when YHVH is about to do a great work it may look opposite to what we are expecting. Many miss His blessings, as they pull out too early under the pressure instead of holding on and waiting upon YHVH for His mighty hand to move. May we learn this lesson of Moses: In judgment is our delivery.

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and told him what YHVH said, "*Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.*" The festival Moses spoke about would be the feast of Shavuot at Mount Sinai, the betrothal of Israel to YHVH.

Upon hearing this Pharaoh's heart hardened, he ordered heavier tasks for the Israelites, in other words, making bricks without straw with the same daily quota. This put a huge burden on the people, who staggered under the pressure to perform an impossible task. The Israelite foremen appointed by Pharaoh appealed to him but to no avail. These men did not seek YHVH but turned to Moses and Aaron and blamed them as the cause of all their problems, saying, "May YHVH look upon you and judge you! You have made us a stench to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." Moses did not address the foremen but turned to YHVH for help. YHVH answered, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country" (Exodus 6:1).

Jeremiah 1:5-8 YHVH said to Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I chose you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." "Ah, Sovereign YHVH," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." But YHVH said to me, "Do not

say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. ***Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,***" declares YHVH.

To be continued...

Shabbat Shalom
Carl and Julie Parker

Reference:

Redeemed Israel – Reunited and Restored by Batya Wootten www.messianicisrael.com
Studies in the Five Books of Moses by Ben and Catherine Dixon STBM publisher www.torah.tv
Easton's Bible Dictionary

Sheepfold Gleanings written by Carl and Julie Parker
Mail: 6655 Royal Avenue; P.O. Box 94014; West Vancouver, BC; V7W 2B0 CANADA
Website: www.sheepfoldgleanings.com
Email: sheephear@yahoo.ca
Translation by RosaMaria Anders.

© Copyright 2003-2010 Sheepfold Gleanings Inc. All Rights Reserved.