



## Parsha Shem'ot / Names

Shem'ot 1:1 – 6:1

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This week's Torah portion is entitled "**Shemot**" which literally means "**Names**". This is because we read in **Chapter 1, verse 1**; **And these are the names of the children of Yisra'el who came to Mitsrayim with Ya'aqob, each one with his household.** Next, we read in **verses 2-5**; **Re'uven, Shim'on, Levi, and Yehudah; Yissackar, Zebulun, and Binyamin; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. And all those who were descendants of Ya'aqob were seventy beings, as Yoseph was already in Mitsrayim.**

Now, at first glance we might think that this is a recap of **B'reshith 46:8-28**, where we are given the names of the sons of Ya'aqob. However, we are given these names, this time, in a different order than in **B'reshith**. And, as you know, that usually means Yahweh is pointing out something special to us in the meanings of the names, as well as the order in which they are given. Here, **Shemot (Exodus) 1:2-4** lists them as; **Re'uben, Shim'on, Levi, and Yehudah; Yissaskar, Zebulun, and Binyamin; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.** As we learned last week, **Re'uben** means "**behold a son**" or "**first-born**", **Shim'on** means "**hearing and obeying**", **Levi** means "**joined to**", **Yehudah** means "**praise Yah**", **Yissaskar** means "**recompense**", **Zebulun** means "**habitation**" or "**house**", **Binyamin** means "**son of the right hand**", **Dan** means "**a judge**", **Naphtali** means "**strife**", **Gad** means "**good fortune**" and **Asher** means "**happy**". In verse five, we are told **Yoseph** ("**Yah who gives**" and "**Yah who takes away**") was already there in Mitsrayim, the land of bondage, waiting for them.

For context here, let's remember that Yahweh has Moshe tell Pharaoh in **Shemot 4:22**; "**And you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus said YHVH, 'Yisra'el is My son, My firstborn...** With this in mind, the order of the names of the "**Children of Yisra'el**" actually their meanings, speaks to us the following, in our parsha; "**When Yisra'el, My son, My first-born, hears and obeys, he will be joined in praise to Yahweh. But, the recompense of his house (seed), the Son of My right hand will judge in strife; because he (Yisra'el) considers himself fortunate, even happy, in his bondage. However, Yah who gives and takes away is in Mitsrayim already, to hear his cry and deliver him.**" **Baruch HaShem Yahweh!**

And, as we discussed a couple of weeks ago, **verse 5** reminds us of the picture that Ya'aqob's family represents the 70 nations, as they went down into Mitsrayim, as we read; **And all those**

*who were descendants of Ya'aqob were seventy beings, as Yoseph was already in Mitsrayim.*

We need to mention here also, that in **Acts 7:14** Astapanos, in Aramaic (you might know him as Stephanos or Stephen), states; ***“And Yoseph sent for his father and brought Ya'aqob and all his family. Together, they were seventy and five souls in number”***. This relates to the fact that Yoseph, his wife and two sons were already in Mitsrayim, as we read above; and that Yok'ebed, Moshe's mother was born just after they entered, or at the entrance to Mitsrayim as the Jewish sages state. These bring the total to seventy-five.

Now, let's continue our reading with **Shemot 1:6-22**; ***And Yoseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation. And the children of Yisra'el bore fruit and increased very much, multiplied and became very strong, and the land was filled with them. Then a new sovereign arose over Mitsrayim, who did not know Yoseph, and he said to his people, “See, the people of the children of Yisra'el are more and stronger than we, come, let us act wisely towards them, lest they increase, and it shall be when fighting befalls us, that they shall join our enemies and fight against us, and shall go up out of the land.” So they set slave-masters over them to afflict them with their burdens, and they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Ra'amses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they increased and grew, and they were in dread of the children of Yisra'el. And the Mitsrites made the children of Yisra'el serve with harshness, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all kinds of work in the field, all their work which they made them do was with harshness. Then the sovereign of Mitsrayim spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Pu'ah, and he said, “When you deliver the Hebrew women, and see them on the birth stools, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death, but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.” But the midwives feared Elohim, and did not do as the sovereign of Mitsrayim commanded them, and kept the male children alive. So the sovereign of Mitsrayim called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and kept the male children alive?” And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Mitsrite women. For they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.” So Elohim was good to the midwives, and the people increased and became very numerous. And it came to be, because the midwives feared Elohim, that He provided households for them. And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, “Throw every son who is born into the river, and keep alive every daughter.”***

Now, the two **“midwives”** or **“ha'm'yalad'ahch”** feared Elohim and were protective of the children they helped the Hebrew women deliver. **Verses 20 and 21** state that, because they feared Elohim and not Pharaoh, Yahweh was good to them and *provided households for them*. But, what exactly does that mean? First, we need to see what Torah is saying about these two women. **Verse 15** tells us two things. First that there were only two midwives and secondly, their names; ***Then the sovereign of Mitsrayim spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Pu'ah, .....***

Let's look at the names for a minute. First there's **“Shiphrah”** (*Shin-fey-reish-hey*). The meanings of the letters are, *shin = El Shaddai, fey = mouth, reish = beginning and hey = revelation*. So, in the letters we read, **“El Shaddai's Mouth is the beginning of revelation”**. With this spelling, her name is **“shofar”** with an added **“hey”** at the end. So, we have the connotation of the **“shofar of revelation”**. Her name literally means **“brightness”** or **“to adorn”** or **“to make beautiful”**. The word **“Shiphrah”** is used one other time in Scripture; in **Iyob/Job 26:13**, where, in the ISR

Scriptures it reads; ***By His Spirit He adorned the heavens. His hand whirled the fleeing serpent.*** Now, in the KJV it reads; ***By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.*** And, in the Stone Edition TaNaK it reads; ***By His breath the heavens were spread; His hand fashioned the (earth) girdling serpent.*** Notice that the word earth is in parenthesis meaning it was added by the translators as being inferred. Now, according to the DHV (Dyslexic Hebrew Version) it would read; ***By His Ruach (breath) He adorned with beauty and brightness (stars) the heavens; by His hand He formed the crooked serpent (Leviathan) that encircles.*** This verse refers to the formation of the stars and constellations. The “***crooked serpent***” that encircles or girdles describes the constellation ***Dracos*** (*Dragon*) in the Milky Way galaxy, which we can see from earth, and is also a picture of “*ha satan*” depicted in the heavens encircling the earth, as Bob Wadsworth has explained on several occasions. You should read his website ([www.biblicalastronomy.com](http://www.biblicalastronomy.com)). Now, the numeric value of the letters in “***Shiphrah***” is 585 which equals from the Torah “***ha shofar***”, “***the ram’s horn***” or “***mouth of El Shaddai***” and “***seraphah***” or “***burning***” like “***seraphim***” (***burning ones***) or like “***suns***” or “***stars***”.

Now, the other midwife; her name is “***Pu’ah***” (*Pey-yud-ayin-hey*). The meanings of these letters are; *pey* = *mouth or speak*, *yud* = *hand or make*, *ayin* = *eye or to know* and *hey* = *revelation*. So, we read “***By speaking, He makes known the revelation***”. “***Pu’ah***” literally means “***splendid***” or “***to glitter***”, or “***twinkle***”, “***twinkle***” little star; how I wonder ***who*** you are. The numeric value of the letters in “***Pu’ah***” is 165 which equals from Torah “***le’kahal***” or “***a congregation***”, “***a company***” and “***ha ami’ im***” or “***the peoples***”. Hmm, a “***company of peoples***”. Where have we heard that before? 165 also equals “***ha nephil***” or “***the one who falls***”. This *company of peoples* that would come forth because of the midwives would indeed one day *fall*. Are you seeing a picture here?

There are all these references to the heavens and the stars that populate them. Let’s review one of the Scriptures relating to the promises Yahweh made to Avraham, Yitzaq and Ya’aqob and compare it with the *stars* and *light*. Moshe reminds Yahweh in ***Shemot 32:13a***; ***“Remember Avraham, Yitzaq, and Yisra’el, Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself, and said to them, ‘I increase your seed like the stars of the heavens.’”*** Then let’s look at ***B’reshith 1:16-17***; ***And Elohim made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and the stars. And Elohim set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth....”*** These women, named for the stars in heaven, helped fulfill Yahweh’s promise by helping the mothers of Yisra’el bring forth *heavenly light* into the world. Then one Shabbat, as Sha’ul was speaking to the Yehudim about their calling, he quoted ***Yeshayahu 49:6***, when he said in ***Acts 13:47***; ***“For so the Master has commanded us, ‘I have set you to be a light to the nations, that you should be for deliverance to the ends of the earth.’”***

Also, in Pu’ah’s name we see “***a company of peoples***” or “***an assembly of peoples***”. Well first, in ***B’reshith 35:11*** Yahweh promises Ya’acov; ***And Elohim said to him, “I am El Shaddai. Bear fruit and increase, a nation and a company of nations shall be from you, and sovereigns come from your body.*** And, in ***B’reshith 28:3-4*** Yitzaq so blessed Ya’aqob; ***“And El Shaddai bless you, and make you bear fruit and increase you, and you shall become an assembly of peoples, and give you the blessing of Avraham, to you and your seed with you, so that you inherit the land of your sojournings, which Elohim gave to Avraham.”***

Now, as ***Chapter 1*** nears an end, we’re told that because these two women feared Elohim, that He provided “***households***” for them. The KJV says that He made them “***houses***”. OK, the word for “***provided***” or “***made***” here is “***va’ya’ahs***” which is from the root “***asah***” and means to “***make***”, “***fashion***” or “***prepare***” and the word for “***houses***” here is “***beit’im***”, the plural of “***beit***” which means “***house***”, “***household***”, “***family***” or “***descendants***”. Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon

associates the meanings regarding “**descendants**” in this case, with the verses where Boaz redeems Ruth before the people in **Ruth 4:11**; *And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, “Witnesses! YHVH make the woman who is coming to your house as Rahel and as Le’ah, the two who built the house of Yisra’el.”* And, if we read on through the end of this chapter, we see that Bo’az did indeed marry Ruth and they had a son, Obed, who would be the grandfather of King David. So, as Rahel and Le’ah before them and Ruth after them; **Shiphrah** and **Pu’ah** literally helped build up the “**House of Yisra’el**”.

Here in **Chapter 1**, we’ve seen the makings of a “**holocaust**”. Pharaoh orders the death of all male children. But, with the protection of Elohim, through the midwives, it was averted. But then, Pharaoh commands that the newborn males be cast into the “**river**”, “**ye’or**” or “**Nile**”. Now, we’re not told just how long this went on or how many babies were killed in this manner. However, we do need to remember that Yahweh increased B’nei Yisra’el from seventy-five people (including the little ones) to over 600,000 men over the age of 20, as we read in **Shemot 12:37-38**; *And the children of Yisra’el set out from Ra’meses to Sukkoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides the little ones. And a mixed multitude went up with them too, also flocks and herds, very much livestock.*

The stage is now set for the birth of Yisra’el’s next deliverer. Let’s read **Shemot 2:1-10**; *And a man of the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived and bore a son. And she saw that he was a lovely child, and she hid him three months. And when she could hide him no longer, she took an ark of wicker for him, and coated it with tar and pitch, and put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the edge of the river. And his sister stood at a distance, to know what would be done to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river, and her young women were walking by the riverside. And when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her female servant to get it, and opened it and saw the child, and see, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the children of the Hebrews.” And his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Go.” And the girl went and called the child’s mother. And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child away and nurse him for me, then I shall pay your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him. And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moshe, saying, “Because I have drawn him out of the water.”*

There’s something that I want to point out here about Moshe, at his birth, or his beginning. While we won’t officially learn his father’s name for four more chapters, I want to introduce it now, along with his mother’s name, to give you a little insight into Moshe beforehand, so, that as we read and study, you can remember just who he is. It will help keep Moshe in context. His father’s name is “**Amram**” (*Ayin-mem-reish-mem*), Strong’s #6019 which means “**people of the Most High**”. The numeric value of the letters in his name is 350 which equals “**ha’shoham**” or “**the onyx**”. Remember, the High Priest (*Kohen HaGadol*) had “**shoham**” or “**onyx**” stones on the shoulders of his garment with the names of the tribes of Yisra’el engraved on them, six on each shoulder, to show that he bore the burden of their spiritual well-being. Moshe’s mother’s name was “**Yochebed**” (*Yud-vav-kaf-beit-dalet*), a Levite also, Strong’s #3115 meaning the “**heaviness of Yahweh**” or the “**esteem (or esteemed) of Yahweh**”. The numeric value of these letters is 42 which equals the number of encampments of B’nei Yisra’el in the wilderness and, also “**Eloah**” or “**Mighty One**”, a title used by Yahweh for Himself. Then of course, there’s “**Moshe**” their youngest son (*Mem-shin-hey*), Strong’s #4872 meaning “**drawn out**” or “**brought out**”. The numeric value of these letters is 345 which equals “**haMitzri**” or “**the Egyptians**”. This is interesting, in that

Moshe lived 40 years in Pharaoh's house. It also equals "**Shiloh**" which is "**rest**" or "**place of rest**" (as in the place so named where B'nei Yisra'el rested and the Mishkan stood for 369 years). We've looked at Shiloh closely over the past few weeks. This is also a reference to Messiah as the "**One who brings rest or tranquility**". If you "**add**" it all up; this all seems to be telling us that indeed Moshe was "**drawn**" or "**brought out**" from B'nei Yisra'el, the "**people of the Most High**", the "**esteemed of Yahweh**"; that he would "**bear their spiritual well being**" on his "**shoulders**" and lead them out of the bondage of "**the Mitzri**", through "**the 42 encampments**" to their "**place of rest and tranquility**". Wow! What's in a name? A calling, a destiny, a **deliverer**.

Let's proceed with **Shemot 2:11-25**; *And in those days it came to be, when Moshe was grown, that he went out to his brothers and looked at their burdens. And he saw a Mitsrite beating a Hebrew, one of his brothers. So he turned this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he smote the Mitsrite and hid him in the sand. And he went out the second day and saw two Hebrew men fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why do you smite your neighbor?" And he said, "Who made you a head and a judge over us? Do you intend to slay me as you slew the Mitsrite?" And Moshe feared and said, "Truly, the matter is known!" And Pharaoh heard of this matter, and he sought to kill Moshe. But Moshe fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midyan. And he sat down by a well. And the priest of Midyan had seven daughters. And they came and drew water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock, but the shepherds came and drove them away. Then Moshe stood up and came to their rescue, and watered their flock. And they came to Re'uw'el their father, and he said, "How is it that you have come so soon today?" And they said, "A Mitsrite rescued us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock." And he said to his daughters, "And where is he? Why did you leave the man? Call him and let him eat bread." And Moshe agreed to dwell with the man, and he gave Tsipporah his daughter to Moshe. And she bore him a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, "I have become a sojourner in a foreign land." And it came to be after these many days that the sovereign of Mitsrayim died. And the children of Yisra'el groaned because of the slavery, and they cried out. And their cry came up to Elohim because of the slavery. And Elohim heard their groaning, and Elohim remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Yitsaq, and with Ya'aqob. And Elohim looked on the children of Yisra'el, and Elohim knew!*

So Moshe is forced to flee Mitsrayim and goes to Midyan, which means "**contention**". He sojourns there and one day, he sits down by a well. There is some interesting imagery here, in that Yahweh brings Moshe to Midyan, in the wilderness of Sinai, to **contend** with him, to speak with him there, just as He would with B'nei Yisra'el and will still do with us. I'm reminded of **Yirmeyahu 2:7-9**; *"Then I brought you into a garden land, to eat its fruit and its goodness. But when you entered, you defiled My land and made My inheritance an abomination. The priests did not say, 'Where is YHVH?' And those who handle the Torah did not know Me, and the shepherds transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Ba'al (by the lord- "thus sayeth the lord"), and walked after matters that did not profit. Therefore I still contend with you," declares YHVH, "and with your children's children I contend."* And, as **Hoshea 2** says, while Yahweh will punish His bride for the days she worshipped Ba'al (**the lord**), He declares in **verse 14**; *"Therefore, see, I am alluring her, and shall lead her into the wilderness, and shall speak to her heart,"*

And, Moshe sits down by a well or "**be'er**". Remember our past study of wells. They are where the **water**, or **wisdom**, from the **deep places** comes to the **surface**. And, someone had to labor and dig to bring it forth. Here, according to the Hebrew word picture, Moshe comes for answers. The

priest of Midyan, the spiritual head of Midyan had seven daughters who came to draw water (**wisdom**) for their father's flock. They came to "**water**" the "**sheep**". But, when they filled the trough, the "**shepherds**" transgressed, or came and drove them away. It's interesting that **seven** times in Scripture, Yisra'el is referred to as the "**Daughters of Tzion**". Picture for a moment that these seven daughters are the "**Daughters of Tzion**" and that as they come to water the flock, the shepherds (a scriptural metaphor for the religious leaders) come and drive them off. **Yehezqel 34:7-11** speaks of this; *'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of YHVH: "As I live," declares the Master YHVH, "because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, from not having a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock," therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of YHVH! 'Thus said the Master YHVH, "See, I am against the shepherds, and shall require My flock at their hand, and shall make them cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more. And I shall deliver My flock from their mouths, and they shall no longer be food for them." 'For thus said the Master YHVH, "See, I Myself shall search for My sheep and seek them out. So Moshe (the deliverer) stands up, drives off the evil shepherds and rescues the daughters and waters the flock. This sounds a lot like **Yeshayahu 62:11**; See, YHVH has proclaimed to the end of the earth: "Say to the daughter of Tsiyon, 'See, your deliverance has come; see, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.' "*

So, these daughters of the priest, run and tell their father Re'uw'el of their rescue by the hand of Moshe. Now, the name we're introduced to this "**Priest of Midyan**" by is "**Re'uw'el**". This name literally means "**friend of El**". In a bit, we'll learn more about Re'uw'el and his other name, Yithro. But, here Re'uw'el offers Moshe a place in the family, work and a wife, **Tsipporah**; whose name means "**little bird**" or "**sparrow**". And, they have their first son, **Gereshom**. His name literally means "**stranger**" or "**one expelled**".

Then **verses 23-25** tell us something that may seem a little strange; *And it came to be after these many days that the sovereign of Mitsrayim died. And the children of Yisra'el groaned because of the slavery, and they cried out. And their cry came up to Elohim because of the slavery. And Elohim heard their groaning, and Elohim remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Yitsaq, and with Ya'aqob. And Elohim looked on the children of Yisra'el, and Elohim knew!* Now, one would think that when this Pharaoh, who was doing evil to the Children of Yisra'el, died that they would be happy. But, we're told they groaned because of the slavery and cried out. The Midrash teaches that the new Pharaoh was even harsher to them than his predecessor. But, Elohim heard their groanings and we're told He remembered His covenant with Avraham, Yitsaq and Ya'aqob. It's not that Elohim forgot His covenant; the Hebrew word here is "**zakar**" which more perfectly means "**bring to mind**". In other words, Yahweh didn't forget; He purposely brought "**it**" to mind. And, as Elohim looked upon the Children of Yisra'el, He knew that it was time. Remember, He told Avraham that his descendants would be in Mitsrayim a total of 400 years, which included Avraham's and Yitsaq's sojourns as well.

Yes, Elohim does know. In **Vayiqra 26** He lays it all out for us. In **verses 1-3** Yahweh says; *'Do not make idols for yourselves, and do not set up a carved image or a pillar for yourselves, and do not place a stone image in your land, to bow down to it. For I am YHVH your Elohim. Guard My Sabbaths and reverence My set-apart place. I am YHVH. If you walk in My laws and guard My commands, and shall do them, then I shall.....'* and in **verses 4-13**, He goes on to describe the blessings of obedience. But, in **verses 14-15** He says; *'But if you do not obey Me, and do not do all these commands, and if you reject My laws, or if your being loathes My right-rulings, so that you do not do all My commands, but break My covenant, I also do*

*this to you:....'* Then, in **verses 16-39**, Yahweh goes on to describe the cursings for disobedience, including the compounding of our punishment, seven fold, if we do not repent. And, including, in **verse 33**; *'And I shall scatter you among the gentiles and draw out a sword after you. And your land shall be desert and your cities ruins...'* Then, in **verses 40-41**, Yahweh says; *'But if they confess their crookedness and the crookedness of their fathers, with their trespass in which they trespassed against Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me, and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies – if their uncircumcised heart is then humbled, and they accept the punishment of their crookedness, then I shall remember My covenant with Ya'aqov, and also My covenant with Yitzaq, and also remember My covenant with Avraham, and remember the land.'* Notice here that Yahweh repeats three times, **"I shall remember my covenant"**. He made that covenant with three men. Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses a thing is established. The rabbis teach that the reason Yahweh reversed the order of our fathers here was to emphasize that since Ya'aqov was the last patriarch to represent all Yisra'el, that the last (*the end time*) would be as the first, or beginning. In other words, the covenant He remembers in our day will be as strong and binding as at the first, when He made it with Avraham.

**Shemot 3:1-10**; *And Moshe was shepherding the flock of Yithro his father-in-law, the priest of Midyan. And he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of Elohim. And the Messenger of YHVH appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. And he looked and saw the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. And Moshe said, "Let me turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." And YHVH saw that he turned aside to see, and Elohim called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moshe! Moshe!" And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not come near here. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is set-apart ground." And He said, "I am the Elohim of your father, the Elohim of Avraham, the Elohim of Yitsaq, and the Elohim of Ya'aqob." And Moshe hid his face, for he was afraid to look at Elohim. And YHVH said, "I have indeed seen the oppression of My people who are in Mitsrayim, and have heard their cry because of their slave-drivers, for I know their sorrows. And I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Mitsrites, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Kena'anites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hiwwites and the Yebusites. And now, see, the cry of the children of Yisra'el has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Mitsrites oppress them. And now, come, I am sending you to Pharaoh, to bring My people, the children of Yisra'el, out of Mitsrayim."*

Here, we find Moshe shepherding his father-in-law's flock. But, his father-in-law's name is now **"Yithro"**, or *Jethro* according to most English translations. This is interesting in that first, Moshe rescues the **"daughters"** and waters the **"flock"**. Now, he's elevated to shepherd, tending, feeding and watering that flock continually. Remember that 40 years have passed since he sat near the well, in the place of **"contention"**. His father-in-law has gone scripturally from being **"Re'uw'el"** (*friend of Elohim*) to **"Yithro"**, which means **"abundant"** or **"that which exceeds measure"** and also **"excellence"**. Now, he's still **Re'uw'el**, still the **"Friend of El"**, as he's called by that name elsewhere. But now, he's the **"Friend of El"** and he is **"abundant"**, he **"exceeds measure"** and he is **"excellent"**. This man, though a Midyanite (*of Yishma'el*), is a **"Priest of Yahweh"**, whom Yahweh has placed in the wilderness to meet, teach and advise His servant Moshe. He is not a pagan. We'll see more examples of Yithro's teaching and advising Moshe in the coming weeks, as we read through **Shemot** and later **B'midbar (Numbers)**.

And, in Moshe's care, the flock indeed has thrived for forty years. We've talked about this before. Forty is the number of "**preparation**", "**testing**" and "**trials**". Moshe was raised in Pharaoh's house. What did he know about being a shepherd? Forty years Moshe was taught by Re'uw'el / Yithro to shepherd the Priest's flock; and forty years he would shepherd Yahweh's flock and feed them and water them. Interestingly, forty is also the numeric value of the word "**ha'val**" or "**pledge**", as in "**collateral**" on a loan, or "**guaranty**"; as well as "**va' ga'al**", "**and redeemer**" from **Vayiqra 25:25** which reads; **'When your brother becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and his redeemer, a close relative comes to redeem it, then he shall redeem what his brother sold.'** If you think about it, you see that the forty years with Yithro was Moshe's time of learning in order to be the Shepherd of Yahweh's flock. And, just as he increased Yithro's flock, he would increase Yahweh's flock. Remember the mixed multitude from the nations. They were the increase. And, as we'll read throughout the rest of Torah, Moshe would himself be the "**pledge**" or "**collateral**" and the "**redeemer**" of Yisra'el.

Here, Moshe speaks with Elohim. The verse says, the Messenger (**malach**) of Elohim. However this "**Malach**" says that He is Elohim and Moshe hides his face, for he is afraid to look upon Elohim. Yahweh/Yahshua speaks to Moshe from a "**s'neh**" or "**thorn bush**" that burns but is not consumed. Yahweh refers to Himself as a "**consuming fire**" four times in Scripture. Twice we see incidents where His fire consumes, but does not burn up. And, these two incidences occur at the same place. First, in our *parsha* and then when Moshe shepherds Elohim's flock back to this mountain in **Shemot 24:15-18**; **And Moshe went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. And the esteem of YHVH dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moshe out of the midst of the cloud. And the appearance of the esteem of YHVH was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain, before the eyes of the children of Yisra'el. And Moshe went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And it came to be that Moshe was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.** The appearance of the "**Shekinah**" or "**Esteem of Yahweh**" is also the "**consuming fire**" that indeed burns up, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu and when He judges our works.

It is important to understand who this "**Malach**" (**Sent One**) of Elohim is; who calls Himself "**Elohim**". We'll save the "**Pillar of Fire**" until another study. But..... It's Him, also. For any that are new to us, I'm not talking about a "**trinity**", or even "**twinity**". I'm talking about Yahweh Echad. He is "**One**". He is "**Unified**" with Himself. He came in the flesh, was manifested in the flesh. The Hebrew word for "**flesh**" is "**basar**" which means "**physical flesh**", "**living body**" and is a euphemism for "**all mankind**". But, "**basar**" is also the word for "**bearing glad tidings**" or "**bringing good news**". We've talked about this before. So, in His flesh, He's the "**bearer of the good news**". And, that "**News**" is that He redeemed the House of Yisra'el in order to "**restore**" the Kingdom. But, that's at least two other teachings, both of which are on the website. And, believe me, more will be written. Remember, Yochanan said that all the books in the world couldn't contain all that Yahshua did.

Now, **Shemot 3:11-22**; **And Moshe said to Elohim, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Yisra'el out of Mitsrayim?" And He said, "Because I am with you. And this is to you the sign that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Mitsrayim, you are to serve Elohim on this mountain." And Moshe said to Elohim, "See, when I come to the children of Yisra'el and say to them, 'The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His Name?' what shall I say to them?" And Elohim said to Moshe, "I am that which I am." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Yisra'el, 'I am has sent me to you.' " And Elohim said further to**

**Moshe, “Thus you are to say to the children of Yisra’el, ‘YHVH Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitsaq, and the Elohim of Ya’aqob, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations.’ Go, and you shall gather the elders of Yisra’el together, and say to them, ‘YHVH Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, of Yitsaq, and of Ya’aqob, appeared to me, saying, “I have indeed visited you and seen what is done to you in Mitsrayim; and I say: I am bringing you up out of the affliction of Mitsrayim to the land of the Kena’anite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hiwwite and the Yebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey.” And they shall listen to your voice. And you shall come, you and the elders of Yisra’el, to the sovereign of Mitsrayim, and you shall say to him, ‘YHVH Elohim of the Hebrews has met with us. And now, please, let us go three days’ journey into the wilderness to slaughter to YHVH our Elohim.’ But I know that the sovereign of Mitsrayim is not going to let you go, not even by a strong hand. And I shall stretch out My hand and smite Mitsrayim with all My wonders which I shall do in its midst. And after that he shall let you go. And I shall give this people favor in the eyes of the Mitsrites. And it shall be, that when you go, you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask from her neighbor and from the stranger in her house, objects of silver, and objects of gold, and garments. And you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters, and shall plunder the Mitsrites.”**

Now, B’nei Yisra’el had not forgotten Yahweh’s name. Remember, they have been crying out to Him. But, Moshe supposed that the people, in their affliction and pain, would be sarcastic in their response, saying; **“Oh yeah. So, what’s his name then, this elohim who finally hears us?”** Yahweh provides Moshe the words of gentile correction; **“hayah asher hayah”, “I shall be as I shall be”**. Tell the people, **“I shall be as sent me”**. In other words, **“Don’t question Me in that manner. I will be as I will be. That’s all you need to know. I will be.”** But then, Elohim tells Moshe; **“Thus you are to say to the children of Yisra’el, ‘YHVH Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitsaq, and the Elohim of Ya’aqob, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations.’”** So, Yahweh is His remembrance Name. The Hebrew word here is **“zeker”** which means **“memorial”** or **“remembrance”**. Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee lexicon states that it is **“a name by which one is remembered”**. We may view and remember Elohim in our own various ways; by how we know Him and what He’s done for us. To me, He’s **“El Shaddai”** meaning **“Elohim is Sufficient”**, **“Yahweh Rapha”** or **“Yahweh my Healer”** and **“Yahushua”** or **“Yah my Salvation”**. But, the Name He chose for all generations to remember Him by is **“Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey”**..... **Yahweh**. How hard is that?

Next, in **Shemot 4:1-9**; **And Moshe answered and said, “And if they do not believe me, nor listen to my voice, and say, ‘YHVH has not appeared to you?’ ” And YHVH said to him, “What is that in your hand?” And he said, “A rod.” And He said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent. And Moshe fled from it. And YHVH said to Moshe, “Reach out your hand and take it by the tail” – so he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand – so that they believe that YHVH Elohim of their fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitsaq, and the Elohim of Ya’aqob, has appeared to you.” And YHVH said to him again, “Now put your hand in your bosom.” And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, and see, his hand was leprous, like snow. And He said, “Put your hand in your bosom again.” So he put his hand in his bosom again, and drew it out of his bosom, and see, it was restored like his other flesh. And it shall be, if they do not believe you, nor listen to the voice of the first sign, they shall believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry**

***land. And the water which you take from the river shall become blood on the dry land.”***

Now, let's jump ahead to **verses 29-31**; ***And Moshe went with Aharon and gathered together all the elders of the children of Yisra'el. And Aharon spoke all the words which YHVH had spoken to Moshe. Then he did the signs before the eyes of the people. And the people believed. And they heard that YHVH had visited the children of Yisra'el and that He had looked on their affliction, and they bowed their heads and did obeisance.***

I believe that nothing in Torah is random, coincidental or by accident. It's all written in there for a purpose. So why did Yahweh pick those three particular signs for Moshe to show B'nei Yisra'el? First turning a rod into a serpent and then back again; what does this mean? The shepherd's rod represents a leader's calling and work. It's what he uses to lead the sheep. When we let it "***loose***" or "***out of control***", it can easily become a serpent, a tool of the "***enemy***" doing what it was not intended to do, misleading the flock along with the shepherd. It's interesting that the Hebrew word here for "***rod***" is "***matteh***" which is also "***branch***" or "***tribe***". If a tribe, or tribes, are let loose, they can become as a serpent, doing evil against themselves and their brothers. This can certainly be said of the Northern Kingdom, or House of Yisra'el. When Moshe came down from the mountain after the first forty days on Sinai and saw the Children of Yisra'el celebrating and worshipping the golden calf, he asked Aharon, "***What have you done? The people are let loose.***" They were out of control, indeed doing evil before Yahweh.

The shepherd must keep a firm grip on his calling and be in subjection to Yahweh, always. In fact, what was the sin that kept Moshe from entering the Promised Land? In pride and anger, he and Aharon lost control of their calling as shepherds and used the rod of authority and calling perversely, not giving esteem to Yahweh. Remember, when B'nei Yisra'el grumbled, yet again, about not having water to drink and Moshe went before Yahweh, we read in **Bemidbar 20:7-12**; ***And YHVH spoke to Moshe, saying, "Take the rod and assemble the congregation, you and your brother Aharon. And you shall speak to the rock before their eyes, and it shall give its water. And you shall bring water for them out of the rock and give drink to the congregation and their livestock." And Moshe took the rod from before YHVH as He commanded him. And Moshe and Aharon assembled the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels, shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moshe lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. And much water came out, and the congregation and their livestock drank. But YHVH spoke to Moshe and to Aharon, "Because you did not believe Me, to set Me apart in the eyes of the children of Yisra'el, therefore you do not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."***

Getting back to our *parsha* and the signs, what about this leprosy thing? Elohim tells Moshe to place his hand in his bosom and when he takes it out, it's as leprous as snow. The word used here for "***bosom***" is "***cheyq***" which refers to the "***inner person***" or one's "***heart***"; not "***heart***" as in "***lev***", but "***cheyq***" as in "***seat of emotions***". Torah tells us that man's heart is evil continually. Our heart tends to be at the very least "***self-serving***". Moshe's "***hand***", like our hand represents "***works***" and "***callings***" in Scripture. We must not let any leprosy grow in our heart, as it will infect our works and callings. It eventually kills; but, only after much disfigurement, pain and suffering. That's why **Vayiqra / Leviticus** tells us how leprosy is healed. That first, we are to be separated (***set-apart***), then cleansed (***repentance*** and ***washing***) and then we give thanks (***make an offering***) and we are healed. Even, when Yahshua healed the leper, in **Mattityahu 8**, He told him to present himself to the priest and make his offering, as a witness of his healing.

I love how Yahweh says that these signs have voices. They testify; they are testimonies that Yahweh did indeed call Moshe as a Shepherd to the people. What voice, if any, has water being

turned into blood, as it is poured out on the ground? It's the loudest voice of all. After Qayin killed his brother, Yahweh asks in **B'reshith 4:9-10**; *And YHVH said to Qayin, "Where is Hebel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's guard?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.* There's another who would come and His blood would be poured out as a witness in fulfillment of the scriptures. This is the "**sign**" of the Redeemer; "**water**" – the "**Word**" turning to "**Blood**" – "the "**Covering**". While these words would be said of Yahshua many hundreds of years later in **Yochanan 5:6-9**, these words certainly applied to Moshe, a picture of Yahshua HaMashiach; *This is the One that came by water and blood: Yahshua Mashiach, not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the Truth. Because there are three who bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood. And the three are in agreement. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of Elohim is greater, because this is the witness of Elohim which He has witnessed concerning His Son.* For more on this, please read our teaching on Yom Kippur, at; [http://www.hearoisrael.org/uploads/Yom\\_Kippur\\_2008.pdf](http://www.hearoisrael.org/uploads/Yom_Kippur_2008.pdf)

Yes, these "**signs**" were given to show B'nei Yisra'el that Yahweh had indeed sent Moshe to be their Shepherd. But, they are also to be warnings that these very signs will testify against the *shepherd* who does not himself heed the Word of the One who called him to that office. Perhaps, the realization of that played a part in Moshe's response, in **Shemot / Exodus 4:10-17**; *And Moshe said to YHVH, "O YHVH, I am not a man of words, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant, for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." And YHVH said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, YHVH? And now, go, and I shall be with your mouth and teach you what to say." But he said, "O YHVH, please send by the hand of him whom You would send." And the displeasure of YHVH burned against Moshe, and He said, "Is not Aharon the Levite your brother? I know that he speaks well. And see, he is also coming out to meet you. And when he sees you, he shall be glad in his heart. And you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I am with your mouth and with his mouth, and I shall teach you what to do. And he shall speak for you to the people. And it shall be that he shall be a mouth for you, and you shall be an elohim for him. And take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs."*

When Moshe balks at this "**calling**", we read in **verse 14**, "**V'uchar aph YHVH b' Moshe**". Yahweh literally "**flared His nostrils**" at Moshe for suggesting that He might send another shepherd. So then, Yahweh gives Moshe his brother Aharon to be his mouth. And these will be the "**Two Witnesses**" that go before Pharaoh and who will deliver and shepherd B'nei Yisra'el out of bondage.

Before we close for this week, and even though we've looked at this before, we need to see this picture in our *parsha* today. So, let's look at what happened when Moshe and Aharon go before Pharaoh for the first time, in **Chapter 5:1-12**; *And afterwards Moshe and Aharon went in and said to Pharaoh, "Thus said YHVH Elohim of Yisra'el, 'Let My people go, so that they keep a festival to Me in the wilderness.' " And Pharaoh said, "Who is YHVH, that I should obey His voice to let Yisra'el go? I do not know YHVH, nor am I going to let Yisra'el go." And they said, "The Elohim of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness and slaughter to YHVH our Elohim, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword." But the sovereign of Mitsrayim said to them, "Moshe and Aharon, why do you take the people from their work? Get back to your burdens." And Pharaoh said, "See, the people of the land are many now, and you make them cease from*

*their burdens!” And the same day Pharaoh commanded the slave-drivers of the people and their foremen, saying, “You are no longer to give the people straw to make bricks as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. And lay on them the required amount of bricks which they made before, do not diminish it. For they are idle, that is why they cry out, saying, ‘Let us go and slaughter to our Elohim.’ Let more work be laid on the men, so that they labor in it, and not pay attention to words of falsehood.” And the slave-drivers of the people and their foremen went out and spoke to the people, saying, “Thus said Pharaoh, ‘I do not give you straw. ‘Go, take straw for yourselves, wherever you find it, for your work shall not be diminished.’ ” And the people were scattered in all the land of Mitsrayim – to gather stubble for straw. Of course if we read on, we see how the taskmasters of Pharaoh pushed B’nei Yisra’el even harder to produce their quota of bricks.*

Did you know that the Hebrew word for “**brick**” here is “**lebanah**” (*lamed-beit-nun-hey*)? It’s from the root word “**laban**”, meaning to “**be white**”, “**purified**” or “**made pure**”. Because of this, “**lebanah**” also means “**white one**” or “**pure one**” and is also used for “**full moon**” or “**moon**”, as it is also a “**white one**”. The plural, “**leban’im**” also means “**white**” or “**linen garments**”, as in what the righteous of Yahweh will one day be clothed in. The picture here is that B’nei Yisra’el were slaves in Mitsrayim (*Bondage*), making their own “**purification**”, their own “**righteousness**”. It’s an interesting picture of serving a man-made religion.

What adds even more to this picture is that they used “**straw**”, or “**teben**” (*tav-beit-nun*) to make their “**lebanah**” (**brick**). If we look at this word for a minute, we see “**beit-nun**” or “**ben**”, “**son**”. But, we also see the “**tav**”, which is a “**sign**” or “**mark of the covenant**”. So, their “**lebanah**” (*brick or man-made righteousness*) had the “**sign of the covenant, the Son**” as its substance. This is indeed a picture of Christianity. But now, as the Two Witnesses confront the bondage, Pharaoh, the system of bondage, makes them provide their own **straw**. Pharaoh, the government, changes the substance of their own righteousness. And, the Scripture reads, *And the people were scattered in all the land of Mitsrayim (bondage) – to gather stubble instead of straw.* “**Stubble**” here is the Hebrew word “**kash**” (*kuf-shin*), which is “**chaff**” and is the root word for “**koshu**” and “**koshashu**” as it relates to Tsephanyah 2:1; “**hit koshashu v’ koshu ha’goy lo nech’saf**”. We studied this before, as we looked, “**Be gathered and gather O’ nation not desired**”. Then, we read in **verses 2-3**; *before the decree is issued – the day shall pass on like chaff – before the burning wrath of YHVH comes upon you, before the day of wrath of YHVH comes upon you! Seek YHVH, all you humble ones of the land, who have done His right-ruling. Seek righteousness, seek humility, if so be that you are hidden in the day of wrath of YHVH.* So, here in Mitsrayim, scattered in bondage, the people are trying to make their own righteousness; but, their works, not having the sign of the Covenant, are as “**chaff**” and “**stubble**” that will be burned up in the Day of Yahweh’s wrath and judgment. But, as we’ll see in the weeks ahead, Yahweh will take His chosen into the wilderness to contend with them, and to bring Tikkun (repair and healing).

As Yochanan the Immerser came to proclaim repentance and testify of Mashiach, he said in **Mattityahu 3:8-12**; “**Bear, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Avraham as father.’ For I say to you that Elohim is able to raise up children to Avraham from these stones. And the axe is already laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, then, which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed immerse you in water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to bear. He shall immerse you in the Set-apart Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He shall thoroughly cleanse His threshing-**

*floor, and gather His wheat into the storehouse, but the chaff He shall burn with unquenchable fire.”*

Oh Yahweh, let us be found to be as trees bearing good fruit. Abba, winnow the chaff from our lives and gather us as grain into Your storehouse on Your set-apart Mountain in Yerushalayim. *B'Shem Yahshua, HaMashiach, Ahmein.*

**Baruch HaShem Yahweh !**