

Parashah # 13  
(Updated 1.17.09)

Sh'mot ~ **שְׁמוֹת** ~ Names

Torah: Sh'mot/Exodus 1:1-6:1

Haftarah: Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23; Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 1:1-2:3

B'rit Hadashah: Mattityahu/Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-44;  
Acts 3:12-15; 5:27-32; 7:17-36; 22:12-16; 24:14-16; Ivrim/Hebrews 11:23-26

CHAPTER 1

**Sh'mot**, Hebrew for *names*, is our Torah portion title because that's how it starts out, with a list of names! (verses 1-5) Although we just read the names of the tribes of *Bnei Yisrael/Sons of Israel* in our previous Parashah, we know there is always a reason for repetition. This time, I believe, is to emphasize the fact that, although they were few in number when they entered Egypt, it is a contrast to the many who left, approximately two million (600,000 men plus women and children). In addition, in Chapter 3:13-15, HaShem gives us His "names" (more on this later).

Quickly we read that Yosef dies, "as did all his brothers and all that generation." (verse 6) A new Pharaoh takes power and things begin to change! It is important for us to remember that Pharaoh is a title, like King or President is a title. As indicated above, many years have passed and this new Pharaoh is totally clueless of the fact, that had it not been for the descendants of Isra'el, Egypt would have been wiped off the face of the earth because of the famine. It would have been well for him had he studied his nation's history.

Now begins the story of the "Prince of Egypt", (Moe-sheh) **Moshe** or **Moses** as the (goy-yeem) **goyim/nations** call him. It is also the beginning of anti-semitism.

Operating out of a spirit of fear because of their increasing numbers, the new Pharaoh put slavemasters over Isra'el, oppressed them with forced labor building the cities, Pitom and Ra'amses. Some translations call these two cities "storage" cities and others call them "treasure" cities. Consulting the maps, it appears that Pitom was approximately 25 miles from Goshen and Ra'amses was about 100 miles away. I'm not sure if these trips were made daily or weekly; for that matter, I'm inclined to believe that it was traveled by foot. The fact remains, regardless of the oppression, Isra'el continued to multiply and expand, much to Pharaoh's chagrin. (verses 11-14)

The edict goes out to the Hebrew midwives for all male babies to be killed; if it was a girl, let her live. Let's look at verses 15-22. According to one of the commentaries, (She-frah) **Shifrah** was another name for (Yoe-keh-vehd) Yokheved, Moshe's mother. **Shifrah** comes from the Hebrew root word (l'shah-pehr) *l'shahper* meaning, **to make better** because she did things for the betterment of the infants in her care. **Puah** (Poo-ah) was another name for Miriam, Moshe's sister. She was called **Puah** for the comforting sounds she would make to the infants as mothers do, to calm a crying baby. We are told that Torah calls someone by a certain name when it represents the essence of the person. Consequently, Yokheved and Miriam have a special place in the Torah as Shifrah and Puah because of their compassion for babies. Oh, did you know that Miriam/Mary, Yeshua's mother was named after Moshe's big sister? She was!

**Shifrah/Yokheved** and **Puah/Miriam** were G~d fearing women so they didn't do as Pharaoh had ordered; for the midwives to kill all the male babies. When questioned as to why they disobeyed his command they explain that Hebrew women, unlike Egyptian women, go into labor and give birth before the midwives can get there. I love verse 21, "... because the midwives feared G~d, He made them founders of families."

CHAPTER 2

I wonder, why weren't **Moshe/Moses** parents named here? We learn later in Chapter 6:20 that Moshe's father was Amram and his mother, of course, was Yokheved. Amram was a grandson of Levi and Yokheved was also from the tribe of Levi. According to Rashi, she was 130 when she miraculously gave birth to Moshe.

As we have studied Torah, have you noticed that many, if not most of the leaders of Isra'el have been unusual, if not miraculous births?

In verse 3 we read about Moshe being kept safe for 3 months. Three is a number of resurrection, in this case, resurrection from assigned death! Anyway . . .

- Moshe was put in an ark or basket,
- was found by Pharaoh's daughter,
- and raised in the Palace.

By the way, the same Hebrew word, (teh bah) **tebah**, for **ark** or **basket**, used here is the same as the Hebrew word used for the ark built by **Noach/Noah** in **B'resheet/Genesis 6**.

According to **verse 6**, Pharaoh's daughter knew this was a Hebrew child and how would she have known that? Only Hebrew baby boys were circumcised. Isn't that just like HaShem to make those kinds of arrangements? I'm tellin' ya, sometimes the Word of the L~rd is stranger than fiction!!! As an infant, arrangements were made for his mother to nurse him and care for him. Other than that, we know virtually nothing about his childhood except he grew up with the riches AND the idolatry of being in the royal household yet due to his mother's involvement in his training, he maintained his loyalty to HaShem.

**Verse 10** indicates this child was named Moshe. However, since Pharaoh's daughter was Egyptian, it is most likely that she named him **Monios**, which means he was **drawn from the water**. **Moshe/Moses** are the **Hebrew/English** translations meaning the same thing.

Then in **verse 11**, we jump to "when Moshe grew up". Jewish tradition lets us know that the approximate age of a "grown man" is 30. That's when most men went out on their own. According to Stephen's testimony in **Acts 7:23**, Moshe was 40.

When I began my search, I found that . . .

- **B'resheet/Genesis 41:46** indicates that Yosef was 30 years of age when Pharaoh appointed him 2<sup>nd</sup> in command over Egypt.
- **B'midbar/Numbers 4**, when the census was taken, those 30-50 were to do the work in the tent of meeting (tabernacle).
- **Sh'mu'el Bet/2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 5:4** David became king at the age of 30.
- **Luke 3:23** confirms that Yeshua was approximately 30 when he began his ministry.

Like I said, it's tradition . . . but it appears that the tradition was most likely Biblically based.

It's interesting how some of the commentaries think Moshe was 20 and some thought perhaps 12 when he killed the Egyptian slave master. Given the above information, however, 40 seems most likely. Then he freaks, runs, and is gone for 40 years.

**Verse 15** ". . . One day as he was sitting by a well . . .". Does this sound familiar? Does this remind you of **B'resheet/Genesis 24:15-21**, when Abraham's servant, Eliezer went to Kena'an to find a wife for **Yitz'chak/Isaac**? Then again, in **B'resheet/Genesis 29**, **Ya'akov/Jacob** meets **Raquel/Rachel** at a well! HMMMM!!!! Seems history repeats itself, because here Moshe meets (Zip-poor-ah) **Tzipporah**, Hebrew for **bird**, who will eventually become his bride. One commentary indicates that he intentionally "stationed" himself at a well because he was seeking a wife. He remembered how his forefathers, **Yitz'chak/Isaac** and **Ya'akov/Jacob's** wives were found at a well and he was following their example.

The next three **verses, 16-18**, have a lot of "meat" to them. First of all, "the minister of Midian" is mentioned. I wonder why he wasn't named at this point? Anyway, his name is **Yitro/Jethro** and he was a both a priest and a leader in Midian.

Much like **Ya'akov/Jacob**, **Moshe/Moses** becomes the "redeemer" for the seven daughters, who had come to water their father's sheep. Instead of removing the cover from the well, as did **Ya'akov/Jacob**, he drove the shepherds away and watered the sheep for the seven daughters. The number seven represents . . .

- spiritual perfection
- completeness
- rest
- bringing to an end.

Perhaps this was "**bringing to an end**" Moshe's running from Pharaoh. Perhaps we will see that Moshe, although tending his father-in-law's sheep, was at "**rest**" and was attaining "**spiritual perfection**" as he spent time with the L~rd during his time tending the sheep.

**Verse 18** says “when they came to Re’u’el their father, he said . . .” Sometimes I get SO confused!!! We know this man is a Midianite priest and leader, research indicates his name is **Yitro/Jethro**, now he is called (Reh-you-eh!) **Re’u’el**. By the way, according to Strong’s concordance #7467 **Re’u’el** means **friend of G~d** and is the name of Moshe’s father-in-law.

Being grateful that this man came to the rescue of his daughters, **Yitro/Jethro/Re’u’el** is insistent on inviting Moshe to have something to eat. (**verses 19-20**) Moshe agreed to stay and, long story short, received Tziporah in marriage and a son was conceived. Moshe named him (Gehr-shome) **Gershom** which means **foreigner there** in Hebrew.

Our chapter ends (**verses 21-25**) with the acknowledgment that the Pharaoh whom Moshe knew, died but Isra’el was still in slavery and they cried out to HaShem, Who heard their cry, remembered His covenant with Avraham, Yitz’chak and Ya’akov and He acknowledged them.

### CHAPTER 3

We know that for the next 40 years, Moshe tends **Yitro/Jethro’s** flocks, ultimately leading them to the far side of the desert; “he came to the mountain of G~d, to **Horev/Horeb** and then he has the **burning bush**, (**sneh**, in Hebrew) experience at the age of 80!!!! (**verses 1-10**) By the way, the general consensus is that Mt. Horeb and Mt. Sinai are one and the same location. In fact, **verse 12** HaShem tells Moshe the sign that he has been sent to lead the people out is that they would worship HaShem at that very same mountain!

Now, bear in mind that Moshe was in the final trimester of his life and was a poor man. Although he was a master shepherd, they were not his sheep; they belonged to his father-in-law, **Yitro/Jethro/Re’u’el**. Moshe essentially had been on a self-imposed exile; isolated from civilization and certainly from contemporary Egyptian culture and the Pharaohs for at least forty years.

HaShem speaks to him about returning to Egypt and saving his people and commentaries say that for 7 days, Moshe gives HaShem every excuse he can think of why he isn’t the man for the job. Moshe knew he was . . .

- the wrong man
- in the wrong place
- at the wrong time

. . . but HaShem didn’t want a politician. He wasn’t looking for a smooth talker and He wasn’t looking for someone who could work the crowd; He was looking for someone with a humble soul and Moshe was that man.

Can’t you almost hear the dialogue?

- HaShem says: “Moses, it’s time for your dream to come true!”
- And Moses comes back with: “What?! What dream?”
- HaShem: “To deliver **Bnei Yisrael /Children of Israel** from Egypt.”
- Moses: “Are you kidding me? That dream was when I was young, impetuous, and living in Pharaoh’s household, for crying out loud!!! I was an idealist; I had a say in the government and I had energy. I’ve changed, times have changed and I can’t even speak publicly any longer. Besides, back then the Jewish people still believed in the G~d of Avraham, Yitz’chak, and Ya’akov; they still remembered Yosef. Today the Jews have assimilated into the depths of Egyptian culture!”

(Boy, did Moshe hit the nail on the head with that statement, which we will learn about later.)

Moshe was about to embark on a series of **firsts**.

- This was the **first** time in history a man would stand up and say, “G~d sent me!”
- For the **first** time in history, G~d would overrule the nature He had created and perform miracles in order to save a nation.
- For the **first** time in history, a nation would be freed and the powerful Egyptians would be defeated.
- AND very importantly, for the **first** time in Moshe’s life, he would become a leader ~ at the age of 80. (Oy Vey!!! Such a deal!!!)

It is in this chapter that we have “first mention” of a land flowing with “milk and honey” (vs. 8 & 17). I really like what one of my friends, Vicki Wolfe, shared with us. She mentioned that HaShem had revealed to her that it was MUCH more than just “milk and honey”. In order to have milk, you have to have cows; in order to have cows, you have to have pasture land, as well as water. In order to have honey, you have to have bees. In addition to bees, you have to have flowering plants . . . lots of them!!!

In verses 13-15, HaShem tells Moshe that Moshe is to tell the people of Isra'el that (say Eh-yeh Ah-shehr Eh-yeh) “Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh” has sent him. Many translations have “I am that I am” however, the Hebrew is much more encompassing than that. We know HaShem to be “past, present and future” which is what the Hebrew implies. He is MUCH more than “I am”, He is also “I was” and “I will be”. In addition, the Holy One, blessed be He, tells Moshe that “Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh” (the sacred Tetragrammaton) is His name forever.

I want to address an issue right here and now. HaShem put this on my heart several years ago and I believe it is imperative. In the Messianic Movement there are “sacred name” users, whom I do NOT agree with at all. Perhaps if I put this in layman’s terms I can make myself understood. When I was growing up, I called my father “Daddy”, “Daddy-boy”, and “Dad”, although his NAME was Harvey. For me to have called him by his NAME would have been disrespectful; as if I were putting myself on the same level as he. If we use Yeshua as our example, we will not call HaShem by His NAME but, we will call Him as Yeshua did, which was Abba or Father.

Additionally, it is absolutely inappropriate to call the Holy One, blessed be He, . . .

- Jehovah ~ there is no “J” in the Hebrew language so that doesn’t fit.
- Yahweh ~ there were no vowels so how do we know which vowel should be used where (a,e,i,o,u)? In addition, there is no “w” in the Hebrew language either. In fact, research shows that there are more than 320 variations of these consonants and vowels so how in the world can we know which ones are the appropriate ones?!

Torah does not explicitly state, “Do not pronounce the Name of G~d as it is written.” However, a commandment that does appear is one of the ten spoken aloud on Mount Sinai and it states:

- “You shall not take the name of the L~rd your G~d in vain, for the L~rd will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.” (**Sh’mot/Exodus 20:7; D’varim/Deuteronomy 5:11**)

(First Fruits of Zion has an excellent teaching on this subject by Aaron Eby and Toby Janicki entitled “Hallowed by Your Name ~ Sanctifying G~d’s Sacred Name”. If you are interested in more information on this subject, I encourage you to go to [www.ffoz.org](http://www.ffoz.org) to check it out!)

One more matter before leaving this chapter. It is important that we remember verses 21 & 22. “Moreover, I will make the Egyptians so well-disposed toward this people that when you go, you won’t go empty-handed. Rather, all the women will ask their neighbors and house guests for silver and gold jewelry and clothing, with which you will dress your own sons and daughters. In this way, you will plunder the Egyptians.” I repeat, it is important that we remember this.

## CHAPTER 4

As proof that HaShem will be with Moshe when he returns to Egypt, He gives Moshe three miracles . . .

- Staff into a snake and back into a staff
- Leprous hand and back to a whole hand
- Turning water into blood

which He says He will perform when the need arises. (verses 1-9)

When Moshe had exhausted all his excuses and HaShem promised him the assistance of his brother, **Aharon/Aaron**, Moshe finally relents. Then he tells his father-in-law about the burning bush experience and asks Yitro to send him and his family off with his blessings and Yitro said to Moshe, “Go in peace” (verse 18)

Moshe puts his wife and sons on a donkey and leaves for Egypt. Verses 24-26 are interesting. Does this mean that HaShem would have killed Moshe or would have killed the son? And if it was the son, which son would it have been Gershom or Eliezer? (**Sh’mot/Exodus 18:3-4**) What do you think?

Actually, Gershom had already been circumcised but Eliezer had not. I believe that it was time for Eliezer to be circumcised, which was Moshe’s responsibility but because he was caught up in getting himself to Egypt, per the

instructions of HaShem, he had a “brain freeze” and forgot about it. Apparently, some physical stress manifested itself in Moshe and was not released until Tziporah had completed the circumcision of Eliezer.

In the meantime, HaShem has spoken to Aaron to go into the desert to meet Moshe, which he does and Moshe fills him in on **ALL** of the happenings from the *sneh/burning bush* to the rod becoming a serpent to his leprous hand and the instruction concerning the river water turning into blood. Then the two of them gathered the leaders of **Bnei Isra’el/Children of Israel** together and **Aharon/Aaron** reiterated everything HaShem had told Moshe and they began to carry out “the plan”. (Verses 27-31)

## CHAPTER 5

They go to Pharaoh, whom they already knew would harden his heart and not allow an exodus such as they proposed (verses 1-6). Pharaoh increases the demands on Bnei Yisrael, (verses 7-19) which causes them to become angry and upset with Moshe (verse 21); to which Moshe cries out to HaShem “why have you treated this people so terribly? . . . You haven’t rescued Your people at all.” (Verses 22 & 23)

## CHAPTER 6

Then we have the big promise from HaShem when He says “now you will see what **I** am going to do to Pharaoh!” (verse 1)

I believe HaShem wants our availability more than He wants our ability. When we make ourselves available to Him, then we receive His promises to facilitate accomplishing His will for our lives and the lives of others.

So, we have a lesson in greatness. Greatness is not always where you would expect to find it. (Moshe with sheep; David tending sheep; Yeshua in a cave/tomb). Greatness isn’t necessarily in one who can posture and project. Greatness lies with the sincere and humble; one, who can make room for G~d to be in charge. As one commentator wrote, “We are in sales but HaShem is in management.” My prayer is that each one of us continues to let HaShem manage our lives on a daily basis.

## HAFTARAH

Sh’mot ~ **תִּנּוּ** ~ Names

Yesha’yahu/Isaiah 27:6~28:13; 29:22-23; Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 1:1-2:3

**Yesha’yahu/Isaiah 27:6~28:13 and 29:22-23** (traditional Ashkenazic reading) According to the Stone Edition of the Artscroll Chumash, **Ya’akov/Jacob** represents the root of what will eventually lead to a flourishing, world-renowned and respected “Israel”. “Jacob” always symbolizes the Jewish people in times of travail and dissent, before they succeed in realizing the goals and potential represented by the name “Israel”; just as that very name was given to Jacob in recognition of his enhanced stature.

The prophet **Yesha’yahu/Isaiah** lived when there was much turmoil. The kingdom of the Ten Tribes was going downhill in its spiritual decay with defeat and exile on the way. At the same time, the Davidic kingdom of Judah was suffering from spiritual decline as well. Here, Yesha’yahu describes the failures of both nations. He begins with the encouraging prophecy that the “root” of Ya’akov – like all roots, unseen in the ground and trampled by those who walk over it, obviously – will once more produce luxuriant produce. (Like now?!)

**Yesha’yahu/Isaiah** describes Y’hudah as having become so estranged from Torah and its wisdom that they must be taught as one who has just been weaned. They must be spoon fed – a commandment or instruction at a time, a line at a time – “precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (28:13).

This part of the Haftarah ends with Yesha’yahu offering words of comfort and encouragement. “Ya’akov shall not now be ashamed, nor shall his face now turn pale; but when he sees his children, the work of my hand, in his midst, they will sanctify my name; indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Ya’akov and will stand in awe of the G~d of Isra’el.” (29:22-23)

**Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 1:1-2:3** (traditional Sephardic reading) **Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah** like **Moshe/Moses** was a reluctant prophet, who was convinced that he was unqualified to accept the mission G~d had for him. And like Moshe,

he tried to refuse though not as strenuously nor for as long. He, too, feared that the people would not accept him and might harm him. The fact is, at one point in his prophetic career, he was thrown into a dungeon for daring to tell Jerusalem what it did not want to hear. Nevertheless, HaShem commanded him to go and prophesy and guaranteed that He would protect him from harm.

G~d sent Jeremiah to tell the complacent citizens of **Y'hudah/Judah** that their destruction would come from the "North" in the form of Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army, which did destroy the Temple and exiled the people.

However, Jeremiah's first words to the Jewish people were an expression of Divine love that to this day is one of the most familiar prophetic utterances. HaShem never forgets Isra'el's loyalty to Him since its first emergence as a nation. He may be forced to respond to its sins by punishments, but that doesn't lessen His love and consequently Israel is assured that it will survive and prosper once again.

## B'RIT HADASHAH

### Sh'mot ~ **תנוח** ~ Names

**Mattityahu/Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-44;**  
**Acts 3:12-15; 5:27-32; 7:17-36; 22:12-16; 24:14-16; Ivrim/Hebrews 11:23-26**

We have several passages from the B'rit Hadashah related to our parashah. The purpose is to demonstrate how clearly and appropriately the B'rit Hadashah interprets and fulfills the meaning of the Torah.

**Mattityahu/Matthew 22:23-33** As I began reading this portion, I immediately thought of the Judah situation with Tamar because he refused to let Onan marry Tamar. But gosh, that was in our Torah Portion three weeks ago and this is supposed to parallel this week's portion.

I believe the parallel comes in **Sh'mot/Exodus 3:6** where HaShem said "**I am the G~d of your father, the G~d of Avraham, the G~d of Yitz'chak, and the G~d of Ya'akov.**" Here in **verse 32**, Yeshua reminds them of that very passage and goes on to say that HaShem is ". . . G~d not of the dead but of the living!" HaShem is concerned with the living but He wants the living (us) to learn from the lives of those who have been historical examples for us, such as Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov.

**Mark 12:18-27** This parallel would be the same as **Mattityahu/Matthew 22:23-33**

**Luke 20:27-44** Again, this would parallel **Mattityahu/Matthew 22:23-33**

**Acts 3:12-15** **Kefa/Peter** adjures the "on-lookers" to not be so surprised at the healing of this man. He goes on to iterate that it is not he and the other disciples who performed this miracle; rather it was "**the G~d of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, the G~d of our fathers.**"; again quoting from (pronounced Say-fer) **Sefer/Book of Sh'mot/Exodus**. According to David Stern, author of The Complete Jewish Bible, this phrase was not accidental on Kefa's part. These are the very words they would have been praying during their afternoon prayers in **minyans/groups of 10 or more** throughout the Temple grounds, similar to what is done today at the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem.

**Acts 5:27-32** At the time of King Herod Agrippa all but three of the seventy members of the Sanhedrin were **Tz'dukim/Saducees**. In suppressing the Gospel, the Sanhedrin was judging it by two of their criteria:

1. The Gospel proclaimed resurrection, which the Tz'dukim denied and
2. It proclaimed "another king, Yeshua", which, if true, would be politically subversive, as well as destructive of the cozy working relationship the Sadducees had with the Romans.

**Acts 7:17-36** Here, Stephen's speech validates Torah in every respect. His message to the Sanhedrin validates the B'rit Hadashah as a Jewish book which was written by Jewish authors for those who already had knowledge concerning the Torah and/or Tanakh. This passage clearly covers the story of Moshe, from his birth to the exodus.

**Acts 22:12-16** **Chananyah** (Kahn-an-yah), or **Ananias** in Greek, was a Torah observant follower, who was highly regarded by the entire Jewish community. This was an important fact for **Sha'ul/Paul's** current audience, as he was telling of his experience in regaining his eyesight. Here is the phrase that seems to echo throughout scripture: "**The G~d of our father's . . .**"

**Acts 24:14-16** This passage starts out with the very words which are becoming a melody to my ears. "But this I do admit to you; I worship the G~d of our fathers in accordance with the Way (which they call a sect). I continue to believe everything that accords with the Torah and everything written in the Prophets."

**Ivrim/Hebrews 11:23-26** Once again, Ivrim confirms, if not amplifies, our Torah portion. The writer of Ivrim recaps this great story of faithfulness and obedience to HaShem's voice. As Moshe didn't allow himself to be assimilated into the culture of *Mitzrayim/Egypt*, we, too, must resist becoming attached to this world system. We must stand firm for HaShem; He is worthy of our trust. He is faithful, never changing and eternal!

**The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 99**