

Parashah #14

(Updated for 1.01.11)

Va'era~ וָאֵרָאִיתִי ~And I appeared

Torah: Sh'mot/Exodus 6:2~9:35

Haftarah: Yechezk'el/Ezekiel 28:25~29:21

Brit Hadashah: Romans 9:14-17; 2nd Corinthians 6:14-7:1

As the Last Days grow shorter and shorter, many are looking at (Say-fer Sh'mote) *Sefer Sh'mot/Book of Exodus* as prophetic. Egypt represents the world (including the United States) and many of its “gods” are being destroyed as we are heading into the Greater Exodus found in **Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 16:14-16**.

Another week of more than enough!!! There's more than enough material here to last for who knows how long! Needless to say, there is no way we can get this entire Parashah covered in the time allotted to us.

CHAPTER 6

Remember last week, we ended with Chapter 6:1 “Adonai said to Moshe, “Now you will see what **I** am going to do to Pharaoh.” Here, in **verse 2**, we find Adonai continuing to reassure Moshe by reminding him He appeared to the Patriarchs as *El Shaddai/G~d Almighty* but never by His personal name. So, in a repeat of **Sh'mot/Exodus 3:15**, the Mighty One of Isra'el restates, in **verse 3** His holy name “Yud (Y)-Heh (H)-Vav (V)-Heh (H)”. According to the Sages, we substitute the word Adonai, meaning L~rd and/or Master.

For those who have not taken any Hebrew, it is important to know there were no vowels in the original Hebrew so the above really is not pronounce-able. There is no way to make Jehovah out of those letters and it isn't possible to form Yahweh as there is neither a “J” nor a “W” in the Hebrew language.

- The “Y” sounds like the “y” in yes
- The “H” sounds like the “h” in hear
- The “V” sounds like “v” in vase

We could put vowels in all sorts of sequence with the consonants but it doesn't mean we would get it correct. Based on recent information, I am inclined to believe the proper pronunciation is (Yeh-hoe-**VAH**) “Yehovah”. However, based on #3 of the Big Ten, I will not use His Holy Name often 'cause He says not to. We have been told not to profane the name of the L~rd. In our Westernized mindset, we think profaning is cussing or using it in foul language. However, in the Hebrew mindset “profane” means to use loosely, often, and/or commonly. My Jewish brothers and sisters prefer to use Adonai (L~rd/Master) and HaShem (Hebrew literally for The

Name) and I choose not to offend them so I will use Adonai and HaShem as well. According to **Romans 11:11** we are to provoke them to jealousy; not provoke them!!!

Then in **verse 4** HaShem speaks of the covenant He made with the Patriarchs giving them the land of ***Kena'an/Canaan*** but, up to this point, they had only wandered living as foreigners

In **Sh'mot/Exodus 6:5-7** Adonai tells Moshe He has heard the groanings of ***B'nei Yisrael / Children of Israel*** and He sends Moshe to His Chosen People with incredible promises of deliverance from (Mitz-rah-yeem) ***Mitzrayim/Egypt***. Long story short, He said

- ***Vey-hotzaiti*** . . . and I will free you/bring you out the torture will stop!
- ***Vey-hitzaliti*** . . . and I will rescue/deliver you the slavery will end!
- ***Vey-goalti*** . . . and I will redeem you no longer aliens!
- ***Vey-lokahti*** . . . and I will take you it's all over!

(As a side note: these are the four expressions of redemption when we drink the four goblets of wine during the ***Pesach Seder/Passover Service***. But that's another teaching!!!)

It is told, years ago, a rabbi said the following: "The very fact that G~d says something will happen, means that it has already happened." I have to admit this sounds kinda strange and is a little hard to swallow. To our finite minds this is hard to comprehend. However, to understand this statement is to further understand the nature and character of HaShem. He is not bound by time or space. He not only knows the end from the beginning but He has the ability to see and experience the reality of future events, even though the manifestation has not occurred to us.

Those four "I will"s apply to us today in our lives and our futures. HaShem was speaking to Moshe's day and to ours as well. The Hebrews were about to go through difficult times and some of those plagues would affect them. They would need to hold on to the fact what HaShem had said was already done. Today we can hold fast to these same promises. Read them again. Each one not only has been brought to pass but will be brought to pass because our Heavenly Father is the same yesterday, today and forever.

As the final days draw nearer, it is imperative for us to have these "I will"s engraved on our hearts. Tough times are ahead and Abba isn't gonna whoosh us outta here! **BUT**, if we are obedient to HIS word, . . .

- He will be with us
- He will free us/bring us out
- He will take us
- He will redeem us
- He will rescue/deliver us

Then there was the ***fifth*** promise "And I will bring you into the land . . . and I will give it to you for your inheritance, "***Ani Adonai/I am your G~d***" (**verse 8**). There's the number ***five***, for

grace. However, there was a long time between the first four promises and the fifth. Because of doubt, unbelief, and disobedience, the generation taken out of *Mitzrayim/Egypt* didn't make it into the Promised Land. We will learn more about this in next week's Parashah reading.

It is said the promise to bring the Yisraelites into the land was conditional; conditional on the faith of the Yisraelites to KNOW "*Ani Adonai Elohechim/I am the L~rd your G~d*". By saying this to Moshe, in essence, Adonai was saying, "I am here; I am faithful, I will always be here with you, faithfully present to perform My promises."

The same conditions apply for the Final Redemption as well. Like them, we must have faith and KNOW "*Ani Adonai Elohechim/I am the L~rd your G~d*".

PROMISES ~ THEN AND NOW REQUIRE FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Promises, promises, promises!!! To receive them, takes faith, faith, faith AND obedience.

This caused me to start thinking about promises made through out the Bible. If I remember correctly, almost every promise required faith and obedience. It started with Avraham. No, actually, it started with *Adamah veh Havah/Adam and Eve* and because they lacked faith and obedience, they were banned from the *Gan Eden/Garden of Eden* (B' resheet/Genesis 3:21). Then in B' resheet/Genesis 12:1-3 Adonai said "I will, I will, I will" but Avraham had to be obedient and leave everything familiar to him. Avraham and Sarai were promised a child but because it wasn't in their time frame, they lacked faith and obedience and behold we have Ishmael. Noach and his family were saved because of his obedience to build an ark when nobody knew what rain was and he was the laughing stock of all around him. But he was obedient and they survived the flood. As we know, it goes on and on.

As the final days approach, will we be as obedient as Noach and survive the tribulation?

D'varim/Deuteronomy 28:1-14 is where some of the most well known promises requiring obedience are found.

Do you recall some of the promises requiring faith and obedience?

For whatever reason, Hashem reminded me about Na'aman in M'lakim Bet/2 Kings 5:9-14. Healing was promised but Elisha required him to dip seven times in the Jordan River. (Nasty!) *HaYarden/The Jordan* is not one of the cleanest bodies of water. No wonder Na'aman had a problem with it!

Another one is in Yochanan/John 5:1-9; as well as Yochanan/John 9:1-7

And last but not least, for me personally is **Yasha'yahu/Isaiah 26:3&4**. Hashem WILL keep me in perfect peace BUT I have to keep my mind on Him; I have to keep my trust in Him and be obedient to Him. And surely, He will give me the desires of my heart. And you too!!!

O-k-a-y, sorry about the interruption. I don't know why HaShem took me down that path . . . maybe because I needed it? . . . maybe because someone else did. Who knows?!?!?!?!?!?

Getting back to our Torah portion, **Sh'mot/Exodus 6:10-12** begins the "Go and tell Pharaoh" phase of this week's lesson. Moshe, almost whining to HaShem, says "Look, the people of Isra'el haven't listened to me; so how will Pharaoh listen to me, poor speaker that I am?" I thought his "lack of confidence" issue had been addressed before. Anyway, at this point, slavery has become very cruel toward **Bnei Isra'el/Children of Israel**.

In **verse 13** HaShem spoke to both Moshe and Aharon, giving them orders on how to treat both (Ahm Is-rah-el) **Am Isra'el/People of Israel** and Pharaoh. The Sages indicate Moshe and Aharon should be patient and understanding toward the people and should display respect for the office of the Pharaoh, in order to bring Bnei Israel out of (Mitz-rah-yeem) **Mitzrayim/Egypt**.

Here we go again . . . a list of names . . . of the leaders . . . in **verses 14-25**. There is interesting information in here. One of the sons of **Shim'on/Simeon**, named **Sha'ul/Saul** was the son of a woman from **Kena'an/Canaan** (**verse 15**). According to commentary, Shim'on was the only brother of the twelve who took a **Kena'ani/Canaanite** wife. If we remember the Canaanites were a wicked nation. In fact, both Avraham and Yitz'chak made great efforts to assure their sons **Yitz'chak/Isaac** and **Ya'akov/Jacob** did not marry a **Kena'ani/Canaanite** woman.

Verses 16-18 tell us Levi lived to be 137 years old; K'hat, 133 years old and Amram (Moshe's daddy) lived to be 137 years old. One of the great rabbis, Sforno, says the reason the ages are given is to suggest the superiority of Moshe and Aharon. Since Levi outlived his brothers and K'hat and Amram lived long lives, they had the opportunity to be instrumental in the education and rearing of their children and grandchildren; an advantage over the other tribes.

There is another interesting matter, in **verses 20, 23, and 25**. We are told there are only three times where the Torah mentions the wives of the leaders. In all three cases, the reason is to show the offspring not only descended from distinguished fathers but from distinguished mothers as well.

- Amram married Yokheved, a daughter of Levi (parents of Miriam, Aharon and Moshe)
- Aharon married Elisheva, from the tribe of Judah, a sister of Nahor, who later became the most distinguished tribal prince. Aharon and Elisheva began the Jewish priesthood.
- El'azar, Aharon's son, married a daughter of Puti'el, (the Sages say this name refers to both **Yosef/Joseph** and **Yitro/Jethro**) who had a son, **Pinchas/Phinehas**, who was granted priesthood as a result of his own merit.

Oh my gosh! Did you slide over **verse 30** time and time again as I have? Moshe's doing it again!!! "Look, I'm such a poor speaker . . ." Don't tell me the original covenant is all about law and judgment. It's all about grace and mercy, over and over and over again!!! As I continued to study, HaShem brought this to my remembrance: During the years Moshe was tending Yitro's sheep, Aharon was still in Egypt. Therefore, Aharon would have been more masterful in speaking the Egyptian language than Moshe. So perhaps Moshe's concern was legitimate about his speaking. Therefore, Moshe heard from HaShem and delivered the message to Aharon, who interpreted it, in Egyptian, to Pharaoh. This makes sense to me!

CHAPTER 7

Again (**verse 1**) HaShem assures Moshe he will have the support of Aharon and it's a matter of following the chain of command. As a matter of fact, HaShem said, "I have put you in the place of G~d to Pharaoh, and Aharon your brother will be your prophet." It sounds to me like HaShem will speak, Moshe will tell Aharon, who in turn will speak to Pharaoh. HaShem even gives Moshe the entire game plan . . . He tells Moshe He (Adonai) will make Pharaoh hard hearted even though He multiplies His signs and wonders (**verse 3**).

The Artscroll Chumash, Stone Edition has a very interesting commentary on **verse 3**, which bears quoting:

- "A sign validates the messenger's claim that he was sent by G~d; this is why Moses performed signs only for the Israelites, who believed in G~d, but needed to be convinced Moses had been sent by G~d.
- A wonder offers proof of the authenticity of the sender; which is why Moses performed wonders for Pharaoh, who, in **5:2**, questioned the existence of HaShem."

For those of you who don't know, HaShem used the "Ten Plagues of Egypt" to judge anywhere from one to eight different Egyptian "gods". HaShem specifically judged the Nile River first to demonstrate to Pharaoh and to the rest of the Egyptians the River Nile was NOT a god and Pharaoh was NOT the "power of the Nile incarnate"! HaShem was out to prove to ALL who were involved, the Egyptians AND Am Yisra'el/People of Israel alike there is only ONE G~d, maker of heaven, the earth and the seas, including the Nile River, and He ALONE is sovereign!

Following is a quick overview of the ten plagues and the Egyptian deities which were judged.

1. The Nile Plague judged Khnum, Sati, Hapi, Osiris, Hathor, Neith, Sobek and Apepi.
2. The Frog Plague judged the creator goddess Heka.
3. The Lice Plague judged Seth, Geb, Ra and Osiris.
4. The Flies Plague judged Vatchit, Beelzebub, and the Scarab beetle
5. The Deadly Pestilence judged Ptah, Apis, Hathor and Osiris

6. The **Boils Plague** judged Ptah, Osiris, Sekhmet, Imhotep, Serapis, the Egyptian priesthood and the ritual of casting ashes.
7. The **Hail Plague** judged Nut, Geb, Amun-Ra, Osiris and Pharaoh.
8. The **Locusts Plague** judged Sobek, Ra, Shu, Geb and Osiris.
9. The **Darkness Plague** judged Nut, Hathor, Amun-Ra and the Egyptian priesthood.
10. The **Death of the Firstborn** judged Heka, Isis, Min, Horus, Bes, Seker, and the Pharaoh.

In **verses 10-12**, we see the “men of HaShem” go head to head with Pharaoh’s sorcerers and magicians. Although the magicians and sorcerers are able to turn their staffs into snakes as Aharon did, his snake swallowed-up the other snakes. I guess this meant the other guys had to go get new staffs. Awwwww☹!!! Anyway, there were interesting commentaries concerning this passage as well. Some believe this miracle symbolized the “Splitting of the Sea” when HaShem would cause the sea to “swallow-up” Pharaoh and all his men.

According to the Complete Jewish Bible, **verse 13** says, Pharaoh was made hardhearted. The operative word here is “made”. I believe HaShem made him hardhearted to begin with.

One of the intriguing elements of the Exodus story is the interplay between HaShem and Pharaoh. Though they don’t speak to each other directly (**verse 15**), Moshe, the messenger, finds himself running back and forth between G~d and Pharaoh, relaying messages and prophecies. Of course, HaShem had the upper hand and, if Pharaoh hadn’t been so arrogant and filled with delusions of grandeur, I could almost feel sorry for him. Obviously, the proverbial deck of cards is stacked against Pharaoh, because only G~d can wreak havoc with all of nature and its rules. So much for man-made gods!

Remember in **Sh’mot/Exodus 5:1-2** where Moshe says “Let my people go!” and Pharaoh responds with (Batyah’s translation) “Who is this G~d? Why I should listen to him? I don’t know this dude!” So, the ten plagues are a progression, a process, if you will, of bringing Pharaoh to the recognition of the living Yehovah.

As we will see, The Ten Plagues consisted of three sets of three plagues each, followed by the Plague of the Firstborn.

- The first three plagues (blood, frogs, lice) proved the existence of HaShem (**7:17**);
- The next three (swarms, epidemic, boils) proved His provision extended to earthly affairs and He was not oblivious to material matters (**8:18**)
- The next three (hail, locusts, darkness) proved HaShem was unmatched by any power (**9:14**)

Rabbi Hirsch explains these punishments were measure for measure retribution for enslaving the Hebrew people.

- The first of each group (blood, swarms, hail) reduced the Egyptians, in their own land, to the insecurity of strangers;
- The second of each group (frogs, epidemic, locusts) robbed them of pride, possessions and a sense of superiority;
- And the third in each group (lice, boils, darkness) imposed physical suffering.

Follow along with me the progression of the plagues. In each of the three groups, some say, only the first two (“two witnesses”) were preceded by warnings to Pharaoh.

- The first warning came to Pharaoh at The River where he went each morning.
- The second warning was delivered at the royal palace, because those were the symbols of Pharaoh’s arrogance.
- The third plague in each series was not preceded by a warning.

It came as a punishment to Pharaoh for not heeding the messages which had been delivered previously.

Rashi says each plague lasted an entire month. It is my understanding the actual duration of a plague was seven days and the remaining three-quarters of the month were for warning Pharaoh of its arrival. There were times, however, when Pharaoh asked Moshe to pray for the end of a plague, in which case it would stop in response to Moshe. Even at seven days per plague with three weeks for warning, the total duration would have been 10 months!

One more very important thing: None, absolutely none, of these plagues affected the *Children of Israel/Bnei Isra’el*. It was almost as if there was an invisible bubble over the land of Goshen and over the people as well, should they be out and about. As we will see later on, this was quite a testimony to some of the Egyptians.

Upon observation, according to Torah, HaShem did not harden the heart of Pharaoh during the first five plagues. Quite the opposite! It is Pharaoh who hardens his own heart and ignores the signs and wonders of the Almighty.

THE FIRST FIVE PLAGUES

1st Plague: Blood (in Hebrew, דָּם [dahm] **Dam**)

Often we read or believe only the Nile River turned to blood but Scripture tells us (**verse 19**) the water in the rivers, canals, ponds, reservoirs, even wooden buckets and stone jars were affected. Pharaoh felt this plague was not life threatening because the Egyptians could buy water from the Israelites or find their own water by digging new wells.

“But the magicians of Egypt did the same with their secret arts, so that Pharaoh was made hardhearted and didn’t listen to them as Adonai had said would happen. Pharaoh just turned and went back to his palace, without taking any of this to heart.” (verses 22-23).

CHAPTER 8

2nd Plague: Frogs (Tzefardea, צפרע [zeh-fahr-day-ah] in Hebrew)

This particular plague makes my skin crawl. Not only was the plague brought by Aharon raising the staff but the stupidity of Pharaoh compounded the matter having his magicians do the same thing, D-U-H!!! In addition to the annoyance of croaking, 24/7, the frogs not only came into their homes but into their bedrooms, beds, ovens, kneading bowls, and actually crept all over their bodies. Really!!! Check it out in 7:29 in Torah (or 8:4 in English translations)! Actually, the original Hebrew rendering is even worse! It says “and **into** you and your people and all your servants will the frogs **ascend**.” That’s pretty gross!!!

In verse 4 (8) “Pharaoh summoned Moshe and Aharon and said, “Intercede with Adonai to take the frogs away from me and my people and I will let the people go and sacrifice to Adonai.” Moshe agrees and offers Pharaoh the opportunity to name the time for the prayer to take place so they can be rid of the frogs. Can ya believe it? Pharaoh said “Tomorrow”!!!! Gosh, I think I would have said something like, “right now”!!!! Anyway, Moshe says it will be as Pharaoh said and from this he would learn Adonai has NO equal.

“But when Pharaoh saw that he had been given some relief, he made himself hard hearted, and would not listen to them just as Adonai had said would happen.” (verse 11 in The Complete Jewish Bible and verse 15 in other translations))

3rd Plague: Lice (key-neem in Hebrew, כנים Kinim,)

Pharaoh’s magicians finally give up and concede this plague could only have come from G~d. However, Pharaoh would not budge. Although the plague was uncomfortable it was not dangerous.

“Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of G~d.” But Pharaoh was made hardhearted, so that he didn’t listen to them, just as Adonai had said would happen.” (verse 15 [CJB] or verse 19 otherwise)

4th Plague: Swarms (flies, insects, wild beasts) (Arov, ערב [ah-rove] in Hebrew)

The translations concerning this plague are quite interesting.

- Six rendered this “swarm” to be of flies;
- one of “dog-flies”;
- one of beetles;
- the Complete Jewish Bible uses insects;
- the Chumash renders it wild beasts.

According to the commentary, anyone would have feared for his life when surrounded by beasts of the wild but the Complete Jewish Bible says in **verse 20** “the insects ruined the entire land of Egypt” (or **verse 24**). There’s a BIG difference between insects and wild beasts, as far as I’m concerned. Unfortunately, my Hebrew isn’t good enough to know the difference!

A very interesting interchange takes place in verses **21-24 [CJB] (or 25-28)**. Sometimes, I get so caught up in the plagues and what is happening there I miss some of this other stuff. For instance, for the first time Pharaoh promised to heed Moshe’s commands and says they can sacrifice “in the land”. Moshe, in consideration of the Egyptians, says it would be inappropriate since the Egyptians worshiped sheep, the very animal Bnei Isra’el slaughter in serving HaShem. Additionally, Moshe was concerned the Egyptians would react violently to their act of worship. Pharaoh does agree it would be best for them not to slaughter the sheep in Egypt but says the Israelites didn’t need to travel for three days; they just needed to leave the cities and go into the countryside.

However, “. . . **Pharaoh hardened his heart** at this time also; neither would he let the people go.” (**verse 28 or 32**, depending on the translation)

CHAPTER 9

5th Plague: Epidemic (Dever, דֵּבַר [deh-vehr] in Hebrew)

The various commentaries concerning this plague disagree concerning how much livestock was killed. **Verse 3** indicates the livestock in the fields will be stricken, implying those kept indoors would not. However, **verse 6** indicates **all** the livestock of Egypt died. None the less, only animals died, not people. Not fearing his life to be threatened, the following occurred:

“Pharaoh investigated and found that not even one of the animals of the people of Israel had died. Nevertheless, **Pharaoh’s heart remained stubborn**, and he didn’t let the people go.” (**verse 7**)

THE SHIFT: After the first five plagues, note the subtle yet essential shift in language.

6th Plague: Boils (in Hebrew, שִׁחִין [Sheh-kheen] Shechin)

There appears to be an interesting phenomenon occurring here. Both Moshe and Aharon were to take hands full of soot and Moshe was to hurl it. Having only a limited degree of sports knowledge, it would seem to me one could only “hurl” with one hand. So how did Moshe do this since there were four hands full of soot (his two and Aharon’s two)? It appears to me a couple of miracles took place at one time;

1. Moshe performing this feat and
2. the relatively small amount of soot which spread over the entire country, causing boils all over everyone’s body!

This time, the plague caused extreme discomfort, but killed no one so this time . . .

“But **Adonai made Pharaoh hard hearted**, so that he didn’t listen to them – just as Adonai had said to Moshe.” (verse 12)

Before we continue with the list of plagues, I want to take a look at **verse 16**. HaShem tells Moshe why he is alive. Since He is the G~d of yesterday, today and tomorrow, I believe HaShem is telling us the same thing! Notice, it has nothing to do with Moshe!

- Moshe is not alive to be a great companion to the Almighty.
- Moshe is not alive so he can feel warm fuzzies and “Holy Spirit goose bumps”.
- Moshe is not alive so HaShem can pamper him with the luxuries of life

Moshe is alive for one purpose and one purpose only, to show forth the power of HaShem so **HIS** name may resound throughout the whole earth!!! Moshe was not alive for himself but the glory of HaShem.

I suggest we adopt this scripture to live by! HaShem has kept me alive to show His power and so His name might resound throughout the whole earth. Truly we are not here for our own pleasures or rewards but we are here, walking this journey, for Him, to show forth His power and to make His name resound throughout the earth every time our feet touch the dirt. We are called to proclaim His wonders, His light and His redemption to the whole earth.

Difficult days are ahead of us!!! But if we are walking in His power and proclaiming His name. **Yeshu’ahu/Isaiah 54:17** “no weapon formed against me shall prosper” seems to ring true!

7th Plague: Hail (Barad, בָּרָד [Bah-rahd] in Hebrew)

The loud thunder and flames from heaven scared everyone, causing them to fear they would suffer the same total destruction as Sodom had in Avraham's time. So begins the final set of plagues, proving HaShem has no equal in the entire world. It is said this was the severest of all the plagues because it struck at the Egyptians food supply, which would ultimately cause famine in the land. In **verse 23** we find some more interesting phenomena; "thunder, hail and fire fell earthward". Another miracle within a miracle;

- Normally, fire usually shoots upward . . . but not this time!
- Additionally, fire and water, albeit frozen, functioned together in unison, another miracle!

It is said thunder frightened Pharaoh more than anything else. The Sages say thunder was created to purge the perversion of the heart and thunder is mentioned before hail because thunder frightened the Egyptians and made them more vulnerable to the terror caused by the hail.

"Pharaoh summoned Moshe and Aharon and said to them, "This time I have sinned: Adonai is in the right, I and my people are in the wrong." "When **Pharaoh** saw that the rain, hail and thunder had ended, he sinned still more by making himself **hard hearted**, he and his servants. Pharaoh was made hardhearted and he didn't let the people of Israel go, just as Adonai had said through Moshe." (**verses 27, 34-35**)

As we read about these plagues, we might want to compare them to the things which are given to us in the book of Revelation. It appears HaShem needs to prove to the world again **HE** and **HE ALONE** is Yehovah. In **Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 46:9-10**, HaShem says, "Remember things that happened at the beginning, long ago – that I am G~d and there is none like me. At the beginning I announce the end, proclaim in advance the things not yet done . . ." And for a second scriptural witness, in **1st Corinthians 10:11**, **Rav Sha'ul/Rabbi Saul/Paul** tells us, "These things happened to them as prefigurative historical events and they were written down as a warning to us who are living in the last days."

Tune in next week, as Paul Harvey says, for the rest of the story!!!

Parashah #14 ~ HAFTARAH

Va'era~ וָאֵרָא ~And I appeared

Haftarah: Yechezk'el/Ezekiel 28:25~29:21

Just as we discussed earlier in our Torah Portion, in **Sh'mot/Exodus 6:6-8**, the fifth promise or guarantee of **Adonai Eloheinu/L~ord our G~d** is prophesied again here. The **Children of Israel/B'nei Isra'el** will be gathered from among the peoples of the earth where they are

scattered, to dwell in the Land of Promise and to live there securely and know Adonai is their Elohim.

As our Torah Portion describes the downfall of *Mitzrayim/Egypt* in the times of Moshe, so does the Haftarah detail the fall of a latter-day *Mitzrayim/Egypt* in the time of the prophet *Yechezk'el/Ezekiel*.

The Pharaoh in the Haftarah proclaimed himself a god who created the Nile just like the Pharaoh of Moshe's times. However, *Mitzrayim/Egypt* will be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. When both of these empires lie in ruins, *Yisra'el/Israel* will emerge intact, to be re-united with Adonai Elohim, who says, "Behold I am against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt . . . !" (29:3)

Parashah #14 ~ BRIT HADASHAH

Va'era~ וָאֵרָא ~And I appeared

Brit Hadashah: Romans 9:14-17; 2nd Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Romans 9:14-17 In **verse 17** we see a direct quote from **Sh'mot/Exodus 9:16**. "For the Tanakh says to Pharaoh, "It is for this very reason that I raised you up, so that in connection with you I might demonstrate my power, so that my name might be known throughout the world."

I believe *Sha'ul/Paul* was seeing history repeat itself. Israel was rejecting Yeshua just as Pharaoh rejected Moshe which provides the circumstances for HaShem to demonstrate his power through an act of deliverance from the bondage of *Mitzrayim/Egypt* then and the bondage of sin and death in Sha'ul's day as well as now.

2nd Corinthians 6:14-7:1 While this scripture applies to not being married to an unbeliever (and I concur), I believe *Rav Sha'ul/Rabbi Paul* was encouraging those in Corinth to guard themselves from false teachers, who actually were not believers in Yeshua at all. Additionally, a false teacher is one who does not teach Torah. I could expound on this but time is short. Perhaps another time!!!

I believe the parallel to our Torah portion has to do with the plagues which were used to prove Adonai is the only one true G~d and was able to overcome ALL of the Egyptian gods. By the same token, it is imperative for us to humble ourselves to the one true G~d, the Holy One of Israel, blessed be He, and follow after His directions and not worship the traditions of man.

Sometimes, we allow the traditions of man to become our "gods" without realizing it. One of the highest forms of idolatry is what Pharaoh did in viewing himself as a god. Today many feel

they can change what HaShem says, making themselves “gods”. For instance, NO where in scripture is there ONE word about celebrating “christmas”, which is a pagan holiday. However, the standard response when questioned about it is: “Well, that’s not what it means to me.” BUT, what it means to you is not the test! The test is what it means to Him and obedience to His Holy Word!! Somehow, they feel they can override HaShem’s Word in **Yirme’yahu / Jeremiah 10:1-5**. Let us not be like Pharaoh, thinking ourselves as gods.

It is only through a very thorough study of Torah we are able to learn the Truth of Who we are to worship, as well as when and where.

The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 46

Next week’s lesson: Parashah #15

Bo ~ בּוֹ ~ Go

Torah: Sh’mot/Exodus 10:1~13:16

Haftarah: Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 46:13-28

B’rit Hadashah/Renewed Covenant: Luke 2:22-24

Yochanan/John 19:31-37; Acts 13:16-17; Revelation 8:6-9; 16:1-21

Shavuah tov (Have a good week)!!!

Who fills his mind with Torah clears it of fear and folly.

Rabbi Chanina Sgan HaKohanim