

# Sh'mot - 13

**Torah: Exodus 1:1 - 6:1**

**Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23; Jeremiah 1:1-2:3**

**Brit Chadassah/New Testament: I Corinthians 14:13-25**

As we start the second book of the Torah, also known as the Pentateuch, we are moving away from YHVH's dealings with the family of Abraham and to dealing with the aborning nation of Israel, composed of the sons of Israel and their families. The theme of this commentary continues which is the men learn how to apply the mitzvot (commandments), ordinances (chuqqim), and judgments (mishpatim) to everyday life.

Exodus 1:7 records that prior to bondage being imposed on them, the Children of Israel multiplied exceedingly. They were fulfilling the Genesis mandate to be fruitful and multiply.

*But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them. Exodus 1:7*

Perhaps this is obvious to everyone, but to make sure that everyone gets this point, the Sons of Israel were not in the land of Canaan. They were in exile in Egypt because that was where YHVH wanted them.

Hosea's prophecy about the Assyrian exile for the ten tribes parallels Exodus 1:7.

Yet the number of the sons of Israel  
Will be like the sand of the sea,  
Which cannot be measured or counted Hosea 1:10

I wish to add one more scripture and then present a couple of observations.

*12 But the more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they dreaded the sons of Israel. Exodus 1:12*

Based on these scriptures, population explosions happen to the Sons of Israel when outside of the land of Canaan. The second thing is that oppression leads to greater numbers and causing fear in the enemy.

Let me restate this in a different way. When our enemies oppress us, our blessings are multiplied and the oppression backfires on our enemies. Therefore, we should not fear oppression because we can both have faith and know based on the Biblical record that the oppression will backfire and we are blessed. That is why Paul advised the Thessalonians “in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

We should always know who we are in truth. Moses started his life in a Hebrew Levite family. His early years were spent with his father, mother, brother and sister, even though he had been adopted by an Egyptian princess. After he was weaned, he was raised as an Egyptian. But he always knew he was a Hebrew.

One day, Moses went out among the Hebrew slaves. He saw an Egyptian overseer beating a Hebrew slave, one of his brethren. Moses intervened and the Egyptian died. Moses did not record any condemnation from YHVH for this act. He has been accused of being a murder. But is this correct? Consider this statute:

*Do not go around spreading slander among your people, but also don't stand idly by when your neighbor's life is at stake; I am Adonai. Leviticus 19:16 CJB*

Moses defended the Hebrew slave and was never condemned as a murderer by YHVH for this act. He demonstrated the meaning of this statute for us.

Of course, now other Hebrew slaves were scared of him and the Egyptian authorities took a dim view of the affair. Pharaoh tried to have Moses killed, as a matter of fact. Therefore, Moses had to leave the country in a hurry and seek sanctuary in Midian.

When Moses arrived in Midian, he was still wearing his Egyptian clothing. He sat down near a well. It so happened that the local priest, Reuel, had seven daughters who were shepherdesses and were harassed by male bullies. Moses intervened and drove away the shepherds. He then helped the ladies water their flock. The girls went home and told their father the story. The priest said (paraphrased) “Girls, you left the man there after he helped you? Go get him and

we'll feed him!" It does seem that some things do repeat in Israel's history because Rachel left Jacob behind standing at the well. Fathers should thank and show respect to men who help their daughters.

Moses decided to stay there and he took one of the seven daughters to be his wife. Her name was Zipporah. She bore him a son and he was named Gershom. He worked as a shepherd for his new father-in-law. In this way, he supported his new family. As Paul said "[f]or even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either" (II Thessalonians 3:10).

One day he took his flock to the western side of the wilderness to Mount Horeb, and as a result, his life changed forever and he became one of the greatest men in history.

Moses saw a burning bush and was so intrigued by it that he turned aside to look at it. Out of the fire, two voices spoke and called his name. The Angel commanded Moses to remove his shoes because he was on holy ground, and Moses did so.

From this we can take two things. First, the Angel of the Lord initiated the encounter and called Moses. Second, when we interact with the Angel we are on holy ground, in terms of time and space. That must be respected. By telling Moses to remove his shoes and stand barefoot, the Angel issued a simple command that Moses obeyed. If Moses had ignored the command, he might not have lived beyond that moment because he had proved himself disobedient. The other thing is that removing his shoes was about the simplest way for Moses to acknowledge he was on holy ground. In addition, Moses also hid his face in fear.

From Exodus 3:7 - 4:17, the Angel explained the mission to Moses in great detail. One thing He said that might have escaped Moses' immediate attention was the fact that the Pharaoh would not easily let Israel go.

*19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion.  
20 So I will reach out with My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. Exodus 3:19-20*

A couple of other things to note. First, Moses would go to the elders of Israel to let them know what was going to happen. Second, when the Hebrews left Egypt, the women were to get gold, silver and clothes for the children from their Egyptian neighbors. Third, Moses was given specific signs to demonstrate that he was indeed a man sent from YHVH.

At the end of the meeting, Moses tried to decline, but the Angel wouldn't tolerate any more protests. He was going, and that was that. Before he departed, Moses showed respect to his father-in-law and requested permission to leave which was granted.

Unfortunately, Moses had not completed one specific commandment and that was to circumcise his son. That oversight very nearly got him executed by the Angel. His wife did the circumcision and saved his life. Sent messengers have to follow all of the rules, and so does every one of the sons of Israel and their wives and families.