

Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation (Under same management for over 5779 years)



Shabbat Service

December 29th – 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"

12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat & In-depth Torah Study

"Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless; who live by the Torah of Adonai.
Blessed are those who observe His instruction; who seek Him with all their heart." Psalm 119



Shemot -- Names

Exodus 1:1 -- 6:1

"And these are the names of the children of Israel, who came to Egypt with Jacob;

they came each one with his household."

וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרַיִם אִתְּ יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בְּאֵוֹ:

V'eleh shemot b'ney Yisra'el haba'im Mitsraymah et Ya'akov
ish uveyto ba'u.

רֵאוּבֵן שִׁמְעוֹן לֵוִי וְיְהוּדָה יִשָּׂשכָר זְבולֻן וּבִנְיָמִן בֶּן וְנַפְתָּלִי גָד וְאַשֶׁר:

Re'uven Shim'on Levi viYehudah. Isachar Zvulun uVinyamin.
Dan v'Naftali Gad v'Asher.

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin,
Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher.



Continuity from Genesis to Exodus

"And these are the names of the sons of Israel...." connects **Genesis 46:8** with **Exodus 1:1**. Nachmanides (Ramban", Rabbi Moshe ben Naáman) suggests that while Bereisheet and Shemot are two separate books within the Torah, Exodus is the sequel to the text of Genesis. Genesis begins with God intimately walking with his people in the Garden; Exodus concludes with the Divine Presence, once again, literally dwelling with his people in the Mishkan. **Where Genesis is God's book of creation, Exodus is God's book of redemption.**

Rabbi David Friedman, a UMJC Rabbi, living in Jerusalem (and I) see a vital connection between Genesis and Exodus. "First and foremost I would bring to your attention that God's word in scripture is not truncated but continues, as do his promises." Friedman sees the connection in aspects of the continuing story, although separated by many years. In Genesis, Joseph asks his brothers to take his bones to be buried in Canaan, which is fulfilled in Exodus. Friedman also points out, "The (Hebrew word) word "ve" connects the books of Genesis and Exodus. The phrase, "And these..." (1:1) begins unfolding the family genealogy, leading into the story of the redemption from Egypt, as relayed by the first five verses of Exodus 1..." Friedman quotes from the JPS commentary on Exodus: "Scholar Nahum Sarna, in his commentary to the Book of Exodus, notes that the two books are also connected through the promises given in (Genesis, i.e. Gen. 15:13–14, Gen. 35:23–26 and Gen. 46:8, 26–27), which come to pass in the narratives of Exodus. Sarna also notes, in agreement with the perspective given above, "The initial vav (the name of the letter of the word "ve" in Ex. 1:1) acts as a connective with Genesis, thereby suggesting continuity with the preceding narrative." Friedman notes that Genesis scripture is fulfilled in Exodus, showing the continuity of the two books.

Genesis 15:13–14: Then He said to Avram, "Understand that your descendants will definitely live in a foreign land that is not theirs, and they will be enslaved and tortured for four hundred years. Yet I will judge the nation that enslaves them. Immediately afterward, they (Avram's descendants) will leave

there with many possessions” (Friedman translation) .

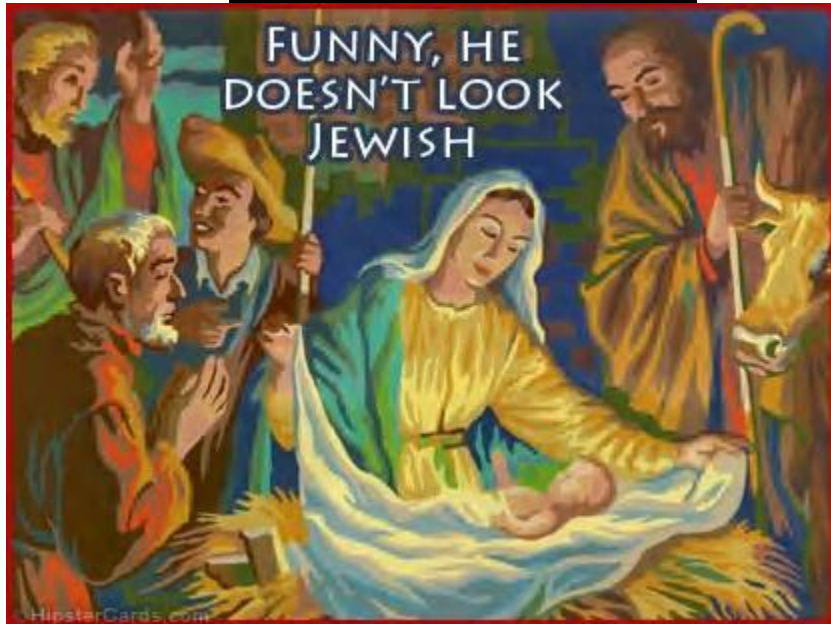
Exodus 1:11–14: So they appointed tax officials for them (for Israel), to **oppress** them with **backbreaking work**; thus they (Israel) built the store cities of Pitom and Ramses for Pharaoh. But when they (the Egyptians) **oppressed** them . . . Then Egypt **enslaved** Israel. So they made their lives **bitter** through **hard labor** with bricks and mortar, as well as in all types of agricultural work in the field; this was the **harshly imposed slave labor**. (Friedman translation, emphasis mine).

Exodus 12:33, 35–36: So **Egypt supplied the people** (of Israel), and hurried them out of that land, because they said, ‘All of us will be dead!’ And the people of Israel did just as Moshe had said, and asked the Egyptians for their **vessels of silver, gold and clothing**. So God caused Egypt to have great favor on the people, and they requested from them, and they complied. And they took advantage of the Egyptians. (Friedman translation, emphasis mine).

The three sets of verses above clearly show us that **these promises and warnings given in Genesis find their fulfillment through the events recorded in Exodus**. The two books complement each other, and our “**ve** bridge” paints a picture of the relationship between them.” Lastly, Friedman notes **the continuity of the names of the sons of Israel at the end of Genesis and also at the beginning of Exodus...the same names**.

God’s Promise

In Genesis, God chooses one man, Abraham, who exhibited active faith in God by leaving behind his comfortable, idolatrous life and following God to parts unknown. Because of Abraham's faith, God made an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants to give them "the land I will show you." God promised to make Abraham into a great nation. God also promised to bless Abraham and his descendants. To illustrate His promise of blessing, God said He would bless those who blessed Abraham and his descendants and curse those who cursed Abraham and his descendants. Throughout history we can observe that God has kept his promises. Nations and individuals who have blessed Jews have been blessed themselves, while they continued to bless Jews. Furthermore, God promised Abraham that through Him (Messiah, son of David) ..."all the nations (people-groups) of the earth shall be blessed" (12:3). Incidentally, "all" the nations of the earth includes both Jews and Gentiles.



Abraham transmitted his faith to his chosen son, Isaac, and Isaac to his chosen son, Jacob. Jacob would produce 12 sons through whom God would make a nation, fulfilling his promise to Abraham. However, at the end of Genesis it became apparent to God that Canaanite influence was corrupting His people. In order to prevent the assimilation of His chosen people into the idolatrous, Canaanite culture, God worked through His faithful servant Joseph, to remove them from

Canaan and bring them into Egypt. There God provided them the fertile land of Goshen, where they could prosper into a mighty nation, while remaining separate from the influence of the gods of Egypt.

This Shabbat observant Jews around the world will begin to read the second book of the Torah, the book of Exodus in preparation for observing Passover. Exodus contains 40 chapters, which we will read this year in 11 Torah portions. Six weeks after finishing Exodus, we will celebrate Passover, a remembrance and celebration of God's delivering His people from Egyptian bondage into freedom in their "promised land." **Remember to attend services these next 11 Shabbats for an interactive discussion of each Torah portion, so you will be better prepared to really appreciate the Passover experience.**

From the Promised Land to Egypt

God called Abraham and his descendants to become His people and to follow Him to a land that He promised them would be theirs forever. In faith, Abraham followed God's leadership and journeyed to Canaan. We followed their family as Abraham and Sarah had Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was given his inheritance away from the "promised land," so that Isaac alone remained in the land as God's chosen inheritor of His promise. Isaac and Rebecca also had two children, Esau and Jacob. Jacob inherited the birth right and God's blessing, while Esau was given his inheritance in Edom. Jacob had twelve children by two wives and their two hand maids. These twelve children would become the leaders of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel and inhabit the land promised to them and to their descendants by God.

The Jewish People in Egypt

As long as the Pharaohs of the Semitic Hyksos dynasties (1720 - 1570 BCE), the 16th and 17th dynasties prevailed, the sons of Jacob prospered in the land. Then a Hamite, Egyptian leader, Acnose (1570 -1546 BCE), led a revolt which over-threw the Semite Hyksos dynasty. Acnose established the Egyptian 18th dynasty, which was totally against any Semite harbinger from the past. One could say they were "anti-Semitic." Those from the conquered Semitic dynasty were either killed, enslaved, or driven from Egypt. Their statutes were defaced. Their records were destroyed. All traces of them were removed. **Acnose was the "new king, who did not know Joseph"** in Exodus 1:8, who enslaved the Hebrews. Yet the Hebrews remained such a numerous people that the next Pharaoh, Amenhotep (1546 - 1526), the son of Acnose, thought they might be populous enough to revolt. He was the Pharaoh who decreed that the Hebrew midwives should kill all the male children, while allowing the female children to live. He figured that the females would grow up and, having no Hebrew males to marry, would marry Egyptian males and thus assimilate the Hebrew population, while still providing the numbers necessary for his workforce. Amenhotep died childless. During this time Moses was born to a couple from the tribe of Levi, Amram and Jochebed. His mother first hid him from Pharaoh's men and finally placed him in a water proof basket among some dense reeds alongside the bank of the Nile River, instructing her daughter Miriam to watch over him.



"When she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket (tevah, which is the same Hebrew word for the ark of Noah) and covered it over with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it, and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile" (2:3). It was there that Hatshepsut, the daughter of the next Pharaoh, Tutmose I (1526 - 1512), found Moses. Moses was adopted around 1525 BCE. Tutmose I had two marriages. From the first marriage he produced a daughter, Hatshepsut. From the second marriage he produced a son, Tutmose II.



Hatshepsut decided to rear him herself. She gave him an Egyptian name, including the name of their dynasty, "mose." He probably also had the name of one of the Egyptian gods attached before "mose" (pronounced Mois-she) like the other Egyptian males. Hatshepsut looked for a wet nurse for her new-found baby and through Miriam "found" the mother of Moses to nurse him for her until he was weaned. Then she reared him in the Egyptian court. Tutmose I as mentioned had a son, who would become Tutmose II (1512 - 1504) upon the death of his father. Remembering that Tutmose II's half sister was Hatshepsut accounts for Moses being raised at court. **Acts 7:22**, "And Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and

deeds." Tutmose II also had a son, Tutmose III (1504 - 1447), who was very young at the time of his father's death, but would become the Pharaoh of the oppression. Being so young, Hatshepsut, ruled as queen for him, and Moses remained in court. As he grew up, the young Pharaoh resented Hatshepsut. After the death of Hatshepsut in 1883 BCE, Tutmose III removed all vestiges of Hatshepsut and anyone connected with her. All statues of her were smashed; all inscriptions mentioning her name were plastered over to remove her name. So when she died, he looked for an excuse to remove her "son," Moses. When the Pharaoh heard that Moses had seen an Egyptian overseer beating a Hebrew (which of course was allowable) and had killed the Egyptian (also allowable for someone in court), Pharaoh tried to kill Moses. However, Moses, now forty years old, escaped and fled into Midian, where he became a shepherd for the next forty years during the reign of Tutmose III, taking a wife, Zipporah, and having two sons, Gershom and Eliezer.



A Personal encounter with God

In Midian, present-day Saudi Arabia, while pasturing his flock, Moses saw an amazing occurrence. A desert bush was aflame and kept on burning, but was not burned up. A Rabbinic Midrash from Shemot Rabba 2:5 says that this illustrates for us that "no place is devoid of the Divine Presence." As Moses investigated, God's voice came out of the burning bush. God was calling Moses to return to Egypt to liberate His people from Pharaoh, Amenhotep II (1447 – 1425 BCE), the son of Tutmose III. Amenhotep II was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. It was before Amenhotep II that Moses said, "Let my people go..." It was Amenhotep II who experienced the 10 plagues and the death of his own first-born son. Briefly continuing on with the 18th Egyptian Dynasty, Tutmose IV (1425-1417), was the second son of Amenhotep II. In order to make his ascent to the throne sound legitimate, he told the court that he had a dream, where an Egyptian god told him that if he cleared the sand which at that time had obscured the Sphinx, he would become Pharaoh. He was the Pharaoh during Israel's wilderness wanderings. Then Amenhotep III (1417 – 1379 BCE), the son of Tutmose IV became Pharaoh. He was a weak king, which enabled Joshua to begin to control the land of Canaan. Amenhotep IV (1379 -- 1361 BCE) was another son of Amenhotep II. He changed his name to Achnaton (Sun Disk) trying to change the worship of the Egyptians to only one god, the Sun Disk. This caused religious turmoil over which a civil war broke out, causing Egypt to become even weaker, losing all of the land of Canaan. This was the period of the Book of Judges in Canaan.

Moses, who answered God's gracious call with the Hebrew words "**hineni,**" meaning "**here I am, I'm willing to do whatever you ask,**" was quite reluctant, when he heard what God wanted him to do. He made several excuses why he could not go. However God, in His graciousness to Moses, made allowances that overcame the excuses of Moses, even providing Moses with supernatural

signs to show the people and Pharaoh that he was sent by God. One of the allowances was that the brother of Moses, Aaron, would accompany him to speak to Pharaoh God's words through Moses. Just before leaving for Egypt, God mentioned to the reluctant Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, so that Pharaoh would not listen to him. "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hands of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes" Proverbs 21:1.

Pharaoh's Hardened Heart

We will eventually see that numerous times Pharaoh will harden his heart toward what he knows is God's will. Finally God will harden Pharaoh's heart. Then we ask ourselves, why does God harden someone's heart? Is that fair? We find our answer to these questions by examining Pharaoh's heart throughout Exodus, rather than waiting until God finally hardens his heart. What are the intermediate steps that Pharaoh takes that get him to the point that he no longer is capable of listening to God's voice through Moses? It is important that we understand that hardening one's heart is a process, rather than something that occurs suddenly and without warning. This concept is important for us to understand, so that we do not find ourselves in the position of Pharaoh, having hardened his heart in opposition to God's plans for His people. It was and is God's plan, through His chosen people, to send man His redeemer, Messiah, Yeshua, so that His people can appropriate the redemption that only He can provide and be reconciled to God. Pharaoh hardened his heart to God's plan. We must learn from **Shemot** to open our hearts to the redemption He has provided!

When Moses initially approached the people with God's plan, they believed him. However, when he delivered the same message to Pharaoh, he replied, "Who is the lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go: I do not know the Lord..." (5:2). So the Pharaoh not only did not let the people leave, he increased their workload. The people blamed Moses for their travail, and Moses complained to the Lord that he (Moses) had done harm to the people...by doing what God had told him to do. However, God told Moses that he would see that Pharaoh would acquiesce to His wishes and let the people go. Ironically, it was Joseph who told an earlier Pharaoh what the Hebrew God was about to do (Gen. 41:25) to Pharaoh and the country. That Semitic Pharaoh listened to God's voice through Joseph and profited. This anti-Semitic Pharaoh did not listen to Moses and therefore had to be shown the power of the God of the Hebrews. **Even today, God's promises to His people will be fulfilled! No country (including the United States) nor king had better stand in the way of God's fulfilling His promises to His people. And even today, God's desire is for each of His people to experience the redemption provided by Messiah, Yeshua!** Redemption begins for us, as it did for Moses, with a personal encounter with God. Just as Moses did not earn his encounter with God through Mitzvot (doing good deeds), we, too, must rely on the grace of God. God had prepared Moses through his life experiences in the court of Egypt and in his years of shepherding sheep, providing sometimes rough and difficult lessons. It is only after we, too, have a personal encounter with God that we can hear and respond to His calling for our life's work, **"hineni!"** Moses was eighty years old before he had his personal encounter with God. My prayer for each of you is that you do not wait that long for your encounter with God. Look to the atonement for sin provided by Messiah, Yeshua, and pray for God's response. He will not disappoint you. Just be prepared to say **"hineni"** to God, as did Moses.

SHABBAT SHALOM