



**#13 Shemot Exodus 1:1-6:1
Torah Teaching
by Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one.
Christ in the Greek means to be smudged

Moshe – Moses

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)

Y'hudah – Judah

Yochanan – John

Yosef – Joseph

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
Torah

Shemot – the 13th Torah portion

The Torah portion for this week is Shemot and it means, “names.” This portion begins by saying that originally seventy men of Israel came to Egypt. All that generation died, and the children of Israel multiplied and became so powerful that the Pharaoh became alarmed with their numbers. I want to begin today by talking about being willing to change and do what God tells us.

Seek repentance on a regular basis. The Hebrew word for repentance is to turn back to God. We may not think that we need to do that in any area of life, but a mind that is always ready to think and do what is right will not stay stuck in wrong or sinful thinking. I have met a number of people who thought they had arrived spiritually. Consider what Rabbi Shaul has to say.

Philippians 3:12-15 NKJV says,

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise.

Shaul says that he presses on and runs forward toward the high calling that God wants for us. We need to be mature enough to understand that because of all the things we have to endure in life, we are being pushed and pulled on in life. Shaul says he has not made it yet. He is not giving up on doing what God commands us and the life God wants us to live. Shaul also says that we are to watch our thinking and change our thinking. 2 Corinthians 10:5 NKJV says, "Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God."

What is the knowledge that God has given us? Psalms 119:66 NKJV says, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments." In fact, God has given us the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding we need for life. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" Some will say that God's commandments are just for the Jews. Can't everyone benefit from the commandments of our good God? They have been tricked by man-made philosophy.

On a side note, Shaul says his father was a Pharisee and that he is a Pharisee. He is not a Christian as some say but a Jewish leader who believed in the Messiah Yeshua who rose from the dead as a witness to us that God will someday raise the dead. Believers in the Messiah Yeshua were called Nazarene Jews in Shaul's time. Acts 23:6 NKJV says, "But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, 'Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!'" His accusers did not discredit him and say he was not a Pharisee but began arguing about the resurrection. The Pharisees there even supported him! Acts 23:9 NKJV says, "And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, 'We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.'" Daniel prophesies about the resurrection.

Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV says,

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

We need to get back to the truths of the Bible and not made-up doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." God is good and His commandments are good. These people who teach that God's commandments are done away with are keeping people away from what is best for them and good. Psalms 119:66-68 NKJV says, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word. You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes. Keeping God's commandments over thousands of years has helped people to have a better life. There have been many Bible ministries that were developed to help people have a better life through God's commandments and they succeed because they are teaching truths for life. Psalms 26:3 NKJV says, "For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth." God's commandments are His lovingkindness towards mankind. To walk in God's truth is to keep His commandments. Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says, "You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days.?"

We get good judgment and knowledge from God's commandments. The Psalmist said that his life changed for the better when he began keeping God's commandments in His word. He now understands that God is good, and he willingly seeks to learn God's commandments. That is the attitude that we need to have. We need to hold ourselves to a high standard, a high calling. We need to watch out for the arguments that lead us the wrong way and be

determined to keep God's commandments. It is then that we will see that God is good and that He has given us good commandments to keep.

Our views on life change as we encounter different issues in life. We need to check our thinking to see if they match up with what the Bible teaches. Shaul does not have that attitude that he has arrived. A high standard gives us the opportunity to do better and better. Is all we want in life is a mediocre life? I was watching a football game recently and after the team won, the player they interviewed was already thinking about winning the next game. Live like you want to succeed spiritually. Cast down the arguments that are keeping you from doing everything you can to succeed. The people who succeed in sports put their whole life into winning. Discipline and work on your spiritual walk.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NKJV says,

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Sometimes we may absorb a cultural value or a philosophy that is different than that of what the Bible teaches. As we mature either spiritually or personally, we may become aware of some thinking that is not what the Bible teaches. We are to have a heart that wants to do things God's way. We could think of the heart as how we think, feel, and act. It is who we have decided to become. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" Some have a heart that is against truth and God's commandments. God wants what is best for us, so keep His good commandments. Deuteronomy 26:16 NKJV says, "This day the LORD your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul." We are to be careful to keep God's commandments. Be willing to take to heart all the scriptures at any opportunity even if we have heard certain scriptures many times.

God's commandments and the Holy Spirit help us in life in so many ways and creates the conditions for blessings that can flow into every area of life. In that sense, God gives us tremendous power in life through His good commandments and the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we could think of that as an all-encompassing road of blessings or even a streamlining of life, a wide and generous road of blessing. This wonderful and gracious and wide road of blessing though is narrow because it requires we do things how our good creator God told us. If we are driving down a road, we keep our hands on the wheel, so we stay on the road and do not crash. As we have talked about many times, God has our best interests as heart and wants what is best for us. His commandments are intended to keep us from crashing in life.

So, walk the narrow road and stay on the road so that you can obtain what God wants for you in life. Not staying on the narrow path and entering the narrow gate can lead to

destruction. Matthew 7:13-14 NKJV says, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." A lot of people want the easy way out. There is a saying, "You get what you put into something." If the football player was only concerned with a once in a while victory, he might not be seeing the success he is seeing.

There are many things that we will encounter in life. How will we deal with life? We have talked about fear in the past and how it can keep us from being successful spiritually and also keep us from succeeding in a number of ways in life. 2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." We talked about how God's commandments and the Holy Spirit help us in life in so many ways and creates the conditions for blessings that can flow into every area of life. Like I said, in that sense, God gives us tremendous power in life. So, this scripture in 2 Timothy makes sense. And God's commandments have helped people in life for thousands of years to have a sound mine.

Fear often keeps people from trying different things in life and also trying different things to succeed financially. Doing nothing is comparable to thinking that you will not succeed. Doing nothing is a decision in the negative. Fear of God means that you respect God for who He is, our good God and creator. Fear in life though often stops us from living life to its fullest. Sometimes fear is just superstition. It is a perceived fear and not a proven fear.

It seems a lot of people are afraid of being dedicated spiritually, but as you can see from the scriptures, God is good, His commandments are good, and so is the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:11-13 NKJV says,

If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

We need to learn to trust in God's commandments and also trust in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Grow spiritually and in your abilities. Respond in life with action instead of doing nothing (find opportunities and get advice). Sometimes fear will keep us from becoming what God wants us to be. We get stuck instead of moving forward either with life or our spiritual life. Shaul decided to move forward and a high calling in life. We need to be willing to take risks in life. We are all fools for something so why not be a fool for God. Be willing to take spiritual risks. Be willing to do what is right and seek God's help in life.

We have a Devine Healing Prayer Class online that can help you to grow in the gifts and evidences of the Holy Spirit.

We can face a lot of difficult times in the present because this is a fallen world. We need to trust in God, nonetheless. It was a difficult time for Mary when Lazarus her brother died. John 11:32 NKJV said, "Then Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.'" Yeshua then raised Lazarus from the dead. John 11:43-44 NKJV says, "Now when He had said these

things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes."

It doesn't always turn out that way, but the raising of Lazarus demonstrates that God is able to raise the dead. In the future, those who believe in God and Yeshua will be raised from the dead. Yeshua speaking of Himself in John 5:25 NKJV, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live." Even though we have struggles and disappointment, continue trusting in God. He is able to do what He says He will do. Genesis 18:14 NKJV says, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?"

God can work things out, but if not, keep trusting in God and be at peace.

Joshua 1:7-9 NKJV says,

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Do not fear, keep God's law and it will help you in life. God knows you and can help you in life.

The world will wear on us and will try to cut into our godly life.

Sometimes like Mary, we will experience great pain. People who keep God's commandments have reason to have joy and peace no matter what the circumstances.

There are things that can wear on us and are often detrimental behaviors or ideals:

The political agenda of religious Communism and religious Atheism.

Their agenda is to create dissatisfaction in society with the aim of making their Atheist religion overthrow and take control of that society. Like some religions, their goal is to take over the world. Their tenets are often intentions that do not seem to be a problem at times, but can often make people opinionated and cause strife and problems for that society. So, they are a problem influence in any country where they exist. They will not identify themselves as a religion but their behaviors lend them to be a dangerous and destructive religion. The Stanford College of Religion and Philosophy defines any set of ideals as a religion even if it does not include the belief in a God.

In the 1900s, religious Communism and religious Atheism led to the murder of some 101 million of their own people. We are not talking about the wars they created. That caused additional death and destruction. China still has concentration camps where they hold those who do not conform to their atheist doctrine. Perhaps the only crime these people have committed is to believe in being kind to others like that of the Falun Gong. The people in these concentration camps (also known as reeducation camps) are forced to work for the

government and are they are killed and used for spare body parts. Yeshua said to love one another, but the people who adhere to these religions want to impose their false religion on others. They believe they know the truth, but their truth puts people in bondage to that society. They are the most murderous and destructive religions that have ever existed.

The evil and pain in the world.

In every society there is evil and suffering. It has been well documented that those who keep God's commandments are more satisfied in life and have better lives even if they are poor or disabled. One of my cousins was very successful and had lots of money. When he became a believer, he told me that he felt better about life and that becoming a follower of God helped him to feel more at peace in life. He said that he was on the verge of committing suicide before believing in Yeshua. Whether rich or poor, believing in God and keeping His commandments helps people to have a more satisfying and good life.

Senseless violence.

People can experience terrible pain through those who hurt others whether that is emotionally or physical. We see people suffering and hear about suffering and violence and we can even personally experience these things ourselves. The commandments to love others through keeping God's commandment can help reduce the pain and violence in this world. Do not murder is a commandment of God. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes."

Attitudes that can hurt us.

Some people are stuck in negative attitudes and their negative attitude can even make them miserable. Rabbi Shaul said in Philippians 4:8 NKJV, "whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things."

Some people lack trust and are burdened with a lack of trust. It is good to be sensible and informed, but lack of trust can keep us from forming good relationships and can even keep us from accepting God's good truths for life. These people often lack joy in life and their lack of trust controls their behaviors. Psalms 32:10-11 NKJV says, "He who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him. Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!" Being right or upright refers to keeping God's commandments. We should have joy because we have God's good commandments.

Some people lack loyalty. Their ability to care and have concern for others is low. They can sometimes be unforgiving, selfish, and narrow-minded. Proverbs 23:7 NKJV says, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. 'Eat and drink!' he says to you, but his heart is not with you." And again, Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes."

Some people are self-absorbed, and they seek attention. They are often thoughtless, and they may think only about themselves at the expense of others. Sometimes, they

think that they are right and everyone else is wrong. Proverbs 26:12 NKJV says, "Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

Some people have pride issues. People who are self-absorbed often have pride problems. They are not willing to change even if they are wrong and they can be defensive. They will make personal vows that control their behaviors and they often think they are superior to others. They may find ways to elevate their self-worth by control, attitudes, or beliefs. They will even lie, commit gossip, and commit fraud for their own benefit. Proverbs 11:2 NKJV says, "When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom." Also, Proverbs 8:33 NKJV says, "Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it." People with pride issues can value what they think over what God teaches. Be willing to hear and obey God's instructions.

Some people let fear, failure, regret, and guilt control their life. They may fear being accepted by the crowd and then go along with false ideas or ideals. They may see themselves in a negative way and their drive in life can come from these attitudes. While it is good to learn from mistakes and turn one's life around, these people can form their life around false concepts for acceptance, and they can tend to be people pleasers instead of being committed to do what is "right and good." It is always good to treat others with respect and be kind, but we also need to be who a person who is after God's heart.

Proverbs 3:1-6 NKJV says,

Do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

It makes sense that the commandments of our good God can help us in life and help us to live how we should live. When we trust in God we will stop being controlled by others or by regrets or failures and begin doing what is "right and good," see Deuteronomy 6:17-18. Our hearts are then led by our all-knowing and good God.

I am sure that you could think of some other things that can wear on us in life. These are a few of those things that I would like you to consider.

Torah Teaching.

Shemot means, "names" and begins by giving the names of the children of Ya'akov. In the past, I found it fun to read the names in Hebrew. I will often use Hebrew words and names to properly place the Bible in its context, namely, a Hebraic or Jewish context. I could use the word biblical context, but people often see biblical context as what their religion teaches. Most religions are only interested in keeping their doctrine the way it is and not in changing for the sake of following truth. They know people will leave their church if they change. They

want their money, so they need to perpetuate their belief system. They serve money and not God.

Many people philosophize themselves out of keeping what the Bible says.

Understanding the Bible in its original context is important for understanding the Bible properly. For example, Yeshua kept the Torah and many believers in the Messiah Yeshua say we are to do what Yeshua did, yet they philosophize themselves out of keeping God's word. Shaul unequivocally tells us that we are to keep the Torah, yet false teachers contradict what he teaches. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law."

Faith in God is important, but we must also keep the law. The law is God's good commandments and when we do not keep His commandments, we have walked away from God. Ya'akov said in James 2:19-20 NKJV, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" If you say you believe in God and do not keep His commandments, you will end up where the devil spirits are going. Revelation 20:10 NKJV says, "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone."

Also, those who are teaching people **not** to keep God's commandments are deceiving people and guess where they are going? When you take anything out of context, you no longer have the facts. You can say $2+2=5$, but that doesn't make it right. I doubt that any one of you would accept \$5 back from the clerk at the cash register instead of \$10 just because the clerk at the cash register decided that \$5 was just as good as \$10.

We absolutely need truth, not error.

This week we begin the book of Exodus. Exodus begins by giving us the names of the tribes of Israel. We are given the male names for the families instead of giving us all the male and female names. Exodus is primarily about the people and nation that followed God's commandments. God blessed the world with the knowledge and wisdom of God through these believers.

The ancient believers before Israel passed on God's commandments verbally. For example, before the written word, Abraham kept God's law. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." We see Joseph avoiding sexual sin and hearing from God. The Egyptians were pagan and did not live in Goshen. So, Joseph secured the land of Goshen for Israel to keep them separate from the sinful pagan practices of Egypt.

This raises an interesting question. Should believers in God allow their children to go to schools that are secular and do not include God and Bible teaching in their curriculum? Many believers in God are being brainwashed by secular society and losing their faith and their eternal life. Maybe we need to learn from what Joseph did? Mark 8:36 NKJV says, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" Education without God is dumbing down our children. The Bible provides us wisdom for life and facts without

wisdom lacks the sufficient knowhow we need for life.

We saw in Genesis some of the records of the early believers and we learned lessons from how they lived. Exodus continues to teach us about the path of those who follow the true God and their struggles and successes in life. Jacob wrestles with a man he later identifies as God. God give him a new name. Genesis 32:28 NKJV says, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." There is a lesson we can learn from this. We must all contend or work at our relationship with God or we will fail to prevail spiritually. Yeshua said in Revelation 2:7 NKJV says, "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

We must overcome sin, or we will fail. Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Do not be deceived by those who twist God's word.

In Exodus, we will find out that God now wants His commandments to be written down for future generations. Recently, studies have shown that Israel had its own alphabet and the ability to write down what God told Moshe to write down. God said they were not to use the writing style of the Egyptians. Archaeologists have found ancient Hebrew that they date to the time when Israel crossed into the land of Canaan. In fact, Hebrew has been found dating to around 1650 BC. Israel's escape from Egypt is now considered to have occurred around 1447 BC. They brought their alphabet with them, and it was adopted by the Greek Phoenicians and subsequently was the basis for the European and English alphabet.

God sets His people free from the persecution of the pagan Egyptians so they can worship the true God, follow His good commandments, and write down His good commandments. God set His people free so they could follow truth, and God desires that all people come to a knowledge of the truth. Our God is a good God. Exodus 34:6 NKJV says, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth." It is important that people can be set free from sin and know truth.

This portion continues by saying that originally seventy men of Israel came to Egypt. All that generation died, and the children of Israel multiplied and became so powerful that the Pharaoh became alarmed with their numbers. So, he made them into slaves and worked them hard. Also, Pharaoh told the midwives to kill the baby boys, but the midwives feared God, so they didn't kill the baby boys. They told Pharaoh that the woman had their babies quickly and God blessed the midwives for not killing the babies.

God's commandments must be applied properly.

They lied to Pharaoh to protect life. The Bible teaches us that we are created in the image of God and that murder is wrong. We are to apply God's commandments properly to situations. For example, we are not to work on Shabbat, but even saving the life of an animal supersedes the command not to work on Shabbat. Deuteronomy 22:4 NKJV says, "You shall

not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; **you shall surely** help him lift them up again." The Bible tells us not to start a fire on Shabbat which can be quite a bit of work. Turning on a light by comparison is no work at all. Some man-made commands that micromanage life are just silly. Some man-made commands even make life difficult. I knew of someone who had to walk quite a way to synagogue on Shabbat with 2 children. That was a lot more work than driving to synagogue.

Then in this portion, Pharaoh ordered all the baby boys to be thrown in the river. The Pharaoh no longer recognized Egypt's deliverance through the Israelites. It's also true today, isn't it? Many have forgotten that the scriptures came from the Israelites and the Jews and that their Messiah is Jewish. People would have no salvation without the Jews.

A Levite couple hid their child for three months, but eventually had to put him in the river in a basket. The basket is called an ark in the Hebrew just like Noah's Ark. Mankind is saved through Noah and Moshe also saves God's people. Pharaoh's daughter heard the baby crying and had pity on the child. She had her slave find someone to nurse the baby for her, and Pharaoh's daughter called him Moshe which means drawn out and she raised the child as her own in the palace.

The Brave women of the Bible.

In the Bible we not only see men standing up for what is right, but many brave women are mentioned. Moshe's mother stood up for what is right and tried to save the life of her baby. Moshe's sister watched over the ark carrying Moshe as it moved down the river. We even have books of the Bible named after women. The homes of believers have been graced with women who teach their children about God and are not afraid to stand up for what is right and good. It was through my mother that I first heard about God.

This one particular time the sun was shining, and it was raining so my mother quickly told me the story about Noah. She went to the front door to see if there was a rainbow. She said loudly with her voice crackling with surprise, "Come here quick!" I went to the front door and there was a rainbow coming straight down from the sky in great big bands of colors close to being right in front of our house.

After Moshe had grown up, he saw an Egyptian strike one of his own kinsmen and he waited until no one was around and he killed the Egyptian, but what he did was found out. Pharaoh tried to have Moshe put to death, but he fled to Midyan. In Midyan, Moshe ends up defending a woman at a well and their father tells them to bring Moshe over for some food. Moshe ends up staying with them and is given Zipporah as his wife and has children. Moshe has the heart of a defender of what is right. Are we defenders of truth or do we make up excuses? Meanwhile the Pharaoh that tried to kill Moshe died, but the children of Israel remained slaves. God heard their cries. God values all of mankind. He created us with His characteristics. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image.'"

Moshe was tending the sheep of Yitro, and he came to the mountain of God, Horev, where the angel of God appeared to him in a fire in a middle of a bush that did not burn up. He is told to take off his sandals as an act of humility. God identifies Himself as the God of his

fathers and Moshe was afraid to look at God. God tells Moshe that He has heard the cries of the Israelites. God then tells Moshe that He is sending him to free Israel and Moshe asks how he could do that, and God says that He will be with Moshe.

God tells Moshe that Yĕhōváh (yud-hey-vav-hey) is to be His name forever. The word LORD in all caps in the Hebrew of Exodus 3:15 is the word Yĕhōváh. Exodus 3:15 NKJV says, "Moreover God said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.'" Substituting for the true name of God we get in Exodus 3:15, Yĕhōváh the "God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac" etcetera. Can it be any plainer what the name of God should be? The translation hides the name of God. The name of God has been taken out of our Bibles!

Moshe is to get together the leaders of Israel and tell them that God is going to force Pharaoh to let them go and they will be given gifts when they go. Some say that God is beyond description so we cannot use His name. God tells us His name and it is used over 6,000 times in the Bible. The Jews were being persecuted for using Yĕhōváh around the 2nd century AD, so they made a law not to speak God's name temporarily. Some think it was to keep others from using God's name. The prohibition to say God's name was supposed to be reversed, but they didn't change their man-made law. Thousands of manuscripts have been searched and the name of God as Yĕ-hō-váh (יהוה) has been found in 2,363 different manuscripts pointed as Yĕ-hō-váh. Only one time in over 7,000 manuscripts has it been pointed differently as Yĕ-hō-vĕh. Information provided by Nehemiah Gordon.

Do we respect God?

Some call God Hashem which means "the name." Would you call your father "it?" They dishonor God by their man-made commandment. Yeshua said in John 17:26 NKJV, "I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." At the time of Yeshua, there was no prohibition on using God's name. It says He declared the name of Yĕhōváh. He is the Messiah, and we are to obey Him. Deuteronomy 18:15 NKJV says, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear." We are to obey the Messiah Yeshua.

Some say that to know the name of Yeshua is to know the name of God. What they are saying is that we cannot use the name of God, but we can use the name of Yeshua. It sounds nice, but man-made ideas are not Gods' word. Watch out for these man-made ideas. Some are not right. Yeshua said He declared God's true name (see John 17:6). Obey the Messiah. We have evidence in the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion that Messianic believers were obedient to Yeshua. We see God's real name pointed as Yĕhōváh in some of the New Testament Hebrew manuscripts.

Moshe doubts that the people will believe him when he gets there, but God turns Moshe's staff into a snake and back again and made his hand leprous and then normal again. God also said that Moshe could turn water into blood. Moshe then says that he is not a good speaker, and God has Aharon come to meet Moshe and be Moshe's speaker. Moshe leaves for

Egypt with his family and Moshe encounters God along the way again. This time Moshe's son is circumcised by his wife Zipporah. Perhaps this was written as a lesson to let women know they are also to be defenders of the Torah. When my dad stopped teaching the Torah, my mother took up the mantle in my family and taught me about God and about circumcision.

Moshe and Aharon talk to the leaders of Israel and the leaders believe them. Moshe and Aharon then talk to Pharaoh, but he will not let the people go and he imposes more work on them and mistreats the people. Israel is told they must gather their own straw for the bricks. Perhaps Pharaoh sees himself as a god. He does not believe in the true God. The leaders of Israel were upset with Moshe and Moshe is now also upset. God then tells Moshe that He will force Pharaoh to set Israel free.

As we know, Abraham prophesied that Israel would be slaves. This portion jumps ahead some 215 years. The 430 years included the time in Canaan according to Josephus and the Septuagint (see Jewish Antiquities 4.15.2).¹ We find out that Israel is being treated badly because they are doing well. The Jewish people do well because they follow the true God and His laws, and God blesses them. They also learned to read and write so they could learn God's good laws. The Gentiles become afraid of them or are jealous. The fact that the followers of the true God do well is a testimony to the goodness of God and also to His future promises to Israel and to us. The Egyptians were treating the Israelites ruthlessly and having their baby boys killed, but God was going to keep His word to Abraham and bring them back to their land.

In this portion the Bible says there is an appearance of God as a man in the fiery bush. It says that the angel of God appeared to Moshe. Angels look like men; for example, the angels that visited Abraham in Genesis 18; God also appears as a man there too. Then in Exodus 4:1, the angel in the bush is called Elohim and then later, yud-hey-vav-hey, Yĕhōvāh tells Moshe that He is mightier than Pharaoh and the Israelites will be set free. God tells Moshe He will be with him.

God can do what He wants; even appear as a man in a fiery bush.

Israel has doubts throughout this portion, but God is greater than the people's doubts. The prophets in the Old Testament portion tried to get people to return to God. That was their job. So, we have lots of scriptures urging the people to do what is right. Some say that there was nothing good about Israel. They misunderstand why the prophetic scriptures were written.

In our era, God gives us the powerful gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) and the Holy Spirit is with those who believe on Yeshua the Messiah. Good thing for us because the believers in the Messiah are not perfect either. We can always seek God's forgiveness and decide to change our lives and do what is right, and He will forgive us. Psalms 103:11-12 NKJV says, "So great

¹Jewish Antiquities 4.15.2; Josephus says, "They left Egypt in the month Xanthicus, on the fifteenth day of the lunar month; four hundred and thirty years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but two hundred and fifteen years only after Jacob removed into Egypt. It was the eightieth year of the age of Moses, and of that of Aaron three more. They also carried out the bones of Joseph with them, as he had charged his sons to do." The Septuagint includes Canaan in the 430 years.

is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." God is not subject to us, but we are to be subject to our God and king and we are to fear Him, trust in Him, and do what is right.

God does not always intervene in life.

Why did God allow the Israelites to suffer all those years? We do not understand why God does not always act. Perhaps it has something to do with free will. If God always changes history, then mankind would not have free will. Perhaps it has something to do with the sin of Adam and Eve. They decided to do things their own way instead of what God told them. Because Adam and Eve understood they were wrong when they disobeyed God, God made a provision for them and humanity based on limited involvement from Him. After their sin, their situation changed. Men would have to toil hard and women would suffer through childbirth.

Even though God does not always act when something goes wrong, God is just, and He will punish those who bring evil into the world through sin and reward those who follow His commandments. Daniel 12:2 NKJV says, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." Rabbi Kefa had a lot to say about those who live in sin.

2 Peter 2:13-17 NKJV says,

They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Those who do not change and do not repent of their sin will be sent to the lake of fire and the blackness of darkness forever. Revelation 21:8 says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." We can take comfort in God being a just God who will punish the wicked who do evil. We do not want anyone to go to the lake of fire, and God does not want anyone to go there either. But God must be just.

They bring their punishment on themselves because of the sin and evil they do. 2 Peter 3:9 NKJV says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." God gives people the chance to change and will forgive them. 1 John 1:9 NKJV says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God will forgive us if we are truly sorry and decide to change and follow God's commandments.

The Haftarah for Shemot is Isaiah 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23. Israel had just acknowledged that God saved them, and He wiped away their tears and disgrace in Chapter 26. They now have faith and trust in God, and God has humbled the mighty. Our portion in Chapter 27 begins by

saying that Israel will fill the whole world with a harvest (possibly referring to an end time harvest) and that His controversy with them is taken care of. A shofar will sound, and Israel will have the land from the Euphrates to the wadi in Egypt and they will be glorious. This is obviously about the end time land promise that will occur in the future.

The subject then changes. Can they understand beyond precepts? With another tongue will God give them rest, but they wouldn't listen, and they live only by precepts. After the Haftarah for today it says that God will lay a cornerstone. We know this cornerstone prophetically refers to Yeshua who would come about 600 years later. In Isaiah 29:22-23 it says that Israel will no longer be ashamed (this is yet to come); they will consecrate God's name Yĕhōvâh (yud-hey-vav-hey), and the Holy One (most likely referring to Yeshua), and they and will be in awe of their God.

Rabbi Shaul sees some of the verses that we read from the Haftarah as prophetic verses. He understands that Isaiah 28:11-13 NKJV being about the gift of speaking in tongues. God gave us the Holy Spirit to help us keep His commandments. The Holy Spirit is to help us with life and takes the place of making up man-made commandments and traditions. The Holy Spirit should be a witness to us, but some disregard that witness and think it is okay to live a life of sin. The Bible says that those who lead a life of sin will not be in God's future kingdom. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Do not be deceived.

Trust in the Holy Spirit and trust in God and do what is right.

Although we see a lack of trust in God at times in today's portion, it was through trust in God that Israel was set free. We also need to have trust in God and live with faith. Faith requires we actually do what is right and not just think we are right. Hebrews 11:23-26 CJB says, "By trusting, the parents of Moshe hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw that he was a beautiful child, and they weren't afraid of the king's decree. By trusting, Moshe, after he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose being mistreated along with God's people rather than enjoying the passing pleasures of sin. He had come to regard abuse suffered on behalf of the Messiah as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he kept his eyes fixed on the reward. By trusting, he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered as one who sees the unseen." We also should be a people who trusts in God's promises to come.

Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts. (We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)

We are to save life. The midwives lied to save lives. God created mankind in His image. This also implies that we are to apply the commandments of God correctly according to the situation. Exodus 1:17-19

Good people defend the rights of others, the truths of God's word, and what God says is right. Exodus 2:16-17

God knows what is going on and can act to defend the rights of others. It is up to Him. Exodus 2:24, 3:7-9

God keeps His promises. Exodus 2:24-25

God can appear how He chooses. He appeared as an angel in a burning bush. Angels appear as young men. We find out that it is God who appeared to Moshe. Genesis 3:1-7

God says His name is Yĕhōvâh forever. The word LORD in Genesis 3:15 is the name Yĕhōvâh as found pointed in 2,363 different manuscripts and as Yĕhōvēh only once out of some 7,000 manuscripts. Genesis 3:15 reads, Yĕhōvâh the "God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac," etcetera. Genesis 3:15

We are allowed to ask God for confirmation and instructions when God asks us to do something. Genesis 4:1-17

God will fulfill His will no matter what obstacles occur. Exodus 5:1-6:1

In closing, let us say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

We need to explain why we use God's real name in the Aaronic blessing. Some believe we are not supposed to use God's name, but they are mistaken. ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yĕ-hō-vâh. Yĕ-hō-vâh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yĕ-hō-vâh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yĕ-hō-vâh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yĕ-hō-vâh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. Won't you also honor God's name and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that Yĕ-hō-vâh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,000 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yĕ-hō-vâh, once as Yĕ-hō-vĕh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yĕ-hō-vâh.

Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yĕ-hō-vâh (יהוה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people. It is a commandment to put God's name on His people and by not using God's name, some are not keeping this commandment. What an honor it is to be a people of the creator and true God.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ

יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ

יְשֵׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.