

Torah: Sh'mot (Exodus) 1:1 – 6:1
Haftarah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 27:6-28:13;
 29:22-23
B'rit Hadashah: Acts 7:17-39

	year 1 1:1-2:25	year 2 3:1-4:17	year3 4:18-6:1
1	1:1 – 7	3:1 – 6	4:18 – 20
2	1:8 – 12	3:7 – 10	4:21 – 26
3	1:13 – 17	3:11 – 15	4:27 – 31
4	1:18 – 22	3:16 – 22	5:1 – 5
5	2:1 – 10	4:1 – 5	5:6 – 9
6	2:11 – 15	4:6 – 9	5:10 – 14
7	2:16 – 25	4:10 – 17	5:15 – 6:1

and Moses was shepherding the flocks of Jethro his father-in-law / the priest of Midyan and he led the flocks to the west of the wilderness / and he came to the mountain of God toward Horev	<i>u'Moshé hayah ro'eh et-tzon Yit'ro khot'no kohen Mid'yan va'yin'hag et-hatzon akhar ha'mid'bar va'yavo el-har ha'Elohiym Khorevah</i>	וּמֹשֶׁה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֹתֵנו כֹּהֵן מִדְיָן וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־הַצֹּאן אַחַר הַמִּדְבָּר וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֹרֵב:
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Year 2 Aliyah Highlights

1. Ex. 3:1-6 The Theophany at The Burning Bush

- One of the ancient Hebrew terms for “west” (*akhar* – אַחַר) literally means “behind” – west is what is behind you when you are oriented forward, toward the rising sun (east). *Midbar* (מִדְבָּר) refers to uninhabited/unirrigated pastureland (Ps. 65:13). Moshe is unaware of any sanctity attached to Horev/Mountain of God. This description anticipates its later role.
- The concept of messenger (*mal'akh* – מַלְאָךְ) delocalizes God. Fire (*aish* – אֵשׁ) represents God's presence in a mysterious, luminescent, nonmaterial, and formless manifestation (Ge. 15:17, Ex. 13:12, 19:18, 24:17. Nu. 9:15-16, 14:14, De. 4:24, 9:3). The Hebrew, bush (*seneh* – סִנֵּה) only appears here and De. 33:16, likely a word play on Sinai. That the bush is not consumed suggest two interpretations: fire that requires no fuel for its existence, and symbolism of a people that survive under oppression.
- Moshe's curiosity is sparked by his observation of an unnatural phenomena. Most people would not look long enough to see the miracle. Moshe chooses to “turn aside.”
- The repetition of one's name is characteristic of a divine call, and the response, *hineni* (הִנְנִי), “here I am” – the proper immediate response.
- The idea of sacred (*kadosh* – קָדוֹשׁ) space, first introduced here, is sanctified by the presence of HaShem. It is not sacred in itself. This teaches that no place is devoid of God's presence, and any place can be a “holy” place. Removing footwear is a humble sign of respect and in this case, provides direct contact to holiness.
- The God who speaks here defines himself as the same God who spoke to each of the patriarchs (singularly), not the universal Creator of heaven and earth, indicating a particular context. Moshe experiences terror (Ge. 32:31, Ex. 20:19, 24:10, 33:20, Judg. 6:22, 13:22, 1Ki. 19:13) hiding his face during this first encounter, but will later ask to see more (Ex. 33:18).

Parashah 13-2 Shemot שמות

2. Ex. 3:7-10 The Divine Call

- a. Outcry (tz'a'qah – צַעֲקָה) is a most powerful word. It is the soul-stirring, anguished, agonized voice of the oppressed, helpless victim (Ge. 18:21, 19:13, Ex. 22:22, Is. 5:7, Ps. 9:13). He refers to the sons of Israel as his people (*ammiy* – עַמִּי)
- b. God decisively takes action to get involved in human affairs. Their oppression is contrasted with the quality of their destination, not included in the promise to the patriarchs. Milk implies bounty (pastureland, flocks, meat, hide, wool) and vitality; honey implies a carb-filled diet. The list of six people-groups suggests that the promised land was usually ruled by foreign powers rather than the people in it, with the exception of the first and second Jewish Commonwealths and Israel today.
- c. Moshe is now charged to be the agent of HaShem, the human instrument of redemption, initiating the institution of the prophet. Note that his role does not include destiny in the land.

3. Ex. 3:11-15 Moshe's dialogue with HaShem

- a. Moshe's first question is "Who am I?" His reluctance is similar to later prophets (Is. 6:5, Jer. 1:6, Jonah). He is fearful for his own life in light of his reasons for leaving Egypt.
- b. God gives his assurance of protection, and an unusual retro-active sign: when all is said and done, the people will come to this very mountain to serve God. Perhaps we can only see God when looking back (Ex. 33:23). Serving God is incompatible with serving the king of Egypt.
- c. Moshe's second question is "Who are you?" This implies that he does not know, and that the people need a personal revelation that moves beyond the experience of their forefathers.
- d. *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה), only used here, expresses eternal, unchanging, absolute being, or it can mean "he causes to be." God's name is a verb. To name someone/something implies power over the one named. The divine name can only be given by God himself.
- e. The essence of who God is, connected to the experience of the patriarchs is now being revealed to this generation, to be passed on to all subsequent generations, past, present and future.

4. Ex. 3:16-22

- a. Moshe's first task is to address the respected elders (*z'iq'ney* – זִקְנֵי), who are frequently mentioned but never really defined, and say *paqod paqad'tiy* (פָּקֹד פִּקְדְתִּי), "I surely visit," echoing Yosef's dying words in Ge. 50:24, a promise passed down from generation to generation.
- b. The divine epithet, "HaShem, God of the Hebrews" (yahweh elohey ha'iv'riyyim - יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) appears only in the Exodus narrative when addressing pharaoh, who does not know HaShem, but surely is aware of the God of the Hebrews. The encounter with God is sudden and requires response. 3 days travel means a significant segment of time and distance. Periodic pilgrimages were reasonable requests – be polite. Denial was indicative of tyrannical rule.
- c. God's strong hand (*yad khazaqah* – יַד חֲזָקָה) contrasts the oppressive "hand of Egypt" (v.8). God's wonders (*nif'leotay* – נִפְלְאוֹתַי) are his visitation – direct, timely intervention in human affairs – not necessarily miraculous.
- d. God's promise of a wealthy departure was foretold to Avraham (Ge. 15:14), viewed as compensation for unpaid labor, and echoed in later emancipation law (De. 15:13).

Parashah 13-2 Shemot שמות

5. **Ex. 4:1-5** Moshe fears that the elders may accept but the people may still reject.
 - a. The first sign God gives is Moshe's ordinary staff turning into a snake.
 - b. The staff represents authority and power. The snake is the symbol of death. Moshe's recoil shows that God, not Moshe, is in command here. Yet Moshe is validated as God's chosen instrument for the redemption of Israel.
 - c. To take a snake by the tail is foolish, yet Moshe demonstrates his faith in God by obeying.
6. **Ex. 4:6-9**
 - a. The second sign is the hand of *m'tzora'at* (מַצְרַעַת), which was viewed as divine punishment for misbehavior. The sign represents death to life, exile to freedom. God sent them down to Egypt, and he will take them out.
 - b. If they don't 1) believe and 2) listen to the voice of the first two signs, then advance to the third sign: river water poured out as blood. This reveals the hidden death of the new-born boys thrown into the river (Ex. 1:22).
7. **Ex. 4:10-17**
 - a. Moshe's third objection: he is not a man of words (*lo ish d'variym* – לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים), has a heavy mouth (*k'vad peh* – כְּבֵד פֶּה) and heavy tongue (כְּבֵד לְשׁוֹן). But it is not about Moshe, as the message will come from HaShem.
 - b. Close to refusal, Moshe asks God to send someone else. In anger, HaShem suggests the assistance of Moshe's brother Aharon, who is mentioned here for the first time. He is 3 years older (Ex. 7:7). This establishes the resolution of a major theme in Torah: sibling rivalry. Up to this point, the relationship between brothers has been fraught with conflict. Now, the older will serve the younger with joy.

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (1:1) God gave Avraham a promise, and then brought his people to Egypt for a purpose - each one accounted for. Are you counted in God's plan? (Gen 15:5, Isa 40:26, Rom 8:28, 2Pe 3:9, Psa 139)
2. (1:18) The midwives did not carry out the king's orders. Who do you obey? (1Sa 13:8-14, 1Sa 15:3-22, Act 16:23-34, Act 4:19-20)
3. (2:11) Have you grown up to know who you are and who you serve? (Amos 1:1, 7:14-15, Jer 1:4-10, Phil 3:4-9, 1Pe 2:9)
4. (3:1) Do you see your daily activities as God's training ground for what lies ahead? (1Sa 17:34:35-37, 2Sa 7:8-9, Phil 3:4-5, Act 22:3, Luk 2:52, Luk 5:1-11, 1Co 1:26-30)
5. (3:16) Has God sent you to share His plans with others? (Isa 42:9, Amo 3:7, Jer 7:2,11:6, 21:11, 28:5, 1Co 14:26, 29, Eph 15:19, Isa 48:3-7, Col 3:16-17)
6. (4:18) Do you find confirmation of God's plans in the circumstances of your life? Compare Exo 4:18 with Gen 31:19-27. (Psa 24:3-4, Heb 13:17, 1Ti 6:1, 1Th 5:12)
7. (5:2) Are you overwhelmed by this decaying world, or anticipating Yeshua's return? (Col 1:15-17, Jud 21:25, Job 21:7-16, Jer 44:15-19, Rom 8:19-23)