



Parasha Va'era

January 16, 2021

Torah: Exodus 6:2-9:35

Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21

Ketuvim Shlichim: 2Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Shabbat shalom mishpacha! This week in our *parasha*, we see the beginning of the plagues which ADONAI brought against the nation of Egypt. The troubles of that day are beginning to resemble the troubles of our own day. The groans of the Israelites against Moses in last week's *parasha* are also reminiscent of the unrest in the body of Messiah today. There are grumblings and accusations going on between brothers and sisters regarding how each perceived what was recently happening in the government of our nation. Some have forgotten that "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" and as Yeshua said, "you shall love your fellow believer as I love you." We must not fight among ourselves. While we give everyone the right to his own opinion, we must not descend into fleshly arguments. The body of Messiah is in a precarious position right now and is also facing attacks from the left. Let's do our part to promote love and unity within our ranks.

Regarding the Egyptian Passover, books have been written about parallels seen in the Book of Revelation. I read one years ago, but don't remember what it said. I gave it away, so I don't know how others have compared them. My present thoughts are that the Pharaoh of the Exodus is a type of *HaSatan* and I have no doubt that he was actually controlled by *HaSatan*. You can't be a worshipper of many different non-gods and even believe that you, yourself are a god, as Pharaoh did, and not be at least, heavily influenced by demons. The events surrounding the Egyptian slavery of Israel, the plagues themselves and the redemption of Israel from slavery, are all very reminiscent of what is going on in the world today. They remind us of today, particularly if you believe that we are in "the last days." I have no doubt that we are.

Two weeks ago, I said that the End Times began in the 1st century CE, probably at Yeshua's birth. That time period also fits in with my understanding of the events of Revelation. I believe that Revelation began to be fulfilled right after *Yochanan* wrote it and has continued to be fulfilled bit by bit through the centuries. We are not going to be hit in the last days with all of the bad things pictured there. Some have already been fulfilled through the past two thousand years of the End Times. But, today, we are in the end of the End Times, the Last Days spoken of by Daniel. In fact, we are 54 years into the Last Days which began in June, 1967. Are we the last generation? Possibly we are, and we are privileged to be living in this time period. We are seeing events of the Last Days now and we can't expect the road not to be at least a little bit bumpy. And, it may get worse. This is not to say that during these times ADONAI is not with us, His called-out ones. He is very much so, but we also have to do our part. We can't just be casual believers in these days, just believing for "fire insurance." We have to be sold-out followers of Yeshua. The responsibility is on each of us. How we individually follow Yeshua is a very important part of the response made by the body as a whole. We must individually call upon ADONAI for guidance, but at the same time join with the body. And, we can't seek our answers from others and follow blindly after the prophets. We know that G-d has true prophets in this day, but prophecy

also must be judged. Many recent prophetic voices will soon be judged by whether or not they spoke truth. ADONAI is their judge, not us. And, this is not to say that the intentions of those prophesying things which turned out not to be true were not good. I believe that most had no ulterior motive. As followers of Yeshua, we must be merciful to them and not judge. ADONAI is the Judge. Keep your response to every situation pure.

Our *parasha* this week is *Va'era*, אָרָא, meaning “I appeared.” It begins: *2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, “I am ADONAI. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, as El Shaddai. Yet not by My Name, ADONAI, did I make Myself known to them”* (Exodus 6:2-3 TLV). There is a typo in the TLV. It says: *3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, as El Shaddai. Yet by My Name, Adonai, I made Myself known to them.* If you haven't already, you should make these changes in your Bible. ADONAI made these statements to Moses because he questioned Him about why He allowed the Israelites to continue to suffer. The Father said: “I am ADONAI.” That is reason enough. In last week's *parasha*, He identified Himself as אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה, 'ehyeh 'āšher 'ehyeh, translated in the TLV as I AM WHO I AM. Who He is, is the Creator who exists simultaneously in the past, present and future. In other words, He said to Moses that He was capable of handling this situation and all situations. I will be who I will be! He is still *El Shaddai*, the all sufficient one, ADONAI Yireh, our provider! He is the one on whom we must call.

In the fullness of time, ADONAI sent His Son Yeshua into the world to suffer and to die as a sacrifice for our sins. Yeshua also bears the characteristics of ADONAI. In John 1, He is identified as the Creator of everything. And, He identified Himself in the Book of John seven times as “I Am.” Who is Yeshua? He is the divine coming king who will preside over the events of the Last Days. And, He has told us what to expect in these days. What we believe about the Last Days we must base upon Scripture. *Sola Scriptura*; Latin for by Scripture alone! That is where we must be. We do not depend on any outside sources. Not the *Oral Torah*, not the *Talmud* or any other doctrines of man. G-d's Word is sufficient to explain itself. While many today ignore Last Days verses, we must not. It is imperative that we know what Scripture says about the Last Days. If you are not reading your Bible daily, I urge you to begin immediately. I recommend the MJAA read through the Bible in a year plan. In it we read the *parasha* each week plus chapters from the *Tanakh* and the *Ketuvim Shlichim*. I also recommend that you read a Hebrew oriented version. Consult other versions if necessary, but read from a version based upon the Hebrew language which reflects the culture of those whom ADONAI called to write it. You must not depend on me or anyone else to tell you what you need to know. You must seek it for yourself as the Jews in Berea did. I am your exhorter, but you should check out everything which I say to you. These words of *Sha'ul* to Timothy fit very well with our discussion and also what is happening today: *14 “Remind them of these things and solemnly charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which is useless—to the ruin of those who are listening. 15 Make every effort to present yourself before God as tried and true, as an unashamed worker cutting a straight path with the word of truth”* (2Timothy 2:15 TLV). Or, as is more familiar, “rightly dividing the Word of truth.”

By seeing the ancient pharaoh as the personification of *HaSatan*, we are reminded that there are many in this world today who are guided by the evil one. Pharaoh today, is our present government, a government which brainwashes our children, authorizes ungodly and unbiblical activities and seeks to close the mouths of those who disagree. This is very much like the nation portrayed by George Orwell in his novel “1984.” Big Brother is watching us. In addition, we are seeing retribution against those who don't agree with their policies, especially those who made their dissent known on social media. At least one supporter of

the president has had his insurance policy cancelled, some others are not being allowed to fly on certain airlines and his supporters are being punished in other ways as well. A national news commentator even suggested that all those who voted for President Trump should be punished. We must be praying for those members of Yeshua's body who have been so visible during these last few months.

HaSatan is very actively involved in all of this. 3 *“And even if our Good News is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case, the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, so they might not see the light of the Good News of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God”* (2Corinthians 4:3-4 TLV). The door of salvation has not been closed on all of these and we should pray that this blinding would be removed. And, we most definitely should pray for those in authority in our government. What we are seeing today, trying times, are happening not just any time, but in the Last Days, the relatively short period of time which leads up to the day of our redemption. But, those who are showing themselves to be evil and opposed to the ways of G-d are not themselves our enemies. For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and spiritual wickedness in high places. These wicked spiritual rulers and *HaSatan* are blinding the minds of human beings. Certain people, by their godlessness and worship of the things of the world, have opened themselves to the influence of demonic spirits and are being led by them. We must pray for them in the hope that some might come to their senses and be saved.

HaSatan, personified in the Exodus Pharaoh is running wild in the world today. What happened then is happening today. 3 *“Yet I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and wonders in the land of Egypt”* (Exodus 7:3 TLV). This verse is representative of the eighteen times where we read that ADONAI hardened Pharaoh's heart. But, does ADONAI really make people evil by hardening their hearts? No, of course not, and you here, already understand what this means. The Hebrew word underlying all this hardening is *chazak* or some form of it. Its basic meaning is to strengthen. I don't know why the translators didn't just go ahead and say that ADONAI strengthened Pharaoh's heart. He strengthened his will which is represented by his heart, to follow the evil plan that he had already determined to do. ADONAI could do this because He knew what was in Pharaoh's heart and where it came from- straight from the pit and *HaSatan*. I believe that ADONAI is continuing to strengthen *HaSatan's* heart today, strengthening it to do the evil which he has already planned in his war against Israel and the Lion of Judah. But, we cannot allow ourselves to succumb to the evil one's temptations in any area. We must be holy and set apart for ADONAI and when we resist *HaSatan*, he will flee from us.

How is it that the Adversary is able to have so much influence in today's world? It is because that is what is prophesied to happen today. 7 *“When the thousand years has ended, satan shall be released from his prison, 8 and he shall come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for the battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea”* (Revelation 20:7-8 TLV). The thousand years, what many call “the Millennial Reign of Messiah,” is not something that's going to happen in the future. That's because the thousand years spoken of in this verse has already occurred. We don't have time to talk about the millennium today, but you can find more about it at *beitshalom.us*. Under the message tab, read the discussion from August 8, 2020, *Parasha Ekev* entitled The Millennium. The thousand years of Revelation is a symbolic number, the symbolic period of time that *HaSatan* was imprisoned. Referring to His coming death on the stake, Yeshua said: 31 *“Now is the judgment of this world! Now the prince of this world will be driven out”* (John 12:31 TLV)! And, during His time with His disciples after Passover in the upper room, He

spoke of the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and said this: 11 *“and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged”* (John 16:11 TLV). *HaSatan* has been judged and has been driven out, that is, he was placed in the abyss. In Revelation 20, verse 1, we see an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the abyss and a large chain. Then this: 2 *He seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and satan—and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He also threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short while* (Revelation 20:2-3 TLV). He has been bound and also released and the short while is now here. *HaSatan* is out of the abyss. He was put in the abyss when Yeshua died on the stake and he was released a symbolic thousand years later. He may have been released around the time Israel became a nation again or possibly even 1967 when Israel recaptured Jerusalem and the End Time began. And, we can find the evidence of his greater temptations during this time period in every newspaper and in every news media. And, a disproportionate part of his temptation has been directed through individuals who hate Israel. Consider Yasser Arafat. How much satanic activity have we seen against Israel since Yeshua’s prophecy about Jerusalem was fulfilled in 1967? So much! In Luke 21:24, Yeshua referred to the year 70 CE and the murder and slavery of Jews by the Romans. That Roman captivity began the trampling of Jerusalem by the Gentiles which only ended in 1967. 24 *“They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations [70 CE]. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” [70 CE-1967]* (Luke 21:24 TLV). According to Josephus, about a million Jews were killed and another 600,000 taken as slaves in the year 70. The takeover of Jerusalem by the Romans that year marked the beginning of the “trampling of Jerusalem by the Gentiles” which ended in 1967 and began the Time of the End. *HaSatan* has already been released from the abyss, but it’s for a short while. What’s a short while? We don’t know. It’s already been 53 years and according to John’s prophecy, he is right now stirring up Gog and Magog for battle. There is not time to go into this today, but I believe that the Gog and Magog war and Armageddon are one and the same war. It is Yeshua’s final solution and end to *HaSatan*’s reign of terror.

Speaking of this period, the Last Days, Yeshua said: 29 *“But immediately after the trouble of those days, ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken”* (Matthew 24:29 TLV). Was Yeshua speaking about the actual heavenly bodies or is *HaSatan* the sun and his principalities and powers the moon and stars? The one whom *Sha’ul* calls the prince of the power of the air, *HaSatan*, and his demons, the powers of the heavens, will be shaken just before Yeshua returns. If you are following the MJAA Bible Reading Plan, you would have read these verses this past Wednesday: 21 *“It will come about in that day, Adonai will punish the host of heaven on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth. 22 They will be gathered together, like prisoners in the Pit, and will be shut up in the prison, and after many days be punished. 23 Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed, for Adonai-Tzva’ot will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders, gloriously”* (Isaiah 24:21-23 TLV). Yeshua was using *remez*, seemingly hinting back at this Scripture, when He made His statement which we just read in Matthew 24: 29.

Most in these verses in Isaiah who are being punished are not human. But, some are. What about the “kings of the earth who will be punished on the earth?” Revelation has the answer. 1 *“After these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his glory. 2 He cried out with a mighty voice, saying: “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a den for demons, a haunt for*

every unclean spirit and for every unclean bird and for every unclean and detestable beast. 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her immorality. The kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich off the power of her self-indulgence” (Revelation 18:1-3 TLV). That is what we are seeing today. It’s much easier now that we are so close to it to understand Babylon. It is the world system which is asserting itself to control everything according to their plans and in opposition to ADONAI’s plan. The great city, Babylon the great, the world system, has uncloaked itself. It has been revealed, but its time and success are limited. *21 Then a mighty angel picked up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying: “So shall Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, never to be found again* (Revelation 18:21 TLV)! We don’t have to worry. ADONAI has already judged Babylon.

But, what are we to do during this period? We are being called upon to stand up for Yeshua. Being a follower of Yeshua doesn’t give us immunity from being persecuted. We may face persecution. But, I also believe that if we totally commit our lives and service to Yeshua, we will be given the power and spiritual authority which we need to stand and to proclaim His truth to those around us. In Egypt, those in Goshen, the Israelites, were protected from the last plagues. I don’t know if that will be true for us today, but it certainly should be our prayer. ADONAI, protect your children from the persecutions of the ungodly!

Shimon Kefa said: *9 “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”* (1Peter 2:9 TLV). Proclaim it: I am chosen and I am called! I am a priest of the Most High G-d! And remember Yeshua’s words: *19 “Behold, I have given you authority to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you”* (Luke 10:19 TLV). Revival is coming! The latter days of the body of Messiah will be greater than the former. And, all Israel shall be saved! It is a declaration of ADONAI!

Israel’s deliverance from Egypt is a picture of what is going on in the world today. The commonwealth of Israel, composed of those in the Covenant of Abraham and redeemed Jews and Gentiles, is the Israel of today which the pharaoh is oppressing. ADONAI is working right now, today, to deliver us from the pharaoh of this world, *HaSatan*, and from those whom he has seduced. It’s ADONAI’s work of grace for His people today, those who are His covenant members. By His grace we were saved and by His grace we will be delivered! ADONAI said to Moses: *6 “Therefore say to Bnei-Yisrael: I am Adonai, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 I will take you to Myself as a people, and I will be your God. You will know that I am Adonai your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 So I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, and give it to you as an inheritance. I am Adonai”* (Exodus 6:6-7 TLV). These verses about the Exodus from Egypt are also for the End Times. Yeshua, the great “I AM,” is saying to us today. “Walk with Me during these trying times and I will give you rest; I will bring you out of Egypt!” *5 “Trust in Adonai with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight”* (Proverbs 3:5-6 TLV). This is the coming exodus, our exodus from this world into “the world to come” and Yeshua’s kingdom on earth! *Shabbat shalom!*