



Parasha Shemot

December 25, 2021

“Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah 1”

Torah: Exodus 1:1-6:1
Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23
Ketuvim Shlichim: Matthew 1:18-23

Shabbat shalom mishpacha! Our *parasha* today is *Shemot* and we begin a new book, the Book of Exodus. The Hebrew title for the book, *Shemot*, means names and begins with listing the sons of Jacob, Joseph and his eleven brothers. Exodus begins with Israel in slavery.

The new Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites and ordered that all males born should be killed. Moses was born during Pharaoh's edict and was placed in the Nile River by his mother. There he was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter. Moses grew up in the house of Pharaoh. When he was forty years old, he killed an Egyptian slave master mistreating one of his Hebrew kinsmen. When it became known, he fled to escape Pharaoh's punishment. In Midyan, he met and married the daughter of *Ruel*, also known as Jethro, the Priest of Midyan. While tending his father in law's sheep on Mount Horeb, He saw a burning bush and heard ADONAI speak to him from it. He identified Himself as *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*, meaning "I Am Who I am." He told Moses to tell the sons of Israel that "I Am" had sent him and also identified Himself as *YHVH*, the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ADONAI commanded Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt.

We are beginning a new message series today. We have been speaking about the *parasha* for many years and will continue to introduce it each week, but until we are finished, our topic will be "Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah." It is important that each of us continue to read the *parasha*, *haftarah* and associated reading from the *Ketuvim Shlichim* each week. Our *Shlichim* reading this week, Matthew 1:18-23, is from our new topic and not from the *parasha*.

The title, "Yeshua Our Jewish Messiah" agrees with our belief that the Bible is a Jewish document from Genesis to Revelation. Not only was it written by Hebrews, today known as Jews, but its content is thoroughly Hebraic. It is best understood when it is read paying attention to Jewish idioms, Jewish methods of thought and Jewish Biblical exegesis, interpretation. It is my great desire that Bible readers would read with these things in mind and seek to understand what the writer originally meant rather than trying to Gentileize their words and take away its original meaning. That's not a real word, but you understand what I mean.

That we began our study today, December 25th, is ironic. It was not planned that way. It just happened. My Messianic Jewish understanding of the Scriptures is that we only observe what ADONAI has commanded us to observe. *Torah* says: 2 "You must not add to the word that I am commanding you or take away from it—in order to keep

the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am commanding you." (Deuteronomy 4:2 TLV). (also Deuteronomy 12:32). ADONAI only wishes what He has inspired in His writers and has been confirmed as Scripture to be followed. While we don't observe December 25th as Yeshua's day of birth, we are not suggesting that Christians should not. Yeshua has given His followers the freedom to make their own decisions regarding faith and practice. Yeshua said to *Shimon Kefa*: 19 *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will have been forbidden in heaven and what you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven."* (Matthew 16:19 TLV). The keys to the kingdom of heaven is the authority to bind and to loose, to forbid and to permit, that is, to make binding decisions for Yeshua's followers. Each leader has the authority to decide how to interpret Scripture. We respect our Christian brothers and sisters in their sincere wish to follow Jesus and wish them peace and joy on this day. We wish to be in unity of spirit with them even though we understand some things differently.

Yeshua, the Son of G-d, when He was born into the world was a Jewish man. He is the son of a Jewish woman, who at the time of His birth, was a virgin. She has since had sons and daughters including Yeshua's half-brothers *Ya'acov* and *Yehudah*, both of whom wrote letters which were included in the *Ketuvim Shlichim*, the writings of Yeshua's *shlichim*, His apostles. His tribe was foretold in the *Torah* by His ancestor Jacob. Regarding his son *Yehudah*, Judah, he said: 10 *"The scepter will not pass from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs will come. To him will be the obedience of the peoples."* (Genesis 49:10 TLV). The kingship of the Messiah was also foretold by a Gentile. The Prophet Balaam said: 17 *"I see him, yet not at this moment. I behold him, yet not in this location. For a star will come from Jacob, a scepter will arise from Israel."* (Numbers 14:17a TLV). It was not a secret that ADONAI planned to send a *Mashiach*, an Anointed One, to Israel. Even the Magi, the Babylonians who came to worship the infant Yeshua, knew that a *Mashiach*, an anointed One was to come.

The first seventeen verses of Matthew chapter 1 deal with the genealogy of Yeshua. This is one of two genealogies found for Him in the Gospels. The other is in Luke. The two are significantly different. Why would ADONAI give two different genealogies? The simplest explanation may be that the genealogy in Matthew shows Yeshua's descent through his legally adopted father, Joseph, *Yosef*. At the end of His genealogy, Matthew wrote: 16 ... *"and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Miriam, from whom was born Yeshua who is called the Messiah."* (Matthew 1:16 TLV). The genealogy in Luke 3 is thought to be Yeshua's descent through his mother *Miryam*. Given in reverse order, the genealogy begins: 23 *"Yeshua was about thirty years old when He began his ministry. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,"* (Luke 3:23 TLV). If this is her genealogy, it means that she was descended from King David through his son Nathan, *Batsheva's* fourth son by *David*: 31 ..., *the son of Nathan, the son of David,"* (Luke 3:31b TLV). If that is true, Yeshua was "Son of David" by both His adopted and legal father *Yosef* and His mother *Miryam*, but through different sons of David.

Yeshua's genealogy in Matthew is one of those Hebraic constructions which was mentioned a moment ago. This listing of ancestors was not intended by Matthew to be Yeshua's actual genealogy and does not include all of His ancestors. By reading in 1st and 2nd Kings and 2nd Chronicles, we can find the complete list of Joseph's ancestors. Why was Matthew not being accurate in his presentation? It was not an accurate representation of the ancestors, but it is not an untruth, something which some atheists seek to find in Scripture. Matthew was not trying to give a complete genealogy. By managing the number

of ancestors in the genealogy, he was sending a hidden Hebraic message. Written as it is, we understand that this is not a completely correct genealogy, but an allegory to make a specific point. The other ancestors of Yeshua are still there between the lines although unwritten. Matthew knew about the others in Joseph's ancestry, but he purposefully chose to leave them out and to write it this way. He left out some generations so that those which remained formed a pattern, a pattern which would make his point. He wrote the genealogy in three sets of generations: 17 "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the Babylonian exile are fourteen generations, and from the Babylonian exile until the Messiah are fourteen generations." (Matthew 1:17 TLV). Three sets of fourteen generations add up to a total of 42 generations. Four generations were left out; Ahaziah, Athalia, Jehoash and Amaziah, meaning that there are actually 46 generations from Abraham to Joseph. By reducing the 46 generations to three sets of 14, a total of 42, Matthew was using *gematria*, a well-known Hebrew system which uses numbers to hint at an underlying message. It is a system of letters and numbers which assigns a numerical value to a name, a word or a phrase based on its letters. Or, in Yeshua's Matthew genealogy, it is based on its numbers and then converted to letters.

This is how we understand it. The Hebrew letter *dalet* , ט, a "d" sound, has the numerical value of 4 and the letter *vav*, ו, a "v" sound, has the numerical value of 6. The word *David*, in Hebrew, ט ו ט, *dalet vav dalet*, has the numerical value of 14, 4 plus 6 plus 4. Since we have three groups of 14 generations leading to Yeshua, Matthew is using *gematria* to very loudly state: *David! David! David!* This is about Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel being "Son of David." Matthew's intended message to the reader is: Son of David! Son of David! Son of David! – in other words, Messiah of Israel!

After we are given Yeshua's Jewish genealogy, Matthew tells us about His birth: 18 *Now the birth of Yeshua the Messiah happened this way. When His mother Miriam was engaged to Joseph but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Ruach haKodesh. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, made up his mind to dismiss her secretly.*" (Matthew 1:18-19 TLV). Understanding something about ancient Jewish marriage customs gives us some insight as to what was actually taking place and allows us to read between the lines of these verses. By saying that *Miryam* was engaged to *Yosef*, it meant that they had had *kiddushin*, the betrothal ceremony. (It is sometimes called *erusin*). In the 1st century, the betrothal period was usually a period of up to one year. Sexual intimacy would not take place until the actual marriage, called *nissuin*, was performed. Yosef and Miryam were betrothed, but not married. We have no way of knowing how long they had been betrothed when Joseph noticed *Miryam's* pregnancy. Since he knew that he had not been intimate with her, he assumed that she had been unfaithful, but did not want to utterly disgrace her by a public announcement.

20 *But while he considered these things, behold, an angel of Adonai appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Miriam as your wife, for the Child conceived in her is from the Ruach ha-Kodesh. 21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins"* (Matthew 1:20-21 TLV). In his dream, the angel addressed Joseph as son of David, verifying that he, Joseph, was in David's royal line. This would have been one of the reasons that ADONAI chose him to be the legal father of Yeshua along with him being a righteous man. *Interestingly, the angel told Joseph that he was to name the child, and to name Him Yeshua. In Jewish tradition, the father names the child.* The Greek text says: "Name him *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce'). *Strong's Concordance* says that *Iésous* is the Greek form of Joshua. We'll come back to that shortly.

The Bible version I'm using is a Hebraic oriented translation, the Tree Of Life Version, and it puts back in some of the Jewishness of the content. This allows us to understand as we read that even though written in English, this is a Jewish document. I also believe that the original language of Matthew was Hebrew. Several extra-biblical sources tell us that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew and this is also borne out by the many Hebraic ways of teaching such as the one which we just saw regarding Yeshua's genealogy. The final statement in verse 21, "*and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins,*" is extremely important and we will examine it in Hebrew. Have you ever thought about how Messianic Jews in Israel, Hebrew speakers, read the *Ketuvim Sh'lichim*, the writings of Yeshua's followers? They read it in Hebrew and there are several Hebrew versions available. For our purposes today, I am using the Transliterated Hebrew New Testament program from Hebrew Heart Media.

Here is Matthew 1:21 in Hebrew and English.

וְהִיא יִלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יֵשׁוּעַ כִּי הוּא יוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־עַמּוֹ מִחַטָּאתֵיהֶם׃ 21. *Ve'hi yoledet ben v'karata et sh'mo Yeshua ki hu yoshia et-amo me'chatoteihem. 21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins.* (Matthew 1:21 TLV). Within this verse we find another Hebraic method of writing and teaching. One word is linked to a similar word in order to make a point, essentially, a Hebraic pun. In the King James Version it reads: *21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.* There is no logical connection between these two underlined words, Jesus and save. It was translated from Greek to English without regard for its Hebrew meaning. The "for" in both the TLV and the KJV indicates that the second phrase is linked to and related to the first phrase. Written this way in the KJV and other bibles, "Jesus" and "save" don't have any logical word connection. Yes, Jesus does save, but the name Jesus does not have the semantic relationship with save such as Yeshua does with save. The problem is that this phrase was originally written in Hebrew and when read in Hebrew, it's quite different. Yeshua in Hebrew means salvation, but more specifically, it means "YHVH is salvation." That's because Yeshua is a shortened form of *Yehoshua*, Joshua, and both mean ADONAI is salvation. The Hebrew of two words in this verse translates to: "Name him *Yeshua* for he will *yoshia* his people."

Yeshua = salvation

yoshia = save

Yeshua and *yoshia* are related words. The TLV makes verse 21 to say what Matthew intended: *21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins* (Matthew 1:21 TLV).

In the last two thousand years, Jesus has become a valid name for our Messiah and what I am teaching today is not an attempt to denigrate it. Millions have called upon Jesus and been saved by their confession of faith. Various forms of His name are spoken in the many languages of the earth. But, our point here is that unless we understand the Hebrew background of the Scriptures, we are missing some of the vital information which the writers placed there under ADONAI's inspiration.

In the 1st century, Greek had become a primary language of many Jews, particularly those in Egypt and that was where the *Septuagint*, the Greek language translation of the Hebrew *Tanakh* was made. The name *Septuagint* comes from the Latin *septuaginta*, meaning "70." It is also called the LXX, the Roman numerals for seventy. Seventy was derived from

the legend that there were 72 translators, 6 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The five books of the *Torah* were completed in about 250 BCE and the rest of the *Tanakh* 50-60 years later.

The Messianic Jewish author Daniel Gruber gives us some interesting information about the Greek of the LXX and what would become the Greek of the *Ketuvim Shlichim* hundreds of years later. In his book, *The Separation of Church and Faith, Copernicus And The Jews*, he writes about what he calls Jewish Greek. He states that “The New Testament is a Jewish document written in Jewish Greek.” What is Jewish Greek? It is the Greek language with the addition of many, many new words invented by the translators of the LXX to express Hebraic terms. There were no Greek words to portray many different Hebraic concepts. Native Greek speakers questioned by Daniel Gruber say that “New Testament” Greek is neither *koine* Greek, common Greek, or classical Greek. That is because they find so many words within it that are not Greek. It is essentially common Greek with many, many Jewish Greek words, words created to express Hebraic concepts. It’s very important that we as Messianic *talmidim* of Yeshua understand that even though the *Tanakh* was translated into Greek, it was never separated from its Hebraic foundation and principles. And, the same is true for the Greek of the *Ketuvim Shlichim*. It was never intended to be separated from its Hebrew foundations. It is Hebrew thought expressed in Greek which then became translated into hundreds of other languages. But, it was never intended to be separated from the Jewish thought behind it. That is why we must continue to seek its underlying meaning even though we are reading it today in English. *Shimon Kefa, Yochanan, Ya’acov* and *Sha’ul* all thought in Hebrew even when they wrote in Greek.

Just one more comment about Yeshua’s name. His name was not a newly created Jewish Greek word such as some were in the LXX. Yeshua’s actual name is Hebrew and it was transliterated into Greek. To transliterate is to represent or spell in the language of another alphabet. The transliteration of the Hebrew *יֵשׁוּעַ* – Yeshua into Greek is *Ἰησοῦς* – *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce’). The Gree *Iésous* was then transliterated into English as Jesus. It is not His name, but a transliteration of it. His name is Yeshua, the name which the angel told Joseph that it was to be, a name chosen by ADONAI and relayed to Joseph by His *malach*, the angel. It is a shortened form of *Yehoshua*, Joshua. In the *Septuagint*, Joshua’s name in the Book of Joshua is *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce’), the very same as Yeshua’s.

5 “Have this attitude in yourselves, which also was in Messiah Yeshua, 6 Who, though existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be grasped. 7 But He emptied Himself— taking on the form of a slave, becoming the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man. 8 He humbled Himself— becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8 TLV). There’s a lot of meat in these verses. Yeshua, even though G-d Himself, did not consider Himself equal to G-d, G-d the Father, but humbled Himself and came in the form of a man as a slave, a servant to all, and willingly died for us. We are told by *Sha’ul*: “Have this attitude in yourselves.” We have received such a wonderful gift, the gift of eternal life, through Yeshua. It is our duty as His followers to have the same attitude which He had; to humble ourselves and be servants to each other and to be willing to die for our Messiah.

Sha’ul continued: 9 “For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue profess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord— to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:9-11 TLV). What is the “name above

all names?” It is Yeshua, the name of our Jewish Messiah, a name which means ADONAI is salvation. He is our salvation. His name is the name above all names and we must profess that He is our Master, our Owner, the Son of G-d who through His death bought and paid for our salvation. And, we acknowledge and bow before the greatness and splendor of G-d the Father, His glory. *At the name of Yeshua every knee should bow and every tongue profess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord.* He is our Jewish Messiah, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Son of David and our coming king! *Shabbat shalom!*