

# Parashat Shemot

Exodus 1:1–6:1

JANUARY 16, 2020



## SUMMARY

A new Pharaoh, who did not know *Yosef*, takes power in Egypt. He is afraid of the growing Israelite community, so he enslaves them. The heroic civil disobedience of midwives *Shifra* and *Pu'ah* help prevent the destruction of the Israelite nation.

*Yocheved*, the mother of Moshe, places her baby in a floating basket in the river in hopes of saving him. Pharaoh's daughter discovers the basket, adopts the baby, and names him *Moshe*. With the help of *Moshe's* sister, she hires *Moshe's* mother as a nurse. *Moshe* grows up. When he sees an Egyptian slave driver hit an Israelite, *Moshe* hits him, kills him, and runs away to *Midyan*. There *Moshe* meets the daughters of *Yitro* and marries one, named *Tsippora*. They start a family, and *Moshe* works as a shepherd.

God speaks to *Moshe* from a burning bush, telling him to return to Egypt and demand that Pharaoh let the Israelites go to worship God in the wilderness. Moshe tries to persuade God several times not to choose him, but God insists on *Moshe's* leadership and promises that *Aharon*, *Moshe's* older brother, will speak for him. *Moshe's* first meeting with Pharaoh does not help and Pharaoh makes things worse for the Israelites.

### From Our Commentators:

#### HaK'tav V'HaKabbalah

וירא כי אין איש. ראה שאין ביניהם גבר  
בגוברין, ואין מהם שם על לב צרת אחיו  
להשתדל על הצלתו

**And he saw that there was no man.** He saw that there was not amongst them a man of courage; not one of them on whose heart was the suffering of his brother's so that he might strive to save him.

### FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1) This week we read about Moshe growing up and leaving Pharaoh's palace. He goes out and sees an Egyptian hitting an Israelite. Moshe looks around, sees there is no one around, then hits the Egyptian and kills him. Why do you think Moshe looked around before hitting the Egyptian?
- 2) After he killed the Egyptian, the Torah says Moshe buried the Egyptian in the sand. Why would he bury him?
- 3) Of all the ways that G!d could have appeared to Moshe, why do you think G!d appeared to him as a bush that was on fire but didn't burn up?