

PARASHÁ 14 VAERA | EXODO 6:2 – 9:35



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Torah Readings:

1. 6:2-13
2. 6:14-28
3. 6:29 – 7:7
4. 7:8 – 8:10 (8:6 Heb.)
5. 8:11-22 (8:7-18 Heb.)
6. 8:23 (19 Heb.) – 9:16
7. 9:17-35
8. Maftir: 9:33-35

Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25 – 29:21

The Messianic Writings: Luke 2:21 – 5:11

VaEra

Means “and I showed myself”

Comments

The First Aliyah, 6:2-13

6:3 “and I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya’akov, as El Shaddai; but by my name *YHWH* I was not known to them.”(HNV revised) – This does not mean that the patriarchs did not know God’s personal name. From Genesis 2:4 the Name *YHWH* had been known. Moreover, the patriarchs had the oral traditions passed down from Adam, see Genesis 4:1; 24:31. We also see in Genesis 4:26 that man began to call on *YHWH*’s Name. In Genesis 15:2, Avraham says the Name *YHWH* in his prayer. After that it is written that Avraham believed *YHWH*, and that it was counted to him as righteousness, Genesis 15:6. In Genesis 17:1, it is written,

“When Avram was ninety-nine years old, *YHWH* appeared to Avram, and said to him, ‘I am El Shaddai. Walk before me, and be blameless.’”(HNV revised)

This teaches us that the patriarchs knew the Name *YHWH* (see Genesis 26:21-25; 28:10-16). How then, should we understand this passage?

Rashi says, “Here it is not written: ‘my name was not known’, but rather ‘I was not known’. They did not know me by the part of my character that is ‘true’, the characteristic by which I am called *YHWH* – Faithful to verify my word. Thus he had given them a promise, but he had not fulfilled it.”

We have to understand that when the Eternal reveals one of his names it does not mean that we only have to find out how it is pronounced or written, but that he reveals an act, which the Infinite One uses to relate to the world. The Eternal reveals himself through his different names. Each name reveals an act according to the meaning of that particular name. This is the way we must understand this verse. There is an act that is connected with the revelation of the name *YHWH*, and that act had not yet been fully revealed to the patriarchs. However, they had experienced acts connected with the name of El Shaddai.

The name El Shaddai can be understood in two ways, as the Almighty God and as the All Sufficient God. The patriarchs became familiar with the Infinite One by that name, which corresponds to that specific way to act towards them and the rest of the world. They knew El Shaddai’s hand of protection as they walked through dangers. They knew his supernatural miracles in creation. They experienced how El Shaddai gave them everything that they needed in order to be satisfied. It is written that Avraham died full of years, Genesis 25:8. But the Eternal had not made himself known to them as *YHWH*.

Which characteristic and which act is behind this name?

We have already quoted Rashi, who brings out this name's connection to faithfulness in fulfilling promises. Avraham got to know, to a certain degree, this part of the Eternal's character when he supernaturally received his son Yitzchak as the result of a promise, as it is written in Genesis 21:1,

"HaShem visited Sarah as he had said, and HaShem did to Sarah as he had spoken."(HNV revised)

However, there were several promises that the Eternal did not fulfill during the lifetime of the patriarchs; for example, the promise of descendants like the stars in heaven, as the dust of the earth, and as the sand of the sea, as well as the promise of being given the land of Kana'an as an eternal inheritance. These promises were not fulfilled during the lifetime of the patriarchs. Beyond this, they were also waiting for a heavenly city that would come down to the land of Kana'an, as it is written in Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16, 39-40,

"By faith, he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Yitzchak and Ya'akov, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God... These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and embraced them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking after a country of their own. If indeed they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had enough time to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them... These all, having had testimony given to them through their faith, didn't receive the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, so that apart from us they should

not be made perfect."(HNV revised)

The Eternal, therefore, did not reveal himself to the patriarchs by the name *YHWH* because he did not fulfill all his promises to them.

Moreover, we can bring out two more meanings of the name *YHWH*. The two names most frequently found in the Scriptures are *Elohim* and *YHWH*. *Elohim* occurs 2,500 times in the *Tanach* (OT). *YHWH* occurs almost 7,000 times. Even though *YHWH* is a personal name and *Elohim* is a title, the rabbis see in these two names a tendency toward two different emanations of the Infinite One. These two are both opposites as well as complements of one another. The name *YHWH* is connected to the Infinite One's compassion and the title *Elohim* relates to His righteousness. This means that wherever the name *Elohim*, which is translated as God, is written, it has to do with a righteous act and when the name *YHWH*¹¹ is written, it has to do with an act of compassion.

So we can conclude that the patriarchs did not fully know the Eternal's character since he had not revealed his compassion to them to the extent that he was about to do for the children of Israel at this time.

It is therefore very interesting to see that the first thing Moshe received at the magnificent revelation of the burning bush was the impression of the compassion and mercy of the Eternal, as it is written in Exodus 3:7, 9,

"HaShem said, 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows... Now, behold, the cry of the children of Yisra'el has come to me. Moreover I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.'"(HNV revised)

This expression of the Eternal's compassion had not been revealed to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov.

We also find another aspect of this Name, related to the first two aspects, and this is redemption, deliverance, liberation, as it is written in Exodus 3:8a, 10,

"I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians... Come now therefore, and I will send you to Par'oh, that you may bring forth my people, the children of Yisra'el, out of Egypt."(HNV)

The children of Israel needed to be redeemed in order to leave Egypt. When one or more people are in danger, slavery, poverty, disease, or any other such suffering, and do not have the ability to come out of the situation, they need to be redeemed in order to be free. A redeemer, or liberator, is a person who has the ability to deliver the one who needs to be set free. In this case the Eternal presents himself as Redeemer, in order to set the children of Israel free from Egypt. They could not come out on their own, as it is written in Exodus 15:13,

"You, in your loving kindness, have led the people that you have redeemed. You have guided them in your strength to your consecrated habitation."(HNV revised)

In Psalm 77:15, it is written,

"You have redeemed your people with your arm, the sons of Ya'akov and Yosef. Selah."(HNV)

The patriarchs did not come to know the Eternal as the great Redeemer. Here HaShem reveals himself to the children of Israel as the Redeemer who has come to set them free from slavery.

The children of Israel were slaves. A slave has no right to his own life. He is not lord over his own life. He is owned by another. It is hard for us to understand this because we have not lived in this kind of reality. That the people of Israel were slaves did not only mean that they were forced to work hard, it also meant that they were owned by someone else. They belonged to Pharaoh. The Torah does not tell us in detail how they came to be slaves. Midrash-literature gives one explanation, but

the fact that they were slaves meant that at some point they lost their freedom. They either sold themselves as slaves of their own free will, or else they were taken as slaves by force. The fact remains that at this point they were slaves, and therefore they were owned by Pharaoh. This meant that the Eternal could not take them out of Egypt without permission from their owner. We see, therefore, that Moshe did not command Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go in order to hold a festival unto the Eternal, but rather asked for his permission, even in a beseeching manner, as it is written in Exodus 5:3,

"They said, 'The God of the Hebrews has met with us. **Please** let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to HaShem, our God, lest he fall on us with pestilence, or with the sword.'"(HNV revised)

Seen from a legal standpoint, the Eternal could not claim the children of Israel since they were under Pharaoh's authority and belonged to him. If the Eternal had taken them out without Pharaoh's permission, he would have been a thief and he would then have violated the principles of authority that he himself had established. This is why Moshe had to ask for permission up to seven times in order to get the children of Israel out, compare 5:1; 7:16; 8:1 (7:26 Heb.), 20 (16); 9:1; 10:3. Not in any of these places does it say that HaShem commanded Pharaoh to release the people. The Eternal cannot commit any unrighteous act, as it is written in Psalm 145:17,

"HaShem is righteous in all his ways, and gracious in all his works."(HNV revised)

On the other hand, God had all power over Pharaoh. It was He who had placed him as king in Egypt by delegating some of his own authority, (see Romans 13:1-6). Therefore God had the right to judge Pharaoh's actions. And this was one part of Moshe's assignment; to act in this case as *Elohim* over the king in Egypt. The plagues came because the king of Egypt and his people did not respect the laws of the Eternal, which include all people on earth. Moshe was sent to carry out two main assignments. One was to judge the authority that was not doing as it should and not fulfilling

His will. The other was to deliver the children of Israel from their slavery.

Both of the names *Elohim* and *YHWH* were revealed in this great act. *Elohim* was revealed as the righteous Judge who makes just judgments over an evil government and sees that they are carried out. *YHWH* was revealed as the compassionate Redeemer, who sets his people free from slavery.

The Eternal has revealed himself in the same way through his Son, Yeshua the Anointed. When he was revealed to the world, he came with two purposes. One was to judge the ruler of this world's system and his people. The other was to deliver the people of Israel from the slavery of sin and death. In Yeshua, *Elohim's* righteousness and *YHWH's* compassion were revealed. The death of the Messiah constitutes the greatest revelation of *Elohim's* righteousness and *YHWH's* compassion. In his death, sin was judged and the ruler of this world was cast out. In his death the righteousness of God was revealed, the righteousness which cannot forgive a sinner and declare him innocent without payment for the consequences of sin. In the death of the Messiah, *YHWH's* compassion is revealed so that all those who believe in the substitutionary sacrifice can be forgiven and delivered from the slavery of sin and all of its consequences for eternity.

6:6-8 "Therefore tell the children of Yisra'el, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you an *Elohim*; and you shall know that I am HaShem your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov; and I will give it to you for a heritage: I am HaShem.'" (HNV revised) – We find seven promises in this text. The first four are connected with the four cups of the Pesach celebration (Passover).

1. I will bring you out – the first cup which is called *kiddush* "separation"
2. I will rid you of their bondage – the second cup called "judgment"

3. I will redeem you – the third cup which is called "redemption" or "blessing"

4. I will take you – the fourth cup, called "praise"

5. I will be to you a God

6. I will bring you into the land

7. I will give it (the land) to you for a heritage

6:12 "Moshe spoke before HaShem, saying, 'Behold, the children of Yisra'el haven't listened to me. How then shall Par'oh listen to me, who am of uncircumcised lips?'" (HNV revised) – This is the seventh time that Moshe Rabbenu opposes the Eternal. He did it five times at the burning bush and two times in Egypt (see 5:22-23).

"uncircumcised lips" – literally "hindered lips". The Hebrew word that is translated as "uncircumcised" is *aral*,^[2] which comes from *arel*,^[3] which, according to Rashi, means "hindrance". What Moshe is saying is that his lips have a hindrance so that he cannot speak clearly. According to Rashi, the word *orlah*,^[4] which is the feminine form of *aral*, always means "hindrance". We have one example in Jeremiah 6:10, where it is written,

"To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may hear? behold, their ear is **hindered** (*arelah*), and they can't listen: behold, the word of HaShem is become to them a reproach; they have no delight in it." (HNV revised)

We have another example in Jeremiah 9:25-26, where it is written,

"Behold, the days come, says HaShem, that I will punish all those who are circumcised in their uncircumcision: Egypt, and Yehudah, and Edom, and the children of 'Ammon, and Mo'av, and all that have the corners of their hair cut off, who dwell in the wilderness; for all the nations are uncircumcised (*arelim*), and all the house of Yisra'el are

uncircumcised in heart (*arlei-lev*).”(HNV revised)

In this text, uncircumcised heart means that the heart is blocked so that it cannot understand; it is insensitive to the impulses of the Eternal.

There is another example in Habakkuk 2:16, where it is written,

“Thou art filled with shame instead of glory, drink thou also, and be uncovered (*ve-he'arel*); the cup of HaShem's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and filthiness shall be upon thy glory.”(JPS revised)

Rashi translates the verse this way, “Drink thou also and be hindered”, which means, drink and block your mind because of the intoxication in the cup of the curse (poison).

In Leviticus 19:23, it is written,

“And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised (*arlatem arlatoh*): three years shall it be as uncircumcised(*arelim*) unto you: it shall not be eaten of.”(KJV)

This means, according to Rashi, that they had to put hindrances on the trees, in other words, a command prohibiting people to eat of the fruit during the first three years.

The foreskin of the flesh is also called *orlah*, since it covers and hinders a part of the male organ. An uncircumcised man is called “*arel*”, as it is written in Genesis 17:14,

“The uncircumcised male (*arel*) who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant.”(HNV)

In Exodus 12:48, it is written,

“When a stranger shall live as a foreigner with you, and will keep the Pesach to HaShem, let all his males be circumcised, and then

let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one who is born in the land: but no uncircumcised person (*arel*) shall eat of it.”(HNV)

Moshe had, therefore, a hindrance over his lips so that he could not speak well. This forced the children of Israel to acknowledge the fact that HaShem used him whenever his words poured out with clarity and ease, as it is written in Deuteronomy 32:1-2,

“Give ear, you heavens, and I will speak; let the earth hear the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall condense as the dew, as the small rain on the tender grass, as the showers on the herb.”(HNV)

This teaches us that the Eternal chooses that which is nothing to put to shame that which is something in this world, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29,

“For you see your calling, brothers, that not many are wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, and not many noble; but God chose the foolish things of the world that he might put to shame those who are wise. God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and God chose the lowly things of the world, and the things that are despised, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nothing the things that are: that no flesh should boast before God.”(HNV revised)

The Second Aliyah, 6:14-28

6:16 “These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, and Kehat, and Merari; and the years of the life of Levi were one hundred thirty-seven years.”(HNV) – According to Midrash literature^[5] and Rashi, Levi was the last of Israel's sons to die. After Yosef and all his brothers died, slavery came, see 1:6-8.

6:18 “The sons of Kehat: `Amram, and Yitzhar, and Chevron, and `Uzzi'el; and the years of the life of Kehat were one hundred thirty-three years.”(HNV revised) – According to Genesis 46:11, Kehat traveled with his grandfather Ya'akov to Egypt. If we add Kehat's years of life, which were 130, and Amram's, which were 137, (verse 20), plus Moshe's 80 years, we get 347 years. We also have to consider that many of the years of the sons overlapped the years of their fathers.

In Genesis 15:13, it is written,

“He said to Avram, ‘Know for sure that your seed will live as foreigners in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them. They will afflict them four hundred years.’”(HNV)

How can it be possible that the prophecy in Genesis 15:13 speaks of 400 years in slavery and affliction when the genealogy of the Levites does not show that they spent that many years in Egypt?

We present two different interpretations here.

According to Rashi and many rabbinical sources, the 400 years began at the birth of Yitzchak. Then Yitzchak would be counted as one of Avraham's "descendant's" who would be in slavery and oppressed for 400 years in a strange land. The land of Kana'an where Yitzchak lived his whole life, would, in this case, be considered a strange land, as well as Egypt where Ya'akov later traveled with all his children. The rabbis count 210 years in Egypt.

In Exodus 12:40-41, it is written,

“Now the time that the children of Yisra'el lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years. It happened at the end of four hundred thirty years, even the same day it happened, that all the hosts of HaShem went out from the land of Egypt.”(HNV revised)

If Rashi's theory is correct, this verse must be translated as:^[6] “The time of the duration of the children of Israel, during which they lived in Egypt, was 430 years.”

It is written in another translation:^[7] “And Israel's children's dwelling in Egypt was 430 years.”

The latter translation has a footnote, which says that the 400 years began at the time of the sacrifice that was offered in Genesis 15, (and not from the birth of Yitzchak, as Rashi says), and which includes all the lands where the patriarchs lived as strangers.

We are now going to look at some arguments, which challenge the rabbis' interpretation that we have just presented. First of all, the text in Genesis does not say that Avraham's descendants would be oppressed in several lands, but in one land; “will live as foreigners in a land that is not theirs”. Yitzchak was born when Avraham was a hundred years old. If the 400 years began at the birth of Yitzchak, then the 430 years mentioned in Exodus 12 must have begun 30 years earlier. At that time Avraham was seventy years old and was still living in Haran, according to Genesis 12:4, where it is written,

“So Avram went, as HaShem had spoken to him. Lot went with him. Avram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran.”(HNV revised)

The word in Exodus 12:40-41, says that a time period of 430 years ended for “Israel's children” when they left Egypt. If “Israel's children” had existed for 430 years when they left Egypt, how is it possible that the 400 years began as Yitzchak's birth? In that case we would have to call Avram “Israel's child” when he was in Haran, five years before he came to the land of Kana'an for the first time. The book of Jasher says that Avraham made several trips to the land of Kana'an before the story of Genesis 12. But even if that is true, we can still not call our father Avraham “Israel's child”, as the Scriptures say. We must therefore look for another solution for the missing years in the Levite genealogy.

In the genealogy in Luke 3:36, the name Keinan, is found between Shelach and Arfachshad. This name is not found in the Masoretic text of Genesis 11:12-13. The name is found, however, in LXX (the Septuagint), as well as, according to my understanding, in the

Qumran manuscripts. We also have to reckon with the fact that the word *ben*, “son”, does not necessarily mean a son born of one’s wife. It could be a grandchild or a great grand child etc. Yeshua is the son of David, which means that he is a direct descendant of King David. In the genealogies found in different places in the Scriptures, it is possible that certain generations were skipped. It is, therefore, quite possible that there is a generation that was skipped between Levi’s son, Kehat, and Moshe’s father, Amram. Amram is definitely Kehat’s son, in the meaning of *ben*. It is possible that he is not his direct son, but one of his descendants. This way we can fit the 430 years of time in Egypt, from the day that Ya’akov, at 130 years of age, together with all his children, moved there. It was on the 15th day, in the month Aviv.

According to the Jewish calculations there are still more than 200 years until we reach the year 6000 from the creation of Adam. This calculation is based on the children of Israel having spent 210 years in Egypt. If, however, they were in Egypt for 430 years, there is a difference of 220 years ($430-210=220$). If we add the 220 years to the Jewish calendar, it is more in line with the time that we are living in right now, according to the words of prophecy, i.e. very near the year 6000. The Messianic Kingdom on earth will start in year 6001 after Adam.

However, between the dividing of the kingdom at the reign of King Shelomoh’s son and the Babylonian invasion, there was a time of severe backsliding during which the years were not recorded or counted properly. According to Pastor Jozsef Lado,^[8] the Jewish chronology counts that there were between 200 and 240 years from the beginning of Shelomo’s building of the temple, see 1 Kings 6:1, until the Babylonian captivity. This means that there is quite a margin of error and that we do not know exactly what year we are in right now. It is clear, however, that there is only a little time left until the Messiah returns and the Messianic Kingdom is established on the earth.

Another option is that the calculation from Adam to Avraham could be incomplete because all generations are not mentioned.

It is possible that the year of the birth of the Messiah was 3970 after Adam, because when he began his preaching ministry he said, as it is written in Mark 1:14-15,

“Now after Yochanan was taken into custody, Yeshua came into the Galil, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand! Repent, and believe in the Good News.’”(HNV revised)

The expression “the time is fulfilled” is referring to the first 4000 years of the history of mankind and the beginning of the Messianic era in year 4001. According to Talmud,^[9] the history of the world is divided up in the following way:

- 2,000 years of destruction (from Adam to Avraham)
- 2,000 years of Torah (from Avraham to the Messiah)
- 2,000 years of Messianic era (from the Messiah’s first coming to his second coming)
- 1,000 years of redemption (the Messianic Kingdom)
- After this the world will be renewed (new heavens and a new earth)

The Third Aliyah, 6:29 – 7:7

7:3 “I will harden Par’oh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.”(HNV) – According to our point of view the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart was not because of a pre-determined decision that the Eternal had made. That would violate the principle of the freedom to choose. HaShem gave Pharaoh many chances to turn from his sin, as it is written in 2 Peter 3:9,

“The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness; but is patient with us, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”(HNV)

In 1 Timothy 2:4, it is written,

“who desires all people to be saved and come to full knowledge of the truth.”(HNV)

Rambam writes,^[10] “Do not think in the same way as the senseless nations of the world, and in the way of the majority of the ignorant in Israel, that the Consecrated One, may he be blessed, from the beginning of his creation of man decided if man should be righteous or evil. It is not this way... There is no one that can force another, or push, or draw him to one of these two ways. It is only the person himself, who by his own decision will go in the way that he wishes.”

HaShem said to Moshe that he would harden Pharaoh’s heart so that he would be able to multiply his signs and wonders. We see however, that the Eternal did not harden Pharaoh’s heart until after five plagues had come. During the first five plagues, which according to Midrash literature, lasted for 5 months, it was Pharaoh himself who made his heart so strong that he did not listen to the words of the Eternal.

In Exodus 4:21, HaShem said that he would strengthen Pharaoh’s heart. The Hebrew word is *chazak*^[11], which means “strengthen oneself/be strong”, “be courageous”, “harden oneself”. The Eternal promised that he would strengthen Pharaoh’s heart so that he would be able to continue in his rebellious attitude and not lose the strength to resist the Eternal. If HaShem had not made Pharaoh’s inner man strong, He would not have been able to perform the last great wonders before the whole world. HaShem was, therefore, taking advantage of Pharaoh once he had decided to go the way of rebellion.

In Exodus 7:3, we see that the Eternal said that he would harden Pharaoh’s heart. The Hebrew word is *kashah*^[12], which means, “be hard”, “difficult”. This is the only time that the word “harden” is found in relation to Pharaoh.

During the five first plagues, we can see how Pharaoh strengthens his own heart in rebellion.

In Exodus 7:13, 22; 8:19 (8:15, in the Hebrew text); 9:12, 35; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17; we find the word *chazak*, “strengthen”.

In Exodus 7:14; 8:15 (8:11 Heb.), 32 (28 Heb.); 9:7, 34; 10:1, the word *kavad*^[13] is found. It means “be heavy”, “weigh”, “be a burden”, “receive honor”.

From all these texts we learn that when a person is walking in stubborn rebellion against the will of the Eternal, he will come to a point where the grace of the Eternal is withdrawn. Then there is no longer the opportunity to repent. He has crossed over the line and is condemned to be a vessel of wrath prepared for destruction, as it is written in Romans 9:22,

“What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath made for destruction”(HNV revised)

After having passed the point of no return, the Eternal strengthens the person in his rebellion. This has a threefold purpose.

First of all, he does this to confirm the decision that the person has made, that he has the right to live according to his free choice.

Secondly, he does it to show those around that what earlier looked like repentance was only a façade, see 9:27. So when the judgment comes, no one can say that God punishes those who have repented. The rebellion of the individual is apparent to everyone and therefore no one can make the mistake of saying that the heavenly punishment is unjust.

Thirdly, the Eternal hardens the sinner in order to show his power through the great judgments that will be revealed. Then the people of Israel and other people can know his great power, see Exodus 7:3-5; 9:15-16.

The Fourth Aliyah, 7:8 – 8:10 (8:6 Heb.)

7:12 “For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aharon’s rod swallowed up their rods.”(HNV) – It does not say that it was Aharon’s snake that swallowed up the others, but his rod. From this Talmud and a Midrash^[14] teach that when the snake

was once again turned into a rod, it swallowed the others. This shows the superior power of the Eternal over the magic that comes from demons.

7:15 “Go to Par`oh in the morning. Behold, he goes out to the water; and you shall stand by the river’s bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand.”(HNV) – Rashi quotes Midrash literature^[15] and says that Pharaoh would go very early in the morning to see to his needs in the river. That way people would not know that he was a normal human being. He had said that he was a god and therefore would not have normal physical needs. HaShem used Moshe to judge all the false gods in Egypt, as it is written in Exodus 12:12,

“For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and animal. Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am HaShem.”(HNV revised)

The first thing that Moshe attacked was Egypt’s magic powers. After that, he continued by attacking one after another of the Egyptian gods. Pharaoh himself was attacked by the first plague, because he had claimed that he was a god. Moshe exposed Pharaoh’s humanity as he was going to the river to see to his needs just like every other person.

7:16a “You shall tell him, ‘HaShem, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you’”(HNV revised) – There are three words used in the Scriptures to identify the chosen people: Hebrews, children of Israel, and Jews. Avraham was the first Hebrew, according to Genesis 14:13. From that time forward, all his descendants through Yitzchak and Ya’akov were called Hebrews.

The children of Israel are Ya’akov’s descendants; he who was called Israel

The word “Jews”, was first used to describe members of the southern kingdom, which consisted of Yehudah’s and Binyamin’s tribes,

as well as a large part of the tribe of Levi, see 2 Kings 16:6; Jeremiah 32:12; Daniel 3:8.

7:17 “Thus says HaShem, ‘In this you shall know that I am HaShem. Behold, I will strike with the rod that is in my hand on the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood.’”(HNV revised) – The river was also considered to be a god and therefore it was judged by the God of the Hebrews. The Eternal said that he himself would strike the waters, not Moshe. Moshe’s rod was also the Eternal’s rod. We see here that there was an intimate cooperation between what Moshe did and what the Eternal did. The Eternal struck the waters through his *shaliach*, messenger, Moshe.

7:19 “HaShem said to Moshe, ‘Tell Aharon, “Take your rod, and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.”’”(HNV revised) – Authority was delegated to Aharon. Rashi brings out something that is taught in Midrash literature,^[16] he says that Moshe had been saved through the water of the river and therefore he did not punish it himself, but let his brother Aharon do it.

The redemption from Egypt gives a prophetic message about the great redemption that Israel will experience in connection with the second coming of the Messiah, as it is written in Isaiah 44:23,

“Sing, you heavens, for HaShem has done it; shout, you lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for HaShem has redeemed Ya’akov, and will glorify himself in Yisra’el.”(HNV revised)

In Isaiah 52:9-10, it is written,

“Break forth into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for HaShem has comforted his people, he has

redeemed
 Jerusalem. HaShem has made
 bare his consecrated arm in the
 eyes of all the nations; and all the
 ends of the earth have seen
 the salvation of our God.”(HNV
 revised)

In Jeremiah 31:8-11, it is written,

“Behold, I will bring them from the
 north country, and gather them
 from the uttermost parts of
 the earth, and with them the blind
 and the lame, the woman with
 child and her who travails with
 child together: a great company
 shall they return here. They shall
 come with weeping; and with
 petitions will I lead them: I will
 cause them to walk by rivers of
 waters, in a straight way in which
 they shall not stumble; for I am a
 father to Yisra'el, and Efrayim is
 my firstborn. Hear the word of
 HaShem, you nations, and
 declare it in the isles afar off; and
 say, He who scattered Yisra'el will
 gather him, and keep him, as
 shepherd does his flock. For
 HaShem has ransomed Ya`akov,
 and redeemed him from the hand
 of him who was stronger than
 he.”(HNV revised)

The final redemption is going to be very similar
 to the first redemption. In the same way that
 during the first redemption the people went
 through water, Israel is going to go through
 water at the final redemption, as it is written in
 Zechariah 10:8-12,

“I will signal for them, and gather
 them; for I have redeemed them;
 and they will increase as they
 have increased. I will sow them
 among the peoples; and they will
 remember me in far countries;
 and they will live with their
 children, and will return. I will
 bring them again also out of the
 land of Egypt, and gather them
 out of Ashur; and I will bring them
 into the land of Gil`ad and
 Levanon; and there won't be
 room enough for them. He will

pass through the sea of affliction,
 and will strike the waves in the
 sea, and all the depths of the Nile
 will dry up; and the pride of Ashur
 will be brought down, and the
 scepter of Egypt will depart. I will
 strengthen them in HaShem; and
 they will walk up and down in his
 name,’ says HaShem.”(HNV
 revised)

In Isaiah 11:11-16, it is written,

“It shall happen in that day, that
 the Lord will set his hand again
 the second time (*in the end
 times*) to recover (*redeem*) the
 remnant of his people, who shall
 remain, from Ashur (*Iraq*), and
 from Egypt (*Egypt*), and from
 Patros (*southern Egypt*), and from
 Kush (*Ethiopia and Yemen*), and
 from `Elam (*Iran*), and from
 Shin`ar (*Iraq*), and from
 Hamat (*Syria*), and from the
 islands of the sea (*the Balearic
 Islands, the continents, and all
 the coastlands*). He will raise up a
 banner (*the Messiah*) for the
 nations, and will assemble the
 outcasts of Yisra'el, and gather
 together the dispersed of
 Yehudah from the four corners of
 the earth. The envy also of
 Efrayim (*the ten tribes*) shall
 depart, and those who vex
 Yehudah (*the Jews*) shall be cut
 off: Efrayim shall not envy
 Yehudah, and Yehudah shall not
 vex Efrayim. They shall fly down
 on the shoulder of the
 Pelishtim (*the Palestinians*) on
 the west (*Gaza*); together shall
 they despoil the children of the
 east: they shall put forth their
 hand on Edom and
 Mo'av (*southern Jordan*); and the
 children of `Ammon (*northern
 Jordan*) shall obey them.
 HaShem will utterly destroy the
 tongue of the Egyptian sea; and
 with his scorching wind will he
 wave his hand over the
 River (*Euphrates*), and will strike
 it into seven streams, and cause

men to march over in sandals. There shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, who shall remain, from Ashur; like as there was for Yisra'el in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.”(HNV revised)

In Isaiah 43:1-7, it is written,

“But now thus says HaShem who created you, Ya`akov, and he who formed you, Yisra'el: Don't be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle on you. For I am HaShem your God, the Consecrated One of Yisra'el, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Kush and Seva in your place. Since you have been precious in my sight, and honorable, and I have loved you; therefore will I give men in your place, and peoples instead of your life. Don't be afraid; for I am with you: I will bring your seed from the east, and gather you from the west; I will tell the north, Give up; and to the south, Don't keep back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; everyone who is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yes, whom I have made.”(HNV revised)

At the final redemption, there will be a deliverance even from sin and death, as it is written in Psalm 130:7-8,

“Yisra'el, hope in HaShem, for with HaShem there is loving kindness. With him is abundant redemption. He will redeem Yisra'el from all their sins.”(HNV revised)

And in Psalm 49:15, it is written,

“But God will redeem my soul from the power of She'ol, for he will receive me. Selah.” (HNV revised)

In Isaiah 63:4, it is written,

“For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.”(HNV)

In Luke 21:28, it is written,

“But when these things begin to happen, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is near.”(HNV)

In Romans 8:23, it is written,

“Not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for adoption, the redemption of our body.”(HNV)

In Ephesians 4:30, it is written,

“Don't grieve the Consecrated Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”(HNV revised)

Since the first redemption is similar to the final one, we can find similarities in the plagues that came over Egypt and the plagues that will come over the world in the last days. We are going to compare the plagues that came over Egypt with those found in the book of Revelation:

1. **Water turned to blood**, Exodus 7:14-25 – In Revelation 8:8, 16:3, it is written, “The second angel sounded, and something like a great burning mountain was thrown into the sea. One third of the sea became blood... The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man. Every living thing in the sea died.”(HNV)
2. **Frogs**, Exodus 8:1-15 (7:26-8:11 Heb.) – In Revelation 16:13-14, it is written, “I saw coming out of the mouth

of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, something like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs; which go forth to the kings of the whole inhabited earth, to gather them together for the war of that great day of God, the Almighty.”(HNV revised)

3. **Swarms of lice**, Exodus 8:16 (12 Heb.) – I have not found anything similar.

4. **Wild animals**, Exodus 8:20-32 (16-28 Heb.) – In Revelation 6:8, it is written, “And behold, a pale horse, and he who sat on it, his name was Death. She'ol followed with him. Authority over one fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine, with pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth was given to him.”(HNV revised)

5. **Pestilence on the cattle**, Exodus 9:1-7 – In Revelation 6:8b, it is written, “with pestilence”.

6. **Boils**, Exodus 9:8-12 – In Revelation 16:2, it is written, “The first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth, and it became a harmful and evil sore on the people who had the mark of the beast, and who worshiped his image.”(HNV)

7. **Hail**, Exodus 9:13-35 – In Revelation 16:21, it is written, “Great hailstones, about the weight of a talent, came down out of the sky on people. People blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for this plague is exceedingly severe.”(HNV revised)

8. **Locusts**, Exodus 10:1-20 – In Revelation 9:1-11, it is written, “The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from the sky which had fallen to the earth. The key to the pit of the abyss was given to him. He opened the pit of the abyss, and

smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke from a burning furnace. The sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke from the pit. Then out of the smoke came forth locusts on the earth, and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those people who don't have God's seal on their foreheads. They were given power not to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion, when it strikes a person. In those days people will seek death, and will in no way find it. They will desire to die, and death will flee from them. The shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like golden crowns, and their faces were like people's faces. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like those of lions. They had breastplates, like breastplates of iron. The sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, or of many horses rushing to war. They have tails like those of scorpions, and stings. In their tails they have power to harm men for five months. They have over them as king the angel of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is 'Avaddon', but in Greek, he has the name 'Apollyon.'”(HNV revised)

9. **Darkness**, Exodus 10:21-29 – In Revelation 6:12; 8:12; 16:10, it is written, “I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became as blood... The fourth angel sounded, and one third of the sun was struck, and one third of the moon, and one third of the stars; so that one third of them would be

darkened, and the day wouldn't shine for one third of it, and the night in the same way... The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened. They gnawed their tongues because of the pain"(HNV)

The Fifth Aliyah, 8:11-22 (8:7-18 Heb.)

8:12 "Moshe and Aharon went out from Par'oh, and Moshe cried to HaShem concerning the frogs which he had brought on Par'oh."(HNV revised) – Moshe cried to the Eternal. This teaches us that there are times when we have to cry out to the Eternal in order for our prayers to reach the throne.

8:16 "HaShem said to Moshe, 'Tell Aharon, "Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'""(HNV revised) – Pharaoh did not receive any warning before the third plague came. If we divide the first nine plagues into three groups, we can see that Pharaoh was warned of the first two in each group; but not of the last one in each group.

8:18 "The magicians tried with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they couldn't. There were lice on man, and on animal."(HNV) – We see that these magicians finally had to admit that HaShem's power was greater than theirs. The magic powers in Egypt had reached a very high level. The source of magic is satan. The source of Moshe's power came from HaShem. All supernatural manifestations, which are not connected to the Eternal, have their source in evil spirits. Occultism, magic, astrology, and the pagan religions have demonic origins. The servants of the Eternal need supernatural power in order to stand against the powers of evil and show that the Eternal is greater, as it is written in Luke 10:17-20,

"The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!' He said to them, 'I saw satan having fallen like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. Nothing will in any way hurt you. Nevertheless, don't

rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'"(HNV)

In 1 John 4:4, it is written,

"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world."(HNV revised)

In Mark 16:17-18, it is written,

"These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new languages; they will take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will in no way hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."(HNV)

In John 14:12-13, it is written,

"Most assuredly I tell you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these will he do; because I am going to my Father. Whatever you will ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."(HNV)

8:22 "I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end you may know that I am HaShem in the midst of the earth."(HNV revised) – Here we see that the chosen people were preserved throughout the great judgments of the Eternal. It is going to be like this in the last days. The birth pains for the new age have already begun with false "anointed" preachers, wars, terrorism, famine, plagues, signs in the heavens, earthquakes, and great waves in the sea, as it is written in Matthew 24:5-8,

"For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and will lead many astray. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you aren't troubled, for all this must happen, but the end

is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines, plagues, and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are the beginning of birth pains.”(HNV)

In Luke 21:10-11, 25-26, it is written,

“Then he said to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines, and plagues in various places. There will be terrors and great signs from heaven... There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and on the earth anxiety of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the waves; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.’”(HNV)

In the midst of all this there is a people who have learned to trust the Eternal. They are not going to suffer in the same way as those who are not the Eternal's people. There is a difference between the children of the darkness and the children of the light, and that difference is going to be revealed more and more through the plagues that will come over the world, as it is written in Revelation 7:3-4; 9:4,

“saying, ‘Don’t harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we have sealed the bondservants of our God on their foreheads!’ I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Yisra’el.”(HNV revised)

The Sixth Aliyah, 8:23 (19 Heb.) – 9:16

8:23 “I will put a division between my people and your people: by tomorrow shall this sign be.”(HVN) – The Eternal continues to separate the light from the darkness. There is a difference between the children of Israel, who are the children of the Eternal, and the other people. To be consecrated means to be

different. If the people of Israel want to be the same as the other nations, they will lose the light that comes from the Torah, as it is written in Matthew 5:14-17,

“You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can’t be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp, and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Don’t think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn’t come to destroy, but to fulfill.”(HNV)

8:26 “Moshe said, ‘It isn’t appropriate to do so; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to HaShem our God. Behold, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and won’t they stone us?’”(HNV revised) – Sheep were considered to be gods by the Egyptians.

8:30 “Moshe went out from Par’oh, and prayed to HaShem.”(HNV revised) – The Hebrew word that is translated as “prayed” is *va-yetar*, and the root of this word is *atar*^[17], which means “pray”, “intercede”, “burn incense”. It is connected to the word *atar*,^[18] which means “increase”, “overflow”, “boost”. That teaches us that Moshe prayed with intensity. If prayer is to be effective, it must be prayed with fervor, as it is written in Luke 18:1-8,

“He also spoke a parable to them that they must always pray, and not give up, saying, ‘There was a judge in a certain city who didn’t fear God, and didn’t respect man. A widow was in that city, and she often came to him, saying, “Defend me from my adversary!” He wouldn’t for a while, but afterward he said to himself, “Though I neither fear God, nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will defend her, or else she will wear me out by her continual coming.”’ The

Lord said, 'Listen to what the unrighteous judge says. Won't God avenge his chosen ones, who are crying out to him day and night, and yet he exercises patience with them? I tell you that he will avenge them quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?'"(HNV revised)

In James 5:16b-18, it is written,

"The effective, earnest prayer of a righteous man is powerfully effective. Eliyahu was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it didn't rain on the earth for three years and six months. He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit."(HNV revised)

Both Moshe *rabbenu* (our teacher) and Eliyahu *hanavi* (the prophet) prayed according to the will of the Eternal. In spite of that they still needed to pray with fire and intensity in order for the Eternal to fulfill his will. Our Rabbi taught us to be like the aggressive widow in our prayers. Whoever does not pray with *kavanah*, intention, intensity, fire, is not going to break through the spiritual barrier in the air, and the prayer is not going to come forth with power to the throne. The Eternal was dependent on Moshe's prayers in order to fulfill his purposes in Egypt. If we do not pray, the plan of the Eternal will not be fulfilled in our surroundings. The purpose of prayer is that the will of the Eternal is done on earth as it is done in heaven.

9:3 "behold, the hand of HaShem is on your cattle which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks with a very grievous pestilence."(HNV revised) – This was the crucial plague. If Pharaoh did not repent at this time, he would not have any more opportunities to be saved. His soul would be lost. After the resurrection of the dead, he will be cast, body and soul, into the lake of fire to be destroyed for eternity, as it is written in Matthew 10:28,

"Don't be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is

able to destroy both soul and body in Gehinnom."(HNV)

In Matthew 25:41, it is written,

"Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels'"(HNV)

"the hand of HaShem is" – Here we find the word, *hayah*, "be", in the present tense, *hoyah* (*he, vav, yud, he*). This is the only time in all the Scriptures that the verb "to be" is found in the present tense. Normally in the Hebrew language, the verb "to be" is not used in the present tense. Here we find an exception.

9:4 "HaShem will make a distinction between the cattle of Yisra'el and the cattle of Egypt; and there shall nothing die of all that belongs to the children of Yisra'el."(HNV revised) – In the midst of the plagues in the end times, there will be access to heavenly provision from our Father. In this way we will be able to survive supernaturally, even when we no longer have the right to buy and sell, (Revelation 13:17). It is going to be like the three and a half years when Eliyahu lived through the drought. The ravens came with food and what little food there was, multiplied (see 1 Kings 17:4, 6, 14, 16).

9:15-16 "For now I would have put forth my hand, and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth, but indeed for this cause I have made you stand: to show you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."(HNV) – During the fifth plague of the pestilence on the cattle, HaShem protected Pharaoh and his people so that the pestilence did not come over them. From the sixth plague and forward, the Eternal enters Pharaoh's heart and strengthens it in its rebellion. He had crossed over the line of the mercy of the Eternal, and now there was no return, no possibility to repent. HaShem used this to show his wonders to the whole world. This is how we must understand the teaching in Romans 9:14-24, where it is written,

"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be! For he said to Moshe, 'I will have mercy on whom I have

mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy (*since all have sinned and cannot make any claims*). For the Scripture says to Par'oh, 'For this very purpose I caused you to be raised up, that I might show in you my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth.' So then, he has mercy on whom he desires, and he hardens whom he desires. You will say then to me, 'Why does he still find fault? For who withstands his will?' But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed ask him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' Or hasn't the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath made for destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory, us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the gentiles?"(HNV revised)

When it is translated that Pharaoh was "to be raised up", we could misunderstand it as speaking of the time when Pharaoh was raised up as king. The text in Exodus that we have stopped at here, says that the Eternal allowed Pharaoh to remain standing, i.e. remain in spite of the pestilence that came over the animals. Then, since he did not repent during the fifth plague of the pestilence over the cattle, HaShem strengthened, by his own decision, Pharaoh's heart, so that he could no longer receive mercy. In this way, he was prepared ahead of time, after the fifth plague, to be destroyed. Pharaoh was not prepared in his mother's womb to be lost, only once he crossed the line where the mercy of the Eternal ended, after the fifth plague.

The vessels of mercy receive glory. The vessels of mercy are the children of Israel and those gentiles who have turned from their false gods and have come in under the wings of the God of Israel through the Messiah. We were not prepared for glory in our mothers' wombs, but at the moment we repented of our sins and confessed Yeshua as our Savior and Lord.

On the other hand, we can understand this teaching as meaning that the Eternal had pre-determined Pharaoh to be a vessel to be destroyed and those who have responded positively to his calling he pre-determined to be vessels of honor. However, the foundation of this pre-determination is not his inexorable will to decide who will be saved and who will be lost, but it is based on the will of every individual. Every being, created to be like God, has been given this free will. Only those who were known by him ahead of time, according to their own future decisions, have been pre-determined for the glory, as it is written in Romans 8:29-30,

"For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Whom he predestined, those he also called. Whom he called, those he also justified. Whom he justified, those he also glorified."(HNV)

n Ephesians 1:4-5, it is written,

even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be consecrated and without blemish before him in love; having predestined us for adoption as children through Yeshua the Messiah to himself, according to the good pleasure of his desire,"(HNV)

On account of every individual's future decision, HaShem can pre-destine us for certain assignments, as it is written in Galatians 1:15-16,

"But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and

called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the gentiles, I didn't immediately confer with flesh and blood"(HNV revised)

In Jeremiah 1:5, it is written,

"Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came forth out of the womb I set you apart; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."(HNV)

In Isaiah 49:1, 5, it is written,

"Listen, isles, to me; and listen, you peoples, from far: HaShem has called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother has he made mention of my name... Now says HaShem who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Ya`akov again to him, and that Yisra'el be gathered to him (for I am honorable in the eyes of HaShem, and my God is become my strength)"(HNV revised)

We can also say that Pharaoh was formed in his mother's womb with the characteristics needed in order to be the King of Egypt and to have the necessary strength to resist the power of the Eternal. It is true that the Eternal does not wish anyone's death, see Ezekiel 18:32, but rather that they should repent of their sin and be saved for eternity. But if the person does not want to be saved, HaShem respects his decision and prepares him to be a vessel meant for destruction. This means that he can use it, in the same way that there are vessels in a household that are used less honorably for a time, in order to be destroyed in the end.

The Seventh Aliyah, 9:17-35

9:28 "Pray to HaShem; for there has been enough of mighty thunderings and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."(HNV revised) – The request to travel a three days' journey in order to celebrate a feast to the Eternal, was given with the thought of returning to Egypt afterwards. The slaves did not have the right to leave their owner without permission. We see here, however, that

Pharaoh spoke of them not having to stay in the land any longer. It meant something more than just leaving for a while and then coming back. But since Pharaoh did not keep his promise, the children of Israel were not free of their former owner until he died in the Reed Sea.

Going through the sea is a *tevilah*, an act of cleansing through water. That act symbolizes, among other things, death and resurrection. It is also a way to go from one lord to another. When Jewish brides go through a *mikveh*, a body of cleansing water, before they enter the covenant of marriage, they go from being under their father's authority to stand under the authority of their spouse. In the same way, the children of Israel were delivered of their bondage to Pharaoh when they crossed the Reed Sea, in order to stand under the Eternal, who now became their spouse.

9:29 "Moshe said to him, 'As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands to HaShem. The thunders shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that you may know that the earth is HaShem's.'"(HNV revised) – Here we see another ingredient in Moshe's prayers, lifted hands. Several passages in the Scriptures speak about this way of praying, as we see in Exodus 17:11, where it is written,

"It happened, when Moshe held up his hand, that Yisra'el prevailed; and when he let down his hand, `Amalek prevailed."(HNV)

And in Psalm 28:2, it is written,

"Hear the voice of my petitions, when I cry to you, when I lift up my hands toward your Most Consecrated Place."(HNV revised)

In Psalm 63:4, it is written,

"So I will bless you while I live. I will lift up my hands in your name."(HNV)

In Psalm 88:9, it is written,

"My eyes are dim from grief. I have called on you daily,

HaShem. I have spread out my hands to you.”(HNV revised)

In Psalm 134:2, it is written,

“Lift up your hands in the consecrated dwelling. Praise HaShem!”(HNV revised)

In Psalm 141:2, it is written,

“Let my prayer be set before you like incense; the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.”(HNV)

In Psalm 143:6, it is written,

“I spread forth my hands to you. My soul thirsts for you, like a parched land. Selah.”(HNV)

In 1 Kings 8:54, it is written,

“It was so, that when Shelomoh had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication to HaShem, he arose from before the altar of HaShem, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven.”(HNV revised)

In 1 Timothy 2:8, it is written,

“I desire therefore that the men in every place pray, lifting up consecrated hands without wrath and doubting.”(HNV revised)

By this we learn that Moshe rabbenu's prayer was based on four things:

- He prayed according to the will of the Eternal.
- He cried out.
- He prayed with intensity.
- He prayed with lifted hands.

Let us follow the teacher Moshe's example in order to prosper in our praying so that the will of the Eternal can be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Vav and He, with “the Eternal” or “HaShem”. HaShem literally means “the Name”.

^[2] **Strong H6189** 'ârêl, *aw-rale'*, From H6188; properly *exposed*, that is, projecting loose (as to the prepuce); used only technically *uncircumcised* (that is, still having the prepuce uncurtailed): - uncircumcised (person).

^[3] **Strong H6188** 'ârêl *aw-rale'*, A primitive root; properly to *strip*; but used only as denominative from H6189; to *expose* or *remove* the *prepuce*, whether literally (to *go naked*) or figuratively (to *refrain* from using): - count uncircumcised, foreskin to be uncovered.

^[4] **Strong H6190** 'orlâh, *or-law'*, Feminine of H6189; the *prepuce*: - foreskin, + uncircumcised.

^[5] Seder Olam Rabbah 3.

^[6] According to R. Ariyeh Koffman, translated from Spanish by S.K. Blad.

^[7] Humash Ha-Mercatz, R. Meir Matzliah Melamed, translated from Spanish by S. K. Blad.

^[8] Jozsef Ladò, Hur länge skall ondskan dominera? (*How Long Will Evil Dominate?*), chapter 4.

^[9] Sanhedrîn 96a, 97b, see Hosea 6:2; Zechariah 14:9; Psalm 90:4; 92:1; 1 Peter 3:8.

^[10] Hilchot Teshuvah 5:2.

^[11] **Strong H2388** châzaq, *khaw-zak'*, A primitive root; to *fasten* upon; hence to *seize*, *be strong* (figuratively *courageous*, causatively *strengthen*, *cure*, *help*, *repair*, *fortify*), *obstinate*; to *bind*, *restrain*, *conquer*: - aid, amend, X calker, catch, cleave, confirm, be constant, constrain, continue, be of good (take) courage (-ous, -ly), encourage (self), be established, fasten, force, fortify, make hard, harden, help, (lay) hold (fast), lean, maintain, play the man, mend, become (wax) mighty, prevail, be recovered, repair, retain, seize, be (wax) sore, strengthen (self), be stout, be (make, shew, wax) strong (-er), be sure, take (hold), be urgent, behave self valiantly, withstand.

^[12] **Strong H7185** qâshâh, *kaw-shaw'*, A primitive root; properly to *be dense*, that is, tough or *severe* (in various applications): - be cruel, be fiercer, make grievous, be ([ask a], be in, have, seem, would) hard (-en, [labour], -ly, thing), be sore, (be, make) stiff (-en, [-necked]).

^[1] Normally we replace the Name that is written using the four letters *Yud*, *He*,

[13] **Strong H3513** kâbad kâbêd, *kaw-bad, kaw-bade'*, A primitive root; to be *heavy*, that is, in a bad sense (*burdensome, severe, dull*) or in a good sense (*numerous, rich, honorable*); causatively to *make weighty* (in the same two senses): - abounding with, more grievously afflict, boast, be chargeable, X be dim, glorify, be (make) glorious (things), glory, (very) great, be grievous, harden, be (make) heavy, be heavier, lay heavily, (bring to, come to, do, get, be had in) honour (self), (be) honourable (man), lade, X more be laid, make self many, nobles, prevail, promote (to honour), be rich, be (go) sore, stop.

[14] Shemot Rabbah 9:7; Shabbat 97a; Rashí.

[15] Shemot Rabbah 9:8; Tanchumah 14.

[16] Shemot Rabbah 9:10; Tanchumah 14.

[17] **Strong H6279** 'âthar, *aw-thar'*, A primitive root (rather denominative from H6281); to burn *incense* in worship, that is, *intercede* (reciprocally *listen* to prayer): - intreat, (make) pray (-er).

[18] **Strong H6280** 'âthar, *aw-thar'*, A primitive root; to be (causatively *make*) *abundant*: - deceitful, multiply.

Acts 14 King James Version (KJV)

14 And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

³ Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

⁴ But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

⁵ And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

⁶ They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:

⁷ And there they preached the gospel.

⁸ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

⁹ The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

¹⁰ Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

¹¹ And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

¹² And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

¹³ Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

¹⁴ Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

¹⁵ And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

¹⁶ Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

¹⁷ Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

¹⁸ And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

¹⁹ And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

²⁰ Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

²¹ And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

²² Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

²³ And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

²⁴ And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

²⁵ And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

²⁶ And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

²⁷ And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

²⁸ And there they abode long time with the disciples.