

# Exodus 1:1-6:1 *Shemot*, “Names”

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## **Shemot Hebrew paragraph divisions**

- 1:1-7 {p} The increase of the children of Israel
- 1:8-22 {p} The enemy tried to stop their increase
- 2:1-22 {p} Moses, born to be Israel’s deliverer
- 2:23-25 {s} God acknowledged the children of Israel
- 3:1-4:17 {p} Call of Moses: words + signs of YHVH
- 4:18-26 {p} Moses’ return to Egypt with message of authority, in obedience
- 4:27-6:1 {s} Pharaoh’s response to Moses and the children of Israel

## **Shemot summary**

- 1A) 1:1-22 {p+p}** God increased **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DESPITE PHARAOH’S ENSLAVEMENT**;
- 1B) 2:1-22 {p}** The birth and preparation of **MOSES AS DELIVERER**;  
**CENTRAL AXIS) 2:23-25 {s} GOD ACKNOWLEDGED THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL**;
- 2B) 3:1-4:26 {p+p}** The commission, equipping, and sending of **MOSES AS DELIVERER**;
- 2A) 4:27-6:1 {s}** Pharaoh cruelly oppressed **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DESPITE GOD’S DEMAND**.

## **Shemot chiasmatic structure**

- 1A) 1:1-22 {p+p}** God increased **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DESPITE PHARAOH’S ENSLAVEMENT**;
- 1a) 1:1-7 The children of Israel increased and waxed mighty**;
  - 1a) 1:1** Now these are the names of *the sons of Israel*, who came into Egypt with Jacob; every man came with his household;
  - 1b) 1:2-4** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; **3** Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; **4** Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher [i.e., *the sons of Israel*];
  - central axis) 1:5a** *And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls*;
  - 2b) 1:5b-6** And Joseph was in Egypt already. **6** And *Joseph* died, *and all his brethren*, and all that generation;
  - 2a) 1:7** And *the children of Israel were fruitful*, and **increased** abundantly, and multiplied, and **waxed exceedingly mighty**; and the land was filled with them; **{p}**
- central axis) 1:8** Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph;

**2a) 1:9-22 The children of Israel are too many and too mighty** for us;

**1a) 1:9-12** And he said to his people: Behold, the people of **the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us**; **10** come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there befalls us any war, they also join themselves to our enemies, and fight against us, and go up out of the land. **11** Therefore they set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses. **12** But the more **they afflicted them**, the more **they multiplied** and the more they spread abroad. And they were in dread because of the children of Israel;

**1b) 1:13** And the Egyptians **made the children of Israel to serve with rigor**; **central axis) 1:14a** **And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field**;

**2b) 1:14b** In all their service, they **made them serve with rigor**;

**2a) 1:15-22** And the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah; **16** and he said: When you do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, you shall look on the birthstool: **if it be a son, then you shall kill him**; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. **17** But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. **18** And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said to them: Why have you done this thing, and have saved the male children alive? **19** And the midwives said to Pharaoh: Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered before the midwife comes to them. **20** And God dealt well with the midwives; and **the people multiplied**, and waxed very mighty. **21** And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that He gave households for them. **22** And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying: Every son that is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive; {p}

**1B) 2:1-22** The birth and preparation of **MOSES AS DELIVERER**;

**1a.1) 2:1** And there went a man of the house of Levi, and **took to wife a daughter of Levi**;

**1a.2) 2:2a** And the woman conceived, and **bore a son**;

**1a.3) 2:2b-10** **Pharaoh's daughter called his name Moses**;

**1a) 2:2b-6a** And when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. **3** And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with bitumen and with pitch; and she put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. **4** And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. **5** And **the daughter of Pharaoh** came down to bathe in the river; and her maidens walked along by the riverside; and she **saw the ark among the reeds**, and sent her

handmaid to fetch it. **6** And she opened it, **and saw** it, even **the child**; and behold the baby wept;

**1b) 2:6b** And she had compassion on him, and said: **This is one of the Hebrews' children**;

**1c) 2:7** Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter: Shall I go and call a wet nurse of the Hebrew women, that **she may nurse the child for you**?

**central axis) 2:8a** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her: **Go**;

**2c) 2:8b-9** And the maiden went and called the child's mother. **9** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her: Take this child away, and **nurse him for me**, and I will give you your wages. And **the woman** took the child, and **nursed him**;

**2b) 2:10a** And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and **he became her son**;

**2a) 2:10b** And she **called his name Moses**, and said: Because **I drew him out of the water**;

**1b) 2:11-14a** And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown up, that he went out to his brethren, and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his brethren. **12** And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he killed the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. **13** And he went out the second day; behold, two men of the Hebrews were fighting together; and he said to him that did the wrong: Why do you strike your companion? **14** And he said: Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you think to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian? [i.e., **Moses delivered the Hebrew slave**];

**1c) 2:14b** And **Moses feared**, and said: Surely the thing is known;

**central axis) 2:15a** Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses;

**2c) 2:15b** But **Moses fled** from the face of Pharaoh;

**2b) 2:15c-21a** And dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well. **16** Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. **17** And the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. **18** And when they came to Reuel their father, he said: How is it that you are come so soon today? **19** And they said: **An Egyptian delivered us** out of the hand of the shepherds, and moreover he drew water for us, and watered the flock. **20** And he said to his daughters: And where is he? Why is it that you have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread. **21** And Moses was content to dwell with the man;

**2a.1) 2:21b** And **he gave to Moses Zipporah his daughter**;

**2a.2) 2:22a** And she **bore a son**;

**2a.3) 2:22b** And **he called his name Gershom**; for he said: I have been a stranger in a strange land; **{p}**

**CENTRAL AXIS) 2:23-25** And it came to pass in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up to God by reason of their bondage. **24** And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. **25** And **GOD SAW THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and GOD ACKNOWLEDGED THEM; {s}**

**2B) 3:1-4:26** The commission, equipping, and sending of **MOSES AS DELIVERER**;

**1a) 3:1-17** **The word of YHVH** which was given to Moses;

**1a) 3:1-12** Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the farthest end of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. **2** And the angel of **YHVH appeared to him** in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. **3** And Moses said: I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. **4** And when YHVH saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said: Moses, Moses. And he said: Here I am. **5** And He said: Do not draw nigh this place; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. **6** Moreover He said: I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look on God. **7** And YHVH said: I have surely seen the affliction of My people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their pains; **8** and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good land and a large, to a land flowing with milk and honey; to the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. **9** And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come to Me; moreover I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. **10** Come now therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt. **11** And Moses said to God: Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? **12** And He said: Certainly I will be with you; and this shall be the sign to you, that I have sent you: when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain;

**1b) 3:13** And Moses said to God: Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them: **The God of your fathers has sent me to you**; and they shall say to me: **What is His name?** What shall I say to them?

**central axis) 3:14a And God said to Moses: I AM THAT I AM;**

**2b) 3:14b-15** And He said: Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: **I AM has sent me to you.** **15** And moreover, God said to Moses: Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: **YHVH, the God of your fathers,** the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, **has sent me to you; this is My name for ever,** and this is My memorial to all generations;

**2a) 3:16-17** Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them: **YHVH,** the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, **has appeared to me,** saying: I have surely remembered you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt. **17** And I have said: I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey;

**1b) 3:18a** And **they shall hearken to your voice;**

**1c) 3:18b** And you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him: YHVH, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. And now **let us go,** we pray you, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to YHVH our God;

**1d) 3:19** And I know that **the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go,** except by a mighty hand;

**central axis) 3:20a** And I will put forth My hand, and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst;

**2d) 3:20b** And after that **he will let you go;**

**2c) 3:21-22** And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. And it shall come to pass, that, **when you go, you shall not go empty;** **22** but every woman shall ask of her neighbor, and of her that sojourns in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment; and you shall put them on your sons, and on your daughters; and you shall spoil the Egyptians;

**2b) 4:1** And Moses answered and said: But, behold, **they will not** believe me, nor **hearken to my voice;** for they will say: YHVH has not appeared to you;

**2a) 4:2-26** **The signs of YHVH** which were given to Moses;

**1a) 4:2-9** And YHVH said to him: What is that in your hand? And he said: A rod. **3** And He said: Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. **4** And YHVH said to Moses: Put forth your hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and laid hold of it, and it became **a rod in his hand,** **5** that they may believe that YHVH, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you. **6** And furthermore, YHVH said to him: Put now your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into

his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow. **7** And He said: Put your hand back into your bosom. And he put his hand back into his bosom; and when he took it out of his bosom, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. **8** And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe you, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. **9** And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe even these two signs, neither hearken to your voice, that you shall take of the water of the river, and pour it on the dry land; and the water which you take out of the river shall become blood on the dry land;

**1b) 4:10** And Moses said to YHVH: Oh Lord, *I am not a man of words*, neither before, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;

**1c) 4:11-12** And YHVH said to him: Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, YHVH? **12** Now therefore go, and *I will be with your mouth*, and teach you what you shall speak;

**1d) 4:13** And he said: Oh Lord, *send*, I pray You, *by the hand of someone else* whom You will send;

**central axis) 4:14a** *And the anger of YHVH was kindled against Moses;*

**2d) 4:14b** And He said: Is not *Aaron the Levite* your brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he *is coming forth to meet you*; and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart;

**2c) 4:15** And you shall speak to him, and put the words in his mouth; and *I will be with your mouth*, and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do;

**2b) 4:16-17** And he shall be your spokesman to the people; and it shall come to pass, that *he shall be to you a mouth*, and you shall be to him in God's stead. **17** And you shall take in your hand this rod, with which you shall do the signs; **{p}**

**2a) 4:18-26** And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said to him: Let me go, I pray you, and return to my brethren that are in Egypt, and see whether they are yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses: Go in peace. **19** And YHVH said to Moses in Midian: Go, return to Egypt; for all the men are dead that sought your life. **20** And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt; and Moses took *the rod of God in his hand*. **21** And YHVH said to Moses: When you go back into Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh *all the wonders which I have put in your hand*; but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. **22** And you shall say to Pharaoh: Thus says YHVH: Israel is My son, My firstborn. **23** And I have said to you: Let My son go, that he may serve Me; and you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will slay your son, your firstborn. **24** And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that YHVH met him, and sought to kill him. **25** Then Zipporah took a flint, and

cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said: Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me. **26** So He let him alone. Then she said, 'a bridegroom of blood,' in regard to the circumcision; {p}

**2A) 4:27-6:1** Pharaoh cruelly oppressed **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DESPITE GOD'S DEMAND**;

**1a) 4:27** And **YHVH said to Aaron: Go into the wilderness** to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mountain of God, and kissed him;

**1b) 4:28** And **Moses told Aaron** all the words of YHVH with which He had sent him, and all the signs with which He had charged him [i.e. **that He will deliver His people**];

**1c) 4:29-30** And **Moses and Aaron** went and **gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel**. **30** And Aaron spoke all the words which YHVH had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people;

**1d) 4:31** And the people believed; and when they heard that YHVH had remembered **the children of Israel, and** that He had seen **their affliction**, then they bowed their heads and worshiped;

**1e) 5:1** And afterward **Moses and Aaron came, and said to Pharaoh**: Thus says YHVH, the God of Israel: Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness;

**central axis) 5:2-14 Pharaoh's response: I do not know YHVH;**

**1a) 5:2-3** And Pharaoh said: Who is YHVH, that I should hearken to His voice to let Israel go? I know not YHVH, and moreover I will not let Israel go. **3** And they said: The God of the Hebrews has met with us. **Let us go**, we pray you, three days' journey into the wilderness, **and sacrifice to YHVH our God**; lest He fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword;

**1b) 5:4** And the king of Egypt said to them: **Why do you**, Moses and Aaron, **cause the people to break loose** from their work? **Get you to your burdens**;

**central axis) 5:5a** And **Pharaoh said: Behold, the people of the land are now many**;

**2b) 5:5b** And **will you make them rest from their burdens?**

**2a) 5:6-14** And the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying: **7** You shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. **8** And the quota of the bricks, which they made before, you shall lay upon them; you shall not diminish it at all; for they are idle; therefore they cry, saying: **Let us go and sacrifice to our God**. **9** Let heavier work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it; and let them not regard lying words. **10** And the taskmasters of the people went out,

and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying: Thus says Pharaoh: I will not give you straw. **11** Go yourselves, get straw where you can find it; for none of your work shall be diminished. **12** So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. **13** And the taskmasters were urgent, saying: Fulfil your work, your daily task, as when there was straw. **14** And the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, saying: Why have you not fulfilled your appointed task in making brick both yesterday and today as before?

**2e) 5:15-16** Then **the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh**, saying: Why do you deal thus with your servants? **16** There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us: Make brick; and, behold, your servants are beaten, but the fault is in your own people;

**2d) 5:17-19** But he said: You are idle, you are idle; therefore you say: Let us go and sacrifice to YHVH. **18** Go therefore now, and work; for no straw shall be given to you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks. **19** And the officers of **the children of Israel saw that they were set on mischief**, when they said: You shall not diminish at all from your bricks, your daily task;

**2c) 5:20-21** And **they met Moses and Aaron**, who stood in the way, **as they came forth from Pharaoh**; **21** and they said to them: YHVH look upon you, and judge; because you have made us abhorrent in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us;

**2b) 5:22-23** And **Moses returned to YHVH, and said**: Lord, why have You dealt ill with this people? Why is it that You have sent me? **23** For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has dealt ill with this people; **neither have You delivered Your people** at all;"

**2a) 6:1** And **YHVH said to Moses**: Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a strong hand shall **he let them go**, and by a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land [i.e., **into the wilderness**]. {s}