



Yitro

(Jethro)

Shemot [Exodus] 18:1-20:26

Leaving Egypt

Shemot [Exodus] 19:1-2

1 In the third month after the children of Yisrael were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

2 And when they were departed from R'fidim, and were come to the wilderness of Sinai, they camped in the wilderness; and there Yisrael camped before the mount.

When Moshe left Egypt the first time, when he was fleeing for his life, Scripture tells us that he settled in the land of Midyan (Midian). It is important for us to understand that Midyan and Egypt were neighboring countries. So when Moshe left Egypt, he went into the country of Midyan.

Shemot [Exodus] 2:15

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to kill Moshe. But Moshe fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midyan; and he sat down by a well.

As we keep reading, we see that Moshe rescued the daughters of the priest of Midyan (for whom this Parasha is named), and eventually took one of them for his wife. And so Moshe lived in Midyan.

All maps that I have ever seen of this region, place Midyan in the southwestern portion of what is present-day Saudi Arabia. It was while Moshe was out tending the flocks in Midyan, that YHWH appeared to Moshe in the burning bush. It was back to this same mountain that YHWH led the children of Yisrael after the exodus. Thus, we see that Mount Sinai is actually in what is now present-day Saudi Arabia, and not what we know as the Sinai Peninsula.

How much area of the Sinai Peninsula ancient Egypt controlled, seems to be a matter of question. The size of the area attributed to Egypt varies with differing map makers. But when we come to these two verses in this week's Parasha, it would seem likely that Egypt controlled most, if not all, of what we know today as the Sinai Peninsula.

Please note, that as the verses above state, it was in the third month that they left Egypt, and it was on this same day that they came into the wilderness of Sinai. It was also on that day that they left R'fidim. We need to keep in mind that the nation of Israel left their homes the fifteenth day of the first month. However, the verse above tells us that they did not leave the nation of Egypt until the third month. So for thirty to forty-five days the nation of Israel had been traveling in territory that belonged to Egypt. This seems to tell us several things.

- ✓ That Pharaoh actually caught up with the Yisraelis in Egyptian territory
- ✓ That when they crossed the Red Sea on dry ground they were no longer in Egyptian territory
- ✓ That R'fidim is on the shore of the Red Sea on the Egyptian side
- ✓ That Mount Sinai is not far from the Red Sea on the Midyan side

On Eagles' Wings

Shemot [Exodus] 19:3-4

3 And Moshe went up to Elohim, and YHWH called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus shall you say to the house of Ya'aqov (Jacob), and tell the children of Yisrael:

4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on wings of eagles, and brought you to Myself.'"

This phrase, *I bore you on wings of eagles*, is very descriptive of YHWH's love and care, and especially of His training of His children.

When the young eaglets are at the stage in their lives that they are ready to learn how to fly, the adult eagle will allow one of the young eagles to climb up on its back. Then the adult will take off, mounting higher and higher into the air. At one point, the adult will flip upside down and dump the young off. As the young eagle tumbles toward the earth trying to find its wings, the adult eagle follows it down. At some point, if the young bird has not found its wings, the adult eagle swoops under the young eaglet, catching it, only to mount into the air again to repeat the process.

This is a very apt picture of our Heavenly Father's love and training of His children. He will not allow us to crash to the earth, but there are times in which He dumps us off His back so that we can find our own wings and learn to fly.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 40:31

but they that wait for YHWH shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.

It is also important for us to see that this phrase "on the wings of an eagle" is also found in Scriptural prophecy. Many prophecy teachers teach that this phrase is an allusion to modern day aircraft. However, this does not really fit into the above passage, for Elohim certainly did not rescue the nation of Israel from Egypt by the use of aircraft.

What this phrase really means, is that YHWH cares for us enough to take us from being spiritually immature to being spiritually mature, so that we can learn to fly spiritually in order to build His Kingdom here on earth.

Will You Obey My Voice?

Shemot [Exodus] 19:5-6

5 “Now therefore, if you will obey My Voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be Mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is Mine:

6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a set-apart nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Yisrael.”

YHWH desires for us to *grow up* into a kingdom of priests and a set-apart nation.

In order for us to become this kingdom and nation, we have some requirements to fulfill laid down by YHWH. It is not going to *just happen!* In this passage, YHWH tells Moshe two requirements. The first requirement is to obey His Voice.

Obedying His Voice is the supreme duty of mankind. When YHWH created man and placed him in Gan Eden (Garden of Eden), He gave him a verbal commandment only. This was because He desired for man to hear and obey His Voice.

But alas, man has difficulty hearing and obeying His Voice. We tend to be so wrapped up in the physical needs of self, that we do not put forth much effort in listening for, listening to, and obeying His Voice. In fact, many times we do not even see our need in obeying His Voice. The thing that seems to matter most is: “Are my needs being met right now?!” Many times, in looking at one of the citizens of His Kingdom, one would think he was looking at a baby whose only care in the world is “feed me,” “comfort me,” and “change my pants.” My brethren, these things ought not to be so. We need to mature in our walk with YHWH so that He can give to us greater responsibilities. For if we do not mature, then He will have no choice but to keep us in the wilderness and not allow us to enter into His land.

Please note the order in which YHWH places these two requirements. First, there is obeying His Voice, then secondly, there is keeping (obeying) His covenant. His covenant is basically just a written record of His Voice (His Torah). And the reason that He had His Voice recorded for us, is for the purpose of learning to hear, recognize, and obey His Voice. Please consider this passage.

Galatians 3:19a

What then is the Torah? It was added because of transgressions,

This verse seems to be a stumbling block for many whom YHWH is leading into returning to His Torah. What Shaul (Paul) is teaching us in this passage is, that because we (mankind) did not hear and obey His Voice the way that we should have done, YHWH had to put His Voice down in writing. That way we would have no excuse for our sins (disobeying His Voice).

Basically, what Shaul is teaching, is that before YHWH had Moshe write down the Torah, it was just up to the individual to hear and obey His Voice. But because of man’s selfish, sinful nature,

he (man) has a propensity towards claiming not to have heard His Voice, in order to do whatever was in his evil heart, when it was against the instructions of His Voice. Man knew it was against His Voice, but he wanted his own way, anyway. Thus, the vast majority of mankind refused to hear and obey His Voice. Hence, YHWH sent the flood to remove man from the earth, except for Noach and his family. But still man refused to hear and obey His Voice.

The result of this was that YHWH wrote down the Torah so that man would have no excuse.

He Said – She Said

Shemot [Exodus] 19:7-8

7 And Moshe came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which YHWH commanded him.

8 And all the people answered together, and said, "All that YHWH has spoken we will do." And Moshe reported the words of the people to YHWH.

After Moshe received the instructions from YHWH (the Husband), he went (as instructed) and delivered those instructions to Yisrael (the wife).

When Yisrael heard all the instructions of her husband, she responded with a resounding "Yes", that she would obey all the words that YHWH spoke to her through Moshe.

But herein lies the difficulty.

Instead of putting the words of YHWH in the past tense as they did, they should have put His words in the present tense. But why does this make any difference, you ask?

These words give a strong indication of what was in their hearts. They were willing to obey the instructions that He had already given, but any future instructions they seemed to want to (wrongly) make subject to their approval.

We are still making this mistake today!

When a husband and wife get married, it is supposed to be for life. They are both to live inside the security and protection of Torah. With that understanding, the wife basically tells the husband that she gives up her right to have her own way when she agrees to, and does, in fact, marry the man. She agrees that the man is now the head of the family.

Yisrael, in putting the agreement in the past tense, was not really agreeing to the headship of YHWH. This has caused numerous problems and difficulties in Yisrael from that day to this. They wanted the option of approving each and every new commandment before they would agree to keep it. They just did not trust YHWH the way that they should have trusted Him – unconditionally!

If we are truly going to be the wife of YHWH (i.e., be a part of His bride), then we have to agree to hear and do all that He commands us (His Voice), and this must be done without reservation. If we attempt to put reservations or conditions upon our obedience, then it really is not

obedience, is it? If one puts conditions upon his obedience to YHWH, then he is making himself to be Elohim. This is idolatry and is not be pleasing to YHWH.

Preparation for Marriage

Shemot [Exodus] 19:9-13

9 And YHWH said to Moshe, "See, I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you for ever." And Moshe told the words of the people to YHWH.

10 And YHWH said to Moshe, "Go to the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments,

11 and be ready on the third day; for the third day YHWH will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.

12 And you shall set bounds to the people round about, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves, that you go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever touches the mount shall be surely put to death:

13 no hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, he shall not live: when the shofar sounds long, they shall come up to the mount.'"

YHWH desires for His bride to be pure.

YHWH commands His bride to wash her clothes and prepare for His coming. In order for us to be ready for His coming, we need to be pure.

Ya'aqov [James] 4:8

Draw near to Elohim, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded.

Please notice the direct correlation between what YHWH commands us in Shemot in washing our garments and in Ya'aqov when He commands us to cleanse our hands. Both the washing of our clothes and the washing of our hands signify the outward works of our lives. Cleansing our clothes and our hands should be indicative of the spiritual work that YHWH has already done and is doing in our hearts (spirits).

What YHWH does not want to see in His bride, is divided loyalties (double-mindedness). YHWH desires for us to have a singleness of mind towards Him!

Please note, YHWH clearly states that the penalty for not obeying His Voice in this matter is death. These are His words! I don't know of anyone in his right mind, who would want that, do you?

More Preparations

Shemot [Exodus] 19:14-15

14 And Moshe went down from the mount to the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their garments.

15 And he said to the people, "Be ready on the third day; do not come near a woman."

When Yisrael camped at the base of Mount Sinai, it was just days before Shavuot (Pentecost). YHWH instructs Moshe to command the people to purify themselves. Besides washing their clothes, they were also not to have any sexual relations between husband and wife (understanding that there were already not to be any sexual relations between two people who were not married).

It is important and instructive to notice that YHWH gave no instructions about niddah (menstruating) women in this context. Nor, did YHWH mention any other way that a person could become unclean. The only one that He mentions in this context is becoming unclean through sexual relations between a husband and wife. Why?

A woman has no personal choice as to when she begins her period of niddah. The other ways that one becomes tamei (ritually unclean), may also happen as a lack of choice on the individual's part.

So when YHWH commanded His bride to purify herself, He wanted it clear that she was to do this in a completely voluntary way. YHWH wanted to see His bride make the right choice.

Likewise, YHWH desires for us to purify ourselves as well, because we choose to do so out of love for Him.

Wedding Day

Shemot [Exodus] 19:16-20

16 And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were voices and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a shofar exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled.

17 And Moshe brought forth the people out of the camp to meet Elohim; and they stood at the foot of the mount.

18 And Mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because YHWH descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19 And when the voice of the shofar waxed louder and louder, Moshe spoke, and Elohim answered him by a Voice.

20 And YHWH came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mount: and YHWH called Moshe to the top of the mount; and Moshe went up.

Yisrael had spent the previous two days getting ready for YHWH's arrival. Now on the third day of preparations, YHWH arrives. This is the arrival of the Bridegroom.

When YHWH came down upon Mount Sinai, certain manifestations accompanied Him. These were:

- ✓ Voices

- ✓ Lightning
- ✓ Thick cloud
- ✓ Shofar sounding
- ✓ Mount Sinai smoked
- ✓ YHWH descended in fire
- ✓ Mount Sinai quaked greatly
- ✓ Shofar sounded louder & louder
- ✓ Elohim answered Moshe in a Voice
- ✓ YHWH came down on top of Mount Sinai

YHWH manifested His glory to His bride at Mount Sinai that day.

Once again, YHWH is in the process of manifesting His glory to us as He pours His Spirit out upon us through Yeshua in bringing His people back to His Torah. As He does this, many will come from the east and west and believe upon Yeshua as Mashiach.

Sanctify Yourselves

Shemot [Exodus] 19:21-22

21 And YHWH said to Moshe, "Go down, charge the people, lest they break through to YHWH to gaze, and many of them perish.

22 And let the priests also, that come near to YHWH, sanctify themselves, lest YHWH break forth upon them."

It seems that the people were trying to get as close to YHWH as possible and see what all these signs were and possibly Who it was that was speaking to Moshe. People are generally just curious people. But in this case, their curiosity could be their undoing and they could die.

We can clearly see YHWH's love for them as He sends Moshe back down the mountain in order to prevent this from happening to His people. YHWH was protecting His bride by instructing the Yisraelites not to come upon the mountain. He was also testing them to see if they were worthy to be His bride, to see if they would obey His word.

At this same time, YHWH also calls for the priests that come near to YHWH to sanctify themselves. Now this is a rather curious statement. If we will recall, it was not until after the incident with the golden calf that YHWH set the tribe of Levi apart to be a tribe of priests. The incident with the golden calf did not happen until Shemot 32. Up until then, the priesthood consisted of all the firstborn of Yisrael. In this system, there would be a priest from every family in Yisrael. Every family would be represented before YHWH.

However, because of the incident with the golden calf, this priesthood became defiled and lost its position before YHWH, and He rejected them and replaced them with the tribe of Levi.

Moshe Argues with YHWH

Shemot [Exodus] 19:23

23 And Moshe said to YHWH, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for you did charge us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.'"

Moshe seems to typify each and every one of us at times. We are all guilty of talking back to and arguing with YHWH about what He commands us to do.

We are not talking about those times when we simply ask YHWH for clarification because we do not quite understand what He is telling us to do. If we do not understand His instructions, then we need to ask for clarification. Or, sometimes we just need to make sure that what we are hearing is, in fact, coming from Him.

However, in this case it does not seem that Moshe did not understand; nor was Moshe checking to be sure that this command was from YHWH. Rather, what Moshe was doing, was telling YHWH why he did not need to do what YHWH had just commanded him to do.

Can you image telling one of your children to do something that was of critical importance, and your child would begin to tell you why he did not need to do it? All the while you know that your child does not know all the details and facts concerning the command that you had just given to him. How many times do we do this very thing to YHWH when He tells us to do something? How many times do we tell Him why we do not need to obey Him? I would think that would not be a very good place to be!

Same Command, Again!

Shemot [Exodus] 19:24-25

24 And YHWH said to him, "Go, get you down; and you shall come up, you, and Aharon with you; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up to YHWH, lest He break forth upon them."

25 So Moshe went down to the people, and told them.

YHWH repeats His command to Moshe. One can almost hear the tone and emphasis in YHWH's Voice as He tells Moshe to ***get going!***

After all, these people's lives were in jeopardy if Moshe did not reach them in time; and his delay in leaving immediately heightened that possibility of some of them dying.

It is a blessing to read in verse 25 that Moshe obeyed YHWH.

But I wonder how many times we are like this towards our Heavenly Father; i.e., how many times does He have to tell us to do something before we do it?

After all, we have to consider what other people are going to think about us for obeying Him. We have to consider what kind of personal cost there will be for obeying Him. We have to consider what we might lose as a result of obeying His Voice. We have to consider how much obeying Him will put us out of our comfort zone. We have to consider how much time it will

take away from those things that we want to do. Really now, there is so much to consider before we make a commitment to obey His Voice.

NOT!

If these are the types of things that we have to consider before obeying His Voice, then it is likely that we probably do less obeying of His Voice than we do more. I have a saying in my house and all my children know it well. "When you need an excuse, anything will do."

They know that I am not interested in hearing their excuses. What I am interested in is their obedience. Because, when we get right down to it, we do everything that we really want to do; and those things that we really do not want to do, we don't do; and then we manufacture some lame excuse so others will supposedly not think badly of us. For example, when a person states that they just don't have the time to do something, is that really true? Or, is it just an excuse? Would that same person not *make* the time to do something that was important to him? Sure!

But let's be honest here. Do you believe some lame excuse when someone tells it to you? Not likely! So why is it that we deceive ourselves into thinking that others are going to believe our lame excuses? So how deceived would a person have to be in order to believe that YHWH is going to accept our lame excuses?

Matithyahu [Matthew] 5:37

"But let your speech be, 'Yea, yea; Nay, nay;' and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one."

Yeshua gave us this commandment because He does this towards us and expects us to do the same.

Go – It's a matter of Faith

Matithyah 8:9-13

9 "For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers; and I say to this one, 'Go', and he goes; and to another, 'Come', and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this', and he does it."

10 And when Yeshua heard it, He marveled, and said to them that followed, "Amein, I say to you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

11 And I say to you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Avraham, and Yitzchak, and Ya'aqov, in the kingdom of heaven;

12 but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth."

13 And Yeshua said to the centurion, "Go your way; as you have believed, so be it done to you." And the servant was healed in that hour.

Yeshua marveled that this man before Him, who was a Roman centurion, understood faith with nearly a perfect understanding. He had not found such in Israel.

YHWH desires that we have this same degree of faith as He is still commanding us to "Go!"

Matityah 10:5-10

5 These twelve Yeshua sent forth, and charged them, saying, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans;

6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as you go, preach, saying,

'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give.

9 Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your purses;

10 no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff; for the laborer is worthy of his food."

Yeshua sent out His chosen ones to preach and teach those who would receive the truth. However, He also told those He sent, not to be doing it for money. Yes, those so sent are worthy of the labor, but it should not be in excess, so that those sent are living a luxurious lifestyle. I think that we all are tired of the abuses of those who claim to be sheep or a shepherd, and then "fleece the flock". This is not what YHWH intends for those He sends out to preach and teach. He expects those so sent, to love and to protect His flock and to lay down their lives for the sheep. He calls those to preach and teach, to serve others!

Let us serve in the newness of the Spirit setting aside the lusts of the flesh, and pursue the things of the Spirit with a singleness of mind and heart and purpose that His Kingdom may be built.

ABBA YHWH, please fill us with Your Spirit and strength as we respond in faith to obey Your Voice; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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