

## Beginning Our Exodus

In this week's *Torah* reading we begin the book of *Shemot* which literally means *Names*. This second book in the *Torah* has 40 chapters and follows *Genesis* with 50 chapters. As it is for every book of the *Torah*, *Shemot* is both the title for a *new portion* and a *new book*. The English-speaking world calls this book *Exodus*. The Hebrew title for the book follows the widespread ancient Near Eastern practice of naming a literary work by its opening keyword (a verb or noun). In this case, *Shemot* is the first noun at beginning of the book: *Ve-eleh Shemot* (וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת). It translates to: *And these are the names*. Another ancient *Hebrew* name for the book was *sefer yetziat mitzrayim* – *The Book of the Departure from Egypt*. Accordingly, this title expresses the main theme of the book. This was the title chosen by the Jews of Alexandria in Egypt, at the time of the translating the *Tanakh* into *Greek* when the Septuagint (LXX) was written. The *Greek* title was *Exodus Aigyptou*, which was simply shortened to *Exodus*. The Latin Vulgate version of the Bible (many European versions, including English ones) kept the title, *Exodus*.

The Book of *Exodus* begins the account of the most famous story of all human history – the story of the departure of the Children of Israel from Egypt. Time will tell, but I feel that *January 2026* is the beginning of our Exodus (as *Adonai's People*) from our inherited worldly society. I believe we have been manipulated by cunning words (*"Come, we must deal shrewdly with them," Exodus 1:10a*), oppressed, given difficult taskmasters, and have become slaves to the rhetoric of left-leaning politics in the last 33 years.

*The Almighty* gave us a helpful insight into what He intends to do about the situation at hand at the end of *Exodus 2*: *"<sup>23</sup>During those many days it happened that the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel groaned because of the work and they cried out. Their outcry because of the work went up to Elohim. Elohim heard (VaYishma) their groaning, <sup>24</sup>and Elohim remembered (VaYiskor) His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. <sup>25</sup>Elohim saw (VaYareh) the Children of Israel; and Elohim knew (VaYeda)." (Exodus 2:23-25, ESV)*. I see parallels between the plight of the Children of Israel some 400+ years after arriving in Egypt and our plight some 249+ years after our becoming *One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all*. America was founded as a *covenant nation* with *the Almighty*. He does not and will not forget *any* of His Covenants. He is not one to show *favoritism* or be a *respector of persons*.

The appointed time (set time) has come for *the Almighty* to show *favor (chen)* to Zion: *"You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her, for the appointed time has come" (Psalm 102:14)*. This is also true for *Kol Simcha*. Like at the end of Chapter 2, at the end of Chapter 3 we read: *"<sup>21</sup>Then I shall grant these people favor (chen) in the eyes of the Egyptians. So it will happen that when you go, you will not leave empty-handed" (Exodus 3:21)...* This will come to pass at the first *Passover*: *"<sup>3</sup>Adonai gave the people favor (chen) in the eyes of the Egyptians..."<sup>36</sup>Adonai gave the people favor (chen) in the eyes of the Egyptians and let them have what they asked for. So they plundered the Egyptians" (Exodus 11:3, 12:36).*

There is an appointed time to receive and accept His favor (*chen*) and the set-time is now, in 2026. I shared last week that this the year where we can experience *Destiny Fulfilled*. We are to gain favor with Him and favor with the people around us. Our future and success depends on this. Let's get excited and covet His favor. Favor is more important than money and fame. It is more important than hardly anything I know especially at this time.

Let us treasure his favor. We need His favor activated in *Kol Simcha*. His favor is part of the *last days* revival and it is His pleasure to give it to us. It WILL guide us to the next level. It will cause us to *delight in Him*. It will keep us in the *center of His Will*. It will result in *joyful people* living up to our name:

*Kol Simcha* – the people of the sound of joy and gladness. We will not only call the *Shabbat* a *delight* but we ourselves will be *His delight*. *Kol Simcha* – a delightful congregation. In closing, sing with me: "♪ *Sim shalom tovah u'b'racha, chen vachessed v'rachamim, aleinu ve-al kol Yisrael amecha* ♪". *Grant peace, kindness and blessing, favor, charity and mercy upon us and all of Israel thy People. Shabbat Shalom!*