

Parashat Shemot
Hannah Elkin

What is Egypt?

Mitzrayim=מצרים

Exodus 2:10-15:

10 When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

11 One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and saw their forced labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk. **12** He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. **13** When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew?" **14** He answered, "Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "Surely the thing is known." **15** When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh. He settled in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well.

Exodus 3-4:

1 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. **2** There the angel of God appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. **3** Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." **4** When God saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." **5** Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." **6** He said further, "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 at God.

7 Then God said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, **8** and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to

bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. **9** The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. **10** So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” **11** But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” **12** He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”...

4. 1 Then Moses answered, “But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, ‘God did not appear to you.’” **2** God said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” **3** And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. **4** Then God said to Moses, “Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail”—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand— **5** “so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”

6 Again, God said to him, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous, as white as snow. **7** Then God said, “Put your hand back into your cloak”—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body— **8** “If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. **9** If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

10 But Moses said to God, “O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” **11** Then God said to him, “Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? **12** Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.” **13** But he said, “O my Lord, please send someone else.” **14** Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, “What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. **15** 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. **16** He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. **17** Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.”

The West Wing, Episode #32 “Noel”- Leo to Josh

"This guy's walking down the street when he falls in a hole. The walls are so steep he can't get out. A doctor passes by and the guy shouts up, 'Hey you. Can you help me out?' The doctor writes a prescription, throws it down in the hole and moves on. Then a priest comes along and the guy shouts up, 'Father, I'm down in this hole can you help me out?' The priest writes out a prayer, throws it down in the hole and moves on.

"Then a friend walks by, 'Hey, Joe, it's me can you help me out?' And the friend jumps in the hole. Our guy says, 'Are you stupid? Now we're both down here.' The friend says, 'Yeah, but I've been down here before and I know the way out.'"

Sforno on Exodus 2:10

And she called his name Moses- Someone who will save others by pulling them out of their calamity.