

**Understanding the Parsha**  
**Shemot 1:1 - 6:1**

We will Learn how to

- 1) interpret the main theme (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

In order to figure out the overall theme of a passage, it's good to outline it and study the topics of the outline first. Read the passages below, then fill in our outline for the flow of events.

Exodus 2:1-10 Moses escaped   d    
death

Exodus 2:11-15 Moses in   c    
conflict

Exodus 2:16-22 Moses' life in   e    
exile

## Moses Escaped Death

Can you think of any Scriptures thematically related to verses 1-4?

These verses are thematically connected to the story of the f pool. Draw a line to complete the connections in each story:

- 1) Moses was placed into a basket just as \_\_\_\_\_ from death by water.
- 2) In both cases the ones in the "ark" were preserved \_\_\_\_\_ pitch.
- 3) Both "arks" were smeared with \_\_\_\_\_ Noach was placed into an ark.

Based on the thematic connection above, what do you think is the main theme of verses 1-4?

In the flood account Adonai:

- 1) sends a j judgment against the ungodly.
- 2) saves and preserves the r righteous through the same judgment.
- 3) establishes a C covenant with the one saved and preserved.
- 4) the ones saved and preserved go on to establish a new e earth in hopes that mankind will walk according to Adonai's commandments.

Since Adonai is about to:

- 1) send j judgment against the ungodly [Egyptians].
- 2) save and preserve the r righteous [Israel] through the same judgment.
- 3) establish a C covenant with the one saved and preserved [Israel] and
- 4) the ones saved and preserved [Israel] go(es) on to establish a new l land in hopes that mankind will walk according to Adonai's commandments [Torah]

Could the Torah be hinting that the theme of these verses is that Adonai wants to use Moses in a role similar to Noach's?

In this instance, see how we used a thematic connection to another Parsha to help us understand the story.

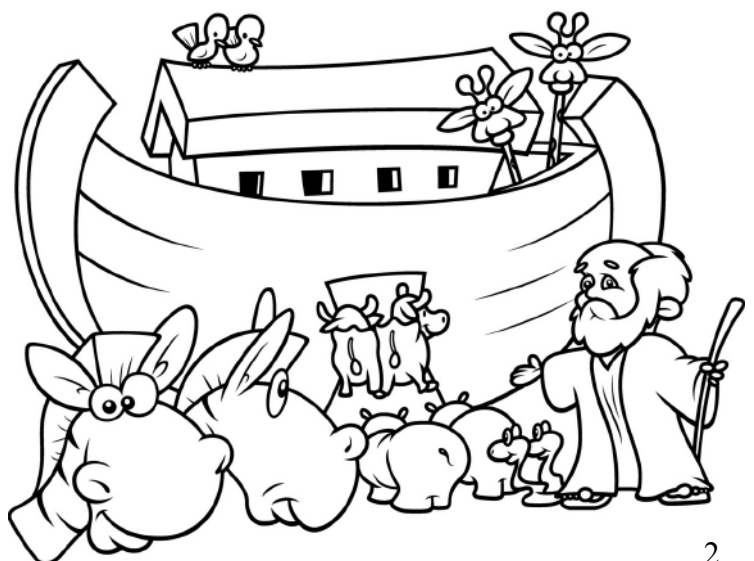
## Moses in Conflict

How is the story of verses 11-12 thematically related to verses 13-14?

[In both stories Moses is trying to d defend the cause of the weaker and oppressed person.

Based on the thematic connection above, what do you think is the main theme of verses 11-15?

Since both stories relate how Moses is standing up for the oppressed, it seems these verses are trying to teach us about Moses' character.



## They teach that:

- 1) Moses hated i injustices.
- 2) He cared for the d disadvantaged.
- 3) He could i identify with the weak, and
- 4) he was a man of a action willing to remedy the situation.

See how we used a thematic connection within the Parsha to help us understand the events.

## Moses' Life in Exile

How is the story of verses 16-22 thematically related to the theme of verses 11-15



We see Moses coming to the r rescue of a weaker and disadvantaged person (the women at the well vs. the male shepherds).

## How is this connection important?

This is the third story telling us about M Moses' character and sense of justice. The Torah is making a huge effort to get us to understand Moses' character and what motivates him.

What other Scriptures from Genesis are thematically related to verses 15b and 21?

Remember the well! These Scriptures show that Moses met his W wife at a well. In Genesis 24 Abraham's servant meets Isaac's W wife, Rebecca, at a well. In Genesis 29 Jacob met Rachael, his future W wife at a well. Also, in all three stories a significant event of kindness was demonstrated. Rebecca filled hoisted almost 250 gallons of water for the servant's camels. Jacob moved the huge rock from over the well mouth by himself. Moses defended the daughters of Jethro.

## Moses the Leader

Read these verses (Exodus 2:11-22; 3:10; and 4:18) and think of a thematic connection between another character in the Torah! Here's some help:

In Exodus 2:13-14 Moses is in conflict with one of his "b brothers".

In Exodus 2:13-14 Moses is rejected by one of his "b brothers," who says, "who made you judge and ruler over us."

Exodus 2:15 and 22 show that Moses flees and lives in exile (Midian) from His b brothers.

Exodus 2:16 and 21 show that Moses married the daughter of a p priest.

Exodus 2:11 and 4:18 show that Moses went to see how his b brothers were doing.

In Exodus 4:29-31 Moses is re-united with his b brothers who now accept his leadership.

Let's look at the thematic connections, here they are:

Was not Joseph in conflict with his b \_\_\_\_\_?  
brothers

Wasn't Joseph rejected (first time he was with them) by his b \_\_\_\_\_?  
brothers

Wasn't Joseph sent in exile, away from his b \_\_\_\_\_ when he was taken to Egypt?  
brothers

Didn't Joseph marry the daughter of the p \_\_\_\_\_ of On?  
priest

Wasn't Joseph sent to see how his b \_\_\_\_\_ were doing in Shechem?  
brothers

Wasn't Joseph accepted by his b \_\_\_\_\_ when they were re-united and didn't they also accept his leadership the second time?  
brothers



Now, why do you think there are so many thematic connections and why are they so and so specific?

Because the Torah is trying to teach us (at the pashat level) that Moses is being called to fulfill a role s \_\_\_\_\_ to Joseph's. Moses will be instrumental in securing l \_\_\_\_\_ for the Israelites just as Joseph p \_\_\_\_\_ their lives during the seven years of famine! The Torah teaches this through the thematic connections.  
similar  
life  
preserved

### The Theme of This Parsha

By using thematic analysis, we see the many different thematic connections to the character of Moses and his call to lead Israel.

Then, we saw his two unsuccessful attempts to act in that l \_\_\_\_\_ role.  
leadership

He ended up in e \_\_\_\_\_ for 40 years.  
exile

Using the original outline at the beginning of our study we can summarize the Parsha like this:

**Moses Escaped Death** This section shows us how Moses was p \_\_\_\_\_ [remember what happened after his birth] in order to lead Israel.  
preserved

**Moses in Conflict** This section shows us his sense of inner calling to l \_\_\_\_\_ Israel [remember the conflict he had in Egypt].  
lead

**Moses Life in Exile** This section shows us the e \_\_\_\_\_ of the would-be leader.  
exile

Although Moses is clearly designated to lead Israel out of bondage, it seems that for some reason, his timing may not have been correct. A short sentence that may capture these three ideas, might be Moses' False Start at Leadership? Can you think of another sentence that captures the 3 ideas from our outline?

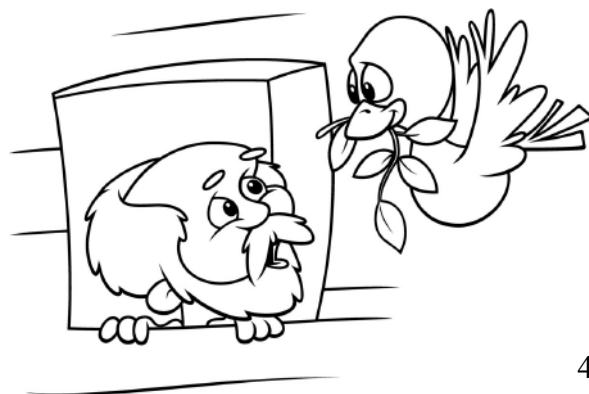
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SHEMOT  
 DEATH  
 MOSES  
 EXILE  
 CONFLICT  
 FLOOD  
 WATER  
 PITCH  
 ARK  
 JUDGMENT  
 RIGHTEOUS  
 COVENANT  
 LAND  
 LEADER  
 BROTHERS  
 WELL  
 MARRIED  
 KINDNESS  
 NOAH  
 JOSEPH  
 EGYPT

**Find the hidden words for this weeks Parsha**

S	J	O	S	E	P	H	T	S	U	J
H	E	K	E	G	O	S	T	W	A	A
E	N	R	S	Y	S	F	E	A	P	J
M	M	A	O	P	D	L	O	T	E	U
O	I	P	M	T	L	C	I	E	X	D
T	C	I	L	F	N	O	C	R	I	G
R	R	T	G	L	P	V	V	E	L	M
S	E	C	R	O	A	E	N	I	E	E
R	D	H	S	O	C	N	I	O	P	N
E	A	E	N	D	L	A	N	D	A	T
H	E	E	G	Y	P	N	V	E	L	H
T	L	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S
O	I	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	L
R	B	E	D	E	I	R	R	A	M	S
B	R	E	G	Y	P	T	V	E	L	N

