

# א ביסל תורה!

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כ"ז טבת תשפ"ו • וארא

## Different Ways Hashem Interacts With People

By Yakir Samuels '26

וַיִּדְבֹר אֶל-לֵקִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי ה': וְאָרָא אֶל-אַבְרָהָם "G-d spoke to Moshe and said to him, 'I am 'Hashem' (Tetragrammaton). I appeared to Yitzhak, Avraham, and Yaqob as 'Kel Shakkai', but by My name 'Hashem' was not known to them" (שמות ו:בג). These first couple of פסוקים in this weeks פרשה are very ambiguous and cryptic. The simple reading of these פסוקים are that Hashem didn't use the tetragrammaton name of G-d when talking to the אבות but used a different name- Kel Shakkai, but for משה He uses this name.

However, in בראשית, Hashem indeed does talk to the אבות using the tetragrammaton name. This seems to contradict the second פסוק in this weeks פרשה! For example: "אֲנִי ה' אֵל-לֵקִי אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיךָ וְאֵל-לֵקִי יִצְחָק" (בראשית כ"ח:יג). This פסוק along with other ones clearly contradict these opening פסוקים. Additionally, what is the significance of G-d's various names, and why does G-d choose to reveal to משה a name that the patriarchs did not fully know?

רשי comments on this פסוק by saying that when G-d communicated with the אבות, He used Kel Shakkai, one of His names as the G-d who makes promises and fulfills them. Like the covenants he made with the אבות for the land, descendants, and blessings. The אבות never saw these promises fully come to fruition, so, when G-d says that His name was not known to them, it means

they did not recognize Him in His attribute of faithfulness, which the Name Hashem represents, that He will fulfill His promises; just not in the lifetime of the אבות. Even though the promises were not completed in their lifetimes, the אבות still had full faith in G-d. G-d uses the Name Hashem when speaking to משה because the redemption will now bring these promises to fulfillment.

אבן עזרא agrees that the verse isn't really about the Name Hashem itself but about what the name represents. He explains that G-d's names show how He acts in the world, not whether He makes or fulfills promises. When G-d appeared to the אבות as Kel Shakkai, He helped and protected them through the non extraordinary things: saving them from famine or war and giving them wealth and honor, without any open miracles that went against nature. Now G-d tells משה that He will reveal Himself as Hashem, the Creator, to show a different kind of divine intervention. This name means G-d will act beyond nature, creating miracles everyone can see. That is what will happen in the ten plagues and in the redemption showing that G-d can perform small, as well as big miracles.

רמב"ן builds on this and explains that there is a difference between how G-d revealed Himself to the אבות and to משה. With the אבות, the תורה uses the word "appeared" but with the name Hashem it does not. The רמב"ן says the word "appeared" is used for the אבות because they experienced G-d indirectly, through visions, while "known" is used for משה because he had direct contact through his prophecy and could truly understand G-d. The אבות knew G-d through Kel Shakkai, which shows justice, while משה knew G-d

through "Hashem", which shows mercy. By revealing Himself to משה this way, G-d was showing that the redemption of ישראל עם would go beyond justice, giving them goodness through His mercy.

So why does G-d reveal to משה an attribute that the patriarchs never saw? Didn't the אבות deserve to see the promises fulfilled or witness bigger miracles? אבן עזרא explains that משה had a closer connection to G-d, which let him experience direct revelation and miracles in front of all בני ישראל. The אבות, on the other hand, experienced G-d's help through events that followed the normal course of nature.

The אבות teach us that faith does not depend on seeing immediate results. משה teaches us that sometimes G-d acts openly to reveal His power and fulfill His promises. Both lessons show us different aspects of Hashem: sometimes we see G-d working in ways we don't notice, and sometimes He shows His power openly. In both cases, we can trust that Hashem is guiding and protecting us.

## Believing in G-d and Expressing Gratefulness

By Marc Muzin '28

In פרשת וארא, Hashem reveals Himself to משה in a new way and says: "וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֶל-יִצְחָק וְאֶל-יַעֲקֹב בָּא-ל-שִׁקִּי" "ואברהם, יצחק, and יעקב as 'G-d almighty' and my name is (tetragrammaton name of G-d), my name was not known to them in this name" (שמות ו:ג). This is a powerful turning point - from promises to action, from waiting to redemption. משה is sent to פרעה again and again with a

clear command: "שְׁלַח אֶת-עַמִּי" "send my people" (שמות ט:א). But פרעה refuses to listen and the plagues begin. These plagues are not only punishments to the Egyptians; they are lessons to the Jewish people. Each one shows that Hashem is in control of nature, history, and human dignity. Through them, בני ישראל learn that Hashem is actively present in the world.

One of the most moving moments in the פרשה is that בני ישראל themselves struggle to hear משה's message. The תורה tells us: "וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה מִקָּצֶר רוּחַ וּמִעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה" "and they did not hear משה from short breath and hard work" (שמות ו:ט). They were so crushed by slavery that they could not imagine freedom. Even though redemption was promised, emotionally they were not ready to accept it. This teaches us that sometimes the greatest challenge is not the hardship itself, but believing that change is possible.

Another beautiful lesson in this פרשה is gratitude. During several of the plagues, משה does not strike the Nile or the ground himself; instead, רש"י explains that Moshe showed gratitude to the Nile, which once protected him when he was placed there as a baby and protected against the dangers of the Nile. From here we learn the importance of gratefulness, recognizing and appreciating kindness, even from inanimate objects.

פרשת וארא teaches us that redemption often happens gradually. Faith may exist even when hope feels distant, and Hashem never forgets His promises - even when we struggle to see them being fulfilled. May we learn to notice the quiet beginnings of redemption in our own lives, to trust the process, and then to show our thankfulness to G-d for all that he does for us.

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