

אֶלֹהִים
 VA'ERA/AND I APPEARED
 Shemot/Exodus 6:2-9:35

Let's take a look at the introductory verses to our parasha Vayera:

Shemot 6:2 And Elohim spoke to Moshe and said to him: "I am אֶלֹהִים.³ "I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'acov, as El Shaddai (אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי), but by My name אֶלֹהִים I was **not known to them**.⁴ "I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers.⁵ "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have **remembered My covenant**.⁶ "Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am אֶלֹהִים; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.'⁷ 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your Elohim. **Then you shall know that I am אֶלֹהִים** your Elohim who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.⁸ 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'acov; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am אֶלֹהִים.'⁹ So Moshe spoke thus to the children of Israel; but **they did not heed Moshe, because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage**.

A couple of things to point out here concerning these verses:

- Begins and ends with a reference to the **forefathers**
- He revealed Himself to the forefathers, but only by the name "El Shaddai"
- The name "אֶלֹהִים" remained unknown to them

What is the **difference** between the **two names**? Clearly, **both names appeared** throughout the **patriarchal narratives**. Thus we know that these **Shemot verses** are **not speaking** to us about the **literal awareness of the name**. Instead, the **Torah** must be **suggesting** that **Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'acov's relationship** with the Almighty could be **described** through the **meaning and implication of the name "El Shaddai"** (אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי). If so, then **what does El Shaddai symbolize**?

According to many of the sages, the word "**Shaddai**" (אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי) derives from the **root shadad** (שָׁדַד), associated with "**defeating**." "**El**" (אֱלֹהִים) means "**mighty**", and **together** we have a **name** which **describes His awesome might to deliver, especially the individual**. The forefathers did **experience this attribute** over and over again as **He saw them through famines, warfare, and family disputes**. Through all of these incidents, **El Shaddai intervened to save them**, albeit through **natural means**...i.e., the **onlooker would not have noticed any divine intervention** in the **outcome of their trials**. Thus, even though **El Shaddai's involvement is real** and moves toward a **chosen outcome**, it is **often concealed** and **totally invisible** to an **ignorant world**. **Rav Sha'ul** refers to **El Shaddai** in this well known verse in **Romans**:

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love Yah, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

For the **one who loves the Almighty**, every situation and seemingly insignificant decision is in fact **guided to its conclusion** by the One who **displays the attributes** of El Shaddai, the One **orchestrating everything behind the scenes**. The **lives of the patriarchs** in fact are a **testimony of El Shaddai's handiwork**.

What then is the **meaning of "יהוה"**? What was the **message of hope** that **Moshe** was **given in Shemot 6** to **encourage the oppressed Israelites**? It was simply this...**very soon**, instead of **working within the laws of nature**, He would instead perform **miraculous signs** on the **behalf of an entire nation**. These **wonders would go against the laws of nature** and **clarify that He was indeed "יהוה their Elohim"**. He is in fact **Creator of the Universe** with **no need to follow the laws of science or nature**.

During His ministry on earth, **Yeshua** also **performed miracles** which **upset the laws of nature** and **made clear that He was the Messiah, the Son of יהוה**:

John 20:30 And truly Yeshua did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Yeshua is the Messiah, the Son of Yah, and that believing you may have life in His name.

His **birth and resurrection from the dead** were the **greatest miracles ever** and the **most extreme display of "power" by יהוה**:

Romans 1:3 concerning His Son Yeshua the Messiah our Adonai, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,⁴ and declared to be the Son of Yah with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

The **Israelites were not able to recognize the covert El Shaddai within their midst** due to being **crushed by Pharaoh** and his evil cohorts. So our heavenly **Abba encouraged them** with the news that **His salvation would be awesome!** The **revelation of יהוה** would be **evident through miracle upon miracle, testifying of His power to save!**

It has been pointed out that **in the end times, unprecedented technology and scientific progress** will attempt to **explain יהוה's miraculous works**. If so, we can see the **parallel between the role of scientists and the magicians who appear in our parasha**. But as the **Torah teaches**, the **magicians came to the point where they admitted this was the "finger of Elohim."**

In the **future redemption**, the **entire world...including the most prominent scientists**, will also **"bend the knee"** and **acknowledge the sovereignty of the One they will come to know as יהוה** because of His **miraculous works**:

Micah 7:15 "As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders." ¹⁶ The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might...They shall be afraid of יידי' our Elohim, And shall fear because of You.

*Isaiah 45:23 ... That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath. ²⁴ He shall say, 'Surely in יידי' I have righteousness and strength. **To Him men shall come, And all shall be ashamed Who are incensed against Him.** ²⁵ In יידי' **all the descendants of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory.**' "*

Shabbat Shalom!

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