

# vaEra - 14

**Torah: Exodus 6:2 - 9:35**

**Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25 - 29:21**

**Brit Chadassah/New Testament: Revelation 16:1-21**

In the previous portion, Sh'mot, Moses was sent to Pharaoh to request the release of Israel to the wilderness to offer sacrifices. Pharaoh refused and made the Hebrew slaves work harder instead.

Moses was dismayed and went to YHVH to complain.

*22 Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did You ever send me? 23 Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done harm to this people, and You have not rescued Your people at all." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he will let them go, and under compulsion he will drive them out of his land."*

*2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the Lord; 3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but by My name, Lord, I did not make Myself known to them. 4 I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as strangers. 5 Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Exodus 5:22 - 6:5*

The key takeaway from this section for Hebrew Israelite men is that we may be told what will happen, and we form expectations of how things will happen based on what we are told. Then when things happen that don't line up with our expectations, we are dismayed. Therefore, we should remain open to YHVH acting in ways we don't expect.

There is another aspect to this section beyond boxing in YHVH. Note that it was in anguish and groanings that they were in a place to see Him act. He heard the groanings of the sons of Israel, and then He remembered His covenant. Then He acted.

Therefore, He will allow us to groan and be oppressed before we are ready to see Him as He truly is. The Fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) saw Him move in their lives, but they didn't see Him show forth His immense power like He is about to do for the enslaved sons of Israel. Abraham saw YHVH free Sarah twice through supernatural intervention and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. These supernatural interventions come the closest to how He chose to free Israel.

To repeat, it is in our seasons of groaning and despair that He meets and lifts us up.

Undoubtedly, many, many people have opined in numerous places why YHVH said that He had not made Himself known as YHVH to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when He clearly identified Himself as such to them.

*6 Then he believed in the Lord; and He credited it to him as righteousness. 7 And He said to him, "**I am the Lord** who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it." Genesis 15:6-7*

*12 And he had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 Then behold, the Lord was standing above it and said, "**I am the Lord**, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your descendants. Genesis 28:12-13*

How do we understand what He was saying about being known to them as "El Shaddai" but not as "YHVH"? At the risk of unknowingly repeating what others have said before me over the centuries, I offer the proposition that the Fathers experienced YHVH as El Shaddai, a powerful but intimate Friend with whom they could talk.

When He says "I am the Lord" or "I am YHVH", He is linking actions with His reputation and character. Another way of saying this is that His character is revealed by taking certain actions and declining to take other actions.

One way perhaps to understand this is how a person is sometimes known for verbal malapropisms or perhaps has obsessive-compulsive behaviors like chronically cleaning. We say, "Oh, that's just Bertie" or "That's just Miss Piggy". People become known for certain actions.

***A good name is to be more desired than great wealth; Favor is better than silver and gold. Proverbs 22:1***

***A good name is better than good oil, And the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth. Ecclesiastes 7:1***

YHVH wants to be known as One Who does what He says He will do. He wants His actions to define His character and those actions image Him to us.

How do we apply this to ourselves? If we want to be remade into His image, then we need to do the same actions He does. What we are known for is our reputation. Do we want to be known for godly behavior and character?

Going forward, when we see Him associating Himself with specific behaviors or prohibiting specific behaviors, we need to understand that imitating or avoiding these specific behaviors help us become more like Him.

Also with the Fathers, YHVH was acting on a small scale (the individual or the family). He is now about to shake the most powerful country of the day and challenge and defeat their gods (elohim). In other words, He is about to act on a global scale.

What will He do? As Amos observed “[c]ertainly the Lord God does nothing Unless He reveals His secret plan To His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Moses certainly was His servant and was a prophet. He gave Moses a series of statements that have the English words “I will ... “. Joseph also prophesied about what “He will ...”. Let’s look now at what Joseph said and what YHVH told Moses.

***24 Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but **God will assuredly take care of you** and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” 25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “**God will assuredly take care of you**, and you shall carry my bones up from here.” Genesis 50:24-25***

These next statements were made during the “mission briefing” at the burning bush.

***10 And now come, and **I will** send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.” Exodus 3:10***

*20 So **I will** reach out with My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. Exodus 3:20*

*21 **I will** grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not go empty-handed. 22 But every woman shall ask her neighbor and the woman who lives in her house for articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; and you will put them on your sons and daughters. So you will plunder the Egyptians.” Exodus 3:20-21*

After Moses was dismayed and complained to YHVH, YHVH responded with the seven great “I WILL” statements we read every Passover.

YHVH starts with “Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘**I am the Lord**’” (Exodus 6:6a). He is going to add to His reputation by the following acts. This will also define how we understand and see Him.

*and **I will** bring you out from under the labors of the Egyptians,  
and **I will** rescue you from their bondage.  
**I will** also redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments.  
7 Then **I will** take you as My people,  
and **I will** be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the labors of the Egyptians.  
8 **I will** bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob  
and **I will** give it to you as a possession;*

Then He concludes with “**I am the Lord**” (Exodus 6:6-8).

When we men say “I will \_\_\_\_\_”, we need to do what we said we will do.

That is acting like YHVH. The power of saying “I will \_\_\_\_\_” and then doing it is very great.

I want to leave you with another set of “I WILL”, but this time, instead of seven as in Exodus chapter six, there are eight.

*19 **I will** betroth you to Me forever;  
Yes, **I will** betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice,  
In favor and in compassion,  
20 And **I will** betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the Lord.*

21 *"And it will come about on that day that **I will** respond," declares the Lord.*

*"**I will** respond to the heavens, and they will respond to the earth,*

22 *And the earth will respond to the grain, to the new wine, and to the oil,*

*And they will respond to Jezreel.*

23 ***I will** sow her for Myself in the land.*

***I will** also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion,*

*And **I will** say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!'*

*And they will say, 'You are my God!'" Hosea 2:19-23*

What He started with the seven "I WILL"s in the First Exodus, He will finally complete with the eight "I WILL"s after the Second Exodus.