



MORDEKAI'S DRASH — VA'ERA




Torah: *Va'era* (And I appeared), *Sh'mot* (Exodus) 6.2-9.35

Haftarah: *Yechezk'el* (Ezekiel) 28.25-29.21

Suggested **Messianic Writings** reading: Revelation 16.1-21

Shalom,

“I appeared to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya`akov as *El Shaddai*, although I did not make myself known to them by my name, *Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh (YHVH)* [ADONAI].” These words open this parashah, but a reading without an understanding of the Hebrew might be confusing here. Other versions read something similar to, “I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name *the LORD* I did not make myself known to them.” Yet the Sacred Name was used by the Patriarchs (*ADONAI* or *HASHEM* is seen in most Jewish-published Scripture as a substitution for the Sacred Name; other Bibles often use terms such as *the LORD*). Some examples: (Gen 12.7) “So he [Avraham] built an altar there to ADONAI, who had appeared to him.” When Avraham was stopped from sacrificing Yitz'khak, he then built an altar and sacrificed the lamb that had been caught in the bush, and “Avraham called the place *ADONAI Yir'eh* [ADONAI will see (to it), ADONAI provides].” (Gen 26.25) “There he [Yitz'khak] built an altar and called on the name of ADONAI.” The Sacred Name is used as early as Gen 2, at the creation of man. So why did ADONAI make the above statement to Moshe?

The key is found in the word *known*; “I did not make myself *known* to them...” *Know* in the Hebrew is *יָדָע, yah-dah*, “to know by experience; a personal, intimate knowledge.” This is the same term used after creation, when Adam *yah-dah* Eve, and they had children. In other words, the Patriarchs had an intimate acquaintance with the Creator as *El Shaddai*, the G-d who was their provider. Now He was about to reveal Himself to Israel, the Keil & Delitzsch Commentary notes, “as the absolute Being working with unbounded freedom in the performance of His promises.” The Ramban (a Jewish Sage) understood the name *El Shaddai* as describing G-d when He performs miracles that do not openly disrupt the normal course of nature. Never before had the Creator overruled His creation to aid mankind. Israel would soon see this happen. The Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible has this description of *know, יָדָע, yah-dah*: “ The pictograph for *dalet*  [now written as *ד*] is a picture of a door. The *ayin*  [now written as *ע*] is a picture of the eye. Through the eyes one experiences his world and learns from it. Combined these pictures mean ‘the door of the eye’. The eye is the window into man’s very being. Experience is gained through observation. Knowledge is achieved through these experiences.” Even if one does not have physical eyes, he has “spiritual eyes”. The Patriarchs had *experienced* the Creator as *El Shaddai*, who cared for them without “openly disrupting the normal course of nature;” now the nation of Israel would *experience* the Creator as ADONAI, who will show His power to care for them in a whole new dimension, He will *indeed* “disrupt the normal course of nature”.

Further, Rabbi Hertz, Chief Rabbi of Britain pre-WWII, wrote this in his Torah Commentary: “The emphasis is on the words *I am ADONAY*. They are not intended to inform Moses what God is *called*, but to impress upon him that *the guarantee of the fulfillment of the Divine promises lay in the nature of the Being who had given the promises*. Even as the phrase ‘I am Pharaoh’ (Gen 41.44) is merely an assertion of royal authority and power, in the same manner, ‘I am ADONAY’ means ‘I am He who has the power and the faithfulness to fulfil any promise vouchsafed by Me. I have promised Redemption, and I shall fulfil that promise; I will and can do it.’”

Next, the Creator told Moshe, “I have heard the groaning of the people of Isra'el, whom the Egyptians are keeping in slavery; and I have remembered My covenant.” And then He promises four things, which are the primary themes of the *Pesakh* (Passover) Seder: 1) I will free you; 2) I will rescue you; 3) I will redeem you; and 4) I will take you as My people. Moshe went to the people of Israel and related these promises, but they wouldn't listen to him because they were so discouraged. I think we can all relate to the Israelites, for when you are discouraged, a promise of “pie in the sky” means nothing until you have fork in hand and a slice in front of you. But the mercies and miracles of G-d did eventually come.

There is one little phrase in this parashah that reveals the sum of the Creator. In *Sh'mot* 9.14, ADONAI relates to Pharaoh, through Moshe, these significant words: “I am without equal in all the earth”. In other words, “all that you hold dear or important, all that you worship, is nothing compared to My Glory, My Holiness, My Worthiness. It is Me whom you should worship and obey.” And those words are not just for Pharaoh, or just for world leaders – although if a few more world leaders would heed these words, the

world would be in better shape. But for every human, the ultimate goal *should be* just as Sha'ul wrote in Philippians 3.7-8, "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Messiah. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing the Messiah Yeshua as my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain the Messiah."

The days are getting darker, and many spiritual forces in this world are fighting against the Creator and His people. Anti-Semitism grows stronger in the world as the prince of darkness fights to keep the Messiah from returning to His people. But his days are numbered, and Yeshua will one day appear to all. The prophet Isaiah wrote these words of the Creator (45.22-23), "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'" Sha'ul reiterates this point in Philippians 2.9-10, "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Yeshua the Messiah is ADONAI, to the glory of God the Father." Many will bow and make this confession in fear, for their time is up; others will be singing and rejoicing. We have only this lifetime to make that choice. A wise Jewish Sage once gave this bit of advice: "Repent one day before your death" (Perkei Avot 2.15). Since we don't know when that will be, perhaps we should live today as if tomorrow we die; better yet, live today as if today we die.

Today we are given the opportunity to *know*, יָדַע, *yah-dah*, Him through the Son, the Messiah, Yeshua: "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I *know* whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1.12).

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a rousing cry, with a call from one of the ruling angels, and with God's shofar; those who died united with the Messiah will be the first to rise; then we who are left still alive will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we will always be with the Lord. So encourage each other with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4.16-18).

שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם – *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

B'rakhot v'todah rabbah
(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven.
(Acts 1.11 CJB)