



Parashat Shemos: Entering Eternity

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles
Summary by Channie Koplowitz-Stein

Parshat Shemot describes the dialogue between Hashem and Moshe at the burning bush. Moshe asks, "Who am I... that I should take Bnei Yisroel out of Egypt? Hashem reassures him, "For *Ehekeh* shall be with you." He then gives him a sign as further encouragement, that after their liberation, the nation will worship God on this mountain. How can a sign not yet materialized provide proof for the present?

Moshe asks Hashem for the Name he should use in speaking to *Bnei Yisroel*. The Ramban explains that *Bnei Yisroel* wanted to know through which of His attributes would He be manifest in this deliverance. Hashem's answer was, "*Ehekeh Asher Ehekeh* I Shall be As I Shall Be," which He later abridged to, "I Shall Be" has sent me to you."

This is a most unusual Name which appears nowhere expect in the Rosh Hashanah prayer, *Vechol Ma'aminim*, where Hashem is referred to as the true Judge Whose Name is 'Certainty'. It is a cryptic Name that implies the unknown, the Unknowable and the Eternal, God's Name of the future. The Tiferes Shimshon notes that whenever we want to discuss something hidden and eternal, it always appears in three's. For example, "*Kadosh*" recited three times in Kedushah. The three words here therefore also constitute one single Name of Hashem evoking the future and the eternal. With this Name, Hashem can give a future proof for the promise of deliverance, that *Bnei Yisroel* will accept the *Torah* at this place.

In answer to Moshe's question, Hashem originally told Moshe the three word Name, alluding to future exiles when Hashem will continue to be with us. When Moshe's suggested that talk of future troubles while deep in the current exile would be discouraging, Hashem agreed, and amended the message, "Tell them I will be with them [through this one exile]." Nevertheless, we, in our current Diaspora should take heart in the original message, that Hashem is indeed with

us here as well. Hashem, speaking grammatically in the first person, is using His name of mercy, the YKVK third person we are familiar with, that He will always be with us mercifully throughout our history. In a *Medrash* that Rabbi Wolbe cites from Rashi, Hashem showed Moshe a brick of sapphire He kept under His throne so that He is constantly reminded and remains in empathy with the suffering of *Bnei Yisroel* who were forced to make bricks in Egypt.

Within this merciful Name lies another message, continues Rabbi Asher Weiss. We are to gather strength in this current exile, for, although it is difficult, there is purpose. While the times appear as full of darkness, all is light in the world of Hashem. It is only the darkness we are in that is preventing us from seeing it.

The Ramban notes, that when *Bnei Yisroel* will ask for His Name, they are asking for proof of His existence and His manifestation in the world. To this Hashem responds that they need not worry about His involvement with them. The proof of My existence is that when they cry out to Me in their troubles, I respond.

In making this request to Hashem, Moshe himself wanted to know a name that would reflect Hashem's personal presence in our world, writes the Sam Derech. The best proof of Hashem's existence lies in the power of prayer, in Hashem's "being there" and hearing us, even when our prayers are wordless and informal. In Egypt, Hashem heard our sighs, even without words.

The Shvilei Pinchas, citing the Arizal, notes that *EHeKeH* equals 21, and multiplied by the second *EHeKeH*, we get a total of 441, the same numerical value as *EMeS*. Anyone who calls out to Hashem in truth, He will be close to them (*Tehilim*).

Since He judges in truth, by using the doubled *Ehekeh*, the Ramban, as cited by Shvilei Pinchas, explains that the relationship is reciprocal; as we interact with Hashem, so will

He interact with us.

In *Melachim*, we are told that Shlomo HaMel-ech was the wisest of all men, and that he spoke *shloshet alaphim*/three thousand proverbs. But *shloshet alaphim* can also be translated as "three letters *aleph*." The great wisdom that Shlomo taught the nation was that Hashem would be with every person who clings to Him, in accordance with the letter *aleph* that begins each word in this Name of Hashem.

The Nesivot Shalom explains that *Bnei Yisroel* would be concerned how they could merit the redemption, given how steeped they were in Egyptian culture. This three word phrase, "I Shall Be As I Shall Be," is all in the future. Hashem was teaching Moshe the power of teshuvah, that even if the penitent fails, he can still return. But Moshe is hesitant to tell *Bnei Yisroel* that they may fail. Hashem accepts Moshe's anxiety, and instructs him to tell *Bnei Yisroel* to repent this one time, and the proof will be that they will worship Me on this mountain.

But there is a caveat. You must faithfully desire that change in order to believe it, writes the *Mesillot Bilvovom* citing the Arizal. The desire is the catalyst for the change. When you leave Egypt, you must work on transforming yourselves for 49 days, but the final result is a gift, says Rabbi Steinwerzel. If we begin the process and make a commitment, Hashem will lift us up and help us connect with Him.

The numerical value of *EHeKeH* is 21. Rabbi Brazil notes that this is the same value as the word *hoda'ah*/gratitude. When you appreciate all the blessing Hashem has bestowed on you, it ignites a desire to reciprocate. The day that is most conducive to this feeling is *Shabbat* when we reconnect with our spiritual side and seek closeness to our Creator. It is a time to return, to start anew and connect again to the Infinite through gratitude.

Responsibility of A Professional to his Client Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Dayan Shlomo Cohen

Let's study this case- Two cars were parked on a narrow street and a truck came down and couldn't pass. The halacha is that where a car blocks the street you can cause damage. The truck nudged its way down the street and damaged one of the cars. The car owner asked the truck driver to pay as he had parked first, and the second car had blocked the street. The truck owner then said, *hamotzi m'chavero*; if you want me to pay you for damages, prove it. There's clear damage that the truck smashed into the car and there's a doubt as to whether the person who perpetrated the damage is exempt. There is no witnesses to testify to either side. So, where there's clear damage and doubt whether the perpetrator is exempt or not, we don't say *hamotzi m'chavero* -that the person who wishes to extract payment has to prove he deserves payment. We say that the owner of the truck has to pay for damages unless he

can prove that he was permitted to damage the car.

A professional is like a paid guardian. If a condition is made, whether verbally or in a contract, that he isn't liable for damages, it's halachically binding. What about if the professional gave advice that ultimately caused damage? Is he responsible or do we say that he didn't actually do any physical acts of damage and therefore isn't held responsible? It depends on if he's considered an expert or not and if it can be proven that the professional was negligent and that it was the wrong advice. Where the professional is being paid and knows his advice will be relied upon, he's held responsible. But if he's not being paid and isn't sure that his advice will be listened, he isn't liable.

If a client orders work from a professional and then refuses to accept the work done for him,

he is still obligated to pay. The only exception would be if the professional can use the work done for someone else and there is no actual loss. If you made an appointment with a professional and then didn't show up out of negligence, not because of extraordinary circumstances, so then if the professional didn't suffer a loss (he had other work) you wouldn't be liable to pay, otherwise you would be responsible.

If you give raw materials to a craftsman to create something, to whom do the improvements belong? According to the *Shulchan Aruch* it would belong to the client, not the craftsman. However, the *Shach* and other poskim argue that it may belong to the craftsman and so therefore you wouldn't be able to force the craftsman to pay any profits he earned if he sold the finished product to someone else.

Tehillim 98

Universal Celebration of Divine Revelation

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Dr. Esther Shkop

This *mizmor*, like the two preceding it, present a universe celebrating Hashem's wondrous salvation of his chosen nation. Here too, other nations join in a celebration of Hashem's love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. The song also personifies the seas and rivers that join in symphony of praise sung by the mountains applauding the arrival of Hashem who has come to judge the world. While Psalm 96 seems to be an invitation to sing, this chapter adds the musical accompaniment of the stringed instruments, the *kinor*, trumpets and the *shofar*, followed by the clapping of rivers and the roaring of the seas. Thus Redak explains that *zamru* means with musical instrument. Furthermore, while Psalm 96 invited all Israel to sing and declare Hashem's impending salvation, this chapter celebrates Hashem's redemption of His people as if it had already occurred, astounding all of the nations and arousing the joyous anticipation of all creation.

"Sing a new song, for Hashem has made great wonders, His right hand has saved, His

holy arm has redeemed us." *Malbim* differentiates between Hashem's right hand and His holy arm. The laws of nature are symbolized by the left hand, whereas miraculous intervention that momentarily override natural law are symbolized by the right hand. "Hashem revealed His righteousness, His justice to the eyes of all the nations." *Seforno* explains that with the coming of *Mashiach* which this song celebrates, Hashem will reveal not only His power, but His righteousness, and all nations will come to see that the suffering of Israel had purpose and the salvation of Israel and subsequently of all humanity were products of Hashem's love and faithfulness to the promises He made to our forefathers.

Seforno posits that the yeshua will come because Hashem will remember the chesed and faith of the Jew who remained loyal to Hashem even when it seemed that Hashem had abandoned him.

Redak explains that the imposition of Hashem's judgment of morality that distinguishes

virtue from vice, and kindness from cruelty, must bring joy to the whole universe that had been put in peril by the unbridled reign of evil and chaos as described in *mizmor* 96. Hashem's judgment will set right the imbalance that threatens the earth's survival.

"Before Hashem, for He has come to judge the earth; He will judge the inhabited world justly and the peoples with equity. *Tzedek* is a balancing of law and mercy. However in the previous *mizmor* 96, we are told that Hashem will judge them b'emunato -by his faithfulness. *Metzudat David* explains that *emet* and *emunah* are synonymous. *Malbim* indicates that justice requires a careful assessment of human behavior and on that basis, Hashem judges the entire universe. However, after the *mabul*, when Hashem promised He would no longer destroy the world, it became seemingly chaotic, where evil could thrive. With the coming of *Mashiach*, justice will be set aright. Hashem will again impose judgement that balances law and mercy and it will come *b'meisharim* -directly.