

פֶּרֶשֶׁת
שְׁמוֹת
Parashat Shemot

*Shemot / Exodus 1:1-6:1, Isaiah 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23
Luke 5:12-39*

**Does the Lord's Promise to be with Us Guarantee We
will not be Harmed?**

In this week's Torah portion, Parashat Shemot, there is a lot that happens. We read about Israel's enslavement in Egypt (*Shemot / Exodus 1*), the birth of Moshe, his fleeing from Egypt, and staying with Jethro a priest of Midian (*Shemot / Exodus 2:11-25*). Moshe marries Jethro's daughter and has children and while tending the sheep he sees God at the burning bush (*Shemot / Exodus 3*). The Lord commissions him to go to Egypt to set the people free and the Lord Promises to be with him. Moshe is given the power to perform signs as proof of the Lord God being with him, and Aaron becomes the spokesperson for Moshe. Moshe then goes before Pharaoh and Pharaoh increases the labor of the people. When the Lord speaks to Moshe to go to Egypt, Moshe responds saying, *Bereshit / Genesis 3:11-12*, וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־ הַיְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִי אֲנִי כִּי אֵלֶּךָ אֶל־פְּרַעֲוֹה וְכִי אוֹצִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם:
But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?" כִּי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךָ וְזֶה־לְּךָ הָאֵוֹת כִּי אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךָ וְזֶה־לְּךָ הָאֵוֹת:
And He said, "I will be with you; that shall be your sign that it was I who sent you. And when you have freed the people from Egypt,

you shall worship God at this mountain.” (Sefaria) We notice here Moshe questioning based upon his humility, he said “*who am I*” (מִי אֲנִי) that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt? The Lord then responded saying, כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ “*I will be with you*” and then God said וְזֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת “*and this shall be the sign to you.*” We note how Moshe seems to be arguing about his inadequacy as a man of stature to stand before Pharaoh. We also note the significance of how the Hebrew text is written, the Lord’s response was that the sign will be that God will be with Him. Indeed, part of this sign is that the Lord will make his journey successful and bring the people back to this very mountain, but the most significant point is that the Lord will be with him (כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ). If we consider the context, we find an interesting parallel in *Shemot / Exodus 3*, to the burning bush. Notice how the bush was not consumed because of the sustaining power of God. The Lord God commissioned the bush to a certain task and the bush was not consumed until having followed through with the task it was given. An alternate interpretation by Rashi on these verses speaks to whether Moshe may have had some doubts about the Lord God’s ability to save Israel. (*Or HaChaim on Exodus 3:12 Part 1*)

We note how powerful of a statement is it for the Lord to say that He will be with him (כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ)! The commentary Daat Zkenim speaks specifically on this phrase וְזֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת.

Daat Zkenim on Shemot / Exodus 3:12 Part 1

וְזֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת, “*and this will be the sign for you (that though unworthy, now they will become worthy of redemption shortly thereafter;” at that time I will make it plain to all the people that I have sent you to be their redeemer. [G–d is referring to what we read in the report of the revelation at Mount Sinai in Exodus 19,9: וידעו כי אתה שלוחי, [not exactly but words to this effect. Ed.] An alternate interpretation of this line: it is a response to Moses’ question why he had been found worthy to become this people’s leader. He had considered himself as unfit to speak with Royalty, and even if he had been worthy of that, he certainly did not deem*

himself worthy to take the people out of Egypt. G-d reassured him, implying that he was right, but seeing He would support him all the way, he would be able to fulfill his task. In fact the redemption would not be due to Moses' actions, but to His actions, all the way. All you need to know is that I will not abandon you in your efforts. (Attributed to Rabbi Joseph Kara who heard it from a Rabbi David.)

Notice how Daat Zkenim draws out the idea of not being worthy to merit being delivered. The significant point that Daat Zkenim is making is that it was not because of Moshe's actions, but because of God's actions that he will be successful. The Lord promises not to abandon Moshe. Rashi on *Shemot / Exodus 3:12* speaks of the sign of the burning bush that the bush was not consumed due to the mission God had laid upon it. In a similar manner, Rashi says that וְזֶה-לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנִי וְזֶה-לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנִי *"and this will be the sign unto you because I have sent you"* the fact that the Lord God of Israel is sending Moshe is a sign to him coupled with the miracle of the burning bush. What the Lord is telling Moshe, due to Moshe having fled Egypt for his life, the Lord is telling him that he will not suffer any harm. In addition, it is not due to the merit of Israel that they should go forth out of Egypt. We read the last verse in the Torah portion according to *Shemot / Exodus 6:1*, stating וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה עַתָּה תֵרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר אֲעֲשֶׂה לְפָרְעֹה כִּי בִגְד חֲזָקָה (יִשְׁלַח־ם וּבִגְד חֲזָקָה יִגְרָשׁם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: ס) *Then the LORD said to Moses, "You shall soon see what I will do to Pharaoh: he shall let them go because of a greater might; indeed, because of a greater might he shall drive them from his land."* (Sefaria) These things were to occur purely for the glory of God and so that the Lord God would show His great power! This is the אֹת, the sign of believing in the Lord God Almighty, which provides us with a future expectation of something happening. These things reveal to us how the Lord God facilitates faith in the one whom He sends. This is what the Lord God was asking of Moshe, to believe in Him because He was with him (כִּי-אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ)! These Scriptures teach us that if the Lord is with us, nothing can stand against us! (see *Romans 8:31*)

ספר שמות פרק ג

[רביעי] א וּמֹשֶׁה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת-צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֹתְנָו פֹּהַן מִדִּן וַיִּנְהַג אֶת-הַצֹּאן אַחַר הַמִּדְבָּר וַיָּבֹא אֶל-הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֹרֶבָה:
ב וַיֵּרָא מִלֶּאדָּה יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּלִבַת-אֵשׁ מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֵּה וַיֵּרָא וְהָיָה הַסִּנֵּה בַעַר בָּאֵשׁ וְהַסִּנֵּה אֵינָנו אֹכֵל: ג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרֶה-נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת-הַמַּרְאֵה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה מִדּוּעַ לֹא-יִבְעַר הַסִּנֵּה: ד וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה כִּי סָר לְרְאוֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו אֱלֹהִים מִתּוֹךְ הַסִּנֵּה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הַנְּנִי: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-תִּקְרַב הֲלֹם שֶׁל-נְעֻלֶיךָ מֵעַל רַגְלֶיךָ כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹמֵד עָלָיו אֲדַמַּת-קֹדֶשׁ הוּא: ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיךָ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וַיִּסְתֵּר מֹשֶׁה פָּנָיו כִּי יָרָא מֵהַבְּיַט אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה רְאֵה רְאֵה יְרֵאתִי אֶת-עֲנִי עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאֶת-צַעֲקוֹתֵם שְׁמַעְתִּי מִפְּנֵי נִגְשָׁיו כִּי יִדְעֵתִי אֶת-מִכְאֲבָיו: ח וְאָרַד לְהַצִּילוֹ | מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וְלְהַעֲלֹתוֹ מִן-הָאֶרֶץ הַהוּא אֶל-אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ אֶל-מְקוֹם הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי: ט וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה צַעֲקַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָה אֵלָי וְגַם-רְאִיתִי אֶת-הַלֶּחֶץ אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לֹחֲצִים אֹתָם: י וְעַתָּה לֵכָה וְאֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ אֶל-פְּרַעֲהַ וְהוֹצֵא אֶת-עַמִּי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם: יא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים מִי אֲנֹכִי כִּי אֵלֶךְ אֶל-פְּרַעֲהַ וְכִי אוֹצִיא אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם:
יב וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי-אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְזֶה-לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנֹכִי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֶךָ אֶת-הָעָם מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּעֲבֹדוּן אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים עַל הַהָר הַזֶּה: יג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי בָּא אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתִּי לָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם וְאָמְרוּ-לִי מִה-שְׁמוֹ מָה אָמַר אֲלֵהֶם: יד וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה וַיֹּאמֶר פֹּה תֹאמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶהְיֶה שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם: טו וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה פֹּה תֹאמַר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם זֶה-שְּׁמִי לְעֹלָם וְזֶה
 זְכָרִי לְדֹר דָּר: [חמישי] טז לך וְאֶסְפֹּת אֶת-זַקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נִרְאָה אֵלַי אֱלֹהֵי
 אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר פֶּקֶד פְּקַדְתִּי אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת-הַעֲשׂוֹת
 לְכֶם בְּמִצְרָיִם: יז וְאָמַר אֶעֱלֶה אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם
 אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַיְבוּסִי
 אֶל-אֶרֶץ זְבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ:

Shemot / Exodus 3:1-17

3:1 Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 3:2 The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. 3:3 So Moses said, 'I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up.' 3:4 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' 3:5 Then He said, 'Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' 3:6 He said also, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. 3:7 The Lord said, 'I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. 3:8 'So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 3:9 'Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me;

furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. 3:10 'Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.' 3:11 But Moses said to God, 'Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?' 3:12 And He said, 'Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.' 3:13 Then Moses said to God, 'Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?' 3:14 God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' 3:15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations. 3:16 'Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, 'I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt. 3:17 'So I said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey.' (NASB)

The most significant statement here is what we read about the Lord God being with Moshe, וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְזָה־לְךָ הָאֵת כִּי אֲנֹכִי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֶךָ אֶת־הָעָם מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּעֲבֹדוּן אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים עַל הַהָר הַזֶּה: And He said, "I will be with you; that shall be your sign that it was I who sent you. And when you have freed the people from Egypt,

you shall worship God at this mountain.” (*Sefaria*) Again, the reason Moshe fled Egypt was because he feared for his life. The Lord here commissioned Moshe to go back to Egypt and said saying He will be with him, was assuring him that he will not be harmed. Hashem tells Moshe that His presence will go with him such that he will not see harm. (*Siftei Chakhamim, Exodus 3:12, Part 2*) These things should cause us to ask ourselves a question. *“Are we promised that we will not be harmed when taking the message of God to the nations?”* This is a very important question in light of what the Hebrew text states, וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְנֹהֲלֶךְ הָאֹת כִּי אֲנֹכִי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֶךָ notice here how the word לְךָ (to you) is superfluous (unnecessary) as the Lord was emphasizing how he will not be harmed as going back to Egypt. The Lord God was making Him a promise. When we look at the NT text, as follows of Yeshua, walking in His footsteps, and taking the Message of the Gospel to the nations, are we promised no harm? The point is, though God is with us, His presence in our lives does not preclude us from persecution, or even death. Yeshua brought this point forward according to the NT saying, *“They will persecute and put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed, by your perseverance you will secure your lives.”* (see *Luke 21:12-19*) Notice the significance of this statement. This is synonymous to our having faith, believing in the God of Israel, and His Messiah, taking the message of truth, regardless of what happens, remaining faithful even unto death. In parallel fashion to the sustaining power of God with the burning bush (*Shemot / Exodus 3*) Yeshua says *“not a hair on your head will be destroyed.”* Note that the rabbis say the burning bush was not an illusion, rather it was a true sign from HaShem! (see *Rashi and Siftei Chakhamim on Shemot / Exodus 3:12*) As pertaining to faith, Moshe was to believe God regardless of whether the promise had been fulfilled or not. The Lord made a promise which was contingent on a previous promise, the promise of inheriting the Promised Land. This event had not happened yet (i.e. it had not been fulfilled). The promise God gave to Moshe וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְנֹהֲלֶךְ הָאֹת כִּי אֲנֹכִי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֶךָ was a promise of a mission and of success. Again this promise of success had not been accomplished as of yet, this is what is facilitating faith in the one whom God is sending. The returning to the Mountain of the

Lord was a promise of the giving of God's Word to His people, the giving of the blessing of Torah. Note today in the modern theologies of the church the Torah is not considered a blessing from God. The Scriptures however show this not to be true (see *Tehillim / Psalms 119*). The words וְזָה־לְךָ הָאֵלֹת is God's promise that He will be at Moses' side all the time, enabling him to face Pharaoh and anything that comes at him in life without fear or trembling because the Lord said כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ. The significant aspect of all of these things is how the Lord promises to be with us. Note how Israel was redeemed in order to receive God's Word. The people did not receive God's Word first. They received God's Word after they witnessed the power of God to redeem them from bondage. This generated faith and then following they received the Word of the living God!

This week's Torah portion teaches us how the Lord God promises us that because He is with us, we will be successful in taking His message to the nations! In light of all of these things, we must be diligent to not cling to this world but to cling to the things of God because the great day of the Lord is even closer today than ever before! The promise God gave to Moshe, וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְזָה־לְךָ הָאֵלֹת כִּי אֲנֹכִי, וְיִשְׁלַחְתִּיךָ we can rest assured that we do not have to be disheartened when the wicked prosper or when sudden disaster comes. (*1 John 2:15, Mishley / Proverbs 3:25*) The reason these things happen us is because the kingdom of God is at war with the kingdom of this earth and so whoever makes himself a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of the Lord! The Prophet Isaiah foresaw the future when he said, א הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר חָזָה יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ בֶן־אֲמוּץ עַל־יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם: ב וְהָיָה | בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יְהִיָּה הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשָּׂא מִגְּבְעוֹת וְנִגְהָרוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם: ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ | וְנִבְעָלָה אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה אֶל־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וִירְגוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנִלְכְּהוּ בְּאַרְחֻתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה: *2:1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And*

that we may walk in His paths. 'For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (NASB) These words coupled with what we read in this week's study reveals to us the importance of the call of God on our lives! We can rest assured the Lord is with us as we take His Message of Salvation to the nations! He will make our efforts to further the kingdom successful, regardless of what happens, just as He promised Moshe that He will be with him. The Lord God Almighty is with us too, for the Glory of God!

