

Parashat Va'era / פרשת וארא

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Ani Hashem / אני יהוה

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Exodus 6:2-9:35

Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21

B'rit HaChadashah: Rom 9:14-33

This week I would like to discuss the Hebrew text in the Tanach and an interesting emphasis on the phrase “Ani Hashem” (אני יהוה) in Parashat Va'era shown below.

שמות 6:1-9

וַהֲצִיל לֹא־הֲצִילְתָּ אֶת־עַמּוֹךְ; וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲתָה תֵרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר אֲעִשֶׂה לְפָרְעָה כִּי בְיַד חֲזָקָה יִשְׁלַחֶם וּבְיַד חֲזָקָה יִגְרָשׂם מֵאֶרֶצוֹ; וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יְהוָה; וְאֵלֹא אֶל־אֲבֹרָהֶם אֶל־יִצְחָק וְאֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שְׁדֵי וּשְׁמֵי יְהוָה לֹא נִוְדַעְתִּי לָהֶם; וְגַם הִקְמַתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּם לֵתֵת לָהֶם אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֵת אֶרֶץ מִגְרֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר־גָּרוּ בָּהּ; וְגַם אֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־נְאֻמַּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם מַעֲבָדִים אִתְּם וְאִזְכֹּר אֶת־בְּרִיתִי; לִכֵּן אָמַר לְבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה וְהוֹצֵאתִי אִתְּכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלַת מִצְרַיִם וְהֲצִילְתִּי אִתְּכֶם מִמַּעַבְדֵיכֶם וְגִאֲלִיתִי אִתְּכֶם בְּיָד נְטוּיָה וּבְשַׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים; וְלִקְחֹתִי אִתְּכֶם לִי לְעַם וְהִנִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וַיְדַעְתֶּם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַמּוֹצִיא אִתְּכֶם מִתַּחַת סִבְלֹת מִצְרַיִם; וְהִבֵּאתִי אִתְּכֶם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת־יָדַי לֵתֵת אֹתָהּ לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב וְנָתַתִּי אֹתָהּ לָכֶם מִזְרָשָׁה אֲנִי יְהוָה; וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה כֵּן אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מִקְצֶר רוּחַ וּמִמַּעַבְדָּה קִשָּׁה;

Clearly there is an emphasis of G-d's message to his people by repeating the statement "Ani Hashem." In this section of verses G-d is informing Bnei Yisrael (Children of Israel) of their eminent redemption and while doing so He repeats His name saying "I am Hashem." This statement is so significant, that it is even mentioned in the first of the Ten Commandments. I believe the repeated statements are G-d's way of stating the authority that He has as well as assuring us that He can be trusted. By repeating these statements Hashem is saying (i) I am faithful because I remember my covenant with you, (ii) I am faithful to exact payment, (iii) I am faithful to give reward, (iv) I am faithful to exact revenge, and (v) I am faithful to deliver you and take you back to the land which I promised to your fathers.

Now, looking at the context in which we find Parashat Va'era, Bnei Yisrael is in the midst of problems; specifically, the problem of slavery. Life is full of problems consisting of challenges, difficulties, and obstacles to overcome. For Bnei Yisrael they had a difficulty of 400 years of bondage/slavery and today we also face similar problems which we must overcome. Even people who are G-d's children have problems. That is right, even people who have given their lives to Hashem have to deal with problems just like those who do not know G-d. I believe the important message G-d is trying to tell us in this portion of scripture is life comes with its difficulties and disappointments but He is faithful and can be trusted.

In this week's parsha we find G-d cares about his people. G-d is calling us, asking us and offering us a means for entering into a unique relationship with Him. G-d is calling us to intimacy with Him. Thus far in the Torah we are finding how G-d created us for fellowship and He has revealed that we need Him, and He desires us to draw near. G-d has gone through great lengths to draw us nearer to Himself, from the time He walked in the Garden of Eden, His mighty deliverance from Mitzrayim, to this present day. So passionate was His desire after Adam and Eve sinned that He worked intensely throughout time to bring humanity back to a place of intimate fellowship. He then ultimately gave the greatest gift the very best gift He had, His only begotten Son to redeem Adam, and all of humanity who will place their faith in His Messiah Yeshua. Today G-d is still working, he is calling you, and so what are you going to do about it?

John 3:16

כִּי־כֵן אֵלֶּב אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָעוֹלָם עַד־אֲשֶׁר נָתַן בְּעַדוֹ אֶת־בְּנוֹ אֶת־יְחִידוֹ
וְכָל־הַמֵּאֲמִין בּוֹ לֹא־יָאֲבֵד כִּי בּוֹ יִמְצָא חַיִּי עוֹלָם:

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah for ever and ever