

“I Am the Eternal”: Covenant Faithfulness in the Face of Delay

Focus Text — Exodus 6:2–8

And God spoke to Moshe, and said to him, I am the Lord: and I appeared to Avraham, to Yizḥaq, and to Ya‘aqov, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name, The LORD I was not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Kena’an, the land of their sojournings, in which they sojourned. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Yisra’el, kept in bondage by Mizrayim; and I have remembered my covenant. Therefore say to the children of Yisra’el, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of Mizrayim, and I will deliver you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of Mizrayim. And I will bring you into the land, which I swore to give to Avraham, to Yizḥaq, and to Ya‘aqov; and I will give it you for a heritage: I am the Lord. (Koren)

Introduction: When Promises Feel Delayed

1) Parashat Va’era opens at a moment of profound disappointment. Moshe

has obeyed the calling. He has spoken to Pharaoh. He has delivered the

message. Yet instead of freedom, Israel experiences **increased**

oppression. Straw is withheld. Labor is intensified. Hope appears

crushed.

2) This portion addresses one of the most difficult spiritual realities we face:

What do we do when obedience does not produce immediate

redemption?

3) The Eternal's response is not to explain Pharaoh, the plagues, or the

timetable. Instead, He reveals **who He is**—and reminds Israel of **what**

He has already sworn to do.

I. “I APPEARED...” (EXOD. 6:2–3)

A. Exodus 6:2–3 Is Often Read As Though The Eternal Is Introducing

Something Previously Unknown. However, The Hebrew Text

Allows—Very Naturally—For A Rhetorical Reading, One That Fits

Both The Grammar And The Narrative Context.

B. Rather Than A Flat Declaration, The Words May Reasonably Be

Heard As A Challenging Question:

“I Appeared To Avraham, Yitzchak, And Ya‘Akov As El Shaddai—And

By My Name, The Eternal One, Was I Not Known To Them?”

C. In Biblical Hebrew, Questions Are Frequently Signaled By Context

Rather Than Punctuation, And Rebuking Or Corrective Speech Often

Takes This Form. The Issue Here Is Not Whether The Patriarchs Had

Heard Or Spoken The Name—They Clearly Had. The Issue Is

Confidence Under Pressure.

D. The Problem Is Not Knowledge, but Discouragement

E. Moshe is not ignorant. Israel is not ignorant. They **know who the**

Eternal is. What they are experiencing is the spiritual danger that

comes when suffering causes people to **forget what they already**

know.

F. The Eternal's response, then, is not informational—it is corrective:

1. Did the patriarchs trust Me without seeing fulfillment?

2. Did they walk faithfully despite delay?

*3. Do you now doubt My covenant character because circumstances
have worsened?*

G. This Reading Resolves The Tension Created By Earlier Passages In
Genesis, Where The Patriarchs:

1. Build altars in the Name

2. Call upon the Name

3. Walk in covenant relationship with the Eternal

H. The Eternal Is Not Redefining Himself. He Is Calling Moshe Back To
Covenant **Memory**.

- I. Scripture Consistently Links Calling On The Name With Faithful Obedience, Not **Verbal Formula**.

II. COVENANT MEMORY IN THE FACE OF DELAY

- A. The Eternal Reminds Moshe Of The Covenant Made With The Patriarchs—The Promise Of The Land, Of Descendants, And Of Redemption.

1. The covenant was not forgotten.
2. The delay was not abandonment.
3. The suffering was not proof of failure.

- B. Delay, In Scripture, Often Serves To:

1. Demonstrate divine faithfulness
2. Expose human powerlessness
3. Prepare a people to recognize redemption when it comes

C. Israel Is About To Experience Not Just Rescue, But Covenant

Fulfillment—Something Their Ancestors Anticipated But Did Not
Live To See.

III. THE FOUR VERBS OF REDEMPTION (EXOD. 6:6–7)

A. At The Center Of This Passage Are Four Verbs Of Redemption,
Foundational To Understanding The Exodus And Later Embedded In
The Passover Narrative.

B. “I Will Bring You Out” (Hotzeiti)

1. This refers to removal from oppression.
2. Israel will no longer be crushed under forced labor.
3. This is the **initial act of mercy**, not yet full freedom.

C. “I Will Deliver You” (Hitzalti)

1. This verb speaks of **rescue from bondage**, not merely relief.

2. The Eternal does not merely ease suffering; He **breaks the system that enslaves.**

D. “I Will Redeem You” (Ga’alti) This Is Legal And Relational Language.

Redemption involves:

1. A kinsman-redeemer
2. The payment or exertion of power
3. Restoration of rightful status
4. Israel belongs to the Eternal, and He acts publicly to reclaim them.

E. “I Will Take You To Be My People” (Lakachti)

1. This is the goal of redemption—not escape, but **relationship.**
2. Freedom is not the destination.
3. Covenant belonging is.

4. “I will be your Elohim, and you will know that I am the Eternal
who brought you out.”

5. Redemption culminates in **identity and allegiance**, not
independence.

IV. OBEDIENCE BEFORE VISIBLE REDEMPTION

A. A critical pattern emerges in Va’era: Obedience precedes visible
redemption.

1. Moshe obeys before Pharaoh yields.
2. Israel is commanded before freedom arrives.
3. The covenant is reaffirmed while slavery continues.

B. This pattern appears throughout Scripture:

1. Avraham obeys before seeing descendants

2. Israel follows before crossing the sea

3. Faithfulness is required before fulfillment

C. Obedience is not the reward for redemption—it is the **path toward it**.

V. MESSIANIC APPLICATION: YEHOSHUA AND COVENANT FULFILLMENT

A. Yehoshua stands firmly within this Exodus framework.

B. He does not introduce a new deity, a new ethic, or a rejection of covenant

faithfulness. He calls people to:

1. Recognize the authority of the Eternal

2. Trust the faithfulness of His promises

3. Walk in obedient allegiance

C. Many in first-century Israel expected immediate political redemption.

When it did not come, disappointment followed—much like in Egypt.

D. Yet Yehoshua consistently taught that:

1. The Kingdom unfolds in stages
2. Obedience precedes manifestation
3. Faithfulness is proven under delay

E. Redemption begins with deliverance from bondage to sin and deception,
and moves toward restored covenant life.

VI. APPLICATION FOR THE COMMUNITY TODAY

A. This portion calls us to ask:

1. Do we trust the Eternal when promises seem delayed?
2. Do we equate faithfulness with immediate results?
3. Are we willing to obey before outcomes are visible?

B. Calling on His Name means:

1. Submitting to His authority
2. Trusting His covenant character
3. Walking faithfully even when circumstances worsen

C. Israel's story reminds us: The Eternal does not forget His promises. He fulfills them at the appointed time.

Conclusion: Knowing the One Who Redeems

1) Va'era teaches us that redemption is not merely escape from hardship, but

recognition of the faithful Redeemer who acts in history.

2) The Eternal reveals Himself not through pronouncement, but through action.

- Not through haste, but through faithfulness.
- Not through comfort, but through covenant.

3) May we be a people who:

- Trust during delay
- Obey before fulfillment
- Know the One who redeems by walking faithfully in His ways

Ha Sof