



Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 6:2 – 6:8

We will Learn how to

- 1) interpret the main theme (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

I. Exodus 6:2-4— In this passage, Adonai says that the Patriarchs only knew Him by the name, God Almighty (El Shaddai), not by YHVH (יְהוָה). In most English Bibles, the letters LORD (all capital letters) has been substituted for the Tetragrammaton, יְהוָה.

This passage has confused many people, because as you read Genesis, you will discover that

- 1) Adonai sometimes used the name YHVH when He spoke to the Patriarchs, and
- 2) sometimes they used the name YHVH when addressing Him!

Therefore, they obviously heard and spoke the Name. Let's take a closer look at this verse.

2 God also said to Moses, "I am the LORD. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty (El Shaddai), but by my name the LORD (יְהוָה) I did not make myself known to them. 4 I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens.

A. Look at how the word **appeared** seems to liken to the phrase, **made myself known**. Wouldn't this verse make more sense if it read...

I **appeared** to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty (El Shaddai), but by my name the LORD (YHVH) I **did not appear** to them.

or...

I **made myself known** to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty (El Shaddai), but by my name the LORD [YHVH] I **did not make myself known** to them.

...the Torah seems to make equal the phrases, **I appeared**, with **make myself known**. Adonai made Himself known (*revealed something about Himself*) through the names He used when He appeared to the Patriarchs. So for us, to understand these verses, we should simply go back to Genesis and study the passages where Adonai **appeared** or **made Himself known** to the Patriarchs through the two names mentioned above.



II. There were two aspects of the covenant set up by Adonai with Abraham — Land and offspring.

A. Read Genesis 15:1-20 — In this passage, pay very close attention to the following;

1) Adonai uses His Name _____, and

2) although He promises Abraham **d** _____ (verses 4-5), the

main emphasis of this covenant is **t** _____ (see verses 8-19 where the land is the subject!).

Also, we learn that their possession of the land is connected to their later becoming slaves and their awesome deliverance from Egypt.

B. Read Genesis 17:1-14 — In this passage, pay very close attention to the following;

1) Adonai uses His Name **E** _____ **S** _____ (“I am God Almighty”), and

2) the main focus of this covenant is the multiplying of

Abraham's **O** _____.

Scripture is showing us that Adonai is making clear His personal relationship with Abraham and the nation to be born to him (“to be God to you and your descendants after you”).

C. To sum it all up, each of the two features of the covenant with Abraham go uniquely with a particular Name of Adonai! **This is important, don't forget it.**

III. The Thematic importance of the Two Covenants and the Two Names — Although most of Adonai's appearances to the Patriarchs did not mention any particular name, four appearances occurred with reference to particular names:

A. Connected with the covenant in Genesis 15 which focuses on receiving the land...

1. Who's involved in that process?

The n _____ of I _____, as well as a nation that is oppressing them (Egypt).
nation Israel

What other themes do we notice (hint: verses 13-16)?

E _____, slav _____, conflict, judgment of E _____ t _____
Exile slavery Egypt

and the divine need to eventually punish the inhabitants of Canaan.

B. Connected with the covenant in Genesis 17 which focuses on receiving offspring...

1. Who's involved in the process? Circle one

Noah and his family Abraham and his descendants The people of Caanan
Abraham and his descendants

What other themes are present?

The fruitfulness and multiplicity of _____ and his _____
Abraham Descendants

Adonai's _____ to _____ them and the _____
power multiply

s _____ of the c _____ emphasizing the relationship between
Sign of the covenant

Adonai and Abraham's descendants.

Now, let's look to see if this thematic pattern is repeated somewhere else.

C. Genesis 28:3—What name does Adonai use with Jacob? E _____ S _____

What is the subject of the conversation? The blessing to make them _____
exceedingly

_____ as a prerequisite to receiving the land.
numerous

Did you notice how this is also thematically connected to the theme involving the name El Shaddai listed above! Whenever Adonai uses the name El Shaddai he is talking about how He will increase the progeny/seed of the Hebrews! El Shaddai = fruitful and multiply/descendants

D. Genesis 15:7—What name does Adonai use with Abram? _____

What is the subject? How Adonai took him out of the land of the C _____
Chaldeans

This is thematically related to the general topic of the usage of the name YHVH listed above!

Genesis 28:13-15—What name is used? _____
YHVH

What is the subject? On the land that Jacob is leaving. Adonai reassures him that He will bring him back to the Land.

and wonders. He is about to make Himself known as YHVH who will judge the nations. He is about to make Himself known as YHVH, who can supernaturally bring His people into their land.

If you do a thematic comparison of the miracles done for the Patriarchs in the book of Genesis to the miracles done in Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, you will quickly see that Adonai truly made Himself known to the generation of the Exodus in a way none of the Patriarchs had experienced. In Genesis He blessed their offspring, led them, protected them, made their labors fruitful, gave them success in war, etc. These were all done working within the framework of the natural world. You will not find examples like the splitting of the Red Sea, manna from heaven, etc., where the natural order is turned upside down.

Another aspect of making Himself known as YHVH involves the aspect of His holiness. When you compare the appearance of Exodus 3:1-6 with the appearances throughout the book of Genesis, you will notice one particular shift in emphasis. When in Genesis, did Adonai ever tell one of the Patriarchs, "Do not come any closer...Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground?" Beginning with the burning bush, Adonai is clearly making Himself known in a new manner.

Therefore, the statement in Exodus 6:2-4 primarily pertains to how Adonai makes Himself known experientially through His names, not whether or not He used the names. The El Shaddai of Genesis 1:1-2:3 had made Himself known through the lives of the Patriarchs behind the scenes. But now, the YHVH of Genesis 2:4-3:24 is about to become intimately involved in the affairs of man as the Lord of history, so as to make Himself known to the nations!

