

VaAira

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The Midrash says that it took God seven days to “convince” Moshe Rabbeinu to accept his mission of taking the Jewish People out of slavery and to *Eretz Yisroel*. Seven days!

From the *Chumash*, it seems like the whole conversation took maybe a couple of hours. I mean, what was the conversation like? Did they take breaks? Did Moshe eat...sleep...? It wasn't as if he was in Heaven already and living off miracles. Why didn't God just tell Moshe, “Here's the plan...now go!”

And after Moshe finally accepted his mission, he asked for the name He should use to refer to God when the people asked who sent him. God answered him, “I will be what I will be,” and then shortened it to “I will be.” Firstly, what kind of name is that, and secondly, what meaning would it have had to the nation back in Egypt if they had never heard it before? It's not like they had been kabbalists who knew the different names of God and what they meant!

To answer these questions, we have to first understand what the mission was about in the first place. Contrary to the simple understanding, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* was not only about freeing an

enslaved nation, or even about getting to Mt. Sinai to receive 613 *mitzvos*. All of that was always only meant to be a means to the real goal and fulfillment of the purpose of Creation, which is...?

God told Moshe:

I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov with [the name] Almighty God, but [with] My name Hovayah, I did not become known to them. (Shemos 6:3)

Why not, and what difference did it make? This:

The purpose of Creation is the revelation of the way *Radl"a* works...and therefore, God emanated the world of *Atzilus* to clothe it, and through this reveal it to man. (*Sha'arei Chochmah, Sifra D'Tzniusa, Vol. 1, 1c*)

It would take many pages, and maybe even months to properly explain what this short little paragraph teaches. But we can explain it generally in a couple of lines, starting with how God made all of Creation just to reveal Himself to man. But, as we know, His original light is too intense for anyone to experience without going "poof" the moment they would be exposed to it. As God told Moshe on Mt. Sinai, "*No man can see My face and live*" (*Shemos 33:20*).

Therefore, God created ways to filter His light so that He could control its intensity according to His will. But overall, He has been increasing the intensity of it so that man's understanding of who God is becomes increasingly more sophisticated...for the person who is ready to receive that light.

That was the point of the seven days that God spent convincing Moshe to accept his historic role. It was to make him into a candidate to know God on new levels, after which he would have to "translate" that knowledge for the nation to under-

stand. When he asked for God's Name, it showed that he had become worthy of knowing God on the level that God wanted to be known at that time.

The fact that Moshe Rabbeinu did not ask God, "What does that even mean?" shows how profound his knowledge had become in seven short days. He had become ready to be the vehicle to make this knowledge public..

After all, true freedom comes from personal knowledge of God, because it is the ultimate *Da'as Elokim* one can attain. Therefore, everything that has happened in the world has been to increase access to that level of knowledge, at least for the people who want to know it.

Have a great Shabbos,

Pinchas Winston