

לדרוש בשבת

Parashat Va'eira 5781

January 15 - 16, 2021

"Your mission is not about the present. Your mission is to set up the future."

- Rabbi David Silber, *Land & Covenant*

Sources: Shemot 6:2-8; Shemot 3:6-17

These sources suggest similar but importantly different reasons for the Exodus. What is the main reason articulated by God in each instance? Pay particular attention to the phrases that repeat in each section.

Notice: as you read Shemot 3, the land of Israel is referred to as "broad." This is to distinguish it from Mitzrayim, a land of narrowness and suffering.

Source: Shemot 2: 23-25

The Torah in Shemot 2 uses four verbs to describe God. Identify them.

Now notice which three of them appear in Shemot 3 and which is missing. You will find the missing verb in Shemot 6.

What might account for this difference?

In Shemot 3, God is speaking only to Moshe. We know that Moshe has intervened on behalf of the oppressed party three times before; Moshe always takes the side of the oppressed. God is speaking to Moshe in the language that Moshe will understand.

Source: Shemot 5:1-6:1

Only after going through the narrative of Shemot 5 is Moshe ready to be introduced to that final missing verb from Shemot 2.

The land described in Shemot 6 is a covenantal land. The purpose of the land in Chapter 6 is a place where you can connect to God. The land is important because it is a place where you can fully be yourself. You don't have to live on someone else's agenda.

But the covenant is realized fully only after 400 years. We pay a price for the covenant, the price of the covenant is the suffering, the slavery. Initial suffering is part of the covenantal process.

In Shemot 5 things get worse, and God answers to Moshe, "Now you know what it means to be covenantal - the son of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They only symbolically possessed the land; they were strangers and sojourners. Your mission is to enter into the covenant which I remember. The land in this context is the medium for the fullness of connection to God: Ani Hashem."

שבת שלום!