

Hashem speaks to Moshe to assure him that He will free Bnei Yisroel.

וַאֲרָא אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֶל-יִצְחָק וְאֶל-יַעֲקֹב בְּקֹל שְׁקִי וְשְׁמִי הֵ לֹא נִודַעְתִּי לָהֶם:

“And I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchok, and to Yaakov, as Kel Shakkai and My name, Hashem, I did not make Myself known to them.” (Shmos 6:3).

How is this comforting to Moshe? Surely Moshe does not care to brag that he knows more of Hashem than the avos did. Why does It repeat “to” before each of the avos, instead of saying it once and including them all *to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov*? The avos clearly knew the name “YKVK” so what does it mean that name was not known to them? Also, what does it mean *in* Kel Shakkah (the *bes* prefix)?

In regards to Avraham: “When Avram was ninety years old, Hashem appeared to Avram and said, ‘I am El Shakkai. Walk before me and you will be pure.’” (Bereishis 17:1). Clearly *Hashem* appeared to Avram. While He did use the name *El Shakkai* here, previously ‘Hashem’ spoke to Avram and appeared to him. (Ibid 12:1 and 12:7). Perhaps, it can be argued that while *Hashem* appeared to Avram, Hashem did not say “I am Hashem” and Avram did not know Hashem’s name. It says explicitly: “And He said to him, ‘I am Hashem that took you out of Ur Kasdim.’” (Ibid 15:7). Further, Avraham, his servant, and even Lavan refer to Hashem by name. Avraham says to his household attendant, “I will make you swear by Hashem.” (Ibid 24:3). The servant says, “Blessed be Hashem.” (Ibid 24:27). Lavan says, “Oh, come in, Blessed of Hashem.” (Ibid 24:31).

In regards to Yitzchok: There is no mention of the name to Yitzchok explicitly. However, he knows it because he mentions it to his son, Yaakov. (Ibid 28:3). Yitzchok also mentions *Hashem* by name. (Ibid 27:27). When Hashem is talking to Yitzchok himself no name is given. “And Hashem appeared to him at night and said, I am the Lord of Avraham your father.” (Ibid 26:24). Even when giving him the family blessing and promise it simply says, “Hashem appeared to him and said, ‘Do not go down to Mitzrayim...’” (Ibid 26:2).

In regards to Yaakov: Hashem appeared several times to him, both as Kel Shakkai and Hashem. His father also tells him the names. (Ibid 28:3). Hashem appears to Yaakov in Luz the second time and says, “I am Kel Shakkai, be fruitful and multiply.” (Ibid 35:11). The first time, though it says, “Behold! Hashem stood upon him, and said, ‘I am Hashem, the Lord of Avraham your forefather and the Lord of Yitzchok.’” (Ibid 28:13).

In sum, all three knew both *Kel Shakkai* and *Hashem*. Hashem appeared as both to Avraham and Yaakov, and Yitzchok knew them by reference, at least. To help explain the pasuk it is important to understand the context of when Hashem said “I am Hashem” to each of the avos. When Hashem appeared as *El Shakkai* it was in reference to the promise that they will be fruitful and multiply. When Hashem said “I am Hashem” it was about possession of the Land of Canaan. Even when Yitzchok mentions the names to Yaakov,

it is in the same context. He invokes *Kel Shakkai* when he sends Yitzchok to marry and *Hashem* when giving him the *bechora* rights, future possession of the Land.

“I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchok, and to Yaakov.” They each were visited specifically. The promise and blessings were given to each of them. They were not simply handed down. Yaakov did hand it down to Ephraim. However, Hashem gave it individually to each of the avos, so it says “to” before each name.

“In *Kel Shakkai*.” In the form of *Kel Shakkai*. At that stage it was only the Promise. It was prophecy of what was to come. They did not see the fulfillment. They only saw the fulfillment of them being fruitful and multiplying. Avraham saw grandchildren through Yitzchok. Yitzchok saw his thirteen grandchildren through Yaakov. Yaakov saw sixty-nine members of his family (at least) before he passed. Hashem appeared to them in the *Kel Shakkai* stage of the Promise...the inception.

“And My Name Hashem I did not make know to them.” Hashem did not allow them to know when the promise would be fulfilled. Hashem did not allow them to see the possession of the Land or know when it would happen. Hashem now made Moshe privy to this information. His purpose was not just to punish Mitzrayim and hurt it. It was to free Bnei Yisroel in order to give them the Land. “The name Hashem” is connected to the possession of the Land.

It can also mean *I appeared to in Kel Shakkai and the name Hashem, yet, I never made Myself known to them*. They knew both names. However, they never knew Me, because I did not yet fulfill the promise.

The next pasuk is connected to the name of Hashem. “Also, I established My covenant with them, to give them the Land of Canaan.” (Shmos 6:4). The Torah does not mention about being fruitful and multiplying. It only mentions the possession because that is what the name Hashem is connected to. Later, Hashem connect the name “I am Hashem” with leaving Mitzrayim. (Ibid 20:2 and Bamidbar 15:37). Leaving Mitzrayim was only in order to possess the Land, and that name is connected to it.