

**Reb Pinchas**  
**Imrie Pinchas**  
**Parshas Shemos**

**Siman #84**

**"And they shall say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them? ...  
'Ehyeh sent me to you.'"Exodus 3:13-14**

The Rambam (Maimonides) in *Guide for the Perplexed* raises a difficulty: If they knew the name, presumably Moses would also know it. See there for his explanation.

**[NOTE** The Rambam addresses this passage from Exodus 3:13-14 in his work *Guide for the Perplexed* (Part I, Chapter 63). He grapples with Moses' question, "When they ask me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" and God's response, "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh" ("I will be what I will be").

The Rambam's Difficulty: The Rambam raises a logical question:

- If the Israelites already know God's name (and indeed they should, as they are descendants of the patriarchs to whom God revealed Himself), why would Moses need to ask this question?
- Conversely, if Moses is asking because the Israelites are ignorant of God's name, then it would suggest that Moses himself does not know it either. But how can that be, given his closeness to God?

This creates an apparent paradox: Why would Moses ask this question, and what is the deeper meaning of the name "Ehyeh"?

The Rambam's Explanation: The Rambam explains that Moses' question is not merely about the *linguistic* or *literal* name of God, but about God's **essence** and **relationship** with the Israelites at this critical moment of redemption. Moses understands that the Israelites may ask him for more than just a name—they may want to know *what kind of God* is sending him.

Maimonides interprets "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh" as an expression of God's eternal, self-existent, and unchanging nature. God is essentially telling Moses:

- "I am the Being who exists independently of all else."
- "I will be with you in this moment of redemption, just as I will be with you in future challenges."

Thus, "Ehyeh" is not merely a name; it is a profound theological statement about God's existence and His commitment to the Israelites. **END NOTE]**

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However, it can be explained that the letters of the name "Ehyeh" are formed differently than others: the letters אההע (aleph, chet, hey, ayin) come from the throat, and בומפ (bet, vav, mem, peh) from the lips, etc. In the Zohar, it states that this is a spiritual word (teivah ruchanit), and thus Moses could only utter the name "Ehyeh" because all other names involve sounds formed with the lips or similar organs of speech. This is the meaning of "Ehyeh"—that Moses could only articulate this name, "Ehyeh."

Another explanation is that "Ehyeh, Ehyeh" (repeated twice) has a numerical value (*gematria*) equal to "Truth" (*Emet*). This corresponds to the highest, middle, and final levels, encompassing all levels from beginning to end. Therefore, it represents faith, etc.

**[NOTE Takeaway:**

Moses' question, "What is His name?" reflects a deep inquiry into how God can be known and revealed. God's answer, "Ehyeh," conveys profound messages about His essence and relationship with humanity:

1. **God's Eternal Presence:** "Ehyeh" ("I will be") emphasizes that God is not confined by time or space. He is eternally present, guiding humanity through every stage of existence.
2. **A Spiritual Revelation:** According to the mystical explanation, "Ehyeh" is a uniquely spiritual and transcendent name, symbolizing that God's essence cannot be fully articulated or grasped. Moses could utter this name because it does not rely on the physicality of speech, hinting at God's ineffable nature.
3. **Faith and Truth:** The repeated name "Ehyeh, Ehyeh" has a numerical value equal to "Emet" (truth), symbolizing God's absolute truth and faithfulness. It reflects God's completeness—from the highest to the lowest levels—and His presence in all aspects of existence.
4. **Practical Application:** This teaches us to trust in God's unwavering presence and guidance. Even when we cannot fully comprehend His essence, we can rely on His truth and faithfulness to sustain us through all circumstances. **END NOTE]**

**Siman #85**

**"And the Lord said to Moses: 'Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh...'  
(Exodus 6:1)."**

A difficulty is raised: How is this a response to Moses' question, "Why have You harmed this people?" (Exodus 5:22). The rabbi, of blessed memory, answered that redemption

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only comes when people stop anticipating it (*hesech da'at*, i.e., a removal of focused expectation). (See *Sanhedrin* 97a.)

In Egypt, the Israelites did not have *hesech da'at* because they were given a sign that they would be redeemed: the redeemer would say the words "I have surely remembered you" (*pakod pakadti*). (See *Rashi* on Exodus 3:16.) However, Moses, due to a speech impediment (*keveid peh*, "of uncircumcised lips"), could not clearly pronounce certain sounds like the letters **ב** (bet, vav, mem, peh), which are formed with the lips. Yet, when Moses said "pakod" (I have remembered), they immediately recognized with certainty that he was the redeemer.

Because of this certainty, Pharaoh increased their suffering to such an extent that they finally despaired and let go of their expectations. This *hesech da'at* allowed the redemption to come. This is the meaning of "Now you will see"—that only when they ceased anticipating it could the redemption occur. Reflect on this and understand.

**[NOTE Practical Takeaway:**

1. **Let Go of Over-Control:** Sometimes, salvation or solutions come not through constant focus or expectation, but by releasing control and trusting the process. This teaches us to balance effort with faith, allowing space for divine timing.
2. **Growth Through Challenge:** The Israelites' suffering increased before redemption, highlighting that challenges often prepare us for growth and transformation. When situations feel most difficult, it may be a precursor to breakthrough.
3. **Faith Beyond Certainty:** Even when we are given signs of hope, like the Israelites recognizing Moses as the redeemer, full redemption requires surrendering to a higher plan, especially when outcomes seem delayed or uncertain.
4. **Unexpected Timing:** Redemption often arrives when we least expect it. Instead of obsessively waiting, focus on living meaningfully in the present while holding faith in eventual resolution. **END NOTE]**