

*"I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as Keil Shakai, but the Name YHVH I did not make known to them."* (Exodus 6:3)

There are seven ineffable names of G-d that may not be erased corresponding to the seven days of creation. Keil Shakai, is the sixth name and relates to the concept of completion, reflecting the completion of the creation of the world on sixth day. The Talmud (Chagigah 12a) explains that the name Keil Shakai means "I am the One who told the world dai [enough]".

The Talmud (Eruvin 100b) comments that had we not been given the Torah we would have learnt ethical behaviour from the animals. The name Keil Shakai represents the concept that G-d is hidden just enough to allow the existence of free will, but revealed enough through nature that it is possible to recognise Him through observation of the natural world. The patriarchs used their intellect to discover G-d through observation of the world.

Conversely, the Name YHVH is the Name of revelation, and is connected to knowledge. The generation of the desert, who had the greatest revelation of God when they received the Torah is known as 'the generation of knowledge.'

This is the meaning of our verse. The Patriarchs discovered G-d and as the Talmud relates (Kiddushin 82a), observed the Torah. Nevertheless, they were not commanded to keep the Torah. The revelation at Sinai changed the relationship with G-d from within the confines of the natural world, to revelation through the name YHVH.

Consequently, even though we find references to many of our laws in the Torah before the revelation at Sinai, for example the prohibition to eat the sciatic nerve (Genesis 32:33), the actual source for these laws comes from the revelation itself (see the Rambam's commentary on the Mishnah Chullin 7:6).

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