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## THE GRAMMAR AND INTERPRETATION OF EXODUS 6:3

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In Exod 6:3, the Priestly writer (P) places two divine names in historical perspective.

וַאֲרָא אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב כָּאֵל שְׁדַי וְשְׁמִי יְהוָה לֹא נִדְעָתִי לָהֶם  
“I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shaddai. But I, my name Yahweh, was not known<sup>1</sup> to them.”

According to the traditional analysis of P,<sup>2</sup> God first identifies himself<sup>3</sup> as Yahweh in v. 2, אֲנִי יְהוָה, “I am Yahweh.” He then states that he was known to the patriarchs as El Shaddai. During the patriarchal period, however, he

<sup>1</sup> The *niphal* verb forms וַאֲרָא and נִדְעָתִי may be analyzed as passives of the corresponding transitive *qal* (e.g., RV; Cyrus H. Gordon, “In’ of Predication or Equivalence,” *JBL* 100 [1981] 613; and Shawn D. Glisson, “Exodus 6:3 in Pentateuchal Criticism,” *ResQ* 28 [1985-86] 141). Alternatively, they may be analyzed as simple toleratives (“I let myself be revealed . . . I did not let myself be known”) or causative reflexives (“I revealed myself . . . I did not make myself known”) (see, e.g., Herbert Haag, “Offenbaren in der hebräischen Bibel,” *TZ* 16 [1960] 254-55; and J. H. Eaton, “Some Misunderstood Hebrew Words for God’s Self-Revelation,” *BT* 25 [1974] 333). These latter analyses are based on the general context of the passage, which suggests to some that P is telling of revelations that are (necessarily?) the result of divine initiative (J. A. Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name* [London: Tyndale, 1959] 13; see also G. Johannes Botterweck, “Gott Erkennen” im *Sprachegebrauch des Alten Testaments* [BBB 2; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1951] 82-83 n. 7; and, more generally, Eaton, “Some Misunderstood Hebrew Words,” 331-38, esp. 338). Further the formula אֲנִי יְהוָה (v. 2) is, according to these scholars, closely associated with the deeds that Yahweh performs on Israel’s behalf; that is, divine revelation in Exod 6:2-3 can be understood as a deliberate, willful act (see Walther Zimmerli, “Offenbarung im Alten Testament: Ein Gespräch mit R. Rendtorff,” *EvT* 22 [1962] 17; and Rolf Rendtorff, “The Concept of Revelation in Ancient Israel,” in *Revelation as History* [ed. Wolfhart Pannenberg et al.; New York: Macmillan; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1968] 33). The *niphal* forms, then, would not be nonagentive passives but instead agentive actives.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. R. N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A methodological study* (JSOTSup 53; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987) esp. pp. 63-72. For a less radical opinion, see J. A. Emerton, “The Priestly Writer in Genesis,” *JTS* 39 (1988) 391.

<sup>3</sup> As the syntax suggests. See Francis I. Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch* (JBLMS 16; Nashville/New York: Society of Biblical Literature, 1970) 32; cf. E. J. Revell, “The Conditioning of Word Order in Verbless Clauses in Biblical Hebrew,” *JSS* 34 (1989) 10 n. 8.

was not known by the name Yahweh, the name by which God has just identified himself to Moses.

Exod 6:3 bridges the religious history of the patriarchal and Mosaic ages for P. On the one hand, the verse records the continuity between these periods, for Yahweh and El Shaddai are one and the same Israelite deity. On the other hand, the verse records a contrast between the deity's two names and the periods they represent. The Israelite God was called El Shaddai in the patriarchal age but not Yahweh, the divine name formally introduced in the Mosaic age.<sup>4</sup>

The grammar of the verse also reflects this interplay between continuity and contrast. Both halves of the verse have the same subject, "I" (= God)—נודעתי (לֵא) . . . וְאֵרָא. The divine names themselves, however, appear in different constructions. "El Shaddai" is governed by the preposition *beth* (so-called *beth essentiae* construction); "Yahweh" lies in apposition to "my name," which itself does not govern the verb but whose possessive suffix agrees with the verbal affix (so-called double subject construction<sup>5</sup>).<sup>6</sup> Each half of the verse, then, has its own grammatical construction.

This essay will examine the grammar of Exod 6:3 as a key to interpreting the passage within the Priestly document. It will begin by analyzing the

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the divine name Yahweh in Gen 17:1; 21:1, on which see the discussion below, under "Yahweh."

<sup>5</sup> In addition to the references in n. 17, see Rudolf Meyer, *Hebräische Grammatik* (4 vols.; Sammlung Göschen 763/763a/763b, 764/764a/764b, 5765, 4765; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1966–72) §94.6 (on Ps 3:5); cf. Mayer Lambert, *Traité de grammaire hébraïque* (2d ed.; Publications de l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Section biblique et massorétique, Collection massorah 3/l; Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1972) 443 n. 1. Scholars differ over whether the "second subject" is in apposition to the subjective affix on the verb (see Carl Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* [Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1956] 85 n. 1; cf. Lambert, *Traité de grammaire hébraïque*, 443 n. 1) or in a *casus pendens* construction (see L. Aug. Heerboth, "Exodus 6,3b: Was God Known to the Patriarchs as Jehovah?" *CTM* 4 [1933] 348; cf. Walter Gross *Die Pendenskonstruktion im Biblischen Hebräisch* [ATAT 27; St. Otilien: Eos, 1987] 108 n. 11).

<sup>6</sup> Other analyses conclude that (1) "my name" is an "accusative of limitation" (e.g., Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1923] §126g; and Bruno Baentsch, *Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri* [HKAT 1/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903] 46; see also U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967] 79), on which cf. n. 25; (2) וְשָׁמִי (יִרְדּוּ) is governed by the *beth* of בְּאֵל שֵׁרִי (v. 2a) in a double-duty construction (e.g., R. D. Wilson, "Critical Note on Exodus VI.3," *The Princeton Theological Review* 22 [1924] 113, reprinted as "Yahweh (Jehovah) and Exodus 6:3," in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation* [ed. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972] 34; and Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus* [JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia/New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1991] 242 n. 3 [to chapter 6]; see also Rivka Nogah, "מידה כִּיב מוֹחָךְ לִיב מִיְדוֹת),"  
*Beth Mikra* 118 [1989] 243; cf. B. Jacob, "Mose am Dornbusch: Die beiden Hauptbeweisstellen der Quellenscheidung im Pentateuch, Ex 3 und 6, aufs Neue exegetisch geprüft," *MGWJ* 66 [1922] 185), on which cf. n. 41; or (3) MT נודעתי should be emended to *hiphil* הודעתי [HAT 1/3; and that וְשָׁמִי should be analyzed as the object of the verb (Georg Beer, *Exodus* [HAT 1/3; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1939] 42; see also A. H. McNeile, *The Book of Exodus* [3d ed.; Westminster Commentaries; London: Methuen, 1931] 34), on which cf. n. 34.

grammatical constructions in each half-verse and their discourse effects. Then, the attendant exegetical issues of Exod 6:3 will be discussed; the essay will focus on the two divine names in the verse, El Shaddai and Yahweh, within the context of the Priestly document. It will answer the questions of who El Shaddai is for P, who Yahweh is, and what the interpretive relation is between these two names in Exod 6:3. Thus building from the text's grammar, this essay will address the major interpretive problems of Exod 6:3 and attempt to solve them within the context of P.

## I. Grammar

### *Exodus 6:3a*

One interesting grammatical feature of Exod 6:3a is the use of the preposition *beth* governing the name El Shaddai. In Exod 6:3a, the *beth* is generally translated "as," "in the capacity of," "in the character of;"<sup>7</sup> and it has similar semantic values elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew (BH).<sup>8</sup>

וַיֵּרָא מַלְאֲךְ יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּלַבַת־אֵשׁ, "an angel of Yahweh appeared to him as a fiery flame" (Exod 3:2 [J])

וְאֶשְׁמָם בְּרָאשֵׁיכֶם, "and I will appoint them as your heads" (Deut 1:13)

לֹא־אֲכַלְתִּי בְאֵנִי מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא־בִעַרְתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ בְטָמֵא, "I have not eaten of it while in mourning; I have not removed any of it while unclean" (Deut 26:14)

The specific function of the *beth* is different in each of these examples. In Exod 3:2, the nominal governed by *beth* represents the *form* of the subject, "an angel of Yahweh,"<sup>9</sup> as fire. In Deut 1:13, *beth* accompanies the term that specifies the *function* of the direct object, "them," as heads. In Deut 26:14, it precedes the terms that signify the *state* of the grammatical subject "I," that is, mourning and unclean. The *beth*, then, can convey a particular form, function, or even state of its head nominal.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Wilson, "Critical Note on Exodus VI.3," 112 = idem, "Yahweh (Jehovah) and Exodus 6:3," 34; and Glisson, "Exodus 6:3 in Pentateuchal Criticism," 141.

<sup>8</sup> For collections of examples, see BDB 88b–89a; GKC §119i; A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* (3d ed., Edinburgh: Clark, 1901) §101, Rem. 1(a); Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* §133c; and Wilson, "Critical Note on Exodus VI.3," 112–13 = idem, "Yahweh (Jehovah) and Exodus 6:3," 34.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Motyer, *Revelation of the Divine Name*, 14; and Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 110. Cf., e.g., RSV and NJPS, which interpret *beth* as a locative preposition; and, differently, Werner H. Schmidt, *Exodus 1–6* (BKAT 2/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988) 103. For similar constructions involving a comparison between God and fire, see, e.g., Exod 13:21 (J), 19:18 (J); and perhaps Isa 66:15; cf., e.g., Exod 24:17 (P).

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Heinrich Ewald, *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Bundes* (8th ed.; Göttingen: Dieterich, 1870) §299b (form); Bruce Waltke and M. O'Connor

These examples also share several traits.<sup>11</sup> The phrase governed by *beth* is subordinate to another nominal in the sentence, which in turn is its head; this nominal may take the form of a simple noun (see below), construct phrase (Exod 3:2), or pronoun (Deut 1:13; 26:14). The prepositional phrase and the head refer to the same entity, as, for example, “fire” and “an angel of Yahweh,” or “them” and “your heads”; the prepositional phrase and head nominal are therefore equireferential.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the prepositional phrase throughout these examples limits the scope of its head to a particular aspect of form, function, etc. In other words, this prepositional *beth* appears on nominals that are equireferential with their head, subordinate to it, and characterize it, but only to a limited extent.

The *beth* precedes other characterizations as well.

בְּשִׁבְעִים נִפְשׁ יָרְדוּ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ, “your ancestors, seventy persons, went down” (Deut 10:22)

כִּרְיִיחַ נִיחַח אֶרְצָה אֲתֶכֶם, “I will accept you as a pleasing odor” (Ezek 20:41)

אִךְ-בַּצֶּלֶם יִהְלֹךְ-אִישׁ, “Man walks about as a shadow.” (Ps 39:7)

In Deut 10:22, for example, it marks the numerical equivalent of the head. In Ezek 20:41, it accompanies a metaphorical equivalent, and in Ps 39:7 its following noun represents a particularly transient property.

In each case, this preposition marks a characterization or equivalent<sup>13</sup> of its head. Though its nominal is equireferential with the head, this phrase is not identical with it.<sup>14</sup> On the contrary, this prepositional phrase offers only a limited (partial) view of the entity in question.<sup>15</sup> For Exod 6:3a, this limited

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*An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) §11.2.5e (function); and Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* §133c (state) (despite his reservations). See also GKC §119i.

<sup>11</sup> For this and the discussion of v. 3b, see Hilary M. Chappell and William B. McGregor (eds.), *The Grammar of Inalienability: A typological perspective on body parts and the part-whole relation* (Empirical Approaches to Language Typology; Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, [forthcoming]), with bibliography.

<sup>12</sup> “Equireferential,” as suggested by Sandra Thompson (personal communication), denotes the relationship between two (or more) terms that refer, though perhaps in different ways, to a single real or conceptual-narrative entity.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Gordon, “‘In’ of Prediction or Equivalence,” 613 (“ב of equivalence”). The preposition, however, does *not* function “like an equal sign” (see n. 14 below; cf. *ibid.*).

<sup>14</sup> It is therefore a misnomer to call this preposition the *beth essentialis* or *beth identitatis* (cf., e.g., Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique*, 404 n. 1). These terms imply a permanent, or at least lasting, relationship between the head and the prepositional phrase governed by *beth*. Such a relationship does not necessarily exist between the two nominals in question, and in fact their relationship may be temporary or ephemeral, as in Ps 39:7 (see also Pss 37:20; 102:4; etc.). In this sense, the *beth* serves the same overall function as the Finnish translative ending *-ksi*. A better name for this preposition, then, is the “translative *beth*.”

<sup>15</sup> See the “partitive *beth*” in GKC §119m; and BDB 88.

view of the head (“I”) is represented by the divine name El Shaddai (“as El Shaddai”),<sup>16</sup> which is contrasted with the name “Yahweh” in the second half of the verse.

*Exodus 6:3b*

“Yahweh” appears in a so-called double subject construction. In this clause type, the verb agrees with the possessive suffix of a noun, not with the nominal itself. That is, the verb agrees with the noun’s possessor;<sup>17</sup> the possessor is indexed (cross-referenced) on the verb.

1. This grammatical construction appears elsewhere in BH.

פִּימוֹ דַּבְּרוּ בְנֵי אֱוֹהָהוּ, “they, their mouth, speak arrogantly” (Ps 17:10; see also Ps 66:17, פִּי־קִרְאתִי)

אַתָּה יָדְךָ יִדְּ נְיִים הוֹרֶשֶׁת, “you, your hand, displaced nations” (Ps 44:3; see perhaps Pss 60:7; 108:7)

These examples share some general characteristics. As aforementioned, the verb agrees with the possessor of the free-standing noun in person, number, and gender. Further, the noun represents the entity that performs or executes the action appropriate to it; for example, people speak with their mouths, and dispossession may occur by force of the hand (strength). Also, the entity is, in these cases at least, a body part.

The behavior of the possessed noun is the same throughout as well. It does not act independently of its possessor, and it is not an independently manipulable tool or instrument.<sup>18</sup> Rather, the body part acts in the same way as its owner, except that the part is the performer or effector of the action.

Body parts, however, are not the only entities that display these

<sup>16</sup> See also בֵּיה שְׁמוֹ (Ps 68:5), in contrast to יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ (Exod 15:3; Jer 33:2; Amos 5:8; 9:6). The latter phrase identifies “Yahweh” and “his name” and therefore draws a permanent relationship between the two entities. The former phrase, however, contains a form of the divine name, “Yah” (see also v. 19), which appears alongside other divine names in the text (e.g., God [vv. 2, 3, 4, etc.], Shaddai [v. 15], and Yahweh [vv. 17, 21]). This variety of divine names suggests that “Yah” is not the *only* name of the deity, but a cognomen or nickname. In this case, then, Ps 68:5 may be translated “his name is called Yah” or “his name is (among others) Yah.” Cf., e.g., GKC 379 n. 3.

<sup>17</sup> See Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* §109, Rem. 3; GKC §144; and Joüon, *Grammaire de l’hébreu biblique* §151c; cf. GKC 461 n. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Further, because the body part is not an independently manipulable object, this noun is not an instrument (cf., e.g., Friedrich Eduard König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebräischen Sprache* [3 vols.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1881–97; repr. Hildesheim/New York: Georg Olms, 1979] 2/2 §329m; and Lambert, *Traité de grammaire hébraïque* 443 n. 1, on Ps 66:17; and, differently, Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* §93n); it does not carry the instrumental preposition *beth*. But when the body part is construed as an entity behaving independently of the owner, it carries the instrumental *beth* (for examples, see BDB 90a).

grammatical and functional characteristics. The possessed noun may represent a physical extension of the possessor.

הוּוּהּ מִמַּחֲמַיִם יַדְּיָהוּוּהּ <sup>14</sup>פִּלְטָה נַפְשִׁי מִרְשַׁע חֲרֹכְךָ, "you, your sword, deliver me from the wicked; your hand, O Yahweh, from men!" (Ps 17:13-14)

It may be an internal feature or property.

אֶקְרָא קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, "I, my voice, call to Yahweh"<sup>19</sup> (Ps 3:5; see also Pss 27:7; 142:2 [אֶזְעַק . . . אֶקְרָא]; and Isa 10:30 [צִהְיֵנִי קוֹלְךָ])

וְאֶשְׂרִירָה וְאֶזְמַרְתָּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי, "I, my might,<sup>20</sup> will sing and chant." (Ps 108:2)

Or, like "might" in Ps 108:2, the entity denoted by the possessed noun may be a representation or an abstraction.

נַפְשִׁי כְּחֹךְ לִבְאֵם אֲשַׁכְּבָה, "I, my soul, lie down among the lions" (Ps 57:5; see also Ps 69:11 [?])

נַפְשִׁי אֵייתִיךָ בְּלֵילָה אֶת־רוּחִי בְּקִרְבִי אֲשַׁחֲדָךְ, "I, my soul, yearn for you at night. I, my spirit within me, seek you." (Isa 26:9)

Nonetheless, these nouns function identically in all these cases. The noun is an entity that is inseparable from its owner, and it behaves in the same capacity as its possessor (= subject)<sup>21</sup> What the one does, the other does too.

Up to this point, the cross-referencing of the possessor and subject appears only in contexts where the subject acts willfully. In other contexts, though, the subject may not be in control at all. The subject may, for example, experience a sensation.

וּכְלִיּוֹתַי אֲשַׁחֲוֶנָה, "I, my kidneys, was pierced" (i.e., "I was emotionally wounded") (Ps 73:21); see also

חָלָה אֶת־רַגְלָיו, "he, his feet, was sick" (1 Kgs 15:23)<sup>22</sup>

Or the subject may be affected by an action.

בְּהַמְלֹךְ בָּשָׂר עֲרִלְתּוֹ, "when he, the flesh of his foreskin, was circumcised" (Gen 17:24; see also vv. 11, 25); see also

<sup>19</sup> Cf., e.g., Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* §93n; and, differently, König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebräischen Sprache* 2/2 §329m.

<sup>20</sup> For this translation, see Moshe Weinfeld, "כְּבוֹד־ *kābôd*," *TWAT* 4. 25-26.

<sup>21</sup> In addition to the references in n. 19, cf. König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebräischen Sprache* 2/2 §325o.

<sup>22</sup> For the grammatical and discourse function of אֵת, see W. Randall Garr, "Affectedness, Aspect, and Biblical Hebrew 'et,'" *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 4 (1991) 119-34. Cf., e.g., C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen* (2 vols.; Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1908-13; repr. Hildesheim/Zurich/New York: Georg Olms, 1982) 2 §229c; and, differently, Werner Diem, "Alienable und inalienable Possession im Semitischen," *ZMDG* 136 (1986) 273-74.

קרוע\_ כהנתו, "he, his robe, was torn" (2 Sam 15:32)

Instead of performing, executing, or effecting an action, the nominal here specifies the place where the possessor (= subject) is affected by the situation described by the verb.<sup>23</sup> What happens to the one, happens to the other too.

These individual analyses suggest a number of features common to *all* the examples in this section, including *לוא נודעתו* . . . *ישמי* in Exod 6:3b. (1) The possessed noun and the possessor exhibit an inseparable part-whole relationship. The part may be an actual body part attached to a person or an extension thereof. It may be a feature, property, or something physically contiguous to the possessor. The possessed noun (part) may also be an abstraction or a representation of the whole, like a name (Exod 6:3b). (2) The part specifies the extent or locus of the possessor's involvement in an action or state. It denotes the part that is relevant to a given situation, or the part that is most directly or intimately involved. For Exod 6:3b, this part is God's name. And (3) the part and whole function alike. When the whole does, experiences, or undergoes something, so does the part, and vice versa. The part and whole therefore fill the same semantic role. For Exod 6:3b, both God and God's name are the object of knowledge.

Two grammatical features recur throughout the sample as well. (4) The part noun carries a possessive pronoun which cross-references the whole. And (5) the possessor of the part is also the *subject* of the verb,<sup>24</sup> agreeing with it in person, number, and gender. These five features define an internally consistent group,<sup>25</sup> and they all appear in the construction in Exod 6:3b.

<sup>23</sup> For other possible examples, with intransitive predicates, see Judg 9:9, 11, 13 (חרל); Gen 40:10 (עלה); and Isa 34:13 (עלה).

<sup>24</sup> See also Lach. 3:4–5: [עברך . . .] [את און] . . . [את הפקח נא], "and now, may you, the ear of your servant, please be opened!" (for the reading, see Frank Moore Cross, "A Literate Soldier: Lachish Letter III," in *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry* [ed. Ann Kort and Scott Morschauer; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1985] 42). Although this phrase closely conforms to the BH examples—presuming that the predicate is a *niphal* ms. sg. imperative (ibid. 45; cf. Dennis Pardee, Review of Kort and Morschauer [eds.], *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry*, *JNES* 49 [1990] 90–91)—there is one grammatical irregularity. The ear's owner is the writer, who refers to himself indirectly as "your servant." In epigraphic Hebrew, "your servant" is pronominalized in the first person sg. (see, e.g., line 12.12) or third person ms. sg. (line 1) (see ibid., 91). עברך shows neither pronominalization. This verb, however, agrees with the *suffix* of עברך. It would appear, then, that Lach. 3:4–5 shows a cross-referencing not of the possessor and subject but instead of the possessor's possessor and the subject. Alternatively, the verb mechanically agrees with the possessive suffix on the entire nominal phrase.

For a BH parallel construction, see Gen 17:11: ונמלתם את בשר ערלהכם (see also v. 25), in conjunction with the discussion in Garr, "Affectedness, Aspect, and Biblical Hebrew 'et,'" 123–24.

<sup>25</sup> Although this group resembles the characteristics of the "accusative of limitation" (see n. 6), this resemblance is not complete.

דוא ישובך ראש, "he will hit you (on the) head" (Gen 3:15 [J])

2. There remains to discuss the discourse effect of the so-called double subject (hereafter “possessor = subject”) construction. If the grammar of Exod 6:3a *limits* the equireferential head, what is the function of the grammar in Exod 6:3b?

The clue lies in the grammatical construction itself, whereby the possessor is indexed on the verb as its subject.<sup>26</sup> Subject, however, is a *grammatical* category, and it may be defined for BH as the clausal constituent that controls verb agreement; a verb, then, agrees with its subject (in person, number, and gender).<sup>27</sup> But this grammatical category also reflects certain *discourse* categories. For example, a grammatical subject usually embodies old (given, known) information, as in the pronominal constituent of אָנִי יְהוָה. More generally, the subject is the grammaticalized topic; it grammatically encodes what the discourse is about. That is, stretches of discourse focus on topics whose grammatical manifestation tends to be subjects.

These definitions suggest that the cross-referencing of possessor and subject in BH indicates a topical possessor.<sup>28</sup> It is the possessor that is being discussed, and it is the possessor that is therefore grammaticalized as the clausal subject. The possessed noun, which does not prompt subject agreement, is accordingly less topical. Or, in terms of wholes and parts, the whole is topically prominent (foregrounded) in these clauses. The part is topically subordinate (backgrounded).

בשֶׁלֶם הַבָּשָׂר, “he boiled them (in) the flesh” (1 Kgs 19:21)

מִדּוֹחַ מִצַּנִּיחַ קָמִי, “strike those who rise against him (on the) loins!” (Deut 33:11)

The two forms that follow the verb stand in a whole–part (or part–whole) relationship (1) (see Brockelmann, *Grundriss* 2 §208c). The part specifies that particular entity which is affected by the action (2) (GKC §1171; and Joüon, *Grammaire de l’hébreu biblique* §126g). And both the whole and the part fill the same semantic role, that of patient (3).

In terms of grammar, however, the comparison breaks down. The part does not cross-reference the whole (see [4]), but the part and whole lie in simple apposition (see Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* §94c; in conjunction with S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and some Other Syntactical Questions* [3d ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969] 247–48. Cf. David A. Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry* [SBLDS 3; Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1972] 81–82 [on Deut 33:11]). More importantly, in the “accusative of limitation” the whole is a direct object, not subject (see [5]). The “accusative of limitation” is therefore a different grammatical class.

<sup>26</sup> For the following, see, among others, Peter Cole et al., “The acquisition of subjecthood,” *Language* 56 (1980) 719–43; Marianne Mithun, “Disagreement: The case of pronominal affixes and nouns,” in *Languages and Linguistics: The Interdependence of Theory, Data, and Application* (ed. Deborah Tannen and James E. Alatis; Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1985; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1986) 50–66; and John W. Du Bois, “The discourse basis of ergativity,” *Language* 63 (1987) 805–55.

<sup>27</sup> Impersonal verbs, like וידי and וידיה are, of course, different. They lack a grammatical subject, and they assume the simplest form of the verb possible: the third person masculine singular.

<sup>28</sup> See Russell Ultan, “Toward a Typology of Substantival Possession,” in *Universals of Human Language* (ed. Joseph H. Greenberg et al.; 4 vols.; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978) 4. 36.

These hypotheses are confirmed by the texts themselves. In the passages containing the “possessor = subject” construction, the whole (possessor, subject) is topical, but the possessed part is not. For example, Ps 17:10 is couched within a stretch of discourse about the speaker’s enemies.

מִפְנֵי רָשָׁעִים זֶה שְׂדוּנֵי אֵיכִי כִנְפֵשׁ יִקִּיפוּ עָלַי<sup>10</sup> חֲלַכְמוּ סָגְרוּ פִימוּ דָבְרוּ כְנֹאֵת  
 אֲשֶׁרֵינוּ עָזָה סִבְכוּנֵי (kētīb)<sup>11</sup> עֵינֵיהֶם יִשְׁחָרוּ לְנִמּוֹת כְּאָרֶץ  
 תֵּלֵם לִבָּם (פ); תֵּלֵם, תֵּלֵם מוֹתָם, שִׁבְחוּ אֲרֹגָנוֹתָם. עַתָּה יִסְבְּרוּ אֶת  
 רַגְלֵינוּ; תֵּלֵם יִסְבְּרוּ אֶת עֵינֵיהֶם עַל הָאָרֶץ.” (Ps 17:9–11)

They are called wicked ones and enemies, who despoil, encircle, rebel, speak arrogantly, surround, and cast their eyes. Clearly, the topic of this passage is the enemies, and their hostile deeds and character. *They* are also the topic in v. 10; it is *they* who speak arrogantly, and their mouth is merely the vehicle for expression.

Ps 44:3 points to the same conclusion. The clause אַתָּה יְדָךְ גִּוִּים הוֹרַשְׁתָּ comes toward the beginning of an extended address to God (vv. 2–27). God’s deeds are first mentioned (v. 2) and then detailed (v. 3): how he drove out the nations, planted them, wreaked havoc, and expelled them (v. 3). Throughout this passage it is God—addressed directly as “you”—who is topically prominent, as the sequence “*you, your hand, you displaced (nations)*” demonstrates. God’s hand, the body part used to effect the displacement, is relatively incidental to the address. Though both God and his hand are involved in the action, and though the two cannot be separated, God (the possessor, whole) acts through his hand (the possessed, part). The part and whole are therefore identified with each other, yet the part restricts (specifies) the extent (or locus) of the whole’s involvement.

What is true of the part is also true of the whole, though to different extents. For example, קָרַע כְּתָנָיו in 2 Sam 15:32 is set within the episode about Hushai and David (vv. 32–37). After Hushai is presented in the narrative (וְהִנֵּה, v. 32b), his physical appearance is described. His clothes are torn, and he has dirt on his head; Hushai is in a state of mourning. Here, the topic is Hushai and his aggrieved condition, so that קָרַע כְּתָנָיו is a statement about Hushai himself.<sup>29</sup> The particular, physical manifestation of his grief—

<sup>29</sup> Cf. קָרַע(וּ) עֵי כְנָרִים (2 Sam 13:31; 2 Kgs 18:37 = Isa 36:22; see also Jer 41:5). When a passive participle or stative adjective is in construct with a following noun, the construct phrase acts as a complex adjective and qualifies or modifies the head nominal. But when the head and *nomen rectum* stand in a whole-part relationship, especially that of an animate being and its (body) part, this entire construction frequently denotes what the head nominal owns (has); i.e., קָרַע(וּ) עֵי כְנָרִים means “(having) torn clothes” (lit., “they being torn of clothes”). See also וְהִנֵּה טַבַּח וְהַנְּשֵׂר הַגְּדוֹל גְּדוֹל הַכַּנְפָּיִם, “the maiden had a very pretty appearance” (Gen 24:16 [JJ]); and אֲרֹךְ הָאֵבֶר, “the great eagle having great wings and long pinions” (Ezek 17:3); cf. וְרַבְתָּ בָנִים, “(she who) has many children” (1 Sam 2:5) (see Takamitsu Muraoka, “The status constructus of adjectives in Biblical Hebrew,” VT 27 [1977] 375–80; in conjunction with Henri Frei, “Sylvie est jolie des yeux,” in *Mélanges de linguistique offerts à Charles Bally* [Geneva: Georg, 1939; repr. Geneva:

the garment—is peripheral.<sup>30</sup> The owner (whole), then, is more topical than the clothes (part), though both display traits of mourning.<sup>31</sup>

A discourse analysis adds two recurrent features to the repertoire surrounding the “possessor = subject” construction. First, the part and the whole are identified with each other. What the one does, experiences, or undergoes, the other does too. They differ only in extent of involvement: the whole is more involved, and the part is less involved. Or, stated differently, the part acts as the vehicle through which the whole is involved in a situation. Second, the whole is more topical in the “possessor = subject” construction; the part is less topical. These constructions tend to be about possessors (wholes) rather than possessed entities (parts).<sup>32</sup>

3. All the features isolated in “possessor = subject” constructions outside of Exod 6:3b apply to this half-verse as well. In *לֹא נִדְרַעְתִּי . . . וְשִׁמִּי*, the possessed noun and possessor exhibit a part-whole relationship, “name”: “I” (= God). The part specifies the extent of God’s involvement in the situation, that he is not known by a specific name. God and his name also function identically, for neither he nor his name is known. Further, the part noun has a possessive suffix cross-referencing the whole, and the possessor (“my” = God) is also the subject (“I” = God) of the verb.

These features suggest that the part is identified with the whole. God’s name is identified with God himself. Neither was known to the patriarchs according to Exod 6:3b, though the “name” qualifies (restricts) the extent to which God was not known. To the extent that his name was not known, neither was God known. The part, then, is the vehicle through which the whole is involved.

The whole is, moreover, topically prominent in Exod 6:3b, while the part is topically subordinate. The discourse is about “I” (= God),<sup>33</sup> who identifies himself as Yahweh (v. 2); appeared formerly as El Shaddai but was not known then as Yahweh (v. 3); made his promise (v. 4); heard and remembered his

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Slatkine, 1972] 185–92). This construction of construct adjective and *nomen rectum* therefore functions differently from קָרַע כְּבִדָּתוֹ, though in both cases the possessor and possessed have the same whole-part relationship.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Joüon, *Grammaire de l’hébreu biblique* §127b; and Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* §81e.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Menahem Z. Kaddari, *פרשיות בתחביר לשון המקרא* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1976) 95; in conjunction with n. 32.

<sup>32</sup> There is no reason, then, to accept Kaddari’s suggestion that 1 Kgs 15:23 (MT חלה חלו רגליו) could be worded רגליו חלו (פרשיות, 95). חלו רגליו would make “feet” the grammatical subject, and it would suggest too that Asa’s feet are the topic of the clause. The episode surrounding this clause, however, focuses on Asa, the foregrounded participant. That is, Kaddari’s suggested text would place undue emphasis on Asa’s feet per se, contrary to the topic of the episode.

For another example of suggested rewording, see n. 34.

<sup>33</sup> See Schmidt, *Exodus 1–6*, 269; see also Baentsch, *Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri*, 46.

covenant (v. 5); reidentifies himself as Yahweh; will lead out, rescue, and redeem (v. 6); will take the Israelites as his people and be their God (v. 7a); and, finally, who identifies himself for a third time as Yahweh (v. 7b). Throughout this stretch (vv. 2b–7), God appears as “I” fourteen times and as “my” four times. God (the whole) is clearly the most involved participant here, as already reflected in the “possessor = subject” construction in Exod 6:3b. In this same construction, his “name” (the part) is less involved and is not salient in itself. Therefore, the whole (“I”) is foregrounded, topical, and more involved; the part (“[my] name”) is backgrounded, subordinate, and less involved. Exod 6:3b, then, signals that the whole God, “I,” was not known to the patriarchs, to the extent that his name Yahweh was not known. In other words, the subject of Exod 6:3b—“I” = God—was not *fully* known.<sup>34</sup>

4. Two additional aspects of Exod 6:3b are relevant to the present discussion, and they center on the phrase *ושמי יהוה*. The first is syntactic. The relationship between *ושמי* and *יהוה* is one of strict apposition. *יהוה* is asyndetically juxtaposed to its head *ושמי* and restricts the scope of *ושמי*.<sup>35</sup> This use of apposition recurs elsewhere in BH.

זרח, “two cherubim (of) gold” (Exod 25:18 [P])

שתי סאה־סלת . . . ושתי סאה־שערים, “a *seah* (of) flour . . . and two *seahs* (of) barley” (2 Kgs 7:1)

וימים מספר, “a few days” (lit., “days, number”) (Num 9:20 [P])

נהר הפרת, “the river Euphrates” (1 Chr 5:9)

Throughout these examples, the second term defines the first more precisely. The specific relation may be that of an entity to its material (Exod 25:18), a measure to its contents (2 Kgs 7:1), a mass noun to its count (Num 9:20), or a generic noun to its proper name (1 Chr 5:9). But these specific relationships are based on two general relationships between the appositional nominals: (1) the two nominals are equireferential, referring to the same entity; and (2) they show a whole–part relationship in which the part specifies the content of the whole.<sup>36</sup> In these phrases, the head nominal consists of the part noun.

<sup>34</sup> It is therefore unnecessary to emend the MT of Exod 6:3b. The proposed reading *ושמי יהוה לא הודעתה* (see n. 6) would treat “my name Yahweh” as an entity which itself is the object of announcement, not as an inseparable part of its owner (see Cassuto, *Book of Exodus*, 78; see also Jacob, “Mose am Dornbusch,” 185). Similarly, the suggested *ושמי יהוה לא נודע* (see Cassuto, *Book of Exodus*, 78; see also Kaddari, פרשיות, 95) would focus attention on the name per se as an object of knowledge (Cassuto, *Book of Exodus*, 78; and John J. Davis, “The Patriarchs’ Knowledge of Jehovah,” *Grace Journal* 4 [1963] 41). Neither of these emendations, then, comports with the interpretation of Exod 6:3.

<sup>35</sup> See, generally, GKC §131a.

<sup>36</sup> Driver, *Treatise on the Use of the Tenses*, 248.

From this perspective, the relationship between the appositional nominals need not be that of whole to part, but it may be a relationship of identity.<sup>37</sup> For example, when a nominal is appositional to a pronoun, the relationship is one of identity.

כבאן האיש, “when he, the man, went in” (Ezek 10:3)

את תרומת יהוה, יביאה, “let him bring it, the offering of Yahweh” (Exod 35:5 [P])

להם לבני ישראל, אשר אנכי נתן להם, “which I am about to give to them, the Israelites” (Josh 1:2)

The nominal and pronoun fill the same semantic role, and their grammatical marking may consequently be identical (if grammar permits). But more important for the present discussion, the pronoun and appositional nominal not only function identically; they *are* identical. The head is the pronominal abbreviation of the appositional term; or, conversely, the appositional nominal gives the specific content of the pronominal head, the entity of which the head consists.

The use of apposition in BH suggests two possible analyses of ושמי יהוה in Exod 6:3b. Either יהוה lies in apposition to “name” in a whole–part relationship, or יהוה lies in apposition to “my” in a relationship of identity. But regardless of these options, the two nominals are at least equireferential, and the second nominal specifies the content of its head.

The first aspect of ושמי יהוה—the syntactic—suggests that these two appositional nominals are either equireferential or identical. The second aspect of ושמי יהוה—the interpretive—resolves this dilemma in favor of the latter. For in the Bible, God’s “name” is frequently synonymous with “Yahweh,” and his “name” is also used as a synonymum for God himself:<sup>38</sup>

ליראה את־השם הנכבד והנורא הוה את־יהוה אלהיך, “to revere this honored and awesome name, Yahweh your God” (Deut 28:58)

שם יהוה אלהי ישראל . . . כבדו יהוה, “Honor Yahweh . . . the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel!” (Isa 24:15)

וישמחו כל־חוסים בך . . . ויעלצו בך אהבי שמך, “But let all who take refuge in you rejoice, . . . and let those who love your name exult in you.” (Ps 5:12)

In these clauses, God’s “name” is used parallel to either “Yahweh” or a direct reference to God (“you” in Ps 5:12). Thus God and his name are identified with one another and are mutually substitutable.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *ibid.*; Driver also includes the preceding examples under relationships of identity.

<sup>38</sup> See, e.g., R. Abba, “Name,” *IDB* 3. 502; and A. S. van der Woude, “שם *šēm* Name,” *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament* (ed. Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann; 2 vols.; Munich: Kaiser; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1971, 1976) 2. 956.

<sup>39</sup> M. H. Segal, “גילוי של שם הויה,” *Tarbiz* 12 (1941) 105–6; reprinted in *idem*, *מסורה ובקורה* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sepher, 1957) 56–57; see also Jacob, “Mose am Dornbusch,” 122–23.

This identification (synonymy) of God and his name applies to Exod 6:3b as well.<sup>40</sup> In this verse, "Yahweh" is not only the content of God's "name," but "Yahweh" is God himself. That is, "Yahweh" lies in (synonymous) apposition to "my" as well as defines the "name." In either case, "Yahweh" is identical with the subject (= possessor) of Exod 6:3b. In the whole-part relationship of the verse, "Yahweh" (= "I"/"my") is the whole. His "name" itself, as an undefined representational entity, is the part. Thus for Exod 6:3b, the name "Yahweh" represents the whole God.

### Grammatical Conclusion

The preceding analysis has highlighted the grammatical constructions used in Exod 6:3a and 6:3b and their discourse effects. Verse 3a contains a construction in which a head nominal is limited by an equireferential term governed by *beth*. The preposition marks a (limited) equivalence or characterization of the head, and this limitation is represented by the divine name El Shaddai. Verse 3b contains a different construction, in which a verb agrees with the possessive suffix of a noun; the noun and its possessor (= subject) are equireferential, stand in a part-whole relationship, and the part noun represents the vehicle through which the whole acts, experiences, or undergoes something. This construction highlights the whole (possessor, subject) and backgrounds the part, so that the subject ("I" = God) is topically prominent, and his "name" is subordinate. Yet the grammar of v. 3b also equates the divine name "Yahweh" with the owner of the name ("my"), and the owner in turn with the whole, subjective entity ("I" = God). Thus, the construction of v. 3b highlights the whole, represented by "I," "my," and "Yahweh."

The two constructions of Exod 6:3a and 6:3b perform completely opposite functions. Verse 3a highlights a limited (partial) aspect of the subject "I" (= God), represented by the name El Shaddai. Verse 3b highlights the whole, which is represented, among other things, by the name "Yahweh." The entire verse, then, contrasts two divine names and what they represent: El Shaddai as a part of God, and Yahweh as the whole.<sup>41</sup>

## II. Interpretation

It is now necessary to see whether the conclusions derived from the grammatical analysis are consistent with nongrammatical evidence. The

<sup>40</sup> Segal, "גילויי של שם הוייה," 105 = idem, *מסורת ובקורת*, 56.

<sup>41</sup> It is therefore self-contradictory to posit a double-duty preposition *beth* in v. 3a (cf. n. 6). Whereas the *beth* in v. 3a limits the scope of the head nominal and emphasizes the part, the "possessor = subject" construction in v. 3b focuses on the whole entity. The two constructions, then, are mutually exclusive.

investigation turns, at this point, to contextual and interpretive matters. Is there other evidence that El Shaddai represents a partial (limited) view of God, and Yahweh a (more) complete view? Or, more generally, who is El Shaddai for P, and who is Yahweh?

### *El Shaddai*

The divine name El Shaddai is characteristic of P and is restricted to the patriarchal narratives and contexts.<sup>42</sup> God first appears as El Shaddai in Genesis 17, where he identifies himself to Abram, אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרִי, "I am El Shaddai" (17:1; see also 35:11). After Genesis 17, El Shaddai figures in Isaac's blessing of Jacob (28:3-4) and in the blessing that he himself bestows on Jacob/Israel (35:11-12). The next mention of El Shaddai in the Priestly document occurs in Jacob's speech to Joseph, in which Jacob says that El Shaddai appeared to him, blessed him, and made a number of promises (48:3-4). Finally, in Exod 6:3, P states that El Shaddai appeared to Abraham (Gen 17:1), Isaac,<sup>43</sup> and Jacob (48:3).

Throughout his career, El Shaddai makes promises to the different patriarchs, and these promises together serve to characterize the Israelite God under this name.<sup>44</sup> These promises are, furthermore, all present in his first appearance to Abram, in the *bērīt* of Genesis 17. There, he promises, among other things, that Abram will be made exceedingly numerous and fruitful:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל אַבְרָם, וְאָמַרְתָּ בְּעַדְךָ לְמִי, וְאָמַרְתָּ כִּי אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרִי, "I will make you very very numerous" (Gen 17:2)

וְאָמַרְתָּ בְּעַדְךָ לְמִי, וְאָמַרְתָּ כִּי אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרִי, "I will make you very very fruitful" (Gen 17:6)

that Abram will be made into nations:<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> See Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12-36: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985) 258; in conjunction with Walter Brueggemann, "The Kerygma of the Priestly Writers," *ZAW* 84 (1972) 405 n. 28. Non-P attestations of El Shaddai are immaterial to the present discussion.

<sup>43</sup> El Shaddai, however, is not portrayed as having appeared to Isaac in the patriarchal narratives. For this narrative problem and possible solutions, see Peter Weimar, *Untersuchungen zur priesterschriftlichen Exodusgeschichte* (FB 9; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1973) 97-100; Schmidt, *Exodus 1-6*, 283; and F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 297.

<sup>44</sup> See Jonathan Magonet, "The Rhetoric of God: Exodus 6.2-8," *JSOT* 27 (1983) 66; see also J. Gerald Janzen, "What's in a Name? 'Yahweh' in Exodus 3 and the Wider Biblical Context," *Int* 33 (1979) 232.

<sup>45</sup> For the accompanying promise of kings, see S. McEvenue, "Word and Fulfilment: A Stylistic Feature of the Priestly Writer," *Semitics* 1 (1970) 107; and Norbert Lohfink, "Die Priesterschrift und die Geschichte," in *Congress Volume: Göttingen 1977* (VTSup 29; Leiden: Brill, 1978) 221; cf. Klaus Koch, "Šaddaj," *VT* 26 (1976) 324.

ונחתיך לגוים, "I will make you into nations" (Gen 17:6); see also והייתה לגוים, "she (Sarah) will become nations" (Gen 17:16)

that the *bērīt* will include both Abram and his descendants:

והקמתי את־בריתי ביני ובינך ובין זרעך אחריך, "I will keep<sup>46</sup> my *bērīt* between me and you and your offspring to come" (Gen 17:7; see also vv. 9, 10)

that Abram and his descendants will be given the land:

ונתתי לך ולזרעך אחריך את ארץ מגוריך את כל־ארץ כנען, "I will give you and your offspring to come the land of your sojourn, all the land of Canaan" (Gen 17:8)

and that El Shaddai will be a God to Abram and his progeny:

והקמתי את־בריתי . . . להיותך לאלהים ולזרעך אחריך . . . ; to be<sup>47</sup> God to you and your offspring to come." (Gen 17:7)

והייתי להם לאלהים, "I will be their God." (Gen 17:8)

Two of these promises, however, are not particular to El Shaddai, but recur elsewhere in the Priestly document of the Israelite deity *before* the appearance of El Shaddai. For example, the promise to be fruitful and numerous is made by God to the first man and woman, as well as to Noah and his sons:

פרו ורבו, "be fruitful and numerous!" (Gen 1:28)

פרו ורבו, "be fruitful and numerous!" (Gen 9:1, 7); see also

ומלאו את־הארץ, "and fill the land!" (Gen 1:28; 9:1)

The promise that the *bērīt* will include the patriarch and his progeny is also said to Noah:

ואני הנני מקים את־בריתי אתכם ואת־זרעכם אחריכם *bērīt* with you and your offspring to come" (Gen 9:9)

והיא אות־הברית אשר־אני נתן ביני וביניכם ובין כל־נפש חיה אשר אתכם, "this is the sign of the *bērīt* which I am making between me and you and every living thing with you" (Gen 9:12; see also v. 17)

These promises, then, are not characteristic of El Shaddai specifically. Instead, they are recurrent promissory properties of the Israelite deity, in his various nominations, for P in general.

The other promises are particular to El Shaddai. It is El Shaddai who promises that Abram will become nations (Gen 17:6; see also v. 20 [Ishmael];

<sup>46</sup> The sequence ואתנה בריתי (v. 2) . . . והקמתי את־בריתי (v. 7) suggests that הקים בריתי here signifies "keep a *bērīt*." See E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB 1; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964) 124; and the discussion under "Yahweh" with n. 61 below.

<sup>47</sup> יהיה in this and related verses may mean "become" (with, e.g., Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 298 [on Gen 17:8]).

35:11 [Israel]). El Shaddai promises to give Abram and his descendants the land (17:8; see also 35:12 [Israel]; 48:4 [Jacob]). He also promises a new relationship between himself and Abram and his descendants, when he says that he will become their God (17:7, 8); in promising a new relationship between God and humanity, El Shaddai employs a truncated covenant formula, whose complete version later appears in Exod 6:7.

In this context, it is interesting to recall that El Shaddai makes his first appearance in the *bērît* with Abram and his offspring (Genesis 17).<sup>48</sup> This *bērît* is only one of three that God makes with humanity, according to P.<sup>49</sup> The first *bērît* is made with Noah and his descendants (Genesis 9); in this case, the deity is called 'ēlohîm. The second *bērît* is made with Abram and his descendants (Genesis 17); the deity here is called 'ēl šadday. And the third *bērît* is made with Moses and the Israelites (Exodus 6ff.); the divine grantor is called Yahweh. According to P, then, El Shaddai represents that aspect of the Israelite God who made the second of three *bērîtôt* with humanity.

P's El Shaddai has a very definite character. He is the postdiluvian manifestation of God, whose activity is restricted to the patriarchal period. El Shaddai is first associated with the *bērît* made with Abram and his progeny, in which he makes a number of promises. He affirms the old promises of number, fruitfulness, and inclusion of later generations. He also makes new promises of nationhood, kings, the land, and especially of a new relationship between himself and Abram and his descendants. El Shaddai, then, is a covenantal deity of the patriarchal period, and the contents of his *bērît* are still promissory.<sup>50</sup> El Shaddai's *bērît* is a "promise."<sup>51</sup>

But before El Shaddai is superseded by Yahweh in Exodus 6, some of El Shaddai's promises are realized, though to different degrees.<sup>52</sup> The promise to be numerous and fruitful is fulfilled when the Israelites are in Egypt.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> E.g., E. C. B. MacLaurin, "Shaddai," *AbrN* 3 (1961-62) 102; and Koch, "Šaddaj," 322.

<sup>49</sup> For the following, see Jacob, "Mose am Dornbusch," 181; Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 258; and Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 296-97.

<sup>50</sup> Jacob, "Mose am Dornbusch," 192-93; see also N. Lohfink, "Dt 26,17-19 und die 'Bundesformel,'" *ZKT* 91 (1969) 521-22; and Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Structure of P," *CBQ* 38 (1976) 278; cf. Hugh C. White, "The Divine Oath in Genesis," *JBL* 92 (1973) 171-72.

<sup>51</sup> See Alfred Jepsen, "Berith: Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Exilszeit," in *Verbannung und Heimkehr . . . Wilhelm Rudolph zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Arnulf Kuschke; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1961) 167; Lohfink, "Dt 26,17-19 und die 'Bundesformel,'" 521; and S. McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer* (AnBib 50; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971) 74 n. 64.

<sup>52</sup> For the promise-fulfillment scheme in P, see, among others, Karl Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung der priesterlichen Geschichtserzählung," in *Kleine Schriften zum Alten Testament* (ed. Hartmut Gese and Otto Kaiser; TBü 32; Munich: Kaiser, 1966) 183; and Lohfink, "Die Priesterschrift und die Geschichte," 217-21. For a more general biblical view, see W. Zimmerli, "Promise and Fulfillment," in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* (ed. Claus Westermann; Richmond: John Knox, 1963) 89-122.

<sup>53</sup> Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 177; and Lohfink, "Die Priesterschrift und die Geschichte," 218.

ובני ישראל פרו וישרצו וירבו ויעצמו כמאד מאד ותמלא הארץ אהם, "But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they were numerous and very very strong, so that the land was filled with them." (Exod 1:7); see also

ויפרו וירבו מאד, "and they [Israel's progeny] were fruitful and very numerous" (Gen 47:27)

The promise of nations is incipiently fulfilled with the birth of Isaac, from whom nations emerge:<sup>54</sup> Isaac is born (Gen 21:2), and then his son Jacob (25:26b), whose name is changed to Israel (35:10); Jacob has twelve sons (35:22b-26) and many other descendants (46:7-8), who are ultimately called בני־ישראל, "Israelites" (46:8), the nation descended from Abram (17:6). Likewise, the promise of land is in the early stages of fulfillment when Abraham buys Ephron's land in Machpelah, in the land of Canaan, as a burial place for Sarah (Genesis 23).<sup>55</sup> The promises of El Shaddai are beginning to be fulfilled.

Nevertheless, only one promise is fully realized before the appearance of Yahweh, that of number and fruitfulness. The others are either fulfilled "*in nuce*" (e.g., nationhood, land), or fulfillment is not yet in sight (e.g., new relationship between God and humanity). Under the name El Shaddai, then, P represents a deity who is limited not only in historical scope but also in ability to fulfill promises.

### Yahweh

The divine name Yahweh first appears in the Priestly document in two narrative contexts (Gen 17:1; 21:1).<sup>56</sup> He does not formally introduce himself by this name until Exod 6:2, when he begins his *berit* with Moses and the Israelites and states, in the preamble, אֲנִי יְהוָה. He then explains in the historical prologue that he appeared to the three patriarchs as El Shaddai, but he was not known to them by the name Yahweh.

The simplest interpretation of Yahweh's self-identification, and of the contrast between the names El Shaddai and Yahweh, is that the Israelite deity is declaring a new name.<sup>57</sup> In the time of the postdiluvian patriarchs, he identified himself as El Shaddai — אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרִי (Gen 17:1; 35:11). But in the time of Moses and the Israelite people, he identifies himself as Yahweh — אֲנִי יְהוָה (Exod 6:2, 6, 8). In earlier times, the deity was known as El Shaddai; now he is known as Yahweh.

<sup>54</sup> Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 176; in conjunction with W. Gross, "Jakob der Mann des Segens: Zu Traditionsgeschichte und Theologie der priesterschriftlichen Jakobsüberlieferungen," *Bib* 49 (1968) 326 n. 1, 323-25.

<sup>55</sup> E.g., Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 176; see also J. J. P. Valetton, Jr., "Bedeutung und Stellung des Wortes כְּרִיחַ im Priestercodex," *ZAW* 12 (1892) 18; cf. Emerton, "Priestly Writer in Genesis," 389, on the documentary character of Genesis 23.

<sup>56</sup> For the significance of this name in these contexts, see below.

<sup>57</sup> E.g., Schmidt, *Exodus 1-6*, 281; cf., e.g., Childs, *Book of Exodus*, 113; and Sarna, *Exodus*, 31.

According to the Priestly narrative, the divine name *Yahweh* is announced in a certain historical context, that of Moses (v. 2) and the Israelites (vv. 5, 6) in Egypt (vv. 5, 6; see also v. 7). The announcement takes place in a certain religious context as well, that of a *bērît*.<sup>58</sup> The deity recalls his *bērît* to give the patriarchs and their descendants the land of Canaan (v. 4), the precedent for which appears in Gen 17:8.

וְגַם הִקְמַתִי אִתְּכֶם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אֲתֶם לֵאמֹר אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִגְרֵיחֶם אֲשֶׁר־גָּדְרוּ בָהּ  
 "I both made my promise with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojourn in which they sojourned." (Exod 6:4)

וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וְלִזְרֹעֶךָ אַחֲרָיִךְ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִגְרֵיִךְ אֶת־כָּל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן  
 "I will give you and your offspring to come the land of your sojourn, all the land of Canaan." (Gen 17:8)

The deity also invokes the covenant formula, that he be a God to Moses and the Israelite people, whose antecedent again appears in Genesis 17.

וְהָיִיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים, "and I will be your God" (Exod 6:7)

וְהִקְמַתִי אִתְּכֶם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי . . . לְהָיוֹת לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים וְלִזְרֹעֶךָ אַחֲרָיִךְ  
 "I will keep my promise . . . , to be God to you and your offspring to come." (Gen 17:7); see also

וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים, "I will be their God." (Gen 17:8)

These two elements—the *bērît* and covenant formula—are juxtaposed only twice in the Priestly document: Genesis 17 and Exodus 6. In the former, the grantor is called El Shaddai; in the latter, he is called Yahweh. Thus the change of names is explicitly linked to the *bērît* and to the prospect for a new relationship between God and humanity.

The *bērît* of Genesis 17, however, is cast in a new light when it is recalled in Exod 6:4. In Genesis 17, the *bērît* consists of imperfect and perfect consecutive verb forms, as does the promise of the *bērît* itself.

וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי, "I will keep my promise" (Gen 17:7)

These verbs generally<sup>59</sup> represent situations that continue for a greater or lesser period of time, whose end point has not been reached. They also represent situations that lie in the future or are modal. In other words, these verb forms represent atelic and irrealis situations. For Gen 17:7, the grammar therefore suggests that El Shaddai is making a statement of intent, or

<sup>58</sup> Magonet, "Rhetoric of God," 66; see also Joseph F. Wimmer, "Tradition reinterpreted in Ex 6,2–7,7," *Augustinianum* 7 (1967) 416–18; and C. Westermann, *The Promises to the Fathers: Studies on the Patriarchal Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 159.

<sup>59</sup> Due to the vastness of this topic, the following characterization of the BH verb forms is necessarily general and brief. It simply aligns the standard descriptions (as found, e.g., in GKC and Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique*) with the discussion by Bernard Comrie, *Aspect: An Introduction to the Study of Verbal Aspect and Related Problems* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). The use of the terms (a)telic and (ir)realis follows Comrie.

promise, about what he will accomplish. The verb form suggests an *unfulfilled* promise, whose realization is not yet attained (and is therefore unreal).<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Exod 6:8 interprets this *bērît* as an oath (נשאתי את־יְרִי), a promise for fulfillment at some undesignated future moment. It is El Shaddai who speaks in these atelic and irrealis modes.

When Yahweh recalls this *bērît* and states that he remembers it, his speech consists of perfect and imperfect consecutive (narrative) verb forms.

וְגַם הִקְמַתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי "I both made my promise" (Exod 6:4)

Perfect and imperfect consecutive (narrative) forms generally represent situations whose end point has been reached, particularly with regard to past situations. They also represent situations which the writer believes to be real and certain, whether of present states or future events (e.g., the prophetic perfect). These verb forms, then, are typically telic and realis.

For Exod 6:4, the perfect verb form has a double significance. On the one hand, its appearance in the historical prologue of the *bērît* suggests that God is recalling his unfulfilled promise of Gen 17:8 and other background material (Exod 2:24). In this case, a past tense translation is appropriate.

I both *made* my promise with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojourn in which they sojourned. <sup>5</sup>And, moreover, I *heard* the moaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians enslaved. So I *remembered* my promise.

On the other hand, the perfect verb in Exod 6:4 may not refer to a past, telic event but a present, realis situation. The idiom *hēqîm bērît* means not only "make (establish) a promise (covenant)" but also "keep (fulfill) a promise (covenant)."<sup>61</sup> In the latter case, Yahweh is now actualizing his former promise, is making his promise real, and is certain about what he says.<sup>62</sup> But not all the promises of Genesis 17 have been fulfilled. Only the promise of number and fruitfulness has been realized. The promise of nationhood has been incipiently fulfilled with the birth of Isaac, and similarly the promise of land has been partially realized with the purchase of Ephron's land. Thus when Yahweh here employs verb forms which signify a certain, realis situation, he is confirming his past unfulfilled promises which he now moves to fulfill.<sup>63</sup>

I both *keep* my promise. . . . Moreover, I heard the moaning . . . I (hereby) remember my promise.

<sup>60</sup> See C. Westermann, "The Way of the Promise through the Old Testament," in *The Old Testament and Christian Faith* (ed. Bernhard W. Anderson; New York/Evanston/London: Harper & Row, 1963) 206, 207.

<sup>61</sup> M. Weinfeld, "בְּרִית, *bērîth*," *TDOT* 2. 260.

<sup>62</sup> See Westermann, "Way of the Promise," 203-4, 207.

<sup>63</sup> See Childs, *Book of Exodus*, 113-14.

One such promise is found in the covenant formula of Gen 17:7, 8.

והקמתי את־כבריתי . . . להיות לך לאלהים ולורעך אחריו  
 "I will keep my promise . . . , to be God to you and your offspring to come." (Gen 17:7); see also  
 והייתי להם לאלהים "I will be their God." (Gen 17:8)

Here El Shaddai promises to be a God belonging to (ל) Abram and his descendants. Later Yahweh also makes the same promise, yet this latter promise leads to the recognition that he is Yahweh, the God of the Israelites.

ולקחתי אתכם לי לעם והייתי לכם לאלהים וידעתם כי אני יהוה אלהיכם  
 "I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then, you will know that I am  
 Yahweh, your God." (Exod 6:7)

It is significant, in this context, that P does not use the deity's standard clause of self-identification, *אני יהוה*, as elsewhere in this section (vv. 2, 6, 8).<sup>64</sup> Rather, P amplifies<sup>65</sup> it with an appositional term of relationship with possessive suffix.<sup>66</sup> Thus when Yahweh promises to be a God belonging to the Israelites, an incipient<sup>67</sup> fulfillment immediately follows: the recognition that he is Yahweh, *their God*.<sup>68</sup> In other words, what El Shaddai promised in his *bērît* with Abram (Gen 17:7, 8), Yahweh moves to fulfill (Exod 6:7).

This characteristic of Yahweh appears earlier in the Priestly narrative too, and it accounts for the appearance of this name in the patriarchal stories. When the name is first attested in the Priestly document,<sup>69</sup> Yahweh appears and speaks to Abram, though he himself uses the cognomen El Shaddai.

וירא יהוה אל־אברם ויאמר אליו אני־אל שדי  
 "Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am El Shaddai.'" (Gen 17:1)

The first half of the ensuing *bērît* (vv. 4–14) consists of promises to Abram and his offspring, which the second half (vv. 15–21) applies to Isaac<sup>70</sup> and Sarah.<sup>71</sup> The transfer to Isaac and Sarah is marked in v. 21:

ואת־כבריתי אקים את־יצחק אשר תלד לך שרה למועד הזה בשנה האחרת  
 "But I will keep my promise with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear for you this time next year." (Gen 17:21; see also v. 16)

<sup>64</sup> Cf. K. Elliger, "Ich bin der Herr—euer Gott," in *Kleine Schriften zum Alten Testament*, 228.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Rendtorff, "Concept of Revelation in Ancient Israel," 40–41.

<sup>66</sup> See Jacob, "Mose am Dornbusch," 188.

<sup>67</sup> For the ultimate fulfillment of this promise, see W. Zimmerli, "Sinaibund und Abrahambund," in *Gottes Offenbarung: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Alten Testament* (TBü 19; 2d ed.; Munich: Kaiser, 1969) 212; and Blenkinsopp, "Structure of P," 278 with n. 13; cf. Valetton, "Bedeutung und Stellung des Wortes ברייה," 12.

<sup>68</sup> See Elliger, "Ich bin der Herr—euer Gott," 214.

<sup>69</sup> See, e.g., Michael V. Fox, "The Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision in the Light of the Priestly 'ōt Etiologies," *RB* 81 (1974) 586 n. 57; and Schmidt, *Exodus 1–6*, 281; cf., e.g., Weimar, *Untersuchungen zur priesterschriftlichen Exodusheschichte*, 93 n. 39.

<sup>70</sup> Fox, "Sign of the Covenant," 589.

<sup>71</sup> Lohfink, "Die Priesterschrift und die Geschichte," 217 n. 78.

From this perspective, then, the chapter begins by equating Yahweh and El Shaddai.<sup>72</sup> It further reports El Shaddai's promises to Abram, the culmination of which is the birth of Isaac by Sarah.

When Yahweh next appears in the Priestly document,<sup>73</sup> he brings this promise to fulfillment.<sup>74</sup>

ויהוה פקד את־שרה כאשר אמר ויעש יהוה לשרה כאשר דבר יתהר ותלד שרה לאברהם בן לזקניו למועד אשר־דבר אתו אלהים ויקרא אברהם את־שם־כנו "Yahweh took note of Sarah as he had said, and Yahweh did for Sarah as he had spoken. Sarah got pregnant and bore a son for Abraham in his old age, at the time when God had spoken to him. Abraham named his son born to him, whom Sarah had borne him, Isaac." (Gen 21:1-3)

It is explicitly stated that the Israelite deity, as Yahweh, fulfilled the promises made in Genesis 17 as El Shaddai (21:2, *'ēlohîm*). With the birth of Isaac, Yahweh is fulfilling his promises of number, fruitfulness, nationhood, and inclusion of Abram's progeny in the promise.<sup>75</sup> Under the name Yahweh, the Israelite deity is acting to fulfill the promises made under the name El Shaddai.<sup>76</sup>

All this evidence suggests that, like El Shaddai, P's Yahweh also has a very definite character. He is the manifestation of God in the period of Moses and the Israelites, who first identifies himself in a covenantal context. That context recalls the *bērît* between God and Abram and his descendants (Genesis 17), made under the name El Shaddai, which included a number of promises. There is evidence that, even in the patriarchal period itself, some of these promises are being incipiently fulfilled with the birth of Isaac. In this case, Yahweh is the fulfilling agent. Another promise is likewise fulfilled *in nuce*—land (Genesis 23). But the promise of a new relationship between God and humanity is not fulfilled, to any degree, until Yahweh formally identifies himself to Moses; and even then the fulfillment is more prospective than present (Exod 6:7). Thus all the old covenantal promises have not been fully kept. Where there are signs of fulfillment, whatever the degree, Yahweh seems to be bringing the fulfillment about.<sup>77</sup> El Shaddai's covenantal promises are therefore being kept by Yahweh (Exod 6:4), though at least one former promise—that of the land—still lies in the future (v. 8).<sup>78</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Fox, "Sign of the Covenant," 586 n. 57; see also Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 257.

<sup>73</sup> Cf., e.g., Speiser, *Genesis*, 124; and W. Zimmerli, *1.Mose 12-25: Abraham* (Zürcher Bibelkommentar AT 1.2; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976) 99.

<sup>74</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 332.

<sup>75</sup> E.g., Valeton, "Bedeutung und Stellung des Wortes ברית," 13-14; and Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 190; cf. McEvenue, "Word and Fulfilment," 110.

<sup>76</sup> Segal, "גילוי של שם הויה," 106-7 = idem, *מסורת ובקורת*, 57-59.

<sup>77</sup> See, in a different context, Zimmerli, *1.Mose 12-25*, 69.

<sup>78</sup> Because of their presence in Egypt, the Israelites must first be delivered from Egypt before possessing the land. Their new historical circumstance therefore prevents direct fulfillment of

*Exodus 6:3*

The two halves of Exod 6:3 are contrastive in both grammar and content. In v. 3a, the construction with *beth* limits the scope of the head nominal ("I"), and this limitation is the name El Shaddai. In v. 3b, the "possessor = subject" construction highlights the whole of the topical entity, Yahweh, whose part ("name") is the vehicle through which the whole is involved. Thus, the grammar of Exod 6:3 suggests that El Shaddai is a partial representation, and Yahweh a (more) complete representation, of the same Israelite deity.

While a grammatical analysis affords these preliminary conclusions, they can also be amplified on the interpretive level. For P, the divine name El Shaddai represents the Israelite deity active in the patriarchal period, who first appeared in a *bērît* and in that context made a number of promises. There is no evidence that El Shaddai himself fulfilled any of these promises. Yahweh, however, does. The divine name Yahweh represents the Israelite deity who first identifies himself in the period of Moses and the Israelite people, in a *bērît*, in which he recalls his (former) covenantal promise(s) to the patriarchs and states with certainty that he keeps his promises. There is also evidence that, even in the patriarchal period itself, Yahweh was acting to fulfill the promises made by El Shaddai. What El Shaddai promises, Yahweh fulfills; El Shaddai's limitations are (ful)filled by Yahweh. Thus in the covenantal context, El Shaddai is more restricted in scope (promising), while Yahweh is more complete (fulfilling).

It is in this covenantal context of promises and fulfillments that Exod 6:3 may be reexamined, particularly its use of the verb ידע. ידע occurs not only in v. 3 but also in v. 7, and these two passages exemplify two different meanings of the verb. In v. 7, ידע is used after the formula expressing exclusive covenantal relationship between God and humanity, and the verb means "(come to) know, recognize."

ולקחתי אתכם לי לעם והייתני לכם לאלהים וידעתם כי אני יהוה אלהיכם  
 "I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then, you will know that I am Yahweh, your God." (Exod 6:7)

As a consequence of God's initiating the covenantal relationship, the human party will have knowledge or recognition, the object of which is the Israelite God (that he is Yahweh, their God). According to Exod 6:7, knowing that Yahweh is God is a result of the covenantal relationship.<sup>79</sup>

the old promise. See, e.g., Valeton, "Bedeutung und Stellung des Wortes ברייה," 14; and Ronald E. Clements, *Exodus* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972) 37.

<sup>79</sup> Magonet, "Rhetoric of God," 66; and Pierre Auffret, "Remarks on J. Magonet's Interpretation of Exodus 6.2-8," *JSOT* 27 (1983) 70. See also, in this context, Karl-Heinz Walkenhorst, "Hochwertung der Namenserkennnis und Gottverbundenheit in der Höhenlinie der priesterlichen Geschichtserzählung," *AJBI* 6 (1980) 18. For other factors, see Botterweck, "ידע, *yāda*," *TDOT* 5. 473.

In Exod 6:3, ידע would seem to be used in its basic meaning "know." "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shaddai. But I, my name Yahweh, was not (fully) known to them." In this sense, the patriarchs did not know the divine name Yahweh, which, according to P, was not revealed until the time of Moses.<sup>80</sup>

But if the covenantal context of Exod 6:3 is taken into account, ידע may have a different meaning. In covenantal contexts, ידע signifies "enter into a covenantal relationship, recognize covenantal authority."<sup>81</sup>

רק אתכם ידעתי מכל משפחות הארמה, "With you alone of all the families of the earth have I entered into a covenantal relationship." (Amos 3:2)<sup>82</sup>

ונתתי להם לב לדעת אתי כי אני יהוה והירלי לעם ואנכי אהיה להם לאלהים, "I will give them understanding to recognize my covenantal authority, for I am Yahweh. They will be my people, and I shall be their God. . . ." (Jer 24:7); see also

ביום כחרי בישראל ואשא ידי . . . ואודע להם, "On the day I chose Israel, I took an oath . . . and became the object of a covenantal relationship with them" (Ezek 20:5) (*niphal* ידע)

ידע therefore represents the exclusive covenantal relationship between God and humanity,<sup>83</sup> similar to its use after the covenantal formula in v. 7.

Exod 6:3 can now be reinterpreted in this covenantal context. The contrasting grammar and contrasting divine names refer to the deity's contrasting abilities to implement the covenant of Genesis 17. In v. 3a, El Shaddai is represented as a limited aspect of the Israelite deity, who promises but does not fulfill. In v. 3b, Yahweh is the complete God. The clause "but I, my name Yahweh, was not (fully) known to them (in a covenantal relationship)" suggests that, for P, the Israelite deity had not completely fulfilled his covenantal promises in the patriarchal period and, therefore, was not (yet)<sup>84</sup> the object of full covenantal knowledge. When Yahweh keeps his promises,

<sup>80</sup> See n. 57 above.

<sup>81</sup> See W. Schottroff, "ידע, *jd* 'erkennen,'" *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament* 1. 691-93; and Botterweck, "ידע, *yāda*," 468.

<sup>82</sup> For the covenantal background of this verse, see Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Amos* (AB 24A; New York: Doubleday, 1989) 381-82.

<sup>83</sup> See M. Weinfeld, "Covenant," *EncJud* 5. 1021, who compares this relationship to that between spouses. In this context, not only is the covenant formula similar (see N. Lohfink, "Beobachtungen zur Geschichte des Ausdrucks 'עם יהוה,'" in *Probleme biblischer Theologie: Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* [ed. Hans Walter Wolff; Munich: Kaiser, 1971] 297 n. 79), but also the use of ידע (see Eberhard Baumann, "ידע und seine Derivate: Eine sprachlich-exegetische Studie," *ZAW* 28 [1908] 30; see also J. P. van der Westhuizen, "Three Nuances of Sexual Intercourse: עם שכב עם — רדע — בא אל — שכב עם," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 18/2 [1989-90] 92-94, especially in the context of fulfilling Gen 1:28), and even the term *bērit* itself (see Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* [2 vols.; New York/Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1965] 1. 33; cf. Weinfeld, "Covenant," 1013).

<sup>84</sup> For this translation of לא, see Rykle Borger, "*bal* und *lo*' = 'noch nicht', 'kaum', 'eben erst'," *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 2 (1989) 86-90.

the covenantal relation will be complete.<sup>85</sup> But since fulfillment was not complete in the patriarchal period, Yahweh was not fully known.<sup>86</sup> Thus, Exod 6:3 can be translated as "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (in limited form) as El Shaddai (who makes covenantal promises). But I was not the object of (full) covenantal knowledge to them as conveyed by my name Yahweh (who keeps covenantal promises)." From this standpoint, grammar and interpretation suggest the same conclusion: For P, the divine name El Shaddai represents a partial characterization of the Israelite deity, whose complete counterpart is represented by the divine name Yahweh.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> See Childs, *Book of Exodus*, 115.

<sup>86</sup> See Magonet, "Rhetoric of God," 66.

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