

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 34

Vaera | The Gift of Emuna



MESILLOT

Pathways to the Soul

Illuminating Torah teachings of
HaTzaddik Rabbeinu **Yoram Michael Abargel** zt"l

Based on the lectures of his son
HaRav HaGaon Rabbeinu **Israel Abargel** shlita

...~PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL~...

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Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets

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Text Us to Receive "A Moment of Light"

Parashat Vaera

The Switched Out Groom

In one of the port cities on the Mediterranean lived a wealthy Jewish merchant. This merchant was known and famous both for his wisdom and piety and for his honesty and fairness in the life of trade. Well-known merchants from nearby cities and even from distant lands maintained close business relations with him. Shipowners and captains, whose ships docked at the port, would first offer him their goods before offering them to anyone else.

One day, a large ship entered the harbor. At first glance, it was apparent that it had come a long way until it reached the port. The ship was covered with a thick layer of algae and in dire need of a long-awaited thorough cleaning. After docking at the port, the captain descended the plank down to the mainland, and when he learned of the Jewish merchant, he decided to make way to his home.

The merchant received the captain, as usual, with great hospitality, and be that as it may, the captain didn't waste any precious time and immediately approached the matter for which he came.

“Sir, I have a substantial amount of cargo on my ship, and I'm willing to sell it to you for ten thousand gold coins. Are you interested in the goods?” Asked the captain.

“What exactly are the goods that you have on your ship?” replied the merchant, interested to know.

“I can't tell you exactly.” the captain replied, “I can only tell you that this cargo is completely different from any other cargo I've sailed with so far.”

Now, even more interested, the merchant countered, “Nonetheless,

the amount you ask for is a large sum. Maybe, anyway, you're willing to tell me what the cargo is?"

"I'm very sorry, but I can't tell you." retorted the captain. "If you're willing to buy it without knowing what you're buying, then we'll do business. If not, then time is money... I can only add that this is an outstanding opportunity for you."

The Jewish merchant was taken aback by the strange offer. He turned to the captain and told him in embarrassment that he was an honest and decent merchant but was unwilling to just throw his money away. "How do you expect me to pay you such a large sum without knowing what I'm buying? If you asked for less money, maybe I would have considered, but that is an enormous amount of money...."

At this point, the captain impatiently stopped him... "I wanted to give you the goods for cheap, and therefore I only asked for ten thousand gold coins. Now that you tried bargaining with me,

I'm raising the price! Even if I have to throw all my cargo into the sea, I won't sell it to you for less than thirty thousand gold coins! Decide fast. Yes or no, but I'm not willing to hear another word..."

The merchant looked long at the captain's intense face. "Is he drunk? Maybe he's mocking me, or has he lost his mind?"

Yet, in spite of all his thoughts about the captain, he wasn't drunk but seemed rather serious...

Suddenly, the merchant felt a strong desire to meet the challenge and buy the cargo without knowing its contents. Without saying anything, he put the money on the table!

"The goods are yours," said the captain. "Come with me."

The two went to the ship, and the captain led the merchant to the bottom deck of the ship. The entire floor was dark and bursting with a horrible stench. As his eyes began to acclimate to the darkness, he was suddenly filled with horror at the sight of human bodies crammed like

sardines in a place that was too narrow to hold even half of them.

“Here’s the merchandise you bought,” said the captain, pointing to the heaps of people lying on the damp floor...

The scene before his eyes was horrifying. Nearly seven hundred Jewish prisoners, dirty and shivering from cold and hunger. It turns out that the captain bought them on the slave markets in one of the Mediterranean ports, hoping to find a buyer, some rich Jew, who would be willing to pay the full price for them...

“I would have thrown them into the sea if I didn’t find someone to pay me for them,” said the captain. “Now they’re yours. You bought them, and you can do whatever you want with them.”

The merchant was shocked at the sight of his eyes and the sound of his ears. Without thinking at all about the large sum of money he just lost, his heart was filled with pity for these poor people and thanked Hashem for giving him the audacity to risk such a

large sum blindly. No price in the world is too high to redeem these poor prisoners and return them their freedom and the human dignity that has been so cruelly robbed from them.

The merchant immediately ordered his servants to prepare accommodation for all the prisoners and provide them with food and clothing. He even informed the prisoners that from now on, they are free, and each of them could leave whenever they wanted. For those who wanted to stay until they were healed and renewed their strength, he was willing to fill all their needs for the time of their stay.

In the days following, the merchant came from time to time to visit the survivors, cheered them up, and spoke to them words of comfort and encouragement. Of course, everyone there was full of gratitude to the merchant that saved them and couldn’t thank him enough for all he had done and is doing for them.

Among the survivors who recovered, the merchant noticed

Parashat Vaera - The Switched Out Groom

a modest and gentle young woman, who was always busy reaching out and helping the sick and weak, and especially the children. Her compassion and kind-heartedness were seen in every move she made...

“Hashem is rewarding me for redeeming the prisoners,” the merchant thought to himself. “Here is someone worthy marrying my son off to. I wouldn’t find a more suitable woman even if I searched for many years.”

His son, noble and kind-hearted as his father, was also happy when his father offered him the young woman. The two happily decided to get married.

Preparations for the wedding were soon made. All members of the local Jewish community were invited along with the prisoners to rejoice at the wedding of the merchant’s son and the young woman who was brought to him by Divine Providence.

The merchant’s house was lit with a variety of lights in honor of the heartwarming event.

Everyone was happy and full of joy, especially those hundreds of men, women, and children whose freedom was returned to them by the father of the groom.

The merchant passed from guest to guest to say ‘cheers’ and respond to all the blessings that were showered on him. Everyone he met radiated joy and happiness, until...

Until he noticed a young man sitting at a table in a corner, hiding his face with his palms. The merchant stood by him and placed his hand on his shoulder as if they were friends.

“What’s wrong? Why are you sitting here looking worried instead of rejoicing in my joy?” asked the merchant.

The young man shook his head in despair and said nothing...

The surprised merchant gently lifted the young man’s head and looked into his teary eyes, “Please tell me what’s bothering you. Please... Maybe I can help...”

After many pleas, the young man agreed to tell his sad story...

The young woman, who is about to marry your son, was my fiancée... On the day set for our wedding, the enemy attacked us, killed and looted everything, and then gathered all the local Jews, women, and children and sold us into slavery...

That's how we got here...

I'm so sorry you forced me to tell you all this and ruin your joy. We owe you our lives, and we're very grateful for everything you've done for us. Please go back to rejoicing in your son's wedding and forget everything I told you.

The merchant was moved to the depths of his soul at the young man's story.

"I very much understand you," he told the young man, "and I appreciate your generosity. But I have to think about it. I hope that Hashem will guide me on the right path."

The merchant snuck out of the house and entered the garden. There, in the fresh air, he began to contemplate the situation. On the one hand, he was filled with

pity for the poor young man, but on the other, he also loved his only son very much and didn't want to make him sad. Also, what about the poor girl... ?

Finally, he decided that he must first inform his son of what he had just learned...

When the groom heard the "news," he was completely shocked. However, after recovering from the unpleasant surprise, he told his father without any hesitation that he couldn't be happy knowing that his happiness came at the expense of someone else.

"These are two people," he thought to himself. "If he really was her fiancé and she still chooses him even today, I have nothing to do but move out the way and not stand in the way of their happiness." "Therefore," the groom concluded, "the final decision is in the hands of the girl."

After the merchant heard his son's decision, he approached the young woman and told her what he knew about her former

groom, as well as the decision of his son. When she heard everything he had to say, tears of joy stood in her eyes.

“You saved our lives for a second time...” she said. “Your son is as noble and kind-hearted as you, however I... I belong to my previous fiancé...”

“This is Hashem’s will,” replied the merchant, “and this is what we’ll do.”

We’ll continue with the wedding as if nothing happened, but instead of with my son, enter the *chuppah* with your real fiancé, whom you’ve chosen for yourself.

The merchant’s son quickly exchanged his wedding clothes with the now happy young man, and the guests merited witnessing a wedding which they hadn’t seen in a long time...!¹

Let’s sum things up...

The couple met and talked for a while. After they found one

another suitable, they decided to get engaged. With hearts pounding with excitement and feelings of anxiety from the unknown, they stood together at their engagement party.

And then... a time was set for the wedding. The wedding day had arrived, and everything was turned upside down... Their dream was thrown into the sea, and they didn’t know when they’d meet again, if at all...

In the end, they survived... Yet happiness was still far from them... Their savior decided to marry the girl to his son...

All their hopes to unite together were instantly shattered...

However, after all the suffering, the hardships, and the pain, they finally reunited. The merchant gave his son’s clothes to the young man, and they had a wedding that won’t soon be forgotten!

I Should Have Been Chosen !

Approximately ten months passed from the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, and on the 1st of Nissan, Moshe Rabbeinu appointed leaders over Am Israel.² One leader for each tribe, and because the tribe of Levi had many responsibilities, they were appointed three leaders...

To the Gershuni family - Elyasaf ben Lael.

To the Merari family - Tzuriel ben Avichayil.

And to the Kehati family - Elitzaphan ben Uziel.

In the Kehati family was one of the richest people in Am Israel, and his name was Korach. When he saw that Moshe Rabbeinu appointed Elitzaphan to be the leader of the Kehati tribe, jealousy entered his heart because he believed that he deserved to be the leader.

This was his thinking process...

Kehat had four sons, Amram, Yitzhar, Chevron and Uziel.³ The eldest son, Amram, had two sons, Moshe and Aaron, and one daughter, Miriam.

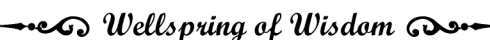
Moshe Rabbeinu appointed himself king and his brother Aharon, *Kohen Gadol*. Now he wants to come and appoint Elitzaphan, the son of his father's youngest brother, Uziel, as leader of the tribe of Levi ! ?

He should have appointed me, for I'm the oldest son of Yitzhar ! It's time to organize a rebellion against Moshe !

And Korach began to gather soldiers...

Two of the most important people in the tribe of Reuven were Datan and Aviram, and when they heard about the controversy that arose, they willingly joined along with their entire families.

The end was terrible... !



2. See Seder Olam Rabba (Ch. 8).

3. In order by age, from oldest to youngest.

This is how it's described in the book *Otzar Agadot HaTorah*...⁴

Even though he was the leader of all of Am Israel, Moshe, in his great modesty, decided to approach Korach and his assembly in order to calm everyone down and quiet the controversy. As he approached Korach's tent, Korach's three sons noticed him in the distance and turned to one another to discuss what they should do.

They asked one another, "How should we act? If we stand up before Moshe and give him the respect he deserves, our father will be angry with us. Yet, if we don't stand up, then we'll disrespect Moshe...."

One of them answered and said, "We must stand up and honor Moshe Rabbeinu and not pay any attention to our father who argues with the righteous..."

The bitter end is already known to all... "The earth opened

its mouth and swallowed them, their homes, their families, and all their belongings!" (Bamidbar 16:32-33).

As the earth opened and preceded to swallow up the three sons of Korach, they began to shout, "Moshe Rabbeinu save us... !

Hashem then called out, "If they repent, they'll be saved. I desire teshuvah and nothing else."

Korach's sons wanted to do teshuvah, but from the shock of everything around them, they couldn't utter a word...

But Hashem, who knows what's in everyone's heart and mind, immediately, when they contemplated in their hearts to do teshuvah, saved them.

When they saw the merit of the righteous and their greatness in the eyes of Hashem, they began to praise them, "You are the most beautiful of human

beings... Hashem blesses you forever !” (Tehillim 45:3).⁵

In these verses, the sons of Korach praised Avraham Avinu,

—*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~* —

5. In the year 3870, Achilles approached his uncle Adrianus, the chief representative of the Roman Empire in Syria and Israel, and asked his permission to settle in Israel and establish trade relations with its citizens.

“Do you need money, Achilles ?” asked Adrianus. “You know money isn’t a problem for me, and I’m willing to give you whatever you need.”

Achilles was most admired and loved by Adrianus. Adrianus hoped that when he inherited the throne of Emperor Trinus, he would adopt Achilles and make him his heir to the throne. For that reason, he hoped that Achilles would remain by his side and follow his commands.

“Thank you, my dear uncle,” replied Achilles, “but I don’t want any gifts. I’m searching after a fortune which I can acquire with my own hands. I only ask for advice. What should I do to achieve success and amass great wealth ?”

“Listen closely,” Adrianus replied, “When you come across a valuable commodity which not many people are going after, buy it at a low price, and then wait until the price goes up, and you’ll make a lot of money.”

“Great advice uncle !” Exclaimed Achilles, “I’ll try my best to follow it.”

Immediately afterward, Achilles went to the Osha Yeshiva and studied Torah there from Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua. He also formed deep friendships with Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Akiva. Secretly, he circumcised himself and accepted the religion of Judaism, and since then, has been called by the name Onkelos. He engaged in Torah study day and night and translated the Torah into Greek. After he finished the translation, he came and read it before his teachers...

Not much remains with us today from Onkelos’s Greek translation except for a few passages in various books. From them, we see that Onkelos tried to translate the Torah, literally, word for word, making the translation only understandable to those knowledgeable in the original language.

Therefore, Onkelos decided to translate the Torah again into the Aramaic language, which was the spoken language of the Jews at the time.

He then came to his rabbis and showed them his translation, and this is how it’s quoted in the Jerusalem Talmud (Megillah 1:9): Rabbi Yeremiah in the name of Rabbi Chiya Bar Ba: Onkelos translated the Torah before Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua, and they praised him, saying, “the most beautiful of human beings” (Tehillim 45:3).

Parashat Vaera - I Should Have Been Chosen !

That is, by his devotion and self-sacrifice, along with his toil in the Torah, Onkelus merited to gain immense and sublime spiritual beauty !

And everyone can achieve this, provided they engage in Torah without ulterior motives and stay away from any forbidden speech !

Some time passed, and Adrianus was proclaimed emperor of Rome. When the news reached Onkelos, he went to Rome to congratulate his uncle.

Adrianus was thrilled to meet with Achilles and turned to him and said, "Tell me everything that you've gone through since we parted !"

"My dear uncle," replied Onkelos, "I've become very successful and have gained much wealth."

"What kind of business did you deal with ?" asked Adrianus, interested.

"I dealt with the most expensive commodity in the world. Even more expensive than silver and gold. Something completely priceless."

"What price did you pay for it ?" asked Adrianus, as his astonishment increased.

"Just a little foreskin," replied Onkelos.

"I don't understand..."

"I converted. I circumcised myself and became Jewish."

Adrianus burned with rage. He screamed angrily, "How dare you do something so

stupid before first consulting me ! I'm the closest thing you have to family !"

"Calm down uncle. I did ask your opinion first, and you advised me to do so."

"What !" - Hadrian looked like his eyes were about to pop out of his head. "I advised you to do so !? I don't remember such a thing !"

"You advised me to look for a neglected commodity that no one wants, that its price isn't high for the time being, but after a while, its value will rise unlimitedly. I went and examined all the religions in the world and didn't find a nation as disgraced and condemned as the Jewish people. However, we're sure that in the future, our value will rise again, as stated in the words of the prophets from the mouth of Hashem."

"All that aside, tell me, Achilles, what really motivated you to accept the Jewish religion ?"

"My soul longed to study the holy Torah which was given to Am Israel at Mount Sinai from Hashem."

"Was it not possible for you to study this Torah even without becoming a Jew and without having to circumcise yourself ?"

"No, my uncle, that was inevitable. It is said in Tehillim, "Tells his words to Yaakov his laws and judgments to Israel" (Tehillim 147:19), that is, only someone who is part of Israel, the descendants of Yaakov will be able to study the whole Torah, and especially the oral Torah. Someone who doesn't keep the

for thanks to him, the world began its repair.⁶

From the day that Hashem created the world, He's been searching for someone with who He could seal a covenant...

And so, He searched and searched... and only after twenty generations from the creation of the world did He find someone
- Avraham Avinu !

We'll explain in more detail...

The Real Truth

The purpose of creation was for us to merit knowing Hashem, to reveal and make His existence known.⁷

Hashem created the world in a way that we will have choice and free will... If we're privileged, and we take advantage of the situations that Hashem puts us in, we'll merit

revealing Him. And if we don't take advantage and throw away all the chances Hashem sends us, we'll...
Better not to go down that path...

Hashem had decided to create this world. One problem though... His "light" filled everything, and there was no place to create a world.

~ Wellspring of Wisdom ~

Torah in practice is helpless when trying to penetrate the depths of its secrets. The commandment of circumcision is the first opening to enter Judaism and be influenced by its inner light."

"And what is so great about this Torah that you praise it so much?"

"You, a mighty emperor, rule not only over the greatest empire in the world but also over all the sciences and wisdoms in the world. Yet, even you know that the Greek and Roman sages toiled endlessly to search for the truth, and yet, it remains far from them. All their knowledge and wisdom didn't help them to discover the truth. Whereas every Jewish child already

knows the truth. Already at the beginning of their studying of the Torah, they read, "In the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth" (Bereshit 1:1). They learn that Hashem is one, and He created the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars. Everything is under his supervision.

Adrianus contemplated for a couple of moments and then said, "I desire to meet one of the sages of Israel. I would like to ask him a number of questions that have occupied my mind for years..."

- Rabbi Akiva (p. 122).

6. Agadat Bereshit (16:1).

7. Zchut Avot 6:1.

The reason for this is that when His light shines openly, there's no room for any creation to feel any sense of self or individuality. Everything is only Hashem.

Therefore, Hashem condensed His light, so to speak, and by this contraction, a space was made in which He was hidden and concealed...

And within this space, all worlds and creations were made.

By this contraction and "free space," a reality was created that, so to speak, is void of Hashem. This is because the free space that was created produced and gave birth to heresy and desecration, darkness and obscurity, narrow-mindedness, and insularity...

But honestly, the real truth is, there's no reality other than Hashem! And even within the free space, He can be found!

And this is the power of choice that was given to us! To continue after the nothingness, or to believe in the true reality - *HaKadosh Baruch Hu!*

Hashem longed to find a nation who knew how to connect the existent with the nonexistent and nothingness, and discover that even within the free space, He can be found! To know and to make known that there is nothing but Him!⁸

And on the sixth day of creation, the first man was created...

~ **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*

8. Next door to the father-in-law of Rabbi Eliezer Shlomo Schick lived a man that dreamed of being rich. After much thought, he came up with an idea on how to establish himself financially...

Slowly, he entered the business of buying and selling apartments. He bought and sold, bought and rented, etc., until he bought about two hundred apartments or so, and though he knew that it was beyond his ability to handle, he wasn't

going to give up so easily after entering such a great business. Eventually, he began to borrow huge sums of money for his business until he entered a dangerous vortex of money borrowing, ultimately leading to him falling into a deep abyss...

Then began a cruel pursuit of creditors, debtors, lawyers, and judges, as well as anyone who remained that he owed money to. The constant persecution didn't end...

Finding Our Way Back

Before Hashem created Adam, he prepared a place for him

where he could live, and that was *Gan Eden*.⁹

~ Wellspring of Wisdom ~

Although he managed to postpone the trials and the creditors, he knew that it was only a matter of time...

One day, Rabbi Eliezer Schick came to visit his father-in-law. When the neighbor heard about this, he asked permission to come to visit and speak with him.

Rabbi Eliezer Schick cheered him up and encouraged him that everything would be okay and that everything that Hashem does is for our good...

You have no other choice but to give yourself over to Hashem's will and take it upon yourself to be careful from now on with your business activities, even more so those that are beyond your ability, and pray a lot to Hashem, and confess before him all your mistakes and everything that you are well aware of that you've done. Pray to Hashem and say... *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, I know now that everything depends on you and that only you can save me and no one else in the world can... Talk to Hashem with every spare second you have. Only that can save you from your distress...

The words of encouragement did their part, and the neighbors' spirits were lifted. He had new emuna and hope for the future. He was truly ready to change for the better.

Then, Shabbat arrived...

On Friday night, Rabbi Eliezer Shikh sat in his father-in-law's home engaged in his Torah learning as usually when suddenly he heard cries coming from the neighbor's house...

"Hashem! I know that everything comes from you. Hashem, I know that everything comes from you..." These words repeated themselves over and over, countless times, almost throughout the entire night...

Sunday came. Loud knocks shook the home of the neighbor's house... The door was kicked in, and workers from the bank came in and emptied the whole house... Yet, nothing phased him. He was already "immune" to everything going on around him after he received a pick-up from Rabbi Eliezer. He continued on with his prayers to Hashem and continued to enforce the knowledge that everything comes from Hashem.

His emuna stood him in good stead, and thanks to his new emuna and bitachon, he was soon able to re-establish himself in a modest business that he ran to the best of his ability and was able to pay off his debts while making a respectable living.

- Esh Kodesh (Vol 1, p. 189).

9. Bereshit 2:8-10.

Adam walked around in *Gan Eden* and saw the angels and divine visions with his own eyes.

But, because Hashem created His world within the free space, the possibility of heresy was also created... and even there, within *Gan Eden*, there was free will...

The “representative” for the band of heretics was the snake...

We all know what happened next...

After Adam was thrown out of *Gan Eden*, Hashem continued to search for someone who could give birth to a nation of people who knew how to connect the existent with the nothingness...

Ten generations passed since Hashem created the world, and Noach was born. Noach had extraordinary qualities, and even the Torah testifies to that, “Noach, an innocent, righteous man... Noach walked with Hashem” (Bereshit 6:9).

The Torah continues and reveals to us... “And Noach found

favor in the eyes of Hashem” (Bereshit 6:8).

Generally speaking, the verse is simply stating that Hashem found the person he was looking for, “And Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem.” However, chazal reveal to us that this isn’t so !

“And Noach found favor” - Rabbi Simon said... He found. Hashem didn’t find.¹⁰

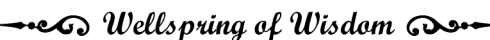
Don’t worry, we’ll explain...

There are two interpretations of the word found...¹¹

1. Acquisition - As someone who finds something, and then it becomes theirs.

2. Discovery or Revelation/ Uncovering - As is said in regards to Yosef, “And a man found him, and he was lost in the field” (Bereshit 37:15). The Discovery of something with no relation to acquisition whatsoever.

This is the form of “found” mentioned with Noach. Noach



10. Bereshit Rabba 26:3.

11. Birkat Shimon – Al HaTorah (p. 12).

Parashat Vaera - Avraham Avinu

wasn't privileged to declare Hashem's presence to the world, for he hadn't acquired the knowledge. Rather he only had it revealed.

Noach only possessed emuna that was handed down to

him by his ancestors and not emuna that he acquired himself by investigating and seeking Hashem. Rather it was just innocent faith...¹²

In the meantime, ten generations passed by, and Avraham was born...

Avraham Avinu

The Mishna¹³ states that Hashem bought five possessions for himself, and these are them... Torah, Heaven and Earth, Avraham, Israel, and the Beit HaMikdash...

The first to discover and publicize the reality of Hashem to the whole world was Avraham Avinu.¹⁴

Hashem said to Avraham, "My creations didn't know me, and you publicized my name, allowing them to discover me. In my eyes, it's as if you were a partner with me in the creation of the world!"¹⁵

Hashem, after twenty generations, found the person He was looking for! Avraham Avinu! Hashem turned to Avraham and said, "I want to choose you, and your descendants after you, to be my nation!¹⁶ Do you agree?"

"Of course!" answered Avraham.

Then Hashem told him,¹⁷ "But I have three conditions before I accept you as my nation. I seek that My nation have these three qualities... lineage, wisdom, and beauty."

Only after I see that they have all three of these

~ Wellspring of Wisdom ~

12. Akidat Itzchak by Rabbi Itzchak Harama (Parashat Lech Lecha, Shaar 16).

13. Avot 6:10.

14. Bamidbar Rabba 14:2.

15. Bamidbar Rabba 43:7.

16. See Nechemya 9:7-8.

17. See Shomer Emunim by Rebbe Aharon Ratta (Drush HaGeula, Ch. 4).

Parashat Vaera - The Foundation of Am Israel

qualities will I agree to be joined together - like an engagement...

And for that, I want to take your descendants down to Egypt - for a test! If they stand the test, the light will be revealed, and I will agree to get engaged to them!¹⁸

For this is how I created my world... The peel will always precede the fruit¹⁹ and the darkness before the light. Only after you pass the darkness will you discover a pure and clean light...

Avraham Avinu agreed, and the path was paved for exile in Egypt...

The Foundation of Am Israel

In the entire history of Am Israel, only Avraham, Itzchak, and Yaakov were given the title *Avot*, and there are no *Avot* other than them.²⁰

The title *Avot* that was affixed to our forefathers indicates not only the closeness of the blood we have to them and the lineage we share with them. If that were the case, we would have to attach this title to Noach, Yosef, Moshe, etc. We have to understand that the term *Avot* means much more than mere blood ties.

What distinguished Avraham, Itzchak, and Yaakov apart from everyone that preceded and followed them and earned them the title *Avot* is that in their actions, they, and only they, did the groundwork and laid the foundations for the building of our nation.²¹

The *Avot* were the ones who, in their hard work and by the power of their holiness, placed in their hands the foundations of our nation. They were the ones who shaped us and the ones who gave us the unexplainable



18. To connect with them and make them my nation.

19. **Shnei** Luchot HaBrit (Taanit, Torah Ohr 6).

20. See Brachot 16b.

21. **Merosh** Tzurim Bereshit (p. 124).

strength and resilience to stand up strong against anything and everything thrown at us!

When Hashem saw Avraham, Itzchak, and Yaakov,

he said, “The first condition has been fulfilled, for from now on, all your descendants will have the lineage of the *Avot*.²²

Let Us Out!

In the year 2238, since the creation of the world, Yaakov Avinu arrived with all his children and grandchildren at the entrance of the land of Egypt.

The guards opened the doors of the country, and they entered. Their entrance was simple and painless, but their exit from there was not at all...

Rabbi Yosef Chaim, the Ben Ish Chai, wrote²³ that during the exile in Egypt, the land was called “מצרים”. In the word “מצרים” (Egypt), the first (מ) Mem is open, and the last “מ” (ם) is completely closed.

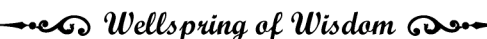
Whereas, at the time of Am Israel’s redemption, the land was called “מצרימה”. The

closed Mem (ם) at the end of the name disappeared, and in its place, there is the letter “ה” (Heh), which has two openings.

All this was done to reveal to us that when Am Israel descended into Egypt, there had never been anyone in Egypt who managed to escape after being forced into slavery...²⁴

When someone new would arrive, they would find an opening in which to enter, but the exit was completely blocked...

Many slaves tried to escape. On moonless nights, they crept slowly, tiptoed toward a small hidden hole in the wall around the land. A silent night, no sounds



22. **Shomer** Emunim (Drush HaGeulah, Ch. 3).

23. **Od** Yosef Chai – Drushim (Parashat Beshalach).

24. **Mechilta** D’Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (Shemot, 18:11), Rashi (Shemot, 18:9).

Parashat Vaera - Simple Faith

were heard, the slave approached and only his heartbeats were heard, when suddenly...

They were attacked by wolves, dogs, lions, and bears! Snakes hurled from the top of the wall, their tongues dripping with venom. Between his legs crawled venomous scorpions and spiders!

The slave would faint on the spot, and in the morning,

after finding him, they would return them to work...

But the truth is... There were no lions or bears, nor venomous creatures... Everything was fake. It was all magic...



This was the state of the land when Am Israel arrived in Egypt, and Pharaoh, who saw that his luck was growing, decided to turn Am Israel into slaves...

Simple Faith

Am Israel is called wise, for it says in the Torah, “An intelligent and wise nation” (Devarim 4:6).²⁵

Rebbe Aharon Rata writes that wisdom is emuna and that Am

Israel’s wisdom is expressed in the fact that they know the basics and main principles of *avodat Hashem*, simple faith, *emuna temima*. Throw out whatever you “know” and just believe!²⁶

 *Wellspring of Wisdom* 

25. See Kohelet Rabba 7:38.

26. When we were kids, they would tell us a story about a king who loved wisdom and knowledge and one day called his elderly advisor and said to him...

I very much so long to become wise and gain knowledge of what I do not know. I ask that you wander the lands far from here and search for treasures of wisdom and knowledge, study them, and then return and teach them to me.

The elderly advisor set off...

Nine years passed... Many lands did he wander, and many great pearls of wisdom did he learn.

Then, he stood before his king again, ready to complete the second part of his mission.

The king apologized and said... Nine years ago, I could allocate time for studying, but since then, I’ve expanded my kingdom, acquired new territories, conquered many countries, and a larger

Parashat Vaera - Simple Faith

burden has fallen on my shoulders. I ask that you sum up all the wisdom that you have gathered in the past nine years in one sentence.

“My king,” the advisor bowed down and said, “One sentence! ? That’s too much... I can sum it all up in one word.”

The king was astonished, and the advisor continued...

“Yes, my king, one word... Carrot”.

“Carrot! ?” The king wondered.

The advisor again bowed down and asked, “Have you ever seen a field of carrots, my king?”

“No...” The king admitted. “I’ve only seen them when they’re served to my table on a plate.”

“If so,” said the advisor, “I ask that the king accompany me and see a carrot field in full bloom. There, the king will understand all the wisdom’s that I have learned in one moment.”

The king’s curiosity was aroused, and he ordered that his chariot be prepared. The advisor intervened and said, “The wheels of the chariot will sink in the furrows of the fields. It’s better that we ride on horseback.”

The king agreed and ordered the horses to be prepared.

Together, they rode out to the edges of the city. The sun illuminated the flowering vegetable fields, and as they rode between the plots, the advisor

said, “Such a beautiful day, it’s worth walking...”

They got off the horses and walked among the furrows. The king stood and inhaled the fresh air, savoring the light breeze.

The advisor asked, “Please tell me, my king, what vegetable grows in this field?”

The king looked and shrugged. In the other fields, he saw tomatoes, zucchini, and other vegetables, while here, he only saw green leaves... “Really, what is this vegetable?” asked the king.

The advisor leaned over, dug with his hands in the ground, pulled hard, and uprooted a huge orange carrot...

The king looked at him, waiting for an explanation.

“Such great wisdom, just lying before us,” said the advisor, “under our feet, and we don’t pay any attention!”

“Few know how to deduce from the outer leaves that beneath hides something so wonderful. Fewer are those who stop and bend down to dig, toil, and expose it. But, my king, look... Your horses are strolling around, eating the leaves... They’re sure they found the fruit...

This is how the world looks... Just like your horses... Going around, searching and choosing the visible, “what can be seen with the eye,” completely ignoring Hashem who creates, controls, and guides everything!”

- Yosef Da’at (Haggadah Shel Pesach, p. 80).

Yaakov's sons, who lived in Egypt, were full of pure, untouched *emuna*. Even at the time of Yaakov's death, they said, "*Shema Israel, Hashem Elokenu, Hashem Echad!*"²⁷ and testified that their *emuna* beats within their hearts just as much as their father, Yaakov.

And yet, the wicked of each generation tries to destroy the simple faith that is rooted in the hearts of all of Am Israel...

Pharaoh gathered his advisers and told them, "Am Israel has grown into a number much greater than ours. Let's make them smarter so that they'll waste their

—*~* Wellspring of Wisdom *~*—

We think that we're the leaders of our homes, our wives, children, and even ourselves. Yet we forget one thing...

Hashem!

I'll explain with a story...

Many of us remember the "crazy" man that used to stand on the side of the road at the entrance to Jerusalem. Whether pouring rain or scorching heat, the man stood at the entrance to the city screaming...

Go! Go! Go!

The man would stand and signal with his hand to the tens of thousands of cars entering Jerusalem - drive! He shook his hand, "Come on, come on! Go!" This is how he made sure to stand for hours on end and be filled himself with unlimited satisfaction... "After all, everyone is able to go because of me. I direct them, and they drive..."

When the light turned red, the man would instantly pause, wait patiently, and as soon as the green was visible, he waved again with joy, "Come on! Go! Go! Go!..."

Just like this, he would stand for hours every day, believing everything was working because of him.

This is exactly how we look. We go on with our lives and imagine to ourselves, "I the navigator, I the leader." The children are sick, we shout, "Go!" We take Tylenol and put it into their mouths. The fever goes away, and we're sure that we healed our children...

We live a long life, and the entire time, we're sure that everything was led by us!

Hashem controls and leads the entire world every second of every day. He's the one that makes the Tylenol work. He's the one that gives us health, a good life, our livelihood... All we do is sit on the side and wave our hands... Go! Go! Go! Yet, we stupidity smile to ourselves and are one hundred percent sure that it's all from us. That we control everything...

- Kol Chotzev (p. 79).

27. See Pesachim 56a.

Parashat Vaera - And The Nation Believed !

time studying sciences and stop having simple faith in Hashem !”

Pharaoh wanted to separate Am Israel from their pure and simple faith and devotion to Hashem.

“**By** making them smarter, we’ll gain that they won’t

be worthy of connecting with Hashem, for Hashem had three conditions for them, and the second condition was wisdom. And wisdom is faith !”

But, like always, the evil Pharaoh lost the battle...

And The Nation Believed !

Moshe Rabbeinu returned to Egypt, approached Am Israel,²⁸ and said, “The

time has come !” - “And the nation believed !” (Shemot 4:31).²⁹

...*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*...

28. Moshe Rabbeinu returned to Egypt at the age of eighty, and by then, he had gone through a lot, married the daughter of Yitro Cohen Midyan, and had two sons. On a side note...

A priest once asked the Maharal of Prague, “Why in your prayers do you mention Avraham, Itzchak, and Yaakov, yet you don’t mention Moshe, who gave you the Torah ?”

The Maharal answered... “We don’t mention Moshe because his father-in-law was a priest...”

- Chiyucha Shel Torah (p. 60).

29. When Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe Rabbeinu for the first time and instructed him with the task of informing Am Israel that the time of their redemption

from Egypt had come, at that moment He also taught him that in every Jew, no matter who or where they are, hides emuna in Hashem, whether they know it or not.

Therefore, even a Jew who is far from the path of Torah and mitzvot, deep down within them, they surely believe in Hashem with complete faith. Why? Because they’re a Jew. Every Jew genuinely loves Hashem and desires to connect with Him and His Torah, except that the *yetzer hara* confuses and deceives them and causes them to go against the will of Hashem, even when they truly don’t want to.

Am Israel are like burning coals. On the outside, they seem to be extinguished, but really, inwardly, they’re still burning. All it takes is a little bit of wind, and they immediately begin to flare and radiate.

Parashat Vaera - And The Nation Believed !

The Midrash says...³⁰ From this verse, you discover that our ancestors weren't redeemed from Egypt but by their faith - "And the nation believed !"

On this, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, The Lubavitcher Rebbe, said the following...³¹

Belief, in general, is above reason, and in particular, the faith of Am Israel in redemption during their exile in Egypt.

By nature, there was no possibility that Am Israel could be redeemed from Egypt, for no slave ever escaped from Egypt, and all the more so, six hundred

thousand slaves. In addition, it's easy to imagine how broken Am Israel must have been from the difficulties they experienced in exile and enslavement in general. Even more so, the depression and anguish caused by Pharaoh's decrees on the little children (It's human nature to give up everything as long as their descendants and especially small children aren't harmed). Yet, regardless of their misery and hardships, Am Israel believed with simple faith in the news given by Moshe Rabbeinu of their redemption that Hashem is going to redeem them and bring them out of exile.

—*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*—

Even the simplest Jew, though outwardly it seems that their faith in Hashem has extinguished, inwardly, a fire of pure faith in Hashem still burns. All that's needed is to blow some life within them, and immediately their fire is revealed.

This was, in essence, Hashem's claim against Moshe Rabbeinu... Why did you say, "They won't believe me" (Shemot 4:1) ? Because they strayed a little, they won't believe ? ! No ! Their emuna is in a place so deep within their hearts that no matter what happens, they can never lose it !

Am Israel are believers. The fact that someone violates Shabbat, or someone else behaves immodestly, and so on, doesn't in any way indicate that they have no emuna. Emuna is found deep within the hearts of every Jew, and in no way can it be uprooted from them...

- Imrei Noam (Shemot, Maamar 9).

30. Yalkut Shimoni (Shemot, 240).

31. Yalkut Mashiach V'Geulah by Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (Vol. 14, p. 411)

Parashat Vaera - The Beauty of Am Israel

Am Israel's simple faith, which was above and beyond all understanding, awakened Hashem's love for them, which was also above and beyond all understanding, even though rationally speaking, there was room to claim, "What's the difference between the two of them?"³²

But through the faith of Am Israel, Hashem's infinite love for them was revealed...

Hashem saw their faith and said, "The second condition has been fulfilled."

Now let's fulfill the third condition, beauty...

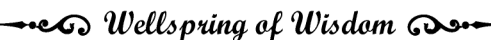
The Beauty of Am Israel

The prophet Yechezkel revealed to us how Am Israel merited their beauty. When the time for the redemption arrived, Hashem revealed Himself to Am Israel... "And I will dress you in embroidered garments, and I will put leather shoes on you, and I will fasten you with linen and cover you with silk. And I adorned you with ornaments, and I put bracelets on your hands, and a necklace on your neck... and the nations will know you for your beauty" (Yechezkel 16:9-14)...

The clothing and jewelry in this verse are a metaphor for Torah

and mitzvot. Chazal teach us³³ that just as a bride adorns herself with twenty-four ornaments, so too must every Talmid Chacham be proficient in the twenty-four books of the Tanach. The Torah and the Mitzvot are ornaments that Hashem gave to Am Israel in which to adorn themselves for His honor, like a bride who beautifies herself for her husband.

Just as our bodies are comprised of 248 limbs and organs and 365 sinews and nerves, we have 248 and 365 different strengths and attributes, which are the "limbs"



32. The intention being Am Israel and the Egyptians.

33. Yalkut Shimoni (Shir HaShirim, Remez 988).

Parashat Vaera - The Beauty of Am Israel

of the soul. The mitzvot of the Torah are the soul's clothing. Just as the body's clothing reveals the essence of a person, whether they are a policeman, a soldier, a construction worker, a Jew, a man, or a woman...

So too, the mitzvot, which are the soul's clothing, reveal and express its essence, which is a longing for its Creator.³⁴

When Am Israel came to the foot of Mount Sinai and said,

“Everything that Hashem spoke we will do and listen” (Shemot 24:7) - We accept on ourselves and on our descendants the will of Hashem. In good times and in bad. Whether it'll be hard work or easy. We accept to keep and do all His mitzvot.

Hashem saw the acceptance of His will by Am Israel and said, “My third and final condition has been fulfilled!”³⁵

Let's get ready for the wedding...

...*~* **Wellspring of Wisdom** *~*...

34. My Sole Desire (p. 259).

35. A woman stood crying outside the door of the Maggid of Koznitz, Rebbe Israel's, room...

“How can I help?” Rebbe Israel turned to her and asked.

My husband wants to divorce me on the grounds that I'm ugly!

“Maybe he's making a true claim?” implied Rebbe Israel...

Rebbe! The woman shouted nervously. When I married him, I was a beautiful and respectable woman, and I gave myself over for him in every way possible... in cooking and laundering, cleaning and ironing... I cared for his well-being with all

my heart and did everything for his success...

Now that I've lost my beauty, because of what I did for him, he wants to divorce me! ?

Rebbe Israel replied... “I'll pray to Hashem that your husband returns to seeing you as he did before.”

After she walked away, Rebbe Israel immediately began to weep... *Ribono Shel Olam!* When you wedded us at Mount Sinai, we were in your eyes like the most beautiful woman in the world. How, for almost 2000 years, do you see us as ugly and unattractive and disappeared from us ? !

Rebbe Israel then fainted...

- Yalkot Avrech - 1995 (p. 320).

Will You Marry Me ?

The prophet Hoshea revealed what happened at that time...

Hashem appeared to Am Israel and said to them, “It’s time to get engaged !”

“**Marry** me forever, marry me with justice and judgment, kindness and mercy, marry me with emuna, and you shall know Hashem.” (Hoshea 2:21-22)

The words “Marry me” are mentioned three times in this verse, corresponding to the three virtues that Am Israel merited.

“**Marry** me forever” - Corresponds to the virtue of lineage. The reason that it says, “Marry me forever” is because thanks to the virtue of lineage, Am Israel’s connection to Hashem will never cease! Even if we stray away from the other virtues of wisdom and beauty, the virtue of lineage can never be annulled, for lineage is something eternal. You can’t take away your lineage.

“**Marry** me with justice, kindness, and mercy” – Corresponds to the virtue of beauty. For when Am Israel learn Torah or observe the mitzvot, they become en clothed by the garments of their soul, and their beauty and radiance shine through all the worlds. Even the attributes of “justice and judgment” begin to generate “kindness and mercy.”

“**Marry** me with emuna, and you shall know Hashem” – corresponds to the virtue of wisdom. This virtue is the greatest virtue of them all, for wisdom corresponds to emuna! And that’s why the verse says, “Marry me with emuna !” only with emuna can we get to “and you will know Hashem !”

Emuna is true knowing (knowledge), “And you will know today with all your heart that Hashem is G-d in heaven and over the entire earth, there is none other” (Devarim 4:39). From this, we learn that the essence of knowing is emuna...

The Engagement Ring - 613 Mitzvot

Once, Rebbe Shneur Zalman of Liadi left his room and overheard his wife say to her friends, “Mine says...” that is, “My husband says.”³⁶

Rebbe Shneur Zalman stood still... All I did was marry her with a ring, and that turned me into “hers”!?

HaKadosh Baruch Hu, who wedded us with 613 rings – 613 mitzvot - surely, we’re considered “His”!

And even though we’re far from Hashem, nevertheless, because we are obligated to keep His mitzvot, we’re for sure considered “His”!

HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l explained that the word “mitzvah” comes from the word *tzvata* (צוּוּתָא), which means

connection, signifying that by keeping the mitzvot, a connection is made with Hashem.

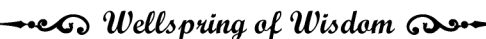
What connects us to Hashem? What connects us to our roots above? What connects us to the source of our souls? - The keeping of the mitzvot.

Every mitzvah is a channel that Hashem uses to bestow blessing upon us. A channel of blessing both for our material needs and for our spiritual needs. But the mitzvah itself, in order to attain its perfection, must be completed in five parts. Each mitzvah is divided into five parts. The act of the mitzvah, speech, intention, thought, and *Reuta DeLeeba* (emotion and excitement of the heart)...

What Is A Complete Mitzvah ?

With Hashem’s help, we were privileged to write a

series of books on the Shulchan Aruch called *Chelev*



Parashat Vaera - What Is A Complete Mitzvah?

Haarets. There, we wrote the following...³⁷

In order for the mitzvot that we observe to be complete, we're required to complete them on five levels... 1. Action, 2. Speech, 3. Intention, 4. Thought, 5. *Reuta DeLeeba* (emotion and excitement of the heart).³⁸

Action -

The actual observance of the mitzvah. Wearing tzitzit, putting on tefillin, sitting in a sukkah, and so on.

Speech -

The recitation of the verses relating to that same mitzvah and the study of its laws.³⁹

Intention -

Knowing that the action being done is for the sake of a mitzvah and to complete the will of Hashem that He commanded us to complete the mitzvah, and not that we're just doing things

without any purpose. More so, the Shulchan Aruch already ruled that mitzvot need intention.

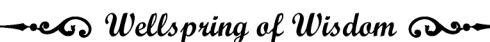
Thought -

The Arizal wrote,⁴⁰ "It isn't enough just to perform a mitzvah. Rather, we need to have in mind that we are doing the mitzvah for Hashem, the one who commanded us." Also, it is very important that we have no ulterior motives during the performance of the mitzvah. Rather, only to fulfill the will of Hashem.

Reuta DeLeeba -

Reuta DeLeeba is the will of the heart and the desire and joy to complete the mitzvah even more than if you had earned hundreds of millions of dollars, for you were privileged to complete the will of Hashem and to make Him happy.

When we fulfill the mitzvot with these five conditions, our mitzvot will be complete and desirable before Hashem.



37. Chelev *Haarets* (Vol. 2, p. 7).

38. Bnei Aharon 11:45.

39. See Menachot 110a.

40. Shaar HaMitzvot (Introduction).

Emuna - A Gift From Hashem

The giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai was the wedding between Hashem and Am Israel...

“Blessed are you Hashem, Elokenu, King of the world, who sanctified us in His commandments and commanded us on adultery and forbade us the engaged and permitted us the married to us by *chuppah* and *kiddushin*.”⁴¹

Rebbe Aharon Rata wrote⁴² that during the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, the marriage between Hashem and Am Israel wasn't finished, for Am Israel sinned with the golden calf. However, after the

arrival of the Mashiach, the real wedding will take place...

“I left you for a moment, but with great mercy, I will gather you !” (Yeshaiya 54:7).

The Midrash says that the future redemption will be brought about only by virtue of our emuna !⁴³

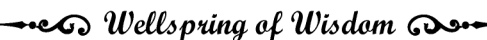
And since the final redemption will be by virtue of our emuna, Hashem gave every Jew emuna as a gift !⁴⁴

And since we were privileged to receive emuna as a gift, we must be very careful not to lose it...

Don't Be A Drunk

It's known that gentiles like to drink, and in Poland, there were many drunks. They gave the Polish police a lot of work. It's hard work keeping track of drunk drivers... How did they check to see if the driver they caught was

really drunk ? I remember from my childhood that they told me that the policemen would lead the driver to the parking lot of the police station, where a narrow road was paved, and they would order the suspected driver to



41. Ketubot 7b.

42. **Shomer** Emunim (Drush HaGeulah, Ch. 4).

43. **Yalkut** Shimoni (Hoshea, Remez 519).

44. **Otiyot** D'Rabbi Akiva (1).

drive. If they drove straight, fine, but if they didn't, it was clear proof that they were drunk.

Once, they brought a driver there and said to him, "Go!"

The driver complained to the police and said, "Wait! First straighten the road, then I'll drive..."

Everyone present smirked, and the cops immediately understood the intensity of his

drunkenness. He was sure that he was fine, his mind is straight, it's the road that's crooked... The same thing goes with emuna.

Faith is straight and simple. It's the mind that's crooked.

There's nothing easier than explaining faith. Only, make sure that the person listening isn't drunk.

That is, that their mind isn't upside down...⁴⁵

Shabbat Shalom !



The Pathway...

1. From the day that Hashem created the world, He's been searching for someone with who He could seal a covenant. The purpose of creation was for us to merit knowing Hashem, to reveal and make His existence known. Hashem created the world in a way that we will have choice and free will... If we're privileged, and we take advantage of the situations that Hashem puts us in, we'll merit revealing Him. And if we don't take advantage and throw away all the chances Hashem sends us, we'll...

Better not to go down that path...

2. When Hashem had decided to create this world there was one problem... His "light" filled everything, and there was no place to create a world. The reason for this is that when His light shines openly, there's no room for any creation to feel any sense of self or individuality. Everything is only Hashem. Therefore, Hashem condensed His light, so to speak, and by this contraction, a space was made in which He was hidden and concealed... And within this space, all worlds and creations were made. Yet, by this contraction and "free space," a reality was created that, so to speak, is void of Hashem.

3. But honestly, the real truth is, there's no reality other than Hashem! And even within the free space, He can be

found! This is the power of choice that was given to us! To continue after the nothingness, or to believe in the true reality - *HaKadosh Baruch Hu!* Hashem longed to find a nation who knew how to connect the existent with the nonexistent and nothingness, and discover that even within the free space, He can be found! To know and to make known that there is nothing but Him!

4. Wisdom is *emuna* and Am Israel's wisdom is expressed in the fact that they know the basics and main principles of *avodat Hashem*, simple faith, *emuna temima*. Throw out whatever you "know" and just believe! Every Jew, no matter who or where they are, hides *emuna* in Hashem, whether they know it or not. Even a Jew who is far from the path of Torah and mitzvot, deep down within them, they surely believe in Hashem with complete faith.

5. Every Jew genuinely loves Hashem and desires to connect with Him and His Torah, because they are a Jew. The reason a Jew may be far from the path of Hashem is only because the *yetzer hara* confuses and deceives them and causes them to go against the will of Hashem, even when they truly don't want to. Even the simplest Jew, though outwardly it seems that their faith in Hashem has extinguished, inwardly, a

The Pathway...

fire of pure faith in Hashem still burns. All that's needed is to blow some life within them, and immediately their fire is revealed. Am Israel's emuna is in a place so deep within their hearts that no matter what happens, they can never lose it! Emuna is found deep within the hearts of every Jew, and in no way can it be uprooted from them...

6. Every mitzvah is a channel that Hashem uses to bestow blessing upon us. A channel of blessing both for our material needs and for our spiritual needs. But the mitzvah itself, in order to attain its perfection, must be completed in five parts. Each mitzvah is divided into five parts. The act of the mitzvah, speech, intention, thought, and *Reuta DeLeeba* (emotion and excitement of the heart)...

7. In order for the mitzvot that we observe to be complete, we're required to complete them on five levels, action, speech, intention, thought, and *reuta deLeeba* (emotion and excitement of the heart).

Action: The actual observance of the mitzvah. Wearing tzitzit, putting on tefillin, sitting in a sukkah, and so on.

Speech: The recitation of the verses relating to that same mitzvah and the study of its laws.

Intention: Knowing that the action being done is for the sake of a mitzvah and to complete the will of Hashem that He commanded us to complete the mitzvah, and not that we're just doing things without any purpose. More so, the Shulchan Aruch already ruled that mitzvot need intention.

Thought: Having in mind that we are doing the mitzvah for Hashem, the one who commanded us, as well as having no ulterior motives during the performance of the mitzvah.

Reuta DeLeeba: The will of the heart and the desire and joy to complete the mitzvah even more than if you had earned hundreds of millions of dollars, for you were privileged to complete the will of Hashem and to make Him happy. When we fulfill the mitzvot with these five conditions, our mitzvot will be complete and desirable before Hashem.





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Parashat Vaera

Tevet 28, 5782



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	4:20 pm	5:25 pm	5:52 pm
Miami	5:22 pm	6:19 pm	6:54 pm
Los Angeles	4:36 pm	5:36 pm	6:07 pm
Montreal	4:02 pm	5:12 pm	5:34 pm
Toronto	4:25 pm	5:32 pm	5:56 pm
Jerusalem	4:30 pm	5:21 pm	5:53 pm

Pathways to the Heart

From the Holy Words of HaRav Yoram zt"l

Good parenting begins with emuna and ends with emuna.

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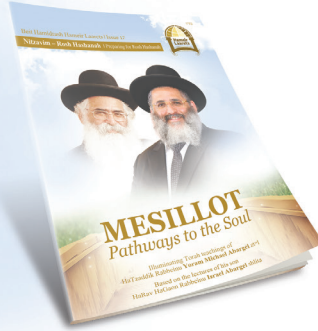
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