

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 57

Behaalotecha | The Path To Change



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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Parashat Behaalotecha

Lighting One Candle from Another

In the city of Dombrova¹ lived a married couple who had just given birth to a baby boy whom they named Tzvi Hersh HaCohen. When Tzvi Hersh grew up, like every other Jewish family, his father brought a private tutor to teach him Torah.

From an early age, it was already clear to all that Tzvi Hersh was a young prodigy, excelling in his learning and meticulous with everything that had to do with his *avodat Hashem*.

Unfortunately, the “good days” didn’t last long. Tzvi Hersh was orphaned from both parents at the age of ten.

Fortuitously, young Tzvi had a well-off family in the nearby city of Torana who took him into their home. In the beginning, they planned on

allowing Tzvi to continue his studies. However, not long after Tzvi came into their home, they lost their wealth, and against their will, they were forced to have Tzvi find work to support himself.

After some wandering around, Tzvi finally found a Jewish tailor in Torana that agreed to teach him how to sew. For five years straight, little Tzvi stayed with the tailor in Torana until he reached the age of fifteen.

One day, on his way to the tailor’s store, Tzvi noticed that all of Torana was full of excitement. Some were cleaning, others preparing, and others decorating, all of what looked like the arrival of someone important. When Tzvi inquired what all the fuss was about, he found out that none other than

the *tzaddik* Rebbe Avraham Moshe of Peshvorsk was due to arrive.

Rebbe Avraham was very righteous and spent many hours alone and in seclusion dealing with his own *avodat Hashem*. For that reason, not many merited being able to see him, let alone speak with him. Subsequently, with his visit to Torana, only a few individuals were allowed to enter the home where Rebbe Avraham stayed.

The rest of the Torana residents, who were overjoyed about their chances to see Rebbe Avraham, waited outside in the event that they could catch a small glimpse of the *tzadik*.

Torana during the evening was typically full of noise and commotion. However, with Rebbe Avraham in the town, everyone was home early, trying to sleep for the chance to see Rebbe Avraham in the early morning hours on his way to the *mikve*.

Young Tzvi Hersh HaCohen was also waiting for his opportunity to glance at the *tzaddik*. In addition to his

anticipation, Tzvi also heard rumors that a special *segula* is attributed to Rebbe Avraham... Whoever enters the *mikve* first, right after Rebbe Avraham, will merit heightened levels of *kedusha*. Tzvi then put all of his thoughts and efforts into being the first tomorrow morning.

In the morning, Tzvi Hersh got up long before sunrise and made his way to the *mikve*, which was still empty. When he got there, he lay beneath one of the benches and hid under a pile of towels. He stayed like this, waiting for the moment that the *tzaddik* would come.

The time of Rebbe Avraham's arrival at the *mikveh* was approaching, and the streets were already filled with people waiting for the chance at a mere glimpse of him. When the time arrived, and Rebbe Avraham departed the home that he was staying at, all the people that had gathered to see him fell silent and stood in awe at the sight of the *tzaddik*. Rebbe Avraham humbly made his way to the *mikve* while his two assistants walked by his sides, making sure no one got

near him and interrupted him during his early morning preparations.

Before his arrival at the *mikve*, one of Rebbe Avraham's assistants made his way in to ensure that the *mikve* was clear of all people. Rebbe Avraham arrived, and even his assistants left, leaving Rebbe Avraham all alone in the *mikve*. The only noise heard outside of the *mikve* was the faint sound of Rebbe Avraham continuing his pre-prayer preparations.

When Rebbe Avraham finished immersing in the *mikve* and made his way outside, young Tzvi quickly jumped into the *mikve* that the *tzaddik* just used. Almost instantly, with his ascending from the water, Tzvi Hersh felt an incredible sensation that he'd never experienced before.

Suddenly, he had great awareness and closeness to Hashem that wasn't explainable on any level. Tzvi then made his way from the *mikve* to the *Beit Haknesset* to pray *Shacharit*. His prayer, too, was different from any other prayer that he had prayed up to date. A prayer

of tremendous consciousness, nearness, boundless enthusiasm, and profound sensation. All his bones were burning with passion. He felt as if his soul was leaving his body with every word that he uttered.

After the *tefilla*, he felt an immense craving to learn Torah, as if the old *gemarot* on the shelves were calling him, asking him to absorb every word written on their pages.

After hours of sitting and learning, it took Tzvi almost all his might to separate himself from the books and head out to the tailor's store. When he got there, the tailor immediately noticed something different about Tzvi. He asked him, "How are you, little Tzvi?" "I'm great!" answered Tzvi, "I've also decided to leave my career as a tailor and to dedicate myself to learning Torah and to *avodat Hashem*."

The tailor tried everything to convince Tzvi Hersh to change his decision and that he was still immature and didn't know what

was best for himself. However, Tzvi stood his ground, thanked the tailor for the last five years, and went off on his way.

Starting his journey to the unknown, not even knowing where to go, Tzvi went off, allowing his feet to take him to wherever they decided. Slowly, Tzvi traveled from city to city and from town to town until he reached the city of Pristiq.

During that time, the *tzaddik* Rebbe Menachem Mendel had still resided in Pristik (before moving to Rimenov, where he quickly became known as Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Romanov). When Tzvi heard that Rebbe Menachem

Mendel lived there, he ran to his home to see if he could find work as an aide in his house.

After accepting him, Tzvi quickly found his hearts love in Torah, *tefilla*, and *avodat Hashem*, rapidly making his way up until he eventually took the chair of Rebbe Menachem Mendel after his passing and became known to all as Rebbe Tzvi Hersch HaCohen of Riminov, whom even *gedolei hador* came from far and wide to be near him.

That was the strength of the *tzaddik* Rebbe Avraham Moshe of Peshvorsk...

The Transformation

Already from his youth,² Itzchak Shlomo Shor labored tirelessly night and day learning Torah with no rest.

One year, Itzchak felt that he needed a break and to rest a little. His parents sent him to rest in a small inn in a nearby town. When

he got there, he met the owner of the inn, and they started to conversate. Itzchak Shlomo quickly uncovered that the inn owner was a very honest man with a heart of gold. Throughout the week that Itzchak Shlomo stayed at the inn, every time he and the owner met, they

picked up their conversation from where they had left off.

Friday rapidly approached, and the sun had already started to set. On his way to *Kabbalat Shabbat*, Itzchak Shlomo passed the *mikve* and noted the owner of the inn entering the *mikve*. When the inn owner got out of the *mikve*, Itzchak Shlomo immediately noticed that he was completely changed. He had risen in stature, and his face was shining like the sun...

This is how Rebbe Itzchak Shlomo himself told the story to his disciples...

When he put on his Shabbat clothes, he transformed completely. I saw him go from ordinary and simple to great and holy. The entire Shabbat, I was frightened to talk to him!

After Shabbat, the inn's owner made *havdala* and returned to his previous state of a simple and humble man. Itzchak Shlomo decided to stay for another week to see what would happen the following Shabbat...

The following *erev* Shabbat, Itzchak Shlomo once again witnessed

the occurrence with the owner of the inn. After Shabbat, Itzchak decided to confront the owner and ask him what was happening.

The owner of the inn told him the following story...

"A couple of years ago, I made a livelihood by selling cattle. One day I was fortunate enough to sell a couple of herds of cattle at the annual flea market in Chernovitz, and I made a large sum of money.

When Friday approached, I didn't know where to put all the money I made, and I ended up going to the holy Rebbe Chaim of Chernovitz to ask him if I could keep all the money with him until after Shabbat. When I came to him, he was very occupied with other affairs. However, he agreed and put the money in his drawer...

Shabbat passed, and on Sunday, I came to him and requested my money. When Rebbe Chaim opened the drawer, he instantly noticed that the money was stolen and passed out...

Immediately, everyone ran to him and tried to help him gain

consciousness. However, no one succeeded... I guess he knew that he didn't have enough money to pay me back and feared *chilul Hashem* and that's why he fainted...

They continued all attempts to help him gain consciousness, but nothing worked. Rebbe Chaim remained lying on the floor, turning more and more white. I suddenly approached him and screamed without any warning, "Rebbe, I forgive you!" Only then were they able to help him regain consciousness...

After Rebbe Chaim started to come back to himself, he called me over and said, "I very much feared from *chilul Hashem*

and almost passed away, and you revived me. Therefore, I would like to "revive" you. From now, every Shabbat, you'll merit to feel the Shabbat how I feel it!

And since then, every Shabbat, I merit a great sensation and tremendous light from another world that makes my soul filled with indescribable pleasure and bliss."

This week we will learn that Hashem gives a certain strength to *tzaddikim* to change the very nature of the world, "To make a weight for the wind" (Iyov 28:25)...

However, before explaining, we'll first need to understand the simple verses...

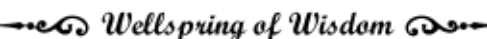
Time To Face The Truth

We found the following story in the writings of Rebbe Itzhak Rokovsky (Avitzedek)...³

It was presumed that it would be a difficult day like the days before. However,

something which couldn't have been anticipated happened...

Unexpectedly screams tore through the air that affirmed something distressing was happening. The listener neared,



and suddenly he saw something that his eyes couldn't bear. Forms of torture that only the vilest of all people could conceive.

He witnessed mothers screaming in horror as they pulled at their hair, watching their newborn infants being torn from their arms and put into walls to be used as bricks for new buildings...

An enslaved man eventually becomes bare of all. He becomes worthless, lacking all self-worth, pride, and dignity - hell on earth, terrible cruelty with contempt and aversion to the human race.

Moshe Rabbeinu, who had only just begun his leadership of Am Israel, didn't have the strength to face this disturbing image. He turned to Hashem, puzzled and confused, and asked, "Why?"

Hashem calmly answered him, "It's known only to me that these infants are wicked and that this is their *tikkun* (rectification)." However, Moshe Rabbeinu wasn't able to cope with this answer...

Hashem noticed this and continued, "Moshe, you can take

one of the babies out of the building, and all will be proven."

Moshe took one of the newborns out of the building, revived him, called him Micha, and worried that he would always stay by his side...

The hour that Am Israel left Egypt, Moshe Rabbeinu went to the Nile river and threw into it a piece of metal with the words 'עלה שור' (arise ox) engraved into it. As soon as the strip of metal touched the water, the coffin of Yosef HaTzaddik rose to the top of the river.

Moshe took Yosef's coffin, and Micha took the piece of metal...

During *kriyat yam suf* (the splitting of the sea), Micha crossed like everyone else. However, he held a statue of *Avodah Zara* (idol worship) the entire time...

A couple of weeks after, while Moshe Rabbeinu was on Har Sinai, Am Israel brought Aharon HaKohen gold for him to make them a new god. When Aharon took the gold and threw it into the fire, Micha threw in the strip of metal that he stole from Moshe, and from that came the golden calf!

An outcome of Moshe Rabbeinu's lack of *emuna* in the divine providence of Hashem brought about the sin of the golden calf...

However, Moshe Rabbeinu wasn't held into account for this... This was his first encounter with suffering, and he still hadn't seen the ways of Hashem. His first encounter with evil, something which has no explanation in man's intellect, and nevertheless demands an answer, yet all are lacking.

Hashem's will was for suffering to be revealed to Moshe at the beginning of his role as the

leader of Am Israel to instill in him the understanding that no matter how close he will get, Hashem's ways will always be hidden from man...

Years passed, and Hashem revealed His ways to Moshe Rabbeinu. With the desire that others will also be able to understand Hashem's hidden ways, to some extent, Moshe Rabbeinu wrote the book of Iyov, where he reveals Hashem's divine providence in the world and explains that nothing that happens to us is by chance or accidental. Rather everything is overseen by Hashem,⁴ who maintains His world with precision and justice.

Wellspring of Wisdom

4. Once, while Rabbi Mordechai Progmansky zt"l was traveling by train, he noticed that on the bench next to him sat a Jew who was a *shochet* and a *mohel*.

The two began to talk, and soon a deep conversation developed between them, to the extent that they didn't realize that they had missed the stop at their destination. Only in the middle of their conversation did the butcher look out the window and realize what had happened.

It was Friday, and there was no return train that day. It soon became clear to him and to Rabbi Mordechai that they

would have to stay for Shabbat in the place where they had arrived.

The butcher began to worry, "What will happen? Where are we going to stay?" Rabbi Mordechai reassured him, "A Jew never gets lost along the way! The place that he arrives is divine providence!"

When the train arrived at the next station, they decided to get off even though they weren't familiar with the place. It soon became apparent that only gentiles lived in that town, and there were no Jews there at all. The butcher, who relied on the *bitachon* (confidence in Hashem) of Rabbi

To Make a Weight for the Wind

It's written in the book of Iyov, "Elokim understood its way, and He knew its place. For He looks to the ends of the earth, and He sees under all the heavens. To make a weight for the wind, and He meted out the water with a measure" (Iyov 28, 23-25).

The Metzudat David explains, "To make a weight for the wind" - To send the wind by measure to every place as needed."

Moshe Rabbeinu (who wrote *Sefer Iyov*) reveals to us the great providence of Hashem in the world, that even the wind, how long they will blow, where they will blow, and how strong, are all directed by Hashem. And so, they said in the *Midrash Hagadol*,⁵ Hashem commands the wind and tells it, "Make sure not to capsize the ships, not to overturn the trees, and not to tear down the homes," for if the winds did not blow by measure, they would destroy the world...

Wellspring of Wisdom

Mordechai, remained silent, while Rabbi Mordechai quickly stopped everyone that passed and inquired if there were any Jews living in the town.

When they learned of one single Jew living there, they immediately hurried to his house and knocked on the door. When he opened the door and saw two Jews standing there, a sight which he never had never seen in his life, he burst into tears.

After they helped him calm down, the Jew happily invited them to enter his home and explained to them why he was so filled with emotion at the sight of them. He explained, "A week ago, my son was born and today is the eighth day. All day

I stood and prayed to Hashem to send me a *mohel* so that I could circumcise my son, and it looks as if you two have been sent from Hashem to fulfill my prayers!"

Of course, with plenty of *mazal tov* and happiness, the *mohel* circumcised the newborn boy, and Rabbi Mordechai even sat *sandak* for the child.

After Shabbat, when Rabbi Mordechai and the *mohel* were on their way to the train station, Rabbi Mordechai turned to the *mohel* and said, "Now you see, a Jew never gets lost along the way!"

- Ayin Od Milvado (Vol. 4, p. 353).

5. Bereshit 42:1.

Rebbe Itzhak Isaac Yehuda Yechiel of Kamarna wrote in his book *Netiv Mitzvotcha*,⁶

“**The** truth is that there isn’t any movement, even the smallest, that isn’t the product of the want and will of Hashem, who observes the smallest of every action taken in the world. There is nothing

that is by chance, not even the birds flying overhead. He gives life to everything, gives quantity and measure to all. He decided how heavy rocks and sand would be, how light fire and wind would be...”

However, in the *Midrash*, there’s an even deeper meaning...

Blessed are You the One that Gives Knowledge

“**To** make weight for the wind” – Rabbi Acha said, “Even *ruach HaKodesh* (a form of prophecy) that was given to the prophets was given by measure. Some prophesied a book and others two.”⁷

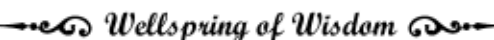
From the *Midrash*, we learn that the word wind (*Ruach*) in the verse talks about *Ruach HaKodesh* and that even this “*ruach*” is given to the prophets by measure.

First, we have to explain the concept *ruach hakodesh*...

The Zohar says,⁸ “Praiseworthy are they Israel that *Hakadosh*

Baruch Hu wanted them more than any other nation and called them *kadosh*... and *kadosh* is absolute wholeness and it is the *chochma elyona*, and from this place passes the holy oil through known trails to a place known as *bina elyona*, and from there come out springs and streams to every direction. The *chochma elyona* is called *kadosh*, and when receiving *ruach* from the *chochma elyona*, that is called obtaining *ruach hakodesh*.”

Ruach hakodesh is also called “*shefa eloki*.” Rebbe Nachman of Breslov writes in *Likutei Moharan*,⁹



6. **Netive** Mitzvotcha by Rebbe Itzhak Isaac of Komarna (*Netive Emuna*, 6:9).

7. **Vayikra** Rabbah 15:2.

8. **Acharei** Mot 60b.

“It’s written, ‘Back and front *tzartani* (You formed me)’¹⁰ (*Tzura* – “form” is the intellect). In other words, there is the intellect which a person attains by means of numerous preparations. This intellect is called ‘back.’ And there is the intellect which comes to a person without any preparation, but through *shefa Eloki* (G-dly abundance). This is called ‘front,’ the face. Now, inspiration of the heart is born out of the motion of the intellect. This is because it is the nature of motion to create heat, and according to the amount of motion of the intellect is the amount of heat created in the heart. Thus, due to *shefa Eloki*, that the intellect bestows upon a person rapidly, for

he has no need of any preparation, for as a result of this, quickly the heat of the heart rises up continuously on its own.”

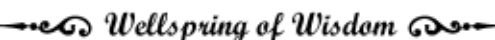
On this, Rebbe Eliezer Shlomo Schick explained... *Ruach HaKodesh* is *shefa Eloki* (blessing) that is poured down on a person from above, which shines on them Hashem’s light without any barriers until they become completely nullified to Hashem and void of existence. Then they’re given *sechel elyon* (upper intelligence), which an outcome is that they feel no existence other than that of Hashem.

Who Runs The World

The Mishna says...¹¹ “The world was created with ten utterances. What does this come to teach us? Certainly, it could have been created with a single utterance? Rather, this teaches us that the wicked will be accountable for destroying a

world created with ten utterances, and the righteous will be rewarded for sustaining a world created with ten utterances.”

Rebbe Shlomo of Radamask zt”l¹² explained that the meaning of the *Mishna* is that Hashem gave charge of the entire world



9. Torah 21.

10. Tehillim 139:5.

11. Pirkei Avot 5:1.

12. Tifferet Shlomo (Shemot).

into the hands of *tzaddikim*¹³ so that they would be in control...

Also, the power “To make a weight for the wind” was given in

Wellspring of Wisdom

13. Rebbe Israel Friedman from the city of Ruzchin had five sons and one daughter. His daughter was the Rabbanit Gitla, who was married to Rebbe Yosef Manzan of Barditshov. One day her brother, Rebbe Menachem Nachum, came to visit her, and in their conversation, he said to her, “Do you know what righteous brothers we have? Let me tell you!”

Rebbe Avraham Yaakov - He wants and can.

Rebbe Dov Ber - He can and doesn't want to.

Rebbe David Moshe - When he takes the *Tehillim* in his hands and reads it with as much *kavana* as he can, Hashem hands the world over to him and says, “Please, my son, run the world.” However, due to his immense humility, he immediately returns the world to Hashem and gives up the opportunity given to him.

Rebbe Mordechai Shruga - He, with the saying of “*Shema Israel*” can resurrect the dead.

Rabbanit Gitla listened and asked, “My dear brother, and what about you?”

However, he humbly responded, “It's enough that I have such extraordinary brothers...”

When this story was related to Rebbe Israel of Hosiatin, he responded, “Indeed, my father, Rebbe Mordechai Shruga, had the power to resurrect the dead, and I'll tell you a story of one of those experiences...”

In our city, Hosiatin, they once dug a well in the backyard of my father's home. When they finished digging far into the ground and finished building the structure around the well, one of the workers repelled into the well to do a final check.

In the same second that the worker began to repel into the well, the structure over the well collapsed and fell onto the worker sending him immediately to the bottom of the well. After much effort, they succeeded in bringing him out.

However, the worker was lifeless.

With everyone standing around, not knowing what to do, they turned to my father.

My father stood there perplexed and said, “Is it possible that someone doing a *mitzvah* so great as providing water for people to survive, that something so harsh can happen to them simultaneously?”

Rebbe Israel of Hosiatin stopped his story, sat in silence, and then concluded, “The man then came back to life.”

the hands of *tzaddikim*, and this is the secret of *semicha* (ordination).

Rebbe Yosef Mayer of Safinka¹⁴ wrote that it's known that when a *tzaddik* gives *semicha* to his *talmid* (student), as long as the student has already earned *nefesh* and *ruach*, he is then given *neshama*. Like what is said about Yehoshua, "A man that has *ruach* in him" (Bamidbar 27:18), that by his learning of Torah and completion of mitzvot, he merited earning the level of *ruach*. Then, when Moshe gave him *semicha*, he earned the level of *neshama*.¹⁵ In this fashion, every Rabbi and *tzaddik* weighs and considers which *neshama* is fitting and suitable for his *talmid*.

We have found that there are three forms of performing *semicha*...

1. By placing his hand on the head of the *talmid*. Like what Moshe did to Yehoshua, "Moshe did as Hashem had commanded him, and he took Yehoshua and presented him before Elazar HaKohen and before the entire congregation and placed his hands upon him and commanded him, in accordance with what Hashem had spoken to Moshe" (Bamidbar 27:22-23).

2. By speaking. Like what is written in the *Gemara* (Sanhedrin 13b) that it isn't necessary to perform *semicha* only by placing a hand on the head, rather it can also be performed by speaking and announcing to him that he has now been given *semicha*.

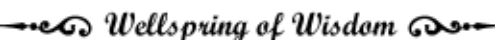
3. By writing. And this is what we'll learn about in our *parasha*...

These are the Descendants of Amram

The Period: Exile in Egypt.

The whole Nation of Israel is concentrated within the borders of Egypt. At the time, there was one

man within Am Israel who was very distinguished, and his name was Amram, the son of Kahat, the son of Levi, the son of Yaakov Avinu.



14. Imrei Yosef (Pinchas).

15. There are five "levels" of the soul. Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya, Yechida...

Amram married Yocheved, the daughter of Levi. After getting married, they gave birth to a daughter and named her Miriam, which means bitter (from the root *mar* meaning bitter), because, during that time, Am Israel heavily felt the bitterness of the *galut* (exile).

After three years, they gave birth to a son and named him Aharon, which means to throw, because the Egyptians were in the future going to spill the blood of Am Israel and throw them to the ground.

During that time, Hashem revealed himself to Amram and commanded him two mitzvot, marriage and divorce.

One day the Egyptians decided to make a law that all the newborn

baby boys must be thrown into the Nile River. When Amram heard this, he decided to divorce his wife Yocheved and then married a different woman and had two sons with her, Eldad and Mayday.

More than two years passed, and Amram's daughter Miriam came to him and told him that she had prophesied that the person who would save Am Israel and take them out of Egypt would be born from her mother. When Amram heard that the time had come, he went and remarried Yocheved, and they gave birth to Moshe Rabbeinu.

When Moshe was born, the entire house filled with light, and it was clear that he was going to be the redeemer of Am Israel...

Bitul

Altogether, Amram had four sons and one daughter. Miriam, Aharon, and Moshe from Yocheved. Eldad and Maydad from his second wife.

And we found that everyone excelled in the trait of humility. Aaron and Miriam were prophets

already from their childhood, and it's impossible to gain prophecy unless you have humility, as is stated in the Tanya, "For the holy side is nothing but the indwelling and extension of the holiness of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and He dwells only on such a thing that

nullifies itself completely to Him...”¹⁶

Also, Eldad and Maydad had a great deal of humility, as we’ll learn later in the parasha...

And, of course, we don’t need to elaborate on the magnitude of Moshe Rabbeinu’s humility. The end of our parasha can attest to this, in which it’s said, “And the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth” (Bamidbar 12:3).

And in a *shiur* given by HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l, he said the following...¹⁷

Moshe was given the greatest degree of prophecy, as stated in our parasha, “My servant Moshe, he is the most faithful throughout my house; Mouth to mouth I will speak with him, in a vision and not in riddles, and he beholds the image of Hashem” (Bamidbar 12:7-8).

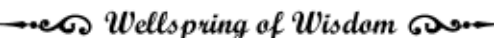
The reason for this is because the difference in the level of

prophecy attained depends on the extent of the prophet’s *bitul* (the nullification of oneself) before Hashem, and the more the prophet was nullified to Hashem, the more Hashem would instill the spirit of prophecy on him.

Moshe, who completely nullified himself and was more humble than anyone in the world, was therefore awarded the greatest degree of prophecy.

Even in relation to the *Avot* (forefathers), Moshe was more nullified to Hashem, for Avraham Avinu said, “I am but dust and ash” (Bereshit 18:27), and Yaakov Avinu said, “I am unworthy” (Bereshit 32:11), and David HaMelech said, “I am a worm and not a man” (Tehilim 22:7).

However, Moshe Rabbeinu said, “For what are we” (Shemot 16:7), that is, I am nothing, like air which has no physical existence, and therefore Moshe merited being the father of the prophets.



16. Tanya (Ch. 6).

17. **Imrei** Noam (Parashat Behaalotecha, Maamar 11).

As with the prophets, the greater the amount of nullification, the greater his prophecy was, so is it regarding the Rabbis and *tzaddikim* in each generation. Their status is measured by the amount of *bitul* they have before Hashem, and the greater the amount of *bitul* that they have, the greater the influence they receive from Hashem.

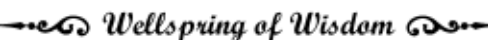
An excellent example of this can be found in the words of the *Gemara* (Eruvin 13b), “After three years of disagreements in *halacha* between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel, a Bat Kol came out and announced, “Both these and these are words of *Elokim Chaim*, and the *halacha* is as Beit Hillel.” The reason that the *halacha* was designated as that of Beit Hillel is because they nullified themselves more and were more humble than Beit Shammai.

In other words, even though both Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel were both *Tannaim kedoshim* (holy) and *geonim* (geniuses), nevertheless,

when they sat in heaven to discuss like who the *halacha* would be, they examined the amount of *bitul* and humility that each of them had, and when they found that Beit Hillel were more humble and had more *bitul*, they immediately decided that *halacha* would be like them for generations to come.

And of course, the only one who can measure the amount of *bitul* that each and everyone has in his heart is only Hashem. Like-so, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said,¹⁸ “I have seen those who have truly attained high levels, and they are few,” for only a few have true and absolute *bitul* before Hashem.

Yet, just as it’s necessary to nullify yourself before Hashem, so too must you nullify yourself before others. For that reason, *chazal*¹⁹ taught us that on the day of judgment, every person will be asked, “Did you allow your friend to rule over you?” Meaning, did you allow yourself to become nullified next to your friend.



18. Sukkah 45b.

19. **Reshit** Chochmah (Shar HaYirah, Ch. 12).

Sometimes two people sit down to study Torah together, and when one of them says a *svara* (insight), the other immediately tells him, “Besides what you said, you have to say so and so.” In other words, he’s telling him, “What you said doesn’t even seem right to me.” That isn’t the right way to study the Torah. You should be telling one another, “In addition to what you said, you can also say so and so.” Show humility before your friend. Allow them to voice their opinion and also be right.

This is actually the main difference between *Mussar* and *Chassidut*.

The main principle of *Mussar* is to ensure your personal completeness and *tikkun*, while the teachings of *Chassidut* ensure the completeness of others. *Chassidut* doesn’t associate at all with the

person himself because, as far as it’s concerned, they should feel like they don’t exist at all, and their main focus should be on others, how to help them, and benefit them, and of course never to upset them.

According to the teachings of *Chassidut*, every individual came down to this world, not for themselves but rather to benefit others. As the Baal Shem Tov said,²⁰ “A soul descends into this world and lives for seventy, eighty years, in order to do one Jew a favor...”

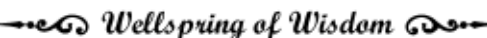
Each and every one of us must endeavor to provide help to everyone who comes to us and asks for our help. We must always think, “What can I do for others around me? How can I take care of and help them?” That’s our entire purpose in this world.

And You Gathered the Elders of the Nation

The exile in Egypt was coming to an end...

Moshe Rabbeinu was herding the flock of his father-in-law in

Midyan when suddenly Hashem revealed Himself and commanded Moshe to go and redeem Am Israel from the exile in Egypt.



Moshe hears what is spoken to him and replies, “I fear that Am Israel won’t listen to me.” Hashem continues and tells him that He will give him three signs with which he will prove to Am Israel that he is the one that shall take them out of Egypt...

1. Your staff will turn into a snake when thrown onto the ground.
2. When you cover your hand with your sleeve and then reveal it, it will be white as snow.
3. After you shall speak with Paraoh, all the water in Egypt will turn to blood.

Hashem then commands Moshe... When you get to Egypt, gather all the elders and show them the three signs which I have given you and speak to them these three words, *Pakod Pakadeti Etchem* (פָּקֹד פִּקַּדְתִּי אֶתְכֶם).²¹

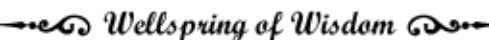
Moshe and Aharon²² came to the elders and gave them the signs. When the elders saw the signs, they decided to go to the oldest member

of Am Israel, Sarah, the daughter of Asher (the son of Yaakov Avinu), and ask her if the signs meant anything and if they should believe them.

However, when they showed her the signs, she told them that they were nothing and not to believe them. They then told her that Moshe said to them, “*Pakod Pakadeti Etchem*.” When Sarah heard this, she immediately told them that this was the person that would redeem Am Israel and to believe everything that Moshe said !

Moshe then asked all the elders to escort him to Paraoh. When Am Israel saw the amount of honor that Moshe gave to the elders, they were astounded by his humility.

Moshe, Aharon, and all of the elders continued until they reached the palace of Paraoh. When they arrived at the palace, suddenly, the elders became scared to enter and appear before Paraoh and decided to return to their homes... (For this reason, when Am Israel received the



21. “I have remembered you.”

22. **Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer** (Ch. 48).

Torah, the elders weren't invited to go up to the mountain with Moshe).

As everyone knows, Paraoth refused to allow Am Israel to leave

Egypt, and in exchange for refusing, he received ten plagues, and only when the ten plagues finished did Am Israel leave Egypt.

Wandering in the Desert

On the fifteenth of *Nissan* of the year 2448, Am Israel left Egypt and traveled to the Sinai desert. There, they stayed for twelve months and twenty days.

On the 20th of *Iyar*, in the second year since leaving Egypt, Am Israel was still wandering in the desert, and Hashem started to hurry them so that they would quickly enter *Eretz* Israel.

Then suddenly! "The people took to complaining bitterly before Hashem and Hashem heard and was angered, and the fire of Hashem broke out against them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp" (Bamidbar 11:1)...

Am Israel complained that Hashem was making them travel already for three days straight without any stops. Hashem was angered at their complaints because His whole intention was to quickly

reward them with entering *Eretz* Israel without further waiting. However, they didn't attempt to understand His intention and the goodness He was doing with them and instead took to complaining.

Rashi wrote²³ that an outcome of their complaints was that all of the elders passed away...

Moshe Rabbeinu quickly took to *tefilla* (prayer) before Hashem to attempt to save the situation... And he succeeded. However...

Am Israel was still recuperating from the passing of the elders, and suddenly the *erev rav* (Egyptian converts) continued to complain... "The multitude among them began to have strong cravings. Then Bnei Israel once again began to cry, and they said, "Who will feed us meat? We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt free of charge, the

Parashat Behaalotecha - The Self-Sacrifice of Moshe Rabbeinu

cucumbers, the watermelons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now, our bodies are dried out, for there is nothing at all but the *mann*" (Bamidbar 11:4-6).

The *erev rav* complained that all they were eating was the *mann* that Hashem was giving them, and they craved other foods instead. This complaint was, however, a complete lie, for *chazal*²⁴ teach us that when Am Israel ate the *mann*, they tasted whatever food they desired, and if

so, there was no food in the world that was omitted from them.

Chazal add²⁵ that the *mann* was a great miracle, for when someone ate the *mann*, it would be completely digested and absorbed into the body, and then there would be no need to eliminate waste from the body. Could there be a better food than this anywhere in the world? Rather this is the way of complainers. No matter how much good they have, they'll always find on what to complain...

The Self-Sacrifice of Moshe Rabbeinu

Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe Rabbeinu and told him, "I will punish Am Israel..."

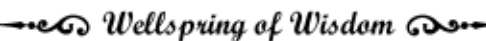
In response, Moshe Rabbeinu said, "If this is what You will do to me; If I have found favor in Your eyes, please kill me, so that I not see my misfortune."

In other words, Moshe Rabbeinu was saying, "I disagree with You.

However, if You still want to punish them, then punish me first!"

And since Moshe Rabbeinu sacrificed himself once again for Am Israel (The first time being on Har Sinai),²⁶ he received a great present from Hashem...

However, before we tell you about Moshe Rabbeinu's present, we'll first elaborate...



24. **Shemot** Rabba 25:3.

25. Yoma 75b.

26. **This** is what Moshe said on Har Sinai, "And now, if You forgive their sin, but if not, erase me now from Your book, which You have written" (Shemot 32:32).

Moshe Rabbeinu – The Reliable Shepherd

In the Zohar, Moshe Rabbeinu is called by the name רעיא מהימנא, the reliable shepherd (הרועה הנאמן). In the books of Chabad,²⁷ they explain the concept of “shepherd” that there’s a spark of the soul of Moshe Rabbeinu in every Jew, and that spark is what gives strength to the souls of Am Israel. From the strength of the soul of Moshe Rabbeinu, every Jew is given the strength of “self-sacrifice” for another Jew...

During the time of the civil war in Poland against the Russian government, the Poland army decided to initiate pogroms against the Jews living in their cities. In order to drastically weaken the morale of the Jews, they decided to hang the most important person in the town, Rebbe Shimon.

To enforce their will of hanging Rebbe Shimon, they decided to report him to the government as a spy of Russia. During the court

trial, they brought “witnesses” who “saw” Rebbe Shimon pass state secrets to the Russian government.

His sentence was clear, death by hanging...

The Jewish citizens tried everything in order to abolish the decree, but to no avail. With the Polish government preparing the city square for the hanging, a tremendous feeling of helplessness descended on the Jews. When they realized that there was nothing more that they could do, they understood that only one more option was left, to enter the *Beit Midrash* and pray before Hashem and hope for a miracle.

While all the townspeople were crying before Hashem in the *Beit Midrash*, Nachum, the kindergarten teacher, suddenly burst in. “Dear neighbors!” cried out Nachum, “They’re getting reading to hang Rebbe Shimon! We have to save him!”

Nachum's words made a strong impression on all those that were present. However, with bitterness and despair in their voices, they only reassured Nachum that there was nothing that they could do other than pray for a miracle. Nachum, who wasn't surprised by their answer, didn't waste any time. Instead, he ran to the city square where Rebbe Shimon was already standing with the rope tied around his neck and screamed, "You took the wrong man ! I am the Russian spy ! This man is innocent. I'm the one you need to hang !"

The executioners looked at Nachum as if he was crazy and told him to go away ! "We're busy !" they said.

Nachum didn't give up. He pushed with all his strength and made it all the way to where Rebbe Shimon was standing. He removed the robe from Rebbe

Shimon and placed it on himself, all while shouting, "I am the spy. I should be hung !"

The two executioners, with all their might, removed the rope from Nachum and started to mercilessly beat him. However, Nachum didn't give up. He tried fighting back with all his strength. While the entire crowd was watching the strange sight, a heart-stopping scream was suddenly heard.

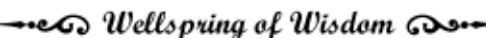
"The Russians ! The Russians are coming !" Immediately the entire crowd and all the Polish citizens began to flee, leaving the two Jews, Rebbe Shimon and Nachum, all alone in the middle of the square, standing stunned, not believing that they were alive.²⁸

This story is just a typical example of the devotion, unity, and self-sacrifice of the Jews to each other in those days.

The Source of Prophecy

Moshe Rabbeinu turned to Hashem and said, "I'm not

willing to live without Am Israel ! If it's Your will to



punish them, then punish me first.”

In response, Hashem turns to Moshe and says, “Gather Me seventy of Israel’s elders of whom you know them as elders and officers of the people, and bring them to the Tent of Meeting and let them take their place there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will draw upon the spirit that is on you and bestow it upon them” (Bamidbar 11:16-17).

In a discourse given by Rebbe Shmuel Yehuda Mintz, he said the following...²⁹

“**Immediately** after Moshe Rabbeinu defended Am Israel, Hashem made him the source of all prophesy. All the prophets that followed Moshe, whether in his generation or all of the generations that followed, everyone received

their source of prophecy from Moshe Rabbeinu and were like branches that draw from the roots.”

Accordingly, Onkelos translated ואצלתי (I will draw) to וארבי (I will disperse), for within the prophecies of Moshe Rabbeinu are all the prophecies of all the prophets, and they’re just dispersed to the other prophets from him.

As a result of Moshe Rabbeinu’s self-sacrifice for Am Israel, he merited being the source of prophecy for all generations !

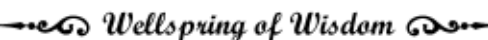
Hashem continues and tells Moshe, “The original elders have died, and now I will gather from all the tribes of Israel seventy elders, and I will disperse your spirit upon them, and they will help you with the burden of the nation !”

Now all that’s left is to gather seventy elders...

And I Will Disperse onto the Seventy Elders

The Gemara says³⁰ that while Hashem instructed Moshe to

gather Him seventy elders from the tribes of Am Israel, Moshe said



29. Drushot MaHari Mintz (9).

30. Sanhedrin 17a.

to himself, “How will I do that ? If I take six men from each tribe, there will be seventy-two, and if I take five from each tribe, there will be only sixty. Also, if I take six from ten tribes and five from two tribes, even though there will be exactly seventy, there will also be jealousy between the tribes...”

What did Moshe Rabbeinu do? He took seventy-two parchments, and on seventy, he wrote the word “elder” and two he left blank. He then took six elders from every tribe,

seventy-two elders, and told them to draw from the lottery.

The two tribes that received only five elders were the tribe of Levi and the tribe of Yissachar.

Yet, many *Gedolei Israel* asked why Moshe Rabbeinu did the lottery in this way. There were for sure easier ways ? !³¹ We found that Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azoulay wrote³² that Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to give *semicha* to the elders. He then wrote them the word “elder,” and by the power of his writing, they received *semicha* !

Segula For All Generations

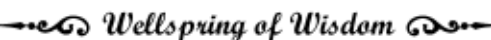
In the Zohar, the following story is told...³³

Rebbe Elazar, the son of Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, walked along the way, and on his way, he met an old man who was walking accompanied by a child, and he too decided to accompany them.

After some time of walking, they reached a river that flowed

fiercely. Rabbi Elazar turned to the old man and said, “There’s a river flowing here. If you want, I’ll put you and the child on my shoulders and bring you to the other side of the river.”

The old man immediately denied, “You’re one of *gedolei Israel* ! I can’t allow you to carry us to the other side !” he said. Rebbe



Wellspring of Wisdom

31. See Imrei Pinchas by Rabbi Pinchas Freidman (Behaalotecha, 303).

32. Marit HaAyin (Sanhedrin 17a).

33. Zohar Chadash (Lech Lecha 32a).

Elazar then replied, “The holy Torah is called a cure and a medicine, like what’s written, “It’ll be a cure for your body, a medicine for your bones” (Proverbs 3:8). I’ve drunk so much of the Torah that my strength is immense and great...

Rebbe Elazar then loaded them both on his back, one on each shoulder, and moved them across the river. After they crossed the river, they continued to talk, and Rebbe Elazar discovered that this old man was Eliyahu Hanavi !

As time went on, and Rebbe Elazar met with his father Rebbe Shimon, he turned to him and told him, “Lately I have many disturbances preventing me from learning Torah, personal difficulties and many people that bother me, please father ask Eliyahu Hanavi to pray for me that I will stay strong against all of these disturbances.

Rebbe Shimon replied, “I have better advice for you, and that is, whenever you feel down and weak, mention the names of the seventy elders whom the *ruach* of Moshe rested on them.”

And these are the names of the seventy elders...

From the tribe of Reuven: Chanoch, Krammi, Pelo, Eliav, Nemuel, Zechor.

From the tribe of Shimon: Yamin, Yachin, Ohhad, Tzochar, Shaul, Namri.

From the tribe of Levi: Amram, Chananya, Natanel, Katu ben Sitri, Moshe Rabbeinu.

From the tribe of Yehuda: Zerach, Dan, Yonadav, Betzalel, Shoftaya, Nachshon.

From the tribe of Yissachar: Azzu, Yoel, Paltiel, Atniel, Chagit.

From the tribe of Zebulun: Sered, Alon, Sodi, Ohaliav, Elihu, Negishi.

From the tribe of Binyamin: Snoav, Kislon, Elidad, Achitov, Achimelech, Matniah.

From the tribe of Ephraim: Yair, Yeazar, Malkiel, Adoniram, Achiram, Zechut.

From the tribe of Dan: Gadlia, Yoel, Achinoam, Achiezer, Daniel, Zesha.

Parashat Behaalotecha - The Humility of Eldad and Mayday

From the tribe of Naftali: Elyochanan, Eliakim, Elishamah, Sumchus, Zvedi, Yehonatan.

From the tribe of Gad: Chagi, Zrachi, Shoni, Kani, Zavdiyahu, Matityahu.

From the tribe of Asher: Peshur, Shlomi, Shalom, Shmuel, Shachniyahu, Achziyahu.

And in addition to these seventy elders, there were two more...

The Humility of Eldad and Mayday

The *Gemara*³⁴ continues and says that when Moshe went to gather from each tribe six elders, he approached Eldad and Mayday (his brothers from his father) and told them, “I’m gathering seventy-two elders, and from them, seventy will be chosen, and you two have been chosen to be part of the seventy-two.”

Eldad and Maydad, however, responded to Moshe and said, “We aren’t worthy of this title. We’ll stay here with the rest of the people.” Their humbleness was real... And from their humility, they merited what the other seventy elders didn’t merit. The seventy received prophecy and then stopped. However, Eldad and Maydad received prophecy that didn’t stop.

They received three prophecies...

The first was that Moshe would pass away and that Yehoshua would bring Am Israel into Eretz Israel. The second was that Hashem would send Am Israel *slav* to eat. The third was the downfall of Gog Magog.

On the seventh of Adar of the year 2488, Moshe Rabbeinu passed away.

Following this, the period of the judges started. After the judges were the prophets. After the prophets were the members of the *Knesset Hagdola*, followed by the *Tannaim*. Following them was the period of the *Amoraim*, and then the *Svoraim*, and the *Geonim*. Lastly was the periods of the *Poskim* that we’re accustomed to divide into two, the *Rishonim* and the *Acharonim*.

Then began the period of *Chassidut* and *Mussar*...

What all these generations have in common is that the Torah has always gone from Rabbi to student. Every Rabbi would influence his

disciples from himself, which this itself is the matter of ordination, *smicha*, and the disciple, with the influence and strength of his Rabbi, would continue the passing of the Torah...

Choose for Yourself a Rabbi

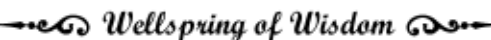
HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l said the following...³⁵

At the beginning of parashat Behaalotecha, the Torah commands the lighting of the *menorah* in the *Beit Hamikdash* in a manner that all six lamps of the *menorah* would face the lamp in the middle.

The manner of this lighting alludes to the souls of Am Israel that are likened to a candle, “The candle of Hashem is the soul of man” (Proverbs 20:27). The reason for this is that just as the flame of a candle always moves upwards with the desire to cling to its source (the foundational element fire), so too does the soul of each and every Jew move upwards, out of aspiration and longing, to cling to Hashem.

Like so, do Jews move and sway as they pray, bless, or study Torah, and often do so spontaneously without noticing. Even small children naturally move when they pray, and this is because the soul within them moves out of tremendous aspiration and longing to cling to Hashem.

The six candles on the sides of the *menorah* allude to all the souls of Am Israel, and the candle in the middle of the *menorah* alludes to the *tzaddikim* that Hashem placed in each and every generation, just like what *chazal* said,³⁶ “Hakadosh Baruch Hu saw that the *tzaddikim* are few and therefore placed them throughout each and every generation.”



35. Imrei Noam (Parashat Behaalotecha, Maamar 6).

36. Yoma 38b.

Parashat Behaalotecha - The Pathway...

The Torah commands us that all six candles must face the middle candle in order to imply to us that each and every one of Am Israel, who desires his own eternal good, must attach themselves to a *tzaddik*, to take from him advice in all aspects of their life, both physical and spiritual.

Every Jew must bring unto themselves the light of the *tzaddik*. No one should go through this world, seventy, eighty years, and not know who the *tzaddik* that's supposed to guide them to the next world is.

It's unacceptable for anyone to stay without a rabbi to guide them in every area of their life. Every individual must pray non-stop and beg Hashem to send them a rabbi that will show them the right path for their own soul.

Everyone must find a rabbi that will show them their mistakes and teach them how to do *teshuva* and slowly, slowly, build themselves until they can truly serve Hashem.

Even though it may be hard being with a rabbi like this, it'll certainly be worth it once we get to *Olam Haba* and merit being close to Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom !*The Pathway...*

1. Hashem's providence over the world is hidden yet nothing that happens to us is by chance or accidental. Rather everything is overseen by Hashem, who maintains His world with precision and justice.

2. Moshe Rabbeinu revealed to us the great providence of Hashem in the world, that even the wind, how long they will blow, where they will blow, and how strong, are all directed by Hashem. There isn't any movement, even the smallest, that isn't the product of the want and will of Hashem, who

observes the smallest of every action taken in the world. There is nothing that is by chance, not even the birds flying overhead. He gives life to everything, gives quantity and measure to all. He decided how heavy rocks and sand would be, how light fire and wind would be...

3. Yet Hashem gave charge of the entire world into the hands of *tzaddikim* so that they would be in control. This week we will learn that Hashem gives a certain strength to *tzaddikim* to change

The Pathway...

the very nature of the world, “To make a weight for the wind” (Iyov 28:25)...

4. At the beginning of parashat Behaalotecha the Torah commands the lighting of the *menorah* in the *Beit Hamikdash* in a manner that all six lamps of the *menorah* would face the lamp in the middle. The manner of this lighting alludes to the souls of Am Israel that are likened to a candle, “The candle of Hashem is the soul of man” (Proverbs 20:27). The reason for this is that just as the flame of a candle always moves upwards with the desire to cling to its source (the foundational element fire), so too does the soul of each and every Jew move upwards, out of aspiration and longing, to cling to Hashem.

5. The six candles on the sides of the *menorah* allude to all the souls of Am Israel, and the candle in the middle of the *menorah* alludes to the *tzaddikim* that Hashem placed in each and every generation, just like what *chazal* said, “Hakadosh Baruch Hu saw that the *tzaddikim* are few and therefore placed them throughout each and every generation.”

6. The Torah commands us that all six candles must face the middle candle in order to imply to us that each and every one of Am Israel, who desires his own eternal good, must attach themselves to a *tzaddik*, to take from him advice in all aspects of their life, both physical and spiritual. Every Jew must bring unto

themselves the light of the *tzaddik*. No one should go through this world, seventy, eighty years, and not know who the *tzaddik* that’s supposed to guide them to the next world is.

7. It’s unacceptable for anyone to stay without a rabbi to guide them in every area of their life. Every individual must pray non-stop and beg Hashem to send them a rabbi that will show them the right path for their own soul. Everyone must find a rabbi that will show them their mistakes and teach them how to do *teshuva* and slowly, slowly, build themselves until they can truly serve Hashem. Even though it may be hard being with a rabbi like this, it’ll certainly be worth it once we get to *Olam Haba* and merit being close to Hashem.

8. So too, according to the teachings of *Chassidut*, every individual came down to this world, not for themselves but rather to benefit others. As the Baal Shem Tov said, “A soul descends into this world and lives for seventy, eighty years, in order to do one Jew a favor...” Each and every one of us must endeavor to provide help to everyone who comes to us and asks for our help. We must always think, “What can I do for others around me? How can I take care of and help them?” That’s our entire purpose in this world.



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12th of Sivan, 5782



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
Be'er Sheva	7:24 pm	8:15 pm	9:09 pm
Tel Aviv	7:26 pm	8:17 pm	9:12 pm
Haifa	7:27 pm	8:18 pm	9:13 pm
Eilat	7:21 pm	8:13 pm	9:07 pm
Jerusalem	7:29 pm	8:20 pm	9:16 pm
Jerusalem 40 min	7:06 pm		

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