

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 91

Beshalach | Serving Hashem With Our Thoughts, Speech, and Actions



MESILLOT

Pathways to the Soul

illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly parasha
by **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l**

From the weekly lectures of his son,
Rabbi Israel Abargel shlita

...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Operation - Rescue From The Abyss . . .	1
Diamond Gates	9
The Purpose Of Everything	10
Higher and Lower Recognition	12
The World's First Power Struggle	13
Twenty Generations Of Darkness	15
Our Ancestors Knew	16
The Egyptian Exile	18
Moshe Rabbeinu – The Savior	19
A Pile Of Bones	21
The Three Levels	22
Taking The Long Route	22
A Benoni	24
The Sanctity Of Thought	25
Step By Step	26
<i>The Pathway</i>	27



DONATE

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets

Publisher and Distributor of the Teachings of
Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l



500 Frank W Burr Blvd Suite 47
Teaneck, NJ 07666



(954) 800-6526



en@h-l.org.il



Hameir Laarets



www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en



HameirLaaretsEN



HaKatzir 666, Netivot, Israel



054-870-8737

Message Us to Join Our WhatsApp Groups

Parashat Beshalach

Operation - Rescue From The Abyss

Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heschel sat in the midst of his followers and began to tell...¹

In a small village lived a Jew who worked in agriculture for a living. And throughout the years, with the blessing of Hashem, he rose and ascended to extreme wealth.

To make it easier, we'll call him Yossi.

Yossi was the only Jew in the village. Everyone around him, near and far, was a gentile. Over the years, two sons, as well as one daughter, were born to Yossi. However, when the boys grew up a little, and it was time to teach them to read and pray, Yossi became a little stressed, "I don't know anything! What can I teach them?!" And he began looking for

a teacher who would agree to come to his home and teach his sons.

One problem, though... No teacher wanted to live in a place where it wasn't possible to pray in a *Minyan*.

Then Yossi decided... "True, they're small, but there's no choice. I'll send them to the city, and there, they'll learn to read and pray..."

His two sons were very smart and talented, and they studied with vigor and much desire, and in a very short time, they rose to become two of the most successful young men studying in the city.

One day, they had to go on a trip, and on their way, they passed by the town of Mezibuzh. They stopped there and entered the *Beit Midrash* of the Baal Shem Tov.

Parashat Beshalach - Operation - Rescue From The Abyss

They entered and in a moment, were completely captivated! Their souls were bound together with his in a true and pure bond.

From that day, they began to travel to him regularly to enjoy his teachings, his holiness, and just being in his presence.

Their father, Yossi, being completely unlearned, although he knew to some extent that his sons knew a little more than he did, nevertheless, he didn't really understand to what extent. Even more so, he was surprised to see them always traveling to Mezibuzh, and he didn't hide his astonishment from them.

The sons, being aware of their father's virtues and his failings in these matters, realized that if they explained to him the greatness of the holiness and righteousness of their holy rabbi, he would certainly not understand at all what and who was being discussed, so they answered him that they were going to Mezibuzh because there lived a great sage and they wanted to learn from his wisdom.

The father, who, due to his simplicity, didn't understand at all how there could be a higher wisdom working in agriculture, immediately presented his question to his sons... "By what is his wisdom expressed?"

"Does he know how to plow? How to sow? The different kinds of soils?! Is he an expert in knowing when to sow and what and how?!"

His sons simply answered, "Yes, father, this wise man knows everything about agriculture, and he'll give you advice with all your problems, and then you'll succeed." They told him that he should get closer to their rabbi, and by doing so, he would become even more wealthy.

Yossi heard and accepted his sons' words and began to prepare for the trip.

Their trip passed smoothly, and they arrived at the Beit Midrash of the Baal Shem Tov. The Father entered the Baal Shem Tov's room and stated, "Dear wise man! My sons told me that you

are an expert in everything that has to do with the work of the soil and agriculture and that you're well versed in all the matters of this craft! Is this true?!"

The Baal Shem Tov heard the father and replied, "Yes, it is true."

And without any hesitation, the Baal Shem Tov began to enumerate all his fields and explain the nature of every field and their types, how much he sowed this year and what he sowed, and thus detailed before the father all his actions that he did in his fields that year.

Yossi listened to everything attentively and was full of admiration. He had never seen such a thing, that a person whom he had never met and who was talking to him for the first time would detail before him with marvelous precision everything that has to do with agriculture. He then concluded, despite his simplicity, that the Baal Shem Tov was indeed a great sage, and so he turned to him and asked, "Wise man! What do you suggest I do from here on out?"

The Baal Shem Tov advised him... "I suggest that you sow so and so amount of wheat, and so and so amount of barley, and so and so kinds of fruits and vegetables..."

The father then thanked the Baal Shem Tov and returned to his home.

When he arrived at his home, he didn't delay from completing everything the Baal Shem Tov instructed him.

The year passed, and the man realized that his fields were blessed a hundred-fold more than they were in other years. Even though he was exceedingly rich before, he was now wealthy beyond belief... All thanks to the advice of the Baal Shem Tov.

When Yossi saw that the advice of the "wise man" was bearing fruit, he decided not to do anything from there on out without first asking the Baal Shem Tov.

After a few years, the time came for Yossi to marry off his daughter, and as is the way of the world, such a great rich man is

matched with successful and outstanding young men, and what's more, he also had two sons who were very famous scholars. Many potential matches were sent to Yossi, but he didn't do anything without first asking the wise man. He, therefore, prepared a list of matches that were offered to him and went to consult with the Baal Shem Tov on which of them he should choose.

When he handed the list of the matches that were offered to him to the Baal Shem Tov, the Baal Shem Tov went over all the names listed and said, "In this list, I do not see a suitable match for your daughter."

Yossi stood dumbfounded for a moment. Regardless, he had a strong belief that he should only follow the advice of the wise man and asked, "Well, what should I do?" The Baal Shem Tov then answered and said, "When you go back to your home, send me two of your sons, and I will send you a groom for your daughter."

And so he did.

Immediately upon arriving at his home, he sent his sons to go

to the Baal Shem Tov to look for a suitable match for their sister.

The Baal Shem Tov got up together with the two sons of the rich man and traveled to a place very far from away. When the citizens of the city learned that the Baal Shem Tov was passing through, everyone gathered together and prepared a fine welcome feast in his honor.

During the feast, the Baal Shem Tov addressed the people of the city and explained to them the reason for his coming, to look for a decent match for the sister of these two outstanding young men, and thus he said to them...

"In this city lives a young man whose name is so and so and his father's name is so and so, and his mother's name is so and so, and he is the groom of their sister."

The crowd that gathered around the Baal Shem Tov, upon hearing this, began to think about who that person was. However, even with all the details provided by the Baal Shem Tov

they failed to remember.

They turned to the city's elder, an old and aged Jew whose exact age was one of the biggest mysteries, and asked him, "Do you know anyone with that name?"

He raised his head, and through his thick and white eyebrows, his eyes were seen sparkling, "No! I don't know anyone with that name!"

Everyone present looked at one another in astonishment...

They returned to the Baal Shem Tov, and he asked, "Well? Did you find him?" But they answered in the negative.

Then, the Baal Shem Tov announced, "The young man lives here in this city, and I won't leave until you bring him before me."

The Baal Shem Tov stayed in the city for a few days, and in the meantime, Rosh Chodesh arrived, and the people of the city prepared a Rosh Chodesh feast so that they could once again celebrate together with the Baal Shem Tov.

They were still in the midst of preparing the feast when suddenly,

a wild and unclean young man came and grabbed bread from the table, and ran away. When the person preparing the meal saw what happened, he ran after him shouting his name and the name of his father and the name of his mother, and when the crowd heard his shouts, they realized that these names were the names that the Baal Shem Tov had told them, but in no way did it occur to them that he was the man that the Baal Shem Tov was looking for as a groom for the sister of the two brothers.

Nevertheless, in order to be sure, they approached the Baal Shem Tov and told him what had happened and immediately added that they were sure that he was certainly not what the rabbi was looking for.

But to their great surprise, the Baal Shem Tov told them that he was looking for him! He then asked them to run after him, clean him up a little, and bring him to him.

The people ran after him, and the man, seeing that they were running after him, thought that they wanted to catch him for stealing the bread, so he started running faster...

In the end, the pursuit was crowned with success, and the man was caught... They did as the Baal Shem Tov ordered and brought the man before him.

The Baal Shem Tov received him kindly and sat by him at the meal, and in the middle of the meal, he passed his handkerchief over his face and commanded him to say a Dvar Torah!

The young man began and gave over a long sermon with such vigor and depth that even the two brothers couldn't grasp.

When he finished, the Baal Shem Tov asked the two young men, "Do you think he's fit to be your sister's husband?" And they answered, "Yes."

"If so," the Baal Shem Tov said to them, "go with him to your father's home and get them married immediately."

And so they did. They came to their father's home and told him about the greatness of the man whom the Baal Shem Tov had chosen for their sister and how he ordered them to marry them off

right away. Their father gave his consent, and they immediately called the guests, prepared the wedding, and married them off.

During the *sheva brachot*, the groom gave over several intensely in-depth *divrei Torah*, and his father-in-law, as well as everyone else, were very fond of him. But the happiest of everyone was the two brothers-in-laws, who were already impatiently waiting for the seven days to pass so that they could learn directly from his teachings.

On the last night, their joy increased, knowing that already starting tomorrow, they'll have the privilege of learning from someone so.

Since the two brothers were students of the Baal Shem Tov, of course, they were accustomed to get up at midnight to recite *tikkun chatzot* and learn Torah until dawn, when they would then begin to prepare themselves for prayer. They imagined to themselves that it must also be how their new brother-in-law acted, and therefore they waited for him to wake up

from his sleep, but they waited in vain. He kept sleeping.

They were reluctant to wake him up because they thought that he must have been studying until midnight or maybe he had a different form of *avodat Hashem*...

However, when it was already time for prayer, and they saw that their brother-in-law hadn't yet risen from his sleep, they approached the door of his room and politely knocked gently. Their sister opened the door for them and informed them that he was still asleep...

When they awoke him from his sleep, they noticed that something had changed about him... He wasn't acting like a Torah scholar, and he didn't even say *Modeh Ani* or wash his hands. He just laid lazily in his bed...

When they tried talking to him, but he didn't pay attention to them at all and didn't understand what they wanted from him, they came to the conclusion that it was certainly not something normal and decided to immediately go visit their holy rabbi and ask him

what had happened to their new brother-in-law.

They traveled to Mezibuzh and told the Baal Shem Tov everything that had happened with their brother-in-law. The Baal Shem Tov then answered them and said, "Just as there are matchmakers below, there are also matchmakers above whose job it is to match so-and-so's daughter to so-and-so. When your sister was matched in the upper world, she was matched with this man, but then one of the angels came and claimed that this match couldn't be made since the girl's father would be very rich and would also have two sons who are outstanding scholars, he won't want to marry his daughter off with a man who comes from a shameful family.

In heaven, they decided that the girl would be born with a defect, and no one would want to marry her anyway, and therefore she would be forced, without a choice, to marry him.

However, the angel still didn't calm down and claimed that, after all, her father would be extremely rich and wealthy, and with his

money, he could buy a groom even though she has a disability...

Then it was decided that a little before the girl reaches marriageable age, her father will die, and she'll remain both an orphan and with a disability, and therefore it's certain that no one will marry her but him.

I then interrupted and announced that I didn't agree that this girl or her father be harmed! I then took it upon myself to sort things out!

Since I was then the one responsible for making sure the match was made, and I knew for sure that you wouldn't agree to take a simple young man as a brother-in-law, I had no other choice other than to open before him all the gates of the Torah so that you would agree to let him marry your sister.

The Baal Shem Tov concluded...

If he was a vessel worthy of receiving, I would have left him with all the wisdom forever, but

since he didn't prepare himself at all, the wisdom would only have harmed him, and he would have been cut off from this world and the next! For that reason, I removed it from it!...

"Rabbi! We don't understand what you're talking about!" the two brothers cried.

The Baal Shem Tov explained...

With his immense wisdom, people would have come from all over the world to hear Torah from him.

The noise and commotion around him would make the evil forces curious, and they, too, would come and observe. When they would have seen his wisdom, they would taunt him and make him go through many great trials and tribulations, as *chazal* say, "Everyone who is greater than their friend, so too is their yetzer hara greater than theirs!"²

But since he's never worked on himself and he's never faced any difficulties, he has no tools to

face those difficulties. His soul is very weak, and he's unable to cope even with attempts to steal a loaf of bread in front of the citizens of a city. If he had been given the tests and trials that tzaddikim are given, he would have failed miserably!

I decided to take pity on him and took his "wisdom" from him. By doing so, I prevented him from all the difficult trials and thus saved him from the terrible punishments of *gehinom*...

Now please go back to your home in peace and tell your sister that this is her match. Tell her to continue to live with him, and I promise her that they will have good and wise sons.

You, his brothers-in-law's, try to learn with him to the point where his intellect reaches, and little by little, he'll even know and reach a good level in his studies...

Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heschel concluded his story and said, "The sons who were born to that couple are now among the chassidim who are followers of me."

The Baal Shem Tov was afraid of the incitements and tests that the young man would get from the *yetzer hara* and therefore removed from him the gifts he had received. We found a source for the actions of the Baal Shem Tov in our parasha...

Diamond Gates

The Gemara reveals to us³ that in the future, in the days of the Mashiach, Hashem will make the gates of Jerusalem completely made up of diamonds, as it's said, "And your gates shall be made of diamonds" (Yeshayah 54:12).

When Rabbi Yochanan reached this verse in one of his lectures, this is how he explained to his students...

The walls of Jerusalem will have several gates, and each gate will be made of one diamond!

Parashat Beshalach - The Purpose Of Everything

Hashem will bring a diamond that is thirty cubits long and thirty cubits wide - an area of 900 cubits ! (Rabbi Yochanan didn't reveal the thickness of the diamond to us). He'll then carve an opening in it that is ten cubits wide and twenty cubits high...

In that lecture sat one student who pondered... "Well, that's a nice theory, but it's unrealistic... Even if they turn the whole world upside down, they won't find diamonds of that size..."

The Gemara continues and says that a few days passed, and that student was forced to go on a sea voyage. He boarded the ship, waving his hand's bye to his friends and family, and the ship began its journey...

During the journey, he saw the ministering angels sitting with a diamond measuring thirty by thirty and carving out a space ten by twenty cubits wide in it.

The student turned to them and asked, "What are you doing?"

They then answered him, "We're preparing them for the gates of Jerusalem!"

The journey was over, and he returned home.

When he arrived, he quickly ran to his Rabbi Yochanan and said to him, "As you said, so I saw!"

Rabbi Yochanan turned to him and said, "If you hadn't seen it, you wouldn't have believed it?! Do you mock the words of the wise!?" He set his eyes on him, and he turned into a pile of bones!

We need to understand what the phrase "He set his eyes on him" means and why was he turned into a pile of bones?

But, in order to answer that, we'll have to start with a short introduction...

The Purpose Of Everything

One of the greatest riddles of all time, which occupied all the greatest thinkers and philosophers from ancient times until now, is...

What is it all for? What are we living for?

People are born, they go through life, struggles, every

now and then they grab some small form of pleasure, they get bored, and finally, they die and are buried in the ground...

What's the point of it all? Is it worth all the suffering, tensions, worries, anxieties, depressions, wars, troubles, and agonies all for a few minutes of fun?!

But the truth is, none of them came to a clear conclusion, and what's more, none of them knew how to define what "life" is. We're not talking about the simple sense of the word life, but to define what emotions and feelings are supposed to beat in the heart of a living person!

Truthfully, we can't blame them, for in order to know what life truly is, you have to ask the Creator Himself why He created all this and in such a way!

And we, Am Israel, merited, and Hashem, in his great mercy and kindness, gave us his holy Torah, the Torah, which are the instructions or guidelines of this

world, and brings us, every Jew, to the discovery of what "life" truly is, as long as we observe its laws and commandments!

Chazal, who were blessed and the "instructions" of the Creator were revealed to them completely, kindly revealed to us the reason for the creation of the world, and this is what they said...⁴

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachman said that when Hashem created the world, He desired that He would have a place to dwell in the lower worlds as He does in the upper worlds.

Simply, Hashem's main desire was to create a place where his divinity would be hidden and to task humans with finding Him in the midst of all the darkness and obscurity, and thus He would receive satisfaction from us.

And by working hard and completing this task, we gain that our souls, day after day, expand and grow. This is what's called in

Parashat Beshalach - Higher and Lower Recognition

kabbalah “Birur Nitzotzin.” Every time another spark (Nitzotz) is acquired in the soul of a Jew, they feel a new depth of pleasure and joy.

And then, right after, the new confrontation arrives... and that’s

human life. Until, in the end, we gain having a soul broad and strong enough to merit the purpose of everything... To stand in completion in the revelation of Hashem’s light.

Higher and Lower Recognition

Until here, everything seems understood. However, when we look closer at the words of *chazal*, we stand surprised.

The words of *chazal*, “He desired that He would have a place to dwell in the lowers worlds as He does in the upper worlds,” raise a very big question.

But, before we continue, we’ll first preface...

One of the most ancient books of kabbalah is *Sefer Yetzirah*. In this book, the act of creation is written about in depth.

There,⁵ it’s explained that every created being must have three dimensions - Olam (world), Shana (year), and Nefesh (soul).

In other words, the definition of a creation is something that is confined within the limits of space (Olam), time (Shana), and has a lifeforce (Nefesh).

But Hashem, the creator of everything, the creator of space and time, and the creator of life is removed from all this.

And if that’s the case, if Hashem is removed from space and time, and He fills every universe, and there’s no change regarding Him whether before or after creation, and He fills all of reality in exactly the same way as before creation, how do *chazal* say that the purpose of creation is for Him to dwell in the lowers worlds as He does in the upper

Parashat Beshalach - The World's First Power Struggle

worlds, for regarding Hashem, there's no difference between above or below, for He's everywhere to the same extent?

The answer is... The upper and lower worlds mentioned in the words of *chazal* aren't referring to the dimension of space but rather to the power of the mind and recognition.

There's what's called a higher recognition (Daat HaElyon)

The World's First Power Struggle

Even though all human beings walk around in the same world and hear the same news, each of them perceives reality in a different way.

Each person perceives and understands the reality around them according to the qualities of their soul. Someone who is merciful by nature will recognize their own points of mercy in others, and someone who is angry will notice the feelings of anger in others.⁶

– The upper worlds.

And there's also what's called a lower recognition (Daat HaTachton)

– The lower worlds.

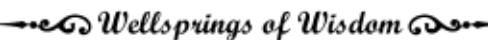
Hashem desired to create a world in which there would be people with a lower recognition, and they, by virtue of their work, would achieve a higher recognition!

And this higher recognition is a place for Hashem to dwell!

Adam HaRishon was created pure and free from all evil and simply and naturally achieved attaining a higher recognition.

And since Hashem created Adam with a pure heart and a clear mind, he instantly perceived all of reality around him in the correct manner. In everything he saw and in everything he heard, he found Hashem.

So too, his understanding was unblemished, and therefore he



6. HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l was accustomed to say that the person

before you is like your mirror. Whatever you see in them, it's a sign that it's in you.

knew that Hashem loved him and what his mission was.

Then, after the creation of Adam, Hashem created Chava and placed her in the most wonderful place – Gan Eden.

Chazal have already said that Hashem desired that He would have a place in this lower world, and for that purpose, he created the snake (the *yetzer hara*). The snake fulfilled, to the complete sense, lower recognition, and it didn't believe anything that its eyes didn't see.

The snake approached Chava and started a conversation with her... Well, Chava, what do you think about the Tree of Knowledge?

Chava then responded sharply, "The Tree of Knowledge?! I want nothing to do with it!"

The snake looked at her with questioning and wondering eyes, "What happened? It's just a tree! Look what a beautiful tree it is. What beautiful fruit it has.... Poor tree, you turned it into a monster!"

Chava then explained herself, "Hashem told us that He would be

very sorry if we ate from the tree. And, of course, anything that causes sorrow to Hashem, I want nothing to do with it!"

The snake then began... "Chava, there's no creator of the world. The world is a reality that has always existed. You should eat from the tree... Eat... Eat..."

The snake's venom seeped into her body and paralyzed her recognition for a few moments - and Chava ate from the tree!

Then she approached her husband, Adam, and offered him the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

Adam grabbed the fruit, and within him, the struggle between the two "recognitions" began. The higher recognition rebuked him and reminded him how much eating the fruit would cause sorrow to Hashem. Whereas the lower recognition began to beat faster, "Eat! It's delicious! It'll make you happy. You'll feel pleasure!"

We have no way of grasping the intensity of the struggle that he felt at that moment. That struggle was of extreme intensity...

But, in the end, Adam HaRishon also ate from the Tree of Knowledge... That was the first snake bite in the history of the world...

Adam was then thrown out of Gan Eden, and the “recognition” given to him by the snake bite grew stronger in his descendants...

Twenty Generations Of Darkness

The descendants of Adam multiplied throughout the land, and the snake penetrated their minds and dulled their consciousness...

People forgot that there was such a concept as higher recognition. They just followed their own lusts and desires.

More than that, they turned the lower recognition - the snake’s venom - into the desired recognition.

And when Nimrod entered the picture, the situation worsened tenfold...

Nimrod founded the first university for the study of “Philosophy and the Bible.”⁷ Through these studies, the foundation of Judaism was shattered

- the faith in the sages and the souls of the listeners were poisoned... The poison spread through the body and paralyzed its systems until finally, all the listeners died spiritually...

Thus, in this way, it was able to disconnect the entire world from faith in Hashem “And they will follow vanity - and will be led astray” (Yeremiah 2:5)!

And since the listeners no longer believed in the sages of the Torah and those who learned it, they sent their children to schools that forbade saying the verse “*Shema Israel, Hashem Elokenu, Hashem Echad...*”

Little by little, Nimrod’s kingdom began to grow. A huge army of mercenaries was formed, who knew how to “convince”

every person in the world that the “king” was Nimrod and that they must listen to him and follow him. Anyone who “didn’t understand” was immediately “taken care of.”

In this manner, the whole world drifted after Nimrod and his views and leadership, and they even began to admire him until, spiritually, the world’s “pulse” weakened, died out, and was almost lost...

Our Ancestors Knew

“I don’t know” is one of the most common sentences in the world. And yet, not everyone’s intention is the same.

There are those who, when they say “I don’t know,” mean to say, “I know the reality of what you’re talking about. I’ve seen it, I’ve engaged with it, but I don’t understand the particular point you’re talking about.”

There are also those who, when they say “I don’t know,” they mean to say, “In reality, I haven’t encountered that, but I have read about it, but

Hashem wondered how long the world would walk in darkness...

Let the light come !

The time had come to send a man who would look at the world and its desires as they’re seen by the higher worlds !

And on the outskirts of the city of Aram Neharim, the cry of a baby was heard... and his name was called Avraham...

that’s not enough to help you.”

So too, there are those who, when they say “I don’t know,” they mean to say, “I’ve had no interaction with that reality, nor have I heard about it.”

And the truth is that with everyone, the “I don’t know” can be easily changed... Learn, and you will know !

But, when we come to write about the virtues of our holy ancestors, and we write that we don’t know how to explain their virtues, the words “I don’t know” take on a different meaning...

“I don’t know” means not only I don’t know, but nobody knows and can’t know!

The holy forefathers were above all levels of creation. They’re above all possibilities of any perception.

They were the chariot of the Holy Shechina! They didn’t stop, even for a second, from binding their minds and souls to Hashem until they were blessed that they were completely separated from the affairs of this world and completely unified themselves with his will...

Our forefathers, Avraham, Itzchak, and Yaakov, looked at the whole world with the highest form of higher recognition. And if in the higher worlds they look at all the lust of the world as nothing, how did they look at it...

Yet, of the three forefathers, it was Yaakov who was blessed with twelve sons - the holy tribes.

The book of Shemot opens with a list of their names, “And these are the names of the Bnei

Israel who came from Egypt with Yaakov...” (Shemot 1:1).

Rabbi Yehuda Aryeh Leib, the *Sefat Emet* of Gur, explained⁸ that the work assigned to the tribes was something new and different than the work of their forefathers.

Their forefathers drew down faith in Hashem from the upper worlds down into our world. The forefathers were a chariot for the Shechina and connected to the divine root and ascended above nature, and were completely bonded with Hashem.

Now came the second stage in the work of the beginning of our nation. The role and mission of the tribes were to draw the light of holiness and faith in Hashem into the hidden and unknown. They had to take the light with them to the darkest depths of impurity in the world, Egypt, a place of complete impurity, poverty, and filth, and work to illuminate the depths of its darkness.

Parashat Beshalach - The Egyptian Exile

The role of the tribes was to continue and extend the light that was drawn down from its root into the dark depths.

The Torah continues and testifies about Yaakov Avinu, “And Yaakov lived in the land of Egypt” (Bereshit 47:28) – “Life” is a

definition of something connected to its source and root. The greatness of Yaakov Avinu was that even though he was in the land of Egypt, he was still in terms of “living,” being connected to his source. To him were the tribes connected, and from there came their success...

The Egyptian Exile

In the year 2238 since the creation of the world, Yaakov Avinu went down with his sons, the holy tribes, and with all his grandchildren to the land of Egypt. All in all, they were a total of 70 people.⁹

And once in Egypt, they continued multiplying...

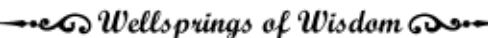
The Seforno writes¹⁰ that as long as one of those seventy individuals lived, the generation was protected. The air that flowed throughout the land of Goshen was fresh and clean...

But, one day, something terrible happened. The last soul from the list of the “Seventy” died, then their

protection was shattered, and from that moment, the war began...

A wind began to blow, a wind that stirred the hearts and set the bodies on fire... Around the minds of the men and women, the angels of impurity, responsible for the thoughts of lewdness and abomination, were stationed. Those responsible for the impure and invalid thoughts... And they organized for conquest...

At first, they lost, big time. The pure hearts of the Jews didn’t accept the impurity and didn’t agree to “sign” a peace agreement with them.



9. Bereshit 46:27.

10. Shemot 1:6-7.

But, little by little, they surrendered.

Slowly, with giant steps, all the defense partitions were conquered, and the brain remained exposed to all targets. The impure thoughts were like waves crashing on the shore...

Am Israel fell into lower recognition and forgot all the

concepts of their previous higher recognition.

And since they lost the level they had previously been on - a disgust and hatred for all lusts and desires - in its place arose love for lusts and forbidden desires.

And as soon as they fell into lower recognition, the authority was given to Paraoh, the king of Egypt, to begin the hard and cruel slavery...

Moshe Rabbeinu – The Savior

Long and exhausting years passed for Am Israel there in the Egyptian exile. Then, on the 15th of Nisan (which in the future would be established as the night of the Seder) in the year 2447 since the creation of the world, Moshe came “to the mountain of Hashem in Chorev” (Shemot 3:1).

There, Hashem revealed Himself to him from the bush and commanded him, “Go redeem Am Israel!”

Moshe Rabbeinu listened and asked, “How will I manage to get them out from under the hands of the evil Paraoh?”

Hashem then replied saying that the secret of salvation lies in the verse, “From the waste, He will raise the deprived” (Tehillim 113:7)...

We’ll explain...

We’ve already explained that the enslavement began because Am Israel fell to the level of lower recognition.

And someone who’s immersed in the world of lower recognition is called deprived because someone deprived is always looking at what the world has to “offer” and wants them. All the “pleasures” of the world seem

more important to them than anything, and they run after them, trying to achieve them. And when they manage to get them, they charge at them in a frenzy...

Well, deprived and poor...

But now the time has come to redeem them, and the first step is to remove from them all lust for this world, enlighten their eyes and hearts, and make them aware of the higher recognition. Then they'll know that all their desires are just stinking garbage.

Moshe listened and then asked, "How?"

In the plague of the firstborns, I will reveal Myself in the land of Egypt, and when my light is revealed, they will feel such a great and exalted love for me, a clean and pure love, and from the abundance of their love for me they themselves will get tired and hate what I detest - all the lusts and evil deeds.

And so it was...

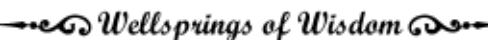
Moshe began to work, hitting Paraoh with nine blows. And when the tenth plague came, the plague of the firstborns, the veil rolled over the whole land of Egypt, and all the lusts were now revealed in their true light - despised and disgusting...

Since Am Israel was redeemed from lower recognition and merited higher recognition, Paraoh no longer had any power left, and it was necessary to send Am Israel out of Egypt...

“And it came to pass when Paraoh sent the nation” (Shemot 13:17)...¹¹

However, the simple meaning of the words “Paraoh sent” doesn't mean that he sent them of his own free will. Indeed, in practice, he sent them, but the motives were completely irrational.¹²

“Sent away” doesn't mean to send. It means to disconnect and separate. Paraoh sent them



11. The original Hebrew –

”וַיִּהְיֶה בְּשַׁלַּח פָּרְעֹה אֶת הָעָם” (שמות יג, יז)

12. Al HaTorah Ve'Al HaAvodah

(Vol. 1, p. 109).

away because he was forced to do so from panic from all the blows he received.

Before we continue, let's return to Rabbi Yochanan and his student...

A Pile Of Bones

The student enthusiastically approached his teacher, Rabbi Yochanan, and said, "Rabbi! There's nothing to say! One zero in your favor!"

Rabbi Yochanan heard and was horrified, "If you didn't see with your own eyes, would you not believe? What did you graduate from the University of Philosophy and Biblical Studies?"

Rabbi Yochanan continued and said, "Come and let me show you how you're looked at in upper worlds." Rabbi Yochanan then drew down higher recognition onto his student, and before his eyes was revealed the enormous damage caused in all worlds by his lack of *emunat chachamim*. Then an enormous feeling of shame completely filled him!

This is what Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt"l said on this...¹³

What's said in the Gemara several times, "He set his eyes on him, and he turned into a pile of bones," what does it mean?

People don't see how far the damage caused by their transgressed reaches, but the tzaddikim see.

This is what the Gemara is saying...

"He set his eyes on him" - He sees with the eyes of tzaddikim.

"And he turned into a pile of bones" – Pile (גל) from the word revelation (התגלות), and bones (עצמות) from the verse "He closes his eyes from seeing evil" (Yeshayah 33:15)

עוצם עיניו מראות ברע" (ישעיה לג, טו)

Meaning that he sees what's damaged, what was previously hidden. And there's no greater punishment than this, when someone sees what they've done wrong...

Parashat Beshalach - The Three Levels

And Am Israel, in the plague of the firstborn, merited

ascended to the level of complete tzaddikim...

The Three Levels

As is known, within Am Israel, there are three levels... Tzaddikim, Benonim, and Rashaiim.

Tzaddikim are those who have completely ridden themselves of the desires and lusts for this world. In their hearts, there is only Hashem and His will.

Even desires that are necessary for human existence, such as the desire to eat, are repulsed in their eyes!

There other two levels, in truth, are actually one level, the level of Benonim and Rashaiim.

At this level, the heart longs for

desires and materiality, and when someone stands and faces them, they feel an internal war, sometimes a quiet war and sometimes a noisy and stormy war full of struggles...

If they surrender to their *yetzer hara* and fall to sin, then they're called a Rasha.

But, if they manage to overcome it, then they're a Benoni.

And the reason they're called a Benoni and not a tzaddik is because even though they won the battle, they felt a slight sense of loss, "I lost out on that pleasure." Tzaddikim not only don't feel a sense of loss but feel disgusted by the desire...

Taking The Long Route

Am Israel gathered in Ramses in preparation for the exodus from Egypt. Moshe Rabbeinu stood before the nation and prepared them...

"We are leaving Egypt and marching to the Land of Israel!"
And so it was...

Our parasha begins with the verses, "And it came to pass when Paraoh sent the nation, and Elokim didn't guide them through the land of the Philistines, for it was near, for Hashem said, 'Lest the people regret when they see war and return to Egypt': And

Hashem led the nation through the desert by the Red Sea, and Bnei Israel went up armed from the land of Egypt” (Shemot 13:17-18).

And this is the meaning of the verses...

In order to get from Egypt to Eretz Israel, there are two ways...

The simplest way is by land, from Ramses to Sukkot, and from Sukkot through Baal North to Kadesh Barnea, “Eleven days from Chorev through Har Seir to Kadesh Barnea” (Devarim 1:2).

The second way is by sea. From Ramses towards the south of the Sinai desert, and there was the parting of Yam Suf, and after several journeys, they went back towards Yotvata on the eastern side of the Sinai desert to Kadesh Barnea.

And Hashem chose to lead Am Israel through the longer route because the shorter route went “through the land of the Philistines” (Shemot 13:17), and the soul of Am Israel were still not yet broad and strong enough to deal with them.

We’ll explain...

The Philistines nation draws its strength from the *kelipah* called the “*Kelipat HaLetzinut*” – whose main power is to defile someone’s thoughts.

Hashem decided that though Am Israel were in a state of “*Mochin D’Gadlut*,” they didn’t achieve it themselves through work, but were given it to them - and since when they pass through the Philistines the *kelipot* there will recognize this and will bring upon them trials according to the level they’re currently standing on, they’ll fill their minds with bad, impure and depressing thoughts, and because they hadn’t worked on themselves, their soul’s strength is weak and meager, and they’ll fall into the depths of the abysses. Therefore, He decided that it was better to take them through the longer route, and through their work, their souls would expand and become stronger.

This secret was revealed by Rashi in his commentary...

“Lest the people regret” – They’ll think about their departure and want to return.

Here's our source for our interpretation of the actions of the holy Baal Shem Tov...

and after everything we've explained, we'll return to reality...

A Benoni

Certainly, anyone who has a divine spark in them, their heart is full of desire... "I, too, want to be a tzaddik. I also want to rid myself of desires. From now on, I'll start crying out to Hashem that He draw me close to him!"

And although we should desire to reach these levels, we must know that it's also very dangerous to take on too much at once. When someone takes on too much at once, they are essentially beginning an open war against all the forces of impurity, and in an open war, there's no doubt that the forces of impurity will defeat them...

Therefore, every Jew has to know their place and know that they're certainly not a tzaddik. A Jew needs to know that they must learn a lot of Torah, many Chassidic works, and delve deep into them for

decades until they merit that all lust and materiality of this world will truly be hated in their eyes. Until they reach looking at them as they're looked at in Heaven!

It's incumbent upon us to know our place and serve Hashem with our thoughts, speech, and actions...

Serving Hashem with our actions is simple. You have to observe all the practical mitzvot and avoid transgressions. So too, serving Hashem with speech is also simple. You have to be careful of forbidden words and speak words of faith and emuna. Get used to saying "With Hashem's help," "If Hashem wills," "Bezrat Hashem," and the like...

But since we explained that the *kelipah* of the Philistine nation is against the sanctity of our thoughts, we'll therefore focus on that...

The Sanctity Of Thought

The following is an excerpt from our book *Imrei Noam* by HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt”l...¹⁴

Our holy Torah is an eternal Torah that is practiced always and at all times. Even the parashiot that speak about the Mishkan are always practiced, even nowadays.

Though much has been written about that, we’ll focus on the fire that would come down on the copper altar and burn the offerings that were on top of it.

This action hints to us that we should burn all the foreign and impure thoughts that creep into our minds from time to time and not let them remain there.

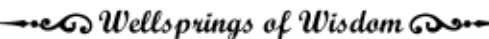
We must remember that reflecting on bad thoughts is so harmful to our souls that *chazal* even said¹⁵ that reflecting on a sin is more severe than the sin itself.

Every second of reflecting on impure thoughts creates another partition between you and Hashem, depriving you of all blessing.

We must know that the Shechina dwells on a person according to the holiness of their thoughts. Whoever, G-d forbid, doesn’t guard their mind against bad thoughts, those thoughts take away all levels of holiness that they may have reached.

The best, most tried and tested advice to get rid of bad thoughts is to occupy the mind as much as possible with holy thoughts of Torah and awe of Hashem and not to allow the mind to be free and busy with idle things.

It’s explained in the midrash¹⁶ that **מזבח** (altar) is an acronym for **מחילה** (forgiveness), **זכות** (merit), **ברכה** (blessing), and **חיים** (life). Likewise, someone who carefully



14. *Imrei Noam* (Vayakel, Maamar 12).

15. Yoma 29a.

16. Midrash Rabbi Tanchuma (Parashat Teruma -10).

Parashat Beshalach - Step By Step

guards their thoughts is granted that all their transgressions are forgiven. They're also put on the side of merit in Heaven, even if

they don't deserve it. Hashem sends all the blessings directly into their hands, and they also merit a long life...

Step By Step

Until here, we've learned that it's dangerous to "jump" levels and that by doing so, it provokes the *kelipot*. Also, when working on our thoughts, to keep them pure and sacred, we have to be careful not to rush too much because when you rush, it's a lot easier to fall as well, and when you fall from that level, you fall into the abyss.

And we found a guide written by the Rambam on how to correct our thoughts...¹⁷

If you pray by facing a wall and moving your lips, and at the same time, you're thinking about your work, or when you learn Torah, and at the same time, you're thinking about the building of your house without concentrating on what you're reading. And also, if when you fulfill a mitzvah, you

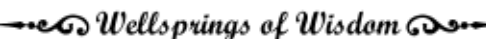
fulfill it with your limbs but without any intention or desire, know that you're still far from the goal because the purpose is to connect your actions and speech with your thoughts!

From here, I will begin to guide you until this purpose is reached...

In the beginning, start by releasing all your thoughts and clearing your mind away from everything when you recite *Kriyat Shema* and pray *Amida*.

When you're able to achieve this and be steady with it for many years, begin putting all your heart and soul into understanding what you hear or read when learning Torah.

When you're able to achieve this as well, train yourself to clear



17. Moreh Nevuchim (Vol. 3, Chapter 51).

your mind when even reading from the Torah or Nevi'im and even when you recite blessings.

When this is reached, learn to clear your mind and free your thoughts about all worldly affairs, even when dealing with ordinary tasks such as eating and drinking...

The Rambam continues and explains to his students how to conquer their thoughts step by step until they're able to get closer to Hashem and stand before Him on the real path and not on the path of imagination... May Hashem grant us to reach that path, Amen !

Shabbat Shalom !

The Pathway...

1. One of the greatest riddles of all time, which occupied all the greatest thinkers and philosophers from ancient times until now, is... What is it all for? What are we living for? People are born, they go through life, struggles, every now and then they grab some small form of pleasure, they get bored, and finally, they die and are buried in the ground... What's the point of it all? Is it worth all the suffering, tensions, worries, anxieties, depressions, wars, troubles, and agonies all for a few minutes of fun?!

2. But the truth is, none of them came to a clear conclusion, and what's more, none of them knew how to define what "life" is. We're not talking about the simple sense of the word life, but to define what emotions and feelings are supposed to beat in the heart of a living person !

3. Truthfully, we can't blame them, for in order to know what life truly is, you have to ask the Creator Himself why He created all this and in such a way ! And we, Am Israel, merited, and Hashem, in his great mercy and kindness, gave us his holy Torah, the Torah, which are the instructions or guidelines of this world, and brings us, every Jew, to the discovery of what "life" truly is, as long as we observe its laws and commandments !

4. *Chazal*, who were blessed and the "instructions" of the Creator were revealed to them completely, kindly revealed to us the reason for the creation of the world. Simply, Hashem's main desire was to create a place where his divinity would be hidden and to task humans with finding Him in the midst of all the darkness and obscurity, and thus He would receive satisfaction from us.

The Pathway...

5. By working hard and completing this task, we gain that our souls, day after day, expand and grow. This is what's called in kabbalah "Birur Nitzotzin." Every time another spark (Nitzotz) is acquired in the soul of a Jew, they feel a new depth of pleasure and joy.

6. But then, right after, the new confrontation arrives... and that's human life. Until, in the end, we gain having a soul broad and strong enough to merit the purpose of everything... To stand in completion in the revelation of Hashem's light.

7. As is known, within Am Israel, there are three levels... Tzaddikim, Benonim, and Rashaiim. Tzaddikim are those who have completely ridden themselves of the desires and lusts for this world. In their hearts, there is only Hashem and His will. Even desires that are necessary for human existence, such as the desire to eat, are repulsed in their eyes!

8. In truth, the next two levels are actually one level, the level of Benonim and Rashaiim. At this level, the heart longs for desires and materiality, and when someone stands and faces them, they feel an internal war, sometimes a quiet war and sometimes a noisy and stormy war full of struggles... If they surrender to their *yetzer hara* and fall to sin, then they're called a Rasha. But, if they manage to overcome it, then they're a Benoni. And the reason they're called a Benoni and not

a tzaddik is because even though they won the battle, they felt a slight sense of loss, "I lost out on that pleasure." Tzaddikim not only don't feel a sense of loss but feel disgusted by the desire...

9. Anyone who has a divine spark in them, their heart is full of desire... "I, too, want to be a tzaddik. I also want to rid myself of desires. From now on, I'll start crying out to Hashem that He draw me close to him!" Although we should desire to reach these levels, we must know that it's also very dangerous to take on too much at once. When someone takes on too much at once, they are essentially beginning an open war against all the forces of impurity, and in an open war, there's no doubt that the forces of impurity will defeat them...

10. Every Jew has to know their place and know that they're certainly not a tzaddik. A Jew needs to know that they must learn a lot of Torah, many Chassidic works, and delve deep into them for decades until they merit that all lust and materiality of this world will truly be hated in their eyes. Until they reach looking at them as they're looked at in Heaven!

11. It's incumbent upon us to know our place and serve Hashem with our thoughts, speech, and actions... Serving Hashem with our actions is simple. You have to observe all the practical mitzvot and avoid transgressions. So too, serving Hashem with speech is

The Pathway...

also simple. You have to be careful of forbidden words and speak words of faith and emuna. Get used to saying “With Hashem’s help,” “If Hashem wills,” “Bezrat Hashem,” and the like...

12. Until here, we’ve learned that it’s dangerous to “jump” levels and that by doing so, it provokes the *kelipot*. Also, when working on our thoughts, to keep

them pure and sacred, we have to be careful not to rush too much because when you rush, it’s a lot easier to fall as well, and when you fall from that level, you fall into the abyss. But once we achieve these levels, after years of steady work, we will finally achieve that level of standing in completion in the revelation of Hashem’s light !



Free distribution

Preserve publication sanctity
by use of Genizah

Shabbat Times

Beshalach

13th of Shevat , 5783



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	4:57 pm	6:00 pm	6:30 pm
Miami	5:47 pm	6:42 pm	7:19 pm
Los Angeles	5:07 pm	6:05 pm	6:39 pm
Montreal	4:45 pm	5:52 pm	6:18 pm
Toronto	5:13 pm	6:18 pm	6:45 pm
London	4:38 pm	5:48 pm	6:07 pm
Jerusalem	4:59 pm	5:50 pm	6:26 pm
Tel Aviv	4:56 pm	5:47 pm	6:21 pm
Haifa	4:54 pm	5:45 pm	6:19 pm
Be'er Sheva	4:57 pm	5:48 pm	6:23 pm

Pathways to the Heart

*From the Words of
HaRav Yoram Abargel zt"l*

Children who are destined for greatness are usually required to withstand many trials, difficulties, and struggles, perhaps even life-threatening ones, from an early age... But Hashem never leaves them.

The purpose of these trials is a form of "professional training" to provide them with the tools to fulfill their role in this world, to help Am Israel.



Become a Partner!

For Donations:

American Friends of Netivot Inc
Signature Bank

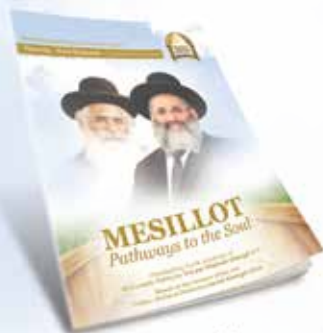
Account # 1504470357

261 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10016

Routing # 026013576

Or Visit: Hameir-Laarets.org.il/Donate

RECOGNIZED BY THE IRS AS A 501(C)(3)
TAX DEDUCTIBLE ORGANIZATION



Do You Enjoy Mesillot?

Want Pathways to the Soul in Your Synagogue?

Receive Mesillot Weekly Anywhere In The World!

- Free of Charge -

Join Now!



Ask The Rabbi!



Media

www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en

Hameir Laarets

(954) 800-6526

054-870-8737

en@h-l.org.il

