



Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 108

**Bahaalotecha** | It Belongs Only To You



# 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...

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# Parashat Bahaalotecha

## One Hundred Days of Prayer

**Then**, just like today the riots of the Arabs endangered the peace of Am Israel.<sup>1</sup>

**In** those days, in the period before the proclamation of the state, Am Israel were under siege from all sides, a sheep between seventy wolves.

**Am** Israel was surrounded while in the land of their ancestors, trembling and afraid.

**With** zero ways of defending themselves, the Jews faced their enemies... Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Iran, and Egypt...

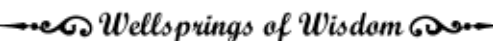
**According** to British law, which was about to end its control over the land, it was forbidden to stockpile weapons. Any weapon caught in the hands of a civilian, endangered the life of its owner.

**The** Arabs set the 5<sup>th</sup> of Iyar as the day that they would officially go to war. This ill-fated and murderous decision was pronounced and heard all over the world...

**“Well,”** said Rabbi Mendel Gaffner in front of anxious groups in Yerushalayim, “in such a situation you look in the Torah and see what a Jew should do.”

**And** this is what’s written in the Torah, “It’s a mitzvah from the Torah to cry out and pray over every trouble that befalls the public... and that is what will cause the trouble to be removed from them.”<sup>2</sup>

**Only** prayer has the power to subdue Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Iran. We’ll take it and start shooting with it, and they’ll drop like flies. Let’s arm ourselves with it, with prayer. Let’s mobilize



1. Chaim Sheyesh Bahem (p. 394).
2. Mishne Torah (Hilchot Taaniyot 1:1-2).

Brisk, “that Am Israel defeated their enemies thanks to those in Yerushalayim...”

**The** war of liberation ended, and the years continued to pass...

### Knocking on The Gates of Mercy...

**Rebbe** Israel Rosenzweig zt”l knocked on the door of Rebbe Yechiel Yehoshua zt”l of Biala (in Yerushalayim) with a message from Rebbe Israel Alter of Gur zt”l...<sup>3</sup>

**The** period before the outbreak of the Six Day War was filled with fear and worry for Am Israel.

**The** Biala Rebbe, Rebbe Yechiel Yehoshua zt”l, decided to go to Bnei Brak to take a closer look at the Ohr Kedoshim yeshiva that his son, Rebbe David Matityahu zt”l, established...

“**The** Gur Rebbe sent me here,” said Rebbe Israel Rosenzweig. “He ordered me to ask you why you’re abandoning the city...” Upon hearing those words, Rebbe Yechiel Yehoshua took a piece of paper and wrote, “Because Hashem won’t abandon his nation...” He handed it to Rebbe Israel and said, “Please

return to the Gur Rebbe, give him this note, and tell him that I said that they should pray and, Bezrat Hashem, we’ll see salvation soon.”

**When** the Gur Rebbe received the note, he looked at it and his face instantly displayed worry... “We need to arouse Yerushalayim! Go to Rabbi Mendel Gaffner and tell him that I said to do whatever needs to be done...”

**Rabbi** Mendel Gaffner went out to stir up Jerusalem, as he always did. A full midrash spoke to him, “As long as the voice is the voice of Yaakov, the hands aren’t the hands of Esav. To prepare for war with Esav, you need prayer...”

**By** the power of prayer, abundance, salvation, and success are drawn down for all of Am Israel.

**So**, too, in our parasha, do we learn about the power of prayer...<sup>4</sup>

**Let's** start from the beginning...

—*Wellsprings of Wisdom*—

**4. The** foundation of our success and the pillar of our *avodas Hashem* is the knowledge that everything depends on *tefillah*. Just as Torah learning is one of the world's essential pillars, so is *tefillah*. On this pillar stands not just the edifice of the world, but also that of the individual. In another vein, we could say that *tefillah* is a vital organ. This is true both in *avodas Hashem* and with success in all matters of life, spiritual and material alike, as *Chazal* say:

**What** should a person do in order to become wise... to become rich... to have sons... he should seek mercy from the One to Whom wisdom, riches and sons belong... without this, it does not suffice.

**Our** need for *tefillah* is even greater in times of trouble. In such times we must pick up the craft of our forefathers and cry out to Hashem over every trouble that comes our way. These cries to Hashem are what save us from all unfortunate occurrences! Without them, we could not subsist in the world.

**The** Ramchal explains *tefillah* as follows:

**Among** the arrangements set by Divine Wisdom is this: In order for created beings to receive *shefa* from Hashem, they must arouse themselves toward Him, draw close to Him and beseech Him. According to their arousal towards Him, so will the *shefa* emanate to them. If they do not arouse themselves, it will not emanate to them.

**To** understand this, we need to know that *tefillah* in principle follows two paths in order to attain Heaven's answer. The first is how *tefillah* is commonly understood: when a person needs a certain matter, by *tefillah* he can elicit Hashem's favor and attain what he seeks, even though his deeds and merits do not entitle him to it.

**However**, there is an added dimension to *tefillah*, which is often mentioned in the writings of early Torah authorities: *tefillah* is the gate and door to the treasures of Heaven. Even if a person is entitled by virtue of his deeds or by Hashem's great *chesed* to receive a certain blessing or salvation, it will come to him only through *tefillah*. This is true even if goodness is ready and waiting for him. *Tefillah* is the gate through which every-thing comes, and nothing can actualize without it.

**This** principle is learned from *Parashas Bereishis*, where it is written:

**And** all the herbage of the field was not yet on the earth, and all the grasses of the field had not yet sprouted up, because Hashem, G-d, did not yet bring rain on the earth, and man was not there to work the soil.

**Rashi** explains that when the world was nearing its completion on the sixth day, just before man was created, all the grasses of the field still had not sprouted. Indeed, on the third day Hashem had said, "Let the

## Parashat Bahaalotecha - Knocking on The Gates of Mercy

earth bring forth vegetation” but the grasses did not sprout forth then. They stayed below the surface of the ground until the sixth day. Why? Because Hashem “did not yet bring rain.” And why didn’t He bring rain? Because “man was not there to work the soil.” In other words, there was no one in the world to recognize the goodness of rain. When man came, and realized that rain is a necessity for the world, he prayed for it. Rain then fell, and the trees and grasses sprouted. (Rashi’s explanation is from *Chullin* 60b, where the Gemara concludes: “This teaches that HaKadosh Baruch Hu desires the prayers of tzaddikim.”)

**This** is a universal principle: nothing comes without *tefillah*. It was embedded in the nature of the world at the time of Creation that everything should stand at the threshold, nothing should emerge, until man comes and brings it out through his prayer. Whether spiritual matters or material ones, everything needs to come through the gate of *tefillah* - even if it is all ready and waiting for us. *Tefillah* is thus crucial for every blessing and goodness.

**So** it was when Yitzchak was blessed with children:

**Yitzchak** repeatedly beseeched Hashem regarding his wife, for she was barren, and Hashem responded to his beseeching.

**Although** Hashem had already promised to Avraham Avinu that his lineage would continue, this would not have actualized without *tefillah*. Only the prayers of Yitzchak brought Hashem’s blessing.

**And** so with the redemption from Egypt, which Hashem had promised to the Jewish people and over which He had even taken an oath. Nevertheless, it is written:

**And** G-d heard their groaning.

**The** Children of Yisrael would not have been redeemed from Egypt without *tefillah*. There are many other places in the Torah where we see that everything the Avos and all the further generations received was only through *tefillah*.

**R.** Chaim Vital, the great disciple of the Arizal, is quoted as saying that back in the days of *Chazal*, Torah learning was fixed and regular, and the primary form of *avodas Hashem*. But in our times, in the period called *ikvesa d’Mashicha* - where we can already sense the “footsteps of Mashiach” coming - the primary avodah is prayer.

**Now**, this obviously does not mean to lessen the primacy of Torah study in our day, and to suggest that *Chazal*’s teaching of “Torah study is equal to all of them put together” has ceased to apply. Now as well, one word of Torah is worth more than all the mitzvos together and all the *tefillos* together, as *sefer Nefesh HaChaim* explains at length.

**It** rather means that our situation today may be likened to the day of Rosh Hashanah. A *daf* of Gemara learned on Rosh Hashanah is surely greater than the blowing of the shofar, as *Chazal* said, “Torah study is equal to all of them put together.” Nevertheless, the chief *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah is shofar. If someone would disregard the mitzvah of shofar, and only learn Gemara, he would have neither shofar

**Parashat Bahaalotecha - Knocking on The Gates of Mercy**

nor Torah learning. This is because shofar is the special *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah. On that day, a person's primary focus must be directed to the shofar and what it represents.

**So** it is with *avodas hatefillah* in these generations. A person surely should make his Torah learning fixed and regular, and all other occupations secondary. The main way to achieve spiritual elevation is only by toil in Torah. Nonetheless, *tefillah* has special importance in our times. Thus a person needs to work at it and pursue it, and accord it special importance, because it is the special point of focus for the days in which we live.

**In** order to gain some understanding of *tefillah's* special connection to the generation of *ikvesa d'Mashicha*, let us consider what we said before [about *tefillah* as the gate to Heaven's blessings]. These final generations are the gate and passageway between this world and *Yemos HaMashiach*. During the many long years of our people's exile, we have amassed enormous amounts of Torah learning, good deeds and merits. We have undergone much suffering and shown much *mesirus nefesh*. When all this is joined together, the combined power will bring the *geulah*. However, even if everything will be ready for the *geulah*, it will not come about unless the gate opens.

**It** is written:

**With** crying will they come, and through begging for grace will I lead them.

**Chazal** explain this to mean that the exiles will come back only by *tefillah*. Ultimately, everything is brought about by *tefillah* alone.

**This** explains the above-mentioned teaching of *Chazal*:

**[The men of Alexandria asked R. Yehoshua ben Chananya:]** "What should a person do in order to become wise?" He answered them, "He should spend more time sitting in learning, and less time in commerce." They objected, "Many people did this, and it did not work for them. Rather, a person should ask for mercy from the One to Whom wisdom belongs, as it says, 'For Hashem will grant wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.'... What is the message [Rashi: Why did R. Yehoshua tell them to spend more time sitting in learning, if the matter rather depends on Divine mercy]? [The message is] that one without the other does not suffice.

**[They asked another question:]** "What should a person do in order to become rich?" He answered them, "He should conduct business faithfully."

**They** objected, "Many people did this, and it did not work. Rather, a person should ask for mercy from the One to Whom riches belong, as it says, 'The silver is Mine, the gold is Mine.'" What is the message? That one without the other does not suffice.

**[They asked again:]** What should a person do in order to have male children... [The message is] that one without the other does not suffice.

**Here** we see three great gifts: wisdom, riches and sons. And we see that there is a way to attain each one of them, following Hashem's holy system. However, many people tried this way and did not have success, due to their lack of *tefillah*, which

## Am Israel's Travels

**The** Egyptian exile ended, and, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, 2448 years since the creation of the world, Am Israel left Egypt and began their journey...

**Forty-four** days later they arrived in the Sinai desert, and there, on Har Sinai, they merited to receive the Torah directly from Hashem.



**Yet**, even though they finished receiving the Torah at Har Sinai, they didn't continue on their way... Instead, they stayed in the Sinai desert for another 344 days ! Then, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, in the second year of their exodus from Egypt, they left the Sinai desert and began to advance towards the Land of Israel.<sup>5</sup>

**They** began to walk, and Hashem hinted to Moshe Rabbeinu to lead them quickly and without stopping, "If they walk quickly, they'll reach the Land of Israel in only a few days."

**But**, Am Israel, instead of trying to find out why they were being forced to walk so quickly, immediately began to complain, "And the nation complained" (Bamidbar 11:1).

**This** notion that Am Israel had, that the whole world is against them and only wants to harm them, caused great sorrow to Hashem, and this caused enormous damage, "And the fire of Hashem burned among them and consumed the elders of the nation" (Bamidbar 11:1).

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 *Wellsprings of Wisdom* 

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held things back. *Tefillah* is the finishing touch in attaining all the blessings.

**It** is so important to learn the ways of *tefillah*, to work hard on perfecting ourselves in its paths, for *tefillah* is what finishes the job in all the things a person seeks to achieve in life. A person might toil and improve himself in hopes of meriting all the gifts of Heaven in *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*, yet they could be held back due to a lack of *tefillah*.

**Who** knows how many good gifts from Hashem are standing ready for us by the gates of heaven, waiting for the key of *tefillah* to open the gates ? All the gifts are ready and available for the person who prays abundantly – the gates open up to bestow all the blessings upon his head.

- Gates of Prayer (p. 14-20) by Rabbi Shimshon Dovid Pincus.

5. See Rashi (Bamidbar 10:11-12).



**Moshe** Rabbeinu saw the damage caused and immediately took action and stood in prayer before Hashem until he succeeded in rescinding the decree, and the fire subsided...

**Am** Israel hadn't yet even recovered from the death of the elders, and already in the evening, they continued to complain... "And the multitude that was in its midst grew lustful..." (Bamidbar 11:4).

**The** *erev rav* began to cry out, "Why is there only *mann* on the menu? Three times a day, only *mann*! We want real food!"

**This** complaint angered Hashem and He appeared to Moshe Rabbeinu and said to him, "Come and I'll show you what I'm going to do to them!"<sup>6</sup>

**Moshe** saw the impending punishment and was horrified.

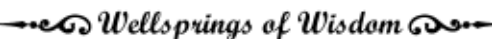
**Moshe** Rabbeinu then turned to Hashem and said, "And if that's what you're going to do, please kill me..." (Bamidbar 11:15).

**And** in response to his request, Hashem turned to Moshe and said, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel... and I will come down and talk with you there, and I will take from the spirit that is upon you and put it upon them" (Bamidbar 11:16-17)...

**Hashem** told Moshe Rabbeinu that the first elders died (after the first complaint), and now He wants him to gather seventy elders from all the tribes of Am Israel and bestow a spirit on them that will allow them to carry the burden of Am Israel along with Moshe Rabbeinu!

**Hashem** wanted there to be prophets to help Moshe Rabbeinu with the burden of Am Israel, and since he was the source that held prophecy in the world, Hashem had to use the spirit that was upon Moshe in order to turn them into prophets as well!<sup>7</sup>

**Moshe** Rabbeinu fulfilled Hashem's command and gathered seventy elders of Am Israel and divided his spirit over them as



6. See Rashi (Bamidbar 11:15).

7. See Drushot Mahari Mintz (Drush 9).

well... and this caused another parasha to be written in the Torah...

**But** before we continue, let's preface...

### **Can They Be Compared ?**

**By** studying the prophets, and especially the first ones, we move to a world of three thousand years ago. A world where they rode on horseback and fought with swords and arrows. We look down on them. We, a generation of jets and the atomic weapons, we imagine that we're progressing forward. They were forest dwellers and we're civilized...

**Nevertheless**, it's difficult for us to accept, understand, and admit that they, who rode donkeys, were like angels, and we, who launch spaceships, are like donkeys.<sup>8</sup>

**And** what's the real explanation for this? Why are we considered nothing compared to them ?

**Rabbi** Nossan Tzvi Finkel zt"l explained as follows...

**Chazal** didn't say that the difference between us and the first generations is that if they

were like great angels we're like small angels, nor did they say that if they were great, we're not so great compared to them.

**Rather**, they explained that the difference between the generations is a fundamental difference... A completely different type of creation !

**The** former had a different "essence" than ours... One that can't be described or understood !

**The** difference between the former and the latter isn't like the difference between a wise person and a stupid person, because even though there are differences between them, they are ultimately of the same essence (they're both human).

**Rather**, the difference between the former and the latter is an abysmal difference like the

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difference between angels and people or between humans and donkeys...<sup>9</sup>

**Simply**, donkeys have no concept of human beings.

**And** if this is how we were compared with respect to the

tzaddikim in the first generations, how will we be compared in regards to Moshe Rabbeinu, Aharon HaKohen, and their sister Miriam...

**After** this introduction, let's return to this week's parasha...

### Miriam And Aharon Speak

**The** seventy elders who received from the spirit of Moshe Rabbeinu began to prophesize. Am Israel, together, them began to rejoice out of excitement.<sup>10</sup>

**After** the joy was over, Miriam approached Aharon and started talking to him. In the verses of the Torah, it's not explained exactly what the topic of the conversation was but we'll quote the words of the Rambam...<sup>11</sup>

**“Remember** what Hashem Elokeicha did to Miriam on the way” (Devarim 24:9) - Contemplate what happened to Miriam the prophetess who spoke about her brother. She was older than he was, had raised him, and had endangered herself to save him from the sea. She didn't speak negatively of him but merely erred in comparing him to the other prophets...<sup>12</sup>

**It's** explained in his words that

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*~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

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9. For more on this topic, see Pathways to the Soul - Issue 106.

10. See Yalkut Shimoni - Bamidbar (Remez 737).

11. Mishne Torah (Hilchot Tumaat Tzarat 16:10).

12. **This** is what he wrote...

**Contemplate** what happened to Miriam the prophetess who spoke about her brother.

She was older than he was, had raised him, and had endangered herself to save him from the sea. She didn't speak negatively of him but merely erred in comparing him to the other prophets, which didn't even bother him, as it is stated “And the man, Moshe, was very humble” (Bamidbar 12:3). And nonetheless, she was immediately punished with *tzaraat*. All the more so is it with *rashaim* who frequently speak arrogantly.

what Miriam did when she spoke with her brother Aharon was compare Moshe Rabbeinu to the other prophets. And even though the Rambam wrote this in general terms (that she compared Moshe to the other prophets), we found that the Rashbam wrote that she compared the level of prophecy that she was on to the level of Moshe Rabbeinu !

**When** Miriam and Aharon said the words, “What did Hashem speak only with Moshe ? ! He also spoke with us !” (Bamidbar 12:2), Hashem immediately appeared before them and revealed to them the immense level that Moshe Rabbeinu had reached and informed them that he is on a much higher level than they are. And yet, despite Hashem’s rebuke, Miriam was punished... “And behold Miriam was afflicted with tzaraat !” (Bamidbar 12:10).

**In** other words, Miriam’s sin was that she discussed whether the level which Moshe had achieved was greater than hers or whether they were equal in rank.

**From** this we learn that it’s forbidden to compare two people and try to decide who’s greater ! We’ve already stated that we have no understanding of the greatness of the first generations, and even more so of the tzaddikim of those generations, and so, we have no ability to understand exactly what happened then.

**However**, simply, every action of a tzaddik brings an enormous abundance of blessing into the world, and more specifically, to Am Israel, and if so, Miriam, through speaking negatively<sup>13</sup> about Moshe, caused that blessing to stop halt...

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### *~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

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Therefore, it is fitting for the someone who wants to guide their ways to distance themselves from these kinds of people and from speaking with them, so as not to fall to their foolishness... At first, they speak a lot about useless things... Then, they come to speak mockingly about the righteous... Until they come to speak

derisively about Hashem, denying His principles of faith...

- Mishne Torah (Hilchot Tumaat Tzarat 16:10).

**13. Now** we come to one of the greatest achievements that a man can achieve in his life – the achievement of learning how to keep quiet. The Rambam said the following:

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“*le’olam yarbeh adam be’shtikah,*” a person should always produce a great deal of silence. To produce silence is a wonderful achievement! A certain *maggid* once lectured in Radin, the town of the Chafetz Chaim, for three hours. When the *maggid* concluded his *drashah*, the Chafetz Chaim remarked that this *maggid* is the finest of men, and he deserves to be compensated accordingly. When queried as to why this was so, the Chafetz Chaim replied that it was not so much for what the *maggid* had said, but that he managed to keep his audience totally quiet for three whole hours! What an achievement! If it had been up to the Chafetz Chaim, the *maggid* would have spoken for longer than three hours!

**We** are taught that “*al kol rega ve’rega she’adam chosem piv,*” for every moment that a person muzzles his mouth, “*zocheh le’ohr haganuz,*” he merits to bask in the hidden light of *Olam Haba*, “*sheh’ain kol malach u’biryah yicholim le’sha’eir,*” which accrues a joy that neither *malach* nor any one of Hashem’s creations can measure. Now, that glorious light is earned by keeping silent for just one moment – can anyone imagine how much reward can be earned by remaining quiet for two moments? This should give us an idea of just how important it is to remain silent.

**The** Rambam tells us that one of the criteria by which a person’s life is evaluated is to what extent he was “*marbeh be’shtikah,*” a producer of silence. So let us begin to produce some silence! The question is, however, how one whose nature it is to be verbose can begin to exercise some control over his manner of speech. Here’s an idea: The next time you are about to open your

mouth, imagine that it will cost you a large sum of money if you do so. Think of how many *mitzvos* you stand to lose by doing so; think of how much of your life you are giving away. Shlomo Hamelech states in *Koheles*, “*Ki HaElokim ba’shamayim ve’atah al ha’aretz al cain yihyu devarecha me’atim,*” For Elokim is in Shamayim, and you are down on the earth – by keeping this in mind we will fulfill the end of the *pasuk* – therefore your words will be few. Think about it for a moment: If you were standing in the presence of a great man, would you dare open your mouth? Certainly not! How much more so, when we arrive at the realization that we are forever standing in front of Hakadosh Baruch Hu – will we have any problem whatsoever remaining silent?

**Remember** what I have just told you, for it is of inestimable importance. Now I am going to say something which might bother some people: The telephone, yes the telephone, is one of the greatest *nisyonos* and obstacles in the way of practicing proper *shemiras halashon*. For we must realize that *shemiras halashon* is not only comprised of refraining from uttering forbidden speech, it even includes refraining from speaking *devarim beteilim*, words that will serve no real purpose to have been spoken. *Shemiras halashon* means that one makes as much effort as possible to avoid talking. Of course, there are times when one must speak. For example, when a husband comes home from work and is greeted by his wife who was home all day long battling with the kids, it is more than likely that she will wish to speak with him. He should sit down with her – but let her do all the talking. All he has to do is listen.

## Parashat Bahaalotecha - Miriam And Aharon Speak

As we mentioned, the Sages teach us, “*mah umnaso shel adam be’olam hazeh?*” what should be man’s profession in this world? “*Ya’aseh atzmo ke’ileim,*” he should make himself similar to a mute. The Sages continue, “*yachol ha’kol,*” I would think that this applies to all forms of speech, “*talmud lomar, tzedek tidaber,*” speak words that pertain to righteousness. Speak words of Torah, and say a few kind words here and there. But realize that speaking properly and knowing when to speak is an *umnus*, a trade that must be learnt and studied.

**The** Chafetz Chaim added an additional insight into the Sages’ statement. Said the Chafetz Chaim, the Sages are not instructing us to actually be an *ileim*, a mute; after all, there are times when it is necessary for a person to speak. Rather, the Sages have told us to be *ke’ileim* similar to an *ileim*. This means, said the Chafetz Chaim, that even when one is forced to say something, he must make himself like a mute when it comes to speaking words that are forbidden by the Torah. Let’s say, for example, that somebody approaches you and begins to speak *lashon hara* about someone else. What’s worse is that he wants you to add your two cents as well. What should you do? Speak if you have to, but speak like an *ileim*. Don’t say one word about the topic that he has brought up. Rather, speak about the weather or about how much it costs to buy a suit in today’s world. By avoiding the subject that he wanted to speak about, you’ve made yourself like an *ileim*.

**The** Chafetz Chaim was once traveling on a train with several businessmen. Fearing that his companions were likely to strike up a conversation that involved *lashon hara*, he posed a question about Belgian horses. The businessmen quickly began to speak about Belgian horses. The Chafetz Chaim was not finished, however. He began to stoke the flames, as he wanted the conversation to continue, and started to criticize Belgian horses. The conversation became a heated one, and one of the men actually reprimanded the Chafetz Chaim for speaking *lashon hara* about horses! Eventually, the men got tired of discussing Belgian horses, and the conversation soon died down. The Chafetz Chaim, once again fearing that the next conversation would be one of a forbidden nature, quickly brought up another subject – English horses. Once again, the Chafetz Chaim attempted to lengthen the conversation by throwing in a few negative remarks about English horses. It worked, and the men argued about English horses until they arrived in Vilna. When the Chafetz Chaim got off the train, he was quite pleased, as he had prevented his companions from speaking *lashon hara* about people, through cleverly speaking *lashon hara* about horses. He had spoken, but he had spoken like an *ileim*.

**In** short, sometimes we must speak, but we must remember to be careful about what we say. Learning to speaking properly is an *umnus*, and it’s one *umnus* that we are all required to learn.

- Rabbi Avigdor Miller Speaks (Vol. 1, p.

## The Purpose - A Holy Nation

**In** the month of Sivan, Am Israel arrived in the Sinai desert and prepared to receive the Torah.

**Before** receiving the Torah, Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe and said...

**“And** you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to Bnei Israel” (Shemot 19:6) – Thanks to you receiving the Torah, you will merit reaching your true purpose, to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...

**But**, in order for you to merit being a holy nation, you need another condition, in addition to receiving the Torah, and it’s what’s written at the beginning of the verse, “And you shall be to me...”

**“You”** - all together as one.

**Precisely** by being in unity with one another and having true Ahavat Israel for one another,

you can merit being a holy nation that is mine.

**And** you need to know that unity is something spiritual, and like everything spiritual, it also consists of an infinite number of levels. But in general, it’s divided into three general levels...

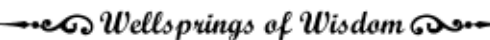
**This** is how Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zt”l defined them...<sup>14</sup>

**Complete** unity is achieved precisely when someone achieves completeness in three points...

**1.** Unity with a tzaddik... That they have a tzaddik in whom they follow and believe in.

**2.** Unity with a friend... That they have a friend who they’re connected with and regularly discuss their avodat Hashem with them.

**3.** Unity with themselves... That they know the strengths that belongs to them.<sup>15</sup>



14. Likutei Moharan I (Torah 34).

15. See Pathways to the Soul – Issue 105 for a better understanding.

**We'll** focus on unity with a friend...

**Let's** start with the words of the Gemara...

### **You Can't!**

**In** the third generation of the Amoraim (the sages of the Gemara) lived three tzaddikim, Abaye, Rava and Abba Omnuna.

**Abaye** and Rava are mentioned in almost every page of Gemara. And Abba Omnuna was a doctor.

**Even** though Abba Omnuna was a doctor, he merited something that Abaye and Rava didn't. This is how it's told over in the Gemara...<sup>16</sup>

**Each** and every day, a voice would come out from heaven and proclaimed, "Shalom Lecha Abba Omnuna!"

**Every** Friday another voice would come out from heaven and announce, "Shalom Lecha Abaye!"

**And** every Yom Kippur (once a year!) another voice would come out from heaven and proclaim, "Shalom Lecha Rava!"

**Abaye** then thought to himself, "Why don't I get a Shalom from heaven every day?!" He was then answered from heaven, "Don't be sorrowed, your deeds aren't like his..."

**The** Gemara then continues and tells what deeds Abba Omnuna had...

**Abba** Omnuna was a doctor, and instead of charging his patients in a normal way, he hung a cash register outside his door and when his patients would leave, after receiving treatment, they would be able to pay, or not, without him knowing. Whoever had the means of paying would pay what they could, and whoever didn't, wouldn't, and Abba Omnuna wouldn't know who he received money from and from who he didn't.



**When** someone poor would come for treatment, he wouldn't only not take money from them, but he would also open the cash register and give them some money so that he could buy something to eat. Also, if a talmid chacham came to him, he wouldn't accept any money from them.

**Once**, Abaye sent two talmidei chachamim to test Abba Omnuna. When they came to him he gave them something to eat and drink and also prepared a place for them to spend the night. He took woolen sheets and prepared their beds.

**In** the morning, the two guests took the woolen sheets they slept on and brought them to the market to sell them...

**Suddenly**, they ran into Abba Omnuna. They said to him, "Please tell us how much these sheets are worth and pay us accordingly."

**They** then waited to see if he'll accuse them of robbing him or if he'll tell them that they're not worth much, so that they'll give it back...

**Abba** Omnuna looked at the two and after a few short seconds

told them the true value of the sheet.

**They** then asked, "Maybe they're worth more?" To which he answered and told them that that was the exact price he had just bought them for.

**They** then admitted to him that they took the sheets from his home and asked him what he thought to himself when he realized that they stole the sheets from his home...

**He** told them that he believed they needed the money to save someone that was in captive or that they were very poor but embarrassed to ask for money, but not even for a second did he think they did it wickedly.

**They** then continued on to tell him that they were only sent to test him, as they tried to give him back the sheets, but to their surprise, he wouldn't take them back...

**"As** soon as you took them, I said to myself that they're yours..."

**And** not only was Abaye sorrowed, but so too was Rava who only received the divine voice from heaven once a year...

**Parashat Bahaalotecha - Finding Your Purpose**

**However**, from heaven they consoled him and told him that he shouldn't be sorrowed because in his merit, his entire city is protected...

### Finding Your Purpose

**The** prophet Yeshayah prophesied, "And your nation is completely righteous" (Yeshayah 60:21)...

**Rebbe** Nachman of Breslov zt"l explained<sup>17</sup> that in every Jew there is a point of Judaism, a point of faith, a precious point, which no other person has except them.

**And** this point that exists in every Jew is the divine lifeforce that is found in every Jew for each and every Jew is a channel that reveals Hashem in our world in their own way.

**About** this point it's said, "And your nation is completely righteous," because at this point, we're all righteous.

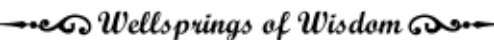
**Abba** Omnuna merited that this point within him shone intensely and openly.

**By** this it's understood that although there's no measuring the greatness of Abaye,<sup>18</sup> nevertheless, Abba Omnuna had a special virtue that Abaye didn't have, and it was the special point that belonged only to Abba Omnuna, which shone with all its validity and strength, and was unmatched by anything else in the world.

**And** for that, he received Shalom every day from heaven...

**Yet**, not only Abba Omnuna, but every person.

**If** they're able to connect to their special inner point that belongs only to them, and have it shine and illuminate, then there's no one in the entire world who resembles them in that point that's special to them, and in that they draw down blessing to all of creation...



17. Likutei Moharan I (Torah 34).

18. See what the Arizal wrote about him in his book Sefer Hagilgulim (Ch. 28).

Parashat Bahaalotecha - Sacrificing

**However**, in order for someone to connect to that special point that belongs to them and have it illuminate, they need to devote a lot of time, attention, effort, and prayer to Hashem that He help them connect to their special point found only within

them and have it shone for the whole world to see and benefit from it.

**We** shouldn't stop striving with full determination and prayer until each and every one of us is able to reach that special point that belongs to them...

**Sacrificing...**

**The** following is an excerpt from our book Imrei Noam by HaRav Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l...<sup>19</sup>

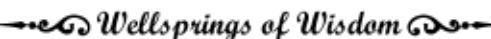
**At** the beginning of parashat Vayikra, the Torah says, "A person who brings a sacrifice from you to Hashem, of the animals, of the cattle, or of the sheep, you shall bring your sacrifice" (אָדָם כִּי יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קִרְבָּן לַה' מִן הַבְּהֵמָה מִן הַבְּקָר וּמִן הַצֹּאן תִּקְרִיבוּ אֶת קִרְבְּנֵיכֶם) (Vayikra 1:2).

**Since** the verse doesn't say, "A person from you (among you) who brings a sacrifice," rather it says, "A person who brings a sacrifice from you," the chassidic masters reveal that the Torah intends to hint

to us that if a person wishes to draw closer to Hashem, they must be ready to sacrifice themselves for this purpose, and give up all which will be required of them in order to achieve closeness to Hashem.

**This** is the meaning of the verse, "A person who brings a sacrifice from you" (אָדָם כִּי יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם) – that is, a person who wants to become closer to Hashem (יִקְרִיב – *yakriv*, coming from the word הִתְקַרְבּוּת – *hitkarvut* (closeness)) must sacrifice "from you," i.e., sacrifice from themselves for this purpose.

**But** what exactly does a person have to sacrifice from themselves? To this, the verse



19. Imrei Noam (Vayikra, Maamar 4).

Parashat Bahaalotecha - Sacrificing

answers, “of the animals” – that is, the primary aspect of a person’s *avodah* in this world is to sacrifice their own animalistic desires that oppose the will of Hashem, and to desire only what Hashem desires, as *chazal* say,<sup>20</sup> “Nullify your will to His will.”

**The** verse then adds, “Of the cattle, or of the sheep, you shall bring your sacrifice” – That is, of all the sacrifices of cattle and sheep, the most precious is “your sacrifice.” The sacrifice that you offer from yourself and overcome your animalistic desires, whether for food, drink, honor, jealousy, hatred, or lust, for the honor of Hashem, is more precious than all other animals you may offer.<sup>21</sup>

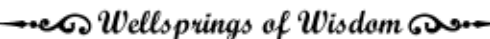
**In** addition to this, Rebbe Shneur Zalman of Liadi zt”l explains<sup>22</sup> that there are those whose animal soul is in the aspect of “cattle” – that they’re hot-tempered by nature, similar to a bull, and there are those whose animal soul is in the

aspect of “sheep” – that although they aren’t hot-tempered by nature, rather a very calm person, the bad part of them is that they’re lustful, similar to a sheep.

**Thus**, the Torah says, “Of the animals, of the cattle, or of the sheep, you shall bring your sacrifice” – That is, whether one’s animal soul is in the aspect of “cattle” or in the aspect of “sheep,” each person must sacrifice their own animalistic desires for the honor of Hashem.

**We** learn from the Alter Rebbe that not all inclinations are equal. What for one person is not considered a test at all, for another person is an enormous test.

**There’s** a person who’s very angry by nature, and for whom to control their anger is an enormous test, and in contrast, there’s a person who’s very calm by nature, and for whom this isn’t considered a test at all. Likewise, there’s a



20. Pirkei Avot 2:4.

21. Be’er Mayim Chaim (Vayikra 1:2).

22. Likutei Torah (Vayikra 2b).

person whose desire for lust burns within them, and for them to close their eyes and not look at forbidden sights is an enormous test, and in contrast, there's a person whose desire for lust is cold, and for them, this isn't considered a test at all. The same goes for all other types of inclinations and tests...

**Thus**, *chazal* say,<sup>23</sup> “Do not judge your fellow until you have stood in their place.”

**According** to its simple meaning, “their place” is the physical environment where their live or work, and sometimes the sanctity and modesty there aren't so kept, and they're required to fight a great war with their desires in order not to copy their surroundings or transgress in seeing forbidden sights or even worse...

**Certainly**, their tests and struggles are very difficult, more than those who sit for most of the day in the Beit Midrash in front of holy *sefarim* and learn Torah. Therefore, you must not judge

them unfavorably, for it's very possible that if you would be in their place, you wouldn't be in a much better situation than them.

**But** in addition to the simple meaning, according to the holy Baal Shem Tov, “their place” is their spiritual level and unique type of animal soul, which aren't equal for everyone. What for one person isn't considered a test at all, for another person is an enormous test, as stated above. Therefore, if you come across a person whose actions aren't desirable, you shouldn't judge them unfavorably, for it's very possible that if you were in “their place,” i.e., on the same spiritual level and had the same animal soul that they have, you wouldn't be in a much better situation than them.

**A** person has to look at Am Israel with a good eye and not awaken accusations against them, *chas v'shalom*. One must remember that Hashem loves Am Israel no matter what, and He takes great pleasure in their good deeds, and

whoever mentions their iniquities, *chas v'shalom*, causes Hashem much sorrow. The truth is that only externally Am Israel sometimes looks not so good, but internally, they're precious, pure souls. A Jew is like a diamond, and a diamond remains a diamond no matter what, even if it's covered in mud and dirt.

**We** must correct our way of looking at Am Israel. It's necessary to understand that every Jew is a precious child of Hashem. The fact that they behave inappropriately is only because they weren't taught to behave differently. Therefore, we must judge them favorably, because it's very possible that if we were brought up in a home or a

school like theirs, we too would behave like them.

**Let's** summarize everything we've learned so far...

**Every** Jew has their own special path, the purpose of which is to help them discover and illuminate the special point that belongs only to them. And if so, it's simply impossible to compare between to Jews...

**Even** more so, since there's something special about every Jew, that's why Ben Zuma said,<sup>24</sup> "Who is wise? Someone who learns from everyone!"

**And** since Miriam the prophetess tried comparing Moshe and his actions, she was punished...

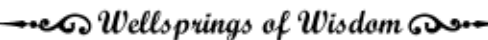
### Healing...

**Following** Miriam's words, she became upset...

**Aharon** approached Moshe, his brother, and said to him, "Please have mercy on Miriam..."<sup>25</sup>

**Moshe** Rabbeinu then immediately stood in prayer before Hashem and begged, "Hashem, please heal her!" (Bamidbar 12:13).

**And** by the power of prayer, he healed his sister Miriam.



24. Pirkei Avot 4:1.

25. See Bamidbar 12:12.

**We** found that Rabbi Yehuda Leib Iger zt”l, in his book Torat Emet (the end of parashat Bahaalotecha), revealed the following...

**By** the power of the prayer that Moshe prayed for Miriam, he was able to draw from heaven the power of healing to the world, and after Miriam was cured, the power of healing was put into the “Well of Miriam.”

**From** then on, there wasn’t even one person sick during Am Israel’s entire forty years of traveling in the desert. After all, during all those years, Am Israel drank from Miriam’s well... from the source of all healing.

**It** turns out that from Miriam’s “failure” and “mistake,” she was able to draw down health to all of Am Israel...

**Shabbat Shalom !**

### *The Pathway...*

1. Every Jew has their own special path, the purpose of which is to help them discover and illuminate the special point that belongs only to them. And if so, it's simply impossible to compare between to Jews...
2. A point that should always be remembered is that not all inclinations are equal. What for one person is not considered a test at all, for another person is an enormous test.
3. There's a person who's very angry by nature, and for whom to control their anger is an enormous test, and in contrast, there's a person who's very calm by nature, and for whom this isn't considered a test at all. Likewise, there's a person whose desire for lust burns within them, and for them to close their eyes and not look at forbidden sights is an enormous test, and in contrast, there's a person whose desire for lust is cold, and for them, this isn't considered a test at all. The same goes for all other types of inclinations and tests...
4. *Chazal* say, "Do not judge your fellow until you have stood in their place." According to its simple meaning, "their place" is the physical environment where their live or work, and sometimes the sanctity and modesty there aren't so kept, and they're required to fight a great war with their desires in order not to copy their surroundings or transgress in seeing forbidden sights or even worse. Therefore, you must not judge them unfavorably, for it's very possible that if you would be in their place, you wouldn't be in a much better situation than them.
5. But in addition to the simple meaning, according to the holy *Baal Shem Tov*, "their place" is their spiritual level and unique type of animal soul, which aren't equal for everyone. What for one person isn't considered a test at all, for another person is an enormous test, as stated above. Therefore, if you come across a



*The Pathway...*

person whose actions aren't desirable, you shouldn't judge them unfavorably, for it's very possible that if you were in "their place," on the same spiritual level and had the same animal soul that they have, you wouldn't be in a much better situation than them.

**6.** A person has to look at Am Israel with a good eye and not awaken accusations against them, *chas v'shalom*. One must remember that Hashem loves Am Israel no matter what, and He takes great pleasure in their good deeds, and whoever mentions their iniquities, *chas v'shalom*, causes Hashem much sorrow. The truth is that only

externally Am Israel sometimes looks not so good, but internally, they're precious, pure souls. A Jew is like a diamond, and a diamond remains a diamond no matter what, even if it's covered in mud and dirt.

**7.** We must correct our way of looking at Am Israel. It's necessary to understand that every Jew is a precious child of Hashem. The fact that they behave inappropriately is only because they weren't taught to behave differently. Therefore, we must judge them favorably, because it's very possible that if we were brought up in a home or a school like theirs, we too would behave like them.



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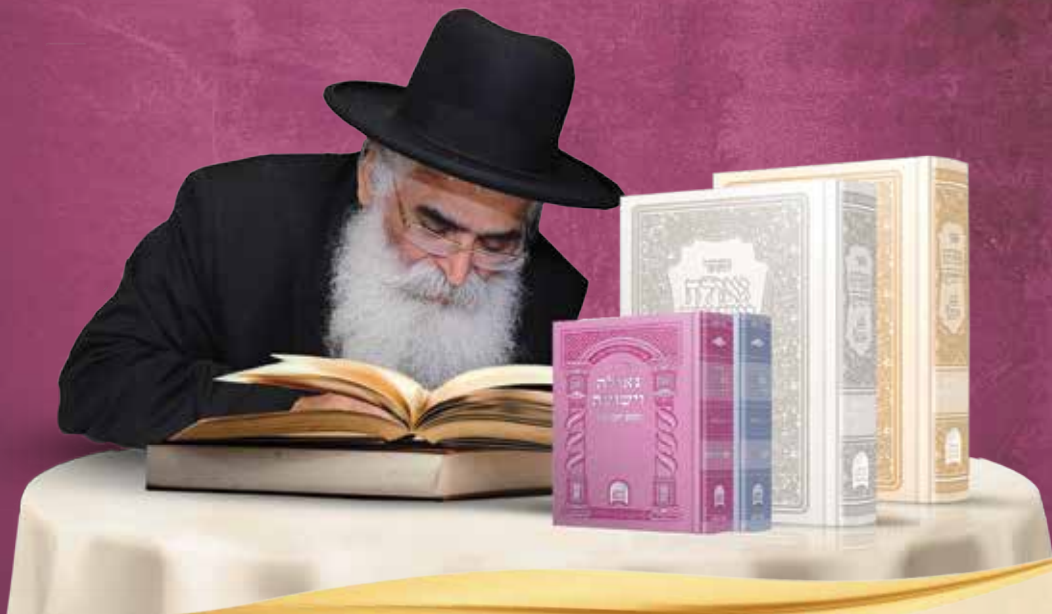
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City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	8:03 pm	9:12 pm	9:35 pm
Miami	7:50 pm	8:48 pm	9:21 pm
Los Angeles	7:41 pm	8:44 pm	9:13 pm
Montreal	8:18 pm	9:34 pm	9:50 pm
Toronto	8:35 pm	9:48 pm	10:06 pm
London	8:53 pm	10:22 pm	10:22 pm
Jerusalem	7:29 pm	8:19 pm	9:15 pm
Tel Aviv	7:26 pm	8:16 pm	9:11 pm
Haifa	7:27 pm	8:17 pm	9:13 pm
Be'er Sheva	7:07 pm	7:58 pm	8:50 pm

### Pathways to the Heart

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

*Every person must constantly  
keep their children in their  
thoughts and remember that  
everything that they do for  
the sake of heaven merits  
them that their children  
will grow up to be talmidei  
chachamim.*

*There is nothing more  
praiseworthy than parents  
that merit raising children  
that grow up to become  
tzaddikim.*



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