

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

✧ THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION ✧

In honor of our parents, Tuvia and Lea Schottenstein and Rabbi Yisroel and Chana Sirota

Erev Shabbos Parshas Va'eira 5781 – January 15, 2021

ערב שבת פרשת וארא, ב' שבט, ה'תשפ"א

✧ כתר שם טוב ✧

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

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The Dishonor of Chasing Honor

The Torah testifies that Moses was exceedingly humble, but even Moses exercised his authority as necessary. He was the king of the Jews and conducted himself accordingly, but solely in the service of G-d—to train the nation to serve G-d.

Moses did not want to rule. He refused the position: *I beseech You, G-d, send now using the agency of the one [i.e., Aaron] whom You would [regularly] send* (4:13), but G-d forced leadership upon him.

When Korah challenged that leadership, Moses responded, *Rav lachem bnei Levi—It is enough for you, sons of Levi!* (Numbers 16:7). Meaning, your self-promotion is not for G-d's sake, but *rav lachem*—the *rav*, “greatness,” you demand, is *lachem*, “for yourselves.”

It is difficult to avoid shedding our humility while pursuing a *mitzvah*. We are focused on our spiritual opportunity, but wait—perhaps this *mitzvah* does not belong to us; perhaps someone else is more fitting for it. To grab it for ourselves is highly arrogant. Is there a greater *mitzvah* than to lead and teach Torah to the entire nation? And yet Moses declined the opportunity because he felt that Aaron was a better candidate.

Do not quarrel over the right to perform a *mitzvah* involving any form of authority or control. Flee from such arguments! If it is for you, G-d will compel the entire world to place it in your hands without you having to compete or promote yourself. Pray that G-d assists you in avoiding this trap.

Focus: Humility is always important. If you need to be in a position of authority, G-d will find His way to put you there. Don't let it be the source of a quarrel.

✧ גאולה ✧

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiah uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by Yaakov Paley

From Exile To Redemption

The phrase *lachein emor*, “Therefore, say,” is used twice in the Torah. The first is in this *parshah*: “Therefore, say to the children of Israel: I am G-d, and I will extract you from under the burdens of Egypt” (6:6). The second concerns Pinchas: “Therefore, say to him: Behold, I am giving him my covenant of peace.” Taken together, the two verses leave us with

a directive. The way to bring the final redemption, the era in which G-d will extract us from the burdens of exile, is to uphold the covenant of peace, through loving our fellow Jews and preserving Jewish unity.

Mikri Dardiki

STUDY CYCLE FOR SHABBOS DAY

Chumash

Va'eira, 7th reading: The seventh plague was a rain of hail formed miraculously of ice together with fire. Par'oh again agreed to send forth the Jewish people if Moshe would stop the plague of hail. Moshe prayed to G-d, and the thunder and hail ceased and the rain stopped, but as before, Par'oh reneged.

Tanya

Likutei Amarim Ch. 19: The core distinction between holiness (Kedusha) and its opposite, is the former's self-nullification to the Divine, versus the latter's seeking its own independent existence / The Innate Love is termed 'hidden' because it is covered by the foolishness of the animal-like soul.

Takeaway: Your soul always yearns to be connected to God. This feeling is often-time incarcerated, covered over by foolishness. What will it take to "free it"?!

Rambam (1)

Zmanim, Hilchos Kidush HaChodesh Ch. 13 — The True Position of the Sun: By calculating the approximate position and the apogee of the sun you determine the "course of the sun." Learn the formula on how to calculate the true position of the sun through knowing its course and determining "the angle of the course." Now that you know the sun's true location you can calculate the beginning of a given season.

GATE OF TRUST

Never Have A Hard Day

Bitachon instills in a person a **peace of mind and body** that comes from **not needing to perform difficult work, nor engage in occupations that tire the body. A person who trusts in G-d chooses those means of sustenance for himself that entail greater rest for his body, give him a good name, and leave his heart free from worry. He also chooses those occupations that are more helpful for his Torah observances.***

All this is due to his strong belief that the means of sustenance will not add to his amount of sustenance nor will it cause him to lack anything. His amount of sustenance will **only** be increased or decreased by the decree of G-d, may He be blessed.

The author will now cite a verse as proof that a person does not become wealthy through traveling. Rather, it is G-d Who causes people to be rich or poor: **As it says (Psalms 75:7-8): *For it is not from the east or from the west, nor from the desert, that elevation comes. Rather, G-d judges; He humbles this one and elevates that one.*** Likewise, it says (Psalms 23:2): ***He causes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters.***

Commentary: Occupations that are more helpful for his Torah observances. The Lubavitcher Rebbe writes: "In response to your question whether you should return to a city that has no *minyan* for work... I wrote all the above because I do not know the degree of your *bitachon*. However, if you

are strong in this respect with simple faith, and you seek just a "vessel" for livelihood (see *Kuntreis U'Maayan*, sec. 25), G-d will grant you your livelihood in a place where there is a *minyan*, etc., and you will be able to carry out all your obligations" (*Igrot Kodesh of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*, vol. 3, p. 372).

Bottom Line: Even with the greatest toil, a person cannot earn one cent more than what G-d has ordained. A person must do what is necessary, and he must remember that all our labors are only of secondary importance. Of primary importance is G-d's blessing, and the blessings are earned by acting in a way appropriate for a Jew—i.e., praying with a *minyan*, keeping Shabbat and kashrut vigilantly, and educating his children under the guidance of G-d-fearing teachers (*Hayom Yom*, 4 Av).

Freedom Comes In Fours

לְכֹן אָמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבֻלֹת מִצְרַיִם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מֵעַבְדֹתָם וְגִאֲלֵתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּזֵרוּעַ נְטוּיָהּ וּבְשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים: וְלָקַחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעָם וְהִיִּיתִי לְכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וַיְדַעְתֶּם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַמּוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבֻלוֹת מִצְרַיִם.

Therefore, say to the children of Israel, 'I am the L-rd, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will release you from their labor, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

And I will take you to Me as a people, and I will be a G-d to you, and you will know that I am the L-rd your G-d, Who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. (Va'eira, 6:6-7)

The Talmud Yerushalmi states:¹

From where [do we derive the requirement to drink] four cups [of wine at the Pesach Seder]? Rabbi Yochanan [said] in the name of Rav, "Rabbi Benayah said, 'They correspond to the four [expressions of] salvation: "...I will free you...I will release you...I will redeem you...I will take you."²

Driving Question: What is the significance of the four expressions of redemption?

There were two steps to the redemption. The first was the physical exodus from Egypt, but more importantly, the ultimate goal was for the Jewish people to reach Mount Sinai and receive the Torah on Shavuot.³ True freedom is achieved through Torah study, as the Mishna states,⁴ "There is no free individual, except for he who occupies himself with the study of Torah." The Exodus was the freedom of the body, the Torah brings freedom to the soul.

It thus follows that just as there are four elements of physical liberation as expressed in the

four expressions of redemption,⁵ there are also four elements of the freedom of the soul brought about through Torah. This is expressed in what is known as the פְּרָדֶס *Pardes* (lit. "orchard") — an acronym for four levels of Torah interpretation: פ = *p'shat* (the literal meaning of the text), ר = *remez* (its allusions), ד = *derush* (the homilies that can be derived from it), and ס = *sod* (its mystical secrets).

These four levels of Torah also correspond to the four letters in the Divine name יהוה-ו-י YHVH (referred to as *Havaya*).⁶ Furthermore, the four letters of G-d's name correspond to a parallel four elements within the Jewish soul structure which stems from and is a part of G-d.⁷

Hashem is referred to by various names. The primary name, the Tetragrammaton, is spelled יהוה-ו-י (*Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei*).

The *Yud* (י) represents *Chochma*, the core of the *Neshoma*.

The first *Hei* (ה) refers to the mental capacity of *Bina* — the ability to absorb an idea, broaden it and reach a comprehensive understanding of it.

5. Which correspond to — and are the undoing of - the four decrees of Par'oh (Shemos Rabba, ch. 6).

6. The Mishnas Chasidim (מ"ב) teaches that the four levels of Torah interpretation correspond to the four worlds/realms: עשיה, יצירה, בריאה, אצילות (which in turn are parallel to the four letters of יהוה-ו-י). This is also found in Eitz Chayim. In English, see chabad.org/2718387.

The Shaloh HaKadosh mentions that the four cups of wine correspond to the 4 letters of יהוה-ו-י.

7. This is hinted at in the first of the Ten Commandments, the opening of the Receiving of Torah. G-d says, "I am יהוה-ו-י your G-d (אֱלֹהֶיךָ)..." Elokim comes from the word power. Thus, the verse can be interpreted as meaning: I am empowering each of you with the four letters of My Holy name (See Likkutei Torah, Parshas Re'eh). In Tanya Igeres HaTeshuva, chapter 4, this same teaching is based on the verse: כִּי חֵלֶק הוּא עָמוֹ (interpreted as "Havaya is a part of His people").

1. Jerusalem Talmud Pesachim 68b:

2. Va'eira 6:6-7.

3. This is evident from what G-d tells Moshe at the *S'neh* (burning bush): "When you take the people out of Egypt, they will worship G-d on this mountain." (Shemos, 3:12). The burning bush was on Mount Sinai. Thus the start of the Exodus process was linked with its final purpose — receiving the Torah.

It is for this reason that the two festivals, Pesach and Shavuot, are closely connected and in some ways seen as an extension of one another. There is no date for Shavuot in the Torah, rather it is marked as the 50th day from Pesach, signifying that it is the culmination of the Exodus.

4. Avot 6:2

The *Vov*⁸ (ו) corresponds to the six middos — the core emotional spectrum.

The final *Hei* (ה) refers to the powers of thought, speech and primarily action — how we impact the world.

To be truly free, we need to allow G-dliness to radiate in all four areas. The soul should shine through every part of our being. Our mind should be absorbed, involved and connected to holiness. Our emotions should feel G-dliness in a real way. Our actions should be in line with the teachings of the Torah.

By learning Torah on all the four levels one experiences the freedom it brings in all four soul ele-

8. The numerical value of *Vov* is 6.

ments as well. This is expressed in the four expressions of redemption in our Parsha.

Thus, the four cups, corresponding to the four expressions of redemption, are not only referring to the physical Exodus (of the body) from slavery, but to the four elements of soul — paralleling four elements in Hashem — which are liberated through the four dimensions of Torah study.

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Igros Kodesh, pg. 276.⁹
(*Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 4, ch. 44*)

9. This letter, dated “Erev Shabbos HaGadol, 5692” was sent to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak begins with wishes for a liberative Pesach, mentions the four expressions of redemption, then in parentheses launches into a 7-page in-depth Kabbalistic dissertation on the mystical meaning of the significance of the four cups before concluding with the above teaching (in 5 lines)!

פרשת השבוע

PARSHA INSIGHT

By: **Rabbi Moshe Wisnefsky** From: **Daily Wisdom #3**

Based on the works of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

The Redemption from Egypt

Moses said to [Pharaoh], “When I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to G-d. The thunder will cease and there will be no more hail—so that you know that the world belongs to G-d.” (9:29)

Moses had to leave the city in order to pray to G-d because Egypt’s capital was full of idols.¹ These idols were tangible symbols of the materialistic approach to life that characterized Egypt, which was antithetical to the notion that there is a G-d apart from the physical world and the natural processes that govern it. It was therefore virtually impossible for Moses to focus on G-d in an atmosphere saturated with the denial of His existence.

1. *Shemot Rabbah* 12:5 Rashi on this verse.

Nonetheless, when it came time to redeem the Jewish people, G-d *Himself*, as it were, came to take them out of Egypt.

This teaches us that when we consciously decide that it is time for us to be redeemed, then, regardless of what depths to which we think we may have sunk (or what depths to which we may have indeed sunk), G-d will redeem us.

Hitva’aduyot 5721, vol. 2, pp. 214-217.

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