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Parshah Va'eira in a Nutshell

(Exodus 1:1-6:1)

G-d reveals Himself to Moses. Employing the "four expressions of redemption," He promises to take out the Children of Israel from Egypt, deliver them from their enslavement, redeem them, and acquire them as His own chosen people at Mount Sinai; He will then bring them to the land He promised to the Patriarchs as their eternal heritage.

Moses and Aaron repeatedly come before Pharaoh to demand in the name of G-d, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me in the wilderness." Pharaoh repeatedly refuses. Aaron's staff turns into a snake and swallows the magic sticks of the Egyptian sorcerers. G-d then sends a series of plagues upon the Egyptians.

The waters of the Nile turn to blood; swarms of frogs overrun the land; lice infest all men and beasts. Hordes of wild animals invade the cities; a pestilence kills the domestic animals; painful boils afflict the Egyptians.

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

**Shabbos Schedule
Parshas Va'eira**

Erev Shabbos – Jan. 4, 2019

Candle Lighting4:24 pm

Mincha4:25 pm

Shabbos – Jan. 5, 2019

Tehillim Reading 8:00 am

Shacharis 9:30 am*

Torah Reading 10:35 am

Drasha 11:10 am

Kiddush 12:10 pm

Gemara (2-31 Summit) Postponed

Mincha 4:30 pm

Rabbi's Drasha 4:50 pm

Shabbos Ends 5:28 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:39 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule

Minyan

Shacharis 6:15 am

Mincha 1:45 pm

Maariv 9:15 pm

Classes

Chassidus, Mon-Fri 5:55 am

Halachah, Mon-Fri 1:40 pm

Torah Studies Mon. 7-8:00 pm

Tuesday Talmud 9:30-10:00 pm

This week's bulletin

is sponsored by

Rabbi Martin

Rosenfeld

Attorney,

Divorce Mediator

34-00 Linwood Ave

Fair Lawn, NJ

(201) 256-4113

www.NJmediation.com

Kiddush

This week's kiddush is sponsored by the Shul.

For the seventh plague, fire and ice combine to descend from the skies as a devastating hail. Still, "the heart of Pharaoh was hardened and he would not let the children of Israel go, as G-d had said to Moses." ❖



Tehillim - Psalms

**Join us this Shabbos morning
Jan 5 at 8:00 am for
Shabbos Mevorchim Tehillim.**

This week's Tehillim reading is dedicated to a refuah sh'laima for Vidal Pasha bas Sarah.

Eruv website:

www.fairlawneruv.com

Eruv Hotline phone number:

201-254-9190.

These resources are updated every Friday after the Eruv is inspected.

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, January 5

Eastern Standard Time

Earliest Tallis 6:19 AM

Latest Morning Shema 9:39 AM

Earliest Mincha (Gedola) 12:26 PM

Plag Hamincha 3:48 PM

Earliest Evening Shema 5:14 PM

Thank You to:

**Rabbi Steinhauser
for reading the Torah
and to our
Kiddush Volunteers**

Chassidic Masters

“What Is G-d's Answer?”

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

Last week's Parshah concluded with the epochal exchange between Moses and G-d over the mystery of human suffering. Moses protested, "My G-d, why have You done evil to this people?"; and G-d replied: "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

This week's reading, the Parshah of Vaeira ("And I made Myself seen"), opens with a new communication from G-d to Moses, in which G-d says:

"I am G-d (Y-H-V-H). I made Myself seen to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, by the name of El Sha-dai, but by My name, Y-H-V-H, I did not make Myself known to them."

G-d then goes on to reiterate His promise to the Patriarchs to give the Land of Canaan to their descendents, evoking the "four expressions of redemption — "I will bring you out, I will save you, I will redeem you, I will take you" — which chronicle the various stages of the redemption, culminating in Israel's election as G-d's chosen people at Mount Sinai.

The commentaries see this divine communication as the continuation of the exchange between G-d and

Moses at the end of the previous Parshah. G-d's mention of His relationship with the Patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — is interpreted as a rebuke to Moses:

G-d said to Moses: I regret the loss of those who have passed away and are no longer found. Many times I revealed Myself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; they did not question My ways, nor did they say to me, "What is Your name?" You, on the other hand, asked from the start, "What is Your name?" and now you are saying to Me, "You have not saved Your people!" (Talmud, Sanhedrin 111a).

You questioned My ways; unlike Abraham, to whom I said, "Isaac shall be considered your seed" and then I said to him, "Raise him up to Me as an offering" — and still, he did not question Me (Rashi)

G-d also says: "By My name, Y-H-V-H, I did not make Myself known to them." This is understood by the commentaries as G-d saying to Moses: "I did not reveal My quintessential truth," represented by the divine name Y-H-V-H, to the Patriarchs; they knew Me only by the name El Sha-dai which represents a more limited manifestation of My being. They accepted that they could never comprehend My infinite, unknowable essence. You, on the other hand, to whom I have revealed My truth, question My ways (Rashi; Nachmanides).

This is how the opening verses of Vaeira are interpreted by the

Midrash, Talmud and the biblical commentaries. The Chassidic masters delve deeper into these verses, and find there more than a rebuke to Moses: in G-d's words they also see an answer (of sorts) to Moses' question, and also a justification of his outcry.

The Pendulum of Life

All life, say the Kabbalists, is characterized by a to-and-fro movement called ratzo v'shov (running forth and drawing back) or mati v'lo mati (reaching and retreating). The heart contracts and expands; the lungs exhale and inhale; the body sleeps, extinguishing its more elevated faculties (cohesive thought, sight, hearing, etc.), in order to rejuvenate its energies; the mind meditates, emptying itself of prior conceptions in order to receive fresh insight; the earth enters night and winter, enduring periods of darkness and hibernation in order to attain a new dawn or spring.

The same is also true of the flow of vitality from G-d to His creation: this flow also pulsates, running forth and drawing back, reaching and retreating. And the more elevated the bestowal is, the more intense is the withdrawal to precede it. Thus, times of extraordinary illumination from Above are always preceded by periods of profound spiritual darkness.

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Thus Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi explains G-d's words to Moses regarding the difference in the quality of His relationship with the Patriarchs and His newly unveiled revelation of the divine name Y-H-V-H.

To the Patriarchs — G-d is saying to Moses — I revealed Myself only as El Sha-dai, relating to them only via the constraints and limitations that define My investment within the created reality. But to you and your generation I shall reveal, for the very first time, "My name Y-H-V-H," the name that connotes "My quintessential truth." For the purpose of the Exodus (as G-d said to Moses at the burning bush) is the revelation at Mount Sinai and the communication of My Torah, which is the very embodiment of My wisdom and will.

You ask why My people must suffer so terribly in their exile. You ask why is My face hidden, why I have seemingly withdrawn My providence over their lives. But this seeming withdrawal is an integral part of the tremendous revelation to come, which shall herald a new, unprecedented intimacy between man and G-d.

Indeed, adds the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the revelation of the Exodus and the concealment that preceded it are two faces of the same reality. In order for the people of Israel to relate to the quintessential truth of G-d revealed at Sinai, they first had to unearth their own quintessential truth — which could manifest itself only in the nadir of their Egyptian galut.

"Truth" is that which is consistent and unchanging, the core reality of a thing that remains unaffected by all external circumstances. The quintessential truth of the Jewish soul is its loyalty and attachment to G-d; but loyalty and attachment to G-d under conditions of spiritual enlightenment and material prosperity cannot, in themselves, attest to this truth. There is no indication that the relationship would endure under less ideal conditions. But when the Jewish soul perseveres in its loyalty and attachment to G-d in the darkest hour of galut, it manifests the truth of its bond with G-d, demonstrating that this loyalty and attachment is, in fact, the unalterable core of its being.

"I am Y-H-V-H," said G-d to Moses. I am in the process of revealing My quintessential self to you. But the only part of you that can apprehend this revelation is your own quintessential self. And your own quintessential self rises to the surface of your souls only under the terrible conditions of galut.

Mind and Heart

The difference between Moses and the Patriarchs is also explained by the Chassidic masters as deriving from the different places they occupy within the total "body" of Israel. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are identified with the attributes of "love," "awe" and "harmony" (chessed, gevurah and tiferet), while Moses represents the attribute of "wisdom" (chochmah).

Otherwise stated, the Patriarchs are the heart of the Jewish people, while Moses is the mind of Israel.

Often, a person who calmly accepts the painful realities of life is described as "taking it philosophically," while one who agonizes over his own or others' troubles is seen as "being emotional." Behind these categorizations is the notion that, in purely rational terms, the cause, or even need, for human suffering can be explained. On the other hand — goes this line of thinking — a person with a sensitive heart will not accept any rationalization of evil, however undeniable its logic.

The truth, says the Lubavitcher Rebbe, is the very opposite. Indeed, the difference between one who cannot reconcile himself to the existence of evil and suffering in G-d's world and the one who can accept it is the difference between mind and heart; but it is the mind-driven person who incessantly questions and challenges the way things are, whereas it is the one with "heart" who can find it in himself to accept the most terrible of incomprehensibilities.

It is true that logical explanations for evil and suffering have been presented by a succession of philosophers and theologians. For example, it is proposed that suffering refines the human being, teaching him compassion and sensitivity.

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It has also been explained that there is no greater satisfaction than the overcoming of adversity and no greater pleasure than the conquest of pain. The philosophical mind can also appreciate that a persons finest and most potent abilities are unleashed only under conditions of challenge and trial. Finally, there can be no denying the axiom that without a truly free choice between good and evil, nothing we do could possibly be of any significance.

These explanations are all valid, in their way; indeed, we have presented one such "explanation" in the first part of this article. But when they are approached from a purely rational standpoint, the mind of the believer will not be satisfied by any of them. Because after all is said and done, after each of these explanations is examined and the questions that can be asked on them are posed and resolved, there remains one final question: Why must it be this way?

All these explanations — the mind will inevitably argue — are predicated upon our understanding of human and universal nature. But You, G-d, are the creator of nature and logic; You could have made the nature of things to be other than what they are. You could have made significant what logic dictates is of no significance. You could have created a reality in which there is gain without pain, in which the best in man could be realized without the threat and challenge of evil, in which the highest peaks of life could be scaled without the momentum of its lowest descents.

This perfectly logical question has no logical answer. Thus, the mind of the believer will never accept the "necessity" for evil and pain.

The heart also perceives the pain — indeed, it senses it more deeply than the aloofly objective mind. But while the mind categorizes reality into compatible and non-compatible suppositions, the heart tolerates contradiction.

Can you "prove" to a mother that her child is undeserving of her love? It's not that she is blind to his deficiencies and transgressions — it's simply that they are irrelevant to her love. Outrage and devotion, judgment and acceptance, pain and pleasure — a heart that loves has room for them all, simultaneously, in its warm embrace.

This, says the Rebbe, is the deeper significance of G-d's evocation of the unquestioning faith of the Patriarchs in His words to Moses. Moses, G-d is saying, you are the mind of My people — the mind that is the instrument for apprehending My truth and, with it, illuminating the world. You will even comprehend "higher" aspects of My truth than did the Patriarches. But as a "mind," you question My creation of evil and suffering, and can find no rationally satisfying answer. Yet you, too, are a child of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. You, too, have inherited from them the Jewish heart the intrinsic bond with your G-d that cannot be shaken by the most terrible of contradictions.

Seeing is Believing

Therein also lies the significance of the word vaeira — "and I made Myself seen" — with which G-d describes His relationship with the Patriarchs, and which give our Parshah its name in the Torah.

There are many ways that a person may come to believe in a certain truth. He may hear of it from a reliable source, it may be proven to him logically, or he may see it himself. Yet there is an essential difference between the perception of sight and all other senses. The other senses are refutable — they merely prove something to the person; subsequent developments can undermine the initial conviction. But sight is absolute.

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The thing perceived may be denied by the entire world, it may be utterly illogical, but the person who has seen it knows it is true. He saw it.

Faith can exist on many levels — faith comparable to the conviction in something that is heard, for example, or faith as powerful as a logical fact. But the most powerful faith is faith on the level of sight. Faith as sight is absolute; the most blatant rational contradictions cannot shake it. The Patriarchs, the "heart of Israel", saw G-d. That is why their faith in Him was not shaken by even the most agonizing "contradictions"

This also explains a puzzling passage in Rashi's commentary on our Parshah's opening verse. On the words "I made Myself seen," Rashi comments: "To the fathers." But the verse itself says, "I had made Myself to be seen to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...", and every schoolchild knows that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the three fathers of the Jewish nation. What is Rashi telling us?

The Jewish people are suffering, and G-d's promises seem to only make things worse. To Moses' anguished words, G-d replies "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never lost faith, they saw Me." Yet Moses and his people are obviously not Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — that's why they reacted the way they did. So what is G-d telling them?

So Rashi explains: G-d's response to Moses is that He "made Himself seen" to the fathers. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the progenitors of the Jewish people in every sense of the word. Just as a child inherits the physical and psychological characteristics of his parents, in the same way, each and every Jew inherits the qualities of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Their every trait, experience, and achievement are stamped in our spiritual genes.

Because our fathers' faith in G-d was as absolute and unequivocal as sight, the potential for such faith exists within each and every one of us. No matter what our more external senses perceive, we can delve into our own selves for the inherent ability to see G-d: to sense His commitment to us even in the "darkest" of times. ❖

Dvar Torah Questions and Answers

By Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky

"אלה ראשי בית אבתם"

"These are the heads of their father's houses." (Exodus 6:14)

QUESTION: Since the Torah wants to tell us the lineage of Levi because of Moshe and Aharon, it began to set out their genealogy in the order of their birth from Reuvain on (Rashi). Why is it necessary to trace and record their *yichus* — pedigree?

ANSWER: Contrary to the belief of the Christian world regarding their own leader, the Torah wants to emphasize that a Jewish leader is not one who is born in a supernatural way. He is a normal person who has a father and mother and who has elevated himself spiritually to be worthy of his rank. Every Jewish boy has the potential to become a Moshe *Rabbeinu* — a leader of the Jewish people in his generation.

(מעינה של תורה)

"וישלך אהרן את מטתו לפני פרעה ולפני עבדיו ויהי לתנין"

“Aharon threw his staff in front of Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a snake.” (7:10)

QUESTION: What message did Moshe and Aharon want to give Pharaoh?

ANSWER: Pharaoh claimed that the Jews had sinned and that they did not deserve to be taken out of Egypt. Moshe and Aharon responded that a person's environment plays a very important role in his development. Even a holy staff can turn into a vicious snake in the company of Pharaoh. On the other hand, a “snake” in the company of Moshe and Aharon can transform itself into a holy staff.

(הרב מאיר ז"ל שאפירא מלובלין)

Haftorah in a Nutshell – Va'eira

Ezekiel 28:25-29:21

This This week's haftorah begins with a mention of the ingathering of the exiles, echoing G-d's promise mentioned in the Torah portion: "I will take you out of the suffering of Egypt." The prophet then goes on to discuss the decimation of Pharaoh and Egypt, reminiscent of the primary theme of the Torah portion—the devastation G-d wrought upon Egypt.

Ezekiel begins with a description of what will occur during the ingathering of the exiles. "When I gather in the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they have been scattered, and I have been sanctified through them in the eyes of the nations, then shall they dwell on their land that I gave to My servant, to Jacob. And they shall dwell upon it securely..."

The prophet then proceeds to convey a prophecy regarding Pharaoh and Egypt, foretelling the fall of the Egyptian empire. Egypt merited this punishment for two reasons: a) They had reneged on their promise to come to Israel's aid against the attacking Babylonians. b) They had incredible arrogance, considering themselves un-reliant on G-d, instead attributing their success to the bounty their deified Nile afforded them. Therefore, Ezekiel warns: "And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and in ruins, and they shall know that I am the Lord! Because he [Pharaoh] said, 'The river is mine, and I have made it.'" G-d warns that the land of Egypt will be empty and desolate for forty years, after which G-d will return the people to the land to reinhabit it, but it will no longer be an important nation to be reckoned with.

The haftorah ends with another prophecy wherein G-d informs Ezekiel that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, will be the one to conquer Egypt and take its spoils. This as a reward for his effort in defeating the wicked nation of Tyre. ❖

MAKE THE SHABBOS MORNING MINYAN IN PATERSON

Jan 12 Parshat Bo, Jan 26 Parshat Yisro

Minyan @ Federation Apartments:
510 East 27th Street/Corner of 12th
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who speak English, Hebrew and Russian.

Visit: www.patersonshul.org or
contact JerrySchranz@gmail.com

From Our Sages

I will bring you out, I will save you, I will redeem you, I will take you (Exodus 6:6-7)

The four expressions of redemption (represented at the Passover Seder by the Four Cups of wine) relate to the four aspects of our liberation from Egypt:

- 1) "I will bring out"—our physical removal from the geographical boundaries of Egypt;
- 2) "I will save"—our delivery from Egyptian hegemony (Egypt was a superpower that enslaved and oppressed many nations and peoples outside its borders);
- 3) "I will redeem"—the elimination of any future possibility of enslavement, by the "great judgments" inflicted upon the Egyptians;
- 4) "I will take you to Myself as a nation, and I will be to you a G-d"—our election as G-d's chosen people at Mount Sinai, the purpose of the Exodus.

-- (Nachmanides; Soforno)

One of the central principles of Judaism is:
"All Israel is responsible for one another."

The new Anshei Security Committee is asking for volunteers for Shabbat morning.

Shifts are only 30 minutes.

We can use any help you're willing to offer.

Please contact Jordan Rockowitz at rockowitzj@gmail.com with questions or to volunteer your time.

NEW SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Would you like to sponsor a Kiddush or the Weekly Bulletin?
It's a wonderful way to honor a loved one, remember a yahrzeit, or celebrate a special occasion, etc.
For more information, please contact the Rabbi.

Good Shabbos to all!

שבת שלום! גוט שבת!



ב"ה
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STUDY CHASSIDUS!

Currently learning

THE FOUR WORLDS

*A letter by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak
 Schneersohn of Lubavitch*

MONDAY-FRIDAY

5:55-6:10 AM

Halachah • שיעורי הלכה

Explore the Ins-and-Outs of Prayer

Hilchos Tefillah..... 1:40-1:45 PM

Monday-Thursday

Tuesday Talmud • שיעורי גמרא

Tractate Sukkah..... 9:30-10:00 PM

Tuesday nights following Ma'ariv

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No Charge
 Donations Welcome
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MONDAY EVENING TORAH STUDIES

7:00-8:00 PM • Maariv at 9:15

JOIN US LIVE ON FACEBOOK

Monday, January 7, 2019

BREAKING NORMS

Challenging Yourself to Touch Another

The Four Questions feature prominently in the collective Jewish imagination. While these questions have been chanted for millennia, fewer know that embedded within the structure of the Passover seder is a clarion call for every Jew to put on a hat they may have never imagined donning. Answer the call!

Monday, January 14, 2019

WET BEHIND THE EARS

Balancing Enthusiasm with Maturity

At the foot of the sea with the Egyptian army thundering behind them, one Jewish tribe started . . . throwing stones at another tribe! What? As we unravel this mystery, discover how to strike the balance between the enthusiasm you seek and the maturity you wish to master.

Monday, January 21, 2019

LIFE IS ART

*Human Flaws Are the Brushstrokes of
 Divine Beauty*

Have you ever wondered what life would be like without so many flaws? Wouldn't your days be so much more meaningful if you didn't constantly struggle with doubt, insecurity, and hidden demons? Frankly, the answer is, "No!" The secret lies in a story about an idolatrous priest who embraces the Jewish message and ends up with an eponymous portion in the Torah bearing his name.

**WANT TO LISTEN TO A CLASS ON-THE-
 GO? Text your WhatsApp number to 201-362-
 2712 to join the Torah Classes @ Anshei Group**



New JLI course coming up

Crime and Consequence

Shevat 5779 / February 2019

Criminal justice reform is a hot-button topic in the United States, with a bipartisan consensus that urgent reforms are needed. This course discusses some of the most controversial issues with respect to crime and punishment and offers Torah perspectives that are relevant and insightful. The course examines many areas of criminal law, such as sentencing, incarceration, parole, death penalty, evidence, rehabilitation, crime prevention—all in the hope of generating a safer and more just society.

For more info, call 201.362.2712. or email:
RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com



**With All Due Respect:
 Honoring Your Parents**

With Rebbetzin Rivky Bergstein
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 7:30 PM

Our parents provide us with life as well as a model for human relations. Thus, the Torah demands that we shower our parents with honor and respect. Living in the "sandwich generation," which brings a host of its own issues to the fore, forces us to probe the parameters of our moral parental obligation. The Torah perspective on the why of honoring parents will provide much-needed clarity on how to go about doing so.

Schedule of classes for

**Larger Than Life: Weaving G-d
 into the Details**

2019 January 16.....7:30 pm
 February 137:30 pm
 March 13.....7:30 pm
 May 15.....7:30 pm

Questions? Want to host a class? Call or
 text Rivky Bergstein: 201.362.2909