"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"

בס"ד

Wonders

Weekly Magazine of the Shiurim and Farbrengens
of HaRav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

Issue 150

Shabbat Bamidbar – Shavu'ot 5785 ❁ **May 30 – June 2, 2025**
שַׁבָּת בְּמִדְבַּר-שְׁבוּעוֹת ❁ ג-ו סִיוָן תשפ"ה



"*the Torah is like a city surrounded by a wall with seventy gates (the seventy faces of the Torah); at each gate stands a gatekeeper (the seventy elders); seventy paths spread out from the gates (the seventy languages); each path leads to a different faraway city (the seventy nations); and on these paths there tread travelers (the seventy soul-roots of Israel)*"

3 **Shavu'ot:** Seventy Faces of the World

10 **Story:** The Ba'al Shem Tov: Reciprocal Divine Providence

13 **Partzuf:** Four Manifestations of the "I Have Enough" Syndrome

The Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rav Ginsburgh, Elul 5741

"…It would be proper to publish your classes in book form. With blessings for success…"



Wonders

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

Wonders is distributed weekly in Israel and North America.
For feedback and/or to receive copies for distribution in your area,
write to **wondersanthology@gmail.com**
Dedication opportunities available.

To see more of Harav Ginsburgh's teachings in English, and to sign up for our weekly email newsletter with updates on live classes and events, go to:

www.inner.org

Books and music are available for sale at www.inner.org/webstore

Join our daily Whatsapp group. Send a message to **+972-50-6528650**

Subscribe to our Youtube channel for hundreds of hours of in-depth study
www.youtube.com/innerorg

Click here to support Wonders (3500 copies freely distributed every week)

Scan this code to access all Wonders past issues

Cover artwork: by John Marin

Wonders Staff
Editor: R' Moshe Genuth • Associate Editor: Shelli Karzen
Contributing Editor: R' Nir Menussi • Typesetting: Yoel Broderick

SHAVU'OT

SEVENTY FACES OF THE WORLD

The festival of Shavu'ot commemorates the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. The Giving of the Torah was an exalted and awe-inspiring event, enveloped in thunder and lightning, fire and mist. In an unprecedented and never repeated Divine revelation, the Holy Blessed One descended upon the mountain in His glory, sanctified us with His commandments, and gave us His Torah.

But in what way can we connect with this exalted event? We do not come from the heavens but from the earth. We are not holy but are covered with the dust of the desert, scarred by hardships and trials from weeks of wandering and years of exile. Though we have already left Egypt, sanctified ourselves, and washed our garments for the occasion, in our hearts, we are still immersed up to our necks in mundane affairs. How can we stand and receive the heavenly Torah?

This question pertains especially to those of us who, as Providence had it, were raised outside of observant Judaism. While our ancestors arrived at Mount Sinai as a relatively cohesive group, today we gather as individuals from every possible background. We have roamed the world, seen various cultures, and learned diverse wisdoms. Most of us did not grow up in the sheltered innocence of a Jewish shtetl or an insulated Orthodox community, and no one can convince us that there is no great world outside. Having immersed ourselves in the world's cultures we realized that we had abandoned our own, and now finally wonder what gems are hidden in our own attic. Each of us, in his or her own way, yearns for the Torah. But can the Torah ever yearn for us—we who have gathered from all the lands of the world?

FOUR TIMES SEVENTY

A clue to solving our question is provided by the Torah itself in the form of a *number*. Some of the Torah's numbers harbor such great significance, that by delving into their meaning we can unravel entire mysteries. So it is in our case. The number relevant to our discussion is 70. As we shall see, the various elements that the Torah associates with this number are all interconnected and putting them together provides a profound answer to our question.

SEVENTY NATIONS

According to Jewish tradition, humanity is comprised of *seventy nations* speaking *seventy tongues*. This assertion is based on the fact that the descendants of Noah, enumerated in the book of Genesis number seventy.[1] In addition, a few generations after Noah, the jumbling of languages occurred at Babel, and the one original language, the Holy

Tongue, split into the languages of the different nations, one language per nation.

Does the idea of seventy nations still apply today? After all, the nations of antiquity have long since been reshuffled, languages have split and died, the number of nations and languages has greatly expanded, and furthermore, there are no clear boundaries between nations and languages. And yet, the concept of seventy nations can still hold today, if applied to the spectrum of *worldviews, cultural languages, and political systems* that cuts across nations and languages. Indeed, Kabbalah describes the nations/languages as descending from seventy spiritual "ministers"—i.e. that at root they refer to spiritually-linked soul-families, not necessarily flesh-and-blood nations.

In fact, in our generation the traditional division into states and nations is gradually giving way to a network of virtual communities that don't necessarily share an ethnic origin or a geographical location but are centered around *fields of interest*. This process can be seen as a kind of resurfacing, in a modern guise, of the original seventy nations and languages.

SEVENTY SOULS OF THE HOUSE OF JACOB

The second seventy in the Torah appears in the description of Jacob and his descendants going down to Egypt to join Joseph: "All the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were *seventy souls*."[2] This was the entire people of Israel at that time: seventy people, who were the children and grandchildren of Jacob. If we liken Egypt to a womb that nurtured the people of Israel from a handful of people into a whole nation, then the seventy descendants of Jacob are like the *seed*—the nucleus of all future souls of Israel.

So, the people of Israel originate from seventy souls, precisely the number of the world's cultures. Later, at the end of the Five Books of the Torah, a verse explicitly addresses this parallel: "When the Most High divided the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples *according to the number of the Children of Israel*." [3] When the Holy Blessed One divided humanity into seventy nations and lands, it turns out, He did so based on the seventy future souls who were destined to descend to Egypt. The different nations of the world somehow correspond, one to one, to the souls of Israel.

Moreover, just as the nations of the world all descended from one man, Noah, and their languages from "one language," the Holy Tongue, so too were the seventy souls all descendants of one person—Jacob. We will return to this interesting fact later.

SEVENTY ELDERS

The next significant seventy in the Torah is the *"seventy men of the elders of Israel"* appointed by Moses to share the burden of leading the people with him.[4] At a certain point during the wanderings in the wilderness, Moses complains to God that he can no longer bear the burden of the people alone. In response, God commands him to gather seventy elders to help him, and He bestows some of Moses' spirit upon them. The seventy elders become the judges of the people, and, as the opening of *Pirkei Avot* (the Ethics of the Fathers) teaches us, they are the ones

who receive the Torah from Joshua, Moses successor, and transmit it to the prophets.[5]

In fact, the seventy elders make up the first *Sanhedrin* (Jewish supreme court). Every subsequent Sanhedrin—always comprised of seventy judges—was a sort of later edition or iteration of the seventy elders of the wilderness. Moses himself is the prototype of the "distinguished member of the court" (*HaMufla ShebaSanhedrin*)[6]—the head of the Sanhedrin—who is its 71st member. The fact that his spirit was bestowed upon the elders parallels the idea that the seventy nations and the seventy descendants of Jacob each also descended from a single source.

SEVENTY FACES TO THE TORAH

The final significant seventy is the most well-known of all: the *seventy faces of the Torah*. Interestingly, this seventy is not explicitly mentioned in the Torah (maybe because the Torah is modest and does not brag about itself). Rather, we are told of it in a midrash.[7] The midrash states that since the Torah is likened to wine, and since the Hebrew word for "wine" (**יין**), has a numerical value of 70, the Torah also has seventy faces. This midrash is joined by another midrash[8] that connects the word "wine" the word for "secret" (**סוד**), which also has a numerical value of 70; hence the adage, "When wine enters, secrets emerge" (נִכְנַס יַיִן יָצָא סוֹד).[9] Put together, the idea emerges that the seventy faces of the Torah are its secret, esoteric level, revealed only to those who come to it in a state of openness to the mystical, a state somewhat similar to that of someone who has drunk wine.

Here, too, the seventy faces split from a single source, and the source is none other than God Himself, "the One God" who gave the Torah.[10]

CORRESPONDENCES

If the four elements we have reviewed—the nations of the world, the descendants of Jacob who descended to Egypt, the elders of Israel, and the faces of the Torah—all number seventy, they are undoubtedly interconnected. But how?[11]

Let's start at the end. It can be easily seen that the last two "seventies" are an obvious pair: the seventy elders are responsible for studying the Torah, and thus we can assume that each of them specializes in one of the seventy faces. The Torah study of each elder reveals and expands one facet of the Torah.[12]

The third element, "the descendants of Jacob" who represent the foundational soul-roots of Israel, also fits well with this pair: each Jewish soul has a special connection to one of the facets of the Torah, one that speaks to them more than others, and therefore also with the elder associated with that facet.

The part of the puzzle that least seems to belong is the seventy we began with—the seventy nations and their languages. How do they fit in with the other three elements? Particularly puzzling is the equivalence mentioned earlier between the nations and the Children of Israel: "He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the Children of Israel." This verse essentially says that the Children of Israel and the nations of the world also reflect one another. But in what way?

Simply put, this correspondence suggests that *each Jew has a special affinity with one of these cultures*. Even though its language is not his language, and its people are not his people, some invisible bond exists between them, linking them from afar. If, heaven forbid, an urge for idolatry were to arise within this Jew, it would be to worship *that* nation's idol, not others. Conversely, if he is destined to make converts from the nations of the world, it would be a soul from *that* nation that he would be able to influence. If, for some reason, he distances himself from Judaism, or happened to be born outside of it, it would be to *that* specific culture that his soul would be unconsciously drawn. And when he finally returns to Judaism, he would have to do so against that specific cultural background.

Of course, if the seventy archetypal non-Jewish cultures correspond to the seventy roots of our souls, they must also correspond to the seventy elders and the seventy faces of the Torah. Indeed, that is exactly what we find.

One of the things said about the judges of the *Sanhedrin* was that "They do not appoint to the Sanhedrin anyone but men of stature, of wisdom, of appearance, of age, of sorcery, and *who know seventy languages, so that the Sanhedrin does not hear through an interpreter.*"[13] The sages of the *Sanhedrin* had to be versed in the languages of the nations, and since there are seventy of both, we can presume that each of them was an expert in one of the seventy languages/cultures.

The faces of Torah also have a profound connection with the seventy nations. The Torah states that upon entering the Land of Israel, the Israelites were commanded to write the entire Torah on great stones in a "well elucidated" manner (בַּאֵר הֵיטֵב).[14] The sages ask what this means, and conclude that it meant writing the Torah "in seventy tongues."[15] Only when the Torah is translated into all languages is it considered "well elucidated." Each of the world's languages seems to unlock and reveal a face of the Torah that corresponds to it.[16]

We can now put our four "seventies" together using the following metaphor:

Imagine the Torah as a kind of city surrounded by a wall. The wall has seventy gates through which one can enter the city (the seventy faces of the Torah); at each gate stands a gatekeeper who holds the key to that gate (the seventy elders); seventy paths spread out from the gates of the city like the spokes of a wheel (the seventy languages); each path leads to a different faraway city somewhere in the world (the seventy nations); and on these paths there tread travelers (the seventy soul-roots of Israel). Some of these travelers walk toward the city while some walk away from it. Some are native to it while others spend their entire lives in the distant cities. But each one is connected primarily to one path—the gate it leads to is *his* opening, the gatekeeper in charge of it is *his* personal emissary, and the exile which looms before him when he turns his back on the city (or which breathes down his neck when he faces it) is *his* personal exile.[17]

CONTRACTION AND EXPANSION

The course of ideas we have pursued leads us back to the question with

which we began: how do the worlds from which we hail connect with the Torah towards which we strive?

What do we experience when we approach Judaism? From afar, the city of Torah appears like just any of the other cities surrounding it, and not even necessarily the most magnificent of them. But as we get closer and begin to speak with the gatekeeper who welcomes us this feeling is replaced by an understanding that this city is utterly different from all the others and requires us to undergo a mental revolution concerning everything we thought we knew. We must set aside the seventy worlds and languages from which we come and devote ourselves to this new world and its foreign language. This is a painful renunciation, but a still whisper emanating from the gate reassures us that it will be worthwhile, that our losses will turn into gains.

Once we enter the city, a second surprise awaits us. Inside is a special room that has waited just for us; this room represents a topic, a verse, or a word that belongs to us. Although this room is completely new to us, we immediately feel at home in it, as if in another and forgotten life, it had been our living room. It is both novel and familiar, home-like and alien. Then we understand why: it is an upgraded and refined version of our old home.

UNINTENTIONAL TRANSLATORS

In fact, not only do we need this room in the Torah, but *it* also needs *us*—to be revealed. As mentioned, the Torah is adequately explained only in seventy languages, because each of its inner facets needs an external language to extract its hidden meaning. While we take in the contents of our room with our gaze, our hearts suddenly turn within us. We realize that our wandering in the seventy worlds was not in vain: it was so that in the end we would come to the Torah and *return its missing languages*—the imagery, metaphors, means of expression, and even technology, these are all part of the missing language the Torah needs in order to be fully revealed. Each of us who makes a pilgrimage to the Torah is an unconscious translator carrying within him a language that only he or she speaks, and which can unlock a facet in the Torah. The word "Torah," it would seem, not only derives from *hora'ah* (הוֹרָאָה), which means "instruction," as per the usual explanation, but also from *tiyur* (תִּיוּר), which means to "tour." The Torah needs people to tour the world and collect all the words that will express it.

This idea is supported by the surprising saying by the Sages,[18] that the word that opens the Ten Commandments, *Anochi*, meaning "I am,"[19] is not in Hebrew but in *Egyptian*, the language of the land from which we fled. They provide an allegory about a king whose son was kidnapped by people from a foreign nation and stayed with them until he forgot his own mother tongue. Therefore, when his father came to rescue him, then out of sensitivity the first word he said to him was in the language of his captors.

The use of the Egyptian language in the Ten Commandments teaches us that we cannot and should not flee from our past. The place from which we come is part of us, and wherever we flee, we carry it with us. When God presents Himself to us in

the language of the diaspora from which we came, He is trying to tell us that even the decree of the exile came from Him. He wanted us to be there, and for it to be within us, and that from it we would come back to Him. It is part of the plan, and more than that—part of the Torah He is giving us.

May we all merit to arrive at the Torah, "each from their place,"[20] and receive it with joy and inwardness.

1. Genesis 10.

2. Exodus 1:5.

3. Deuteronomy 32:8.

4. Numbers 11:16-17.

5. *Mishnah Avot* 1:1.

6. *Horayot* 4b; *Sanhedrin* 86b-87a.

7. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:15.

8. *Eiruvin* 65a.

9. The acronym for "When wine enters, secrets emerge" (**נכנס יין יצא סוד**) is "Sinai" (**סיני**), where the Torah was given.

10. The four sources of the "seventies" are "Noach" (**נח**)—father of the seventy nations); "Jacob" (**יעקב**)—father of the seventy souls; "Moses" (**משה**)—head of the seventy elders; and, *Havayah* (**י־הוה**)—God who connects the seventy faces of the Torah. The sum of their numerical values—58, 182, 345, and 26—is 611, the value of "Torah" (**תורה**) implying that all of them together are included in the Torah.

The recurring ratio between the 70 individual items and the 1 general entity at their head is reflected in the relationship between the two letters whose values are 70 and 1—the letters *ayin* (**ע**) and *aleph* (**א**), respectively. Just as the 70 always constitute an expansion and differentiation of the 1, so the sound of the letter ayin deepens and thickens the simple sound of the letter aleph. This relationship between the two letters is evident in the wide variety of word pairs in which one is written with aleph and the other with ayin, and where the first always expresses the inner aspect of the second. Notable examples are: אֹשֶׁר (happiness) and עֹשֶׁר (wealth); אור (light) and עור (skin) or עִוֵּר (blind); אֱמוּת (verification) and עֲמוּת (confrontation).

11 The four seventies correspond to the four letters of God's essential Name, *Havayah*, as follows:

- *yud* (י): The seventy faces of the Torah
- *hei* (ה): The seventy elders
- *vav* (ו): The seventy descendants of Jacob
- *hei* (ה): The seventy nations

(The seventy languages correspond to the *sefirah* of foundation, situated between the *vav* and the final *hei*.)

12 This pair corresponds to the pair of letters *yud-hei* in *Havayah*. These letters are characterized in Kabbalah as "father" and "mother" in relation to the two following letters. In our case, the Written Torah and its scholars are like the father and mother of the people of Israel, respectively. The Written Torah descends from the heavens, from above to below (masculine influence), and the Oral Torah develops by the elders from below to above (feminine growth).

13 *Sanhedrin* 17a.

14 Deuteronomy 27:8.

15 *Mishnah Sotah* 7:5. And behold, if we write the word for "well," הֵיטֵב, in this way—**ה הי היט היטב**, i.e. well elucidated, letter by letter)—then the sum of all the letters is exactly 70.

16 Of Noah, father of the seventy nations and languages, it is said, "And Noah found favor in the eyes of Havayah" (Genesis 6:8). The word for "favor" (חֵן), appears in the Bible exactly seventy times, a hint to the seventy faces of the Torah. Thus, "Noah found favor in the eyes of Havayah" means that the descendants of Noah and their languages have the power to find the seventy "points of favor" hidden in the Torah. Moreover, the value of the expression that symbolizes the seventy faces of the Torah more than any other, "When wine enters, secrets emerge" (**נִכְנַס יַיִן יָצָא סוֹד**) is identical with that of the verse, "Noah found favor in the eyes of Havayah" (**וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי י־הוה**)!

Additionally, "favor" is identified with the concept of lowliness. We learn this from the juxtaposition of two phrases, "A woman of valor [lit. "favor"] supports honor" (Proverbs 11:16), and in another place "And one who is of lowly spirit supports honor" (Proverbs 29:23; these are the only two occurrences of the expression "to support honor"). And behold, the root of the word "lowly" (**שְׁפַל**), is the initials of "the Torah has seventy faces" (שִׁבְעִים פָּנִים לַתּוֹרָה): attaining the seventy faces of the Torah depends on adopting the trait of lowliness.

17 The foundation of this metaphor can be found in the verse from the passage on the Woman of Valor, "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land" (Proverbs 31:23). A fundamental parable, the relationship between God and Israel is like that of a husband and wife. Thus, this verse depicts God as the husband, who is known to us through "His gates" and through the elders. According to the *Zohar* (1:103b) these gates are understood as "gates of contemplation," and every individual can "know God" according to what he can perceive in his heart. In practice, as explained in the *Tanya* (chapter 44) the power of perception in the heart is individual and depends on each person's character and understanding.

18 *Yalkut Shimoni* 20:286.

19 Exodus 20:2.

20 *Rashi* on Deuteronomy 30:3.

STORY

THE BA'AL SHEM TOV: RECIPROCAL DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The holy Rabbi of Kaminke related the following story:

Once, a poor man came before the Baal Shem Tov seeking salvation from his poverty. The Ba'al Shem Tov told him to search under a certain bridge where his request would be fulfilled and he would find treasures of gold and silver.

The man searched under the bridge but found nothing. He encountered a poor tailor who asked him what he was looking for. The man told him the Ba'al Shem Tov's words - adding that he had searched in vain and found nothing. The tailor replied: "The Ba'al Shem Tov also instructed me to go to a certain place (which was actually the house of the man who was seeking treasure under the bridge) and there, under the stove, I would find a treasure. But I've been lazy about going there and digging in someone else's house…"

When the man heard the tailor's words, he thought to himself: "He's talking about my house! I'll go home and look under the stove." And so it was that he found the treasure. And the tailor thought to himself: "I'm already here by the bridge, what harm is there in digging here? Perhaps the man's words in the name of the Ba'al Shem Tov are true." He searched well and also found treasures, and both became very wealthy.

Each one said to himself: "The man who I met under the bridge was the cause of my wealth. How can I bear to see the person whose words brought me so much wealth in poverty?" They each decided to bring a bundle of gold and silver to the other, and so they did. On the way, they met each other, and their joy was great. They didn't know what to do with the bundles of money they had with them. They decided to arrange a marriage between their children, as one had a son and the other a daughter, and they put the money toward a dowry for the children.

The holy Rabbi of Kaminke said: This story is auspicious for livelihood and should be told at the *Melaveh Malkah* meal. After the story, no other story should be told, only *Shir HaMa'alot* and the Grace After Meals should be recited. And when the story was told, the holy Rabbi immediately recited *Shir HaMa'alot*. The holy Rabbi said that sometimes each person is destined for a great salvation but can attain it only through helping someone else.

A TREASURE OF FEAR OF HEAVEN

Why did the Baal Shem Tov send each person to bring his sustenance from afar, when in fact a treasure was found close to each of them?

We often find that *tzaddikim* bring about salvation, but they demand effort from the recipient. We can explain that the effort is a vessel through which the *tzaddik* merits the seeker with the mitzvah of faith in him and listening to his advice, and through this he merits salvation. This is what the Holy Blessed One did for us when we left Egypt. We were bare of *mitzvot*, and He gave us the *mitzvot* of Passover and circumcision so that we would merit redemption through them.

When explained this way, we can say more deeply that our story is not just about a physical treasure, but primarily about the inner treasure, which is the "treasure of fear of Heaven" about which the verse says, "If you seek it as silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of God and find the knowledge of God."[1] The poor men indeed sought only money, but the Ba'al Shem Tov generously guided them to what lies at the root of money and livelihood—the clear feeling that God is orchestrating all of man's affairs, and only from Him are we nourished. This is the secret of the power and virtue of this story, which presents man's very serious efforts to strive for his livelihood in a somewhat humorous light, thereby revealing what the poor man truly lacks: Not money, which is under his stove but knowledge of God and fear of Heaven.

And when it comes to fear of Heaven, personal effort is certainly crucial. "Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven."[2] The concern for *nahama dekisufa*—bread of shame (spiritual or physical wealth acquired without effort) that embarrasses its eater, is much greater with respect to spiritual possessions than with respect to physical ones. Moreover, fear of Heaven must be found specifically in one's own home and close domain. It is not an external possession that can be obtained from another's domain. Treasures of fear of Heaven are hidden in every Jew. They are revealed when one digs and searches for them.

UNITED WE STAND

Our two poor men are not alike; each responds differently - both to the Baal Shem Tov's words and to reality. The first poor man is truly destitute, seemingly without even a profession. Perhaps that is why he found the strength within himself to fulfill the Ba'al Shem Tov's words, even though he was sent to a distant place. In contrast, the tailor is more indifferent. He is indeed in distress and therefore turned to the *tzaddik*, but the instruction he received is outside his comfort zone. "Each man helps his fellow."[3] As one of the *tzaddikim* said, a person needs a Rebbe to take advice from on how to fulfill God's will, and also a good friend so that together they can fulfill the Rebbe's advice.

The poor man, with all his devotion and alacrity, needed the tailor's kindness, who shared with him what he was going through out of compassion and identification, and only thus did he find his treasure. And the tailor, from whom salvation came to the poor man, certainly also needed the

encounter. It seems that not only was he lacking information, but the energy that filled him with the motivation to dig under the bridge was born within him because of his encounter with the poor man. Without it, he would not have taken any action.

The words of the holy Rabbi of Kaminka, that this story contains a special *segulah* (spiritual charm) for livelihood, can be understood primarily through an important principle illustrated very clearly in the story: "No man can touch that which is waiting for his fellow, not even a hairsbreadth of it."[4] The poor man dug under the bridge, and yet his eyes were closed and he did not find the treasure. The tailor, for his part, could have schemed to dig in the poor man's house, but by God's Divine Providence, he did not use justified excuses to employ that option.

For many people, the end of Shabbat is a time of gloom and pressure, as the rest experienced on Shabbat passes and the coming week already stands at the threshold. The days of the week are characterized by relentless pursuit: one must always be smarter than others, quicker, more confident and thus achieve more. Not everyone is greedy, but they simply assume that these are the rules of the game. For them, Shabbat is a day of refuge, like those souls suffering in Gehennom who rest on Shabbat, and at the end of Shabbat return to their sufferings.

If no one touches what is prepared for his fellow, it means that livelihood is not by chance. Everyone is nourished from the Holy One's table, and each receives his portion directly from His hand. No flesh and blood can prevent livelihood, nor can they influence it. The source of livelihood is in the manna which fed the Israelites in the wilderness and about which the Torah says, "He who gathered much had no excess, and he who gathered little had no lack."[5] When we don't waste strength on vanity and emptiness, the soul is free to hear and understand what God is saying to us, how He is speaking specifically to each and every one of us individually, and how He is sending us what is appropriate for us.

1. Proverbs 2:4-5.
2. Berachot 33b.
3. Isaiah 41:6.
4. Yoma 38b.
5. Exodus 16:18.

PARTZUF

FOUR MANIFESTATIONS OF THE "I HAVE ENOUGH" SYNDROME

RELUCTANCE TO STRIVE FOR MORE

One of the most difficult things in life is to strive for more. We get used to the way things are and find it threatening to leave our comfort zone, even if we might think we might gain a great deal from doing so.

This reluctance to change afflicts both our physical and our spiritual existence. When it comes to our spiritual existence, we can identify four levels of such resistance. Unlike resistance to physical and psychological growth, resistance to spiritual change and growth can come in the guise of piety—piety that can be summed up by the notion that when you strike out in search of new spiritual ground you might be facing additional risks, which were absent from your initial state. Because of the inherent risks involved with taking on greater religious responsibility, one might be inclined to argue that "less is more," or to use the sages' idiom, "If you grasp for much, you capture none"[1] (תָּפַסְתָּ מְרוּבֶּה לֹא תָפַסְתָּ). But this is, as we shall see, only a false form of piety.

FEAR DISGUISED AS PIETY

The source of this piety stems in reality from a type of fear, which, in the Torah can be traced back to a famous commentary by Rashi. When Jacob asked Esau to sell him his firstborn rights, Esau replied, "Behold, I am going to die, what use is my firstborn status to me?"[2] Rashi writes,

> Esau said: What is the nature of the rights [performed by the firstborn]? Jacob replied, "Many prohibitions and punishments and many acts involving even the punishment of death are associated with it, just as we read in the Mishnah: "The following priests are liable to death: those who carry out their duties after having drunk too much wine and those who officiate long-haired." He [Esau] replied: "If I am going to die through it, why should I desire it."

In other words, Esau did not want to act as a firstborn. He abandoned his firstborn rights despite their importance because of his fear that it would be a "headache" to be the one responsible for the family's sacrifices and the one to officiate at the sacrificial rights. Why place himself in a risky situation, where improper behavior, or an inappropriate attitude could lead to him being punished.

As such, Esau was the first person to say, "enough." It is enough for me to be the way I am. I do not want to strive for a higher and more responsible spiritual position or

state. I am perfectly content with what I have.

The "I have enough spiritually" attitude is one that the Lubavitcher Rebbe was constantly criticizing. In his mind, when it comes to spirituality, the proper attitude one should assume is that "one who has a hundred wants to have two hundred."[3] Let us see how this attitude affects us on four different levels. Let us begin by looking at the prospect of rebuilding the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

IGNORING QUESTIONS REGARDING THE TEMPLE MOUNT

There are many present-day Halachic authorities (*poskim*) who refuse to rule on questions related to rebuilding the Temple. They will not even engage the question of where on the Temple Mount we can erect a synagogue, or even where on the Temple Mount it is permitted for people to enter.

The last of these questions is usually met with a blanket statement that the entire Temple Mount is off limits because of our impurity. This is of course not true, and the Lubavitcher Rebbe repeatedly requested that the most important and revered *poskim* of the generation take the time and the effort to make a ruling on this question. This is a question that cannot be resolved merely with archeological evidence. It requires the legal decision of the greatest halachic minds of the generation.

Why is it that to date, the top-tier of *poskim* in our generation have been unwilling to address this topic? There are several different reasons, but one of them has to do with this sentiment of "I have enough." This sentiment is not always a conscious one, and at times we find that it is concealed in the poskim's subconscious.

In effect, it is much easier to ignore the question of rebuilding the Temple. Normative halachic Judaism is a full lifestyle. It fills up our daily routine and presents us with a life of meaning. Why add a new headache to the mix? There are so many difficult details and issues that come up the moment we consider the possibility of visiting the Temple Mount, all the more so if we contemplate the possibility of constructing a synagogue on it, and a figurative migraine is waiting for those who would think about what restarting the daily Temple service would be like.

SOULS OF CHAOS

Who is constantly thinking about these questions? Souls that have a streak of chaos in them. Many times, these are *ba'alei teshuvah* who have already chosen to turn their lives upside-down and willingly enter the "headache" of a life of religious observance. But these can also be people who have been observant from birth who simply want more and who feel that the headache is worth the reward.

A similar attitude can be found regarding the coming of the Mashiach. There are those who used to joke that if somehow the Mashiach came, their lives as they know it would never be the same, and who wants that headache!?

WHY LIVE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL?

Perhaps more than any other issue, the "I have enough" attitude steers the way that many Jews living outside the Land of Israel view moving to the Holyland.

Indeed, among the early authorities, the *Rishonim*, there are opinions that only someone who has the presence of mind to properly appreciate that the Land of Israel is the King's palace, so to speak, it is God's private chambers, only such a person should live in the Holyland. So, there is a real expectation that those of us who live in the Land of Israel should live up to a certain standard of fear of God and seriousness in keeping the *mitzvot*.

But for all the difficulty in living up to this standard, the attitude that living as a Jew outside the Land of Israel is another form of the "I have enough" syndrome.

WHY BE A JEW?

If we've come this far, then let us consider one more aspect of this syndrome. If a person was born a non-Jew, the "I have enough" syndrome can make him or her deliberate: Why convert to Judaism. If I convert, I will be liable for 613 commandments. Why should I place myself in such a position? I have enough by being a God-fearing non-Jew. I don't worship false gods, I don't commit murder, etc. This is just fine for me. Why risk my wellbeing by becoming obligated with 613 commandments, which who knows if I will be able to uphold properly.

Committing to the seven Noachide laws is plenty. I can be a pious non-Jew; according to many opinions, I will even have a portion in the World-to-Come this way.

The sages relate that Ruth, the most famous convert and the great-grandmother of King David became a convert once she took upon herself the responsibility of even those commandments, the punishment for which can be capital. She did this when she said to Naomi, "Where you die, I will die and there I will be buried."[4] It is far more comfortable to remain a Noachide. Noach's name even means "comfort."

WHY BE BORN?

Finally, there is one more level of "I have enough." The sages say that it is more comfortable for a man not to have been created than to have been created."[5] It is much better for the soul to remain outside this world. Life in this world is full of challenges and difficulties and regardless of whether one is born a Jew or a non-Jew, life can lead one to many spiritual pitfalls. Why risk it all? The "I have enough" syndrome would have the soul remain unborn and outside the world.

FOUR BLEMISHES IN HAVAYAH

In all we have seen four different manifestations of the "I have enough" sentiment, which are easily seen to correspond to the four letters of God's essential Name, *Havayah*.

The unwillingness to engage with the laws and rituals of the Temple, with the laws governing purity and impurity and with the laws governing the sacred rites, this manifestation of "I have enough"—"I am perfectly comfortable without this headache"—corresponds to the *yud* of *Havayah*. The *yud* is wisdom and corresponds with holiness. The Temple itself is where God's omnipresent Presence (the *Shechinah*) is openly revealed.

An unwillingness to take the leap of living in the Land of Israel—the King's palace—represents a blemish of the first *hei* in *Havayah*. The Holy Temple

in Jerusalem and the Land of Israel as a whole go together, just as the *yud* and *hei* in *Havayah* are like two companions that never part. The relationship between the two is described in the Zohar as "a point in a chamber," with the point being the Temple—the most sacred point—inside the chamber, or the Land of Israel.

Preferring to play it "safe" and remain a non-Jew without converting to Judaism blemishes the *vav* of *Havayah*, which represents the seven emotive faculties of the heart, which also correspond to the seven Canaanite nations, the root of all non-Jews.

Finally, the soul that fears being created in a body and facing the difficulties of life blemishes the final *hei* of *Havayah*. How so? The sages relate that before God created the world he consulted with the souls and asked them if He should create them or not? The souls answered that He should. Why did they volunteer to be created if it is better to remain without a body?

The answer is that the souls knew that without a people, there is no king! Thus, they understood that if they would not be willing to be created into physical bodies, God would not be crowned as King. There is a lot of risk in becoming corporeal, but the risk is worth it to crown God. So either I will risk life, or You, God, will not be King.

letter of Havayah	"I Have Enough" even without	Rectification	
yud	Building the Temple	*Poskim* must rule on these issues	י
hei	Living in the Land of Israel	Living a Torah-observant life in the Land of Israel	ה
vav	Converting to Judaism	Take Ruth as an Example of Self-Sacrifice	ו
hei	Being Born	Only if I am born and serve God can He be King	ה

1 . *Yoma* 80a.
2 . Genesis 25:29.
3 . *Kohelet Rabbah* 1:34.
4 . Ruth 1:17.
5 . *Eiruvin* 13b.

Harav Ginsburgh's
Nefesh Academy of Torah Psychology
www.thenefesh.org
Join the thousands who have benefitted from a Torah path to psychological and mental well-being and prosperity