

Parasha Meditation Vayeira

Bereishit 18:1-22:24

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

An Opening for Healing Revelation

Introduction:

The Angels' Spiritual Mission

This week's *parasha* is about receiving revelation and healing. "וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם" – "Hashem revealed Himself..."¹ Through Hashem's revelation to Avraham, He gives each of us a glimpse of His light as well. Hashem sent three of his archangels to Avraham and Sarah. Each angel is a spiritual force with its own mission. Michael's mission was to inform Sarah about her forthcoming conception, and later to save Lot from the downfall of Sedom, Gavriel came to overturn Sedom and Amora, and Refael to heal Avraham.²

Opening Hashem's influx in the World through the Mitzvot

When Hashem revealed Himself to Avraham, it states that "he was sitting at the opening of the tent" – "וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בְּפֶתַח הַאֹהֶל".³ Whenever it states in the Torah about our patriarchs that they were sitting, it means that they were meditating. His "sitting" denotes the meditative state of being completely in tune with his environment, at rest, in deep meditation. When it mentions "he is sitting" it also teaches us that Avraham would always be sitting at his tent entrance looking for guests. "He sits in the opening" alludes to the fact that the mitzvot are the opening for arousing and drawing down G-d's Divine supervision into the world. The physical act of welcoming guests opens and draws down from above, Divine sustenance to the world.⁴

Opening for Revelation

Avraham was sitting and just being, sitting without judging himself or others, sitting and allowing everything to pass through him and surround him. He was sitting "בְּפֶתַח הַאֹהֶל" – "At the opening of the tent" – Opening himself totally to the energy field around him, opening himself totally to the presence of Hashem enveloping him. Opening himself and allowing the Divine Presence to reveal Herself to him.

Healing through Seeing

וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵי וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בְּפֶתַח הַאֹהֶל בְּחֹם הַיּוֹם: וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיִּרְא וַיִּרְץ לִקְרָאתָם מִפֶּתַח הַאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה... (בראשית י"ח:ב)

"Hashem revealed Himself to him, at Alonei Mamre, while he was sitting at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day. He raised his eyes and **he saw**, behold three people standing by him,

¹ Bereishit 18:1.

² Based on Rashi and Rabbeinu Bachaya, Bereishit 18:2.

³ Bereishit 18:1.

⁴ Based on *Sefat Emet, Parashat Vayera*.



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he saw and he ran towards them from the opening of the tent, and he prostrated himself to the ground..."⁵ *Ohr HaChaim* notices that the Torah repeated that Avraham saw a second time. Perhaps we can say that only the second time did he see that the "men" were actually angels. However, this can't be so, as Avraham was on such a high level that already the first time he saw, he knew. Rather, Scripture informs us that when Avraham looked again, he saw the healing angel of Refael and was immediately healed from his circumcision, as we see that he was able to run quickly towards them. "וַיֵּרָא וַיָּרַץ" – "He saw and he ran." Experiencing this amazing healing also explains why he bowed down in the greatest respect.⁶

Meditation:

"וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב" – "He is sitting" – Sit comfortable in your chair, close your eyes and take several deep breaths. Breathe deeply and feel completely relaxed in all of the limbs of your body.

1. "וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב" – Sit with the feeling of being alive; simply BEING present and open, using your breath as anchor. Just be present with what is, without DOING anything with any of it. Just be in relation to it. Allow it. Permit it.
2. "פֶּתַח הַאֹהֶל" – "In the opening of the tent" – Be open to it. Just be open and allow. Let all the sounds in the room pass through you, allow all your thoughts and feelings to come and go, without grasping, identifying or judging. Simply sit, in the present moment of being alive. Do not measure yourself, judge yourself, but just make space for yourself as you sit. When you sit, you can free yourself of yourself even in the midst of yourself.
3. "וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו הַשֵּׁם" – "Hashem revealed Himself to Him" – Open yourself and allow yourself to see and connect with Hashem. Let your eyes open to the revelation He wants to show you. It could be completely different than what you expect, what you think it is supposed to be. When you detach from yourself, your judgments and preconceived notions, then you open yourself to see, to see beyond what you know. Not the projection of your desire, but what truly is, that which we don't allow ourselves to see, when we are so full of ourselves that there is no room for G-d.
4. Go beyond counting your accomplishments, let go of even your spiritual self, as you keep breathing, taking in the breath from beyond. Do not fear to open yourself in wonder. Don't be afraid to face any feelings which may come to you, whether a feeling of meaninglessness, despair, fear, they are all part of the experience which leads you to encounter Hashem. Don't be afraid of fear as you come out into the open, the only place where G-d is revealed.
5. "וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו" – "He raised his eyes and he saw, behold three men stood by him."⁷ As you breathe softly, imagine the energy of the archangel Michael standing at

⁵Bereishit 18:1-2.

⁶ *Ohr HaChayim*, Bereishit 18:2.

⁷ Bereishit 18:2.

your right. Feel the energy of *chesed* (kindness), inhale softness love and compassion. Tune into how much you are being loved. Tune into the waves of love washing over you from your right.

6. Now imagine the energy of the archangel Gavriel at your left. Breathe in as you feel *gevurah* (strength) and protection from your left. Inhale the *gevurah* energy. Your boundaries are becoming clear. You now have a vessel for all of the love. Imagine the shape of your vessel emerging from your left.

7. Breathe in, allow yourself to tune into the healing energy of the archangel of Refael from behind you. Inhale the healing energy from behind you to your entire being.

8. "וַיֵּרָא וַיָּרֶץ" – "He saw and he ran"⁸ – When Avraham looked again he saw the healing angel of Refael and he was immediately healed and able to run. Open your eyes to a healing vision. Notice the colors shapes, feelings, of what you visualize in your mind's eye. Allow the healing you receive to enter into every part of you that needs healing. Take your vision of Hashem's healing energy and enter it to every place within you, where it is needed.

9. Breathe slowly and allow your healing process to take place. Feel how your body is responding and opening itself to the healing energy. Slowly tap your hands and feet, open your eyes and return refreshed and healed to the reality around you.

Notes:

Revelation entails true redemption. Even after the Exodus, the Jewish people were still considered in exile until Hashem revealed Himself to them. When they erected the Mishkan (tabernacle) Hashem returned to reveal His Divine presence to them. Only then were the Jewish people considered redeemed, when they returned to the level of their fathers, whose tents were continually illuminated by Hashem's perpetual presence.⁹

"*Vayera elav Hashem*" – "G-d showed Himself to him" – this teaches us that the main intention of this verse, for every Jew is "**to him**," i.e. to relate these events to himself. (Otherwise, the verse would say, "G-d revealed Himself to Avraham," making it clear that the visit was specifically for Avraham.) Each of us is a descendant of Avraham. Each of us has also entered into a *brit* – covenant – with G-d, just as Avraham. Therefore, it is possible for each of us to have part of the same revelation that Avraham had! What do we have to do to receive revelation? Just as Avraham used his body to express his closeness to G-d by circumcising himself at the age of ninety-nine, similarly, each of us must imbue all 248 organs and 365 veins, arteries and sinews with holiness by using them to do G-d's Will. In this way, we will become be a proper vessel for G-d's revelation, both on a personal and universal level and be prepared for the main revelation of Mashiach's arrival!¹⁰

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ramban, Introduction to the Book of *Shemot*, cited by *Netivat Shalom* on *Parashat Vayera*.

¹⁰ Based on the Rebbe of Lubavitch cited by Rabbi Shaul Yosef Leiter, *Ascent of Safed*, w:08-59/Vayera.

About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work.

For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin contact info@berotbatayin.org or in Spiritual Healing with Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, please contact her at director@berotbatayin.org

or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin – Holistic Torah Study for Women on the Land of Israel

At Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin, we weave together Torah studies with creative spiritual expression, connecting with the Land of Israel, and healthy, organic lifestyles. In the heart of the Judean Hills, with its serene beauty, our students experience an approach to Judaism that bridges mind, body and soul. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin is designed as a micro-community within the Village of Bat Ayin where women of all ages and backgrounds engage in intense Torah learning as part of an integrated, participatory approach to Torah living.

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