

GREAT FOR SHARING  
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS  
VAERA 5778

# בְּשַׁבְּתֵיכֶם

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## G-d and Guardian

**P**arshas Vaera contains most of miraculous narrative of the Ten Plagues. Again and again, against all sense and intelligence, Pharaoh refuses to release the Jewish nation from captivity, and suffers the unpleasant consequences. Indeed, Pharaoh's foolishness is compounded by the fact that the *Bnei Yisrael* had actually stopped working since the *Makkah* of *Kinim*.<sup>1</sup>

The *Alter* of Slobodka<sup>2</sup> (Reb Nosson Tzvi Finkel, 1849-1927) questions the purpose of the remaining seven *Makkos* after the *Makkah* of *Kinim*. At this point, the Jewish people already stopped working. Why leave them in *Mitzrayim*, why harden Pharaoh's heart, why change the laws of nature at this point? Why not just gather everyone, and leave!

The *Pasuk*<sup>3</sup> explains "...so that you may relate in the ears of your son and your son's son that I made a mockery of Egypt and My sign that I placed among them - that you may know that I am Hashem." We see that the purpose of this lengthy series of *Makkos* was so that *Klal Yisrael* should have greater *Emunah* and *Bitachon* in Hashem.

The *Alter* points out something fascinating. Although the *Bnei Yisrael* already trusted Hashem,<sup>4</sup> through the *Makkos* the *Bnei Yisrael* saw the specific and targeted personal intervention of the Almighty Creator into their very lives. During *Choshech*, when a Jew and an Egyptian were in a room, the Jew had light, while it was dark for the Egyptian.<sup>5</sup> During *Arbeh*, the grasshoppers ate around the Jewish owned trees.<sup>6</sup>

Hashem does not use auto-pilot. At all moments Hashem is constantly involved in the macro and micro parts of our lives. He ensures that I have air to breathe, food to eat, water to drink, clothing to wear, and live in climates that have manageably controlled temperatures. He constantly makes sure gravity works so that I don't float off the Earth. He is present in the many complex systems in my body that run smoothly every minute of the day. He is present each time I cross the street, ride in a car or fly on a plane, when cooking or baking (even when the food gets burned), or when I go shopping. Hashem's involvement is not conceptual, it is real, and that idea is integral to our *Avodas Hashem*.

1 *Mishnas Reb Eliezer*, Chap. 19

2 *Ohr HaTzafon*, Sefer 1, Page 81

3 *Shemos* 10:2

4 *Shemos* 4:31

5 *Mishnas Reb Eliezer*, Chap. 19

6 *Me'am Loaz Shemos* 10:15

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### Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

Is there a tried and true way to help us recognize Hashem's hand in our lives?

The *Orchos Tzadikim*<sup>1</sup> explains that to acquire *Bitachon* and *Emunah*, one must engage in a paradoxical behaviour. *Bitachon* and *Emunah* are acquired by accepting all that occurs with happiness and joy. By acting joyous, our external actions affect our inner feelings.

Over time, our inner self shifts to match our outward actions. Therefore, we strengthen our belief that Hashem is involved in the detailed aspects of our life every time we take a moment to think about it, and respond with joy.

Of course this is true even with the difficult parts of life, but if we can begin with the aspects of our lives that we truly do enjoy, we are already on the road to deepening our *Emunah*, and our relationship with Hashem.

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1 *Sha'ar HaSimcha*

# A BAG OF BAGELS

Mrs. Leibowitz was not a wealthy woman. Her husband had passed away some years ago, and it fell upon her to support her family. Every day she would wake up early in the morning, and head to the bakery. There she would pick up a large bag of bagels, and make her way to the busy streets of Geulah in Yerushalayim.

Standing on the street, she would sell her bagels, allowing her to have enough money to provide for the needs of her family. Needless to say, if bagels weren't sold, they could not be sold the next day, as no one was interested in day-old bagels.

One day, Mrs. Leibowitz was having a very hard time selling bagels. Though she sold a few here and there, she still had most of the bag left-over. She stood at her usual spot, but it seemed that no one wanted a bagel. Try as she might, it looked like that day would be a total loss.

Night was coming, and it was time to leave. Just a few minutes before Mrs. Leibowitz was about to go, a man came rushing down the street. "I forgot that I have a family gathering tonight, and it's too late for me to get to a store. Do you have any bagels left?"

"I sure do," replied Mrs. Leibowitz.

"Just give me the whole bag," said the man. They quickly counted the bagels, the man paid and left.

Mrs. Leibowitz stood there in the ensuing silence. Finally she spoke, "Hashem, I know you are so busy running the world, but somehow you have time to look inside a woman's bagel bag and ensure that she can support her family!"

*\*This is a true story, though names and places have been changed.*

**Somehow you  
have time to look  
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- The reason that the 1st of *Aseres Hadibros* uses the term singular term "*Asher Hotzasicha*, - that took you out," is to highlight the concept of constant *Hashgacha Pratis*.<sup>1</sup>
- Hashem's *Hashgacha* is not only exacting for humans, but for animals as well.<sup>2</sup>
- Hashem's exacting focus is not only in regards to pleasure. Suffering is done in exact measures as well. In fact, if one reaches into their pocket, and pulls out that wrong coin, that was a decree from Hashem, and is part of one's suffering.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Ohr HaTzafon*, Sefer 1, Page 81

2 *Bava Basra* 16b

3 *Eruchin* 16b