

July 29, 2020

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Rise to the Next Level

Weekly Newsletter by Vital Transformation

Vaetchanan: Revealing Our Gifts



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Energy of the Week

It is on us to trust the Divine and break the cycle of pursuing and obtaining momentary pleasures, never finding deep fulfilment.

In doing this, we will finally unlock our gifts and live a fulfilling life in alignment with our true purpose.

It is human nature to want and desire, even excessively. Moses begged to enter Israel 515 times despite knowing he did not deserve to enter. Have you ever desired something in such an extreme fashion?

We live in a world of want, want, want. That's because, without true spiritual fulfilment, we find ourselves coveting possessions, status or relationships to validate us -- in other words, we are seeking happiness from external sources. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, we may often find that we are denied and deprived of the things that we want: The promotion we felt sure was ours is given to someone else. The potential partner we've long admired starts a relationship with another. We see pictures online of people enjoying vacations that we ourselves would love to experience. It's easy to lose faith when we are faced with these crushing disappointments; however, it is actually in these moments that we must trust the Divine more than ever.

Rather than asking why we haven't received everything that we want, we must trust that there are other gifts awaiting us: the right gifts for us and our life purpose. In this week's portion -- Vaetchanan, the second portion of the book of Devarim -- we can look to the example of Moses to guide us. Again he begged 515 times to enter Israel, even while knowing he didn't deserve it.

This is what we are doing when we beg the Divine for others' gifts, instead of unlocking the gifts that are already installed and waiting for us. But how do we access them? We must first of all go beyond want into a state of true desire. To do this, we should build our passion -- whether it is for a soulmate, wealth or something else -- to

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a point of desperate yearning. You have to have faith that your gifts await you as well as the strong desire to reveal them.



We know that often when we get what we want, it does not fulfil us. We get the promotion, we experience momentary pleasure, then we revert back to feelings of want for something new.

We get the relationship we wanted, feel short term happiness, then immediately start to find faults in it. We get the vacation, we have a good time, then we come home and start planning our next vacation. That kind of superficial want is different from truly desiring something. If you desire something deeply and

desperately, it's because you know it has already been installed in your potential by the Divine. This is good, because it means that it will one day be yours. However, to unlock it, we must transcend our world of want, want, want and instead go deeper, building our passion for what we truly crave so we can live in alignment with our purpose.

This lesson connects to the ninth of the Ten Commandments: Do not covet. When we covet what does not belong to us, we are blocking ourselves from receiving the gifts that await us. Through study of the Ten Commandments, a very basic element, we learn other ways that we may block ourselves from these gifts. The first commandment states Anochi Hashem, or "I am God." This recognizes the bigger picture -- that God created everything, and so when we give ourselves credit for our accomplishments, we must also give recognition to the Light Force of the Creator. We must be humble and remember that human beings were last to be created. God is who provides our gifts.

The second commandment states that we should not have other Gods. Knowing that gifts come from above, it's wrong to place heavy expectations on others and expect them to do the work of God. You should also use your words carefully when you ask for your gifts, in accordance with the third commandment: do not use the name of God in vain. The commandments continue by reminding you to honor the Shabbat. In the context of unlocking your gifts, this means that you

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must remain focused on your divine purpose, avoiding distractions. Then, the fifth commandment is about honoring those who have already delivered gifts to you in the form of lessons: your mentors, parents, and teachers. By following these commandments, you can begin to unlock the gifts that await you.

The sixth commandment states that you should not kill. This extends beyond the literal interpretation, meaning that you also should not kill the image of the Creator within you. How can you put this into action? Basically, you should not shame or punish yourself for not having all that

you want, because in doing so you can kill the image of God. Commandments seven, eight and nine are worth considering together: do not commit adultery, do not steal, and do not covet. All three relate to wanting and taking that which does not belong to you, like Moses did when he begged for entry to Israel. Instead of comparing what you have to others, you must trust that the Divine will reveal what is truly meant to be yours.

The final commandment states that you should not bear false witness; in other words, you should not manipulate people to get what you want. By following these commandments, we can manifest our gifts and stop wasting our time begging for that which was never destined to be ours. It can be hard in this world of perpetual wanting to focus our passion and energy on what we truly desire. However, it is on us to trust the Divine and break the cycle of pursuing and obtaining momentary pleasures, never finding deep fulfillment. In doing this, we will finally unlock our gifts and live a fulfilling life in alignment with our true purpose.

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Tisha B'Av | A Reminder to Return to the Light



Today is Tisha B'Av -- a difficult day in the Jewish calendar -- and this is an opportunity to reflect upon the disasters that we have experienced as a community throughout our shared history. This is certainly a day of mourning; however, we should also strive to let our mourning serve a purpose. By this I mean that we should not become so comfortable with sadness that we allow it to consume us. Instead, we should use our sadness as a motivating force. After all, the real reason we enter into the darkness is to climb out once again. This way we are able to see the light as though it were brand new to us, and our resolve is therefore strengthened by the process. This is the best way for us to approach and learn from the rituals of this difficult day.

Understandably, many of us resist entering the darkness. This is because we are fearful and we aren't confident of our strength to leave it. However, allowing this fear to control us shows that we have misunderstood something fundamental about Tisha

B'Av. Remember that when King Solomon's temple was burned, some sang and celebrated. How could they do this in the face of such devastation? Because they knew that a temple of God could never really be destroyed. They had the wisdom and the faith to realize that their problem was an illusion. Their enemies could destroy their temples and even destroy them, but they could not destroy God. Today is a day to think about which of our problems are also illusions. Although Tisha B'Av is a day of deep sadness, it can also be a day of release.

Today, despite our fear, we challenge ourselves to enter deep into the darkness. Why? Because that is the only way to rediscover the light. It is a moment to sit with our thoughts and come to

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honest conclusions about what we could be doing better. This does not mean it is a day to indulge the negative ego. The positive ego is when we become distracted by what we have “accomplished” and what we have, forgetting that the Divine is the reason for all gifts received. The negative ego, however, is equally dangerous. This is manifested when we beat ourselves up for our failures and our suffering to the point where our reflections are no longer serving any purpose. The negative ego is not focused on self-awareness and growth; it wallows in self-pity and misery. These are not motivating forces.

Rather than indulging the negative ego, we should instead aim to sit honestly with the darkness as well as a strong motivation to return to the light. Remember, alongside the destruction of the Temple came the hope of a Jewish messiah. This day does not just represent darkness. It also represents the consolation that surely follows disaster. Many of our problems are in fact illusions. Let us realize the profound truth of this today, because good news is always coming. We need to be part of the solution. We don't simply grieve the destruction of the temple; we resolve to build a new one.

Videos of the Week:



Tisha B'Av 2018: Remastered