



Parshat Vaera

For the week ending 1 Shevat 5760
7 & 8 January 2000

Overview

Hashem tells Moshe to inform the Jewish People that He is going to take them out of Egypt; however, the Jewish People do not listen. Hashem commands Moshe to go to Pharaoh and ask him to free the Jewish people, emboldening Pharaoh to refuse the request. Hashem punishes the Egyptians and sends plagues of blood and frogs, but the magicians copy these miracles on a smaller scale, again encouraging -d could be performing these miracles. Only the Egyptians, and not the Jews in Goshen, suffer during the plagues. The plagues if Pharaoh will let the Jewish People leave, Pharaoh continues to harden his heart and refuses.

Insights

FREEDOM FROM WORK

Israel; but they did not heed Moshe, because of

Egrow out of dining-room tables. Our attitude to work, however, can be very revealing. In Europe, before the war, they speaks volumes. What I do is *not* who I am. I may be

The Jew defines himself in terms of his relationship with G-d. G-d created me for one reason only to receive the ultimate goodness and pleasure.

fish is blowing bubbles for me. Every stone is silent for me. I am the center of Creation.

-all and end-all of creation.
-d is.

We live in the Age of Man. The age in which Man sees himself as the center of the universe. Man is the idol-worship of the age. Twenty-first century man has written G-d out his world. Man is the center of all. Thus my status what I do really is who I am.

Israel; but they did not heed Moshe, because of

The expression (kotzer ruach)

The Jewish People in Egypt were steeped in idol worship. The ultimate idol is man himself. Pharaoh declared himself a god. Hard work can bring a person to appreciation of G- eneficence.

bring a person to a sense of self-esteem. Or it can fill him with self-importance. Hard work never killed anybody but it can turn us into addicts. It can make us think we are the center of the universe.

The ultimate definition of a workaholic is someone who has confused what he does with who he is.

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

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Haftarah: Yeshayahu 66:1 - 23

SEIZE THE MOMENT

After a week of achieving and ties to the Creator. With the cessation of creative activity we declare that it is G-d who created this beautiful world; it is G-d

The New Moon too is a call to renew our relationship with G-d, lest we become trapped in spiritual stagnation.

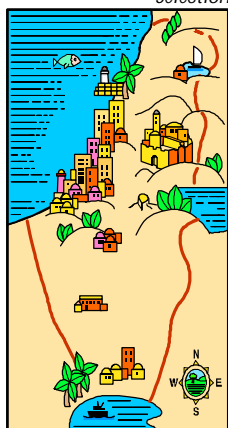
Yeshaya exhorts the Jewish people: They have desecrated the Temple with empty offerings, desecrated their prayers with lip-service. How many

truly cared about G-d im with all their heart? Yeshaya envisions the future time when all will unite to declare G-d and at every Shabbat they will prostrate themselves before G-d, in free-willed devotion.

Every week we have an opportunity to renew our connection. Every month we have an opportunity for spiritual elevation. Such opportunities can not be allowed to slip away. The Torah gives the framework for a life of spiritual elation. All we have to do is to seize the moment.

LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael



TIFRACH

The name of this settlement in the south of *Eretz Yisrael* comes from a passage in the prophecy of Yeshaya (35.1) describing the revival of the desert that will accompany

Pedium also took their names from words contained in that prophecy.

Tifrach is a charedi community famous for its outstanding yeshiva that attracts students from all of Israel and the world.

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