

Parshat Va'eira: Take A Deep Breath

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In Parshat Va'eira, Moshe tells the Jewish people that Hashem will take them out of Egypt. However, the people weren't able to really hear or listen to Moshe. The reason? They had engaged in hard work and because of this they had *kotzer ruach*, a broken spirit. They were beaten down emotionally and spiritually. They were crushed.

Kotzer ruach can also be translated as shortness of breath. Shortness of breath is a sign of a lack of patience. When a person requires patience what do they do? They take a deep and long breath. The ability to take a deep, long breath, which helps slow down one's thoughts, and the idea that this will help us be patient are all interrelated. The Jews had shortness of breath, Reb Noson says, because they lacked patience. This was why they weren't able to listen to Moshe.

Also, patience corresponds to the concept of *emunah*. When a person has *emunah* they are able to be patient. They are able to say: *Okay, I don't see this clearly at this moment in time, but I know and believe that Hashem is there for me. Eventually when the time is right, He is going to take me out of this exile.*

However, we have to be able to listen to Moshe. We have to be able to listen to the *tzaddik* and connect to him. The *tzaddikim* are the ones who can teach us how to develop *emunah* and of course, patience.

May you have a day where you remember to take a deep breath and believe that Hashem is there for you.

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