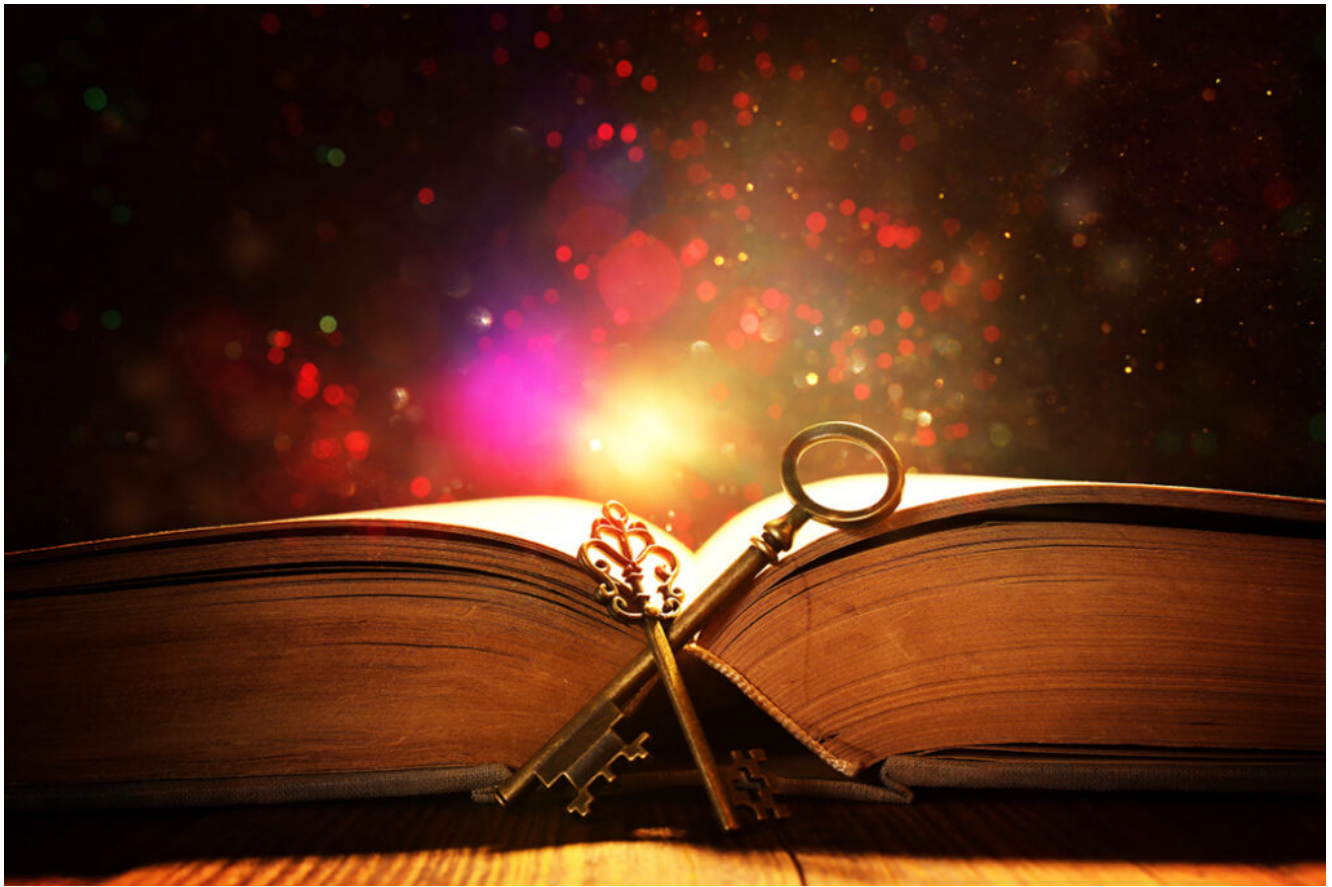


# The Key To Success

written by Meir Elkabas

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*These weeks are very special weeks in that we read portions from the Torah that have an incredible power to transform us!*

## **Last Week – Parshat Parashat Parah**

The Torah commands us to sprinkle the ashes of a red heifer onto someone who came into contact with a corpse and became impure. Even today without the Holy Temple, just by hearing this commandment read from the Torah, we receive the purity brought about by holy ashes.

1. The ashes have the power to elevate those who feel “burnt down to ash.”
2. The red heifer (being the mother of a calf) atones for the idol-worship sin of the golden calf whose root

plagues us spiritual even today.

3. Red according to the kabbalah connotes harsh judgments and blood. Thus the ashes of the red heifer signify someone who has fallen to the lowest levels of impurity, to the point where they are considered spiritually “dead”.

The job of the ash parallels the job of the True Tzaddikim. They both toil and involve themselves in helping to elevate and purify every Jew, even one who has fallen to the point where they are a spiritual dead.

### **This Week – *Shabbat Parashat HaChodesh***

After being “elevated” and purified, we are now ready to start again.

We read about the very first Mitzvah of the Torah, sanctifying the new moon. This mitzvah was taught to Moshe at the onset of the first day of the month of Nissan – the month of the redemption from Egypt.

The Jewish nation and the moon both share a common characteristic; both have periods of darkness and light. In the same way that the month begins when the light of the moon is barely visible, so too can a Jew pick himself up and begin again even in total darkness. This “renewal” is the secret to our success. Even after the moon reaches its full climax at the middle of the month, it thereafter begins to diminish to just a sliver. However, right at the darkest moment, the new cycle begins again.

After receiving the spiritual boost from the ashes of the red heifer, we can begin start anew no matter how far we may have fallen. There is always light following darkness. Like the month (*ChoDeSH* in Hebrew) we are able to start anew (*ChaDaSH* in Hebrew).

These weeks serve to prepare us to properly receive the light

of Pesach – which is the light of the redemption from Egypt, the redemption from our daily struggles and difficulties, and the ultimate redemption when Mashiach will arrive. The keys are hope, joy and never giving up no matter what. Through these we merit the purity and holiness needed to partake of the Pesach offering.

Pesach means to “skip over” and enables us to “skip over” all of our previous failures, downs and set-backs.

May we speedily merit the arrival of Mashiach, the building of the final Holy Temple, and may we then partake in the sacrifices and peace offerings with total purity and holiness, Amen!