

Tiptoe Through The *Torah*

#4 Vayera

A Delightfully Different
Biblical Booklette

Nancy Reuben Greenfield



Delightfully
DIFFERENT
publishing





Tiptoe Through The Torah | #4 Vayera

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Thank you
God
my children
family, friends and community

all my teachers

and especially
my husband Richard.

Thank you
for all your love and support.

It continues
to mean the world to me.





Nancy's Note

The Five Books of Moses
Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy
are known as the written Torah.

This first book of

בראשית

is transliterated as **Bereshit**
and translated into Greek as **Genesis**.

This is **Vayera**

וירא

The fourth chapter in the book of Genesis.

There is
a necessary
fence
around the Torah
to preserve its purity.

The purpose of my book
is to create
a respectful bridge across this fence
so the original text
can easily be accessed
by people of all backgrounds.



Adaptation Goals

#1 Keeping it short.

This format allows you to read it through in one sitting, over time, daily, weekly when you need help, hope or whenever the mood strikes.

#2 Keeping it easy.

Since biblical names, relationships and time lapses can be very confusing text has been added in brackets for clarification or to introduce passages.
{example of added text in brackets}

#3 Keeping it flowing.

To keep things moving, this book leaves out, condenses or alludes to lists of details like lineage and wars and journeys.

#4 Keeping the poetry.

Relying on a variety of English translations and sources each word was chosen for its accuracy and poetic power.



#5 Keeping it verifiable.

Every Torah translation is unique
in its word choices so it would be
very rare for my adapted text
to match word for word with your translation.

To compare any passage
use traditional biblical notation
(Portion, Section, Line) starting with Genesis 1:1.
For example: Portion Noah 9:8-17.
Go to the 9th Section and read Lines 8 through 17.
Note: Any bracketed {added text}
is not included in notation.

#6 Keeping it relatable.

To foster connection and curiosity
my starter questions are railings
on this Tiptoe bridge
something to hold on to
as you explore the text
with yourself
and discuss with others.

As for the answers
there are no right
or wrong answers.

There are only answers
that are honest for you.



Remember
this is not a word for word translation
nor the complete original Torah text.

This is my adaptation
lovingly built for crossing over
the fence of Torah

a bridge

high enough
to look over
and close enough
to look within.

May
Tiptoe Through Genesis
be a source
of light and blessing
in your life.

Nancy





Where *Lekh Lekha* Left Off

God said to Abram In My Covenant,
your name shall be Abraham, the father of a multitude of nations
Kings will descend from you.


I will be God Almighty to you and your children for all generations
and you shall have the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession.
As a sign and eternal seal of My Covenant you shall circumcise
all males now and at eight days old.

Tell (your wife) Sarai her name will now be Sarah.
I will give her a son through you
and bless her to be the mother of entire nations.
Kings will be her descendants.

Call Sarah's son Isaac. I shall bless him to keep My Covenant
with all his children for eternity.

And I shall bless (your son with Hagar) Ishmael
and make him fruitful, increasing his numbers greatly.
Ishmael will father twelve princes and I will make him into a great nation.
But I will keep My Covenant with Isaac whom Sarah will bear
this time next year.

That very day, in keeping with God's Covenant,
99-year-old Abraham circumcised himself, his 13-year-old son
Ishmael and all the males in his household.





God appeared to Abraham in the heat of the day
as he sat outside his tent. He lifted his eyes and lo!
Three strangers!


He perceived them
then ran to them and said, "Come, wash
and rest under the tree.
I will bring you bread
and you can refresh your hearts
then journey on."

They agreed
and Abraham and Sarah made a feast.

Vayera 18:1-7



Q. How is a heart refreshed by hospitality? What refreshes you?



{The three strangers agreed to eat with Abraham and a feast was made.} They ate under a tree.

They asked, “Where is your wife Sarah?”

Abraham answered, “In the tent.”

One of them said to him, “I will return to you this time next year and Sarah will have a son.”


Sarah {whose female cycle was over} heard this and laughed to herself.

“My husband is old. I am worn out. And now my heart’s desire is to come true?”


God said *Why did Sarah laugh? Is there anything too wondrous for God? At the designated time I will return and Sarah will have a son.*

Sarah was afraid and denied laughing but Abraham said, “You did laugh”.

Vayera 18:8-15




Q. Is there anything too wondrous for God? What is your hearts desire?



{After eating with Abraham}
the visitors gazed out over Sodom
then
Abraham escorted them out
and on their way.

God thought
*Shall I hide from Abraham
what I plan to do to Sodom?
He is about to become a great nation
through which all the nations of the earth
will be blessed.
I know him.
He will teach his children and those that follow
to keep God's Ways
doing charity
and justice.
Then everything
God promised Abraham
can be fulfilled.*

Vayera 18:16-19



Q. What teachings do you want to be known for? What does God know you will do?



{Having decided to share the plan with righteous Abraham
God said to him} *The outcry in Sodom is so great
and their sins so grave
I will descend to see.*

Abraham heard and came and stood before God saying
“Will You
God
kill the innocent people
along with the guilty?”

I know I am but dust and ash
but God what if 50 or 40 or 30 or 20 or 10
righteous people live there?

I dare say too much God
but if you kill the innocent with the guilty
the righteous and wicked will fare alike.


Shall God
the Judge of all the earth
not do justice?”

God said *If I find 10 good people
I will not destroy Sodom for their sake.*

Vayera 18:20-32



Q. Compare the translations: “righteous versus innocent” and “guilty versus wicked”? Do you speak up on behalf of others who can’t speak for themselves?




God's angels arrived in Sodom {ready to destroy it
if ten righteous people were not found.}
As it happened
Abraham's nephew Lot was at the city gate. He greeted
them and insisted they come to his home. And
they went. He baked them matzah
and they feasted until bedtime. Suddenly
a Sodomite mob converged on Lot's house
demanding the visitors.
Lot went out and tried to
appease them
but still they rushed at him until
the angels reached out, pulled Lot inside, then
blinded the mob so they could no longer find the door.
The angels said to Lot, *God sent us to destroy this
place. Go. Gather those you wish to save.*

Lot convinced his wife and two daughters to leave.
The angels rushed them out. They said
*Flee for your life. Do not look back.
Do not stop or you too will be destroyed!*
And God made sulphur and fire rain down
on Sodom and Gomorrah destroying everything.
And it was when
the sun arose over the earth and Lot arrived in Tzoar
that Lot's wife turned back to look
and she turned
into a pillar of salt.

Vayera 19:1-26



**Q. Do God's angels still save and destroy? How can "looking back"
be destructive?**



Abraham woke up early in the morning and hurried back to the place where he had stood before God and stared at Sodom and Gomorrah.

He saw heavy smoke rising from the earth.

When God destroyed these cities

God had remembered Abraham {for}

God had allowed {his nephew} Lot to escape.

{Now} Lot was afraid to remain in Tzoar and went to the hills with his two daughters and lived in a cave.

The older girl said to the younger, "Our father is growing old and there is no other man left in the world {for us}.

Come let us get him drunk and lay with him.

We will then survive through our children."

And they both did.


Lot's eldest daughter had a son she named Moab.

He began the nation of Moab, which exists today.


And his younger daughter had a son she named Ben-Ami.

He began the nation of Ammon, which exists today.

Vayera 19:27-38



Q. When have you done something in desperation? How does fear impact your decision-making?



{When Abraham and Sarah went into the land of King Abimelech, for safety, Abraham had Sarah pretend she was his sister.}

And the king's officers
took her for the king to wed
but he fell asleep.

And God came to the king in a dream.
You will die because of the woman you took.


But the king had not come near her. He said, "They said she was his sister. If I did something it was with an innocent heart and clean hands."

God said *I know the innocence of your heart; therefore I restrained you from sinning against Me. Return Sarah to Abraham for he is a prophet. He will pray for your life and reopen the wombs of your women.*


And the king summoned Abraham to ask why {he lied}. Abraham said, "I realized the one thing missing here is the fear of God and men would kill me to take my wife. So I told her to be my sister."

And the king gave livestock, servants {and money} to Abraham, returned Sarah to him and restored Sarah's dignity. Then Abraham prayed to God and God healed King Abimelech, his wife and slaves. God unsealed their wombs so they were able to have children.

Vayera 20:1-18



Q. How do you understand the power of prayer? Why does God call Abraham a prophet?



And God remembered Sarah
just as God had promised
and Sarah conceived
and she gave birth to Abraham's son
in his old age!


It happened at the exact time
God had promised him.

Abraham named him Isaac
and circumcised him on the
eighth day as God commanded.


Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

Sarah said, "God made
laughter for me; whoever hears
will laugh for me. For who
would have even suggested to Abraham
that {his old} Sarah would be nursing!"

Vayera 21:1-7



Q. Does God have a set time for everything? How do you explain medical miracles?



{At the set time
just as God promised
Abraham and his wife Sarah bore Isaac.}

Isaac grew
and on the day he was weaned
Abraham made a great feast.
There
Sarah saw her maidservant Hagar's son
mocking.

Sarah said to {Abraham}
“Drive out
this slave woman with her son
for her son
shall not inherit with my son Isaac.”

Vayera 21:8-10



Q. How respectful are you of someone else's joy? How do you mark meaningful occasions in your life?



{After Sarah's maidservant Hagar's son
mocked her son
she said to Abraham, "Drive out this slave woman with her
son for he shall not inherit with my son Isaac."}

The matter upset Abraham very much but God said

*Do not be distressed.
Heed Sarah's voice
for through Isaac
will your seed be acclaimed.*

*But
the son of the slave woman
I will also make into a nation
for he is your offspring.*

{So}

Abraham woke up early and gave
{"his maidservant wife"} Hagar
bread and a pouch of water
and sent her away with the boy.

Vayera 21:11-14



Q. How do you prioritize your relationships? Do your priorities affect your relationships?



{After Abraham sent Hagar away with the boy Ishmael}
Hagar wandered aimlessly in the Beer Sheba desert.
When their water ran out, she put the boy under
the bushes for she did not want to watch him die.
And she lifted her voice and wept loudly.

God heard the boy weeping
and God's angel called to Hagar from heaven
Do not be afraid Hagar.
God hears the boy's cries.
Lift him up and hold him tight
for I will make a great nation of him.

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well
of water and she filled the pouch
and gave the boy a drink.
Thereafter God was with Ishmael as he grew up
in the desert of Paran
and became an accomplished archer.
His mother arranged an Egyptian wife for him.

Vayera 21:14-21



Q. When have your "eyes been opened"? What do you do when you feel helpless?



{After much dispute}
Abraham settled well-rights in Beer Sheba
with seven ewes as proof he dug the well.
And he planted a tamarisk tree there
and proclaimed
the Name of God Eternal
God of all the Universe.
And Abraham sojourned there for many days.

Vayera 21:22-34



Q. Does God being eternal bring you comfort? How do you understand the universe?



It was after these things
that God tested Abraham.

God said to him *Abraham*.


Abraham said to God, "Here I am."

God said *Take Isaac your son whom you love
and get yourself to the land of Moriah
and offer
him up
on one of the mountains that I will show you.*

Vayera 22:1-2



Q. How do you know when something is a test from God? What have you learned from the tests in your life?



{God tested Abraham. God said *Take Isaac your son whom you love and offer him to Me on the mountain that I will show you.*}

Abraham got up early in the morning
took wood, servers and Isaac
and left for the place where God designated.

After three days Abraham told the servers
“Wait here while we go worship.”

Abraham gave his son Isaac the wood to hold
while he held the slaughtering knife and some fire.


Isaac spoke up, “Father.”

Abraham said, “Here I am my son.”


Isaac said, “Here is the fire and wood
but where is the lamb for the offering?”

Abraham said, “God will provide
for God
a lamb for the offering.”

Vayera 22:3-7



Q. What does faith in God provide? When have you had to trust in God?



{Abraham said to his son Isaac, “God will provide for God a
lamb for the offering.”}

And they journeyed to the place
God designated {for Abraham to offer his son}. There
Abraham built the altar, arranged the wood
and bound his son Isaac on top.
Abraham stretched forth his hand
and took his knife
to slaughter his son
when
an angel of God called from heaven
Abraham! Abraham!

And Abraham said, “Here I am.”

God’s angel said, *Do not harm him for I know now
that you are a God-fearing man as you have
not withheld from Me your only son.*

And Abraham raised his eyes and saw – behold!

A ram caught in the branches by its horns.

So Abraham went

and made the offering with the ram instead of his son and

named the site


Hashem Yireh {Jerusalem}

God will see.

Today it is therefore said

“On God’s Mountain God will be seen.”

Vayera 22:8-14



**Q. Are you God-fearing? What does Jerusalem mean to you
and to the world?**



Then God's angel called out to Abraham
a second time from heaven saying, *God said*

Abraham

*because you did not withhold
your only son from Me*

*I will bless you and multiply you
so that your offspring*

*shall be like the stars of the heavens
and sand on the shores of the sea.*

Your offspring shall inherit the gate of his enemies.

*And all the nations of the earth shall bless
themselves through your descendants*

*because you
have hearkened to My Voice.*

Abraham returned to his servers
and they all went home.

Vayera 22:15-19



**Q. What kind of blessings does hearkening to God's Voice bring?
When have you proved your faith?**

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- Tiptoe Through The Torah #3 Lekh Lekha*
- Tiptoe Through The Torah #4 Vayera*
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