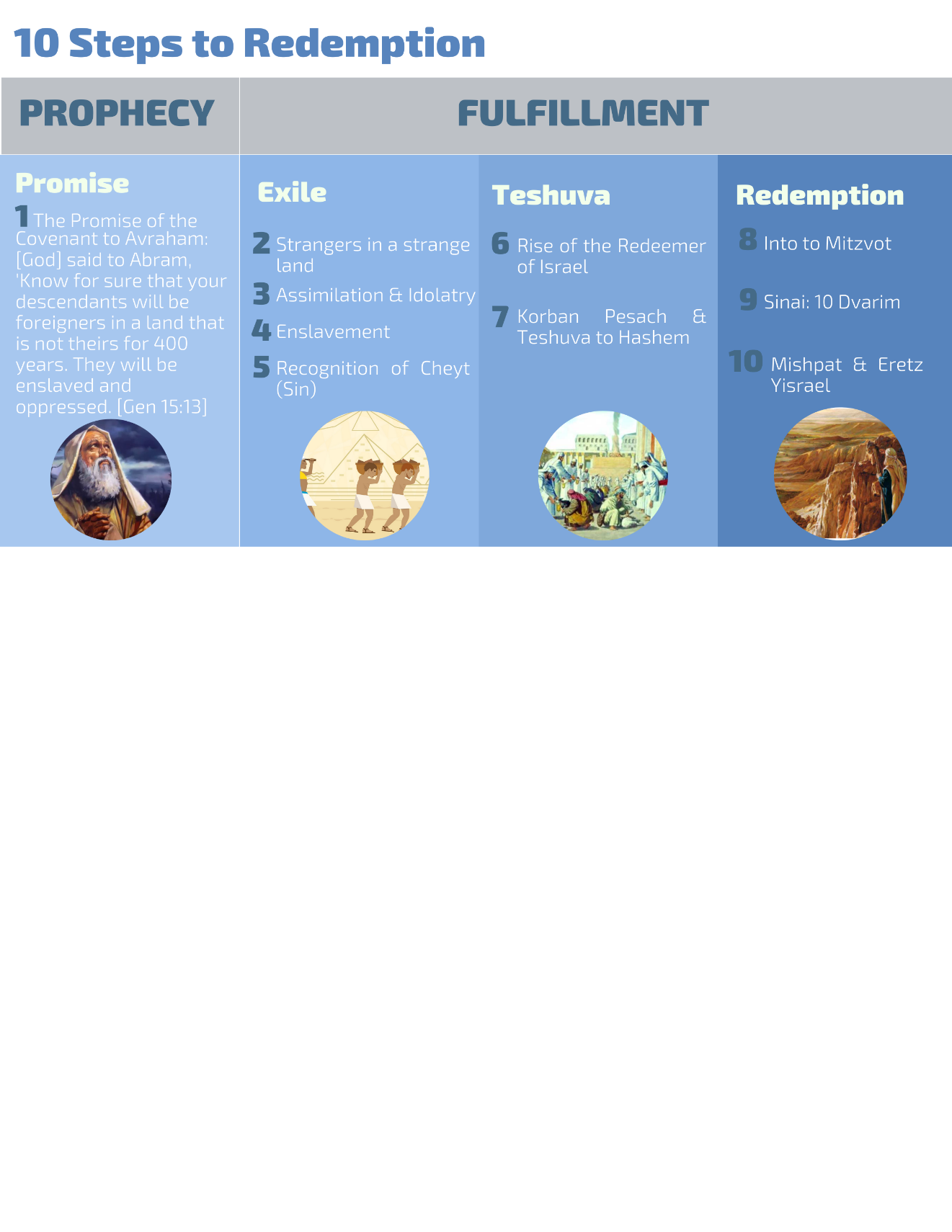
# Class # 9- Bill Clinton, Moshe Rabbeinu and The Secret of Charisma

# Senior Fellowship Leadership Program

# Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal - prepared collaboratively with Rabbi Yoni Sacks



<https://youtu.be/0o_EK4EjuEY> The Secret Of Bill Clinton's Charisma

**Bill Clinton noted in his autobiography** [***My Life***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Life_(Bill_Clinton_autobiography))**:**

“Sometime in my sixteenth year, I decided I wanted to be in public life as an elected official. I loved music and thought I could be very good, but I knew I would never be [John Coltrane](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Coltrane) or [Stan Getz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stan_Getz). I was interested in medicine and thought I could be a fine doctor, but I knew I would never be [Michael DeBakey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_DeBakey). But I knew I could be great in public service…”

1. What determined Bill Clinton's decision to become a politician rather than a musician or something else? What was his ultimate value and goal?
2. What would Bill Clinton rather be - a mediocre doctor or the World Champion ping pong player?
3. Does Judaism agree with Bill Clinton’s basis of choosing to be a politician? Why or Why not?

[Bill Clinton - 42nd [president of the United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States) from 1993 to 2001. Prior to his presidency, he served as [governor of Arkansas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor_of_Arkansas) (1979–1981 and 1983–1992) and as [attorney general of Arkansas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attorney_general_of_Arkansas) (1977–1979).] He ran in his first congressional election when he was 30 years old! He attended [Georgetown University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgetown_University),[University College, Oxford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_College,_Oxford), and [Yale Law School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yale_Law_School).

1. How did Bill Clinton's need for greatness effect his performance as a student and politician?
2. What should a Torah based educator do with the reality that 16-year-olds tend to seek greatness?
3. What role does Judaism assign to attaining “greatness”? Would it be positive for a 16-year-old Bill Clinton to learn Torah with the aim of becoming a great scholar?
4. As a person learning Torah gets older and wiser, what happens to their desire for greatness?

The Midrashic story of Hagar - the slave woman of Sarah

**שפחה מצרית** A HANDMAID, AN EGYPTIAN – שפחה מצרית A HANDMAID, AN EGYPTIAN — She was a daughter of Pharaoh; when he saw the miracles which had been performed for Sarah’s take he said, “It is better for my daughter to be a handmaid in this man’s house than be mistress in another man’s house” (Genesis Rabbah 45:1).

The Burning Bush

3:1 Moses tended the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, sheik of Midian. He led the flock to the edge of the desert, and he came to God's Mountain, in the Horeb area.

3:2 God's angel appeared to [Moses] in the heart of a fire, in the middle of a thorn-bush. As he looked, [Moses] realized that the bush was on fire, but was not being consumed.

3:8 I have come down to rescue them from Egypt's power. I will bring them out of that land, to a good, spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, the territory of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Yebusites.

3:9 'Right now the cry of the Israelites is coming to Me. I also see the pressure to which Egypt is subjecting them.

3:10 Now go. I am sending you to Pharaoh. Bring My people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.'

3:11 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?' said Moses to God. 'And how can I possibly get the Israelites out of Egypt?'

3:12 'Because I will be with you,' replied [God]. 'Proof that I have sent you will come when you get the people out of Egypt. All of you will then become God's servants on this mountain.'

4:1 When Moses [was able to] reply, he said, 'But they will not believe me. They will not listen to me. They will say, 'God did not appear to you.' '

4:2 'What is that in your hand?' asked God.

'A staff.'

4:3 'Throw it on the ground.'

When [Moses] threw it on the ground, it turned into a snake, and Moses ran away from it.

4:4 God said to Moses, 'Reach out and grasp its tail.' When [Moses] reached out and grasped [the snake], it turned back into a staff in his hand.

4:5 'This is so that they will believe that God appeared to you,' [He said]. 'The God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.'

4:6 God then said to Moses, 'Place your hand [on your chest] inside your robe.'When [Moses] placed his hand in his robe and removed it from his chest, it was leprous, [as white] as snow.

4:7 'Place your hand in your robe again,' said [God].

[Moses] placed his hand [back] into his robe, and when he removed it from his chest, his skin had returned to normal.

4:8 'If they do not believe you,' [said God], 'and they do not pay attention to the first miraculous sign, then they will believe the evidence of the second sign.

4:9 'And if they also do not believe these two signs, and still do not take you seriously, then you shall take some water from the Nile and spill it on the ground. The water that you will take from the Nile will turn into blood on the ground.'

4:10 Moses pleaded with God. 'I beg You, O God, I am not a man of words - not yesterday, not the day before - not from the very first time You spoke to me. I find it difficult to speak and find the right language.'

4:11 'Who gave man a mouth?' replied God. 'Who makes a person dumb or deaf? Who gives a person sight or makes him blind? Is it not I - God?

4:12 Now go! I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say.'

4:13 'I beg you O Lord!' exclaimed [Moses]. 'Please! Send someone more appropriate!'

4:14 God displayed anger toward Moses. 'Is not Aaron the Levite your brother?' He said. 'I know that he knows how to speak! He is setting out to meet you, and when he sees you, his heart will be glad.

4:15 You will be able to speak to him, and place the words in his mouth. I will then be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what to do.

4:16 He will speak to the people for you. He will be your spokesman, and you will be his guide.

4:17 Take this staff in your hand. With it, you will perform the miracles.'

1. If Hashem offered Bill Clinton the opportunity to liberate the Jewish People from Egypt, would he even have objected?
2. Why did Moshe object to taking out the Jewish people? Was it false humility?
3. Moshe, our greatest leader, had to be strong armed into taking the job. What does that tell us about our approach to taking leadership positions in general?
4. What were Moshe’s virtues?
5. Why would Hashem not select a Bill Clinton Charismatic speaker, instead of Moshe who is the anti-charismatic speaker?

 Pirkei Avot - 1:6

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִתַּאי הָאַרְבֵּלִי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אוֹמֵר, עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב, וּקְנֵה לְךָ חָבֵר, וֶהֱוֵי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת:

Joshua ben Perahiah and Nittai the Arbelite received [the oral tradition] from them. Joshua ben Perahiah used to say: appoint for thyself a teacher, and acquire for thyself a companion and judge every person with the scale weighted in their favor.

Rambam Comments:

**And he said, "acquire for yourself a friend".** He said it with an expression of acquisition, and he did not say, "Make for yourself a friend," or "Befriend others." The intention of this is that a person must acquire a friend for himself, so that all of his deeds and all of his matters be refined through him, as they said (Taanit 23a), "Either a friend or death." And if he does not find him, he must make efforts for it with all his heart, and even if he must lead him to his friendship, until he becomes a friend. And [then] he must never let off from following [his friend's] will, until his friendship is firmed up. [It is] as the masters of ethics say, "When you love, do not love according to your traits; but rather love according to the trait of your friend." And when each of the friends has the intention to fulfill the will of his friend, the intention of both of them will be one without a doubt.

Scenario #1: Jane MJE’er was given a new chavrutah for one-on-one learning, Lauren. Jane likes Lauren. Lauren has invited her on Wednesday for a wonderful Friday night dinner [pre/post Covid]. The next day, Jane got a call from Tracy, her old college friend, to hang out on Friday night. What are the calculations Jane should use in making a decision of what to do?

Scenario #2: Joe MJE’er, has had a difficult time in the dating area. He is in his 30’s. His Judaism is really important to him. He met a wonderful Jewish women, Sophia, on JSwipe. She is lovely in every way. She was brought up in a secular home. She has very little interest in Judaism. She wants to be supportive, but the gap is huge. What advice would you give Joe?