



# Foreword

by HaRav Dovid Castle\*

It is written in the Torah, concerning the end of the sixth day of Creation, “And G-d saw all that He made, and behold it was very good” (*Bereishis* 1:31). A little further on (in *Bereishis* 2:18) it is written, “G-d said, ‘It is not good that man be alone; I will make him a helper corresponding to him.’” What changed at that point? Until then everything was very good and suddenly G-d said that something was not good, and announced what He would do about it. What happened?

When G-d saw that all He made was good, Adam had not yet been assigned a mission. But then G-d commanded Adam not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. With this commandment, Adam was assigned the job of maintaining his high

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spiritual level as the leader in the Creation and raise it to the level of Shabbos, while totally annulling himself to the Will of Hashem. His mission was to last until the first Shabbos of Creation entered, which was to mark the full completion and rectification of Creation. Had Adam not sinned, the world would have been totally rectified when Shabbos entered.

Immediately after G-d commanded Adam not to eat from the Tree, it is written that “it is not good that man be alone.” Given the nature of his assignment, Adam’s status of being alone was no longer good, and it would be better for him to have a helpmate. Self-actualization and true *bitul* (self-nullification) are more difficult to achieve if one is alone.

After Adam’s sin, we have a similar mission to complete in order to rectify Creation, albeit on a greatly diminished spiritual level of existence.

Negative mitzvos require restraint and discipline, and, as Ramban writes (*Shemos* 20:8), are connected to fear of Hashem. *Bitul* is the key to fulfillment of negative commandments. Positive mitzvos, Ramban writes, are primarily connected to love of Hashem. Proper action is the key to fulfillment of positive commandments and is crucial to self-actualization and realization of one’s potential.

The combination of self-actualization and self-nullification to Hashem’s Will should be the goal and work of one’s lifetime. This is what Hashem wants from us in our relationship with Him, and He created the world’s first and foremost partnership, the institution of marriage, to serve as an arena for practicing and perfecting these essential life tasks. Neither man nor his helpmate is complete without each other. Within the vessel of marriage each can grow and actualize his/her potential while at the same time working to nullify his/her will to further the good of the union and each other. In the process, both are working to fulfill the Will of Hashem.

Husband and wife are a team engaged in a joint effort to

serve Hashem in all the ways asked of them, and to learn, grow, and enjoy the bounty Hashem bestows in the process. Members of any team must master the necessary skills in order to work together and achieve maximum results. The members of the marriage team require numerous skills in order to reasonably and realistically chart a path that will bring them to realizing their spiritual potential, and enable them to travel that path together in peace and harmony, with love and fear of Hashem, and love and kindness to each other and to others.

This book, *Inside Marriage*, authored by my wife, Rebbetzin Miriam, lays out with great clarity, in fifty short chapters, many of the skills and perspectives needed for a happy, holy, loving, and peaceful married life. I have read the entire work and attest that all of it is fully based on, and in line with, the truth and wisdom of genuine Torah teachings and pure Torah *hashkafah*.

May it be Hashem's will that *Inside Marriage* successfully guide couples who are trying to build their marriages, be of help to couples in troubled marriages, and contribute to making good marriages even better, bringing ever more light, happiness, peace, and the presence of the *Shechinah* into Jewish homes everywhere.



## Foreword from *Practical Inner Torah: A Guide to Going Within* (Feldheim, 2012)

**I**nner Torah, a process developed by my wife, Rebbetzin Miriam Millhauser Castle, is a Torah-true approach to personal growth and closeness with Hashem. The Vilna Gaon writes that our main work in this world is *tikkun hamiddos* – rectifying our character traits. Rav Chaim Vital writes in *Sha'ar*

*Hakedushah* that the quality of all our mitzvos is connected to the state of our *middos*. This work of continually refining ourselves and bringing ourselves as close as we can to the lofty levels the Torah asks of us is the work of a lifetime – and it is not easy. To do it we need tools, and the Torah expects us to continually develop those tools so that the challenges of each generation can be adequately met. Today we face unprecedented challenges at the individual level, with many people struggling with personal and interpersonal issues which in turn detrimentally affect their marriages and families.

The Inner Torah process described in this book is a way to use these very issues as a path to growth. It transforms life experiences that might otherwise inhibit, or even block, the reaching of one's full potential and closeness with Hashem, into springboards for achieving those goals. By emphasizing the development of the mature adult in each of us, it also offers a way to help ourselves fulfill the requirements of *halachah* and aim for even higher levels of piety, especially in the area of *bein adam l'chaveiro* (interpersonal *mitzvos*), where mastery of one's feelings and knowing how to work with them is so essential.

Hundreds of women have used the Inner Torah process with great success, with the benefits extending to their marriages and families, as often attested to by husbands and even children. Couples use and benefit from this work as well, with men finding the process equally helpful for their own, as well as their marital, issues.

I have thorough knowledge of the contents of the books my Rebbetzin has written, and have contributed to the writing of some. Her books and work are fully rooted in the most reliable Torah sources.

Upon becoming acquainted with Practical Inner Torah and the Inner Torah process, HaGaon HaRav Shmuel Kaminetsky, *shlita*, cited the Light of Israel, Reb Yisroel Salanter's, *z"l*, words that "proper behavior will not be established without great

strategies” and stated that, therefore, this holy work [*Practical Inner Torah*] is very important, to help people get to know themselves and improve their ways.

The noted *dayan* of Beis Din Ahavas Shalom in Yerushalayim, HaGaon HaRav Naftali Nussbaum, *shlita*, stated that the guidance and insights offered in this work [*Practical Inner Torah*] enable a person to deal with difficulties and relate to them in a proper way with a settled mind. Both of these Rabbeim, as well as others, offered blessings that it should be Hashem’s will that through this work many continue to be helped and the honor of Heaven increased.

I too offer my blessing that it be Hashem’s will that Inner Torah continue to help people relate to themselves, others, and Him in the lofty and holy ways of the Torah, and use their life experiences to grow and to contribute to the *Klal*.