



# ONE WOW MOMENT



7 Biblical Women Who Used 1 Moment to Change Everything  
*And How We Can Do The Same*

לְפִיכֶם צָרִיךְ כָּל אָדָם שִׁירְאָה עֲצָמוֹ כֹּל הַשָּׁנָה  
בְּלֵא כְּאֵלוֹ חֲצִיֹּ זָכָאִי וְחֲצִיֹ חַיִּב. וְכֵן כָּל הָעוֹלָם  
חֲצִיֹ זָכָאִי וְחֲצִיֹ חַיִּב... עֲשֵׂה מִצְוָה אַחַת הָרַי  
הַכְרִיעַ אֶת עֲצָמוֹ וְאֶת כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ לְכַף זְכוּת  
וְגָרַם לוֹ וְלָהֶם תְּשׁוּעָה וְהַצְלָה

...A person should always look at himself as equally balanced between merit and sin and the world as equally balanced between merit and sin.... If he performs one mitzvah, he tips his balance and that of the entire world to the side of merit and brings deliverance and salvation to himself and others.

**RAMBAM, LAWS OF TESHUVA, 3:4**

Maimonides eloquently expresses Judaism's liberating perspective on the power of the individual. Rather than offering an exaggerated inflation of an individual's self-worth, Judaism truly believes that a single positive action of a lone person—no matter who—has the ability to transform a city, a nation, or the course of human history.

When humanity was born with a lone couple in a lovely garden, such a perspective would have come naturally, but billions of bodies now breathe on this planet and the idea that any one of them, without exception, has the potential to deliver untold benefit to the rest seems radical at best. Maimonides, however, was not delivering a sermon; he recorded this perspective as a matter of practical Jewish law for everyday living.

In our own times, the Lubavitcher Rebbe championed this perspective hundreds of times, urging individuals across the globe to adopt Judaism's empowering mindset, to act decisively in their respective environments and circumstances, and to literally change the world for the better.

Surprising perspectives are best delivered on the wings of tangible demonstration. Within the Jewish nation's dramatic history, many of the single acts with supremely destiny-changing consequences were delivered through the hands of women. *One Wow Moment* selects seven such episodes from the narratives that flow through the Tanach (Hebrew Bible), each of which depicts a heroic woman who faced a moment of crisis or a pivotal quandary.

In their unique ways and under dissimilar circumstances, each of these women—three matriarchs, two princesses, one queen, and a queen-to-be—rose to the occasion. Rather than accepting perfectly logical arguments for riding the easy route, they chose to act decisively. History has proven that these women single-handedly tipped the balance of the world to merit and salvation.

*One Wow Moment* is not an overview of these ancient lives; rather, it analyzes the components of their fateful decisions and weighs the stakes involved. Each of its seven classes challenges participants to consider how they might have reacted under similar circumstances, harvests the life lessons inherent within each biblical narrative, and reframes ancient dilemmas into practical and empowering guidance for personal moments of decision in modern life.



## SARAH

Two Views of You

*Overcoming Inclination via an External Perspective*

Navigating life can be tricky, and a moral and spiritual life—even trickier. All humans suffer from unconscious bias; we can be too close emotionally to our internal trees to see our forest with full objectivity. An episode in the life of our Matriarch Sarah reveals that this is a struggle for even the best and brightest individuals. Sarah informs us that what we are certain is right and noble might actually be unsound and unsafe for the particular dilemma we face. This lesson analyzes a puzzling slice of Sarah's story to reveal a literally G-d-sent solution.



## RIVKAH

Desirable Duplicity

*Being Jewish in All of Life's Roles*

It's every spiritual seeker's impasse: We want to live meaningful, soul-inspired lives, but we cannot survive without meeting our material needs—and those tend to swallow our time and focus. Rivkah saw an unbridgeable fissure between untethered spirituality versus untamed materiality playing out in the lives of her twins. With incredible insight and courage, she invented a solution just in time to avert disaster. This lesson explores her dilemma and solution, and presents Rivkah as a motherly guide for our own lives.



## RACHEL

Mother of Devotion

*The Limits of Sacrifice*

Infants arrive in this world primed to receive, not to make sacrifices on behalf of others—and the extent to which individuals outgrow that mindset varies widely. Does Judaism expect us to make personal sacrifices to benefit others, and if so, to what degree? This lesson analyzes the fascinating life of our Matriarch Rachel—referred to lovingly for millennia as our collective “mother”—for inspiration and guidance on the value of acting altruistically.



## AVIGAYIL

Affection in Direction

*Rebuking with Love and Respect*

Being advised that we are acting incorrectly is an inescapable feature of life—as is the reality that we will have occasion to inform others of a wrong they are committing. This lesson probes the dramatic story of Avigayil, a brave and wise woman who rebuked an angry king on his way to battle and prevented disaster. Her approach reveals a profound and empathetic motivation that should underline any rebuke, and spills Judaism's secret of successful intervention and redirection.



## ESTHER

Resource-fullness

*Using Every Resource for G-d's Purpose*

Each human owns resources: talent or time, funds or friendship, position or personality, significant supplies or simply a smile. Are they truly ours? Which of them does Judaism expect us to devote to a higher purpose, and to what extent? This lesson consults Queen Esther for advice from her personal experiences in the Persian palace. Her answers are transformative, and guide us toward a comprehensively meaningful existence.



## BATYAH

Against the Tide

*Acting Morally in an Immoral Society*

Cohesiveness, community, conformity. Judaism promotes these as sacred values with enormous benefits, but not if they lead to morally repugnant results. It can be incredibly difficult to recognize the pull and resist the pressure of peers and surrounding society; swimming against the tide can be draining. A solution to this common quandary was born in an unlikely place: the palace of the pharaohs. This lesson analyzes a moment in the life of heroic Princess Batyah that provides us with tangible tools for handling such pressure.



## RUTH

Stepping Up

*Opting for Tough but True*

Are we supposed to squeeze life for the maximum pleasure and convenience? Is there anything wrong with selecting the easiest, least burdensome path at each personal crossroad? This lesson examines the story of Ruth, a former Moabite princess who voluntarily became a destitute Jewess. Ruth teaches us the huge advantage of shouldering instead of shirking responsibility; of choosing covenant over convenience and eternal over easy. Ruth unveils our true self-worth and guides us toward unexpected power.