

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

My name is Avram Yehoshua (Hebrew for Abram Joshua), and I was born in Brooklyn, New York on May 24th, 1951. My parents divorced when I was five years old and I grew up thinking that I was the only kid who didn't have his father living at home. By 20 I was attending Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey, but I made my living shooting pool. I would eventually graduate from Ramapo State College in Mahwah, New Jersey with a BA in Political Science, with no distinctions. My heart was into shooting pool and my real education would come from the pool hall where I got an MA in 'Banking' and a Ph.D in 'English.'

My life was one where I did whatever I wanted to do. Leaving home at 18, I made the pool hall my new home where I could be found 70 hours a week. I smoked grass, did hash, and some LSD, and learned what sex was about. I also saw that I wasn't as ethical as I had imagined myself to be, but lately, something was stirring inside me. As I got on Rt. 17 to go to the pool hall that day, I looked up into the sky and said:

'God, if You're real, I want to know. If You're not then Heaven and Hell don't mean anything, but if You are, then You're wise enough and strong enough to get in onto a guy like me.'

That began my spiritual journey. Oh, I 'knew' God existed. I had heard about Him in one way or another all my life, but God meant no more to me than Abraham Lincoln. I knew he existed too, but Mr. Lincoln didn't effect my life, as I could see it, in 1971, and neither did God. Where was integrity? Where was real Life?

I was hungry for Reality. I searched for God in Transcendental Meditation. I found something there. I looked into Zen Buddhism. I loved it. I thought it was the perfect answer to reality, but I would come to see that God was in neither of them, just 'self' at a heightened level of awareness. I would wander down that spiritual lane for four years and then I moved from New Jersey to Tampa, Florida.

I had played pool for five years and could have turned professional, but my heart wasn't into hustling people. I had come to see that in order to excel I'd have to become insensitive to people and to any morals that I might still have had left. I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life, but I knew that I didn't want to shoot pool for the rest of it. To be the best you have to give your soul to the game, but the game didn't reward me with something that truly satisfied my soul. It just took my soul and left me empty.

I would have headed out to California, but I didn't think my 1967 Buick Skylark would make it. So Tommy Vince, a friend of mine, and I decided to head to Florida. It was September 1975. I only brought a couple books with me, but one of them would radically change my life. I had heard many good things about it for the last few years. When I began to read it in October 1975 I thought it was going to be like the other self-help books that I had read before. I was into 'pulling myself up by my own belt loops' philosophy and I thought that *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale would be similar. It wasn't.

God drew me to Him through the book. It had stories of people who were searching for Reality, searching for hope or for real peace with God, etc. Each one found their answer in Jesus. I was deeply impressed. I had never read anything like that before. By the time I was halfway through the book I could see that Jesus was everything that I had always wanted, but could never put my finger on. I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins, as the book spoke of, and to come into my heart, and the most wonderful thing happened—*He did! I felt a living peace come over me.* It wasn't the peace of nothingness that the gurus teach, but a heavenly peace. The two were as different as night and day. I had made the right decision. The God of the universe was affirming it. I now had an experiential awareness of the *divine reality*—Jesus had manifested Himself within me and I was Born Again (John 3:3, 5). One journey came to an end while another one began.

You, too, can know the love of Papa God and Jesus His Son—our Savior. Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and to be Born Again. If you have any questions or you'd like to know how to live out this truly incredible Gift that God has given us, email me at AvramYeh@Gmail.com or visit my website at The [SeedofAbraham.net](http://seedofabraham.net). For the rest of my Journey see *Sam the Rock Thrower* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Sam-the-Rock-Thrower.pdf>.

Blessings from Above!,

Avram Yehoshua