

Selections from the Spinka Rebbe, Shlita, of Bnai Brak

"And Count to Yourself..."

[Shiur in Pri HaAretz, "Shabbos Within Pesach," given in Chol HaMoed Pesach, 5774]

"And count to yourselves from the day following the rest day..." The matter is known to those who believe in the spiritual reality and the life of the Holy sparks that are within every physical thing, and within all speech and thoughts and character traits and serious aspirations, which are all from the Hand of Hashem who dwells within them *mamash*.

In the Pesach Hagadah we mentioned the four sons who are spoken about in the Torah. The first two are the Chacham (the wise son) and the Rasha (the wicked son). But it would seem that the opposite of the Chacham is a fool. If so, why are the Chacham and the Rasha grouped together?

The Maharal explains that the Chacham sees changes going on in the structure of Yiddishkeit as he knows it to be. Things that he wasn't used to until now. And because he can't come to understand it himself, he asks, ... מה העדות... *what are these changes testifying about, what are they expressing?*

But his main point still remains the point of *emunah*; he doesn't understand and because of that he wants to clarify why there are changes in the regular order of things.

The Rasha can still be a Chacham but he is called by the name "Rasha" because he is seeking, through this point of change, to run from the truth, and to find for himself reasons why he should destroy the way. He doesn't at all want an answer.

Therefore, we speak to the Chacham who believes that it's all truth, but truth that he doesn't understand. It's to him that we speak, since it is through what he is lacking that he will come to *emunah*. But the Rasha uses questions as a pretext, so that he can run from the way of *emunah*. Therefore, we are told in the Hagadah that we are to blunt his teeth.

That is how the *Pri HaAretz* begins his *shiur*. Everything that we will be speaking about here is known to believers (מתאמינים). The Ramchal speaks on the two posukim "I am the First and I am the Last," and "You shall know today and let it rest in your

heart that Hashem is Elokim." Hashem gives a person the intelligence to understand things, but the question is *what is he going to do with the understanding?*

If a person always needs, according to his own bit of logic, to understand everything, then when he has things that he cannot make peace with, not understanding the ways in which Hashem leads him, he can become broken or rebel, *ר"ן*, and end up completely wild, never coming to *emunah*.

So the Holy Torah says, "And you shall know today..." Know that all the knowledge and understanding that HaKadosh Boruch Hu gives us is given in order that we should realize that if we are in a situation where our ability to understand is taken from us, we should not run away, but should remember the next part of the *posuk*: "...Hashem is HaElokim..."

Spirituality and the life of the Holy Sparks are things that we need to believe in, even though we don't see them with our eyes of flesh.

Now we can go further. Up until now we have explained that *emunah* is the belief that HaKadosh Boruch Hu gives life to everything. Now the *Pri HaAretz* is emphasizing that we need to also believe that there is nothing else besides Him that gives life to the Creation; Only Him.

Rav Asher Freund, *נ"י*, said that as Jews, we are accustomed to saying "Boruch Hashem," and "B'Ezrat Hashem." For most people, they are just "lip words." But the central work is to nullify everything. Take, for example, a person who worked hard to prepare for the holiday. It's harder than all that for him to give up his feeling that *he* did it, from which he would come to believe that HaKadosh Boruch Hu did everything, and led him in what he accomplished...

"The *tzimtzum* (contraction) of the Holy Life Force that is within all physicality is called *The Exile of the Shechina, the Divine Presence*, the exile of the Presence that dwells within them. In order to be Holy, Yisroel was *first* in His Thought, and everything was created for them. Everything is through them and they can raise up the Shechina, further and further, or they can bring it down, *ר"ן*, further and further through their actions."

...Rav Asher, *נ"י*, said that when a person experiences any pain, that is just a small example of the very great pain that the Shechina has when a person does something other than the *Ratzon Hashem*, when he takes the life-force of Hashem which gives him life every second, and uses it to give life to the *klipah*.

The *Pri HaAretz* explains that the purpose of the exile of the Shechina that enters within all physicality is to take it out from there, through believing that HaKadosh Boruch Hu is giving life to it. This is like what the *Pri HaAretz* said earlier, that He gives existence to even the carcasses of the dead. Without that, they wouldn't exist at all.

"In every place where Israel is exiled, the Shechina is with them, even within the *klipot*. That is the life-force of the *klipot*. That is to say that when a Jew is drawn to them, the Shechina that is also drawn with him gives life to the *klipot*. That which comes out from the Shechina to give life to the *klipa* is known as *blemish and impurity*. And from then on, it is beyond his capabilities to be attached with *Kedusha*...He has on him a screen that separates...until he is purified from his impurity..."

The *Pri HaAretz* explained in another place the *posuk*, "If you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures - then you will understand the fear of Hashem, and find the knowledge of Elokim." (Mishle 2:4-5). The silversmith who wants to join together two pieces of silver needs first to remove the rust from the two places where he wants to join them, and then they will fit well together. Like this, the person who sinned, that is to say that he took the holy Life-Force that HaKadosh Boruch Hu sent him *צמצום ממדרגה העליונה*, chaining down to him from the highest level, and instead of allowing it to reveal the Shechina that is within the physicality and raising it up, he falls into wrongdoing, giving life to the *klipot* ר"נ.

And when he wants to return he needs to exert a lot of effort, like that silversmith who needs to work vigorously to remove the rust from the place where they will be attached.

We also explained why the *posuk* refers specifically to *kesef*. It's necessary to prepare the place with *any* material, not just silver. But the word "kesef," is from the word, "kisufin," (longing). The Holy Shechina is always rousing us, in many different ways, to return and be attached to Hashem Yisborach.

The Shechina wants to be attached to Hashem, and Hashem wants the Shechina to return to Him. Therefore, we, who are the connection, need to remove the rust from ourselves, in order to perform Hashem's *Ratzon*. Further on, we will expand on this.

Removing the rust is not a long process, as is explained through the *posuk*, "As far as east from west, has He distanced from us our transgressions." (Tehillim 103:12). Like a person turns his head from east to west, also a person can, in a fraction of a second, change into a complete Tzadik. As is explained in the Gemara in Kidushin, that a person who engages a woman to be married on condition that he is a complete Tzadik, and then he is found to be a complete Rasha, is in any case still engaged, on the assumption that he had a thought of tshuva. In other words, it's all dependent on a person's choice...

Since all is dependent on the choice, once a person has decided to return to Avodas Hashem, he needs to pass over the path that he was on when he did the *avera* (wrongdoing). That is in order to fix it up so that Kedusha can enter there.

These are the fifty days that we are counting, the fifty gates that were in Mitzraim, to raise them from impurity to purity.

There is a very fundamental *Sfas Emes* relating to this, from the *posuk*, "The enemy declared, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide plunder...'" The *Sfas Emes* asks, how did the Bnai Yisroel know what the Egyptians had said? He explains that the Bnai Yisroel themselves saw the *ma'amer* from the Midrash was bringing, that "the servant-girl saw at the sea more than the Prophet Yechezkel." They thought into it...How was it that so recently they were at the 49th gate of impurity, and today they were on such a high level. Then they understood that it didn't happen through them, but that it was a gift from Hashem. To the degree that the Egyptians wanted to sink them into impurity, so was Hashem hidden opposite them in purity.

When they saw that the treasures from the sea were many more times than the treasures of Egypt, they asked why they were receiving so much. And they understand that logically it must be because the enemy was so greatly dedicated to pursuing, overtaking, and plundering, and that Hashem paid them *מידה כנגד מידה* proportionally more.

From this we learn that when HaKadosh Boruch Hu brings a person in a certain way, he needs to know that even though it seems to him that this is the way that is most desirable for him to go, the opposite is true. There is a very great outpouring that HaKadosh Boruch Hu wants to bring him, but the person is obligated first to be taken this way in order to nullify himself and fix up that which he took to himself by his wrongdoing.

As we explained, his wrongdoing in taking the Divine Life-Force for his own personal needs, and inflating himself, he has given life to the Other Side, *ד"ל*. Because of that, HaKadosh Boruch Hu returns him in that way so that he will nullify himself to Hashem, thus rising more and more.

So was it also when they left Mitzraim. They had to wait 50 days in order to raise up in Kedusha everything that had fallen. After that, they received the Holy Torah that has shined for us until this very day much more so than what they brought with them from Mitzraim...

The *Pri HaAretz* *ע"י* explains that all of this wasn't only at the time of leaving Egypt, but it is happening in everything that a person undergoes in his lifetime. We will explain more on the *inyan* of HaKadosh Boruch Hu and His Shechina. HaKadosh Boruch Hu is not a "concept" and we have no grasp of Him. For that reason, he *צמצם* ("contracted") within physicality his Life-Force that is called *Shechina*.

We can grasp through the things that are physical that they have within them that Presence that is called Shechina. The purpose of the *tzimtzum* is to reveal this Presence and thus remove the physicality and raise it up. Then the *אור המקיף* (Surrounding Light) is joined with the *אור הפנימי* (Inner Light), which is HaKadosh Boruch Hu and His Shechina. The way to know how to reveal this Life-Force is through being involved with Torah and Mitzvos.

(...Take a person who has the test of anger. The feeling of the anger comes from the spiritual lights. If he gets angry, he loses that life-force and gives life to the Other Side. But if he is strong and holds himself back in the way the Torah commands and remembers the words of Chazal about anger, he gives life to himself and enlightens himself through that light and he reveals the spiritual life-force, bringing it out to join with the Surrounding Light, bringing it up. Up until that time, it was in exile, as the *Pri HaAretz* writes of "The Shechina in exile," which needed to come to this world dressed in the aspect of *Gevura*, strength.

Now that this person has not gotten angry he knows that the whole test was only a means for him to receive Life-Force from Hashem. This is the way he brings this light to redemption and revelation, giving life to himself because he is the link to this quality.)