

## Selections from the Spinka Rebbe, Shlita, of Bnai Brak

[Shiur in *Sfas Emes* ]

### The True Seder: Nature or Miracle?

There was a well-known debate at the time of the Maharal. The philosophers claimed that all the world is directed by nature, and even the miracles that are done outside of the way of nature were already established at the time of Creation and they are an integral part of the order of the world. And they say that HaKadosh Boruch Hu doesn't change the order of nature at all. The Maharal answers them that just like there is a special *seder* and management to the world that was created by nature, there is a special *seder* and management that is not run by the laws of nature but that runs according to that which is above nature. We will further explain their disagreement:

The *Sfas Emes* in his discussion of the Maharal also explains it differently than the philosophers, who say that nature is the *seder* of the world. They say that when a miracle occurs it is not within that *seder*. He says that on the contrary, the truest *seder* is the special supervision that is outside of nature. It chains down from *Ayn Sof*, ב"ה, and we have no grasp of that at all. *That is the seder.*

HaKadosh Boruch Hu changed from His Supervision that is something beyond our grasp, and created here a world that seems to be of natural management, so to speak, in order to enable us to grasp some concept of a Creator and a Creation. But the truth is that all of nature is not the real *seder*, because the real *seder* is the light of Hashem.

The *Beis Aharon* talks about how we refer to the night of Pesach as "Layl HaSeder," and asks about that: *Layl HaSeder* was the pinnacle of the miracles that were performed for the Jewish people ("I myself took you out, and not a *malach*.") If so, then it needs to be the opposite of the regular order of things (and not a "*seder*.") He answers that on the contrary, on the night of Pesach the truest *seder* is revealed, which is the management of Hashem Yisborach through an order which is above nature. It's all dependent on how the person looks upon it.

Whoever lives above nature and from there he looks towards and awaits HaKadosh Boruch Hu, then from *Shamyim* they lead him in a way that is above the way of nature. The one who lives according to the way of nature, where he needs to understand everything and everything needs to go in the fixed ways, is going not in the way of the Creation and he can very easily spoil things through not looking with

the eyes of his intelligence, which would give him to discover the wondrous supervision of HaKadosh Boruch Hu in his life.

We need to search out in everything the true *seder* through which HaKadosh Boruch Hu leads us in a way that is precisely the opposite of our understanding. Then a person can participate in a life that is above nature. HaKadosh Boruch Hu then opens for him, in all his difficulties, the way of *emunah*. He sees, specifically in his difficult situations, how HaKadosh Boruch Hu leads him with compassion, and is concerned with all his needs.

This is explained in the *Sfas Emes* in Parshas Lech Lecha, where Hashem commands Avraham Avinu to travel: "Go out from your land." But it doesn't say to where he should go. HaKadosh Boruch Hu doesn't reveal that to him. Why? The *Sfas Emes* explains that Eretz Yisroel is above nature, "A land where the Eyes of Hashem are on it from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." That is not the same as the other lands, where it is possible to statistically predict how things will unfold. Eretz Yisroel is managed and supervised in a distinctive manner by Hashem *Yisborach*.

In order to receive the holiness of the land in this special way a person needs to nullify himself to the way the Land is directed by the Will of Hashem *Yisborach* in the way that is above nature, and to let go of his own understandings. Everything that a person then grasps enables him to digest and process this unique type of supervision. He nullifies his own understandings in *emunah*, knowing that there is a more elevated way than that which he understands.

Therefore HaKadosh Boruch Hu didn't reveal to Avraham Avinu ע"ה, where he was going in order that from the very beginning he would live like this. Only then would he merit to the wondrous ways of that which is above nature, the holiness of Eretz Yisroel. His traveling in this manner of self-sacrifice made it possible for the future generations to contain the holiness of Eretz Yisroel in the way we explained.

There is a letter from the *Pri HaAretz* ו"י, that is called "Concerns About Parnossa." (דאנה הפרנוסא): "It is known that the main part of a person is the *machshova* (thought). In the place where a person's *machshovas* fall, *there is the person.*" Everything goes after the *machshova*. The Baal Shem Tov HaKodesh brings a parable of two people. One prays, but all the time he is planning what he will do in his work that is after the praying. What happens is that he wasn't at all in the prayers, but rather, was in his work, or on the way to it.

In contrast, there is a person who is under pressure from the things he is compelled to be involved with that come up before he prays, but all the time he is

thinking, "when will I already be free of this and able to pray?" This person is all the time in tefilla.

To clarify this, it was asked why it is that a dead person floats on the water, and a living person sinks. The answer given was that a dead person has no *machshovas*, no thoughts. Therefore, there is nothing which motivates him. But a living person is always thinking, and therefore he sinks (in thoughts)...

Therefore, a person needs to make use of his *machshovas* only in a positive direction. This is as it is said in Chabad: "Think good and it will be good." Reb Asher Freund, ז"ל once explained that the reason why a person has pains and fears and similar things, is only because of his own thoughts...That's what is written in the *Pri HaAretz*, that "Where a person's thoughts are, that's where he is, and from there he draws his life-force!!!"

But now it is necessary to for us to emphasize the point of *hishtadlus* (efforts). It would seem, if everything is dependent on thoughts, that it should be enough for a person to think of his *parnossa* and not do anything, and from there his *parnossa* will come to him from above nature...

The *Pri HaAretz* continues: "It is written 'commit your ways to Hashem and He will perform.'" והוא יעשה. The *inyan* is that a person shouldn't rely on the apparent cause, as Chazal say that riches don't come from the craft. The cause is only the passageway for the brocha to come on the action. But a person doesn't need to put all his thoughts into working out the details of that thing that he is doing. And that is what it means by "He will perform." He, *Yisborach*, will bring from potential to actuality, according to what the person asks for. Being very involved in the back and forth of the details awakens *din*, judgment, whereas working in the framework of the general principles is called *rachamim*, compassion. And everything goes after the thought.

The *Pri HaAretz* brings a major *yesod*, (foundation) which is applicable to every area of life. Since a person exists in this world of action, he needs to make some actual *hishtadlus* for everything he is facing. He has to make his efforts, but it is not guaranteed that it is from those efforts he will achieve his *parnossa* or his healing, unless he trusts that Hashem's Guidance will bring him to the right place.

That is to say that his *doing* is separate from his success and rescue. It's precisely the one who is all the time thinking that his *yeshua*, his rescue, will come in a certain specific way, who reduces his chances for success in the area that he needs it in. In contrast to that, there is one who walks in the way of the general principles, that is to say that he makes the *hishtadlus* that is given to him to do, but he trusts in Hashem that He will bring him to the place that he needs to be.

Then he opens for himself new ways of *shefa*, abundance. He senses HaKadosh Boruch Hu showing him the elevated way in which things are directed.

The *Pri HaAretz* writes in a letter that for a number of years Chasidim wrote him from overseas about their difficulties with *parnossa*, etc. He talked about the great pain he felt from this. And in a year when they didn't write him at all about *parnossa*, he knew that at that time their *parnossa* was assured because they had given an opening for abundance, and not necessarily because were working so hard. Their efforts were one thing and their *parnossa* was another.

The *Sfas Emes* continues and explains that "...the *seder* of the Creation is given over to the Bnai Yisroel through the power of the Torah." The world was created with ten sayings. These were the way of the *seder* of the world that is above nature, as we said here at the beginning that the true *seder* is above nature. The Ten Commandments that we received are in the way of nature in order that the Jewish people will fulfill the Torah in every situation in such a way that they come to live according to the *seder* that is above nature. Through this, they will be elevated and draw all of the Creation to the original way things were directed.

**"Tishrei and Rosh Hoshana are for all the Creation. But the unique *seder* for the Jewish people is in Nisan. For nature is concealed in a way that's not of the true *seder*...And the Bnai Yisroel can find the opening to make order according to what HaKadosh Boruch Hu wanted at the Creation of the Heavens and the earth."**

The *Gemara* brings the discussion of whether the world was created in Tishri or Nisan. The *Sfas Emes* says that Rosh Hoshana is always in Tishri, but the opinion that it was in Nisan is talking about it in terms of the purpose of the world. In Nisan the special *seder* is given to the Jewish people, enabling them to reveal the internal management of the world, as when it was revealed to them upon leaving Egypt in the month of Nisan.

The *Sfas Emes* concludes by saying that also Shabbos is not run according to the regular *seder*. Therefore the manna did not come down on Shabbos. The manna was *parnossa within* nature. But Shabbos is above nature.

All this was given to us so that we would act in this world of action, while living according to the true *seder* that is above nature. מעל לדרך הטבע

*--translated by yaakov branfman*