

## Lessons from the Chassidische Parsha

The teachings of the Alter Rebbe in Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah

# I am He and there is no other

ד"ה להבין מ"ש בהגדה

פרשת צו  
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In the Haggadah we read the passage;

וְעָבַרְתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה אֲנִי וְלֹא מַלְאָךְ... אֲנִי וְלֹא שְׂרָף... אֲנִי וְלֹא הַשְּׁלִיחַ. אֲנִי ה' - אֲנִי הוּא וְלֹא אֲחֵר.

*And I passed through the land of Egypt on that night; I and not an angel... I and not a Seraph angel... I and not a Shaliach... I am He and not another.*

At the time of the Exodus, we experienced the loftiest revelations of G-dliness, as Hashem Himself descended to Egypt to redeem the Jewish people.

The Alter Rebbe explains that the words of the Haggadah are not just explaining that the Exodus could not come through the intermediaries of the angels or messengers of Hashem. On a deeper level, they are also negating different level of G-dly light and revelations.

Mitzrayim was a place of absolute impurity. In order to enter and redeem the Jewish people from this Exile necessitated the revelation of Hashem's essential light. Lower levels of G-dly light would have been lost within this impurity; the light would have been darkened.

The three emissaries that Hashem negates; "not an angel, not a Seraph, not a Shaliach", correspond to the levels of G-dly light within the three lower worlds of Beriya, Yetzirah and Asiya.

The light that vivifies these worlds comes through various contractions, becoming more limited and contracted at each subsequent level. This is known as the light of Seder Hishtalshelus – the light that is relative to the worlds and created order.

Kabbalah describes how these three lower worlds exist within the Sefiros of the higher world of Atzilus. The Sefira of Malchus is the level of "Asiya within Atzilus". The emotional Sefiros of Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes are the level of "Yetzira within Atzilus". The Sefira of Binah is the level of "Beriya within Atzilus".

Even though Atzilus is a world which is completely G-dly, it is still a "world" and part of Seder Hishtalshelus.

The Haggadah is telling us that even the revelation of the G-dliness within the Sefiros of Atzilus would not be able to bring about the redemption from Egypt. These levels of G-dliness can be received by and channelled through the angels.

"I" (a pronoun that refers to one's essential self - as opposed

to one's name) refers to the level of Atzilus within Atzilus; the Sefira of Chochma.

This is the essential light that is beyond Seder Hishtalshelus and cannot be received by an angel or similar emissary. This light is so beyond existence, that on this level, "dark" and "light" are the same. This level of revelation could come down in a revealed way even within the darkness of Egypt.

These are the levels alluded to by the angel, the Seraph and the Shaliach. But what is being negated by the words "I am He and not another"? Who is the other that is being referred to?

The G-dly light beyond Seder Hishtalshelus is the source of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. Because on their level "dark" and "light" are the same, they can extend to a person even if they have sinned. They are also the source of Hashem's patience and tolerance which extend even to the wicked.

Because light and dark is equal, the deficiency is that when it comes down, both the forces of good and evil can receive it equally. The Kelipah of Pharaoh and Egypt can still receive vitality from this level. Indeed, it was because Pharaoh received from this lofty level, that he was capable of enslaving the Jewish people, representing a dominance of Kelipah over the side of Holiness.

Through fulfilling the Mitzvos of eating Matzah and Marror on the night of the Exodus, the Jewish people affected that the lofty essential light should be directed in an inner way to the Jewish people and the side of Holiness alone.

This is the meaning of the words "Baavur Zeh Asah Hashem Li", literally "on account of this (a reference to the Matzah and Marror) Hashem did for me". Through the Matzah and Marror it caused that the Hamshacha from Hashem should come "to me" (Li) i.e. exclusively to the Jewish people.

This is the meaning of "I am He and there is no other". "There is no other" is explaining that at the time of the Exodus, the revelation of the light beyond Seder Hishtalshelus was directed to the Jewish people alone and not to any other force. Once this took place, Pharaoh and the Egyptians had no more power over the Jewish people and they went free.

Every year on Pesach as we fulfil the Mitzvos of the Seder night, we are able to draw down this revelation once more to be internalised within our souls and the side of Holiness.