

Transforming the World

Based on the maamar *Padah B'Shalom* 5726

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Psalms 55:19

פָּדָה בְּשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי מִקָּרֵב לִי כִּי בְרַבִּים הָיוּ עִמָּדָי:

He liberated my soul in peace from the battle that came to me, because of the many who were with me.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, in a letter concerning his release from Czarist prison:

וכשקיריתי בס' תהלים בפסוק פדה בשלום נפשי, קודם שהתחלתי פסוק שלאחריו, יצאתי בשלום מה' שלום.

When I read in the Book of Psalms the verse, “He liberated in peace my soul,” before I began the verse after it, I left in peace, and it was from the G-d of peace.

Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch, *Torat Chaim, Vayeitzei* 25d ff.:

ושבתי בשלום אל בית אבי...

The purpose behind Jacob’s journey to Haran was to rescue the divine sparks there. That is the meaning of “...and I will return to my father’s house in peace”—that this rescue of these sparks and their return to their origin (“my Father’s house”) should be in peace.

“In peace” is בשלום, meaning two sorts of peace. There is peace that works its way from below upward, and peace that works its way from above downward.

The Rebbe, *Maamar V'Shavti B'Shalom* 5722 (paraphrased):

These two directions of peace are two strategies of *birur*, and each of these strategies of *birur* has its advantage.

The *birur* from below means that you must invest yourself within the situation of that which you are liberating. For example, within your own life mission: Your divine soul describes what it sees and comprehends to the animal soul in terms that the animal soul can fathom,

so that the animal soul also attains a sense of love and awe of G-d. This is the only way to effect real change—by coming to the place of that which you want to change.

But there is a disadvantage to this kind of birur: There is only so far you can lift things up from within—only as far as the limitations you are dealing with. In the example of the animal soul, it remains an animal, and still essentially opposed to G-dliness. It's more sublime aspects—it's mental and higher emotional faculties—are under the influence of the divine soul. But the animal soul itself remains essentially an animal.

Working from the top down doesn't have that disadvantage. You introduce an element so far beyond that which you want to liberate that it spontaneously loses all sense of self and is absorbed entirely within the divine. This is what occurs when the divine soul experiences love and ecstasy that transcends all boundaries of conscious reason—the animal soul becomes totally lost and absorbed within this experience. But, on the other hand, it has not been transformed.

Ultimately, the goal is to have both forms of birur, and within each of them, the advantage of the other. Then the change is both real and all-consuming.

Zohar 1: 148a:

תרין אינון הוו דאמרו קומה ה', משה ודוד,
 משה אמר קומה ה' ויפוצו אויביך,
 דוד אמר קומה ה' למנוחתך.

There are two who told G-d to arise, Moses and David.

Moses said, "Arise, G-d, and your enemies shall scatter, and those who hate you shall flee from before you."

David said, "Arise, G-d, to your resting place; You and the ark of your strength."

Eitz Chaim, Sha'ar 36 (The Gate of the Diminishing Moon), chapters 1-3:

The moon, representing the sefira of malchut, has seven degrees of elevation. In the time of King Solomon it achieved the sixth. In the times of Moshiach, it will achieve the seventh.

At the sixth degree, the female is face to face with her male partner, z"v. But she is still receiving from his crown. At the seventh degree, they will be two kings with a single crown.

Another difference is that at the sixth degree, the light reaches only as far down as the ninth sefirah, yesod of malchut. Malchut of malchut receives this light not on her own level, but only as she is absorbed within that masculine aspect of yesod. In the time to come, the light will be revealed all the way to malchut of malchut as she is in her place.

The Rebbe, Maamar Padah B'Shalom 5726, s'if 11 (freely translated):

The difference between these two degrees of elevation of malchut also affects the birur of the divine sparks that fell below.

You see, malchut of malchut is no longer how malchut receives from above. Rather, it is the divine force of malchut that gives life and existence to each thing. The “active force within each artifact.”

Therefore, in the times of King Solomon, when the light opened into malcut only as far as she related to that which is above her, the same occurred with those divine sparks—only those sparks that were capable of sensing divine light were pulled in towards it.

But in the time to come, when the light will open up all the way to that level of malchut as she descends into the created worlds, to that level of malchut that is the active force behind all its artifacts—then even those divine sparks that became so distant that, of their own, they are incapable of sensing a divine light—and even those sparks that have descended so far that they themselves have become like the evil that they sustain—even those will rise and be absorbed within holiness.

Yet further: Even the physicality itself—not just the divine spark that sustains it—will come into the most ultimate unity with the divine.

When we say that the physicality of each thing will achieve this ultimate oneness, it's not just because the divine force within it, the force that isifies it from the void, will become apparent through it. We mean that force's physical artifact itself, as it is a thing of itself, that too will be in an ultimate state of oneness.

The reason behind all this is... because we are speaking of the very essence-core of the Infinite Light. There is no existence outside of Him. On the contrary, as Maimonides writes, the reality of His existence, blessed be He, is the existence of all that exists.