

חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

Beit Aharon

KARLIN · BERESHIT, BEIT AHARON

The true "light" of Creation is the light that tzaddikim (righteous ones) shine into the hearts of Israel—including sinners—joining with them, as on Yom Kippur, in order to elevate them to complete teshuvah (repentance) and transform them into a new creation. Likewise, a person's deeds are "straight" only when guided purely by sechel (intellect); when one has strayed from this straight path, one must undertake careful berurim (clarifications) to extract and raise the hidden nitzotzot (sparks) before being able to walk the true path again. AI SUMMARY

Holy writings from His Holiness, our master, teacher, and rabbi, Rabbi Asher, may the memory of the righteous and holy one be blessed, may his merit protect us.

It is stated in the midrash: "There is joy to a man... in the answer of his mouth" (Mishlei 15:23) — "And God said, 'Let there be light'" (Bereshit 1:3). And "a word in its proper time, how good" (Mishlei 15:23) — "And God saw the light, that it was good" (Bereshit 1:4). End of quote.

At first glance this is puzzling — how is it possible to speak of "time" (et) in connection with the Holy One, blessed be He? We may say that it is written, "To everything there is a season, and a time (et) for every purpose (chefetz)." "Chafatzim" (purposes/desires) refers to good deeds (maasim tovim).

For in truth, the essential light is that which the tzaddikim (righteous ones) shine within the hearts of human beings — service of Hashem, blessed be He, devotion (dveikus), and love of Hashem. This is based on the midrash on "And G-d divided between the light and the darkness" — that He divided between the deeds of the tzaddikim and the deeds of the reshaim (wicked ones).

And it is stated in the midrash: "And G-d said, let there be light" — this refers to Avraham. "And G-d called the light day" — this is Yaakov. "And the

darkness He called night" — this is Esav. "And it was evening and it was morning, one day" — this refers to Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).

For the tzaddikim must include themselves within the whole of Yisrael, and shine the light of Hashem within them, and rectify even the reshaim, who are called "evening" (erev). This is why on Yom Kippur we say, in the formula "Al daat haMakom, etc." — "We permit ourselves to pray together with the sinners (avaryanim)."

For one must lower oneself to all the lowest levels, in order to raise them up to their root, to shine within them the light of Hashem, blessed be He and blessed be His Name, and to bring them to complete teshuvah (repentance), so that they become a new creature (beriah chadashah) and new souls are created — as we have said, "and a nation is created, etc." — through the response of His mouth, for He created the tzaddikim.

And "a word in its proper time (et), how good it is" — "And G-d saw the light, that it was good" — meaning He saw the deeds of the tzaddikim, who shine within the hearts of human beings love of Hashem, blessed be He, at every time (et). And this is understood by the wise (v'dal).

In the Haftarah: "Thus says the Lord, who creates the heavens and stretches them out." The explanation is based on what is written, "that God made man straight" (Ecclesiastes 7:29). And what is "the straight"? When a person does all his deeds, he

does them by means of the sechel (intellect). It is therefore called sechel, because it is maskil (reflects/comprehends) about every matter, to understand what this thing is and why it is thus and so. And indeed, when a person does what his sechel obligates and does not act against it, then in all the words he speaks in the world he brings forth truth. This is "a faithful messenger to those who send him" (Proverbs 25:13) — what the thought sends forth to be enacted in speech and deed.

And this is what is written: "And the fear of you and your chitchem shall be upon every beast (chayat) of the earth" (Genesis 9:2). Rashi explains "vechitchem" as "vechayutchem" (your vitality), which raises a difficulty: why then is it written "vechitchem"? My teacher explained the term "vechitchem" as follows: why is the creature called "chayat"? Because the letter ches is the vitality (chiyut) of the worlds, and the milui (spelled-out

form) of the letter ches is yud and tav — this is "chayat ha'aretz" (the beast of the earth). And he said that for one who wishes to overpower them in his heart, there is a special segulah (efficacious quality) in this.

But for one who confuses his sechel and did not act "straight," and who now, today, wishes to walk on the straight path — because of this he must clarify, through a number of berurim (clarifications), which way he should go. And at times he must turn his sechel aside from the path in order to clarify there a number of nitzotzot (sparks), and afterward raise them up to their root. And there are yet several more matters involved in this.

Therefore the verse says, "who creates the heavens and stretches them out." "Heavens" — this is the sechel. "And stretches them out" — as explained above.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)