

1. From Discourse 'Many waters ...' 5738 (= 1977) (מים רבים ה'תשל"ח)

'Many waters are not able to extinguish the love, and rivers will not sweep it away' etc. (Song of Songs 8:7). ... 'Many waters' are all the burdens of livelihood and the thoughts of matters of this world. Nevertheless, they are unable to extinguish the 'hidden love' that is present in every Israelite soul. ...

What is revolutionary about the fact that 'many waters are not able to extinguish the love' is that it is known that the source of these many waters, viz. the burdens of livelihood, is *tohu* (= primal chaos), which precedes *tiqqun* (= structure). This is why they are called 'many' (Heb. *rabbim*) waters' – since they are 'great' (Heb. *rabbim*) also in terms of their root and source. ... Nevertheless, they are unable to (G-d forbid) extinguish the love that is in the divine soul – because, as stated in the preceding verse, 'its flame is a flame of fire, a divine blaze'. Indeed, the source of the soul and the hidden love that is within it is in essence of the Infinite One, which is beyond even *tohu* (= primal chaos); for the source of that love which is in the divine soul is on the level of the 'divine blaze' (lit. 'blaze of Y-H') as it is connected to and contained within the coal (= the 'flame of fire'), and even higher, as it is contained in the flint-stone (which is beyond [the divine name and its letters]). ...

It is not merely that the above-mentioned 'many waters' do not have the ability to (G-d forbid) extinguish the love of the soul. Moreso, through them the love reaches a higher level. That is to say that through the soul's descent to this world, where it becomes inextricably bound up with (lit. 'enclothed in') the above-mentioned 'many waters', it reaches to a higher level than its pre-descent level. [In fact, this is the ultimate purpose of the 'many waters' ... - to effect this higher level in the love.] In human worship, this 'higher level' arrived at via the descent is to attain '*teshuva*' (= return, repentance, etc.). It is known that before their descent, the souls are called 'absolutely righteous'. ... It is known that the absolutely righteous cannot attain the heights attained by the 'returnee / penitent'. ... But only when not in its true environment can it be said that the soul 'returns': 'the spirit returns to G-d, who gave it' (Ecc. 12:7). ... This is the revolutionary accomplishment attained by the soul via its descent.

Although the souls are rooted in the divine essence, beyond all externalities, ... nevertheless it can be said that via their descent and subsequent 'return' they go even higher than their level at their source. This will be understood via a statement of the Maggid of Mezritch explaining the Rabbinic statement that 'Israel arose in the divine thought': This is comparable to a man who has a son. Even when the son left his range of vision, the image of the son is still engraved in the father's thought. However, with humans this is relevant only after the son already exists. With G-d, however, Who is beyond time, it can be said that the image of Israel is engraved in His thought even before they were created. Thus, the souls' rootedness in the divine essence and His taking council with them about whether to bring about the Creation refers to the souls as they would become embodied ... for His council was motivated by the pleasure that He would derive from their work/worship down below. Thus, the higher level attained by the souls via their descent, although they were already rooted in the divine essence, is that beforehand this was from the perspective of His foreknowledge of what would be later on; and after the descent they actually fulfil this intention. ... For the ultimate accomplishment is when things come to fruition. Thus, when G-d took council it was with 'the righteous', when the accomplishment is still only in potential. But once they descended and actually fulfilled the intention, they become 'returnees'.

2. From Discourse 'I have come to my garden ...' 5731 (= 1971) (באתי לגני ה'תשל"א)

A *midrash*: 'He (= G-d) is terrible in His pretexts (= *'alila*) towards the children of man (= Adam)' (Psalm 66:5). An *'alila* (= pretext, false charge) was pinned on Adam by claiming that he brought mortality to the world ('For on the day that you eat from it you shall surely die (Gen. 2:17)). For the Torah preceded Creation by 2000 years, and that very Torah stated 'This is the law concerning a person who dies in a tent' (Num. 19:14). (Midrash Tanhuma, Vayeshev, 4).

Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch explains that the false accusation against Adam is not only that, through the Sin of the Tree of Knowledge, he brought mortality to the world. What is also false is that he was at fault for having sinned. Indeed, the fact that at times the evil inclination prevails over a person is due to the fact that G-d caused the evil inclination to entice the person to commit this sin. [... yet the person's choice of good or evil is *free* choice.]

... The cause and ability to sin ... is [G-d's] diminishing of the moon. Anterior to that, the cause and ability to sin is the shattering of the vessels of the realm of Chaos (= *tohu*). [G-d's] having created the realm of Chaos, a realm that did not please Him (which is why it shattered) is (akin to) the opposite of the divine will. Therefore, it is the cause of, and creates, the ability to sin. Anterior to even that, the cause and the ability to sin is the Primal *Šimšum*, which was in a form of withdrawal. The divine will is that there be revelation of divine light; and the withdrawal of divine light, the Primal *Šimšum*, is (akin to) the opposite of the divine will. This ... is the cause and source of the ability to sin, which is literally the opposite of the divine will. ...

From the point of view of the divine light, the intention of the *Šimšum* is that there be revelation in the worlds, which come into being via the *Šimšum*. However, from the point of view of the *Šimšum* itself, the intention of the *Šimšum* is to reveal (i.e. express) 'hiddenness', which is beyond 'revelation', namely the fact that the divine essence is not (G-d forbid) compelled to emit revelation, but that it has the ability to (alternatively) be concealed. However, the revelation of [this] 'hiddenness' ... is by means of revelation that comes after 'hiddenness'. ...

Likewise in human worship of G-d, the fact that a human can do the opposite of the divine will [via the *Šimšum*, as noted], is on account of the fact that the divine essence is not compelled into anything. However, within this empowerment of humans to do the opposite of the divine will, (its source, namely) the 'ability' (= unhampered freedom) of the divine essence is utterly hidden. It is when the human worships G-d, and does so through his own power and choice, ... that it becomes revealed that this power of the human to choose (and even his ability to choose the opposite of the divine will) is on account of the 'ability' (= unhampered freedom) of the divine essence.