

Discourse 23

“Lehavin Inyan Pesach u’Matzah - To understand the matter of Pesach and Matzah”

Delivered on the 2nd night of Pesach, 5728

By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

To understand the matter of Pesach and Matzah,¹⁴¹⁷ as known, it states in the writings of the Arizal¹⁴¹⁸ that on the night of Pesach there is a drawing down of the immature brains (*Mochin d’Katnut*) - the first maturation (*Gadlut Rishon*) and the second maturation (*Gadlut Sheni*) - and the drawing down is primarily in the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*, called “the pleasant son.”¹⁴¹⁹ This is why the Haggadah states that “the son asks etc.,” meaning that this is primarily relevant to him, since the brains (*Mochin*) are drawn down in him.

However, this drawing down is not according to the order of the levels. For, if that was so, there first would have to

¹⁴¹⁷ See the Sichah talk that preceded the discourse, that this discourse is founded upon the discourse by this title in the booklet of Chassidus* that was released from imprisonment – an exodus from Egypt – prior to the holiday of Pesach. [* It appears as though the intention is to booklet number 623 in the library of Agudat Chassidei Chabad, subsequently printed in Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Vol. 1 p. 284 and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*Lahvinn HaHefresh Bein Pesach L’Sefirat HaOmer*” 5628 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5628 p. 123 and on); Discourse entitled “Pesach u’Matzah” in Sefer HaMitzvot of the Tzemach Tzedek, p. 172a and on.

¹⁴¹⁸ Shaar HaKavanot, Inyan HaPesach, Drush 6; Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Chag HaMatzot, Ch. 2; Siddur HaArizal, Kavanot Seder Pesach

¹⁴¹⁹ See Siddur HaArizal *ibid*.

be the drawing down of the immature brains (*Mochin d’Katnut*) followed by the mature brains (*Mochin d’Gadlut*). However, the drawing down is not according to the levels, in that the mature brains (*Mochin d’Gadlut*) come before the immature brains (*Mochin d’Katnut*).

2.

The explanation is that, as known, the exile in Egypt-*Mitzrayim* מצרים is the matter of “the narrowness of the throat-*Meitzar HaGaron* הגרון.”¹⁴²⁰ The neck is what separates between the brain and the heart, so that the comprehension of the brain will not be drawn into the emotions of the heart. That is, the normal order of things is that when the comprehension of the brain is as it should be, this also has an effect on the emotions of the heart, and “the heart distributes to all the limbs,”¹⁴²¹ so that there is also a drawing down and effect on one’s thought, speech, and action, that they should be as they should be.

However, there is the matter of “Egypt-*Mitzrayim* מצרים,” which is “the narrowness of the throat-*Meitzar HaGaron* הגרון,” which contains the trachea (*Kaneh*), the esophagus (*Veshet*) and the carotid arteries (*Vreedeen*), called the three ministers of Pharaoh.¹⁴²² These are the matter of lusts

¹⁴²⁰ See Pri Etz Chayim ibid., Ch. 7; Siddur HaArizal, section on “*Avadim Hayinu*.”

¹⁴²¹ See Zohar II 153a; Zohar III 161b; 221b (Ra’aya Mehemna); 232a (Ra’aya Mehemna); Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 31

¹⁴²² Likkutei Torah of the Arizal, Parshat Vayeishev; Torah Ohr, Va’era 58b; Hosafot to Vayechi 102c and on; Also see the discourse entitled “*Kara Shachav*

in general, but particularly lusts related to eating and drinking (as explained in the additions to Torah Ohr),¹⁴²³ due to which an obstacle and impediment is caused, so that the grasp of the brain is not drawn down into the emotions of the heart, and it follows automatically that one's thought, speech, and action will not be as they should be.

The matter of the exodus from Egypt is when the drawing down from the brains (*Mochin*) to the emotions (*Midot*) is not by way of "the narrowness of the throat" (*Meitzar HaGaron*). Beyond this, as explained in various places, especially in the discourses of his honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden,¹⁴²⁴ at times the brains themselves (*Mochin*) are drawn down into the emotions (*Midot*), in which case the emotions (*Midot*) are comparable to the brains (*Mochin*), this being the matter of mature emotions (*Gadlut HaMidot*).

Thus, since the brains (*Mochin*) are themselves drawn into the emotions (*Midot*), on this level the matter of "the narrowness of the throat" (*Meitzar HaGaron*) does not apply. In other words, Pharaoh and his three ministers are incapable of causing any change there, and even more so, they are incapable of causing concealment and hiddenness. This also is the meaning of the verse,¹⁴²⁵ "You shall know this day and set it upon your heart." That is, the brains (*Mochin*) themselves are

K'Ari – He crouched and lay down like a lion," 5716, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe 5716, Discourse 24, Ch. 4 and elsewhere.

¹⁴²³ Torah Ohr, Hosafot 104a and on.

¹⁴²⁴ Sefer HaMaamarim 5665 p. 247

¹⁴²⁵ Deuteronomy 4:39

drawn into the heart in a way of inner manifestation (*Hitlabshut Pnimit*).¹⁴²⁶

3.

Now, in the drawing down of the brains (*Mochin*) themselves, there are the brains of the Father-*Mochin d'Abba* and the brains of the Mother-*Mochin d'Imma*. This is why on Pesach there is the matter of the Matzah and the matter of the four cups. The Matzah is the matter of the brains of the Father-*Mochin d'Abba*, whereas the four cups are the matter of the brains of the Mother-*Mochin d'Imma*.¹⁴²⁷ That is, the drawing down of the brains (*Mochin*) in the exodus from Egypt is such that not only is there a drawing down of the brains of the Mother-*Mochin d'Imma*, but there also is the drawing down of the brains of the Father-*Mochin d'Abba*.

The explanation of the difference between the brains of the Mother-*Mochin d'Imma* and the brains of the Father-*Mochin d'Abba* is that, as known, there are two ways of grasping. There is the grasp that something exists (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*), and there is the grasp of its essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*). That is, there is a manner of grasp in which even though the thing grasped is understood and comprehended, nonetheless, only its existence is grasped, but not what it essentially is. Higher than this, is grasp in which even its essential whatness is grasped.

¹⁴²⁶ See Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 18 p. 155 and elsewhere.

¹⁴²⁷ Pri Etz Chayim ibid.

The general difference between the grasp that the thing exists (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*) and the grasp of what it is in essence (*Hasagat HaMahut*) is like the difference between hearing (*Shmiyah*) and seeing (*Re'iyah*). That is, the grasp that the thing exists (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*) is only like hearing (*Shmiyah*) about it.

For, although it is so that through hearing about it, which also includes the matter of understanding and comprehending it, one can come to grasp it very well, to the point of having complete grasp of it, nonetheless, because he only heard about it, but does not grasp what it is in essence, it is possible to refute his grasp of it.

However, the grasp of its essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*) is like the matter of seeing (*Re'iyah*) which transcends hearing (*Shmiyah*), as in the teaching,¹⁴²⁸ “Hearing cannot compare to seeing.” For, even though this was stated about physical sight with the physical eye, the same is also true of seeing with the eye of the intellect in the way of grasping what it essentially is (*Hasagat HaMahut*).

This¹⁴²⁹ is also the difference between the grasp of the prophets, which the Torah calls actual “sight,” as it states,¹⁴³⁰ “*HaShem*-יהוה appeared to him,” this being the matter of the grasp of the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*), and the grasp of the sages of the Wisdom of Truth (*Chochmat HaEmet*),¹⁴³¹ such as the Rashbi and the Arizal, which only is the grasp of its existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*).

¹⁴²⁸ See Mechilta to Exodus 19:9

¹⁴²⁹ See Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 19

¹⁴³⁰ Genesis 18:1 and elsewhere

¹⁴³¹ Kabbalah

It is with this in mind that we can understand how it is that Rashbi and his fellowship, as well as the Arizal and his fellowship, spoke of and grasped lofty levels in the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) and even levels that transcend the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) etc., even though the matter of prophecy is only from the aspects of Victory-*Netzach* and Majesty-*Hod* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*), and even this is only as it is manifest in the worlds of Creation, Formation, and Action (*Briyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Asiyah*).

This is as known regarding the difference between the prophet Yishayahu (who was like a city dweller who saw the king) and the prophet Yechezkel (who was like a villager who saw the king).¹⁴³² That is, the prophecy of Yishayahu was from the aspects of Victory-*Netzach* and Majesty-*Hod* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*) as it manifests in the world of Creation (*Briyah*), whereas the prophecy of Yechezkel was as they manifest in the world of Formation (*Yetzirah*). The prophecy of Zechariah was lower than this, as they manifest in the world of Action (*Asiyah*). However, after the destruction of the Holy Temple, prophecy was nullified,¹⁴³³ and there only is the matter of the echo (*Bat Kol*) of the Heavenly proclamation etc.

However, the explanation is that since the grasp of the prophets was a grasp of the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*), therefore they were only capable of grasping up to the aspects of Victory-*Netzach* and Majesty-*Hod* of the world of Emanation (*Atzilut*). In contrast, this was not so of Rashbi

¹⁴³² Talmud Bavli, Chagigah 13b; See Likkutei Torah, Zot HaBrachah 97a-b; Ohr HaTorah, Megillat Esther (Kehot 5750) p. 275 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5629 p. 83 and on, and elsewhere.

¹⁴³³ See Talmud Bavli, Sotah 48b

and the Arizal and their fellowships, who grasped and discussed much loftier levels, since this was only in a way of grasping their existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*), and even though this too is a matter of grasp, nevertheless, the essential whatness (*Mahut*) of the thing is not known.

The explanation¹⁴³⁴ is that when it comes to grasping Godliness through the matter [expressed in the verse],¹⁴³⁵ “From my flesh I behold God,” then even when one understands and senses the soul that manifests in his body and enlivens him, nonetheless, he has no grasp whatsoever of what the soul essential is. That is, not only does he have no grasp of the essential whatness of the Godly soul, but even in regard to the animalistic soul and the natural soul which enliven his body, and even in regard to the powers of the soul that manifest in the limbs of his body, as in the teaching,¹⁴³⁶ “Just as the soul fills the body etc.,” he has no grasp whatsoever in knowing their essential whatness (*Mahut*), but only knows of their existence (*Metziyut*).

More specifically, even in regard to the existence of Godliness, it is possible for there to be a matter of faith (*Emunah*) alone, and it is possible for there to also be a matter of knowledge (*Yediyah*-ידיעה). This itself is the general totality of the matter of toil (*Avodah*), as the verse states,¹⁴³⁷ “You shall know (*v’Yadaata*-וידעת) this day etc.”

However, at first glance, this is not understood. For, in regard to grasping the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*),

¹⁴³⁴ Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5628 ibid. (p. 120).

¹⁴³⁵ Job 19:26

¹⁴³⁶ Midrash Vayikra Rabba 4:8; See Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10a

¹⁴³⁷ Deuteronomy 4:39

this cannot be attained in our times, whereas in regard to the matter of faith (*Emunah*), this requires no toil (*Avodah*) altogether, being that “all Israel are faithful and are the children of the faithful.”¹⁴³⁸ This being so, what is the matter of toil (*Avodah*) in this?

However, the explanation is that the toil (*Avodah*) is that the existence (*Metziyut*) of Godliness should not just be by way of faith (*Emunah*), but by way of knowledge (*Yediyah*), this being the matter of having a sense and feel etc.¹⁴³⁹ Nevertheless, this only is knowledge of its existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*) rather than what it is in essence (*Mahut*).

Now, similar to the difference between the grasp of the existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*) and the grasp of the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*) is the difference between the brains of the Mother-Mochin *d’Imma* and the brains of the Father-Mochin *d’Abba*. That is, the brains of the Mother-Mochin *d’Imma* are only the matter of grasping the existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut*), whereas the brains of the Father-Mochin *d’Abba* are the matter of grasping the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut*).

This then, is the superiority of the holiday of Pesach, on which there is the consumption of the Matzah, as well as the drinking of the four cups, this being the matter of [both] the brains of the Father-Mochin *d’Abba*, as well as the brains of the Mother-Mochin *d’Imma*. In other words, the drawing down of the brains (*Mochin*) is not only in a way of grasping the existence (*Hasagat HaMetziyut* – the four cups, the brains of

¹⁴³⁸ See Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 97a

¹⁴³⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Va’etchanan 4a and elsewhere.

the Mother-*Mochin d'Imma*) – but is also in a way of grasping the essential whatness (*Hasagat HaMahut* – the Matzah, the brains of the Father-*Mochin d'Abba*).

4.

However, the drawing down of the brains (*Mochin*) into *Zeir Anpin* on the night of Pesach is not according to order and gradation. This is because there first is a drawing down of the first maturation (*Gadlut Rishon*) and second maturation (*Gadlut Sheni*) before the immature aspect (*Katnut*). For, since there is the matter of “the narrowness of the throat” (*Meitzar HaGaron*), it thus is of no benefit that there first be the drawing down of the immature aspect (*Katnut*). It thus is necessary for there to first be the drawing down of the first maturation (*Gadlut Rishon*) and second maturation (*Gadlut Sheni*), drawn from the essential whatness of the Supernal Wisdom-*Chochmah Ila'ah* etc., in that on that level the matter of “the narrowness of the throat” (*Meitzar HaGaron*) does not apply, (as explained above).

All this is so of the night of Pesach, at which time the matter of birth (*Leida*) is caused in *Zeir Anpin*. However, when there then begins to be the matter of suckling (*Yenikah*) and maturation (*Gidul*) etc., it then must be specifically according to order and gradation, this being the matter of counting the Omer, which begins with Kindess-*Chessed* of Kindness-*Chessed*, and then Might-*Gevurah* of Kindness-*Chessed* etc., this being the matter of the maturation of the emotions (*Midot*) through drawing down the aspect of the brains (*Mochin*), until

there is the fulfillment of the verse, “you shall count fifty days,”¹⁴⁴⁰ up to the fiftieth gate.¹⁴⁴¹

Then, on the holiday of Shavuot, the drawing down of the brains (*Mochin*) is caused in a way of wholeness and perfection, this being the matter of the giving of the Torah, about which the verse states,¹⁴⁴² “I was with him as his nursling etc.,” and in this itself, are all five levels enumerated in the continuation of the verse, as explained in Likkutei Torah.¹⁴⁴³

Now, just as this is so of the general redemption, that it comes after the matter of birth (*Leidah*), suckling (*Yenikah*) and maturation (*Gidul*) specifically according to order and gradation, the same is so of the individual service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, of each and every Jew, that it specifically must be in a way of order and gradation.

This refers to the order of serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, every single day. This toil begins with reciting “I thankfully submit – *Modeh Ani*,” which is the matter of faith (*Emunah*). However, there then must be the matter of toiling in service of Him during prayer, and [then] “from the house of prayer to the house of study,”¹⁴⁴⁴ and subsequently,¹⁴⁴⁵ “assume the way of the world in regard to them,” to engage in refining the world to the point that we make “a dwelling place for the Holy One, blessed is He, in the lower worlds.”¹⁴⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴⁰ Leviticus 23:16

¹⁴⁴¹ See Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 12a

¹⁴⁴² Proverbs 8:3; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5665 p. 73 and on.

¹⁴⁴³ In the discourse entitled “*VaEheyeh Etzlo Amon*” (Bamidbar 17d and on).

¹⁴⁴⁴ See the end of Talmud Bavli, tractate Brachot; Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe, Orach Chayim 155a.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 35b

¹⁴⁴⁶ See Midrash Tanchuma, Bechukotai 3; Naso 16; Midrash Bereishit Rabba 3; Bamidbar Rabba 13:6; Tanya, Ch. 36, and elsewhere.