

The Rebbe's Discourses

Summaries of points of the Rebbe's Chassidic Discourses בלי אחריות כלל וכלל

ד"ה וכל העם רואים את קולות פרשת יתרו תשמ"ד בלתי מוגה

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A KEY MOMENT

THE GIVING OF THE TORAH AT SINAI WAS HIGHLY DRAMATIC, with thunder and lightning and an extra-ordinary intermingling of the senses, What was happening? Ten Commandments were being given, the basic law code for Judaism. But there is also another aspect to this event.

Chassidic teachings explain that at Sinai, the Essence of the Divine was revealed to the Jewish people. Beyond words, beyond all description or definition. Indeed, one could even say, beyond 'revelation'. The Essence of the Divine is the ultimate inner reality, beyond existence, transcending all being.

A common paradigm views the Divine and all spirituality at one pole, and physical life with its material issues at the other. But the Giving of the Torah deconstructed that polarity. The very Essence of the Divine was revealed as permeating all existence, to its very lowest levels. From this point on, the spiritual and the physical could be joined, had to be joined. The goal of Judaism is the manifestation and revelation of that union.

For the individual men and women at Sinai, this was an extra-ordinary experience of private revelation of the Divine: "I am the L-rd *thy* G-d", *thy* in the singular. So too each of the other Commandments are expressed in the singular: infinite G-d, communicating uniquely with each individual person.

Based on the text of the Torah, the Sages describe the event at Sinai as literally awesome. That's where the thunder and lightning, the immense sound of the

¹ Maamar Vechol Ho-om Roim et Hakolot 5744 (1983). Printed in Dvar Malchut of Sedra Yitro 5774. It was not edited by the Rebbe.

Shofar, the smoke pouring from the mountain all come into the picture. The awe was as a preparation for the revelation of the Essence.

In a sense, the Essence is so exalted that no preparation is possible. But the sense of awe, the culmination of a year of dramatic events in Egypt, the Exodus, the Splitting of the Sea, and then travelling through the wilderness with water from the rock and mystical manna, had the effect of removing inner concealment, veils and confusion. In this sense the heart and mind, the inner being, of each person was 'ready' for the Divine revelation which would change everything.

An important element in this process was the darkness and bitterness of Egyptian slavery, as a prelude to the exalted revelation at Sinai. Before anything positive, there is likely to be something negative. The Kabbalists tell us that before the revelation of Divine illumination which brought existence into being, there was Tzimtzum, the veiling of the Divine.

Similarly, before any Redemption, there is the darkness of Exile. Before the ultimate Redemption there is the long and often bitter contemporary Exile of the Jewish people.

Our Exile is, in an important sense, the Exile of the whole world. The next step is the transformation of darkness to light, the revelation of the Essence to each individual: 'I am *thy* G-d', says G-d to us and to everyone, from every corner of the universe.

With that, we the Jewish people and all humanity will find true freedom.

[Torah teachings are holy – please treat these pages with care](#)