B”H

**THE EXISTENCE OF THE WORLD IS CONDITIONAL ON REDEMPTION**

***BEGIN WITH A GRIN***

*A young engineer applied for his first job and was accepted on the spot. At the end of the interview, the manager asked him how much of a salary he wanted.*

*“Around 15,000 dollars a month, depending on the other benefits you'll give me.”*

*“Then what do you think about a package that includes five weeks of vacation a year, health, dental and car insurance, a pension fund contribution of 50% of your salary, and a luxury car lease that renews every two years with a gas card?”*

*The engineer nearly fell off his chair.*

*“Great! Fantastic! You've got to be joking ...”*

*Said the manager, “Sure... but you started the joke ...”*

***PRE-EXISTING CONDITION***

The monumental event of the Splitting of the Sea described in Beshalach was one of the greatest, most astounding miracles in history. It generated a spontaneous Song of the Sea on the part of the Jewish people in thanks to G-d for the miraculous rescue from the clutches of the Egyptians. The strange thing is, the Song of the Sea begins with the words, “Then Moshe and the Jewish people will sing this song to G-d.”

“Will sing” in the future tense sounds like a song that the Jewish people will sing in the future Geula. As Chazal say (Sanhedrin 91b), “It doesn't say 'sang' but 'will sing.' From here we have Resurrection of the Dead in the Torah.” If that wasn't enough, at the end of the Song, the Jewish people say, “G-d will reign forever.”

Rashi (15:17-18): “In the future, when the entire kingship is His.”

So the beginning of the Song is connected to the future Geula and the end of the Song refers to events at the End of Days. The question is, what connection is there between the Song of the Sea and the future Geula?

We are used to thinking that the Splitting of the Sea expresses G-d's power to intervene in nature and do as He wishes. Chazal teach us that the opposite is true! When G-d created the sea, it was conditional on the sea parting when the Jewish people would need to cross. On the words, “And the sea returned in the morning *l'eisano*,” the Medrash says, “to the condition that was made with it from the start.” In other words, by the sea splitting for the Jewish people it fulfilled the condition that G-d made with it when it was created.

The question is, why did G-d have to make conditions with creation? Who asked the sea anyway? Usually, deals need to be made when two people who have no control over one another have to agree from the get-go that their agreement will take place only under certain conditions. But G-d is the Creator, the One who makes the existence of the world out of nothing. Obviously, He can intervene in the running of nature and change it as He wishes. Did He need to make a 'deal' with the sea from outset?

As always, here too, Chassidus explains and illuminates. In a deep sicha, the Rebbe explains a new dimension to this surprising Medrash (based on a teaching of the Mezritcher Maggid in Ohr Torah, siman 89).

***IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE CONDITIONS***

The purpose of Creation was for Torah and the Jewish people. Therefore, the entire existence and being of every single created entity in the world is for the Jewish people. The avoda of the Jewish people in learning Torah and doing mitzvos is to transform the world into a “dwelling down below” for Hashem Himself, His very Essence and Being. That means that the world needs to reflect within itself not only the spiritual levels that pertain to its creation but even the supernal, infinite levels connected with G-d's Essence.

The way Chassidus puts it is that it's not enough to reveal within the world the levels of Seder Hishtalshelus (the spiritual order of the creative chain of cause and effect); the levels above nature and above creation need to be revealed in the world too, namely the levels of the “Infinite Encompassing Light” and ultimately the Divine Essence. This is why G-d made conditions with Creation, for without those prior conditions, there would be no place within Creation and the world for miracles, no room for spiritual powers that transcend nature, and no ability to reveal within the world as it is, the Creator Himself! It might be possible to “break” the world… to dismantle its systems and “force it” to accept the supernatural… but to reveal the Creator as He is, within Creation as it is, would be impossible!

Therefore, G-d created the sea (and the entire world) on condition, so that the existence of the world itself would agree to the change in nature and the G-dly revelation. The halacha is that when a person makes an agreement with someone on condition, if the condition is not fulfilled, the the entire agreement is canceled as though it was never made. The condition is not an add-on but the basis of the thing that the condition was made on. The fact that the creation of the sea was on condition that it split for the Jewish people meant that if the sea did not split, it would turn out that its existence never was valid. This is the ultimate expression of the fact that the entire purpose of the sea is for the sake of the Jewish people, for if the help to the Jewish people was a side thing in the existence of the sea, it could have continued to exist even without splitting for them, but since the help to the Jewish people is its entire existence, the moment it did not help them, its existence would be negated retroactively.

With which words does the Torah hint to this amazing idea? With the words, “And the sea returned in the morning *l'eisano*.” The simple meaning of the word *l'eisano* is its strength, i.e. the sea returned to being a sea again. On the Chassidic, deeper level, there is a new significance as a result of this. The sea received a new strength, an unusual power it did not have before, an inherent unbreakable existence that is not constrained by the bounds of nature!

The existence of the sea and the entire world with all its details, is a limited existence. It is defined as a temporary existence – of 6000 years. In contrast, the souls of Israel are united with G-d and their existence is eternal – (Yeshaya 60:21)”Your people are all righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I might be glorified.” After the Splitting of the Sea, it became manifest that the existence of the sea was only for the sake of the Jews, and as a result the sea acquired the “strength” of a true and eternal existence like the souls of Israel. This is “and the sea returned *l'eisano* – to its condition/strength,” the condition that defined its existence as a means for the Jews, and thereby, it returned to its strength.

This is also the connection between the Song of the Sea and the future Geula. The Splitting of the Sea revealed the true “strength” of the world as a means for the Torah and for Israel. This will reach its ultimate completion with the Geula when “all the kingdom will be His,” i.e. every single creation will “accept” the kingdom of G-d and recognize it and it will be revealed how the material world not only does not oppose and interfere with the G-dly revelation; on the contrary, its very being is to help and reveal that holiness.

This is a wondrous lesson for us. When we encounter the darkness of exile, one's instinctive reaction is that the world is interfering with a life of goodness and holiness, interfering with the advancement toward Geula. Being involved in making a living interferes with learning and davening, science interferes with G-dliness being revealed, the non-Jews interfere with the Jewish people, and the list goes on … We need to know that truth is the other way round, because at its inner core, the world wants to help us serve G-d. We just need to do what is required of us with dedication and forcefulness and then we will see how the world itself is ready to help with the Geula!

 ***TO CONCLUDE WITH A STORY***

We will end with a story that shows how the world itself helps a Jew do what he is supposed to.

Rabbi Sholom Gordon a'h, was a shliach in New Jersey, starting in the early forties. Over the years, he touched thousands of lives.

Some time around 1960, the mother of a former student of R' Sholom approached him with a problem. Her daughter, who had reached marriageable age several years before, was having a hard time finding a shidduch.

Aware of the Rebbe's greatness, the desperate mother asked Sholom to arrange a meeting for her with the Rebbe. R' Sholom complied, and even drove the mother, along with her son who was accompanying her, to meet the Rebbe and waited outside. When the mother emerged from the Rebbe's office, she looked upset.

“What happened?” R' Sholom inquired.

“Well,” answered the mother, “I went in to the Rebbe and asked him for a blessing for my daughter's shidduch. I was surprised when the Rebbe began to ask me questions about my life. He asked me what our source of livelihood is. I told him that we have a very successful store in Newark. The Rebbe asked me if the store is open on Shabbos. I told him that it is.

“Then, and this is what I really do not understand, the Rebbe suggested that since we are financially secure, we should close our store on Shabbos and that Gd will then send our daughter her *bashert*. I countered that we need the store to provide for our daughter in case something happens to us and she does not get married. When Gd sends her *bashert*... then I will close the store.” The Rebbe disagreed.

“Rabbi Gordon,” continued the woman, “I am from Europe. I know Chassidic Rebbes. I thought they just gave blessings and wanted a donation. I didn't come here for business advice...”

Years went by. 1967 arrived and with it came the Newark Riots and violence and vandalism. The store owned by Sholom's former student's parents was among those destroyed in the riots. Already nearing retirement age, and with her husband having passed away shortly beforehand, the mother decided not to rebuild the store. The store was finally closed on Shabbos. Within a few months, the daughter met her *bashert*. Today, thank Gd, she is the mother of a well-respected family.

Good Shabbos!