

Vayakhel

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When it comes to *Mishnah* or *Gemora*, there is no disagreement in the Torah world regarding their universal importance. *Mishnah* is the basis of Torah law, and the *Gemora* explains how to implement it.

Kabbalah is a very different story. Some hold that it is essential to learn *Sod* (secrets of Torah), others, that it is *okay* to learn it but only once you have mastered all the more obligatory areas of learning, and a few are still not sure about *Kabbalah*'s authenticity and place within a well-rounded Torah education.

Addressing the latter group, the Leshem wrote:

Since the Wisdom of the Truth (*Kabbalah*) has become revealed and known among all Jewish scholars, the inheritance of the Assembly of Ya'akov through Moshe *Rabbeinu* from the mouth of God, anyone who denies or argues with it is called a *kofer* (apostate). They deny a portion of the Oral Tradition, and remove themselves from *Emunas Klal Yisroel* (Faith of the Jewish People). From the time... of the Ramban onward, there has not been a single scholar from the [Torah] scholars of the Jewish people... [who has disputed it]. Prior to this it was hidden and revealed only to a few fitting people in [each] generation... but from the time of the Ramban, it became known among the entire Jewish people and no *chacham* from all the *Chochmei Yisroel*, from whose waters we drink through their commentaries on Talmud and *Poskim*, have doubted it. Specifically for someone who has merited to see it, the words speak for themselves, those of the holy *Zohar* testifying that they are from the Rashb"i (Rebi Shimon *bar* Yochai), and the words of the Arizal testifying to the greatness of the Ari. It is the essence of the truth itself. (*Drushei Olam HaTohu*, *Chelek* 1, *Drush* 5, *Siman* 7, *Os* 8)

Regarding the other opinions, the Ramchal explained:

... All *Chachmas HaEmes* (Wisdom of Truth, another name for *Kabbalah*) is the wisdom of the truth of *emunah* (faith), to understand all that was created and all that occurs... how it is the result of the will of the Upper One (God)... how every-

thing is correctly guided by the one Almighty, *may He be blessed*, causing everything to occur in order to bring all of it to its ultimate completion. . . (*Sefer Klach, Pischei Chochmah, Pesach 1*)

Does God exist, or *doesn't* He? If He does, does He run the world, or does it run by *itself*? And if He runs the world, does He micromanage, or just oversee history in a more general way?

These are questions that billions of people have asked over the last five-and-a-half millennia. They ask them because things happen in life that contradict their idea of what history should look like if God, or at least their *version* of God, was running the world. Whether they keep the faith or not has usually come down to how well they can answer such questions on behalf of God.

The Torah community makes up a minority of the world's Jewish population. But once upon a time, all of us came from Torah families. Those who left Judaism only did so because they had more questions than answers, especially as science and technology became more prominent in everyday life. The *Haggadah Shel Pesach* makes this point vis-a-vis the four sons and the questions they ask.

Perhaps this is why at the end of history, more than ever, learning *Kabbalah* is so important, as counterintuitive as that may have become:

“Someone who clings to *Sefer HaZohar*. . . will not require *chevlei Moshiach*.” as mentioned in *Raya Mehemna, Parashas Naso, 124b*, etc. However, the *Zohar* was not revealed until much later after it was created because it was meant for “its” time. The explanation is: “the Jewish people will flee with this secret of the *Zohar*, because it will only “work” at the end of days in the generation of *Melech Moshiach*.” I will now explain to you what the generation of *Moshiach* is. Our rabbis, *z”l*, have said that during the footsteps of *Moshiach*, *chutzpah* will increase, and this will be because of the *chevlei Moshiach*. . . (*Adir BaMarom*, p. 22)

This is but the beginning of the discussion, the introduction to a paradigm shift that is already underway. It will be a new direction for many in the Torah world and, as such, it will and already does meet with resistance. But it is one with ancient roots, from Torah leaders such as Rebi Akiva, Rebi Meir, and Rebi Shimon *bar* Yochai, whom we have followed for everything else in Torah life for thousands of years now.

Greats like the Ramchal (Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzatto) and the Vilna Gaon, living during the final five hundred years of the sixth millennium, began to initiate Torah learning programs to transition the Jewish people to a more *geulah* way of thinking. Consistent with this approach to the end of days, many have focused on bringing the words, wisdom, and depth of the *Zohar* to those who have difficulty doing so for

themselves.

As we approach the final redemption at a quicker rate than most seem to be noticing, and seeing the negative direction mankind seems to be going regarding the Jewish People, we need to do whatever we can to soften the blow to the Messianic Era.

For this reason, Perceptions will be taking a somewhat different approach to the weekly *parsha* moving forward. I hope to use it as vehicle to share important *kabbalistic* ideas for surviving the end of days, *b"H*. And anyone wishing to add to that should visit my new site for videos on YouTube (@shaarnunproductionsinc), or my site for recently translated material www.shaarnunproductions.org.