



THE CROWN JEWEL Farbrenge – 19 Kislev, 5744-1983

The 18th day of Elul is the birthday of two great Chassidic luminaries, Rabbi Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov—founder of Chassidism—and Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the Alter Rebbe—founder of Chabad.

In the following talk, the Rebbe provides a historical perspective for the dissemination of the mystical insights of Chassidism, and analyzes the unique accomplishments of the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe's accomplishment was: The Torah's deepest secrets were studied by a chosen few ever since they were given at Sinai. However, there were limitations:

At first, the Kabbalistic descriptions of "G-d's chariot" and the like were studied only in private, by a select few. Then, in the time of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, "the windows of Heaven opened": In his generation there was an exception; that even youngsters and children studied the inner secrets of Torah.

After that, however, it was once again concealed.

The study did not cease altogether, Heaven forbid: Rather for Rabbi Shimon and his colleagues "Torah was their trade." Their own Torah study was with a total union with and fervor for, G-d. And it was of the inner dimension of Torah.

This concealment continued until the Arizal revealed that the time had come when it was required to "reveal this wisdom."

The generation required it; due to the "deterioration of the generations" it was no longer possible to rely on the degree of Torah's illumination that had previously been available, since the darkness had increased. Therefore, it was necessary to reveal "this wisdom" —the true wisdom within the Torah of Truth, making it completely accessible, and in the open.

Yet, even then it had not truly reached "the outside." "The outside" world was affected and illuminated by the revelation achieved through studying Kabbalah "on the inside"; there was no need to make the deepest secrets available to the outside itself.

But the secrets were always studied: "Our forefathers in Egypt never stopped studying Torah" includes all dimensions of Torah; it definitely includes the inner teachings, the "soul" of the Torah. As Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai explains in Zohar that the secrets of Torah are its "soul." There is no doubt that it was studied and it vitalized all dimensions of Torah, and thereby each and every Jew.

However, this was accomplished through the Torah study of unique individuals only. And from the time of the Arizal, it shined only where it had actually been studied. Then the situation in the world worsened.



פרשת תבוא

The Alter Rebbe explained this with a parable. There was once a prince, who had always been healthy, had fallen ill. The doctors informed the king that the only way to heal the prince was by grinding the most precious stone in the king's crown — the beauty and preciousness of the royal crown was dependent on this stone.

As long as the prince was not quite so sick, the king instructed them to try other means.

When the king was told, however, that the prince's very life was in danger, he instructed that they take the crown jewel, grind it, mix it in water and try to pour it into the prince's mouth, with the possibility that one drop would enter, and he would be healed.

One may ask: What caused this change in the king? The answer is obvious. The entire point of the crown — and the jewels in the crown, and the beauty and effect of the crown — is all for the prince, the Jewish People!

Therefore, when it is needed for the Jewish People's very existence, it is not only "permitted to reveal this wisdom"; it is an obligation. And not just in certain circles: But especially in the "outside," where the peril is greatest — where there is mortal spiritual danger — the light of the teachings of Chassidism must reach, even if they must be pulverized and diluted, etc.

Because of this dilution, we must immediately explain that all the various illustrations used — even "from my flesh, I see G-d" — to explain the deepest secrets of Torah; they are merely parables and do not fully explain the concepts themselves; they are separated by many elevations, levels, and stages.

This lesson was immediately exhibited at the Giving of the Torah. There, too human references were made — such as "G-d's hands," "G-d's eyes," and the like; references that are no more than a parable, for "Torah speaks the language of mankind."

Now, in addition, the "Torah talks" in deep secrets, to explain even these secrets in the "language of mankind," this explanation and dissemination has become a basic necessity, as is obvious from the above illustration given by the Alter Rebbe, which is already published and well-known.

