

One Alone, One and Unique, filling all space in which He created the universe. It is still the same now insofar as He is concerned. For the change relates only to those who receive His blessed life-force and light, which they receive through many "garments" which conceal and obscure His blessed light, as is written, "For no man shall see Me and live,"² and, as our Rabbis, of blessed memory, have explained it, that even angels, who are called *chayyot*,³ cannot see Him...⁴

This is the concept of the *Hishtalshelut* (downward gradation) of the worlds and their descent, degree by degree, through a multitude of "garments" which screen the light and life that emanate from Him, until there was created this material and gross world, the lowest in degree, than which there is none lower in the aspect of concealment of His blessed light; [a world of] doubled and redoubled darkness, so much so that it is full of *kelipot* and the *sitra achra* which oppose the very G-dhead, saying: "I am, and there is nothing else besides me."⁵

Clearly, the purpose of the *Hishtalshelut* of the worlds and their descent, degree by degree, is not for the sake of the higher worlds, because for them this is a descent from the light of His blessed Countenance. But the ultimate purpose [of creation] is this lowest world, for such was His blessed will that He shall have satisfaction

It is a well-known Rabbinic statement that the purpose of the creation of this world is that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to have an abode in the lower worlds.¹ But surely with Him the distinction of "upper" and "lower" has no validity, for He pervades all worlds equally.

The explanation of the matter, however, is as follows:

Before the world was created, He was

when the *sitra achra* is subdued and the darkness is turned to light, so that the Divine light of the blessed *En Sof* shall shine forth in the place of the darkness and *sitra achra* throughout this world, all the more strongly and intensely, with the excellence of light emerging from darkness than its effulgence in the higher worlds, where it shines through "garments" and in concealment of the Countenance, which screen and conceal the light of the blessed *En Sof*, in order that they should not dissolve out of existence.

For this purpose, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave to Israel the Torah which is called "might" and "strength,"⁶ as the Rabbis, of blessed memory, have said,⁷ that the Almighty puts strength into the righteous in order that they may receive their reward in the hereafter, without being nullified in their very existence, in the Divine light that will be revealed to them in the hereafter without any cloak, as is written, "No longer shall thy Teacher hide Himself (literally: He will not conceal Himself from thee with robe and garment)⁸... but thine eyes shall see thy Teacher."⁹ It is also written, "For they shall see eye to eye,..."¹⁰ and, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day..., but the Lord shall be thine everlasting light...."¹¹

Rabbi K 13170

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