

Charging the World with Love

Modern society does not tolerate hatred. This does not mean that there is less hatred between nations, sectors or individuals nowadays. Declaratively, however, society demands love. Hatred is considered negative and contemptible—an aberration that must be treated.

At first glance, this is an erroneous approach. Love of good and hatred of evil, after all, are two sides of the same coin, as in the verse, “Those who love of God hate evil.”¹ The *Tanya* even explains that the greatness of a *tzaddik* can be measured by his hatred of evil. The distinction between good and evil demarcates parameters and hatred of evil gives us the power to reject it and protect ourselves from it. Most of the unique aberrations of our generation such as blurring of the truth, moral decreptitude with regard to enemies and legitimization of the most negative desires stem from an approach that dissolves limits and makes exclusive use of love and openness. Nonetheless, the love-approach is part of the redemption process and it contains a major messianic spark.

Love and hate are two opposite energies. Love is positive energy and hate is negative energy. The basic emotion of the heart should be love—positive, constructive energy. Hatred is essentially negative. Even when we have to employ it for a specific, vital purpose, we must be extremely careful not to adopt it as a character trait. (In general, our “justified” or “self-justified” hatreds include a dimension of baseless hate, which must be transformed into love by means of contemplation, a good eye and compassion, as is explained in the 32nd chapter of the *Tanya*.)

We feel a need to employ hatred because evil exists in the world. But our aspiration is not to intensify hatred for evil, but rather to nullify the reality of evil so that we will no longer need hatred. This is the messianic destiny of, “And the spirit of impurity, I will remove from earth.”² The evil inclination will be slaughtered, which will nullify the need for hate. Then we will literally be able to see that God created everything for His glory, and love everyone and everything.

The Zohar describes the energy needed to turn the world into a better place as the power of *ithapcha* (or, transformation)—a power that is unique to *tzaddikim*, however, since “Your people are all *tzaddikim*,” every Jew can make use of it. The Zohar describes two types of transformation: darkness into light and the bitter into the sweet. We will now add a third type of transformation: the transformation of hatred into love. The three dimensions of transformation are a process of past-present-future, which are actualized in the three Jewish holidays of pilgrimage to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

¹ Psalms 97:10.

² Zechariah 13:2.

These holidays, which generally occur on weekdays, have the power to transform the mundane weekdays into holy days.

On Passover, we transform darkness into light. The exodus from Egypt, the foundation of our history, (parallel to past) is the exodus from darkness to a great light (when 'the light is turned on' and we identify the good that was previously concealed in the darkness).

On Shavu'ot, we turn bitterness into sweetness. The advice given by the Torah, sweet as honey, sweetens the bitterness of reality and heals its ills. This parallels the present, as in the verse, "today, to do them"³ (the commandments).

On the holiday of Sukkot, God spreads His *sukkah* of peace over us. The ensuing joy breaks barriers, enabling us to transform hatred to love both within the Nation of Israel (as the sages say, "All Israel is worthy to sit in one sukksah) and also in our relations with the nations of the world (for whose benefit we sacrifice seventy bulls on Sukkot). Sukkot is the holiday of the future, when all the nations of the world will stream to the House of God. This holiday clarifies how after the nullification of evil, when darkness transforms to light and bitterness to sweetness, we will be able to transform our hate-charged world to a world charged by love.

³ Deuteronomy 7:11.