

Foreword

I am asleep but my heart is awake. But oh, I hear the call of my Beloved pulsing [in my veins]: "Open [your heart] to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My perfect twin..." (Song of Songs 5:2)

Are we awake or asleep? The answer depends on whether or not we choose to define reality based on our present experience of it. If we do, we are awake, and there's nothing more to discuss. But what if our brains were re-wired and we could access—or at least become more aware of—the dimension above ours? From that heavenly perspective we would see things very differently. Is our current experience truly reality?

In this series called *Reawakening Spiritual Awareness*, I take very seriously the idea that the multidimensional universe in which we live was brought into existence by the infinite intelligence we call Hashem (God). In line with the ancient teachings of Torah/kabbalah,ⁱ I suggest that our souls originated in the higher dimensions that preceded our physical world and envelop it. In those higher dimensions our souls were enfolded in God's oneness. We did not know ourselves as separate entities.

To allow for the possibility of separate existence—or at least the illusion of it—Hashem initiated a creation process that involved the occlusion of His light in successive stages. This creation process consummated in the appearance of our physical dimension. Here, as distinct from all the dimensions that transcend and preceded it, divine energy coalesced into physical matter.

Into this physical world that seems to operate on its own, Hashem purposely lowered our souls. In descending, we fell asleep and forgot our heavenly origins.

Our mission now is to awaken from this sleep. To help us awaken, Hashem gave us His Torah. Torah is God's plan. It tells us exactly who we are, why we were sent here, and what we have to do in order not only to overcome the illusion of earth life, but to transform earth into heaven.

The Torah itself is camouflaged in stories, mostly the stories of very special individuals. But as the Zohar warns, "Woe to those who think that the Torah has come only to tell worldly stories...Rather the stories of the Torah are its outer garments...Fools do not attempt to see beneath these garments. Those who understand more do not look only at the garments, but at the body within the garments. Those who are truly wise, the servants of the supernal King...look at the soul of the Torah, its essence. In the ultimate future they are destined to behold the soul of the soul of the Torah."ⁱⁱ

Torah is the transcendent light of the Infinite One *melubash* (clothed, i.e., reflected and refracted) in the lives of human beings. This implies that we learn about God Himself

ⁱ *Torah*, from *horah* and *orah*, means teaching and illumination. *Kabbalah*, from *kibel* (receive), means received transmission; its cognate, *hakbalah*, means parallel, referring to the idea that everything on earth has a heavenly or spiritual counterpart, and vice-versa. Kabbalah is the living transmission of Torah, specifically its deeper teachings which reveal to us who we are as souls.

ⁱⁱ *Zohar Behaalotkha*, 3:152a.

through the lives of the characters of His story. Seen in this way, the *Tanakh* (Bible) reveals the objective reality of God's plan through the subjective medium of its characters. This means that Adam and Chavah (Eve), Noach and his family, Avraham and Sarah, etc., played cosmic roles. It is through them that we know about Hashem. As extensions of them, we too play cosmic roles. We just have to become aware of this.

We must penetrate behind the camouflage of our own stories to perceive the Godly force itself that enlivens all reality. Our mission is to consciously reconnect and realign with that Godly force and thereby transform earth life.

This is what the drama of earth life is about from the point of view of heaven. The precondition for being born on earth, however, is that we must fall asleep to our divine origins. Throughout history God has sent down special souls to help the rest of us remember who we are and to help us awaken from the dream. What makes our generation different is that we are nearing the end of the drama.

In order to bring the drama to its conclusion, God is now amplifying and even accelerating the reawakening of spiritual awareness on planet earth. As Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook taught in his *Orot Hateshuvah (Lights of Repentance)*, God is pouring down a powerful spirit of *teshuvah* (return) into the soul of mankind. The lights of *teshuvah* are beaming down, sparkling into our souls, and beckoning us to awaken from the sleep of this world. God is calling to us, "Open [your heart] to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My perfect twin..." (Song of Songs 5:2).

Are we ready to respond? Do we believe that it is even possible to wake up?

The title of this series, *Reawakening Spiritual Awareness*, is based on the kabbalistic idea of *itaruta d'letata* (awakening from below). It is meant to imply, first of all, that we were once awake, and that the time has come to reawaken. It is also our half of a larger dynamic. When we begin to awaken from below, we are promised that God will respond with His *itaruta d'le'ela* (awakening from above). This is God's covenant with mankind. No matter how distant we have become, no matter how cynical, the way is always open to reawaken true spiritual awareness.

It is categorically impossible to fully awaken from the dream of earthly existence without divine assistance. Thus *itaruta d'le'ela* (God's awakening from above) must precede *itaruta d'letata* (our awakening from below). This is the sense of our call to God, "Return us to You, Hashem, and we shall return" (Lamentations 5:21). We can only awaken and return to You if You give us the wherewithal to do so. Without direct assistance from above, any attempt on our part to transcend our present limitations is doomed to failure. Conversely, God seems to make His assistance conditional on our returning to Him. This is the sense of His call to us, "Return to Me, and I shall return to you" (Malakhi 3:7).

As we shall see, however, it is more like a dance between God and us. God knows that we can't awaken on our own. He therefore flashes the subtlest hints of His presence into our hearts and waits for our move. No response? He'll try again. Infinitely patient, He doesn't give up on us.

The covenant remains in effect even when it seems as if we are doing all we can from below, with little or no response from above. At such times it is important to look within in order to identify in ourselves whatever it is that might be preventing us from seeing His hand in our life.

It also helps to know that Hashem purposely sets us up in difficult circumstances. We often perceive these circumstances as being unfair because we experience them from within the drama of earth life. Hashem, on the other hand, knows our souls. The more we understand how to see life from Hashem's point of view, the more we can appreciate what an incredible opportunity He has given us—even when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances. Now is the time to speak directly to God, to enter that place within where we realize that there is only Hashem. Here we ask His advice, and request His assistance. Such prayer—emerging from the heart and soul—will never go unanswered.

The title of this volume, *Realizing the Unity*, is based on the Torah concept known as *giluy hayichud*. The verb *legalot* means "to reveal," so *giluy* means "revelation." *Giluy hayichud* means "revelation of God's oneness." It is our belief that, in the final stages of the historical drama, which we are in now, Hashem will begin to reveal that He was secretly directing history from behind the scenes. This will involve a series of revelations that will precipitate, at a certain point, a quantum leap in planetary consciousness that will usher in the final Messianic Redemption.

The principle here is that, as Hashem begins to "reveal" from *above*, we will begin to "realize" down here *below*. These heavenly revelations, in other words, will give birth to corresponding realizations in human consciousness. It is our awakening from below—our sincere desire to know Hashem's unity behind all the events of our lives—that will trigger Hashem's awakening/revealing His unity from above. This volume explains this dynamic behind all prayer and spiritual work in general.

It is my hope that the profound teachings about God that I bring in this series will inspire you to feel and know the blessing of Hashem's presence in your life.

Avraham Sutton
Jerusalem

