

BEHAR 2 - THE SEVENTH MILLENIUM - ETERNAL REST

There is an obvious thematic connection between the seven year sabbatical cycle and the six day cycle of creation along with its subsequent Shabbat. According to R. Bahya the doctrine of a seventh year sabbatical after working the land for six continuous years also serves as an allusion to the seventh millennium - which will follow the six thousand years when our terrestrial universe functions what we consider normally. 1 The Mishna describes that millenium as one of eternal rest - Oomenuha Lehayeh Ha'olamim. 2 The Talmud cites the teaching of R. Qatina that for six thousand years the world will exist and for one thousand years it will be Haruv. 3 The relationship between the seven day cycle of creation, the seven year cycle described in our Parasha and the seven millennia of existence is clearly defined in the Talmudic narratives concerning the years preceding the Messianic era. It was taught in a Beraita in accordance with the opinion of R. Qatina - Just as the Sabbatical Year causes the cessation one year out of seven so too the world ceases one millenium out of seven - as it is stated - Venisgav YHVH Levado Bayom Hahu - Hashem alone will be exalted that day - And further it is stated - Mizmor Shir Leyom HaShabbat - which is interpreted to mean a "day" that is completely Sabbath. This next verse indicates that the global Shabbat - will last for one thousand years as it says Ki Elef Shanin Be'enekha Keyom Etmol Ki Ya'avur - which indicates that the day referred to in the previous stated verses is a millennium. 4 According to R. HaAri the six days of creation represents the Creator's portion or the first stage in what is known as the epoch of Tiqun - while the parallel six thousand years is its second part given for man to mimic his Creator and complete the correction of the spiritual and physical worlds. 5 Given the fact that we are at least heading towards the end of the eighth century of the sixth and final millennia of "work" and that there apparently is no Amora that disputes that the year 6000 is the Divinely preordained deadline to the epoch - it behooves us to learn exactly what our portion is in the Tikun Olam. Furthermore as the year 6000 is given by the Sages as the latest to precede a global Sabbath - it is important for us to at least be familiar with a conflict in the chronology of Jewish History.

THE STAGES OF AQUDIM AND NEQUDIM PRECEDING "CREATION"

We are taught in the Midrash that the Creator brought forth and destroyed worlds. 6 This is a reference to an epoch prior to the six days of Creation. Firstly we must understand that the purpose of Creation was for there to come into being perfect vessels or receptacles to receive the goodness of the Creator. 7 The initial stage in this process is known in the writings of R. HaAri as the Stage of Aqudim 8 - Simply put - It was in this stage that the Creator sent forth his light and retracted it - creating a desire to receive within the vessel of creation. This is similar to giving a baby his initial taste of ice cream. At first he simply looks at it - it is only when the parent brings it to the mouth of the baby and then retracts it - do we see the initial stage of establishing within the baby a strong desire to receive. 9 In the next stage called that of Nequdim - the Creator sent forth his light into ill prepared vessels which are said to have broken - sending forth their shattered parts along with sparks of the light from the highest world of Asilut into newly formed worlds of Beri'ah Yesi'rah and Yesi'ah. 10 There are essentially six plus one vessels that shattered and are in need of repair and elevated along with the sparks of light accompanying them.

TWO STAGES IN CREATION - SIX DAYS FOR THE CREATOR AND SIX MILLENNIA FOR MAN

In the next stage the vessels along with their accompanying sparks must be elevated and realigned in a detailed manner to exhibit themselves as perfect vessels. 11 These vessels are integrally a part of our souls and ourselves - Their rectification is said to be complete when their desire to receive is fully dependent upon the Creator's "desire" to share his goodness. 12 The initial stage of the period of Tiqun is initiated solely by the Creator. This occurred during the six days of Creation when on each day the six lower aspects or the VaQ of each vessel was rectified. For example on day one - the lower aspects of Hesed were rectified - on day two that of Gevura. During the second part - Man is set into the world - given 6000 years to effectuate a Tiqun of the three upper aspects called the GaR of each of these vessels. 13 So for example during the sixth millenium - we are to elevate the upper aspects of the vessel of Yesod. 14 - During these 6000 years - we are essentially the Creator's partner to effectuate the complete Tiqun - as the verse teaches Tenu Auz Lelohim. 15 The fall of Adam and Havah from Gan Eden complicates the matter in that there are now additional tiquanim including that of Parsuf HaZemanim. This is the name assigned to the spiritual structure that Man had damaged - with its correction given to Israel via its service related to the Holidays. 16 . In addition Man's mishap caused a fourteen level descent of the spiritual structure of creation called Parsuf HaYamim necessitating a demand to re-elevate the fallen worlds. 17 According to this view - At the end of the six millennia from the time of Creation the world will cease to exist as we know it. The period of an eternal Shabbat will enter. While the Shabbat of Creation represents the Creator's cessation of work - or the end of the process of elevating the lower aspects of the six (seven) vessels - the seventh

millenium at the latest will usher in an era indicating at least a partial end of our part in the tiqun of the upper aspects of the six vessels. According to the Rashash the Tiqun of Creation and the subsequent sin of Adam includes that of Parsuf HaYamim, Parsuf HaZemanim and the realignment of the worlds. At least a good portion of the former and all of the latter two will surely come to a close with the coming of Mashiah or the Messianic era . 18 Thus the Mishna teaches that the Psalm Mizmor Shir Leyom HaShabbat is a song LaAtid Lavo - a future epoch - 19 for a day that is entirely Shabbat. As opposed to the Shabbat we keep - which is in comparison only a partial Shabbat. In apparent support of this 6000 year epoch - the Talmud cites a Beraita taught in the academy of Eliyahu - The world is destined to exist for six thousand years. 20 According to the Rashba there is no Talmudic dispute in this manner. 21 According to the Hasagot or Objections of the Ra'avad - the Rambam apparently might dispute this fact - or at the least claim that the 6000 year figure might ought to be taken only figuratively. 22 If we take it literally it would appear as if we are approaching the allotted end of the originally intended Tiqun of Creation and surely those Tiqunim initiated by Adam via his sin.

JEWISH HISTORY IN CONFLICT

Jewish tradition appears to subscribe to the view that we are now at the time of this writing in the year 5781. This is arrived to as follows: The year 2000 coincides with the 52nd year of Abraham. We then add the 48 years until Yishak is born - He was 60 when Yaakov is born - Yaakov was 130 when he went down to Egypt - this exile lasted 210 years - The first temple was built 480 years after the exodus - and lasted 410 years - The second temple was built after 70 years of exile. It stood for 420 years. This yields 1828 years - which is the year 68 of the common era. An additional 172 years would take us to the year 4000 which is synonymous with the year 240. Following this calculation the year 2018 would coincide with 5778. According to historians (and a minor group of orthodox scholars) there is a discrepancy in this calculation of approximately 163 years - with the actual current year being closer to 5944. 23 The conflict surrounds the period of Persian rule over the land of Israel during the second temple era - with Seder Olam - authored by R. Yose B. Halafta 24 - claiming that it encompasses four kings (one from Madai and three from Paras) lasting a total of only 52 years. 25 Historians counter and claim that this period which commenced with the reign of Koresh - over the land of Israel until that of the Greek Rule of Alexander the Great encompasses more than ten Persian kings over a 207 year period. 26 It should be noted that the chronology of Seder Olam of the Persian and of the complete second temple era has basically been adopted by the Talmud. 27

IS THERE A LENIENCY TO ADOPT THE VIEW OF THE HISTORIANS

I'm not sure if there is a leniency to discount or reinterpret the views of Seder Olam and the Talmud to admit that it is not the year 5781 but rather 5944. Unless we say that that our Sages followed the messages hinted at in Sefer Daniel. The 5781 figure is apparently based upon two verses in the book of Daniel - In a verse in chapter eleven it can be implied that Daniel was told that in the future - there will be a Persian rule over the land that would span four kings. 28 In an earlier verse it mentions another period encompassing Shevu'im Shevu'im - literally 70 weeks or 70 times 7 years or 490. This is interpreted as the 70 years of exile and 420 years of the total second temple era - 29 which would only allow for a non-protracted period of fifty years allotted to the Persian period. It is apparent that maybe our only option for us to give credence to the historical account of an elongated Persian period of 207 years is to admit that Daniel and the Rabbis of the Talmud intentionally confused the matter - in order not to reveal to Israel the end of the era of Tiqun. 30 It is apparent from Daniel - that God revealed to him alone and not the prophets Haggai Zekharya and Malakhi - the destiny of Israel and the date of the final judgement. 31 According to one Midrash, however he actually forgot the Qes -or end - that was revealed to him. 32 According to the last verse of the revelation - Daniel was specifically told to obscure the matter and seal the book until the time of the end. 33 An earlier verse admits that some of the wise men will stumble in clarifying these words - and elucidating and interpreting when the time of the end will be - for it is not yet the designated time. 34 Either way - the message might be that - our intent should not be to predict the time of an early Qes - but rather to focus on our job to complete our work in the allotted period - prior to the everlasting Shabbat that is quickly approaching.

Shabbat Shalom

Victor Bibi