

VAYEHI - 2 - THE COVERT RECITATION OF BARUKH SHEM

Yaakov asks his sons to assemble and gather themselves in order to reveal the "Ahareet Hayamim" - 1 The Zohar explains that this is not to be interpreted merely as Yaakov's desire to tell them the date that coincides with the end of days - but rather it was his intent to free or reveal the Shekhina from its spiritual husk in order to usher in the messianic era. 2 The Shekhina is the lowest channel - or the ahareet - the ultimate spiritual reservoir of the world of Asilut. 3 The twelve sons (substituting Efrayim and Menashe for Levi and Yoseph) of Yaakov were all associated with this spiritual level. 4 In explaining the details of this gathering - The Talmud teaches that Yaakov desired to reveal to his sons the Qes HaYamin. 5 The Zohar maintains that there is a qes associated with holiness or the right and a qes associated with unholiness and the left. The latter qes hasemaul - represents a husk that surrounds the former and nourishes from it. 6 This qes hayamin is a code for the Shekhina - Yaakov's intent was to remove this qelipah permanently - to reveal the Holy Shekhina- If it would be revealed now - maybe they could avoid an extended stay in the exile of Egypt - as the galout is a reflection of the Shekhina being surrounded by the qelipot. We know that both the exile and redemption of Israel goes hand in hand with that of the Shekhina. 7 The Talmud teaches that his attempt was apparently thwarted; maybe it was not yet its allotted time. Nevertheless we still have a responsibility - as the servants of the Shekhina to provide her with the shefa - divine influx from above even in the face of her being surrounded by the qes hasemaul - A close reading of the narrative from tractate Pesachim will reveal how we are to provide the Shekhina in exile or outside of her home - the shefa she needs. This will be accomplished via the covert reciting of Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed - until the qes hayamin is fully freed from the grasp of the qes hasemaul.

YAAKOV'S ATTEMPT TO REVEAL

It behooves us to examine through a mystical lens the Talmudic expansion of the Torah narrative describing what occurred as Yaakov called upon his sons to gather prior to his passing. The Gemara inquires as to the insertion of the non biblical liturgical addition of Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed - said between the shema - and ve'ahavta. Rish Lakish details the event. Yaakov called his sons and said - Gather together and I shall tell you ... Yaakov wished to reveal for his sons - the Divine Presence called the qes hayamin - His attempt was thwarted and the Shekhina- departed from him. 8 He claimed - Perhaps Heaven Forbid there is a blemish amongst one of you - as not being spiritually fit to be part of the celestial chariot or entourage of the Divine Presence. Maybe my children still retain a vestige of the qes hasemaul - amongst them - so the qes hayamin - has departed from us. Maybe the qes hasemaul is still attached to my seed as it was with my forefathers - As evidenced by Abraham who had Ishmael and my father Isaac who had Esav. His sons answered him that indeed his efforts to remove from himself and his seed any vestige of the qes hasemaul- was successful and is not the reason for the departure of the Shekhina- They proceed to show Yaakov that they are parties with him in the redemption. They proceed to draw down shefa - from above to a preparatory stage prior to its entrance into the spiritual reservoir or that of the Shekhina- This came about as they recited the Shema Yisrael. - At that point Yaakov had the wherewithal to bring down the shefa - even further towards its ultimate destination or the Shekhina- via his recital of Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed - 9 This declaration acts as a vehicle to house the light from above into that spiritual vessel known as the Shekhina - This brought the elusive Divine Presence back to Yaakov and his sons. However, its initial departure apparently occurred due to the fact that the qes hasemaul - was still present due to no inherent fault of their own - hence the qes hayamin was not yet totally free - and would need the continued action of Israel below to assist in the removal of the negative husks. In the meantime however the Shekhina would still need her servants - the Children of Israel - to bring her shefa - during the period of the exile.

THE SECRET OF BARUKH SHEM

The Sages grapple with the appropriateness of us mimicking Yaakov - and uttering this literary phrase after our daily recitation of Shema- The Gemara concludes that indeed it should be said here Behashai - in an in-cladestine manner. R. Yishak brings us a metaphor to help us understand why the Barukh Shem should be said in an undertone. It was taught by the scholars of R. Ame's academy -This is analogous to a king's daughter who smells "chiqe qedera" the aroma of a stew seasoned with spices - If she publicly expresses her desire for it she suffers disgrace - If she does not express her desire for it she experiences distress. 10 R. HaAri explains that the daughter of the King is the Shekhina who at this point of the prayer is still situated below in a place reserved for the negative spiritual husks. 11 She desires now the ten ha'arot expressed in the Holy name AHYH - which is numerically coded 210 by the Talmud as the value of the letters Sadi, Yud, Quf, Yud - which spell chiqe - or stew while still standing in the lower world of Beriah called qedera. This latter word spelled Quf, Dalet, Yud, Resh, Heh is numerically 319 and a code for the spiritual world associated with the divine name Elohi'm spelled Alef, Lamed, Heh, Yud, Mem - expanded with its five simple letters and thirteen expanded letters. 12 The Talmud explains the quandary as to how one can send forth this light of AHYH to the Shekhina while she still has not ascended to the safety of her palace in the world of Asilut? If the chiqe - is sent towards her while she is present in a lower world of Beri'ah - the negative husks will access these holy lights! Her servants having realized the predicament begin to bring her the shefa covertly 13 - in order not to publicly expose this light to the

negative husks. Hence we have the ruling that Barukh Shem should be said covertly to bring the Shekhina the lights enveloped in the 10 times AHYH coded as the chiqe or stew , covertly - to the qedera - or her current place below.

THE RECITAL OF BARUKH SHEM AUDIBLY

We know that the ruling to mention Barukh Shem surreptitiously is limited to when it is said by the public after the recital of Shema during the daily prayer. However, we know that this doxology is occasionally recited audibly. Normally we pronounce the YHVH as ADNY in order to create a built in vessel to capture the powerful light of this holy name. The Talmud forbids one to recite the name YHVH the way it is written - but rather one must harness its power by reading it ADNY - 14 The Talmud teaches a few exceptions for the rule - There are ten times when the Kohen Gadol mentions the Holy Divine name YHVH - the way it is written on Yom Kippour. 15 The unbridled Name was taught by the Sages to worthy students once or twice every seven year period 16 and was uttered by the Priests when reciting the Kohanic blessing in the Temple. 17 Upon hearing this unbridled force of spirituality -from the mouth of the Kohen Gadol in the Temple - the attendees were required to capture this power for the benefit of the Shekhina - and declare - Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed - 18 Let us explain the spiritual meaning of these six words - Barukh Shem - The name of God or the Shekhina is the recipient of the blessing - Kevod Malkhuto - this is the level known as the kavod of the channel called Malkhut - Le'olam Va'ed forever - Namely - the spiritual connection of the chiqe - should not be a temporary phenomenon sent covertly - but rather it should remain in perpetual unity. Hence upon hearing the name as it is written - those in the Temple prostrated and responded audibly with the Barukh Shem formula - Furthermore on Yom Kippour the legal rule is that we are not only permitted but are encouraged to say it audibly. 19 R. Y. Hayyim in his Ben Yeho'yada explains why the ruling that it must be said behashai- is not applicable in the confines of the Temple and on the Holy day of Yom Kippour - 20 The Midrash teaches that when Moshe ascended on high - he heard the Holy Angels reciting the Barukh Shem and he brought it down for Israel's use. It proceeds to explain through a parable as to why Moshe was able to bring this praise down for Israel and to have them recite it audibly in the Mishkan - and (outside of it on Yom Kippour). "A man steals a valuable jewel from the palace of the King and gives it to his wife. He instructs her that she should only wear it modestly within the confines of her home." 21 The Shekhina is permanently in an elevated state in the confines of her "home" in the Temple and on Yom Kippour 22- Hence there and then - the lights of AHYH are not in any danger of being accessed by the negative husks - as the Temple is spiritually guarded by members of the tribe of Levi - While on Yom Kippour - she is elevated to the palace itself. Hence the Talmud rules that even blessings made on the Temple Mount are responded with the liturgical phrase Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed - and there is no reason to pronounce it covertly. 23 Finally we have the halakhic ruling that if one recited a blessing in vain - which is spiritually tantamount to bringing forth shefa without having a place for it to rest upon - one should recite the Barukh Shem - 24 apparently in order to create an ad-hoc vessel to keep the blessing away from the negative husks.

ON THE WINGS OF ANGELS

We saw above that the qes hayamin was still somewhat subject to the husk called qes hasemaul during the gathering of the sons of Yaakov. The Tikune HaZohar is cited as teaching that the six words of Barukh Shem - are inscribed upon the wings of the angels which exist in the world of Beri'ah - under the kise hakavod- 25 The Talmud addresses the apparent discrepancy between the merkava- chariot - vision of Yishaya - which shows angels with six wings and those of Yehazqel which had only four wings. The matter is resolved in that the reduction of the two middle wings resulted from the onset of the exile during the era of Yehazqel -26 The Vilna Gaon notes that this diminution reflects the middle words Kevod Malkhuto -or in our terms the continued forced concealment of the Shekhina - Hence our request in the Musaf prayer on the holidays - Galeh Kevod Malkhutekha -27 Please permanently remove the qes hasemaul - so that we can send forth openly the chiqe to the qes hayamin and declare aloud without fear - Barukh Shem Kevod Malkhuto Le'olam Va'ed.

Shabbat Shalom

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