



Shema Yisrael

HaShem our G-d, HaShem is One

from: Sefer Pituhei Hotam, Parashat Va'et'hanan
by Rabbi Yisrael Abuhatzera

*Translation and commentary by
Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok*

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TEXT: "It is hinted in the Holy Zohar, that the Ayin of Shema and the Dalet of Ehad,, are witnesses (1) that HaShem is with us.

COMMENTARY: (1) Ayin, Dalet spell the Hebrew word for witness, "Ed" In the Torah these two letters of those two words are written larger than normal letters to indicate that this pasuk bares evidence to Israel's faithfulness to HaShem.

TEXT: It is said that every one who properly unifies HaShem's Name every day, will receive Simha, a joyous portion in life. For when we remove the letters Ayin and Dalet from the words Shema and Ehad the remaining letters spell out Simha (joy). Thus those who are the witnesses to HaShem's union (2), also receive Simha (3).

COMMENTARY: (2) The recitation of the Shema boldly emphasizes the letters Ayin, Dalet, that spell out the Hebrew word for "witness". Therefore the one who recites the Shema with appropriate intent bares witness to the words that HaShem is One, thus bringing union to G-d's Name. (3) The letters of the words Shema (hear) and Ehad (one) can also spell out Simha (joy) and Ed (witness). The meaning is simple: one who gives witness to HaShem's unity will always be joyful, and why? Because (as the letters show), they are one and the same thing.

TEXT: It is possible to expand on these things and relate them more directly to ourselves. We, the children of Israel raise up MahN (4) to Zoon (5) because our souls emanate from them (6). Zoon in turn raises up MahN to Abba (7) and to Imma, for the soul of Zoon comes from them (8).

COMMENTARY: (4) MahN - "mayim nokbin" (feminine waters) is the desire of below (Israel / Malkhut) that arouses response and awakening from above HaShem - Tiferet).



(5) ZooN is Zeir Anpin, the small Face and Nukba, His mate. These are the sefirotic Faces of Tiferet and Malkhut, traditionally called the Holy One, blessed be He and His Shekhina. It is the union of these two that is the purpose of every prayer and mitzvah. (6) In the Torah it is written that Israel are children to HaShem our G-d. This is understood in light of the Holy Zohar (III 273A) which states "HaShem, Torah and Israel are One." The spark of holiness that is the source of the Jewish soul makes the Jewish people spiritual children of G-d, not just in title, but in actual deed. Physically, we all have the DNA of our parents, so Israel has the "spiritual DNA" of HaShem. (7) Abba is the sefirat Hokhma. Imma is the sefirat Binah. As ZA and Nok are like "mother" and father" to the Jewish people below, Hokhma and Binah are like "parents" to ZA and Nok. (8) Just as Israel below has within them a spark of the Divine from Zoon, so does ZooN have within them the spark from Abba and Imma.

TEXT: It is imperative that when ZooN raises MahN to Abba and Imma, that in return ZooN receives their Mohin (9) and new light (10).

COMMENTARY: (9) The Mohin are the sefirotic brains. This is the energies of the sefirot Hokhma and Binah that radiate to those beneath them. We the Jewish people elevate the desires of our hearts, this arouses ZooN. ZooN in turn is then able to arouse Abba and Imma. When this occurs, Abba and Imma give to ZooN their radiance (Mohin) which in turn filter down to us. (10) This new light is the by-product of the receiving of the Mohin. It is the new illumination that expanded consciousness achieves.

TEXT: There is no greater rejoicing, pleasure or delight then the receiving of this new light. This is the greatest joy for ZooN. When the children of Israel raise MahN to Zoon, we too in return receive the light for the nourishment of our souls (11), and we have no greater joy than this.

COMMENTARY: (11) This follows the great Kabbalistic principle that for whatever there is above, there is its counterpart below. So when one proclaims HaShem's unity here upon earth this reverberates through many different dimensions. The emotion and intensity of our proclamation causes an arousal in ZooN above. ZooN's arousal in turn causes Abba and Imma above to be aroused. They in turn "look down" to see what is happening. This "looking down" is the giving of the Mohin, i.e., the reception of a brilliant radiance, an expansion of consciousness that is caused by our original passionate proclamation of HaShem's unity. The results of our action are that joy and fulfillment flow throughout all the worlds.

TEXT: We see this hinted to in the Psalms, as spoken by David: "Halleluyah, sing to HaShem a new song. His praise is in the gathering of



the righteous, Israel will rejoice in His works, the children of Zion will be happy with his King” (Ps.149:1-2). To start with, these verses appear to present many questions. For example, what is this “new” song? It seems to imply that there is an “old” song as well.

The verse continues to say that His “praise” is in the congregation of the righteous”. Is just His “praise” there, and not the “song”? The verse continues “Israel will rejoice in His works”. Yet, what is being referred to as “His works”?

Also there seems to be an unnecessary repetition; why does it say “Israel will rejoice” and then proceed to repeat “the children of Zion will be happy”. Being that Israel is rejoicing, we do not need to be told that they are happy. It is possible that King David had in mind the Shema Yisrael prayer when he was composing this Psalm.

We recite the Shema Yisrael prayer four times a day: once in the evening service Ma'ariv, once before going to bed, once during the recitation of the sacrificial prayers (Korbanot) in the morning service Shacharit and the fourth time after the Yotzer blessing of the morning service.

The Ari'zal (Rabbi Yitzhak Luria) has taught that the meditations upon the Shema Yisrael prayer are identical all four times it is recited; with the exception of the meditations on the word Yisrael.

At each time the appropriate Yihud (12) is to be made through the proper meditation. The word Yisrael can also be written differently so as to read Sar Eli, which means “G-d is my Prince”. Sar (Prince) represents the Gevurot (the powers of severity) and Eli represents the Hasadim (the powers of mercy). (13) These Hasadim and Gevurot are received by ZA from Yisrael Saba (14) and Tevunah who are referred to in the Shema as HaShem our G-d, HaShem.

COMMENTARY: (12) A Yihud is a sefirotic union that is brought about by the elevation of MahN to Zoon. The Yihud is stimulated by very precise forms of meditation on certain holy Names and letters at the right time and in the right place. (13) The semi-sefirah



Da'at unites the upper sefirot of the "Head" (Abba and Imma) with the lower sefirot of the "Body" (ZooN). Da'at therefore receives light from both Abba (Hokhma) and Imma (Binah). That which Da'at receives from the Yesod of Abba is called "Hasadim"; that which it receives from the Yesod of Imma is called "Gevurot". (14) Yisrael Saba-Ancient Israel and Tevunah-Intelligence are the aspects of the Faces of Abba and Imma respectively that "look down" upon Zoon. Yisrael Saba and Tevunah (YaSooT) are independent sefirotic Faces that act as intermediaries between Abba, Imma and Zoon. They receive and pass down the Hasidim and Gevurot.

TEXT: There is also a hint here to the Mohin that Abba and Imma receive from Arikh (15). Every day (16) new MahN arises and new Mohin descend. Yet all Mohin are different one from another, they are not the same as the ones received before them, nor are they the same as the ones to be received after (17). They are similar, but not the same.

COMMENTARY: (15) Arikh is the long Face - the sefirah Keter. Abba and Imma receive from Arikh in the same way that ZooN receives from Abba and Imma. (16) Every day when we pray we elevate new passion and energy. This in turn enables human consciousness to expand progressively. Being that the levels of elevation are infinite, the work of Yihud that we can perform is also never ending. Therefore daily prayer is essential not only for the sake of human consciousness but for the sake of the supernal worlds as well. (17) This is because the levels of expanding consciousness are progressive. When we pray regularly three times a day we stay on the path. If however we miss a prayer, there is only a certain time when that missing place can be filled. If that time and place is missed, that rung in the expansion of consciousness is missed too. The full rectification is thereby blemished.

TEXT: The Yihud achieved by recitation of the Shema prayer can only be accomplished by one that is truly G-d fearing. If one is not completely Yirat Shamayim (in awe of Heaven) (18) his heart does not have the power to raise up the MahN, nor is he capable of receiving Mohin.

COMMENTARY: (18) Yirat Shamayim is not a state of mind, it is a state of being. At the essence of ones emotional and intellectual being one acknowledges and feels HaShem's power. One who is Yirat Shamayim knows what will happen if HaShem and His Torah are violated. This awe translates into passion. It is this passion that ascends during prayer enabling the elevation of MahN and the descent of the Mohin. Without the attribute of Yirat Shamayim, one is not fulfilling their Halakhic and Kabbalistic obligations of being a Jew.



TEXT: Thus the verse in Psalms says “sing to G-d a new song (Shir).” The word Shir (spelled with the letters Shin, Yod, Resh refers to the same three letters that are also in the word Yisrael.

Also herein is a hint to the Hasadim and the Gevurot that ZA receives (19) from Yisrael Saba and Tevunah. Shin, Resh (Sar) are the Gevurot, the letter Yod from Eli is the Hasadim. Thus the word Shir (song) refers to both the Hasadim and the Gevurot. Thus the “new” song refers to the Hasadim and the Gevurot that ZA receives from Yisrael Saba and Tevunah. It also must be remembered, that every day is a new day, and that no one time is identical to another. Thus a new “song” is needed every day.

COMMENTARY: (19) This is the initial reception of the Mohin.

TEXT: This meditation (20) must be performed by one who is Yirat Shamayim. If one is not in full awe of HaShem, then the one who come to unite the worlds, end up causing more harm than good.

COMMENTARY: (20) The meditation that elevates MahN and bring down the Mohin, as discussed above.

TEXT: Thus the verse says “His praise is in the gathering of the righteous”, this “praise” is the meditations of the Shema, and is performed “in the gathering of the righteous”. When this is true, then “Israel will rejoice in His works”.

The “Israel” being spoken of here is ZA (21), who is referred to as “the small Israel”. The union achieved by reciting the Shema prayer causes ZA to receive his Mohin from Abba and Imma.

COMMENTARY: (21) The term Israel is used to refer to the Jewish people below as well as to their spiritual source ZA above. ZA is in essence spiritual Israel. Therefore as the Jewish people below fulfill their prayer obligation there are corresponding spiritual affects in the supernal worlds.

TEXT: Abba and Imma are referred to as “His works”, and the verse says “Israel (ZA) will rejoice in His works (Abba and Imma)”. ZA rejoices greatly



in receiving his Mohin from “His works”, i.e. Abba and Imma. Then “the children of Zion (Israel) will be happy with his King”.

We are the children of Israel. We have this joy at the time of the Shema prayer, when the light comes to us from Zoon. It is written “Israel will be happy with his King”, in the singular tense; it does not say “their” King, in the plural; for only the singular (tense) is the secret of unity. The righteous individual below unites Zoon above.

Of the letters spelling the word Ehad the letters Alef, Het refer to ZA while the Dalet refers to Nukba (the Shekhina). Thus within the letters of the word Ehad, which means One, ZA and Nukba truly become one. Thus it says, “Israel will be happy with his King”, (in the singular tense, signifying unity).

This is also the meaning of the opening reference from the Holy Zohar, referring to the words Shema and Ehad.

We therefore have two interpretations; Israel (ZA) says “I will rejoice in the new Mohin that I receive now from Abba and Imma”; and the children of Israel (below) say “we will be happy with the light that we receive anew from ZA”.

Also in the words Shema and Ehad, there are the letters that spell the word Hadash (new). The remaining letters of Shema and of Ehad add up numerically to equal the numerical value of the words Kol HaYom (everyday). This is to remind us that by the union achieved through the Shema prayer and its meditations, we receive new Mohin, and new light everyday.

Thus Kol HaYom Hadash - everyday is new.