

Daily Kavanot

***L'Shem Yihud, Moda'ah v'Galuei Da'at, Mituk HaDin,
Yihud Ner, Arba Mitot Beit Din***

By Ariel Bar Tzadok

Copyright © 2003 by Ariel Bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.

1. The L'Shem Yihud Prayer / Meditation

The Union of the Holy One, Blessed Be He, and His Shekhina.

The relationship between Z.A. and Nok is the essential focal point of all the Kabbalah. G-d is only revealed to His universe through the Partzuf of Z.A. of Atzilut. Nok d'Z.A. is the Shekhina, the holy spark of the Divine that gives life to all. She is the source of the Adamic soul (Neshama).

At present the human race is disconnected from the human soul (Neshama) as a result of our exile from Eden. Thus the Shekhina is not in a state of proper union with Z.A. This state of affairs needs to be rectified. The entire purpose of the Torah is “for the sake of the unity of the Holy One, Blessed Be He (Z.A.), and His Shekhina (Nok).

Prior to the performance of every commandment of the Torah, the Kabbalists instituted a formula to be read as a proclamation and preparation so the one performing the commandment or mitzvah simply does not perform the deed aimlessly, but rather focused, directed to the greater purpose of the universe.

The formula states:

“For the sake of the unity of the Holy One, Blessed Be He, and His Shekhina, in love and awe, and in awe and love to unite the letters Yod Hey with Vav Hey in a perfect union, in the name of all Yisrael, behold I have come to perform this mitzvah”.

The union of the Holy One and His Shekhina is understood, but why do we then say “in awe and love”, and then repeat saying, “in love and awe”?

This is a meditation to merge together the Mohin of Abba - Hokhma (awe) with the Mohin of Imma - Binah (love), and then to reverse the order to unite the Mohin of Imma with those of Abba.

We then recite “to unite the letters Yod Hey with Vav Hey”. Yod (Abba) and Hey (Imma) are the Mohin that need now to descend into Z.A. (Vav, and Nok is Hey) in order for Him to be complete.

This descent of the Mohin of Abba and Imma into Z.A. (and from Him to Nok) creates the “perfect union”.

This in turn is done “in the name of all Yisrael”, meaning that the commandment and mitzvah that we perform we do not do for the sake of our own individual reward and merit, but rather for the sake of the collective good, i.e. “all Yisrael.”

2. Moda'ah v'Galuei Da'at - A Prayer for the Purification of Thought

To be recited prior to Shaharit...

Behold I believe with perfect and complete faith that Adonai Eloheynu is the Cause of all Causes.

He has made ten sefirot, which are Keter, Hokhma, Binah, Hesed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzah, Hod, Yesod and Malkhut.

Their lights are hidden and concealed in the supernal Keter. From there, their lights extend to

- ☆ *Yod, which is Hokhma, and*
- ☆ *Hey, which is Binah, and*
- ☆ *Vav that includes the six sefirot: Hesed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzah, Hod & Yesod, and*
- ☆ *Hey which is Malkhut.*

To His great Light (Ayn Sof), dressed within the ten sefirot of Atzilut do we

- ☆ *offer up the intentions of our prayers, blessings and praises;*
- ☆ *the learning of the Holy Torah;*
- ☆ *the observance of the mitzvot written in the Torah or by the Sages;*
- ☆ *every good thought and every holy intention of the heart.*

All this to draw down the supernal abundance and increasing blessing from the illumination that is within

- ☆ *Atika Kadisha (the Holy, Ancient One), who is the supernal Keter;*
- ☆ *to Abba (Father) and Imma (Mother) who are Hokhma and Binah.*
- ☆ *From Abba and Imma to Malka Kadisha (the Holy King) and to Hakal Tapuhin Kadishin (Field of the Holy Apples), who are Tiferet and Malkhut.*

Behold I believe in perfect and complete faith that Adonai Eloheynu, that He Adonai is one and His Name one.

He was, is, and forever will be. He was hidden and concealed in Keter.

He is presently cloaked in the ten sefirot of Atzilut.

He will be revealed in Tiferet and Malkhut.

It is incumbent upon us to offer up our nefesh (life force), ruah (spirit) and neshama (soul) for the sake of sanctifying His holy Name.

With great love and a desiring soul do we accept upon ourselves the yoke of His Heavenly Kingdom, even as it is written in the Torah:

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheynu Adonai Ehad

Listen all Israel, Adonai is our G-d, Adonai is One

silently:

Baruch Shem Kavod Malkhuto L'olam Va'ed

Blessed be the Name of His glorious Kingdom, forever and ever

Behold, I now reveal my will and desire before the Holy One, Blessed be He.

With my complete heart and my desiring soul, in accordance with Torah law:

☆ *I hereby nullify, with a complete and perfect nullification, any foreign, blemished, defective or forbidden thought.*

☆ *I also hereby nullify any thought of heresy, G-d forbid;*

☆ *any kind of evil idea or any evil, blemished, defective or forbidden image in my mind;*

☆ *all feelings of pride and arrogance,*

☆ *all negative thoughts and slander,*

☆ *as well as all types of anger, rage and impatience that have ever arisen in my mind or heart, at any time.*

Behold, I declare all these things to be completely null and void, in any and every way.

They shall not abide, or be sustained, or last in any way.

May the power, strength and vigor of this declaration, this expression of my will, that I presently declare, reveal and make public notice before the Holy One, Blessed be He, be in accordance to the power, strength and vigor of the Laws of Declaration and Stipulation of Intent, that our Sages have outlined for us in the laws pertaining to business matters.

May this revelation of my intent be in accordance with the Laws of the Nullification of Vows, as outlined by our Sages.

May this my nullification, be in accordance to the law of the Holy Torah regarding the nullification of leaven (Hametz), prior to Passover.

May this declaration and revelation of my will, that I declare and reveal, be accepted and abided by in the Heavenly court above, and in the human court below; as well as in the Gathering of the Righteous, the Elders, the Prophets, the Men of the Great Assembly, the Talmudic Sages, and all the Sages of Israel.

Behold, I make a complete and perfect public confession, one that will last forever. With my complete heart and desiring soul, I declare that:

☆ *all my actions are for the sake of Adonai Eloheynu, G-d of our fathers,*

☆ *and that He is one and His Name is one.*

All my prayers, my Torah study and my performance of mitzvot (righteous acts), be they defined by the Torah or by the Sages; everything that I do is to obey the Will of Adonai Eloheynu, G-d of our fathers and King of the universe.

He makes us holy by the observance of His mitzvot (righteous acts) and has given us His true Torah.

For the sake of the unity of the Holy One, Blessed be He and His Shekhina in awe and love, in love and awe, to unite Yod Hey with Vav Hey in a perfect unity, in the name of all Israel.

And let the beauty of Adonai Eloheynu be upon us; and establish the works of our hands upon us; prosper, I pray, the work of our hands. (Psalm. 90:17)

Let the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be acceptable before You, Adonai, my Rock and my Redeemer". (Psalm. 19:15)

3. Mituk HaDinim - To Neutralize Severity

A selection from the Kabbalistic Siddur HaRashash with full commentary and guidelines for usage.

The Kabbalah is full of complex ideas and concepts veiled in multiple layers of metaphor and symbolism. One of these profound concepts is called Mituk HaDinim, the sweetening of judgments. This is considered one of the elemental purposes underlying all Kabbalistic practice. Many will perform the meditations and prayers associated with Mituk HaDin, yet few are those who truly understand the concept fully, thus few are those who really know what it is they are doing, and for that matter, what they are not doing.

This essay is written to assist all to understand just what the Mituk HaDinim actually is and how we can perform this sacred Kabbalistic task practically and realistically, with full understanding of the metaphors involved, joined with the proper actions on our part and the necessary alteration of our perceptions. In order to accomplish this, as with all things, we must start at the beginning . . .

As we know, G-d is the Creator of all. G-d is the Creator of good, but it is clearly written that G-d is also the Creator of evil (Is. 45:7). Yet, we must ask, although G-d has created both good and evil, what relationship do these concepts have to do with mankind?

Granted, as human beings our innate nature consists of both good and bad tendencies. Yet what exactly are the parameters of good and evil? Are good and evil attributes that exist exclusively within the domain of the human character, or are there other autonomous expressions of these characteristics? In other words, are good and evil exclusive to man, or do they exist also in nature?

The full body of Torah literature teaches us that other races of beings inhabit our universe along side of us. In traditional literature, these being are also said to be good or evil. The good races we call angels, and associate them with G-d. The evil races we call demons and associate them with a devil. Regardless of whether angles and demons really exist as autonomous entities or whether they are merely psychological archetypes, the question remains, does evil exist in nature, or is it merely limited to the realm of mind.

We interact with many things in our environment in a negative way. Certain plants and herbs are deemed evil and thus made illegal based on the manner in which we interact with such plants. The cannabis plant and the cocoa plant are both G-d's creations. As such, they must serve some good in the greater schemes of things. I do not believe it was G-d's design to create these plants for the exclusive purpose of them being used to

create the illegal drugs marijuana and cocaine, and for humans to abuse these drugs to their own harm.

The question is are these plants in and of themselves evil, or are they neutral and just being used for an evil purpose? This question can be asked with all things.

Are guns and bullets evil? If the answer to this is yes, then law enforcement officers and soldiers who endanger their lives to defend and protect us are evil merely because they use guns and bullets to defend us and themselves.

Is fire evil? Forest fires can destroy entire communities and ecosystems, fires cause great damage and kill many. Yet, fire heats our homes and cooks our food. If fire is evil, then is cooked food and warmth also evil?

It is clear than whether we talk about fire, or guns, we must reach the same conclusion. It is not the item or concept itself that is good or evil; it is how the item or concept is put into application.

Ultimately, everything in creation has a good side to it, as well as an opposite evil side opposing the good. Everything in creation, therefore, has within it the innate ability to be used for either good or evil. This dual potential is what G-d created and left for us, mankind, to discover and explore (the result of the fall).

In the metaphorical terminology used in Kabbalistic literature, the innate forces of good and evil are given names. The concept of good defines those forces which are expansive, creative and fluid. Together this force is call Hesed (plural, Hasadim), the forces of mercy.

The concept of evil defines those forces which are constrictive, destructive and rigid. Together this force is called Din (plural, Dinim), also called Gevurot, the forces of severity.

Both forces, Hasadim and Gevurot, created by G-d lie inherent within all things in creation. Each and every thing in the universe has within it the potential to be used for expansive and constructive purposes or to be abused for restrictive and destructive purposes. Herein we find the realms of good and evil as we recognize them.

According to this Kabbalistic understanding, the entire universe of our present space-time is under the dominion of the forces of evil, merely because the laws of nature, left to their own devices are rather severe, and destructive. As long as the natural order of things is based upon constriction and destruction, the element of G-d's Divine mercy remains dormant and concealed, almost as if it were in exile (if we so wished to apply such a metaphor to the forces of nature).

When we use the metaphors of the "fall of Adam in the garden of Eden," and speak about the "eating of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, good and evil" we are referencing a prehistoric retardation in the mental and spiritual development of mankind. What exactly happened in Eden, or where Eden is for that matter, are no longer questions of relevance.

Rather than look to the past to understand matters of the past, we must look to the past to understand matters of the present.

We cannot undue our past, yet, we can undue our future, simply by redirecting the course of its flow. Yet, in order to do this, we need to put our minds into it. And this is where the problem lies.

Our innate human nature is not very outgoing, accepting and expansive. We humans like to understand everything. We are intensely curious creatures. We want to know the answers to every question. We want to tinker with creation, the laws of nature, and like a young child, explore, and take apart everything we can get our hands on.

Of course, we share the same problem as does the three year old, once we have dismantled something to satisfy our curiosity as to what is in it; we seldom have the wisdom, knowledge and patience to know how to put it all back together. More than this, we share the child's limited and inexperienced outlook on life.

When things do not match up to our preconceived notions of how they should be, we try to fix them. Our problem is not that the universe does not fit into the place, we think it should be. Our understanding of the universe is rather lacking and faulty; therefore we do not know how to put all the pieces together correctly.

Unfortunately, rather than acknowledge our short sight, we impatiently deny it, and insist that all pieces fit together in the way that we expect them to. Therefore, for millennia, mankind has been pushing square pegs into round holes, and not understanding why such an endeavor is both difficult and frustrating, and why after all the efforts involved, the fit still does not seem to work. This is the force of constriction and destruction in action. This is Din and Gevurah, severity, the force which hinders the potential ongoing expansive process of creation.

Many modern technologies are good examples of forces we have unleashed in creation, yet, we do not know how to harness or master them. No greater example of this is nuclear energy, which can serve as our passage to the stars or if not properly controlled can bring destruction upon us all.

Good and evil are not so much in creation as they are within us. We are in creation and we manifest either the inherent good or evil within it. Without us creation would run on autopilot, without good, without evil, forever neutral. Thus, without us, the universe would never grow, expand or improve. Without us, universal law would play out until ultimately the universe would collapse back into the big crunch, just as it was created in the big bang. Yet, nothing would have happened, the whole process of creation would have been one grand experiment of waste, with nothing lost, but also nothing gained, in essence, a complete waste of time.

We can rest assured that just as there is a Creator, there is a reason and purpose for His creation. Yet, the ultimate reason and purpose of creation is hidden from our eyes. To make matters even more interesting, G-d has made the universe like a big treasure hunt. We humans are instilled with intense curiosity, we seek the clues, yet, once we find the pieces, we also need the ability to put them together to see the great picture they form, a picture which is none other than the Face of G-d, the Creator.

As G-d has created the universe, He has created man, to join with Him, as His proverbial children, to contribute to the process of creation. While we cannot know the Mind of the Creator until we can at least first see His Face, nonetheless, we still can grasp a small glimpse into the purpose of creation.

The smallest glimpse into the purpose of creation we can see when we look into the heart of man and contemplate our inherent curious nature. G-d has created us to be

curious. G-d has enabled us to become smart and mature intellectual and spiritual beings. G-d gave us the “home-schooling course” of the Torah and told us to learn it, and from there follow the “treasure hunt” of life and human experience until we ultimately find what it is that we seek.

The treasure hunt we are on is one searching for the ultimate truth of the universe. Along this quest are some rather strange bed-fellows. In pursuit of truth, we will find adamantly secular, but brilliant scientists, alongside equally brilliant religious scholars and rabbis. Both seek to make our world a better place to live. The religious try to better the inner-man, whereas the scientist tries to make better the outer-world.

Both of these roles, that of the scientist and that of the Rav are necessary for our human evolution. We human beings are composite entities. We have an inner reality which for us is just as real as any outer reality. Both realms therefore need to be addressed when we wish to discuss matters of human development.

In Kabbalistic terms the worlds are said to consist of what we call Penimiyut (inner aspect) and Hitzoniyut (outer aspect). The Penimiyut inner aspect is traditionally referred to as “light (ohr).” The Hitzoniyut outer aspect is traditionally referred to as “vessel” (klee).

Just as there is this inner and outer aspect to all things within all the worlds, so we ascribe a similar state of being to the revelation of G-d Himself within creation.

Throughout the Torah, two specific Names of G-d are used, YKVK and Elokim. Both these Names manifest an aspect of G-d to creation. The Name Elokim manifests the outer face of G-d, the Hitzoni aspect. The Name YKVK manifests the inner Face of G-d, the Penimi aspect.

Whenever we refer to the Penimi aspect of a thing, we are referring to its inner essence, its “light” or “soul.” Whenever we refer to the Hitzoni aspect of a thing, we are referring to its outer form, its “vessel” or “body.”

Light by definition is expansive, creative and fluid, therefore the Penimi aspect of a thing is also said to manifest the Hesed (mercy) element of that thing.

A vessel or body by definition is that which is constrictive and rigid. It therefore manifests the Din/Gevurah (severity) aspect of a thing.

As this is true with all things in creation so it is true with the revealed aspects of G-d. The Name YKVK reveals G-d’s light, His Hesed to the world. The Name Elokim reveals G-d’s force of severity and limitation to the world. In light of this, it is no wonder that the Name Elokim share equal numerical value with the Hebrew HaTeva, which refers to the laws of nature.

The Name of G-d, Adonai is synonymous with the Name Elokim. This is why when we pray today, all our prayers are addressed to Adonai, even though the Name is written YKVK. YKVK is concealed from us, all we have left is Adonai.

When the Torah speaks of G-d creating the Heavens and the Earth, the Kabbalah understands this to speak about a dual aspect in creation itself. The Heavens mentioned in Genesis are not the physical sky. The Heavens is a reference to what we call the spiritual plane. The spiritual plane of creation coexists side by side with the physical plane of existence. The spiritual plane is in essence the universe of light, whereas our physical plane is the universe of form.

Appropriately then the Name of G-d revealed in the Heavens is YKVK and the name of G-d revealed on earth is Elokim. Appropriately then the physical world, is the outer vessel, rigid and constrictive by nature, manifesting the elements of Din/Gevurah. Heaven, by nature therefore is expansive, creative and fluid, manifesting Hesed.

Now, G-d created both of these dimensional planes. They are meant to exist in perfect harmony, similar to the human union of body and soul. The Heavens plane "ruled" by YKVK is the light and soul to the Earth plane "ruled" by Elokim, the body. When the two are in harmony, then we say there is perfect union between the Heavens and the Earth. The Kabbalists refer to this as the union of the Holy One, Blessed Be He and His Shekhina.

However, whenever the body becomes overly rigid, it does not allow for its inner light to reflect outwards. The light (soul) within the body thus remains stifled and imprisoned, unable to be released or be manifest. When this state of affair occurs, we say (as above) that the Light element in creation is concealed, or in exile. The physical universe suffers from this as would the human body cut off from its life force within. When the physical universe cannot unleash its inner light, which is its inner creative expansive integrative element, it leaves the physical universe as if in a comatose state, rigid, unresponsive, unable to move, dead even while alive.

It is the desired state that the inner essence of the universe flows and manifests through its outer form. However, in order for this to be the case, the conduit of flow must be open and willing channels to accomplish this task. We humans are the conduit. The human mind was created by G-d to rule this physical world. Yet, there is still an element of mind corresponding to the spiritual realm. This realm of mind we call the spirit or soul. In order for there to be harmony in creation between its inner and outer forms, there must be harmony within man between his rational mind, dealing with physical existence, and his spiritual mind, dealing with spiritual existence. Herein lies the problem, as we all know.

The solution to this problem is what we call Mituk HaDinim. The human mind that exclusively views physical reality and disconnects from its spiritual source is locked up in rigidity and constriction. It cannot move or think outside its self containing parameters. In such a state, the only aspect of G-d that can be revealed to us is His Name Elokim/Adonai. This is G-d as He is revealed in nature. In other words, whenever G-d reveals Himself in the physical world, He is forced to do so within the movement of the forces of nature, as opposed to overriding them with what we call a miracle. This constricts the manifestation of G-d severely and we suffer accordingly in that the Face of G-d that we see becomes one of severity. It is like there is no G-d at all (G-d forbid), to reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

The only solution to this is to enable the inner light element of creation to flow into its outer form. This entails a manifestation of the Name YKVK into physical space-time.

The most famous case where this occurred was in Egypt in the days of Moses. Moses introduced the concept of the Name YKVK and the supernatural power that it entailed. Pharaoh was no spiritual dummy. Pharaoh knew G-d well, but he only knew G-d as Elokim, the ruler of rigid forms, laws and severity. Therefore did Pharaoh enslave Israel, forcing them to do hard labor. Moses comes along as demands the people of Israel be let free. Freedom was a concept Pharaoh could not recognize. He had seen no such spiritual reality. In Pharaoh's eyes, the world is a harsh place ruled by strict and unforgiving laws of nature. If one wants to succeed in this world, Pharaoh reckoned that one had better imitate nature and be equally severe and rigid.

Moses then introduced YKVK, the element of miracles superceding the laws of nature. YKVK cast His light into Pharaoh's rigid vessels, until those vessels could hold no more. The vessels of Egypt were broken, their entire culture, religion, world view and philosophy was completely superceded by the revelation of YKVK.

In order to solidify this penetration into the physical world, G-d revealed the Torah at Mt. Sinai, and with it a great and awesome lesson. YKVK is Elokim, there is none other! The element of severity is dominated by the element of mercy, there is no other truth! This has been the age old teachings of Torah since the beginning. YKVK is Elokim.

While we might acknowledge the concept of the union of YKVK and Elokim, there is much more to revealing the Name YKVK and to Mituk HaDin that mere intellectual acceptance of this Kabbalistic idea. As we human are the conduits of revealing the YKVK aspect of creation here in our physical plane, we must use the vehicle created for us to do so. This vehicle is the human mind.

The use of the human mind brings us back again to discuss the scientist. The scientist uses his mind to discover the underlying elements in creation. He endeavors to release the hidden sparks of truth in the form that we today call technology. This is an excellent step forward for mankind, as long as the technology assists in furthering man's movement in the universe and not put a stop to man all together.

Technology and the wisdom of science however are limited in that it is only revealing the outer aspect of the inner light. The inner light is wisdom and spirituality. Scientific discovery is in a way a spiritual pursuit, but it only affects the physical world. As such, science is only applicable to the Hitzoniyut element. It does not touch the Penimi element. As such, science, in and of itself, is still disconnected because, although it is revealing more about the laws of Nature, that nature is still under the dominion of Elokim. The element of YKVK still remains concealed, and in exile.

Only when the mind of man inverts and explores his inner self can there be any solution to the exile of YKVK. When man looks within Himself, and strips off his outer mask, he will see a glow within his essence. This glow is like an ember, small, and in need of nurturing. Yet, when nurtured properly, the ember bursts into a full flame, bringing with it light and warmth, or in this case, enlightenment and wisdom.

When the name YKVK is revealed in the minds of men, then it becomes revealed in creation. When this occurs, then the inner pursuits of the Rabbi and the outer pursuit of the scientist will be combined as the two Names YKVK and Elokim (nature) become one in the minds of all. The revelations that this will lead to are far beyond what our present imaginations can fathom. Yet, Torah teaches us that such a time is inevitable. This dawning time is what we call the Age of Mashiah.

The process, therefore, of bringing close this true new Messianic age requires of us the inner exploration of the human mind with the intent of unleashing the creative potentials of the human spirit. When this is accomplished then we will have released the YKVK element from its prison in our inner minds and expose it to the outer limits.

This exploration of inner space takes the human mind and consciousness on a journey through the numerous dimensional planes of our physical universe and our spiritual counter-universe. When transversing these paths the mind/consciousness becomes aware of and "sees" many different and new things. This process is known as the path of prophetic ascent. It has been practiced in Torah circles since the days of Moses. It is still practiced by the select and secretive few to this day.

One of the great masters of this inner exploration was Rabbi Yisrael Ben Eliezer, better known as the Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of the Hasidic school in 18th century Eastern Europe. His teachings centered on instructing his students how to perform the inner transformation, which is one of the best ways the Mituk HaDin is performed.

Master as he was of the inner transformation, the Ba'al Shem Tov was also a master of prophetic ascent as the following story will show. The source of this is the Sefer Baal Shem Tov, Igeret HaKodesh, Gimel.

"On Rosh HaShanah 5507 (1746), I performed the invocation for the ascension of the soul, as is known. I saw such wondrous things in my vision, the likes of which I've never seen before . . . I arose level upon level, until I entered the Palace of the Mashiah, where the Mashiah learns Torah with all the Tana'im, and Tzadikim, even with the Seven Shepherds . . . I asked the Mashiah, when He will come? He answered me, by this shall you know. At the time when your teachings are famous, and revealed throughout the world, and what I have taught you, and what you have perceived has gone forth; when the masses are also able to recite yihudim and rise above, as you do, then shall the klipot be nullified. Then shall it be a good time for salvation."

The significance of this story is that the Mashiah, who is the human soul that singly manifests YKVK to all mankind, reveals that his time of manifestation will be when "the masses are also able to recite yihudim and rise above."

Yihudim are a specific form of Kabbalistic meditation, where the mind visualizes holy Names and merges them together in one's imagination. This form of meditative visualization technique occurring in one's mind is not limited to that aspect of the mind manifest here exclusively in physical space. As the human mind merges with the human spirit, we become unfettered by the rigid, constrictive limitations of the physical universe and the forces of Din permeating it. As the mind expands into the realm of the spirit our consciousness attains access to numerous dimensional planes above our own. Thus, when we perform a meditative visualization technique it has repercussions far beyond the confines of our limited physical space. In essence, what we perform in our minds becomes a vessel for the supernal lights of YKVK to perform the same function in the spiritual realms. Therefore, as it is below, so it is above. What we think about or meditate upon here below, become manifest above.

The Mituk HaDin is a process of transformation of one's character and one's personality. It requires of one a complete alteration of world outlook. In essence, one must learn to look beyond and beneath our entire fabric of physical space-time and to grasp a glimpse of the universe underlying ours, which is its foundation and source. This higher universe, Biblically called Heaven actually is all around us; it exists in the spaces in between sub-atomic particles. Thus it exists side by side with us. In order to access it all we have to do is think.

The Kabbalists therefore developed their intricate system of metaphors to provide for the human mind a comprehensive path of imagery through which the prophetic ascent can occur. Many of these metaphors are in the forms of holy Names. The Names represent the aspects of reality, be they physical or spiritual. Thus by neutralizing one Name, and ascending another, we are actually causing this reality to happen, both within the confines of our minds and souls, as well as in the greater universe at large.

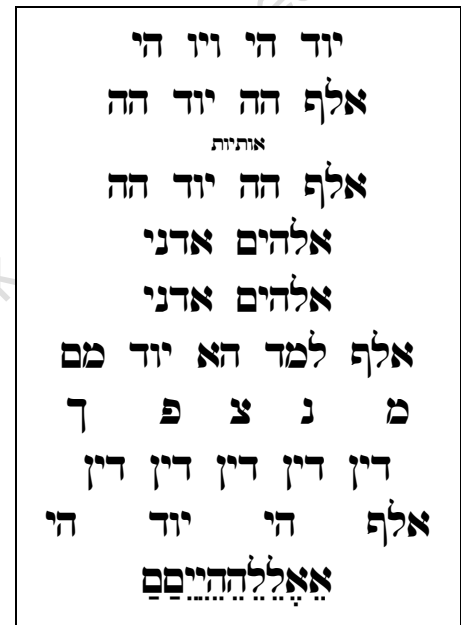
With these insights, I can now proceed and introduce you to a Yihud meditation whose purpose is the Mituk HaDinim. The underlying concepts in this prayer/meditation we have already learned. The specific holy Names, we will explain as we proceed.

This Yihud meditation/ prayer is taken from the Siddur HaRashash of Rabbi Shalom Sharabi, one of the top Kabbalists of all times. The purpose of this meditation/prayer is to nullify the powers of the severity. This prayer is traditionally recited as part of the daily Tikun Hatzot midnight supplications. It is also part of the Kabbalistic Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur ceremonies for opening the Aron Kodesh.

May it be Your will HaShem my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that You send forth great and abundant shefa from Havaya of AB that dwells at the level of Notzer Hesed in the Beard of Arikh Anpin, to neutralize the power of Ehyeh of Heyhin with its ten letters, as well as to neutralize the Names Elohim and Adonai and their nine letters, as well as to neutralize the Name Elohim of Alphin as well as to neutralize the Shakh and Par judgements of Zoon (Zeir Anpin and Nukba).

Cast into the sea all of our sins and all destroyers which were created by our hands. Prevent them from nourishing themselves from the Holy Names of Adonai and Elohim. By the power of the 13th attribute of the Beard of Arikh Anpin, V'Nakay, which equals 161, which is also the value of Ehyeh of Yodin which is also the number of Alaphim, which is also the number of Adonai and Elohim, with their nine letters, plus the collel; may all souls and all sparks of holiness rise up, those which have been dispersed into the unclean by our hands.

HABU! Give us a glimpse of our divine inheritance. Restore these souls and sparks to holiness, even as they were at the beginning, clean of all evil. By the power of the double Elohim with its ten letters which equals Ya'aqob, cleanse our souls from all the powers of darkness, so that they shall not harm us by clinging to our prayers, or our Torah study. For they come forth to accuse us, to stand against us, to cut us off even as are the wicked.



By the power of the holy Name which comes from the verse "and HaShem said to Satan, HaShem rebukes you" (Zekh.3:2), exterminate, totally cast away the strength of our accusers from their evil camps, both great and small. May they be as chaff in the wind, with the spirit of HaShem pushing them. May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be acceptable before You HaShem my Rock and Redeemer. "And let the beauty of HaShem our G-d be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; prosper the work of our hands." (Ps. 90:17).

TEXT

May it be Your will HaShem my G-d and G-d of my fathers . . .

Commentary

As with all prayers, this one opens with a supplication to HaShem. G-d is called "my G-d" to emphasize our personal relationship with our Creator. He is then called "G-d of our fathers." According to the Kabbalah the "fathers" in question here are not necessarily our physical ancestors, not even Avraham, Yitzhak and Ya'aqob. Rather the "fathers" spoken of is a reference to our past lives. Our previous incarnations are called the fathers to this incarnation. The father, in the male context, is one that active and protruding, unlike the female who is passive and receptive. The spark of

our souls from our past lives act to intervene and direct many aspects of our present life. Thus they are called “fathers” because of their activity. We proclaim ourselves servants of YKVK in this life and in the past, thus proving our track record and experience in continuing the Mituk process from lifetime to lifetime.

TEXT

That You send forth great and abundant energy from Havaya of AB . . .

Commentary

We now ask that HaShem draw down the great and abundant energy from his Name YKVK as it is spelled with Yods and is called AB. This is how the Name YKVK is spelled out to differentiate it from other manifestations of the Name YKVK in other universes and realms. The Name is spelled like this: YOD - Yod Vav Dalet; KEY - Hey Yod; VAV - Vav Yod Vav; KEY - Hey Yod. The numerical value of this spelling is 72. This is represented by the two Hebrew letters that numerically represent 72, Ayin Bet. Thus this spelling is called the YKVK (also called Havaya) of AB (Ayin Bet). The significance of this Name is in the secret of its number 72. 72 is the numerical value of the word Hesed. Thus this Name more than any other represents the Hesed (mercy) of HaShem, which is exactly what we wish to manifest now in order to “sweeten” the forces of severity (Mituk HaDinim).

TEXT

That dwells at the level of Notzer Hesed in the Beard of Arikh Anpin . . .

Commentary

The Name Havaya of AB is said to emanate from the Beard of Arikh Anpin. Arikh is the Name of the sefirotic Face of the sefirat Keter. Arikh Anpin means “the Long Face” because this is the “Face” of Divine mercy, the source of all mercies, expansion and growth in all universes. G-d is “long suffering,” so is His “Face” called “long.” The Beard is the metaphor used to describe passage from the Head (specifically the Face) and the body. The beard flows down the Face and flows to the Heart. Thus the “beard” is the symbolic path of sefirotic energy flow from the upper sefirot of Keter, Hokhma and Binah (together called the sefirotic brains, Mohin) towards the Tiferet, the heart. Tiferet is the sefirah associated with the Name YKVK and is associated with Divine justice (not judgment). Keter therefore sends the sefirotic energy and Tiferet receives it. This is the flow of the beard. The level of Notzer Hesed (keeps mercy), is the eight of the thirteen attributes of mercy based upon the pasuk, “HaShem, HaShem, G-d, compassionate and gracious slow to anger, great in mercy and faithfulness, keeping mercy for thousands, bearing iniquity, sin and transgression and absolving.” (Ex. 33:19). These attributes have their source in Keter. Thirteen is the numerical value of Ehad, meaning one. Thus the thirteen attributes emanate from sefirah number one, Keter.

TEXT

To neutralize the power of Ehyeh of Heyhin with its ten letters, as well as to neutralize the Names Elokim and Adonai and their nine letters, as well as to neutralize the Name Elokim of Alphin as well as to neutralize the Shakh and Par judgments of Zoon (Zeir Anpin and Nukba).

Commentary

Here we have the visualization of the Mituk, the sweetening. The Name Ehyeh of Hehin is the lowest Name in the sefirat Binah. As such it is the place where severity is formed in the mind, prior to its being manifest into action. The forces of severity must be neutralized (sweetened) at their source. The two Names Elokim and Adonai, we have already discussed and explained how these two Names refer to the element of severity,

rigidity and limitation. The Shakh and Par judgments are the two forms in which the forces of severity reveal themselves. We refer to them as masculine severity and feminine severity. Both forms are merely active and passive forms of limitation and constriction. Most think that by simply neutralizing the active form of severity all judgment and limitation thereby ceases. This is not so. Passive Dinim is the rigidity and stubbornness of improper stillness. While there is a time for correct stillness, there is also a time when stillness is not correct. On the outside, both forms of stillness look identical, but one of them is a form of resistance to positive change. The names Shakh and Par are not actual names but merely numerical values. Shakh is the Hebrew letters Shin and Kaf, the numerical value of 320. This is merely the value of the Hebrew word Din (Dalet, Yod, Nun=64) multiplied five times ($5 \times 64 = 320$). The five, of course stands for the five general levels within each world. The Shakh thus represents the forces of severity in the physical world in all its active forms. Par is the numerical value of the Hebrew letters Peh (80) and Resh (200). The Par forces of severity are represented by the five final form letters in Hebrew called the MaNTzaFaKh (Mem, Nun, Tzade, Peh, Kaf). These final forms are the forces of improper stillness and finality spoken of above.

TEXT

Cast into the sea all of our sins and all destroyers which were created by our hands. Prevent them from nourishing themselves from the Holy Names.

Commentary

Casting into the sea all of our sins is a Biblical metaphorical way of saying that the consequences of our actions which result in the manifestation of the forces of severity, further imprisoning our souls, should be removed, without leaving any negative residuals. Many of the forces of severity innate in our physical world are actually reinforced and made stronger by our inappropriate thoughts, feelings, speech and actions. Our own behavior are the destroyers spoken of, in essence, our own sins take on a life of their own and become our personal demons. This has both actual occult and psychological significance. Our personal reinforcements of the forces of severity are also the leading cause of mental illness. We request that our sins do not nourish themselves from the holy Names. This is an all too familiar problem, when people commit the worst of acts and then try to justify them as religious behavior. Modern terrorism is just one such example. This is metaphorically called the destroyers nourishing off of holy Names. The only way to put a stop to this is for the revelation of true religious teachings and values of mercy as opposed to the constrictive rigidity that excludes all others, even to the point of death.

TEXT

By the power of the 13th level of the Beard of Arikh Anpin, V'Nakay, which equals 161, which is also the value of Ehyeh of Yodin, which is also the number of Alaphim, which is also the number of Elokim and Adonai with their nine letters, plus the collel; may all souls and all sparks of holiness rise up, those which have been dispersed into the unclean by our hands.

Commentary

The Beard of Arikh we have already discussed. The final attribute of the 13 attributes of mercy is called, "V'nakay" (absolving). This attribute is the source of the sefirat Binah, and the three Names of Ehyeh corresponding to it. The Name Ehyeh of Yodin is spelled like this: ALEF (Alef, Lamed, Peh); KEY (Hey Yod); YOD (Yod, Vav, Dalet); KEY (Hey, Yod). The numerical value of these ten letters is 161, which is the same numerical value of V'nakay. Therefore the relationship of numbers signifies that this Name Ehyeh of Yodin is the conduit to bring absolution. This name corresponds to the highest aspect of human intellect in the conscious mind. As such the name represents

those modes of thinking which enable one not to feel guilt after one has fallen and then gotten up. All too often when one falls one's own guilt prevents one from making appropriate correction and rectification. The spiritual energy represented by this Name enables one to overcome the burden of misdirected guilt. The number 161 also is the numerical value of the word Alafim, which means thousands. This is both a reference to one of the other 13 attributes of mercy mentioned above as well as to the significance of numbers ranging in the thousands. Numbers in their thousands are said to correspond to the realm of Atzilut, the source of all supernal mercy. The correspondence here is to signify that one who contemplates this holy Name opens a channel to the supernal source allowing spiritual cleansing to occur. The number 161 is also the number of the Name Elokim (86) and Adonai (65), when we add the nine letters and one for the concept itself. Again, the relationship is to signify how contemplation of this holy Name enables one to embrace the supernal mercies, not revealed and manifest by the forces represented by the two Names associated with severity Elokim and Adonai. Our prayer is simple, we pray not only for ourselves, but for all who have fallen spiritual and cannot get up. We pray that they too, may come to recognize the concept of G-d's mercy and enable it to manifest here on "earth" as it does in "Heaven."

TEXT

HABU, give us a glimpse of our divine inheritance. Restore these souls and sparks to holiness, even as they were at the beginning, clean of all evil.

Commentary

The Name HABU is a holy Name and should not be recited aloud. It is formed by three Hebrew letters, Het, Bet Vav. There are no vowels to the Name, so we simply put it into the form of HABU for easy recognition. The source of the name reveals its potential and power. The name comes from the first letters of the first three words of the pasuk, "Hayil Balah Va'Yika'aynu" (He devoured wealth, but will vomit it up, G-d will purge it from his gut - Job 20:15). The Name signifies that although the forces of severity have, as if devoured the forces of mercy, G-d in the end, will cause the forces of severity to vomit them out and to restore the forces of mercy to their rightful place, as they were in the beginning, clean of all evil.

TEXT

By the power of the double Elokim - Elokim with its ten letters which equals Ya'aqob) cleanse our souls from all the powers of darkness, so that they shall not harm us by clinging to our prayers, or our Torah study. For they come forth to accuse us, to stand against us, to cut us off even as are the wicked.

Commentary

The Name Elokim as we know represents the forces of severity and limitation. The name holds the numerical value of 86. Twice that value is 172. Add 10 for the number of letters in both names and we have the number 182, which is the numerical value of the name Ya'aqob, one of the names of collective Israel. This is also one of the names of the sefirot Face of Tiferet Zeir Anpin. Our spiritual source in collective Israel, emanating as it does from the sefirotic Face ZA (Zeir Anpin) is called upon to assist us in cleansing our souls. Yet, this cleansing is not some mere nebulous request. Here, we are requesting something very precise. We pray that the consequences of our mistaken beliefs, misguided feelings, harmful words and wrong actions do not come and hinder our path of spiritual ascent. For although, we have changed the course of our lives and live in accordance to all the dictates and laws of the Holy Torah, nonetheless, our past sins can come back to haunt us, or to overwhelm us with guilt. We pray to cognition of our holy source so as not to be deceived by the illusion of our present unclean surroundings.

TEXT

By the power of the Name Y'eh'ha'yih, which comes from the verse "and HaShem said to Satan, HaShem rebukes you" (Zech.3:2), exterminate, totally cast away the strength of our accusers from their evil camps, both great and small. May they be as chaff in the wind, with the spirit of HaShem pushing them. May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be acceptable before You HaShem my Rock and Redeemer. "And let the beauty HaShem our G-d be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; prosper the work of our hands." (Tehilim 90:17)

Commentary

The Name Y'eh'ha'yih is another one of the Names forbidden to be pronounced. As we see from the text itself the name comes from the first letters of the pasuk mentioned above. Its intent is clear, to rebuke and remove the forces of severity and hindrance that stand in the way of our spiritual ascent. We then conclude with traditional pasukim that arouse our hearts and dedicate our service to our blessed Creator,

This concludes the prayer/meditation from the Siddur of the Rashash. Although the metaphors used herein might be difficult to grasp, the concepts underlying them to be rather clear and self evident.

I must emphasize however, that while reciting prayers and performing visualization techniques and other forms of meditation do help one tremendously in rectifying their character and personality, these in and of themselves are not enough. Although one is living an Orthodox Torah life style, in full compliance with all the mitzvot of the Torah, sometimes this too is not enough.

The hard part of living a Torah life is the surrender of the personal will to the Will of HaShem. The hard part is to recognize and allow yourself to live as a vessel for YKVK instead of being vessel for your own pleasures and desires, even ones permitted under Torah law.

In order to unleash the YKVK aspect into our physical worlds, we must embrace a complete spirit of surrender to the higher Truth. We must fight hard to expand and broaden our spiritual and intellectual horizons. We must seek to embrace all that is permitted and at the same time cast aside all that is forbidden. We must become the vessels of movement through which YKVK is manifest here on Earth. When we accomplish this task, then as moving vessels for YKVK, we become His Merkava, His chariot. This too is the topic of another set of visualization meditative techniques. But this is another lecture...

We know what must be done. Let us make use of what we have learned to accomplish the great task. We can do a lot, if we only allow ourselves to. Remember, where you think, there you are! So go to the right place, do the right thing, and you will see the right results.

4. The Yihud NER - The Unification of Light

A Kabbalistic Meditation of Profound Psychological Significance for Daily Usage and Special Applications to Hanukah

What so often turns people off from Torah is not seeing how the lessons of age-old religion have any value and relevance to modern day life. This turn-off is most applicable and true when it comes to the study of Kabbalah.

Today the Kabbalah for the masses has become a cult incorporating teachings that have nothing to do with either Judaism or legitimate Kabbalah. Weak minded, lazy and other narcissistic types are the only ones attracted to this type of cult hype.

Adding to the already existing problem, sincere, hard working Torah faithful individuals fail to see the relevance in authentic Kabbalah's multiple layers of concealing metaphors. Most are also some what frightened away by the terrible name now attached to the Kabbalah, thanks to the Kabbalah cults.

This leaves the authentic and authoritative Kabbalah in a pretty sad and bad place, perverted and abused by the cults, and misunderstood, rejected abandoned by those in the Torah community who should indeed embrace it.

We cannot address all issues within the short form of this essay, however there is one thing we can do. We can look at one simple in-depth Kabbalistic metaphor, a yihud meditation performed during prayer, especially during Hanukah.

We can see how this very profound metaphor when analyzed correctly can be shown to relate to us a very relevant and profound lesson of psychology. Indeed, this is exactly what Kabbalah was always meant to be: the psychology of Torah and the Jewish people.

The following essay on the Yihud NER (Light), I pray will show us just how psychological Kabbalah is supposed to be, how so much unlike the cult forms it really is, and how valuable it is to kosher and sincere Torah faithful individuals and worthy of our rescuing it from the hands of its abusers.

To begin with, the Ari'zal coined a meditative term called a "yihud" (unification). This is a type of visual/contemplative meditation when one visualizes in one's mind certain holy Names of G-d and merges them together, usually by intertwining the letters of their spelling to create new "Names" that incorporate the letters, and thus the meanings and metaphors of both "Names" combined.

As we perform this contemplative task within the confines of our human minds, we are taught that our thoughts reverberate through different dimensions and worlds and actually cause the supernal, spiritual integration and unification of the realities represented by these "Names" above. Thus our minds create the spiritual unification of opposites, or draw near that which is spiritually far apart, and thus the term, yihud, unification meditations.

One of the most important yihudim performed daily during the conclusion of the Amidah prayer when we recite the words, "Blessed are You HaShem, Who blesses Your people Israel with peace (shalom)" is the yihud NER (light). This yihud is performed when we recite the word shalom at the end of this berakha.

The reason why this yihud is called NER (light) is two-fold. First, the numerical value of the six Holy Names involved with this contemplative meditation adds up to 250, which is the value of the word NER (light). Second, the concept of integration represented by the merging of these Holy Names defines what for authentic Kabbalah is spiritual "light." Thus this yihud NER is performed for the sake of shining the Light of the Divine into the consciousness of man. This is after all the true meaning of peace (shalom) and thus defines why this yihud is performed when we recite the word shalom in the Amidah.

The procedure of the yihud is as follows. First one should visualize and contemplate the Holy Name YKVK (Havaya). This sacred Name of Names represents HaShem's essence of manifest power that enables life and our universe to exist. The Name implies Pure Being, above and beyond the ability of contemplation to grasp, nevertheless still active and purposeful in guiding every detail in creation. The numerical value of this Holy Name is 26.

We begin by merging the letters YKVK with the letters of another sacred Name, AKYK (Ehyeh). This Holy Name represents that aspect of HaShem which is concealed and yet acts as the primary mover of things. Whereas YKVK (Havaya) is the manifest power of HaShem, AKYK (Ehyeh) is the concealed source of that power. The two intertwine with one another in a body-soul relationship. Indeed, that is what this yihud comes to accomplish, a bonding of the concealed and revealed aspects within HaShem Himself.

In essence our contemplation is to imbue the Holy Name YKVK (Havaya) with the power to act. And all things receive their power from their source above. AKYK (Ehyeh) is said to be the Name which is the source of the power within the Name YKVK (Havaya). Thus by uniting the two, we create the manifestation of Divine energy, which previously was concealed and non-active.

The Name AKYK (Ehyeh) is said to correlate to the sefirat Keter, which is the spark, seed and source of all things to come. Keter is the ultimate unmanifest potential within HaShem. When uniting this Name of AKYK (Ehyeh) with YKVK (Havaya) we are imbuing the Keter with the power to pass on its potential into the realm of action. The numerical value of this Holy Name AKYK (Ehyeh) is 21.

Once we contemplate upon arousing HaShem's concealed potential to activate it into manifest power we must first balance the polarities of the right and left sefirotic columns. As we know, HaShem is the author of all things, both good and evil, blessing and curse, light and darkness, mercy and severity. A mere generic arousal to manifest HaShem's Divine "Hand" (energy in action) might produce a manifestation of judgment, severity, curse, and punishment.

We are not all worthy by definition to simply receive Divine blessing without merit. Calling upon HaShem to manifest Himself, therefore, might be a dangerous thing, if we do not specify, through our meditative / contemplative process what exactly it is we are trying to accomplish. In order to alleviate the manifestation of Divine judgment and to arouse the manifestation of Divine justice and even possibly mercy, we do the following.

We again visualize the Holy Name YKVK (Havaya) and this time merge it with the letters of the Holy Name ELOKIM. This is the Name which metaphorically signifies HaShem's power of judgment. This is the Name used in the creation story and signifies the power of limitation and form, and thus law, justice, severity, harshness. These forces are summed up by the Hebrew word "Din" (judgment) and most adequately describes what the Name ELOKIM represents.

In order to mitigate Divine judgment it must be "sweetened." The process of this "sweetening" is as described above. We visualize the Name YKVK (Havaya) and merge it with the letters of ELOKIM. YKVK (Havaya) which is HaShem's pure being essentially manifests HaShem's force of mercy in the universe. Therefore, by joining the letters of the Name YKVK to the letters of the Name ELOKIM, we are in essence neutralizing the forces of severity inherent in the Name ELOKIM and eliminating the potential of their manifestation upon our heads. Again, as we perform this in our minds, a corroborative manifestation is made above in the supernal spiritual planes.

The Name ELOKIM in this meditation also corresponds to the aspects of the mind, specifically the sefirot Hokhma, Binah and the semi-sefirah Da'at. The mind is the human faculty that defines, distinguishes, differentiates and separates one aspect of human reality from another. Therefore, in this yihud NER, the mind is associated with the Name corresponding to judgment. Judgment itself is the archetypal act of separation, of man from man and man from G-d. The numerical value of the Holy Name ELOKIM is 86.

Once we have called into manifestation HaShem's concealed potential by meditatively visualizing a unity of the two Holy Names YKVK (Havaya) and AKYK (Ehyeh) and once we have balanced this manifestation that it reveals HaShem's mercy and justice and not His severity (by the yihud of the two Names YKVK (Havaya and ELOKIM), we are now ready to bring this meditative visualization exercise to its conclusion. This, of course, is its manifestation into our physical world of space-time. In order to accomplish this we must now introduce the final Holy Name of the six of this yihud. This Holy Name is ADNY (Adonai), the Name of G-d we recite during prayer.

The Name ADNY (Adonai) represents the manifestation of HaShem here in our universe. This Name of HaShem signifies HaShem's rule over the Heavens and Earth and the subtle manifestation of Divine light through the various forms of the laws and acts of nature. This Name of HaShem is how we refer to Him here in our present state of physical being and spiritual exile.

As we know the Name of HaShem throughout the Torah is YKVK (Havaya). Yet, we today always refer to Him as ADNY (Adonai). These two Names have a very important relationship. It is through the Name ADNY (Adonai) that HaShem reveals Himself in our world today. The Name YKVK (Havaya) is concealed within ADNY (Adonai). The two Names form a body-soul relationship.

HaShem acts in His power (YKVK-Havaya). Yet in our present human state, the full manifestation of YKVK (Havaya) would be too intense of a spiritual revelation for us. When the Name YKVK (Havaya) is revealed unsheathed by ADNY (Adonai), we have events of the likes of Biblical miracles, such as the ten plagues, the parting of the Sea, and other overwhelming changes in the forces of nature.

However, if these miraculous interventions are undeserved, then rather than manifest acts of miraculous Divine mercy, the Name YKVK can in turn manifest Divine wrath, even though it itself is essentially a Name signifying mercy. If and when mankind is worthy then YKVK manifests its essential attribute of mercy as intended. If not then the name can become a very powerful tool of Divine wrath. This was experienced when the Temple was destroyed in Jerusalem and the Jewish people were exiled to Babylon.

In order to avoid this expression of Divine wrath through the passage of what should be Divine mercy, the Name ADNY (Adonai) comes along and acts as a sheath to filter and lessen the light of YKVK (Havaya) and to make it palatable for use here in our physical space-time dimension. This lessening of reception of Divine light, due to our sins, is the definition of spiritual exile.

Our purpose in uniting the two Names YKVK (Havaya) and ADNY (Adonai) is to slowly but surely restore the level of Divine mercy through the appropriate channels. Therefore, we intertwine the letters of YKVK (Havaya) and ADNY (Adonai) signifying the union of Divine mercy and our dimension of space-time. This is the third and final step of yihud NER. With this visualization we contemplate the manifestation of HaShem's

invisible essence, now revealed (Ehyeh) and balanced (Elokim) in our realm (Adonai). This is the true definition of Divine Light, thus the NER.

Being that the union of YKVK (Havaya) and ADNY (Adonai) unify the Heavens and Earth, they correspond to the seven lower sefirot. HaGaT (Hesed, Gevurah, Tiferet), NaHiY (Netzah, Hod, Yesod) and Malkhut. The numerical value of the Name ADNY (Adonai) is 65.

Now, let us add up the numbers. The numerical value of the intertwined Name AKYK-YKVK together equal 47. The numerical value of the intertwined Name YKVK-ELOKIM together equal 112. The numerical value of the intertwined Name YKVK-ADNY equal 91. $47+112+91= 250$, the numerical value of NER, and thus the Name of this yihud meditation.

Now that we have described this meditation in practice, let me explain it psychologically and show how this yihud is actually a mental exercise for mental / spiritual development as well as a prayer of the heart to reach out to bond with G-d.

We must know and understand that what we call psychological development and spiritual development are essentially one and the same. The meaning of "Tikun" (rectification) is actually the correction of the human personality and character and its alignment with the supernal Divine in whose image we were created. In other words, spiritual growth by definition means character development and refinement of personality, for one to be the absolute best human being and individual one can be. This is the whole purpose of Torah, Mitzvot, Kabbalah and meditation. Anyone teaching otherwise simply has not grasped the essence of the Torah.

Yihud NER is much more than a visualization exercise aimed at influencing spiritual supernal energies. Yihud NER is a construct to teach us about ourselves and how it is that we better ourselves.

The Names AKYK (Ehyeh), ELOKIM, ADNY (Adonai) and YKVK (Havaya) all represent elements within the human experience. To be brief, each of these Names acts as the source for that which is directly beneath it within the framework of the human makeup.

At our source is our unknowable essence, our personal sefirat Keter, our inner Higher Self. Corresponding to this attribute is the Name AKYK (Ehyeh). Yet, the Name AKYK is the source and underlying influence over the entire human mind. Therefore, psychologically, the Name AKYK (Ehyeh) represents the aspect of the human mind.

The Name Elokim which connotes judgment, division, distinction and separation underlies both our conscious and unconscious mental processes. We are almost never aware of what is happening in our unconscious. All we can perceive are moods and feelings. Therefore, the Name ELOKIM psychologically represents the heart, the seat of our human emotions.

The Name ADNY (Adonai), as said above, represents our physical universe. As such this Name comes to psychologically represent the third and lowest aspect of the human structure, our physical bodies, and its wants and needs.

Last but not least we turn to the Name YKVK (Havaya). This Name which as we see imbues and embraces all the others psychologically represents the aspect of the human spirit, the highest of all four human components, the one most ignored and forgotten by us.

The four Names therefore come to represent:

1. Spirit - YKVK (Havaya)
2. Mind - AKYK (Ehyeh)
3. Heart - ELOKIM
4. Body - ADNY (Adonai)

Yihud NER now comes as a mental construct of how we psychologically contemplate imbuing our minds, hearts and bodies with the element of spirit, which is the source of all inner peace and true personal contentment, or in other words, light.

Thus when we recite the Hanukah blessing “Lhadleek NER Hanukah” (to light the Hanukah light), we contemplate the meaning of NER as we recite the word NER in the berakha. This is what the Ari’zal calls a kavana meditation. The entire concept is either contemplated or in the tradition of the Siddur Rashash visualized in detail with all the Names and the corresponding passage of spiritual energy (shefa) from one world to the next. In order to accomplish this according to the Rashash tradition the pronunciation of the word NER is elongated for as long as it takes one to perform the visualizations or the contemplations.

Yihud NER can also be simplified and offered as a simple prayer to HaShem, in which one prays that one can develop all of ones inner hidden potentials and rise to be the best and most accomplished that one can possibly be in this lifetime.

In a prayer form Yihud NER can be summed up as follows, “May it be Your Will HaShem, that your Divine spirit fills my mind, heart and body. May I truly come to know and understand Your purpose and role for me. May I actualize all that is latent and concealed within me. May I truly actualize becoming a full human being created in Your Image. Amen.”

This concludes our brief review of yihud NER. In the original Kabbalistic format found in the Siddur Rashash, there are many more intricate details to this meditation. Nevertheless, all the details still point to the same conclusions that we have outlined here.

One point I cannot emphasize strong enough: in order for yihud NER to truly have its transformational affect upon human character and the psyche, one has to truly mean it and want it. A mere visualization of mental concepts without any heart felt desire will accomplish nothing other than giving one a false sense of grandeur. Such illusions are all too common in the insincere. Sincerity, discipline, and desire, these are the keys that actualize yihud NER and indeed manifest the true meaning of Hanukah.

Hanukah as we know is a holiday founded upon Jewish victory in a horrible war that was brought about by severe provocation on the part of the invading Greeks. Judaism as a religion and religious Jews as individuals were subject to outrageous injustices. The minds, hearts and bodies of the people were being violated and abused. Darkness reigned supreme is the psyche of the people. Light, both psychological and political, was needed to bring about redemption.

There can be no redemption that is not both personal and national. This was the experience of the children of Israel in Egypt and so was it in the days of the Macabees. Political redemption could only come about once personal psychological redemption was sought and achieved. Only then were warriors born out of priests. Only then did men of peace become men of war, to fight for what was right, just and necessary; to shine the light of justice and morality into a world severely out of balance.

Thus Hanukah is not remembered as the holiday of war, but rather as the festival of lights. The miracle in the Temple of the one day supply of oil miraculously burning for eight days was HaShem's way of showing us that when we make the efforts and sacrifice to let the light shine, He will match our efforts and more.

The Macabees performed the yihud NER, with or without the Kabbalistic visualization meditation. They actualized what NER meant. In order for us today to fight the good fight against the forces of darkness in our world, be they psychological or political, we too must shine the light, the inner light of the NER.

5. The Arba Mitot Beit Din - Complete Surrender to Heaven

"Blessed are You, HaShem . . .
Who recalls the kindness of the Patriarchs
and brings a Redeemer to their children's children,
for His Name's sake, with love."
(The Amidah)

These are the opening words of the Amidah prayer that Torah faithful Jews pray at least three times a day. Our holy Sages did not just paste together any old words for us to pray. No, the construction of the Amidah prayer was a meticulous work, wherein which every word, and even the letters spelling those words, is packed with secret meanings. Our holy Sages constructed the Amidah prayer to be the vehicle that enables the Jewish heart to soar above, through the Gates of Heavens, and to stand in the presence of our Creator, to beg Him to show us His mercy.

This ascent is not simply a metaphor. It is meant to be quite literal. The secret meditations of prayer are called Kavanot. When one prays with Kavanot, one's prayers are transformed from mere words wishing for good fortune and turned into spiritual "battering-rams" that tear through the forces of hindrance that delay our personal and collective Redemption.

The words that conclude the first paragraph of the Amidah, "for His Name's sake, with love" have such a special meaning. The Ari'zal teaches us that when we recite the word, "B'Ahavah," (with love) we are to contemplate offering to G-d our entire souls as a sacrifice to Him. This is an offering that we freely make to Him because of the love for Him that dwells within us. With this one word is contained the meditation for entire self-sacrifice. This self-sacrifice is the greatest Kiddush HaShem, sanctification of G-d's Holy Name.

This concept of Kiddush HaShem / self-sacrifice is much more than merely offering our lives and souls to G-d. The act of self-sacrifice means that we commit ourselves to G-d's purpose for the universe and surrender ourselves to His judgment. As with all Kavanot, this meditation is visualized and contemplated upon using Holy Names.

The Ari'zal teaches us that by mentally joining together letters of certain Holy Names in accordance to a prescribed formula that we are in actuality rectifying supernal worlds, thus enabling the quickening of Redemption. This one Kavanah meditation contemplated upon when reciting "B'Ahavah" is one of the central Kavanot of all prayer. This Kavanot is also contemplated in numerous other places in prayer, most especially with the recitation of the word, "Ehad" in the Shema.

This Kavanah of Kiddush HaShem/self-sacrifice is simple to learn, and once mastered quick to contemplate. In our present troubled times, a simple act of meditative contemplation can make all the difference between mere prayer and real Redemption.

When reciting the word B'Ahavah, one contemplates uniting the three Holy Names of HaShem, Ehyeh, YHWH, and Adonai. By uniting these Names according to the method to be described, one surrenders one's life to G-d and accepts upon oneself the sanctification of G-d's Name by accepting His Divine judgement. It is this acceptance of G-d's judgment, surrendering our lives to Him as atonement for our sins that enables the rectification and the Kiddush HaShem to be accomplished.

The Torah has ordained four different methods of executions for capital sins. Each of these four manners of death penalty incurred by us because of our sins corresponds to the four supernal worlds of Atzilut, Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah.

1. Atzilut is the realm that emanates the sphere of the spiritual.
2. Beriah emanates the sphere of the intellect.
3. Yetzirah emanates the sphere of the heart.
4. Asiyah emanates the sphere of the physical.

Thus, every aspect of a person's soul and being emanates from a combination of sources within all four of these worlds.

Each sin performed by a person blemishes a certain place in the supernal worlds. Some sins are more severe than others are, yet all sins cause blemishes somewhere. These spiritual blemishes are what hinder the Redemption and the coming of Mashiah. Only with their rectification can the path be clear and Redemption come. Rectifying our sins thus becomes our paramount task in order to bring about the Redemption.

The four methods of capital punishment by Torah are stoning, burning, decapitation, and strangulation.

1. S'kilah/Stoning is the punishment for those who blemish Atzilut (the source of the spiritual).
2. S'rifah/Burning is the punishment for those who blemish Beriah (the source of the intellect).
3. Hereg/Decapitation is the punishment for those who blemish Yetzirah (the source of the heart).
4. Henek/Strangulation is the blemish for those who blemish Asiyah (the source of the physical).

When we accept upon ourselves the four manners of death we offers our soul to unite all the sefirotic aspects represented by the Names Adonai (Malkhut), YHWH (Tiferet) and AHYH (Ehyeh-Keter). Thus via the knitting of the three Names we ascend the middle column of the sefirotic Etz Haim (Tree of Life) from bottom (Malkhut) to top (Keter).

Yet, this too has four levels. What is being rectified is the power to manifest the general Holy Name YHWH. Thus to assist our visualizations we also visualize all four spellings of the Name YHWH, referred to by the Gematria names of AB, SAG, MAH and BEN (see below).

This meditation is performed by knitting the letters of YHWH and Adonai together with the letters of the Name AHYH (Ehyeh). Yet, this knitting is performed in a special

manner. Each of these three Names has four letters. Each of the four letters of these Names corresponds to the four realms discussed above.

The visualization is thus portrayed like this:

1. To atone for sins that blemish the spiritual realm and are punishable by stoning, visualize the Yod of YHWH joining with the Alef of Adonai by the power of the Alef of AHYH to rectify the Name AB.
2. To atone for sins that blemish the intellect realm and are punishable by burning, visualize the first Hey of YHWH joining with the Dalet of Adonai by the power of the Hey of AHYH to rectify the Name SAG.
3. To atone for sins that blemish the heart realm and are punishable by decapitation, visualize the Vav of YHWH joining with the Nun of Adonai by the power of the Yod of AHYH to rectify the Name MAH.
4. To atone for sins that blemish the physical realm and are punishable by strangulation, visualize the final Hey of YHWH joining with the Yod of Adonai by the power of the Hey of AHYH to rectify the Name BEN.

In the Siddur Rashash (Vol. 1, 71b), this order is placed directly under the word "B'Ahavah" as follows:



In the Kavanot of the Ari'zal and the Siddur HaRashash, there are many more detailed Kavanot at this point when we recite B'Ahavah. Yet, all the Kavanot cannot be put into English. Let this one suffice.

This Kavanah when memorized and practiced can be performed in a matter of seconds. Once one is familiar with the concepts, one need just view the above diagram of the Holy Names and all the concepts implied therein are remembered and contemplated.

During these most difficult of times, when every day innocent Jewish blood is shed in our Holy Land, every spiritual tool strengthens us. Every Jew murdered in our Holy Land dies as a martyr for HaShem. Each one's innocent blood sanctifies HaShem's Holy Name. Each one cries out before the Throne of Glory, "HaShem, sanctify your Holy Name and avenge our blood!"

Let each of us work to sanctify G-d's Holy Name with prayer and Kavanah/devotion. In this way, we protect our fellow Jews and speed the coming of the Geulah Sheleymah. When we say B'Ahavah, let us really pour out our hearts and love to HaShem. Do not let these sacred words pass from your lips, without them being joined to the cry from your heart. May HaShem bless us soon with true salvation, Amen.

