

Yosef, Secret of the Masculine The Tribes, Secret of the Feminine

Sefer Mahsof HaLavan
Parashat VaYeshev
Rabbi Ya'aqob Abuhatzera

*Translated, with notes by Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok
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“Behold, we were binding sheaves in the middle of the field, when, behold, my sheaf arose and also remained standing, then behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf.” (Ber. 37: 7)

It is possible to hint to what is written in the Zohar and the Kitvei HaAri'zal that Yosef originally emanated from the World of the Feminine just like his brothers, the [fathers] of the [12] tribes. When however Yosef was tested and stood [strong] in his righteousness by safeguarding the covenant, he then ascended to the World of the Masculine.

(Note: The World of the Feminine spoken of here is a reference to the sefirat Malkhut, or the Sefirotic Face (Partzuf) Nok/Shekhina. This corresponds to the realm of Asiyah, which according to the Sefer Yetzirah is built upon the 12 diagonals, the twelve months of the year, the twelve signs of the Zodiac and of course the twelve tribes of Israel). Of all the tribes, Yosef merited to ascend to the World of the Masculine, which is a reference specifically to the sefirat Yesod, which is included in the realm of Yetzirah, the sefirotic Face (Partzuf) of ZA/Zeir Anpin.)

Now, the Name Adonai, when spelled out (referred to as Milui), contains twelve letters.

(Note: Adonai is spelled Alef, Dalet, Nun, Yod. Each of these letters when spelled out have three letters each within them. Alef (Alef Lamed Peh), Dalet (Dalet Lamed Tav), Nun (Nun Vav Nun), Yod (Yod Vav Dalet).)

These [twelve letters] correspond to the twelve tribes to show that all of them clung to the Shekhina, who is [called by the Name} Adonai.

Although Yosef ascended to the World of the Masculine, as we stated, nonetheless he left a residual, an echo [below] in the [world of] the Shekhina, for this is the known way of all things holy.

(Note: Torah law dictates that once something holy has resided in a place, the place remains holy even after the holy thing is removed from there. This explains why the Temple Mount in Jerusalem is still holy thousands of years after the destruction of the Temple)

Now, all things are hinted to in the letters of the Torah. When the name Yosef is spelled out (each letter is expanded, milui) like this:

Yod (Yod Vav Dalet), Vav (Vav Yod Vav), Samekh (Samekh Mem Kaf), Peh (Peh Alef),

this milui (added) letters equal the numerical value of [the phrase] “Ani (I am) YKVK (HaShem).”

“Ani” (I am) refers to the Shekhina, the World of the Feminine. “YKVK” (HaShem) refers to Zeir Anpin (ZA), the World of the Masculine. This hints to us that Yosef ascended from the World of the Feminine, referred to as “Ani” to the World of the Masculine, referred to as “YKVK (HaShem), all the while he left his echo residual below in the World of the Feminine. This is the meaning of “Ani (I am) YKVK” (HaShem) [with relation to the name of Yosef], both [levels] are [contained] within him.

Now, the tribes who have their source in the World of the Feminine, not one of them can be found to have a milui (expanded name) of “Ani HaShem” like does Yosef. This too points to the fact that Yosef alone arose to [the grade here referred to as] “Ani HaShem.”

This then is the meaning of the pasuk, “Behold, we were binding sheaves in the middle of the field.” The field spoken of here is [a reference] to the Field of Holy Apples, [which is an appellation for] the holy Shekhina, the World of the Feminine.

The [Hebrew] letters of the word for “binding” (m’almim) also spell the [Hebrew] word “m’melim” which means to fill out (or expand, which is the process of the milui of letters). This is also true with regards to the [Hebrew] word for “my sheave” (alumati), and with the {Hebrew} word for “your sheaves” (alumoteykhem).

Now, as we said, “Behold, we in the middle of the field binding sheaves.” This means that all twelve [of the tribes] were brothers, all were from the World of the Feminine, which is the “Field.”

This is hinted to in [the name of] the Shekhina Adonai, which has within its [milui expanded form] twelve letters. Also, [the twelve brothers] were expanding their names to see what hints are referred to within them. Yosef [thus] discovered how his name was above all their names, for the expanded form (milui) of Yosef is numerically equal to “Ani (I am) YKVK (HaShem).”

This proves that Yosef [alone] ascended from the World of the Feminine [represented by the] “Ani (I am)” to the World of the Masculine [represented by the Name] “YKVK (HaShem).” This then explains why, “your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf.”