

MILA YOMIT 20: AUR (VA'YEHEE AUR)

אֹר וַיְהִי-אֹר:

Meaning: Light (And There Was Light]

CONTEXT-

We are at the concluding three words in Breisheet 1:3.

It began with the Creator's first utterance:

וַיֹּמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי-וַיֵּהְיֶה אֹר וַיְהִי-אֹר-VaYomer ELOHIM Yehee-And ELOHIM

Said: Let There Be...

MILA CHADASHAH-New Word

אֹר-AUR -pronounced ORE.

OTIOT: Letters

אֹ ALEPH (A)-Unity, shaped by an upper Yud connected with a Vav and a lower Yud. This form extends in all directions, similar to light.

The Zohar comments

"AUR: Light is ALEPH."

In Kabbala, "the upper yud represents the Transcendent Light whereas the lower Yud represents the Immanent Light. The vav that initially differentiates between but ultimately connects these two Divine Lights is the secret of the primordial contraction (tzimtzum) of God's Infinite Light."

(Ginsburg, p.30)

וֹ VAV (V)- Connection, between all worlds, numeric of six

corresponding to six directions in physical world. "The 'vacuum' created by the contraction allowed an hollow empty space where finite worlds could exist. Into this vacuum God drew down, figuratively speaking, a single line of light from the Infinite Source. This ray of light is the secret of the letter VAV." (Ginsburg, p. 94)

ר REISH(R) -Consciousness

The letters suggest a conscious energy of unification that connects all.

MEANING and RELATED WORDS:

As a verb it means 'to give light, to shine'

Hirsch connects it to עור or ער which means 'to awaken'.

Interestingly the word for 'blind' is also עור EeVeR

This is an example of a fascinating phenomena in Hebrew. I call it the 'Aleph-Ayin switch'. While Aleph and Ayin are pronounced similarly, they often change a words meaning significantly. Aleph's numeric value is 1 and represents unity. Ayin's numeric value is 70 and represents multiplicity. Here אור with an Aleph means light, the light that fills all existence, and the same word with an AYIN instead of an Aleph becomes -עור-EeVeR- blind or ORE-leather.

Earlier (Mila 18) וַיִּאמֶר Va'YoMeR- And (God) Spoke' contains similar letter structure as AUR-Light.

The act of 'speech' contained within that which was spoken about.

It is interesting that the scientific notation for gold is AU or 'aurum'. The Latin (Etruscan) name aurum (ancient ausom) means "yellow". This word is compared with the the ancient Roman 'aurora' or 'ausosa' (the morning glow, the eastern country, the east). The word is also derived from a Sanskrit word "hari", meaning "yellow". Most of the Roman languages and the Celtic languages use derivations of aurum.

MILOT CHOZROT: Repeating Words

וַיְהִי VA'YEHEE -And There Was -Mila 19

אור AUR-Light -Mila 20

CONCEPTUAL MEANING

The Zohar teaches that "With the appearance of light, the universe expanded."

It is interesting that in Big Bang Theory talk the first 'thing' to emerge from the explosion was light.

Kabbala connects AUR:light to the sephira of Chesed:love.

In Etz Chaim, the book containing Rabbi Isaac Luria's root teachings, we find:

"Before all things were created... the Supernal Light filled all existence...When the Creator's Will decided to create all universes...God constricted the Light to the sides...leaving a vacated space...there was a place in which all things could be created. The Creator then drew a single straight thread from the Infinite Light...and brought it into that vacated space...It was through that line that the Infinite Light was brought down below..."

This creation was a Divine Gift. In Kabbalistic terminology "the concept of giving is referred to as 'light' while that of receiving is called a 'vessel.' In order to receive God's light, however a vessel must in some way be connected to God. ..If God is the ultimate Giver, while the Vessel only receives, the two are then absolute opposites. Therefore in order for a vessel to properly receive, it must also give. What is therefore needed is a vessel that gives as well as receives. The ultimate such vessel is the human. If the human is to receive God's Light, they must first resemble God by being a giver." (Kaplan in Bahir, p. 88-89)

אור AUR has the same numeric value (207) as רז- RAZ meaning secret. Perhaps the secret is that light is experienced by giving more than receiving.

AUR: The love of the Infinite shining Infinite Light into finite space.

Midrash Rabbah:

“R. Hiyya Rabbah said: From the very beginning of the world’s creation, the Holy One foresaw that the temple would be built, destroyed and rebuilt.

‘In The Beginning God Created’ symbolizes the temple built...

‘Now the earth was ‘Tohu Va’Vohu’ alludes to the temple destroyed as it says, ‘I look at the earth, it is unformed and void’ (Jeremiah 4:23).

‘And God Said:

Let There Be Light’ alludes to the Temple rebuilt and firmly established in the messianic era as it says, ‘Arise, shine, for you light has dawned; the Presence of God has shone upon you’.”

Verse three ends:

וַיְהִי-אֵוֶר-VA'YEHEE AUR: And there was light.

Here again, we see the functioning of VAV HaHipuch: the vav inverting the tense of a verb to its opposite.

"Let there be light And there was light." The phenomenon of light breaking through the darkness of the tzimtzum, is itself the secret of time (future becoming past) which permeates space."
(Ginsburg, Alef Bet, p. 94)

In the Bahir, Rabbi Berachia said.

"What is the meaning of the verse, "And God said, 'Let there be light, and there was light'?"

Why does the verse not say, "And it was so"?

What is this like? A king had a beautiful object. He put it away until he had a place for it, and then he put it there. It is therefore

written, "let there be light, and there was light." This indicates that it already existed." (Bahir, p. 10)

To continue this, we are drawn to the The Artscrolls edition which explains an important comment by Rabbeinu Bachya, the 12th century commentator:

“Rabbeinu Bachya, kabbalistically citing Zohar and Sefer Bahir notes that light did not come into existence with this saying; it already existed with the first act of creation. **בְּרֵאשִׁית**—

BREISHEET was itself a creative utterance. Initially the light was concealed, but with this Utterance He revealed it. This is implicit in the phrase ‘and there was light’--i.e. the light that already existed from the Work of Creation.” (Artscrolls, Volume 1, P. 40)

Midrash Rabbah again:

“R. Yehuda Bar Simon said: Not by labor or toil did the Holy One create His world, but only by ‘the word of God’. So here, too, it is not written ‘VeHaYah Aur [which implies a process of development and emergence], but VAYEHI AUR- there already was light [through an instantaneous act]...

R. Shimon Ben Yehotzadak asked R. Shmuel Bar Nachman... ‘From whence was the light created?’ He replied: ‘The verse teaches us that the Holy One wrapped Himself in it as in a robe and irradiated with the luster of His majesty the whole world from one end to another.’”

Let us hear the words of the Zohar:

"Rabbi Itzchak said

The light created by the Blessed Holy One in the act of Creation flared from one end of the world to the other and was hidden away.

Rabbi Judah said:

If it were completely hidden the world would not exist for even a moment!

Rather, it is hidden and sown like a seed that gives birth to seeds

and fruit. Thereby the world is sustained. Every single day, a ray of light shines into the world and keeps everything alive, for with that ray the Blessed Holy One feeds the world.

And everywhere that Torah is studied at night one thread-thin ray appears from that hidden light and flows down upon those absorbed in her."

(Quoted in Matt, Zohar, p. 52)

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אור ויהי-אור: