

MILA YOMIT : THE TORAH, WORD BY WORD

by Rabbi Itzchak Marmorstein

MILA YOMIT 38: וַיְהִי כֵן

(VA'YEHEE)KHEN.
Breisheet 1:7

CONTEXT: We are at the conclusion of Breisheet 1:7.

To review the verse:

וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַרְקִיעַ VA'YAAS ELOHIM ET HA'RAQIYAA-

And ELOHIM Made The Firmament

וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם VA'YAVDEL BEIN HA'MAYIM-And Divided
Between The Waters

אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת לַרְקִיעַ ASHER MI'TACHAT LA'RAQIYAA-That Are
Below The Firmament

וּבֵין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל לַרְקִיעַ -OO'VEIN HA'MAYIM
ASHER ME'AAL LA'RQIYAA-And Between The Waters That Are Above
The Firmament..

MILA CHOZERET-Repeating Word:

וַיְהִי VA'YEHEE: And It Was, (also translated: 'and it remained, it
became) See Mila 19 & 20

MILA CHADASHA-New Word:

כֶּן -KHEN (pronounced 'chen') :

OTIOT:LETTERS

כּ -KHAF (or chaf, soft sound of Khaf) ;Kabbalistically related to actualization of potential (see Mila 22)
As soft sound of this double letter, Sefer Yetzira associates it with Life (hard sound transposition associated with Death)

נֶן -NUN (N) Sofit: Final Form- (see Mila 25)- Mystically extension of Infinite into Finite-unfolding into existence

The letters suggest perhaps the process of actualizing Infinite into finite. The numerical value of the word is 20 +50 = 70, which often relates to the manifold manifestations of the One into the many.

MEANING and RELATED WORDS:

כֶּן KHEN is an adverb meaning: 'so, thus' 'yes', 'rightly'.

Klein explains that this word is probably derived from the 'Semitic demonstrative base -כה-KOH-So, thus; כִּי-KI-That, because;

אכן-ACHEN-Surely, truly, indeed'. Some scholars suggest it is derived from the three letter root verb- כון-KON-To be set up, be established'.

כֵּן (kaf (hard sound), nun)- is also an adjective meaning 'sincere, frank, honest'

כֵּן KEN and/or כֵּן KaN (same spelling, different vowelization) is a M. noun meaning 'base, pedestal, position, stand'.

כֵּן KaN (spelled -kuf, nun-, as well as כֵּן-aleph, nun-) is an adverb meaning 'here'

KHEN seems to suggest the Divine Mind emphatically setting 'here' into place.

CONCEPTUAL MEANING

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch explains:

“And so it became! It became thus, as God willed it; more probably it means, so it became just as we see it now. The condition in which we see it now was not from all time, but only became so at God's behest.(Hirsch., p. 13)

The oral traditions is surprised by the inclusion of this phrase. After all, it just said the Divine Made and Divided the waters...It seems redundant and unnecessary to add "And it was so,". Obviously it was so.

A root principle in Talmud Torah is that there are no extra 'unnecessary' words (or letters) in the Torah. Therefore there is something for us to learn from its placement here.

Among the lessons suggested include the understanding that this is not just a separation of two previously connected forms-dimensions but a wide barrier is being created. Some suggest that the phrase implies absolute perpetuity and eternity in an unchanging state. (It is the way it is and that's the way it is..)

The Bahir- Book of Brightness (one of the earliest mystical texts) in its discussion of creation (in paragraph 24) presents the following discussion which relates to the place in the Torah that we are at now:

"What is this (the process of creation) like. A king bought a beautiful object, but since it was not complete, he did not give it a name. He said, 'I will complete it, I will prepare its pedestal and attachment, and then will I give it a name.'

It is thus written (Psalm 102:6) "From eternity You founded the earth" and then "the heavens are the work of Your hands."

It is furthermore written (Psalm 104:2)'He covered Himself with light like a garment, He spread out the heaven like a curtain. He rafters His upper chamber with water."

It is then written (Psalm 104:4) "He makes the winds His angels, His ministers of flaming fire."

Finally, it is written (Psalm 104:5), "He founded the earth on its pedestals, that it not be removed for the world and forever."

When He made its pedestal, He strengthened it. It is therefore written, "that it not be moved."

What is its name?...And (the name of) its pedestal is 'Olam:World'. "
(Bahir, p. 10)

In his commentary on the Bahir, R. Aryeh Kaplan adds this important insight:

"There is a basic dichotomy (in existence, also please remember we are now in the creation-unfolding of Day 2) . While Day 1 is the basic independent separation from the Divine, Day 2 may be the further separation within the separation. ...God must be imminent and transcendental-God must fill all creation, yet, at the same time, must be

utterly divorced from it...Due to the Constriction (Tzimtzum) we do not see this Light when we look toward God...(We see darkness) God therefore seems to be surrounded with darkness.

Creation must exist as an independent entity, and therefore cannot be totally infused with the Divine Presence." (P. 87))

וַיְהִי-כֵן: -VA'YEHEE KHEN

And it became 'so', it became 'here', it became 'now'..

A frame for physical existence is founded.

Absolutely, totally in place and space.

Otherwise we could not be.

It seems as if the membrane between the physical and the spiritual is being firmly and utterly constructed.

And so it is, we are here, now; completely framed in this world.

The sphere of water that encircle us places our existence within itself.

And so ends verse 7 of the Torah.

May we be blessed to know that while we necessarily experience this separation, division of the finite from the Infinite, we are in truth and in essence surrounded by and infused with the One.

Le'Shalom

Itzchak

וַיְהִי-כֵן:

Note-Your donations to Mila Yomit are deeply appreciated and needed. They enable

this project to continue and spread the universal teachings of the Torah.

It is now possible to donate directly by Pay Pal. See below the Note of the email (and not this Hebrew imbedded attachment) for the link. To receive a tax deductible receipt for donations, please see below:

For Americans:

Donations to enable Mila Yomit are tax deductible in the United States. Mila Yomit is a participating project in Reclaiming Judaism, a new paradigm organization formed by a growing team of innovators and teachers of applied Jewish Spirituality.

For deductible donations in the US write checks to Reclaiming Judaism c/o 3014 Chapel Ave. W., Cherry Hill, NJ 08002.

.Please note in the lower left corner of your check that it is for Mila Yomit.

These donations will go directly to support the work of Rabbi Itzhak Marmorstein and his Mila Yomit Project.

For Canadians:

Or Shalom, the renewal community in Vancouver, has kindly agreed to provide tax-deductible receipts to anyone and everyone who sends a contribution, PAYABLE TO: Or Shalom, with a attached note explaining that it is for Mila Yomit-Their address is Or Shalom, 710 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5T 2A7. They can also process credit card payments. Their phone number is 604-8721614.