

PARSHAS BEREISHIS

Shibarti Aleph

*I broke the aleph: a meditation on the unity hidden within
the split*

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BEFORE CREATION

Every letter asked. Hashem chose the beis.

From tav up to aleph, each letter came before HaKadosh Baruch Hu asking to be the one through which the world and the Torah are created. The aleph didn't even come to ask.

“Leis yichuda b'eilaa v'sasaa ela bach.”

There is no unity above or below except through you.



THE SECOND LETTER

THE SPLIT REALITY OF CREATION

Creation begins with a split screen

Good and bad

Yetzer hatov and yetzer hara

Yichud eilaa and yichud tataa

Nefesh Elohis and nefesh habahamis

Torah shebichtav and Torah sheba'al peh

Shamayim and aretz

Torah and tefillah

Day and night

Everything about this worldliness is always already split.

DOVID HAMELECH

Achas diber Elokim, shtayim zo shamati

Hashem spoke once, and we heard twice.

Hashem's unity remains unified. But human grasp splits everything in two, because divine unity is too potent for human consciousness to receive.

TWO WAYS TO READ THE ABSENCE

Is the aleph gone, or hidden?

The aleph is gone

Hashem was once here, and now we fend for ourselves in the territory of division. This treats divine absence as real, and it leads straight to hopelessness.

The aleph is concealed

Hashem is metzamtzem the aleph for the sake of creation. We attenuate ourselves to see the invisible aleph at the heart of all things.

A PERMUTATION OF BEREISHIS

Bereishis: “I broke the aleph”

בראשית ← שברתי א

Rashbi splits Bereishis into seventy permutations in the Tikkunei Zohar. This reading isn't among them, but it says it all: entering existence is rooted in Hashem's decision to break the aleph, so primordial unity no longer shines with all its intensity.

REB PINCHAS KORITZER

Tanach opens with a beis and closes with an aleph



Bereishis bara Elokim

The Torah teaches us to find our way in a world of splitness.



Adam, Shes, Enosh

Divrei HaYamim, the book of the human being, begins with the aleph.

Sent down into separation, we come out with the awareness of the unity at its core.

THREE PERMUTATIONS OF אלה

From darkness, to the aleph, to the wonder

אפלה

Afeyla

The darkness that conceals the light
of unity



אלף

Aleph

The Alufo shel Olam, present despite
the distortion



פלהא

Peleh elyon

The supernal wonder, revealed only from
within the dark

WHY DESCEND AT ALL?

The wonder of above and below at once

Ta'anug tamidi eino ta'anug

Perpetual pleasure loses its pleasure. (Baal Shem Tov)

Unity revealed without human effort would be no surprise; it's what the malachim have access to.

Through mesiras nefesh, affirming the aleph in every distortion, we reveal the **peleh elyon**: Hashem in the static plainness above and in the dynamism of the human condition below.

Even the tav is the aleph, congealed

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ד

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ב

א

By external shape, the aleph-beis descends: one, two, three, down to the four hundred of the tav, the most concealed of all concealments.

Alufo shel Olam nimtza b'chol tnua u'tnua. Gazed at with radical belief, the tav is nothing but the thickened aleph.

REB MENACHEM MENDEL OF SHKLOV

Emunah: I count the aleph with me

אמונה = א מונה

Aleph moneh

Choosing to connect to the aleph hidden in every place, in the post-traumatic reality of shibarti aleph.

Emunah + bitachon = Gan Eden

102 + 75 = 177. Lifnei echad mah atah sofer: with the aleph, what else is there to count?

The aleph, whole and split

WHOLE

$$10 + 6 + 10 = 26$$

Yud, vav, yud: the gematria of Hashem's name. Upper and lower yud joined through the slanted vav, da'as. Ein od milvado.

SPLIT

$$16 + 16 = 32 = \text{לב}$$

Cut the vav down the middle: yud-vav rises, yud-vav descends. Lev, the lamed-beis nesivos chochmah.

KEDUSHAS LEVI, FROM THE MAGGID

Yeish alfin nifka'in

There are alephs that are split, and the whiteness that precedes the aleph shines through them.

Manoach am ha'aretz haya: not ignorant of Torah, but living in a unity higher than the written letters.

When we feel we have nothing, we can lean back, forget the letters, and float into the whiteness.

THE SECRET OF TESHUVAH

Not only a tzaddik, but a tzaddik who is also a baal teshuvah

Tzidkus: the whole aleph

Unity ever-present, everything all right. Psychologically: calmness and comfort.

Teshuvah: the return

Returning to the Alufo shel Olam, hidden within the pain, the boredom and the craving.

Mashiach Tzidkeinu will come to teach the tzaddikim teshuvah. (Zohar)

BO EL PAROH

From the beis into the aleph

HaKadosh Baruch Hu calls from the heart of darkness in Paroh's palace, beckoning Moshe to reveal that His light is there as well.

No experience, no moment, no existential crisis is beyond the light of HaKadosh Baruch Hu.



ALEPH

BEIS



The luchos rishonos hidden within the luchos shnrios

The primordial calmness hidden within the post-traumatic residue of this worldly experience: the
peleh elyon, the Alufo shel Olam.

B' EZRAS HASHEM