

Inner versus Outer**Revelation of [God's] Face through *Itaruta DiLi'Aila* – For the First Time****Individual versus Group: The Community is Born**

“And she saw him, that he was good, and she concealed him for three months.” (Shmot 2:2) The commentaries remark: “It is well-known that women love their children, whether they are beautiful or not.” (Ramban)

Hazal disclose that “when he was born, the house was filled with light.” This meaning can be discerned throughout the verse, beginning with “and she concealed him,” as the key phrase. Yocheved understood that conditions in Egypt were organized around externality. They were based on an overly externalized reality that constituted Egypt’s essence, and its source of existential energy. The inner human being was subordinate to this external reality. He could only play the role of respondent. He could not be the source of energy, the initiator for whom external reality served as his personal tangible expression. There was no expression here of any kind. Inner intention could not be expressed, nor ideas, nor any meaningful content that derived from the deep innermost space that is the source of the Godly quality in man. Yet this is the true purpose of all human activity: to actualize the potential hidden within man’s innermost quality.

The light that filled Moshe’s house was an inner light, as a response, as a counter-weight to the overly externalized reality that prevailed in Egypt. In defense of it, Yocheved carried out a concealing action, focusing on the innermost space. “And she saw him, that he was good,” she saw success crowning this new approach she had taken, “and the house was filled with light,” therefore she decided to actualize the light and transform it into a tangible reality capable of counteracting Egypt’s externalized reality. See Cli Yakar: “ ‘And she saw him, that he was good,’ for the house became filled with light.’ As it is written, ‘And God saw the light, that it was good,’ and for this reason, she concealed him...And the advantage of light was that he was the redeemer who would bring them forth ‘from murky darkness to light, and from enslavement to redemption.’ And perhaps she thought that the light had been created with him for this reason – so that she would learn from it to hide him, just as the first [primordial] light had been hidden away, ‘to be saved for the righteous in the ultimate future.’”

“‘With pitch and with tar:’ tar on the outside and pitch on the inside.” Another further stage in the concealment process with the emphasis upon what is innermost. See further in the Cli Yakar: “And the number of three months hints that the light of Torah was buried and hidden until the third month, that is, Sivan. Just as we learn from the verse in Proverbs 2:7: ‘He shall hide away strength for the righteous.’ Therefore ‘she could no longer conceal him’ [after three months.] And see further in the verse: ‘Remove your shoes from upon your feet’ that Moshe was entirely removed from materiality of any sort whatsoever, and he illuminated from both his parts – it was that his own human house was filled with light, and this miracle was proof of his future essence. It seems that it is about this reality of the light being born with him that it was written “‘and she [Paro’s daughter] opened it and she saw him, the child:’ What is meant by ‘and she saw him? Hazal say (Sota 12) ‘that she saw the

Shechina with him.” Yet the Shechina no one can see. However, ‘and she saw him’ refers to the reality of Torah that was mentioned earlier when it says: ‘and she saw him, that he was good.’”

“And he smote the Egyptian, and he buried him in the sand:” The Egyptian whose very nature is to be an externalized reality – by burying him within a hidden space, one cancels his existence. However, this was not the case when he saw Danan and Aviram, two Hebrew men quarreling. Moshe realized he would not be able to be of help to his brethren when they were thus in an externalized reality: “Indeed, the thing is known,” on the outside. He understood then that he must escape.

The situation in Egypt reflected the absence of any inner quality. All stimuli came from the outside, through sorcery and other acrobatics. This reality had become intolerable for b’nei Yisrael. “They cried out...and their scream rose to the Lord from the labor.” The fact that they turned toward that which is above and beyond external reality made their prayer rise to the One on high. At this point, *b’nei Yisrael* separate themselves from their dependency upon external reality, and a window of opportunity opens for them to connect to heaven, and then to their ancestral merit, privileges accruing to them from heaven by right of their ancestral roots, and from there to their ultimate qualitative purpose: Redemption, receiving the Torah, entering the Land of Israel.

Moshe herded Yitro’s sheep in the desert, a place empty of externality, a place where even just to exist one is compelled to evade everything external and to seek the solution to one’s existence within an inner human space.

“The bush burning in the fire” was burning with an inward fire as well. “And He saw that he had turned aside to see,” that he had noticed the inward miracle. “For the place upon which you stand is sacred earth.” An inward *giluy panim* encounters a positive outward *giluy panim* for the first time.

With our forefathers, “mighty strong men, doers of His will,” God appeared to them by way of their own inner light, and as we have written, it was a form of *giluy panim*, of “revelation of the Face [of God]” that came through their inner soul’s quality. With the issue of the bush, we are witness, for the first time, to an encounter between the inner *giluy panim* experienced by Moshe, and a positive *giluy panim* that addresses Itself to an outer reality. (“Remove your shoes from upon your feet, because the place upon which you stand is sacred earth.”) In the Ramban we find: “He was thus warning him that the entire mountain had been sanctified by the Shechina’s descending to the mountaintop [in the future] as at the time of the receiving of the Torah, and Moshe was in that mountain, for he had ascended there, as it says: ‘And he came to God’s mountain to Horev,’ and the bush was at the top of the mountain, which would henceforth be sacred entirely, and forbidden to the shod foot, as they have said: ‘In every place where the Shechina is revealed, the wearing of shoes is forbidden.’”

We find also with Yaakov: “And he feared, and he said: ‘How terribly awesome is this place.’” With Yaakov, he himself discovered that the place was sacred, and it was not necessary to inform him of this by a revelation from on high as with Moshe, because with Yaakov, the *giluy panim* was from within, and with Moshe, he himself had taken the initiative: “Pray, let me turn aside and let me see this great sight.” “And God saw that he had turned aside to see, and the Lord called to him from within the bush.” Thus for the first time, an encounter was born.

Moshe did not accept the new *giluy panim* as something obvious and self-evident: “And Moshe hid his face, for he feared to look at the Lord.” Moshe was not prepared for a *giluy panim* from the outside, for an
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outwardly objective “revelation of the Face [of God].” And so God prepares him for it, and continues to emphasize this new method: “It is I Who have truly seen.” It was I Who took the initiative to relate. “And their cry, I have heard.” Not only seeing, but also hearing, and even also knowing: “For I have known their pain.” And also practical action: “And I have descended to save him.” All of which result in Moshe’s role: Go forth, and I will send you.” You are a new creation. No more is it the human being taking the initiative, but rather the human being as messenger of God.

New situations are thus created which in turn form a new reality – the reality of the group. No longer is it the connection of man as a private individual, a single person facing the Single One of the entire universe, but rather the Single One of the universe facing the group. For the first time we find the reality of a group, a community: *Am Yisrael*, “The nation of Israel.” *B’nei Yisrael*, “The children of Yisrael.”

Moshe finds it difficult to relate to the new reality of a nation, for in his eyes, a group means a grouping – a collection of individuals. A grouping that has the effect of merely doubling or tripling the individual does not seem particularly lovely in Moshe’s eyes.

God introduces Moshe to a new concept, to the fact that there is a unique quality to the group that is vastly superior to the sum total of the individuals of whom the group is comprised. Moshe attempts to wrest a new attitude from the Creator, and indeed God promises that with this new reality, God’s attitude will not be conditional on their behavior as individuals! Despite their inadequacy and lowliness as individuals, *ehyeh imach, ehyeh asher ehyeh*, “I shall be with you,” “I shall be as I shall be.”

Such a perception – of Godly Presence as an ad hoc revelation – as a functional, ephemeral attitude, is for Moshe and for the people slightly too reminiscent of the externalized reality as source of stimulus which obligates one to only react, and needs no initiative whatsoever. It is not that forging of a consistently paved and continuous path that leads one to one’s goal at the end of the road. Even though God reveals His plan in its entirety to Moshe, including the giving of the Torah and the Promised Land, nevertheless the people, Moshe claims, are not used to any long-range plan and are only used to relating as a reaction to the stimulus of the outside: “And they will say: ‘What is His name?’”

“I shall be as I shall be,” is the answer that he receives. That is, Godly Presence as a function of the situations of ephemeral reality. “‘I will be with them in this trouble...I will be with them in another trouble’...He (Moshe) said to Him: ‘Master of the universe: Why should I remind them of another trouble. It is enough for them with this trouble.’”

Moshe is trying to extract guidelines from the Holy One, as to how to change the nation’s attitude to a connection that is from above instead of from the outside. When Moshe repeats his question, “but, see, they will not believe me,” with the complaint and the claim that the people are incapable of accepting a genuine plan, the Creator agrees with him, and recommends methods of persuasion of the sort that use outer stimulus, with all of the externalized power that these entail – magic, sorcery, an instrumental approach lacking any value-based quality or dimension of height. “What is this in your hand?” “And he cast it to the earth, and it became a snake.” An animalistic stimulus. God teaches Moshe not to succumb to the external stimulus but to dominate it: “Send forth your hand, and grasp its tail.” The second sign as well: “‘Bring your hand to your bosom’...and he took it out, and lo, his hand was leprous as snow.” That is, the power is to be found in your own bosom, in your

own inner space, and not on the outside. The outside too shall be influenced by the innermost space. The waters of the Nile are changed to blood on dry land, by Moshe.

But Moshe aspires to more. He does not accept the assumption that the Godly *giluy panim* need be bound to any gesture whatsoever on man's part. Moshe requests that the *giluy panim* shall be entirely on God's part, from beginning to end.

"I am no man of words." I am not willing to have such a fraught-with-consequences issue depend on such a variable factor as me. "Always – since yesterday, since the day before yesterday, since ever You began to speak with Your servant." Moshe requests that everything should come from above, with no consideration whatsoever of the level on which the human being is found.

God reveals to him that if a human being becomes a Godly Presence, then really there is no human involvement at all, and everything comes from Him, Yitbarach. "Who gave man a mouth?"

Moshe continues to ply his request. "Pray, my Lord, send [this mission] in the hand of whomever You shall send." That is, if every human being is capable of becoming a Godly Presence, why do You need me? "And God was wroth with Moshe." Rashi brings the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korha: "Every wrath in the Torah has some effect recorded with it, and this one has no effect recorded with it, and we have not found that any punishment came as a result of this wrath." That is, Moshe's claim was valid, and despite God's wrath, Moshe's claim was accepted.

We must attempt to understand this: If the claim was accepted, what place was there for wrath, and if it was not accepted, what severe punishment resulted?

It would appear that God's wrath was due to Moshe's claim that a private individual cannot represent the community and also act as God's emissary, in the sense of charity doing double duty, because that might arouse the suspicions of the paltry of faith, who would refuse to trust such an emissary. Almost as though the law that governs the group is different from, and has no connection whatsoever to the law of the private individual. The Holy One answers him that He disagrees with him in principle, though in practice he will permit Aharon to join him in his mission, as the "minimal plural, which is two."

"And you will put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth." Here God teaches him an important lesson about the messenger of God, specifically as regards the individual. This is similar to Moshe's request that God imbue also the Elders with His Shechina. God's answer there resembles His answer here. Go ahead and give it to him. Share your portion with him, not My portion. That is, "and you will put the words in his mouth." But "I will be with your mouth and with his mouth" only after you have put into his mouth from your own. And I shall only agree to it. (See our discussion in previous parshiot regarding applications at the behavioral level of the relationship between inner and outer, as well as the discussion of physical and mental perspectives, and the discussion of anxiety.)

"Wrath that has no anger." Moshe continues to refuse to fulfill the role of incarnator of the Godly Presence, detached from the needs of the material, as Cli Yakar expresses it. This is because neither accept nor make peace with the idea of severing the role of messenger of the people – steeped in the sufferings of his people, immersed in the distresses of their existence – from the messenger of God, detached absolutely from their distress.

Moshe aspires to a total merger between the physical and the spiritual, for such a merger could bridge the contradiction between the principles represented by these two – and existential reality, for though existential reality holds distress, it holds also the promising potential that “out of the fierce comes forth the sweet” and out of suffering comes *yisurim shel ahava* “the suffering of love.” Existential distress holds this potential when it is expressed as “b’nei Yisrael cried out from the work:” A distress that bursts the existential cycle, and in its great despair turns toward the One Who sits on high, Who then responds with *itaruta dili’aila*, and descends, and initiates contact, forging His connection with them.