



EVEN SHESIYA

THE TORAH OF HARAV YOCHANAN BECHHOFFER

WWW.EVENSHESIYA.COM

Shemos - Creating Containment

They are rewarded for “Fear”?!?

“And The midwives **feared** Hashem and they did not do as told to them by the king of mitzrayim and they allowed the boys to live”(1:17)...“And because the midwives **feared** Hashem He made for them **houses**” (1:21). What's fear have to do with it? If they did it purely for humanitarian reasons would it be any less of a virtuous Act? The stress is that they did it out of **fear of Hashem** and **therefore** were awarded with “houses”. Obviously this **can't** mean that if they would have done it purely for humanitarian reasons only they would have not been rewarded! “Hashem does not overlook the reward of any creature” (Baba Kama 38b) but they got rewarded **particularly** with “houses” because they did it out of **fear of Hashem**. what is the connection? Rashi based on the gemara in Sotah explains that the “houses” were the houses of Kehuna, Leviya and Malchus. Yocheved had Moshe who is a Levi and Ahron was a Kohen and from Miriam came Dovid Hamelech. Rashi adds and explains that these things are called “house”. The Beis HaMikdash where the Kohanim and Levi'im served is call the “House of Hashem” and Royalty is called the “Royal House”. What is the Midah k'neged Midah? What is the equivalence between Kehuna, Levia, Malchus, houses, and fearing of Hashem?

“Fear” & Beis Hamikdash

The Beis HaMikdash, which is the ultimate “**house**” is inextricably bound up with the concept of **fear of Hashem**. From the first time it was preceded on Har HaMoriah where Avraham passes the Supreme test of Akeidas Yitzchak the heavenly voice calls out “.....do not harm the lad for now I know that you are one who **fears Hashem**” and then Avraham calls “the mountain where Hashem will be seen” as Rashi explains to **make His Divine presence dwell there**. As We know this concept gets a further boost by Yaakov avinu who actually was the first to call it “**house**”. After he wakes up and he says: “Hashem is in this place and I did not know... he **feared**, and he said how awesome is this place this is none other than the **house of Hashem** and this is the gateway to Heaven”. When the Beis hamikdash becomes a reality, we are commanded then with the Mitzvah “**Mimikdashi Tira'uh**” - **fear my Mikdash** the obligation to be in awe and fear of the place and to conduct ourselves with the proper decorum. The **fear** is so intense that Chazal have to remind us **we are not fearful of the house itself we are fearful of Hashem who commended us. We see that the concept of having the Divine presence on Earth in general and in the Beis HaMikdash in particular is coupled with fear of Hashem! Why is that?**

Otzar Yiras Shomayim & 4 Amos of Halacha

On the one hand fear of Hashem is the one thing we actually give Hashem as Chazal tell us “everything is from Heaven except for fear of Heaven as the pasuk says ‘what does Hashem ask from you? just to fear Him” (Brachos 33b). And yet Chazal say there “the only thing Hashem has in his storage houses is the “**otzar shel Yiras Shomayim**”- the storehouse of **fear of Heaven**”. How does that reconciled with the idea that fear of Heaven is what we do? What does the expression **otzar shel Yiras Shomayim**”- **the storehouse of fear of Heaven** mean? What’s the “**Storehouse**”? How does this fit with the Chazal “From the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed all Hashem has in his world are the **4 Amos of Halacha**” (Brachos 8a) Is fear of Hashem the one thing Hashem has or is it the 4 Amos of Halacha? **What does the term “4 Amos of Halacha” mean?** Torah is knowledge and isn’t contained in space – it’s everywhere! Or is it?

Yiras Shomayim – the vessel to contain the Divine

The Ramchal in Derech Hashem (section 4 chapter 3:1) writes: “...**fear of Hashem purifies the person from the darkness of his physicality and body and causes to the Divine Presence to dwell upon him. To the extent of the fear so also will be the extent of the purity and Divine that dwells upon him. Someone who could be constantly in this fear will have the Divine presence dwell upon him constantly!** This was found in full perfection by Moshe Rabbeinu that regarding him Chazal say” **fear of Hashem was a small challenge for Moshe**” and

that’s why he had the Divine presence upon him constantly”. The Ramchal is teaching us: **The special quality of fear of Hashem is that it creates a base for Holiness to dwell and it does so in two ways: first it purifies the area or body where there is that fear of Hashem and then it makes a receptacle to receive the Divine presence or any other form of Holiness!**

Sharing space

The Nefesh HaChaim further elaborates and explains that this is why fear of Hashem is called “**otzar shel Yiras Shomayim**”- the **storehouse of fear of Heaven**” - **it is the one thing in physical reality that enables the physical to “house” the spiritual!** If not for this **unique quality that fear of Hashem has - there could not be any type of spirituality within physical space!** The Nefesh HaChaim goes on to explain that with this we could understand that there is no contradiction between when Chazal say, “all Hashem has is the **storehouse** of fear of heaven” and when they say, “all Hashem has are the **4 Amos** of Halacha” - **they’re actually talking about the same “space”. Torah exists within physical space only where there is fear of Heaven** otherwise that Torah would never be manifest **within space**. This is the idea of a “**Makom Torah**” - a **place** of Torah. Torah actually being within space (as opposed to “knowledge” which is not manifest in space) is only possible where there is fear of Heaven and that is the receptacle to hold Torah. The “**otzar shel Yiras Shomayim**”and the “**4 Amos of Halacha**” are in the **same space** -one_ is the receptacle and the other one is the Holiness that feels it.

Giving Hashem His place in the world

With the principles we've presented we can now understand that there's no contradiction whether fear of Hashem is what we do, or all that Hashem has - it is really one in the same. It is up to us to "give" Hashem all that He "has" in this world **because there is no way for the Divine to stick within this world without the fear of Heaven. The fear of Heaven is what we do to give Hashem a "stake" in this world - otherwise the spiritual cannot be manifest within the physical.**

The "Houses"

Kehuna and Levia are the Divine services performed in the Beis Hamikdash that caused the Divine presence to dwell on earth. The Divine can't be manifest within space without fear of Hashem and **that's why in the Beis Hamikdash where the kohanim and Levi'im function there has to be awe and fear. The awe and fear make the Beis HaMikdash able to "HOUSE" the Divine Presence summoned by the service of the kohanim and Levi'im!**

Malchus

We have explained in the past that the attribute of the "Shechina"- **Divine presence** is called "**Malchus**" - **Kingdom** because when the Divine is manifest on earth that is the "**kingdom of Heaven**" and Jewish sovereignty represents Hashem sovereignty manifest on Earth, and hence "Malchus" also "**HOUSES**" the "**Shechina**" and by no coincidence **the character trait in the human being from the attribute of "Malchus" is Yiras Shomayim – fear of Heaven!**

Fighting for the Jewish Destiny

The midwives were not only on a humanitarian mission. They understood that the Jewish people are not just people who have inalienable rights to live and prosper. **They understood that the Jewish people are the vehicle to bring Divinity to Earth! They were saving the Jewish people out of "fear of Hashem" meaning to say that they understood that if Divinity will ever be manifest on Earth there needs to be a Jewish people!** Since they saved the Jewish people out of **fear of Hashem** so that Hashem's Kingdom and Torah will be "**HOUSED**" on Earth, that's why they received the particular award of "houses of Kehuna Levia and Malchus all which house Divinity on Earth.

