



When combined with the letter *Lamed*, the *Vav* brings the total of the two letters to *thirty-six*, the number, as mentioned earlier, of the *Ohr Ha-Ganuz*.¹ This is not incidental, especially since the thirty-six comes to rectify the Name of God, *Elohim*.

Creation exists for one purpose only, that something should exist that can recognize God, and relate to Him. There are many pleasures in life, but none match the pleasure of being intensely connected to God, something the *Sitra Achra* and *yetzer hara* have convinced people of just the opposite.

The *Sitra Achra* knows the truth, being an angel, but the people he persuades do not. They are convinced from

¹ *Bais, Rosh Chodesh Kislev.*

what he shows them that God does not exist, or that if He does exist, He doesn't care about what we do. That's good news for the *yetzer bara* who does not like restrictive moral behavior, so people design their lives around this philosophy.

They don't know about Amalek, so they don't know that their approach to life is Amalekian. As mentioned earlier,² Amalek divides the Name of God, at least conceptually, through misinformation and confusing events. If an idea or event makes people doubt God's existence or involvement in human history, Amalek, on some level, has been involved.

At the end of *Parashas Beshallach*, the Name that is affected is the *Shem Hovayah*, the split, so to speak, occurring between the *Yud-Heb*, the *sefiros* of *Chochmah* and *Binah*, and the *Vav-Heb*, the *sefiros* of *Chesed*, *Gevurah*, *Tifferes*, *Netzach*, *Hod*, *Yesod* and *Malchus*. Therefore, we declare before *mitzvos* that we do them in order to unify all four letters, as a testimony to our belief in God's existence and His running of history.

The same kind of idea applies to another Name of God, *Elohim*. In this case, the split occurs between the *Aleph-Lamed-Heb* of the Name, which correspond the *sefiros* of *Chesed* through *Yesod* during exile,³ and the last

² *Vav*, fourteenth of *Kislev*.

³ During exile, these six *sefiros* only have six *sefiros* each, for a total of thirty-six.

two letters, *Yud-Mem*, which correspond to the *sefirah* of *Binah*.⁴ When *Zehr Anpin* (*Chesed* through *Yesod*) separates from *Binah*, the world becomes a far less Godly place.

Rectification of the Names is any time something occurs in history, like the *Chanukah* victory and miracle of the oil, to make people acknowledge God's existence, and even better, His direct involvement in everyday life. This defeats Amalek and does him damage, a process that will end when this becomes true:

God will be King over the entire earth, and on that day, God will be One, and His Name, One.
(*Zechariah* 14:9)

This is why the number thirty-six tends to show up when something happens to contribute to this *tikun*. For example, the original light of Creation that is the basis of the knowledge was available for *thirty-six* hours in *Gan Aiden* before being hidden.

And this was why Ya'akov *Avinu* was away from home for a total of *thirty-six* years, he married a wife (Leah) whose name equals *thirty-six*, and his other wife, Rachel, died at the border of *Eretz Yisroel* at the age of *thirty-six*. He was even healed, after his confrontation with the angel, with the light of *thirty-six*, but that's a longer story in a dif-

⁴ *Yud-Mem* total fifty, as in the Fifty Gates of *Binah* (Understanding).

ferent book.⁵

As for the letters themselves, the *Lamed* indicates the need to learn, and the *Vav*, what to learn. There are two kinds of learning, that of the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and of the *Aitz Chaim*, the Tree of Life. Quality of life depends upon which one a person chooses.

What's the difference between the two types of knowledge. The knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as* deals with the *how* of Creation, knowledge that allows us to understand how Creation works and what we can do it with it. The knowledge of the *Aitz Chaim*, which is Torah, is the *why* of Creation. It teaches us what we're doing here, and how to make the most of life from God's perspective.

History has shown time and again how the knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as*, as enlightening as it can be it can also lead to terrible destruction, first spiritually and then physically. It can lead to what the Torah calls a living death because a person invests himself in the temporal world without regard for the bigger goals of Creation.

The *Lamed* tells us to learn. The *Vav* tells us to learn the *Da'as* of the *Aitz Chaim*, of Torah, so that we can access the *light of thirty-six*, rectifying ourselves while rectifying the world. This is the only knowledge that can unify the *Yud-Heb* and *Vav-Heb* of the *Shem Hovayah*, the *Aleph-*

⁵ See my book, *The Light of Thirty-Six* for the full discussion, and other important thirty-sixes.

Lamed-Heb of *Elohim* with the *Yud-Mem*, and completely and permanently eradicate Amalek from the world.

