

Singer-Jordan Edition

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Batya Shoshanah bat Rivkah

Emor

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The word *koben* is spelled, *Chof-Heb-Nun*. It is a word that means to officiate in some way or another, but its letters allude to something deeper. The first two letters, *Chof-Heb*, have a history of their own, as does the last letter, *Nun*.

The *Nun* is easy, because it usually refers to the *Nun Sha'arei Binah*, the Fifty Gates of Understanding referred to here:

The world was created with fifty gates of understanding. . . (*Rosh Hashbanah* 21b)

The *Nun Sha'arei Binah* are one of the most important concepts, especially in *Kabbalah*. They are the basis of Torah knowledge, and something we're supposed to be trying to access daily. They are also the basis of our souls, the *Neshamah* spelled, *Nun-Shin-Mem-Heb*, which can be read: *Nun shamah*, fifty is there.

The *Chof-Heb* is less obvious. Pronounced *kob*, the word shows up often in *Tanach*, often to introduce a prophecy. But perhaps one of the most famous occurrences is here:

You stay here—pob—with the donkey, while I and the lad will walk until there—kob, bow down and then return to you. (*Bereishis* 22:5)

This is what Avraham told Yishmael and Eliezer who had accompanied him and Yitzchak to the *Akeidah*. When they finally arrived at the location God had intended, Avraham saw the *Shechinah* as did Yitzchak. But Yishmael and Eliezer did not share their vision, which Avraham took as a Divine sign to leave them behind at that place referred to as "*pob—here.*"

In *Gematria Kollel*, when one is added to the total, *pob* (85) becomes 86, which is the numerical value of the Name of God, *Elokim*. Similarly, *kob* (25) becomes 26, the *gematria* of God's Ineffable Name, the *Shem Hovayah*. In effect, Avraham told the two lads, "You stay here on the spiritual level of *Elokim* Who works through Nature, while we go to the level of *Hovayah*, which operates supernaturally."

Not coincidentally, *kob* is used regarding *Birchas Kobanim*, the blessing of the people by the *kobanim*:

God spoke to Moshe saying, "Speak to Aharon and his sons and tell them: 'Chof-Heb—this is how you will bless the Children of Israel. . .'" (Bamidbar 6:22)

The *Ba'al HaTurim* explains:

This alludes to the merit [of the *Akeidab* when Avraham said] "*I and the lad will walk until there—Chof-Heb*" (*Bereishis* 22:5), and "*thus—Chof-Heb—will be your seed*" (*Bereishis* 15:5), and "*as God has blessed me thus—Chof-Heb*" (*Yehoshua* 17:14). *Kob* has the numerical value of 25, which is the amount of letters in *Shema Yisroel*. As well, the language of blessing occurs in the entire Torah 25 times, as does the word *shalom*—peace. (*Ba'al HaTurim*)

But the real significance of the number 25 appears here, explaining why it is associated with blessing:

God said, "Let there—yehi—be light!" (Bereishis 1:3)

The word *yehi* means *let there be*. But it is also a *gematria*, 10 + 5 + 10, or 25. This would make the verse read, "25 is the light." And not just any light, but the Supernal Light of Creation regarding which it says:

God saw that the light was good, and God separated between the light and the darkness. (Bereishis 1:4)

He saw that the wicked were unworthy of using it, and therefore set it apart for the righteous in the future time. (*Rashi*)

He made a separation in the illumination of the light, that it should not flow or give off light except for the righteous, whose actions draw it down and make it shine. However, the actions of the evil block it, leaving them in [intellectual] darkness. This itself was the hiding of the light. (*Sefer HaKlallim, Klal 18, Anaf 8, Os 4*)

Any righteous person can access this wondrous light, but it was specifically the job of the *kobanim* to access it and draw it down to the people. It is only with this light that a person can access the *Nun Sha'arei Binah*, and ascend gate-by-gate. That's why there are so many laws regarding *kobanim*, especially when it comes to maintaining a state of spiritual purity.

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