

Afterthoughts

- Yocheved Bienenfeld

V'HAYA HASHEM L'MELECH ...BAYOM HAHU ...U'SH'MO ECHAD

"On that day, HaShem will be One and His Name will be one." We are about to proclaim HaShem as Melech on Rosh HaShana and I wanted to try to understand what it means when it says that 'His Name will be One.' Rav Shimon Schwab (Rav Schwab on Prayer) explains: "Despite having revealed certain aspects of His Name, HKB"H tells us ZEH SH'MI L'OLAM - This is My Name forever (Sh'mot 3:15) with the word L'OLAM written as if it could be read L'ALEIM, meaning 'hidden'. Just as I am beyond your comprehension, so shall My true Name, My essence, remain unknown and hidden to the human mind. So, we humbly say: BARUCH SH'MO - blessed is His Name. Since there is no way to "know" Gd, then when we refer to SH'MO, His Name, we are referring to those behaviors He exhibits to us from which we can draw conclusions as to His nature. If this is true, then I think I finally understand what it means when it says that "His Name will be one."

BAYOM HAHU YIHYEH HASHEM ECHAD - On that day Gd will be One - that will be the day when the whole world recognizes and admits that there is only One Gd. But that really isn't enough. For example, the Jews and the Moslems also believe in only one Gd. But

is it the same Gd? The "name" of Gd means one thing to a Jew and something quite different to a Moslem. The Jew sees Gd, first and foremost as Y-H-V-H, merciful, giving, beneficent; a gomel chesed - after all, aren't we taught that this is why He created the world?

[Derech HaShem (Ramchal) Chapter 2:1: Gd's purpose in Creation was to bestow of His Good onto another.]

Only then, do we say He is Elokim, the all-powerful One Who can initiate this very Creation. But a Moslem sees Allah as 'akhbar' - first and foremost Kabir, gibor - powerful, mighty. That is a very different deity than the one in Whom we believe. So, although we both believe in only one Gd, it clearly doesn't mean there is any unity in understanding just Who this Gd is, what His true Nature is. But BAYOM HAHU, on that day, not only will there be an agreement that there is only one Gd, that all good and bad derives from Him, but also USHMO ECHAD - there will be agreement, as well, as to that nature. And that Gd is HASHEM TZ'VAKOT SH'MO, K'DOSH YISRAEL, the Sanctified One of Israel.