The upcoming Shabbas Kodesh, which approaches auspiciously, is referred to as Shabbas Chazon. This name reflects the fact that the haftarah-reading comes from the navi prophesying about the “churban” (Yeshayah 1, 1):

“חזון ישעיה בן אמוץ אשר חזה על יהודה וירושלים”

— The vision ("chazon") of Yeshayah the son of Amotz, which he saw concerning Yehudah and Yerushalayim. Hence, it is fitting that we explore a topic related to the “churban.” The Gemara (Ta’anis 29a) describes the following miraculous event:

The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: When the Temple was destroyed the first time, groups upon groups of young kohanim assembled with the keys to the Heichal in their hands, and they went up to the roof of the Heichal, and they said before Him: “Master of the Universe! Since we were not privileged to be trusted caretakers, let the keys be handed over to You.” They threw them towards heaven and something like the palm of a hand emerged and received them from them.

In the sefer Yad Yosef (Devarim), the great “darshan” (expounder), Rabbi Yosef Tzorfati, utilizes this passage to interpret the formula we recite in the Mussaf service on the “Shalosh Regalim”:

“ואין אנו יכולים לעלות ולראות ולהשתחוות לפניך . . . מפני היד שנשתלחה במקדשך”

— and we are unable to ascend, and to be seen, and to bow down before You . . . because of the hand that was sent forth against Your Mikdash.

The Klipah of the Hand that Was Sent Forth against the Beis HaMikdash

Based on his exposition, I would like to propose my own explanation for the matter of “פיסת יד— the palm of a hand that emerged from heaven to take the keys to the Heichal and to deliver them to the evil Nevuchadnetzar. We find a wonderful interpretation of this tefilah: “פיסת יד— because of the hand that was sent forth against Your Mikdash” in the teachings of our teacher, the Arizal, in Pri Eitz Chaim. Here is what he says:

“סוד מה שאנו אומרים בתפילת מוסף, מפני היד שנשתלחה במקדשיך, יובן פרשת תרומת דף קע”ב. סוד חלון אחד, הנקרא חלון על פי המבואר בזוה”ק ויהיו וכו’, ובו צורת יד, והוא כפוף תחת כנפי השכינה, ובעת החורבן שלט על בית המקדש ונחרב עיין שם, וזה שאמר מפני היד שנשתלחה במקדשיך”

The secret meaning of that which we say in the Mussaf service—“because of the hand that was sent forth against Your Mikdash”—can be understood based on that which is explained in the Zohar hakadosh parshas Terumah 172. There is a window

The Arizal’s Incredible Revelation

During the Period of Bein HaMetzarim It Is Incumbent upon Us to Subdue the Hand of the Klipah that Attacked Our Mikdash

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...in it is the shape of a hand; it is controlled by the wings of the Shechinah. At the time of the churban, it reigned over the Beis HaMikdash. This is the meaning of the statement: “because of the hand that was sent forth against Your Mikdash.”

Let us elaborate on the words of the Arizal based on a teaching from the Zohar hakadosh (ibid.). It states that there is a star in the heavens that contains the shape of the hand of the klipah. While the Beis HaMikdash stood, it was subject to the dictates of the Shechinah, which dwelled in the Beis HaMikdash. By means of this hand of the klipah, shevet Yehudah was able to successfully rule over and subdue the enemies of Yisrael. It was for this purpose that Yaakov Avinu bestowed the following blessing on shevet Yehudah (Bereishis 49,8): ידך בעורף אויביך—your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. In other words, that hand of the klipah will itself be used to strike at the neck of Yisrael’s enemies and subjugate them under the realm of kedushah. However, when shevet Yehudah strayed from the ways of Hashem and worshipped avodah zarah, they attributed to that heavenly hand super powers; they used it in various ways constituting forms of idolatry.

The Arizal adds to this an embellishment of his own from the secrets HKB”H revealed to him personally, in keeping with the notion of (Tehillim 25, 14): סוד ה' ליראיו—hashem’s secret to those who fear Him. He explains that this is the secret meaning of the statement: “Because of the hand that was sent forth against Your Mikdash.” For, at the time of the churban, due to Yisrael’s transgressions and rebellion against Hashem and His Torah, the klipah of the hand also rebelled against the holy Shechinah. Consequently, shevet Yehudah lost control of that hand. Therefore, instead of striking the neck of Hashem’s enemies—ידך בעורף אויביך—who were laying siege to Yerushalayim, the hand was sent out against the Beis HaMikdash, destroying it down to its foundation.

Now, if we combine the explanation of the Arizal with that of the Yad Yosef, we can shed some light on the notion of the ידך בעורף אויביך—the palm of the hand that reached out from the heavens to take the keys to the Heichal, which the young kohanim threw heavenwards. As explained, there is a star in the heavens which contains the shape of a hand. It is the hand of the klipah which shevet Yehudah used to subdue Yisrael’s enemies, fulfilling the words of Yaakov’s berachah: ידך בעורף אויביך. At the time of the churban, however, it was authorized to reach out and take the keys and to hand them over to Nevuchadnetzar. This enabled him to enter the Heichal and destroy the Beis HaMikdash, employing the power of that hand that was sent forth against our Mikdash.

“Those whom He redeemed from the hand of the oppressor”

In the sefer Ba’al Shem Tov (Yisro), an explanation is brought in the name of the Ba’al Shem Tov, zy’a, regarding a passuk discussing the future geulah (Tehillim 107, 2): ידך בעורף אויביך—who were redeemed by Hashem will say; those whom He redeemed from the hand of the oppressor. This implies that they will express their gratitude to Hashem for delivering them from the “hand” of the klipah that was sent forth against the Beis HaMikdash. To enhance this idea, let us examine the words of the divine poet in Lamentations (Eichah 1, 10): ידך בעורף אויביך—the oppressor spread out his hand on all her treasures. This can be interpreted as an allusion to that hand that the oppressor spread out to snatch the keys of the Heichal tossed up in the air by the young kohanim. It is with regards to that hand that David HaMelech said: ידך בעורף אויביך—those redeemed from the very same hand spread out by the oppressor.

This provides us with a very nice explanation for the words we recite in Tachanun on Mondays and Thursdays: ידך בעורף אויביך—how long will Your strength be in captivity and Your glory in the hand of the oppressor? As this verse infers, two outstanding attributes—“midot”—prevailed in the Beis HaMikdash—strength and glory. Hence, we pray: “How long will Your strength be in captivity and Your glory in the hand of the oppressor?” For, these two midot which prevailed in the Beis HaMikdash remain captive in the hand of the klipah that was sent forth against our Mikdash.

We can suggest that it is for this reason that the Melech HaMashiach is named David. It states in the Zohar hakadosh (Lech Lecha 82b): David HaMelech lives forever; even during the times of the Melech HaMashiach, he will be King. If from the living David is his name; and if from the deceased David is his name.” The Melech HaMashiach, the head of shevet Yehudah, is called דויר—(14), possessing the same numerical equivalent as the word for hand—יד (14). For, at the time of the future geulah, when he will come to redeem Yisrael and wage war against their mortal enemies, he will once again merit to subdue and harness the hand of the klipah under the wings of the Shechinah. He will use it to strike down the enemies of Yisrael in keeping with Yaakov Avinu’s berachah: ידך בעורף אויביך.
The Idol in the Heichal that Broke Its Fellow’s Hand

Concerning this topic, let us present the wonderful explanation provided by the great author of the Ben Ish Chai, in his sefer Ben Yehoyada, on the allegories and parables in the Talmud (Ta'anis 29a). He addresses the passage in the Gemara (ibid. 28b and 29a) discussing the two idols placed in the Heichal of the Beis HaMikdash by Menashe, the King of Yisrael. This sacrilegious act caused the Shechinah to abandon the Beis HaMikdash. As a consequence, the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed fifty-five years later. However, one of the idols fell on the other and broke off its hand. The following message was found written on the unbroken idol: "אנת צבית לחרובי ביתא, ידך נשפת על הסמל,鹪ית על ידי רוחות טרומא איהו, ת/umdידי לישפאת שמות טהרatoms איהו תוקם, על ידי עם ש✲מדא תושע" (Yechezkel). The Ben Ish Chai explains that this message came from the force of evil. HKB"H protected them by having the forces of evil battle one another: "אנת צביית לחרובי ביתא, ידך נשפת על הסמל"—just as HKB"H arranged for the idol itself to submit itself under the wings of the Shechinah and for it to break its fellow idol’s hand. HKB"H wished to demonstrate to Yisrael that if they returned by means of complete teshuvah, the Shechinah would rule once again over that hand and prevent it from destroying the Beis HaMikdash. Additionally, the klipah itself would combat the enemies of Yisrael, in the sense of: "ידך ה' נאדרי בכח, ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב"—just as the one idol broke off its fellow idol’s hand to prevent it from destroying the Beis HaMikdash.

The Hand that Was Sent Forth against Our Mikdash Is Sustained by the Left Hand representing Gevurah

After much thought, I would like to propose my own explanation for this phenomenon. As explained, while the Beis HaMikdash stood, the hand of the klipah was subservient and obedient to the will of the Shechinah—to the degree that shevet Yehudah used it to strike down the enemies of Yisrael. As a result of their sins, that very same hand destroyed the Beis HaMikdash, as expressed by the words: "ידך ה' נאדרי בכח, ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב". I would like to refer to the pesukim sung by Yisrael at the sea (Shemos 15, 6):—"Youtube," A Baruch b'hem tov mi'ah ve'shadru: "Your right hand, Hashem, is majestic in might; Your right hand, Hashem, crushes the enemy." Rashi explains in the name of the Mechilta: "ימינך ה' נאדרי בכח, ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב—Your right hand, Hashem, is majestic in might, to save Yisrael; while Your second right hand—previously Your left hand—crushes the enemy.

According to this scenario, we can suggest that this is why HKB"H manages the world with two hands, representing the attribute of chesed and the attribute of din. The right hand represents "midas hachesed," providing those who serve Hashem all that is good. The left hand represents "midas hadin," doling out punishment to the wicked. The source for this notion is the Tikunei Zohar in the passage of Pasach Eliyahu (Introduction 17a): "היד השנית תרעץ אויב, השמאל נעשית ימין. ימינך ה' נאדרי בכח, ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב, והיד השנית תרעץ אויב." The right hand is mentioned twice in the passuk. When Yisrael are compliant with the will of the Omnipresent, the left becomes a right. Thus, Your original right hand, Hashem, is majestic in might, to save Yisrael; while Your second right hand—previously Your left hand—crushes the enemy.

Let us add a tidbit of our own to his explanation based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 31a):"אמר רב נחמן, השמה אחרך והאמר עיברכך אחיו מעברך שמיהו תושע.ץרר וייחו השמה אחרך והאמר עיברכך אחיו מעברך שמיהו תושע—Rabbi Yochanan said: For six months the Shechinah lingered for Yisrael in the midbar, hoping that perhaps they would return by means of teshuvah. When they did not return, He said: May their very essence suffer agony! Although it is true that Menashe, the King of Yisrael, drove the Shechinah away by introducing idols into the Heichal; nevertheless, the Shechinah lingered in the midbar for six months hoping that Yisrael would perform teshuvah and she would be able to return to the Beis HaMikdash.
strike down their enemies. This then is the interpretation of the passuk: " dươngיך ה’ תרעץ אויבך — this refers to the actual right hand, the embodiment of chesed; it performs acts of kindness and favor for Yisrael, rescuing them from their foes—the Egyptians—and from difficult situations. "דונותיך ראש ו枨ך — the second part of the passuk refers to the left hand, the embodiment of din; for Yisrael's benefit, it is transformed into a virtual right hand, functioning as a hand of chesed. Thus, Yisrael can use its inherent qualities of gevurah to pound and crush the heads of her enemies.

We can now begin to appreciate the concept of the klipah that appears in the form of a hand to wage war. When HKB"H's left hand, representing din, is dominant in the world, then this klipah draws its power from the residual elements of gevurah native to the left hand; it wages battles with the attribute of gevurah. Now, when Yisrael act in accordance with the will of G-d, the left hand functions like a right hand and battles Yisrael's enemies, in the sense of: " ימינו ה’ נאדרי בכח גודע בחרי אף כל קרן ישראל, השיב אחור ימינו מפני האויב, ויבער ביעקב כאש להבה אכלה סביב" Yet, when Yisrael neglect to act according to the will of G-d, this transformation does not occur; the din of the left hand remains in full force against Yisrael, chas v'shalom. Hence, that very same hand of the klipah that is nourished from the residue of the forces of severity battles against Yisrael.

Behold! The divine poet lamenting the time of the churban states (Eichah 2, 3): "odus mafton megulam be'enu, eshet acharon yomim memfi; עד המית ה' מצדו על גדול ירושלים. השיב אחרון ימי ממתי"-He cut down, in burning anger, all the dignity of Yisrael; He drew back His right hand in the presence of the enemy. He burned through Yaakov like a flaming fire, consuming on all sides. The Zohar hakadosh explains (Beshalach 57a) that HKB"H removed his right hand—the embodiment of "midas hachesed"—leaving only the left hand, creating a situation of total din. Seeing as the time of the churban constituted a situation of total, unmitigated din, the hand of the klipah, being nurtured by the attribute of gevurah—which was heretofore subservient to the Shechinah, vanquishing Yisrael's enemies—now battled against the forces of kedushah to destroy the Beis HaMikdash. It no longer functioned as a right hand, a force for chesed.

Tefillin Shel Yad Subdue the Klipah of Yad
Tefillin Shel Rosh Correspond to the Beis HaMikdash

I was struck by a wonderful idea based on the explanation of the Arizal cited above, which I would like to present upon the royal table. I would like to explain why the tefillin shel yad are donned prior to the tefillin shel rosh, as dictated by halachah in the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 25, 5). The source for this practice is found in the Gemara (Menachos 36a): "אמר קרא (דברים ו-ח) והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך, כל זמן שבין עיניך יהו שתים"—and when one puts on tefillin, he dons the “shel yad” first; afterwards he dons the “shel rosh.” When he removes them, he removes the “shel rosh” first; afterwards he removes the “shel yad.” The Gemara explains the rationale for this practice: "אמר קרא (דברים ו-ח) והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך, כל זמן שבין עיניך יהו שתים—the passuk states: 'And let them be ‘totafot’ between your eyes.' This implies that as long as they are between your eyes (i.e. whenever you are wearing the “shel rosh”), they shall be two (i.e. you should also be wearing the “shel yad”).

It appears that the matter can be explained based on a tremendous chiddush we learn from the divine Tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai in the Zohar hakadosh (Midrash HaNe'elam Chayei Sara 129a). He says that even today in galut, it is possible to fulfill the mitzvah asheh of (Shemos 25, 8): "ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם, שבסיבתם הקב'ה משרה שכינתו"—They shall make Me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them—by fulfilling the mitzvah of donning tefillin shel yad and tefillin shel rosh. This opinion is also shared by the Shela hakadosh (Chullin):

" ///////// ד"ה "הימין כנגד האבות אברהם ויצחק ויעקב, ומצד השמאל שי'ן של ד' רגלים כנגד ד' רגלים. תפילין נאמר ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם, שבסיבתם הקב'ה משרה שכינתו通り, ונא Clerk שאישショ של ראש וchers של יד.\\n\\nימין ה' נאדרי בכח גודע בחרי אף כל קרן ישראל, השיב אחור ימינו מפני האויב, ויבער ביעקב כאש להבה אכלה סביב"—This refers to the actual right hand; it performs acts of kindness for Yisrael, rescuing them from their foes—the Egyptians—and from difficult situations.

Tefillin represent a deep mystery! One must treat them with the utmost reverence and sanctity, because they possess the secret of the Holy Chariot (a vessel subservient to Hashem's will). Since the destruction of the Temple, we fulfill the command of "they shall make Me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them" through the mitzvah of tefillin—as taught by the holy Rashby (Chayei Sarah 129). By means of the tefillin, HKB"H's Shechinah dwells among Yisrael; because tefillin represent the secret of the Chariot and the secret of the Avos. It is for this reason that they have a three-legged “shin” on their right side, corresponding to the Avos—Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov; and on their left side, they have a four-legged “shin,” corresponding to the four creatures bearing the Chariot.
After careful consideration, it is apparent that Rashby’s chiddush coincides amazingly with the elucidation in the Gemara (Berachos 8a), regarding the passuk (Devarim 28, 10): “והיה לך לאות על ידך ויהיה לך מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם”— establishing a sanctuary for the Shechinah to dwell upon. Thus, we prepare for the future geulah—when the power of the hand that was sent forth against our Temple will be eliminated. Then we will merit the coming of the Mashiach, whose name ד-ז is equivalent to — the hand of kedushah that will build the third Beis HaMikdash, swiftly, in our times.

**The Holy Shechinah Subdues the Klipah of י-ז with the Name י-ז**

Following this line of reasoning, let us proceed to delight in the words of the Arizal. He taught us that the star which contains the shape of a hand was subject to the will of the Shechinah when the Beis HaMikdash stood. It served to subdue the enemies of Yisrael, in keeping with the berachah: י-ז בראשית כן נאדרי בכח י-ז תרעץ אויביך. It appears that we can explain this matter based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Sotah 17a): י-ז והי משכת פיקרז. — Rabbi Akiva expounded: If a husband and wife are meritorious, the Shechinah is present between them. Rashi provides the following clarification: י-ז והי משכת פיקרז. — Here we learn a very important principle from Rabbi Akiva. The name י-ז alludes to the holy Shechinah, which is known by this name.

Amazingly, this helps us understand why there were fifteen steps in the Beis HaMikdash between the “Ezras Nashim” (the women’s courtyard) and the “Ezras Yisrael” (the men’s courtyard). Now, we know that the number of steps corresponded to the fifteen “Shir HaMa’a lot” (Songs of Ascent) composed by David HaMelech in sefer Tehillim (Mizmor 120-Mizmor 135). Additionally, the Leviim stood on these fifteen steps while singing their songs during the Simchat Beis HaSho’eivah on Succot, as described in the Mishnah (Succah 120-Mizmor 135). Therefore, immediately after performing the mitzvah of donning the tefillin shel yad—by binding the tefillin to the left arm—we don the tefillin shel rosh, corresponding to the mitzvah of: י-ז והי משכת פיקרז —establishing a sanctuary for the Shechinah to dwell upon.
The Maharal explains in Gevurot Hashem (Chapter 59) that these fifteen steps in the Beis HaMikdash are the same number as the name יד, with which Olam HaBa and Olam HaZeh were created. Based on our current discussion, we can suggest that the number of steps equaled the name יד as an allusion to the Shechinah, referred to by the name יד, which HK"B"H rested in the Beis HaMikdash—as HK"B"H states: "ושכנתי בתוכם". The name יד itself alludes to this fact. Rearranged, its letters spell ספנ יד, conveying the fact that HK"B"H placed the name יד, representing the Shechinah, in the Beis HaMikdash.

We can suggest that this is the reason why the leviim uttered their song on these fifteen steps. It was their job to preserve the dwelling of the Shechinah, represented by the name יד, in the Beis HaMikdash. For, the Gemara (Shabbas 30b) teaches us that the Shechinah only dwells in a place that exhibits the simchah of mitzvah. This fact is alluded to by the word שיר"ה, whose letters can be rearranged to form יד—indicating that they sang for the sake of יד. In fact, we learn in the Mishnah (Succah 51b) that when they exited the Beis HaMikdash after the Simchat Beis HaSho’eivah, they would say: "אני ילד לה—we are for יד and toward יד we direct our eyes." In other words, their entire purpose was to connect with the Shechinah, represented by the name יד.

This enlightens us with regards to the words of the Arizal. As long as the Shechinah dwelled in the Beis HaMikdash, the klipah of יד was obedient to the Shechinah. For, the numerical value of the name יד exceeds the numerical value of the word יד by one. Thus, the Shechinah controlled the klipah of the hand, and it was obliged to fight against the enemies of Yisrael. At the time of the churban, however, when our transgressions drove the Shechinah away, causing the name יד to vacate the Beis HaMikdash, the klipah of יד gained power and proceeded to destroy our Beis HaMikdash, as we state in our prayers: "אמרו יד נשתלחה ממקדשך."

Amalek Represents the Klipah of the Hand

It appears that we can find support for this idea from the passukim related to the battle with Amalek (Shemos 17, 16): " אמרו ישראל לפני הקב”ה, ויאמר להם ה’ – א’רור בישמע ובשמע ברוך – וברוך השם והשמת עמו אבות. "This enlightens us with regards to the words of the Arizal. As we state in our prayers: "Amalek Represents the Klipah of the Hand."

Accordingly, we can suggest that this is the allusion inherent in the passuk: "Amalek Represents the Klipah of the Hand." From the beginning of the month until the fifteenth of Av, it is cursed (cursed; beginning with the letter "aleph"). From the fifteenth of Av, it is blessed; (blessed; beginning with the letter "Beis"). That is the significance of the name יד—"aleph" for יד and "Beis" for יד.

Based on what we have learned, we can provide the following explanation. The first fourteen days of Av are days of din; whereas from the fifteenth of Av to the end of the month the force of din is diminished. In fact, the fifteenth of Av is a day of simchah and lessening of the forces of din. Here is what the Kedushas Levi writes on the subject (Shabbas Nachamu): "The month of the name יד is formed with the letters "aleph" and "Beis." From the beginning of the month until the fifteenth of Av, it is ייד—"aleph" for יד and "Beis" for יד."

Illustrating this fact, the Mishnah teaches us (Ta'anis 26b): "ב’רוכי, וזהו א”ב – א’רור ב’רוכי - do we allude to the klipah of יד—"Aleph" for יד and "Beis" for יד."

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