

INFINITELY MORE MEANINGFUL

by Rabbi Label Lam

Your eyes have seen what HASHEM did at Baal Peor, for every man who went after Baal Peor, HASHEM your G-d has exterminated from your midst. But you (ha-dvekim) who cleave to HASHEM your G-d are alive, all of you, this day. (Devarim 4:3-4)

You have been shown, in order to know that HASHEM He is G-d; there is none else besides Him. (Devarim 4:35)

What do these words mean, "Ain Od Bilvado- There is none other besides Him!"? This is a very deep subject. Don't you and I exist!? Is the world really real? There answer is "yes" and "no"!

Every Friday Night before making Kiddush I make the same declaration. I can see my children from the corner of my eye mimicking the words and saying it like a parrot along with me. That's OK! It's exactly what I am aiming for. The Rav Bartenura comments on the phrase in Pirke'Avos, "Hu Haya Omer- He used to say". It means "He said it all the time."

It was not something stated once at an inaugural address, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country..." and it was recorded for posterity. No! It was something he repeated frequently, a constant refrain.

There's great wisdom in that. If he would have said it only one time perhaps no one would remember or think about it again. However, if he repeats it often, then even though they are rolling their eyes in the back of their head, saying to themselves, "here we go again", after 120 years they will cry big tears when they recall that statement, now understanding it well, they will declare, "You know what my father used to say...?"

Every Friday Night I say in differing ways, "We are remembering now that HASHEM made the world YEISH M'AYIN- Something from nothing." Meaning that before HASHEM decided there was to be a world there was nothing. HASHEM created everything, small and large particles, energy, gravity, human nature, you name it. It's all the precise and explicit work of HASHEM.

That's only the first declaration. Now the second statement goes something like this, "From a physical standpoint HASHEM created the world YEISH M'AYIN- Something from Nothing, but from a spiritual vantage point HASHEM created the world AYIN M'YEISH – Nothing from Something!" That statement is crying out for an explanation!

Before the BEIS of Breishis, prior to the Big Bang or the Big Beis, what was there? What comes

before BEIS? The Aleph of "Adon Olam Asher Malach B'Terem Kol Yetzir Nivra, Master of the Universe Who was King before the world was created". HASHEM Who is real existed, exists, and will exist. This is ultimate reality. The Zohar refers to HASHEM as OHR AIN SOF- An endless light! Infinity is beyond our finite minds. We can at best comprehend that we don't comprehend it!

Everything in the world that HASHEM created is temporal. It has a clock attached to it, like a burning candle. It is beginning to disappear from the moment it comes into existence, destined to disintegrate. The only entity that outlasts everything is HASHEM. This world is as King Solomon described it, "Emptiness of emptiness... everything is emptiness!"

The Mesilas Yescharim writes, "When you look further into the matter, you will see that only (ha-dvekos) cleaving with G-d constitutes true perfection, as King David said (Tehillim 73:28), "But as for me, the nearness of G-d is my good," ...For this alone is the true good, and anything besides this which people deem good is nothing but emptiness and deceptive worthlessness."

Take the largest number and multiply by zero and it produces a zero. This world unto itself is a zero. There is none other than HASHEM. However, if one utilizes this world to help him and others to cleave to HASHEM, by performing a Mitzvah, then the equation changes dramatically. Take any number and multiply it times infinity and the result will be infinity. Now that single supernal factor serves to makes everything in the universe infinitely more meaningful.