

The Holy Eclipse and Radical Kabbalah

By Marc Gafni

Compiled and arranged by Talya Bloom

Contents

Dedication.....	3
April 8, 2024 – Complete Solar Eclipse in the US, corresponding with New Moon for month of Nisan.....	4
Overview	4
3 Stage Midrashic Tradition: <i>Mi'ut HaYarei'ah</i> and <i>Nesira</i>	4
7 Stage Zoharic tradition, Eitz Hayyim sources: <i>Zeir Anpin</i> and <i>Nukva</i>	5
Intermediate conclusions.....	7
Co-incidence with New Moon of Nisan (Passover is on Full Moon of Nisan – 15 Nisan).....	7
Conclusion.....	8
A pre-eschaton possibility - Mordechai Lainer.....	8

Dedication

To My Holy partner, Dr. Kristina Kincaid, who read Radical Kabbalah word for word and in her reading and being and teaching re-minded the Sun and the Moon.

- Marc Gafni

April 8, 2024 – Complete Solar Eclipse in the US, corresponding with New Moon for month of Nisan

Overview

On April 8, 2024 parts of North America experienced a complete solar eclipse. The cosmological phenomenon, when engaged from a mythological perspective, invites us to a conversation on the nature of the sun and the moon and their relationship to each other. As in many traditions, the moon in esoteric Hebrew wisdom represents the feminine, and the sun, the masculine. From a human perspective, during a solar eclipse, the sun and moon seem to be equal in size. The mystical implications of this are discussed in esoteric lineage tradition of the Wisdom of Solomon.

The solar eclipse coincided exactly with the *molad*, the “rebirth” of the moon, on the eve of the New Moon of the month of Nisan.

The juxtaposition of these two cosmological events invites us to a close study of lineage sources discussing the relationship between the sun and the moon, the masculine and the feminine, poles of the Godhead and Sefirotic relationships.

In these Midrashic and Zoharic sources we will learn a multi-staged model of evolution of the feminine which was developed by Isaac Luria and democratized by Mordechai Lainer, and which provide a useful frame of reference for our times.

3 Stage Midrashic Tradition: *Mi’ut HaYarei’ah* and *Nesira*

Luria outlines a seven-stage process called *tikun ha-nukva*, the repair of the feminine which emerges from two distinct midrashic traditions:

1. The first source is the well-known text in the Babylonian Talmud which describes the moon complaining to God about sharing her glory with the sun.

For Luria, *mi'ut ha-yarei'ah*, the diminishment of the moon, is the fundamental flaw in the cosmos which must be reversed and rectified.

2. The second midrashic text, conflated by Luria with the moon story, is the story of the creation of the first, androgynous human, which is divided in two in order to be ultimately reunited at a higher level.

This source delineates **three distinct stages in the relationship between the first man and woman:**

- i. The initial androgynous unity of male and female, which exist back-to-back in one body
- ii. The *nesirah* or separation of the male and female halves from each other
- iii. And finally, the ability of man and woman after they are separated to turn to face each other, *panim bepanim*, 'face-to-face'.

These three stages correspond to the moon's evolution:

- i. The initial state corresponds to the state of the moon before she complains to God
- ii. This unity is broken when the moon becomes smaller as a consequence of her complaint
- iii. And ultimately, this unity will be *restored at a higher level*, represented by *the moon in its fullness*.

7 Stage Zoharic tradition, Eitz Hayyim sources: *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva*

Luria further divided these three stages into a total of seven stages, discussed in *Eitz Hayyim* Shaar 36 ch. 1, 42, where Luria posits that in the eschaton the moon will **attain her initial stature and even exceed it.**

Elaborating on the *Zohar*, Luria tells the story of the relationship between the two *partzufim*, *Ze'ir Anpin* and *Nukva*, or Man and Woman through these *midrashim*.

Ze'ir Anpin is the *partzuf* at whose center is *Tif'eret*, and *Nukva* is *Malkhut/Shekhinah*.

Eitz Hayyim, which records Luria's teachings, **describes *Nukva's* recovery from her diminishment**, identifying seven stages, which are subdivided into the three stages discussed above, regarding the growth of the *partzuf* of *nukva* or 'Woman'—the personification of *Shekhinah* energy—in the context of her relationship with the *partzuf* of *Ze'ir Anpin* or 'Man'.

At the end of the process of *tikun*, **she stands in equal height to the masculine *partzuf*, *Ze'ir Anpin***. Until *Tikun ha-Nukva* is effected, she is unable to draw down the consciousness or *mohin* (lit. 'brains') which is hers and must receive this through the mediation of *Ze'ir Anpin*, while afterwards, she draws her consciousness directly from the great mother, from *Binah*.

In Luria's image, **the degree of dependency is expressed in spatial terms**. The shorter she is, the greater the degree of dependency on *Ze'ir Anpin*; the taller she is, the more she incorporates into her self and the more self-sufficient she becomes. Besides height, Luria applies a second evaluation to the level of *Nukva's* growth and unfolding: the movement from a relationship that is back-to-back to one that is face-to-face. **The messianic goal is for *Nukva* to achieve an independent, face-to-face relationship, equal in stature, with *Ze'ir Anpin***.

- i. The first three stages are back-to-back corresponding to the midrashic description of the androgynous human being.
- ii. After *nesirah* takes place, *nukva* initially regresses back to a single point from which she grows in three successive stages, until she is once again of equal height to *Ze'ir Anpin*; this time, however, she is in a relationship to *Ze'ir Anpin* which is face-to-face.
- iii. After the *nesirah*, even though *nukva* can **turn towards *Ze'ir Anpin***, she **cannot come face-to-face with *Ze'ir Anpin* until their statures become equal** in the sixth and seventh stages. **This entire process for Luria is essentially the cycle of *sihara*, the moon.**

Intermediate conclusions

In these sources we note the evolution of the feminine energy¹ which occurs during a solar eclipse.

Co-incidence with New Moon of Nisan (Passover is on Full Moon of Nisan – 15 Nisan)

First we shall adduce a midrash specifically regarding the New Moon of Nisan:

On the first of Nisan the moon begins to shine, and she continues to shine until the fifteenth of Nisan, when her disk becomes filled. From the fifteenth until the thirtieth, her light wanes. On the thirtieth, she cannot be seen. So too, is Israel: from Abraham until Solomon there are fifteen generations. Abraham began

to shine, as it is said, ‘Who aroused one from the East...’ (Isa. 41:2).

When Solomon came [after thirteen intervening generations], the moon’s disk became full, as it is said, ‘And Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king’ (1 Chron. 29:23).

The New Moon of Nisan is therefore regarded as an auspicious time for the “evolution of the feminine”.

Returning to the seven stages in Luria’s theory of the evolution of the feminine,

Luria positions the sixth stage of the process in historical time.

This is the secret of what is written in the *Zohar* on *parshat Emor* (3:112) **on the fifteenth of the month, that then the moon is in her fullness...Such is the case on the night of Passover**, the fifteenth of the

¹“The evolution of the feminine” is not in any way meant to denigrate the masculine energy in the world, nor is it co-identical with gender. Rather, the move is towards restoration of a greater degree of awareness of and harmony between the masculine and feminine poles in all aspect of Reality, in full honor and appreciation of both.

month, for then she turns face-to-face with him, according to the sixth previously mentioned aspect...She then immediately returns to her former state.

In stage six, the two *partzufim* are of equal height. **While this stage is initially reached during the Exodus**, it is achieved on a continual basis—that is to say not only on Shabbat but also during the week—only at the time when Solomon builds the Temple, **the time when the moon was always in its fullness.**

The month of Nisan is therefore conducive to the evolution of the feminine energy.

Conclusion

The juxtaposition of the solar eclipse and the new moon of Nisan provide a nexus in time, *Kairos*, which humankind can leverage at a stage in history in which we are called forth to evolve our consciousness.

A pre-eschaton possibility - Mordechai Lainer

According to Luria, the seventh stage, which is that of two kings sharing the same crown, was not and will never be achieved until the future eschaton. If it had been so during the time of the First Temple, no nation or other tongue could ever again have ruled over us.

While Luria says clearly that the messianic stage, stage seven, is not accessible within pre-eschaton history, for Lainer, stages six and seven to some extent collapse into each other. **According to Lainer, unmediated face-to-face encounter with the *Shekhinah* is a genuine possibility within the present.**

The reader is invited to contemplate the ways in which he or she is called to participate in the harmonizing of the feminine and masculine poles of Reality.

L'Shem Yichud Kud'sha Brich'Hu U'Shechinteh