

## The Name – quotes (first chapter)

By Michal Govrin

With the help of God... Today is nine days,  
which is one week and two days of the Omer.  
Power of Power.

*May it be Your will, HaShem, Holy Name, my God and God of my fathers, that in the merit of the Omer Count that I have marked today, there may be corrected whatever blemish I have made in the Sefirah Power of Powers. May I be cleansed and sanctified with the Holiness of Above, and through this may abundant bounty flow in all the worlds. And may it correct our lives, our spirits, our souls from all sediment and blemish, may it cleanse us and sanctify us with Your exalted holiness.*

*Amen!*

*May it be Your will, HaShem, Holy Name, my God and God of my fathers, that my prayer come before Thee. For You hear the prayer of each mouth.*

*May You accept me with love and desire. May my little bit of fat and blood diminished today be as fat placed upon the altar before You. And may You want me.*

If only it could end here. If only my sacrifice were complete, and my expiation full before I finish the task. May You at night force my hands to completion, as I shall attempt in the day to complete the holy task of weaving. *To You and to You.* With devotion.

When the pages are opened from their binding, my soul will be one with the weave of the Torah Curtain. A blue sky of secrets and woven silk bindings. Your kiss.

Another forty days. And the body is already burning in Your fire.

Another forty days. To lead the end of the thread, back and forth, to wind it around the slabs of the spools, to empty it sheaf by sheaf on the warp beam, to thread it string by string through the eyes of the rake, the eyes of the thresher, the comb, the tracks, to tie it tightly, loop by loop, between the frame of the loom. Another forty days to pass cord by cord the plaiting of the woof in the trembling of the warp. Another forty days at last, with outstretched arms. Toward You. Body to body and breath to breath.

The night is dim. And the big vaulted room, too, is almost completely dark. I've placed the table next to the window, and we are surrounded only by the ring of light from the single lamp. The rest of the room is here and not here. Better like this. Stronger. The Torah Curtain is hung, warp threads empty and stretched from side to side across the back of the loom; its murmur is coming up here, blending with the thin rustle of dust rising

from the desert and scattering on the stones of the sill, on the lintel of the window. And around me, on the table, the pages. And in the cabinet, the closed boxes of photographs. I'm not yet sure I'll need them, that I'll look at them again before I finish. Meanwhile, all I have to do is run my finger (always with the same amazement) along the eyebrows, the slope of the nose, the fold of the lips, to press the muscle of the tongue to the caves of the cheeks, the bones of the palate. Curved soft clay. A piece of clay You created and You will take.

Oh, the consuming longing to break through. To run right to the end of the thread. To break off all at once. To sink even now into devotion of body and soul. To be concealed in Your arms, even now. Such pleasure...

(And thoughts of little faith, of great anger, embroil my limbs. If only You would call me at once, and not ask me for repentance! If only and at once You would enfold me in Your garb and want me.)

The slack clay of the frightened body is fevered. And Your fire is burning inside me. In forty days, I shall be extinguished ashes on Your altar.

The night is dim. The room is almost completely steeped in darkness. Only a thin light comes, perhaps from the windows on the alley. I hope none of my Arab neighbors sees the movement of the shadow and thinks that here, inside, I'm awake. No, I'm not afraid of them. What do I have to do anymore with dread? But I just don't want, don't want their looks flooded with darkness to linger on the windows of my room, don't want anybody in the world to think about me now, not even the one who may be going down the sleeping alley, raising his eyes to the vaults of the windows.

Everything is ready with me. With complete devotion. Until the last of the Days of the Counting, until Kingdom of Kingdom. Until the last coupling of purity.

*And may it be Your to accept me with love and desire. And may it be Your will to answer my plea. And may it be Your will that my little bit of fat and blood be like fat and blood placed on the altar before You.*

*And may You want me.*