

FEELING THE KNOWING

there!

*all the war-torn clichés
are born again unspeaking
all the unstill words
still tingling from the spine
electric.*

there!a

a New Moon over Jerusalem!

there!

*feeling the knowing
that this beautiful silver sliver
is the shining under the door
of a great palace of Light.*

There!

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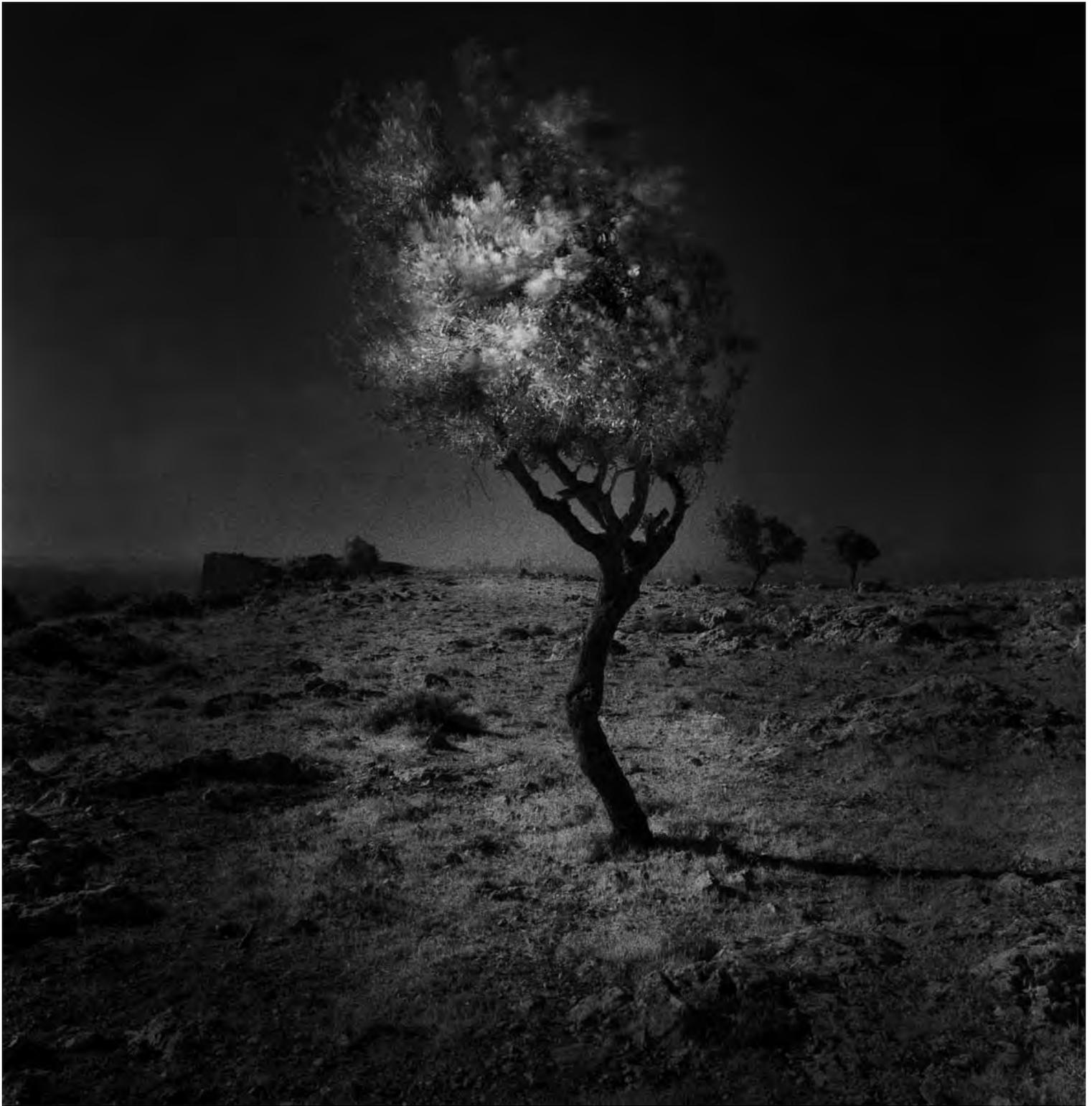
Ancient Synagogue, Gush Chalav, 2004



ARIES - THE MONTH OF NISSAN



The Tomb of Rebbe Yehuda HaNasi, Beit Shearim, 2003



Olive Tree on the Way to Jericho, 2003

GEMINI - THE MONTH OF SIVAN





The Tomb of Shammai, 2004

HEARING IS BELIEVING

Hearing and seeing are very different. Seeing operates as close to instantaneously as we can discern. Traveling at 186,000 miles per second, light is the fastest thing in the universe. Sound is comparatively slow, moving at about 800 miles an hour. We experience these different speeds when a plane breaks the sound barrier. A plane traveling at more than 800 mph causes a “sonic boom.” We hear the sound of the plane breaking the sound barrier only after we see it passing over us.

There is, however, a more fundamental difference between sight and sound than their relative speeds. When we see a photograph, we perceive it as a complete whole instantaneously. After this first sight, we may “walk around” the details of the picture, analyzing it in greater detail, focusing on one element and then another. The essence of vision, however, is that we perceive a complete entity in a single instant. Hearing, on the other hand, is only understood as a sequence. Our brains order discrete pieces of information, giving them substance and definition. No sound can exist without time. No word can be said or understood, no note of music played or enjoyed, without a certain expansion into time. Thus, we receive sound in a time frame, and we assemble the pieces to form sounds and syllables, notes and music, thoughts and ideas. The process of sound assembly is not instant. We have to construct and organize the input we receive from our ears.

Another thing: When you listen to a recording of a lecture, the ambient noise of the room can be very distracting. At the time of the lecture, you weren't aware of the constant drone of the traffic in the background, the noise of the fans and the air conditioner. On tape, however, those extraneous sounds vie for your attention. A sound recorder is not the human ear. It is an indiscriminate “vacuum cleaner” of sound. The human ear, however, takes only the elements of the sound that it requires. It “hears” — it discriminates, assembles, and creates a “sound picture.”

Twice daily, I cover my eyes and recite, “*Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad* — Hear, O Israel! Hashem our God, Hashem is One.” The Shema is my twice-daily declaration of God's absolute Unity, and the last words to leave my lips when I pass from this world.

But when I say, “Hear, O Israel,” what am I supposed to hear? Why don't I say, “Look, O Israel”? or “Know, O Israel”? How am I supposed to “hear” that “God is One?” What does God's Unity sound like? Nothing in the Torah is coincidental or merely poetic. If the Torah says, “Hear, O Israel!” there must be some essential connection between the sense of hearing and the belief that God is One.



Meah Shearim, Jerusalem, 2008



Shoshanat Yaakov, Jerusalem, 2000

THOUGHTS FROM ELSINORE

*moon-dreams
ebb and flow
on a timeless shore.
there must be a million pebbles
in front of me,
but i pick one up
and toss it in the sea,
just to rearrange eternity,
to be or not to be.*



Music from Beyond, 2007



Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 2004

THE MOON IN THE MAN

*you have left Your Footprints
in the highlands of Mann.
the still-rocks still-luminesce Your One Small Step
in this un-tranquility base.
Your Singular Stamp marks
every Landing
every Encounter
close
with the Unseen Hand.
only You can put
the moon in the man.*





Man in the Moon, Temple Mount, Jerusalem, 2007