

Blessings we call whole<sup>1</sup>

In silence he began alone.  
Before the incantation of sources  
He went to the well himself  
Listened<sup>2</sup>  
Placed a mark on his forehead  
Practiced remembering this way.<sup>3</sup>  
With the help of a holy fellowship of similarly gifted souls<sup>4</sup>  
Drawn to the same sources  
They could not have been more different in all other ways.  
When they ended their days of preparation  
They gave away what they had been given.

This they called teaching.

james stone goodman

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<sup>1</sup> Wholeness, she-lei-mut [shalom], comes through the vehicle of blessing.

It is the inner point of truth. -- Sefat Emet (The Language of Truth), on Noah

<sup>2</sup> In seeking wisdom, begin with silence, then listening, remembering practicing, teaching. -- Shlomo ibn Gavirol, Spanish – Jewish poet-philosopher, eleventh century.

<sup>3</sup> In a Rebbe Nachman story, the King is told by his advisor that the wheat of this year's crop causes those who eat of it to go crazy. The advisor says, I have some wheat stashed away from last year's crop. We'll eat the same wheat as everyone else, the King says, but we'll mark our foreheads to remind us that we are insane.

<sup>4</sup> Bar Yochai was part of a group of ten called Chevraya, *Sefer HaZohar*, the Book of Splendor, is a record of their conversations: "If we had come into the world only to hear these words, it would have been enough."