

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON PARSHAS BEREISHIS - 5757

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From: [jr@sco.COM](mailto:jr@sco.COM) (Josh Rapps) [mj-ravtorah@shamash.org](mailto:mj-ravtorah@shamash.org)  
Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Parshas Breishis

On the passuk "Vayishmu Es Kol Hashem Elokim Mishalech Bagan Leruach Hayom" (3:8) the Rav discussed the word Mishalech based on 3 different interpretations: 1) Rabbeinu Yonah explains that man heard the sound of Hashem while he, man, was walking around in the garden. 2) The Ibn Ezra explains that the word Mishalech is describing the Kol Hashem, that the sound of Hashem was extending and spreading through the garden. 3) The Ramban explains the word Mishalech as indicating accompanying, being present. The Shechina will be ever present no matter where man may go. Adam felt the presence of Hashem in garden.

All three interpretations lead to the same conclusion: there is hope for man no matter how enveloped in wickedness he may be. The empty feeling and frustrations that the wicked derives from his action will drive him back to Hashem. The hopeless realization that his present path in life will not succeed is always there pushing him to repent and return to Hashem. This is what the Passuk means:

"Shalom Shalom Larachok Vlakarov... Vhareshaim Kayam Nigrash Ki Hasheket Lo Yuchal Vayigrishu Miyamav Refesh Vtyt".

There is no peace of mind for the wicked. They are never content with their actions and way of life. This gnawing emptiness can eventually bring him back to the Derech Hashem and Torah. All 3 interpretations are hinting at this fundamental concept.

B'S'D' The sin of eating from the Eitz Hadaas was that Adam thought that he could throw off the yoke of Hashem, that he could write his own Shulchan Aruch, so to speak, so he could follow his own conscience. Man wanted to be Gd-like in the knowledge of good and evil.

Rabbeinu Yonah explained that man was walking the way he saw fit, as if he was the master of the garden, showing that he was the master of his destiny. But as he was walking around, he could not escape the sound of Hashem, who he recognized was the true master of everything.

The Ibn Ezra explained that as the Kol Hashem began to spread throughout the garden, bit by bit, man began to realize what he did and the enormity of his actions.

The Ramban explained that Adam could never run away from Hashem, just like the Kol Hashem was always surrounding him. The Shechina never leaves man and it is this constant accompaniment that will bring man completely back to Hashem.

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[ravfrand@torah.org](mailto:ravfrand@torah.org) Reply-to: [dhoffman@clark.net](mailto:dhoffman@clark.net)  
"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Bereishis -

**Man's Innate Need to Evolve**

There is a very fundamental Ramba"n in this week's Parsha on the pasuk [verse] "And G-d formed Man, dust from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils a spirit of life, and Man became a living being" [Bereshis 2:7]. The Ramba"n on this pasuk brings two interpretations of the 'evolution' of the human being.

One interpretation is that there were two stages -- (1) there was the fashioning of Man from the dust and (2) there was the blowing of a spirit of life into his nostrils. At the first stage, he was merely a non-moving body; with the second stage he became a moving body, like all the other animals. Then, the Ramba"n brings a different interpretation, based on a Targum Onkelos. According to this view, even in the first stage Man was already an animate being. However, he lacked the ability to speak. Then, in the second phase, when G-d blew into him the "spirit of life," he became a "talking being."

I once heard Rav Moshe Eisemann offer a beautiful observation on this Ramba"n: According to the second interpretation [that man was already animate in the first stage of creation,] the question can be asked, "Why do we need this 'evolution' altogether? Why couldn't G-d have simply made Man a 'Talking, Walking' human being straight away?"

We see from this Ramba"n, that somehow, it is essential that human beings have development. The creation of mankind was done in this way, so that the person should not be created complete. A person went through development, through stages. He did not come into this world as a 'finished product.'

As a result, this 'evolution' that was present with the original creation of mankind, is still with us today. Human beings, by nature, are not complete. We have this very innate need to grow and develop. We cannot remain stagnant.

Today we hear so much about 'mid-life crises.' People go into a career and after a number of years they see that they are not going to become the Chief Executive Officer. They see that they are not going to make partner at age 35. They see the limits to their lives and they become broken and depressed. They start groping for new paths in their lives.

Why do people feel this need? They feel this need because that is the way people were created by the Ribbono shel Olam, Himself. People are not made complete, they have to have growth -- going and growing from one stage to another.

If a person lives a life of spirituality (ruchniyus), this is an open field for

development. In spirituality, in learning, and in doing acts of kindness, there is always room to grow.

#### Starting With a 'Beis' Rather than an 'Aleph'

There is an interesting Medrash which asks, "Why did the Torah begin with the letter 'Beis'" (rather than with an 'Aleph' -- i.e. "Elokim Bara...")? The Medrash answers that 'Beis' begins the word 'Bracha' (Blessing), while 'Aleph' begins the word 'Arur.' (Curse).

The commentaries on the Medrash point out that this would appear to be a very weak answer. There are numerous words that begin with 'Beis' that have very bad connotations. Likewise, there are many words that begin with 'Aleph' that have very good connotations. Obviously, the Medrash must mean something more.

In Parshas Shlach, Rav Bergman suggests a very beautiful interpretation of this Medrash. The Gemara in Nedarim [40a] says, "If young people among you tell you to build and elders among you tell you to destroy, listen to the old people and destroy, but don't listen to the young people; for the 'building' of the young is destruction and the 'destruction' of the old is building." Rash"i in Megila says that this even refers to the building of the Beis HaMikdash. There is, in fact, a Tosefta to this effect: "If young people tell you to build the Beis HaMikdash, ignore them; but if the elders tell you to destroy the Beis HaMikdash, listen to them..."

Rav Bergman interprets this to mean that old people have the great gift of experience. The Gemara in Kiddushin [33a] says that R. Yochanan stated that he would even honor an old Gentile, because "how many events has he experienced in his life." Therefore, when elders say something, we can be assured that it is based on time honored values and principles that have been passed down through the generations. The 'new generation' that says "don't trust anyone over 30" and advises to start anew and build fresh, should not be listened to. Their 'building', our Sages say, is destruction because it destroys the foundations and the principles of the past.

This is so, even if they say to build the Beis HaMikdash. The Beis HaMikdash can not be built in a vacuum, it has to be built on tradition. The location of the Beis HaMikdash, which was built by Solomon, was a place used for sacrifices by Adam, and by Cayin and Hevel, and by Noah, and by Avraham. The Beis HaMikdash can only be given over to us based on the location and the traditions given over to us by the earlier generations. The Medrash is telling us that a Jew's Torah has to start with a 'Beis' because 'Beis' is Bracha (blessing). The reason is not because the word Bracha begins with 'Beis'. The reason the Torah starts with a 'Beis' is because 'Beis' connotes that there is an Aleph which has preceded it. A Jew must start his Torah, knowing that there has been something that has preceded -- a tradition, a Mesorah. Then, that 'Beis' is a letter of blessing.

But, when a new generation comes and says "start with an 'Aleph'; erase the slate clean; we're going to start anew -- from 'Aleph,'" that, our Sages say, is destruction -- a curse.

#### Personalities:

Ramba"n -- R. Moshe ben Nachman (1194-1270); Gerona, Spain; Eretz Yisroel. One of the major commentaries on Chumash.

Targum Onkelos -- Authorized Aramaic translation of the Torah by the proselyte Onkelos (around 90 c.e.).

R. Moshe Eisemann -- contemporary Rosh Yeshiva and Rav; Baltimore, Md.  
Rav Bergman -- contemporary Rosh Yeshiva; Bnei Brak, Israel.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@scn.org  
Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt, MD dhoffman@clark.net

This list is part of Project Genesis, the Jewish Learning Network.  
learn@torah.org 3600 Crondall Lane, Ste. 106 <http://www.torah.org/>  
Owings Mills, MD 21117 (410) 654-1799 FAX: 356-9931

"ohr@jer1.co.il" "parasha-qa@jer1.co.il"

\* PARSHA Q&A \* In-Depth Questions on the Parsha and Rashi's

commentary.

#### Parsha Questions

1. What happened to the light that was created on the first day?
2. Why isn't the word "good" associated with the second day?
3. How were the trees supposed to taste?
4. On which day were the sun and moon created?
5. Hashem blessed the birds to be fruitful and to multiply. Why did He not do so with the beasts?
6. In whose likeness was man fashioned?
7. Man was created to have dominion over the animals. What happens when he debases himself?
8. What kind of food did Adam eat?
9. Why is "the sixth day" written with the definite article?
10. At the end of the sixth day what was the world still lacking?
11. Why was man made from dust gathered from the entire Earth?
12. How is man superior to the animals?
13. Where do we learn that one must not add to a commandment from Hashem?
14. What does it mean that Adam and Chava "knew that they were naked"?
15. When was Cain born?
16. Why did Hevel choose to be a shepherd?
17. What was the marital practice of the generation who lived before the flood?
18. What did Tuval-Cain invent?
19. Why did Chanoch die at a young age?
20. What was the sign that Shem born with great propensity for righteousness?

Bonus QUESTION: Rabbi Yitzchak said that the Torah should have begun with the first mitzvah given to Israel but instead began with creation. When the nations will claim that the Jewish People stole Eretz Yisrael we will be able to reply that Hashem created the world, and chose to take the Land from the Canaanites and give it to us (Rashi 1:1). If so why do we need all the other stories in Bereishis and Shemos prior to the giving of the first mitzvah?

Recommended Reading List Ramban 1:1 The Need for Bereishis 1:14 The Sun and the Moon 1:26 Man 1:29 Vegetarianism 2:3 Shabbos 2:20 Names 3:16 Punishment of Chava 5:4 Length of Life Sforno 2:3 The Blessing of Shabbos 2:25 Naked and Unshamed 3:17 The Curse of Work 4:26 Calling Out in Hashem's Name 5:1 The Image of Hashem 6:8 Noach Rashbam 1:27 What's Missing? 2:23 The Birth of Chava

Answers to this Week's Questions All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

1. 1:4 - Hashem saw that the wicked would be unworthy of it so He placed it in the World to Come for the righteous.
2. 1:7 - Because the work with the water wasn't completed until the third day.  
Anything that is incomplete is not "good".
3. 1:11 - The wood was to have the taste of the fruit.
4. 1:14 - They were created on the first day and suspended in the firmament on the fourth day.
5. 1:22 - He did not want the serpent, who was to be cursed, to receive a blessing.
6. 1:26 - In the likeness of the angels.
7. 1:26 - His status drops below that of the animals, and thus, they have dominion over him.
8. 1:30 - Man was vegetarian until Noach emerged from the ark.
9. 1:31 - "The" in Hebrew is the letter hey, which has a numerical value of five. Hashem created the world on the condition that it will endure only if the Jewish People accept the Five Books of the Torah.
10. 2:2 - Rest.
11. 2:7 - So that wherever he might die the Earth would receive his body.
12. 2:7 - He was given understanding and speech.

13. 3:3 - From Chava. Hashem commanded not to eat from the tree but she added not to touch it. Because she added to His command she eventually came to transgress it.

14. 3:7 - They had been given one commandment and they had stripped themselves of it.

15. 4:1 - Prior to the expulsion of Adam and Chava from Gan Eden.

16. 4:2 - Since the ground had been cursed he refrained from cultivating it.

17. 4:19 - They took two wives, only one for bearing children.

18. 4:22 - He perfected the work of Cain by making weapons for murder.

Tuval comes from the word "tavlin" (spice).

19. 5:22 - Though he was righteous, he was easily influenced; therefore Hashem took him before his time to protect him from sinning.

20. 5:32 - He was born already circumcised.

Bonus ANSWER: If the Torah had only mentioned the story of creation, then the nations, knowing Hashem's righteousness, would see no reason why He should favor the Jewish People, and they would maintain that our claim to the Land was fabricated. Only upon teaching how the nations angered Hashem and how the Avos and their children came and served Him faithfully, does the Torah show clearly why Hashem chose to take the Land away from other nations and give it to the Jewish People. Gur Aryeh  
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"ohr@jer1.co.il" "weekly@jer1.co.il \* TORAH WEEKLY \*

#### Overview

In the beginning, Hashem creates the entire universe, including time itself, out of nothingness. This process of creation continues for six days. On the seventh day, Hashem rests, bringing into existence the spiritual universe of Shabbos, which returns to us every seven days. Adam and Chava -- the Human pair -- are placed in the Garden of Eden. Chava is enticed by the serpent to eat from the forbidden fruit of the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil," and in turn gives the fruit to Adam. By absorbing "sin" into themselves, Adam and Chava render themselves incapable of remaining in the spiritual paradise of Eden and are banished. Death and hard work (both physical and spiritual) now enter the world, together with pain in childbirth. Now begins the struggle to correct the sin of Adam and Chava, which will be the subject of the history of the world. Cain and Hevel, the first two children of Adam and Chava, bring offerings to Hashem. Hevel gives the finest of his flock, and his offering is accepted, but Cain gives inferior produce and his offering is rejected. In the ensuing quarrel, Cain kills Hevel, and is condemned to wander the earth. The Torah traces the genealogy of the other children of Adam and Chava, and the descendants of Cain until the birth of Noach. After the death of Sheis, Mankind descends into evil, and Hashem decides that He will blot out Man in a flood which will deluge the world. However, one man, Noach, finds favor with Hashem.

#### Insights

First And Last "In the beginning..." (1:1) Beginnings. And endings. The beginning has a quality that the end does not possess, and the end has that which the beginning lacks. Beginning has its strength in quality, but it is weak in quantity. The beginning of something is its source, its root, its central point. It is the powerhouse of its strength, the wellspring of its life-force. On the other hand, ending is strong in quantity, in size, in extent, but it is weak in quality: The end of something represents its maximum span, its fullest extrusion into the physical world - its greatest presence, its most developed incarnation. However its greatest extent is also the weakest expression of its essence: The leaves of a tree may define its ultimate span, but they are also the weakest point of its life-force. The roots, on the other hand, may be hidden, but they contain its very essence. The greatness of an empire is evaluated by its furthest outpost, but it is also there that it is at its weakest, with its lines of supply and communication at full stretch. All this is true in the physical world. But on the spiritual plane, quality and quantity are identical: At the beginning and at the end. This is the hallmark of Shabbos. Shabbos is the end of creation, but it is also its

first purpose and goal. "Last in action; in thought, first." Shabbos has to come after the six working days. And even if you get lost in the desert and forget which day of the week it is, you first count six days and only then keep a day of Shabbos. Not the reverse. But Shabbos is not just the end. For every Shabbos throughout the generations is still called "Shabbos Bereishis" - the first Shabbos - because every Shabbos contains the primal power of the first, of the root. The source of blessing and the root of holiness. Adapted from Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin in L'Torah U'Imoadim

De-Construction "In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and the earth..." (1:1) You drive up to your dream home. It's been two years in the planning, and three to build it. You usher your guests up to the top of the west wing and proudly fling open the doors to the guest suite. The doors bang against their stops. Then a small shudder shakes the house. What sounds like a distant groan starts to get louder and louder and then, before your eyes, the entire west wing parts company with the house and falls away, crashing to the ground like some slow-motion movie. You and your guests are left wide-eyed in horror and disbelief, gazing into fifty feet of nothingness two inches from the ends of your toes. The Torah is the blueprint of the world. Just as a builder takes great pains to study the blueprint of a house before a single bulldozer raises its claws in earnest; just as he measures and calculates and evaluates, slide-rule and calculator at the ready, so too Hashem creates the world from His blueprint - the Torah. It stands to reason therefore, that a Sefer Torah which lacks even one letter is pasul - invalid. For just as one missing line in the plans of a building may lead to the west wing crashing into ruins in front of your eyes, so too one letter missing from a Sefer Torah is as though vast tracts of the universe have been erased. Based on the Chafetz Chaim

Credit Where It's Due "Yet your craving will be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (3:16) The Talmud (Bava Metzia 59a) tells us that when a man honors his wife, it bodes well for the state of his bank account - he will become rich. If you think about it, the reverse should be true. Honoring one's wife with one's credit card is hardly a harbinger of wealth to come. Hashem always rewards us measure for measure. When a man honors his wife, he lightens the punishment that was decreed on her at the time of the sin of Adam and Chava "...and he shall rule over you." So if he lightens her punishment by not behaving like a despot, so Hashem also lightens his punishment - "by the sweat of your brow you shall eat your bread." Instead of having to work hard for a living, Hashem sends him riches, lightening the amount of sweat that it takes to put chicken on the table for Shabbos... and his credit card remains un-dented. In the name of Rabbi Mordechai Druck, heard from Rabbi Calev Gestetner

Sing, My Soul! Insights into the Zemirus sung at the Shabbos table throughout the generations. Ki Eshmera Shabbos - "If We Observe Shabbos..."

"It is an eternal sign between them and Me..." os hi l'olmay ad, bayno uvayni Shabbos is called a sign, explains the Chafetz Chaim, because it is the sign which a Jew hangs on his home to declare that here lives a Jew who believes that Hashem created the world. A craftsman places a sign outside his shop to announce his craft. As long as the sign is there it means that he is still in business even if he occasionally travels. But the moment the sign is removed it signals that he has changed his address. In similar fashion, even if a Jew sometimes leaves his observance of some of the mitzvos, so long as he observes Shabbos this sign announces that he is still at his old address and loyal to Hashem. But if he neglects Shabbos he removes this sign, and announces that he has moved away from his faith. We therefore sing with pride that Shabbos is an "eternal sign" for us.

Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Lev Seltzer (C) 1996 Ohr Somayach International

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"75310.3454@CompuServe.COM "halacha@jer1.co.il"  
SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS BEREISHIS

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

Lighting the Shabbos Candles: Whose obligation is it?

The obligation to light Shabbos Candles rests equally on all members of a household. Chazal established, nevertheless, that it is the wife's responsibility to do the actual lighting. One of the reasons given(1) is that candle-lighting atones for Chava's part in the sin of the Eitz Ha'daas. Chava caused Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit for which mankind was punished by losing its immortality. Thus Chava "extinguished the light of the world" and the woman sets aright Chava's misdeed by assuming the obligation of lighting candles for her household(2).

Consequently:

Even if a husband demands to light candles, the wife has the right to protest and prevent him from doing so(3). It is recommended, nevertheless, that the husband take part in the mitzvah too, by lighting and quickly extinguishing the candle wicks, thus making the candles easier to light(4). The husband should also light candles(5) in other rooms of the house where the wife does not light them(6).

If one has no wife, or if he sees that his wife is running late and will be unable to light on time, then he should light the candles with the blessing(7).

If one's wife is not home for Shabbos, it is preferable that the husband himself light candles and not one of the daughters(8). If, however, a daughter who is over 12 years old lit for him, he fulfills the Mitzvah through her lighting. One cannot, however, fulfill his obligation by having a daughter under 12 light candles for him(9).

In the event that a brother and sister are at home without their parents, it is preferable that the sister light the candles(10).

Years ago, it was customary for a woman who gave birth not to light candles on the first Friday night after giving birth. For that one Shabbos, candles were lit by the husband(11). There are various reasons given for this custom(12). In view of conditions prevalent nowadays, however, many Poskim agree that the custom is no longer valid and the wife should light candles as she does every Friday night(13).

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The Shabbos Candles: Whose custom should a wife follow?

QUESTION: In regard to Shabbos candle-lighting, whose customs should a woman follow, her husband's or her mother's?

DISCUSSION: There is a general rule that once a woman gets married, she must follow her husband's customs. This applies to all customs, both leniencies and stringencies. Since, through marriage, the woman enters into her husband's domain, she must follow his customs as well(14).

It is possible, though, that there may be an exception to this rule in regard to Shabbos candle lighting. Many women follow the example set by their mothers when it comes to issues such as the number of candles to light, the appropriate time to light candles on Yom Tov, and other custom-related matters or practices. Often, their husbands do not object, even though their own mothers followed a different custom. Is this contrary to the aforementioned rule?

It seems that there is an Halachical source for this practice. It is customary for many women to recite the blessing of Shehechyanu when they light candles for Yom Tov. Although this custom has no source or basis in Halacha, indeed, it may be Halachically objectionable(15), it has nevertheless become almost universally accepted.

Rav Yaakov Emden(16) reports that he personally objects to this custom. Indeed, he rules that if a woman does not have a specific custom to recite a Shehechyanu at candle-lighting time, she should not do so.

Nevertheless, he says, his wife - who saw/learned this custom in her parent's home - does so, and he does not object. Since it is not clearly wrong, he does not feel compelled to reject her Minhag, which she witnessed at her home.

Surely, Rav Yaakov Emden was well aware that upon marriage, a woman ought to change her customs to follow her husband's. Still, he did not insist that his wife abandon her parents custom and adopt his own. As long as the custom did not contradict the Halacha, he allowed her to maintain the custom of her parent's home.

A possible explanation is that Rav Yaakov Emden held that the customs pertaining to candle-lighting are an exception to the general rule. Since, as mentioned above, Chazal made it the woman's responsibility to light candles, it becomes "her" Mitzvah, to be followed according to her customs(17). Apparently, it is not incumbent upon the husband to insist that his wife alter all the customs which she learned from her mother. Although she may do so if she likes, she is not required to do so(18).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Tur OC 263.

2 Some families have the custom that all the womenfolk light candles and make a blessing over them - Aruch Hashulchan 263:7. This was also the custom at the home of the Brisker Rov - Harav Dovid Soloveitchik (quoted in Az Nidberu 6:68).

3 Aruch Hashulchan 263:7.

4 Mishnah Berurah 263:12; 264:28

5 Or electric lights - see Halacha Discussion to Parashas Shoftim for clarification.

6 Shulchan Aruch Harav 263:5; Ktzos Hashulchan 74 (Badei Hashulchan 11). See also Biur Halacha 263:6

7 Mishnah Berurah 262:11.

8 Oral ruling by Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in The Radiance of Shabbos pg. 7); Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 43:fn46.

9 Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 43:7.

10 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 45:fn34).

11 Mishna Berura 263:11.

12 See Toras Shabbos 263:4; Tehilla L'Dovid 88:3; Aruch Hashulchan 263:7; Hagahos Imrei Baruch 263:6.

13 Oral ruling by Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in The Radiance of Shabbos pg. 7) Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 43:9.

14 Igros Moshe OC 1:158; EH 1:59; Minchas Yitzchok 4:83; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Yom Tov Sheini Khilchaso pg. 187).

15 See Halacha Discussion on Parshas Bamidbar.

16 Shu"t Yaavetz 107.

17 See Igros Moshe EH 2:12 (concerning a husband who held that a wig is not enough of a hair cover) that the wife does not need to listen to him since this is "her" Halacha. See also Igros Moshe EH 4:100-4.

18 According to Harav S.Z. Auerbach (ibid) a husband may allow his wife to keep her former customs in all cases. For instance, she does not have to change her Nusach of Davening after her marriage.

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peninim bereishis <http://194.90.124.37/parsha/peninim/index.htm>

Peninim on the Torah

Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Bereishis

"And Hashem said, 'Let the earth cover itself with vegetation, plants that reproduce through seeds, fruit trees that are fruit...'" Rashi comments that Hashem had planned that the tree would have the same taste as the fruit. The

earth disobeyed, generating trees that bore fruit, but which were not themselves fruit. Consequently, Hashem punished the earth together with man. The commentators explain that prior to the time that natural law was definitely established, Hashem had granted the earth an element of "creative" freedom. In addition, as the Rambam states in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah, the various parts of creation have a living soul and consciousness of their own existence.

Horav Eli Munk, zl, cites the Chizkuni, who offers the earth's rationale for defying Hashem's command. The earth's sin originated in a feeling which was grounded in reality, although unjustified in its intensity. The earth, aware that Hashem wanted to propagate the world and preserve the species, reasoned that one day humans would need large quantities of food to survive. Because patience is not a natural human virtue, people would not be inclined to wait many years until a tree grows strong and produces an abundance of fruit. Rather, they would fell the trees prematurely in order to use them as fruit, thereby decimating the trees rapidly. Thus, if Hashem creates the taste of the tree to be distinct from the taste of the fruit, people would not destroy the trees. Horav Munk notes that the first sin within creation was one of "an excess of righteousness." The earth second-guessed Hashem! This is the principle which Shlomo Ha'Melech decries in Koheles 7:16, "Be not overly righteous or excessively wise." When man succumbs to self-imposed and unrequired restrictions, he is asserting that he is wiser than the Creator.

As a result of this infraction, the ideal state - in which the tree and its fruit would have the same taste - was never realized. Since that time, creation has suffered from a state of imperfection in which substance is not in harmony with form, reflecting an integral antagonism between them. This is all because of an attitude that has plagued us since creation, an excess of righteousness. Hashem Yisborach has informed us through our Torah and its codes what is right and what is wrong. To attempt to add to His mandate is not only foolish, but it is also wrong, and likely to produce tragic results.

"And Hashem said, 'Let us make man.'" (1:26) Shlomo Ha'Melech teaches us in Koheles 12:13, "When all is said and done, fear Hashem,... for that is the sum of man." This is a remarkable statement! One who does not fear Heaven is an animal! Is the fear of G-d the true determining factor in one's humanness? Perhaps it is a component in his physical makeup, but is it not bold to say that this is the primary, the sole factor, in his characterization as a human being?

Horav Elchanan Wasserman, zl, claims that, indeed, one's humanness is in direct proportion to his fear of G-d. The more devout one is, the greater a man he is. One who is devoid of Heavenly fear, one who has the arrogance and gall to assert that he has no fear of G-d, is nothing more than an animal! He cites the Zohar Ha'Kadosh to support his position.

The Zohar teaches us a fascinating thought, one that offers a new perspective towards understanding the human condition. Hashem invited all of creation to participate in the creation of man. Each animal contributed an element of his own personality to man's overall constitution. In this manner man became a composite of all of the animals' characteristics. He had within him the personality of the snake, the lion, the ox, the mule, etc. Within man exists the power of intelligence and speech, coupled with all of the destructive forces of each animal. Thus, man has the potential to become the most dangerous animal in the world! Have we not witnessed man's capacity for destruction, man's evil, his lack of compassion, his propensity toward treachery? A single trait restrains man from reverting to his primitive and base instinct -- Yiraas Shomayim, his fear of Hashem. It is neither his intelligence or emotion, only his fear of G-d limits his animalistic tendencies and maintains his humanness. Indeed, man's fear of G-d restrains him from destroying himself, as well as the world in which he lives.

"And Hashem said, 'Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.'" (1:26) This pasuk has been the source of abundant commentary. The plural form, "us," seems to imply that Hashem consulted with others. Did the Almighty need assistance in order to create man? Chazal teach us that when Moshe wrote the Torah, he came to this pasuk and noticed the

plural word "us." He asked Hashem, "Master, why give heretics the opportunity to claim that there is more than one G-d?" Hashem responded, "Write! And whoever wants to err will err. Write, for if a great man ever says, 'Why should I consult with others?' they will tell him, 'Learn from the Creator, Who consulted with the angels.'"

The Torah prefers to use an expression which might be misconstrued by polytheists, rather than refrain from teaching an important moral lesson. Indeed, a number of pesukim in the Torah could be misinterpreted. Schools of Bible criticism have based their entire "religious" perspective -- or lack thereof -- upon their ability to cast aspersions upon the authenticity of the Torah. Hashem's response to these spiritual aberrations is, "Let those who want to err -err!" It is more important to present the Torah in its pristine form, so that the Talmud can explain its ambiguities, than to attempt to satisfy the heretics. When all is said and done, they do not desire to be satisfied. Those Jews who look for any excuse to shirk their responsibility as Jews will arrive at a false interpretation -because this is what they are seeking. The Torah is written for the faithful - who ask no questions.

The Maasei Hashem posits that Hashem is speaking here to man. While other creatures reach their potential by virtue of natural law, man is rational. Through his education and will - he plays an integral role in what he becomes. He has within his power the strength to raise himself to the zenith of spirituality or to lower himself to the nadir of depravity. It is all up to him. Hence, when Hashem says, "Let us make man," He means, "Do what you have the capacity to do. I have endowed you with intelligence. I have imbued you with a holy soul. You are capable of becoming the kind of man that I intended - now do it!" To maximize one's potential is truly an extension of the work of Creation. To sit around and waste our G-d-given gifts is not only tragic, it also runs counter to Hashem's plan.

"And, Hashem, Elokim, formed the man of dust from the ground." (2:7)

Chazal call attention to the fact that the word *rmhhu* is spelled with a double "yud". They infer from this exceptional case the dual nature of man. Two yetziros, creations, came into being. Man is a composite of mortal and immortal, earthly and heavenly, the *yetzer tov*, the good inclination, and the *yetzer hora*, its evil counterpart. He is created for *Olam Ha'zeh*, this temporal world, and *Olam Ha'bah*, the Eternal world. Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, notes that while there are two "yudin," only one "yud" is enunciated. One *yetzira* is audible while the other is quiescent. One is predominant, while the other remains subordinate. It is present, somewhat removed, but not totally dismissed. The most noble of men, the one who has reached the apex of spirituality, still belongs to the earth; in contrast, one may still observe a ray of spirituality, shining through even in the lowest of men.

Chazal enlighten us with the idea that right from the beginning man is endowed with these two tendencies. Nothing Hashem has created is evil. The difference lies in how one makes use of his gift. Each inclination can be used to serve the ideal of purity and holiness. Only the misguided who believe that the sensual world has not originated from Hashem. Indeed, a whole religion has fallen prey to this belief - to the point that the concept, "be fruitful and multiply," the first mitzvah given to man, is "below" the dignity of its priests. In Judaism, both inclinations are considered to be the work of Hashem. Man is a unique creation in whom the Divine and the mundane, heavenly and earthly, spiritual and material, the immortal and the mortal, join together to serve their Creator.

"And Hashem, Elokim, fashioned the side that He had taken from the man into a woman." (2:22) The Midrash teaches us that Hashem "deliberated" before He created the first woman. Everything is influenced by the source from which it is created. Consequently, Hashem arranged it so that woman would not be created from any part of the body which would have an adverse affect upon her. He said, "If I create her from the head, she might become lightheaded. If I create her from the eyes, she might be overly curious, looking where she should not. If I create her from the ears, she might be predisposed to listen to gossip. If I create her from the mouth, she might be

overly talkative. If I create her from the heart, she might be overly jealous. If I create her from the hands, she might be constantly touching things. If I create her from the feet, she might wander." Hashem, therefore, decided to create her from the rib, which is doubly covered by a layer of skin and clothing. He wanted the woman to be a tznuah, modest and chaste.

Not only did Hashem want woman to be intrinsically free of any negative traits, He created her with a specific goal - to be a tznuah. Horav Yitzchak Goldwasser, Shlita, infers from Chazal that tznius for a woman is not merely one more area through which she is to serve Hashem; rather, it symbolizes her inherent personality, which she is to refine and dignify. Implicit in woman's creation was a mandate for her to develop a specific trait of human personality to its maximum - tznius. She was created with the capacity to excel in this area! Horav Goldwasser cites the Talmud Sotah 2a in which Chazal declare, "They only pair a woman with a man according to his deeds." As it says in Tehillim 125, "For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous." In interpreting the phrase, "according to his deeds," Rashi comments, "A tznuah to a tzaddik and a prutzah to a rasha." He seems to equate "righteous" with tznius and "wicked" with promiscuity. This implies that the determining factor for women regarding their virtuous standing -- or lack thereof -- is compliance with the Torah code of tznius!

This idea, suggests Horav Goldwasser, lends meaning to the pasuk at the end of Mishlei, "A woman of valor who can find? Far beyond pearls is her value." Why does Shlomo Ha'Melech choose pearls as opposed to other types of precious jewels? The answer lies in the Hebrew word for pearls - penimim - which alludes to panim, inner being. The pasuk tells us that a woman's greatest virtue is "penimah," her innerself, not her ability to capture the attention of the public eye. This coincides with the pasuk in Tehillim 45, "The glory of the daughter of the king lies on the inside." The true grandeur and majesty of every Jewish woman are not manifest in the public domain, but rather - penimah - through dimensions of the inner self. It is not necessary for her to have public acclaim in order to achieve her recognition. She does not have to emerge from that which today's hedonistic society considers to be an archaic imposed seclusion from the outside world in order to attain recognition.

The quest for identity, liberation and self-assertion most often originates from feelings of inner-discontent, and low self-esteem. Because the secular soul is so empty, one feels obligated to compensate for it by seeking public identity, either through a multitude of relationships or through careers and experiences. The Jewish woman should not feel this need, if she truly understands her mission in life. Our vacuous society has stereotyped the Jewish woman as a non-entity whose goal in life is to be subservient in a male-oriented society. This notion can only exist in a society that is far removed from religion and G-d. The central motif in Judaism is that all actions take place before Hashem, Who is the source of all value. The concept of "public" approval pales in comparison with Hashem's approval. The Jewish woman shapes and guards the Jewish home. She has the fundamental responsibility to create an atmosphere which expresses the vibrancy of the Torah way of life. Torah is not something which is taught; it must be lived! This "living" is the creation of the Jewish wife and mother. Her success or failure is manifest by her children. Indeed, the stamp she leaves on her home expresses her uniqueness and individuality. This is the Torah's idea of self-definition. Can one demonstrate a greater sense of success?

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"kornfeld@netmedia.net.il" "parasha-page@jerl.co.il"

The Weekly Internet

P A R A S H A - P A G E

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--- by Mordecai Kornfeld of Har Nof, Jerusalem (kornfeld@jerl.co.il)

This week's Parasha-Page is being sponsored by Melissa Gordon of Las Vegas, Nevada. May she be blessed by the Creator of all to continue to grow in her understanding of Hashem's Torah. \*\*\* Please contact me if you would like to dedicate a Parasha-Page. Spread Torah through the farthest reaching medium in all of history!

Parashat Bereishit 5757

ALL FOR ME! This is the story of the offspring of Adam; on the day that Hashem created man, he created him in the image of G-d... Adam lived for 130 years, and then he had a child... Seth. (Bereishit 5:13)

"Love your neighbor as yourself (Vayikra 19:18)," said Rebbi Akiva, is an invaluable guide to Torah observance. [Shimon] ben Azzai said, "This is the story of the offspring of man," is an even more valuable guide! (Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:4 -- see also Bereishit Rabba end of Ch. 24)

It is readily understandable why Rebbi Akiva chose "Love your neighbor" as a general guide to the Mitzvot of Hashem. The Gemara (Shabbat 31a) relates that Hillel, the temporal leader of Israel, summed up the entire Torah in one sentence by saying "Don't do to your friend what you wouldn't want done to yourself." Following the Golden Rule will invariably lead a person towards the performance of Hashem's Mitzvot -- Mitzvot that are themselves intended to teach a person to be considerate towards his fellow man (see Parasha-Page, Kedoshim 5756). What lesson, however, did Shimon ben Azzai learn from the words, "The story of man's offspring" that brought him to invoke its importance so emphatically? Numerous suggestions are offered by the commentaries, but let us examine an original approach based on the teachings of a Mishnah in Sanhedrin.

## II

Why was man created by Hashem single [and instead of being created along with him, the rest of mankind descended from him]? To teach that if one causes the loss of a single Jewish soul, it is as if he has destroyed an entire world and if one rescues a single Jewish soul, it is as if he has rescued an entire world.

Every person should therefore feel as though the entire world was created only for him [-- that is, he should tell himself, "I'm as important as an entire world! Why should I degrade myself by transgressing a command of the Torah?" In this manner, he will never sin]. (Mishnah, Sanhedrin 37a, and Rashi)

If a person maintains a proper self esteem, he will never even consider sinning. If he views himself as the sole center of his Creator's attention, he won't be affected by an environment of sin and sinners. All of creation was intended to be an arena for the final creation -- mankind. Similarly, all of mankind is meant to be the supporting actors for the one true man of G-d. It wasn't only when Adam was created that a single individual was the focus of the entire world; such is the case in every generation:

"Fear Hashem, observe his Mitzvot, because that is what mankind is all about," quoted Rebbi Elazar. The entire world was only created in order for one who does that such a person (i.e., one who fears Hashem) to come along. Rebbi Abba Bar Kahana said: This person is as important as all the rest of the world.

\*Shimon ben Azzai\*, or Shimon ben Zoma, said: The entire world was only created to be companions for this person. (Berachot 6b)

Ben Zoma once stood on the Temple Mount and observed from there a crowd of some 600,000 Jews. "Blessed be Hashem," he exclaimed, "who created all of these people just to serve me!" (Berachot 58a)

All of existence was intended simply as a backdrop for mankind. Perhaps this is what Chazal meant when they described the "dimensions" of Adam:

Rebbi Elazar said: Adam was from the earth until the heavens...

Rav Yehudah related from the teachings of Rav: Adam was from one end of the world to the other end... (Chagigah 12a)

Adam was as important as all the rest of creation, and so is the true servant of Hashem. All the members of humankind that do not recognize and

serve their creator are playing a role secondary to the truly G-d fearing individual. (See also Rambam, in his Introduction to the Mishnah, who brilliantly develops this theme in his lengthy analysis of a Gemara in Berachot 8a.) This is the lesson that ben Azzai learned from our verse. "This is the story of the offspring of man" -- all living men stem from a single man, Adam. Let a person be aware that the entire world was created for him if he remains true to the Torah way. In ben Azzai's opinion, this verse is "an even more valuable guideline" than loving one's neighbor. It is important to love others, but it is more important not to let those others affect one's own service of Hashem. Regardless of what others teach us, say to us, or do to us, we have a mission to fulfill. Don't just remember how important \*others\* are, let us remember who \*we\* are!

### III

This explains an enigmatic teaching on another verse in Parshat Bereishit: "These are the happenings that occurred to the heavens and the earth 'when they were created' [B'hibaram]" (Bereishit 2:4) - Don't read the word as "B'hibaram," but [rearrange the world's lettering and read it as] "B'avraham" -- for Avraham. In Avraham's merit the world was created. (Bereishit Rabba 12:9).

How can the world have been created in the merit of one who hadn't yet come into being? And what hint did our Rabbis find in this verse to Avraham? They certainly wouldn't have suggested this play on words had they not seen a hint to Avraham in the text (as has been demonstrated in earlier Parasha-Pages -- see Parshat Ki-Tetze 5754). What we have prefaced allows us to understand these words. In this verse too, the Torah emphasizes that the entire world was created for but one man to work it and develop it (see the continuation of the chapter, Bereishit 2:5-25). Similarly, at any given period of time the entire world may be designed for a single individual's fulfillment. This is the allusion to Avraham, for it is just such a theme that is demonstrated by Avraham Avinu. The Mishnah tells us in Avot (5:3), "There were ten generations between Noah and Avraham... and they all continually angered Hashem. Along came Avraham, and he made it all worthwhile." It was in order to produce one Avraham that Hashem allowed ten generations of sinners to pass. "Single was Avraham" (Yechezkel 33:24). Avraham was indeed the single focus of Hashem's attention in the world -- and he knew it. He was not going to allow the sinners of the generation to cause a decline in his status!

"rmk@torah.org" "drasha@torah.org"

DRASHA PARSHAS BREISHIS EVE OF LIFE 10/11/96 Volume 3 Issue 1

Doom and despair and destruction. It all happened so fast after the promises of an idyllic life. And all from two bites of the forbidden fruit. Man, who was promised eternal bliss in the Garden of Eden is now cursed with a plethora of misfortunes. He must toil by the sweat of his brow, work an earth that will produce thorn and thistle. His wife must bear the pain of childbirth with all of its physiological implications. All these are crowned with the most powerful malediction that "you are of dust and to dust you shall return.

But it seems that Adam takes all the news in proper perspective. In the verse that immediately follows the curses, Adam does not spread blame or lament his fate. He continues developing civilization exactly where he left off. Prior to his meeting Eve and partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam began classifying all living things with names that appropriately described their attributes. After the curses he continues. He names his wife. "Adam called his wife Chava because she was the mother of all life." (Genesis 3:20)

Isn't it unsuitable for Adam to name his wife Chava -- the mother of all life -- immediately following the curse of death? What message is the Torah sending us with that juxtaposition?

Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was known for his love and good will toward his fellow Jews always trying to assess the good in people rather than expose the bad.

Once on the Fast of Tish'a B'av he saw a Jew eating in a non-kosher restaurant. He tapped lightly on the window of the establishment and

summoned the man outside.

"Perhaps you forgot that today is a fast day?" Rav Levi Yitzchok queried.

"No, Rebbe," the man replied.

"Then perhaps you did not realize that this restaurant is not kosher."

"No, Rebbe, I know it is a traife (non-kosher) eatery."

Rav Levi Yitzchok softly placed his hands on the man's shoulders and looked heavenward. "Ribbono Shel Olam, Master of the Universe," he exclaimed.

"Look at how wonderful your children are. They may be eating on a fast day. In a non-kosher restaurant to boot. Yet they refuse to emit a falsehood from their lips!"

Adam heard the curse bestowed upon himself, his wife, and humanity for eternity. His immediate reaction was not scorn or criticism. He named his wife Chava, derived from the word life. He viewed the woman whom he had once blamed for his downfall with a different perspective. He saw only the eve of life -- and thus named her so. After tragedy and defeat there is enough blame to share and spread. Adam picked up the pieces and cherished the beauty of what was left.

He did not see himself on the eve of destruction. He saw himself standing at the dawn of life. And he appreciated that life dearly.

Mordechai Kamenetzky - Yeshiva of South Shore rmk@yoss.org

<http://www.yoss.org>

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Bereishit 5757 BEREISHIT

by Rabbi Yehudah Shaviv

Every literary work, whether oral or written, starts with an introduction. After much thought, it is sometimes possible to word a sentence that paves the way for the entire work that follows. If this is true for a human endeavor, how much more so must it be true of the creation of the Almighty. It is therefore incumbent on us to expend the required effort to correctly understand the first words of the Torah.

Some books of the Bible begin by introducing the author and presenting an abstract of what is to follow. For example: "This is the vision of Yeshayahu son of Amotz, who saw prophecies about Yehudah and Jerusalem" [Yeshayahu 1:1]; "These are the proverbs of Shlomo son of David, king of Jerusalem" [Mishlei 1:1]. Thus, it might be expected that the Torah might start with an introduction of the author, something like: "I am your G-d, who took you out of Egypt" [Shemot 20:2].

This might be the basis of what happened when seventy scholars were asked to translate the Torah to Greek, "G-d gave the same idea to each and every one, and they changed the order, and wrote: 'G-d created in the beginning'" [Megillah 9a]. According to the Tosafot, "The Greeks were convinced that the name of the creator must appear first." But even when the passage is written in this way, the emphasis still appears to be the creation and not the creator. According to Rashi, the first passage is an introductory clause and does not stand alone. Thus, the meaning is, "In the beginning of G-d's creation of heaven and earth ..." According to this interpretation, there is no introduction at all.

It may be that it is impossible to begin with a description of the author, who is "invisible, infinite in His oneness ... there can be no comparison to His holiness" [from the prayer, "Yigdal"]. The only thing that remains is to achieve some minimum understanding by looking at the world that He created, and this is what is described in the beginning of the Torah.

>From another point of view, the opening word, "In the beginning," is highly significant. The very use of the word implies that there is a purpose and progress to be achieved. The fact that the world has a beginning that was established by the creator gives meaning to existence. Even if man feels that his part in the creation is insignificant, and that all of his accomplishments

are worth nothing more than a tiny speck of dust, he may be consoled by the fact that it is all part of a great system that was planned and executed by the Almighty Himself.

In addition, the beginning described here does not occur only once. As part of our daily prayers, we give praise to "He who renews daily the acts of the beginning." Events that occur in the "middle" of history can sometimes return us to the starting point, when it was possible to influence the outcome.

**THE TORAH PORTION AND ERETZ YISRAEL: Is Perat a River or a Stream?** by Rabbi Eliezer Gur-Arieh

"And the fourth river is Perat" [Bereishit 2:14]. However, the above title may still be correct in implying that Perat is a stream. In this case, we are referring to a stream that flows from Anatot (near Jerusalem) to Jericho. One section of the route taken by this stream is Wadi Kelt.

Our interpretation is probably correct. However, there are commentators who have identified the river mentioned in this week's portion as the place where Yirmiyahu was commanded to hide his belt, as is written: "Arise and go to Perat, and hide it there in a crevice" [Yirmiyahu 13:4]. This river marks the northeastern border of Eretz Yisrael. But it is not clear why G-d should make the prophet, who lived in Anatot, travel a distance of about a thousand kilometers (not once but four times) to reach a river stretching from Turkey to the Persian Gulf. It is much more reasonable to assume that he was told to go to a stream near his house, which is surrounded by a deep canyon full of crevices in the rocks. To this day, this is called Phara by the Arabs.

The source of this stream, Ein Perat, was used as a source of water for Jerusalem during the time of the British Mandate, using a nearby pumping station. In the time of Herodion, water from this source was sent to Jericho through a conduit whose remains are still visible. The water was augmented from two other sources, Ein Mevoa and Ein Kelt.

The scenery along the canyon is breathtaking. Sadly, many people have lost their lives at points along the route, either in accidents or as a result of terrorism. Examples are Major Tzvika Ofer, who was killed during a chase after terrorists, in a cave between Ein Kelt and the St. George Monastery, and Ehud Bachrach and Uri Shachor, who were killed near Ein Kelt.

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Dvar Torah: Breishit, 5757  
Rabbi Moshe Shulman

#### NEW IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

How does the world measure values? How does society judge and select which ideas are good and which are bad? Today, society and its values change so quickly. How do we judge if we are going in the right direction? Generally speaking, the world judges based on technological advancement. The more advanced a society scientifically, obviously the more sophisticated is their knowledge, and therefore the more "correct" their values. Today, we divide the world into "Western", and "third world" countries, based on their technological development. Together with that comes an assumption of values. Modernity brings with it culture. With the exception of archeology, **THAT WHICH IS NEWER IS BETTER!**

That's why so many people, swept up by this mistake, try to "modernise" the Torah, trying to make Judaism "new", and therefore better. But Judaism believes in just the opposite! **NEW IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER!**

The Torah teaches us to respect our elders, because they know more than we. The Torah teaches us that right and wrong are based on a link of tradition tracing all the way back to Mount Sinai. The Torah teaches us that the oldest values, those in the Torah those written by our prophets, are better, because they come from G-d. The Torah teaches us that the most central key to the survival and development of mankind is the oldest concept in history: that the world was created by G-d, and man in His image.

Parshat Breishit traces what happens to humanity when they forget this

lesson, and is a devastating condemnation of the advancement of society! Begin with Adam and Eve. In the garden, they had everything they needed. They didn't need to till the soil, or work the land. Their needs were simple, and provided. They had but one task: Recognise the authority of G-d who created the world. Understand that you are NOT in charge, that this world, while yours to use, is not yours to dominate!

Their response: What do you mean 'don't eat of that tree'? It's ours! We care for it! We deserve it. This world, if ours to use, IS ours to DOMINATE! They rebelled. And with that rebellion came the response: Now work the soil. Now you are on your own. You have dethroned G-d! Now see what you do with your world without Him!

So Cain and Abel developed, modernised - "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. (Gen. 4:2) What did their modernity bring? Sibling rivalry, hatred, jealousy, and ultimately murder. Having dethroned G-d, the door was now open to deny creation, deny the Divine Image in which man was created, deny spirituality. Mankind is all their is. Lesson 2 had been learnt: **ONCE FREE TO DOMINATE - MAN IS FREE TO DESTROY.**

The next stage: Cain's son, Chanon, "built a city" (ibid. 17) His children "...learn to handle the lyre and the pipe, and forge sharp instruments in brass and iron." (ibid. 21-22) Man learns to use metal, make tools, develop art, music, science, technology... and in so doing - learns how to kill professionally. "I have killed a man for wounding me." (ibid. 23) "Then man began to call by the name of G-d," (ibid. 26) as Rashi explains, they would call everything they made "god". Because they had no other god. Idolatry, murder, violence, crime, jealousy - all the achievements of "modern G-dless societies".

A few generations later, Noah's society had broken down completely. "And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that all the impulse of the thoughts of his heart is evil continually." (ibid. 6:5)

10 generations later, Sedom and Amora taught the world how to deal with the "guest" and the stranger, how to create the perfect society, void of outsiders, homogenous, all one... "aryanised"!!

Abraham understood this. In his day, even in such modernised and advanced civilisations such as Egypt and Gerar, he realised: "Only the fear of Heaven is missing in this place, so they will kill me on account of my wife." (ibid.

20:11) Murder sanctioned by law is the result of a G-dless society. Because without the fear of G-d, without the basic tenant of man created in the image of G-d, man as steward of this world and not master over it, the basic lessons of creation - without these ideas, even the most "modern" of societies will sanction violence, and ultimately destroy itself.

Look at Germany - no nation had "developed", modernised, more than she - technologically, the greatest scientific advancements, the centre of culture and arts, of music and "all manner of sharp instruments"... And it didn't take Germany very long to literally follow in the footsteps of Sedom and Amora... Our "modern world" almost destroyed itself numerous times in a nuclear arms race. And that threat is by no means over. The names change. But the game is the same.

As "new" and "modern" as the world may be, without the oldest concept in history, without the foundation of belief in G-d, and in the immortal spirituality of every human being, there is NOTHING stopping humanity from annihilating itself.

"I created the Evil inclination, and I created the Torah as its cure" (Talmud, Kedushin 30a) Teach our Sages: G-d created man, with all his shortcomings, and his preponderance for evil. And he gave him the antidote - called Torah. The answer is there - it may be "old", cliched, and outdated - but it's there. and it is our only hope for a brighter future!

"For the Mitzvah is a candle, the Torah its light" (Prov. 6:23) The Torah is the light of the world. Today, that light is the inheritance of those who accept it, and live by it. But the day will come, when it will be the light of the entire world. The day will come when Redemption will be complete, the Mashiach will arrive, and light of Torah will be understood by every nation in the world.

That's the eternal message of all our prophets: "The wolf shall dwell with the

lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid..." (Isaiah 11:6) Nations which once were mortal enemies shall live together in peace. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (ibid. 9) In a world where man is created in the Image of G-d, everyone understands that violence is a crime. It becomes naturally abhorrent!

That's what the promise of Redemption is all about. The belief, ingrained into the essence of Judaism since Mount Sinai, in the coming of Mashiach, when the whole world will finally learn that NEW IS NOT NECESSARILY BETTER. They will learn that a better world is one based on belief in G-d, and His Dominion, like in the Garden of Eden, before we dethroned the Almighty, and learnt how to kill.

In the meantime, until Mashiach comes, we have a small taste of that world, every week. It's called Shabbat. It's one day where we focus on this message of Creation, and understand its implications. Shabbat is a day to cease from dominating the world, to restore G-d to the throne of creation, and focus on the Divine Image, the spirituality, of every human being. Shabbat is a day to teach the world what true peace is all about - peace with ourselves, peace with nature, peace with society, peace with G-d.

Shabbat is called "me'ein olam haba", a miniature of the world to come, a taste of a what it will be like when all of mankind recognises that the oldest book in the world, and oldest belief in the world, is the only true hope for a better world. "May the All-Merciful bring us to see that day which will be like a great Shabbat, a day of peace and eternal life." (Grace after meals) THAT'S THE WORLD WE BELIEVE IN! THAT'S THE WORLD WE HAVE TO BUILD!!

"kollel@mcs.com" "haftorah@torah.org"

MESSAGE FROM THE HAFTORAH PARSHAS BREISHIS - EREV ROSH CHODESH SHMUEL1, 20:18

This week we read a special Haftora portion in light of the fact that this Shabbos is Erev Rosh Chodesh. This particular segment deals with the heartbreaking separation of Yonasan from his dearest and most beloved friend Dovid and Dovid's secret escape from the threatening wrath of Shaul Hamelech. Shaul, then acting as king over Israel, had the mistaken impression that Dovid was a threat to his reign and viewed him as a rebel who deserved, according to Torah law, to be executed. Yonasan the king's son, maintained an entirely different outlook on the matter and idolized Dovid's accomplishments to the point of yearning for Dovid to assume the mantle of leadership over Israel. These diametrically opposing views finally came to a head when the king publicly denounced his son for his disgraceful attitude. Yonasan read his father's message efficiently and secretly informed Dovid to flee for his life. After an emotional scene of departure Yonasan sent Dovid away in peace and reinstated their vow that nothing would ever separate the two families from each other.

The timely reading of this particular segment and the occurrence of its events around Rosh Chodesh suggest a corollary between the reign of Dovid Hamelech and Rosh Chodesh. Indeed we find many customs related to the new moon that reinforce this association. Our Chazal in Sanhedrin 42a instituted that we recite a blessing over the new moon each month. The nature of this Mitzvah is to recognize the orbit of the moon and its exact and affixed progression and digression beginning from a small crescent, extending to a full moon and then decreasing and disappearing. Yet, in the midst of the recital we say with excitement, "Dovid, King over Israel is alive and enduring". This peculiar practice suggests that the moon and King Dovid's reign have much in common. Chazal (Pesikta Rabasi 15) tell us that in actuality King Dovid's reign was patterned exactly according to the moon. The moon comes to its fullest appearance on the fifteenth day, and then begins its gradual decline until it totally disappears. Once the moon is completely out of sight it then begins its gradual reappearance. Chazal explain that the reign of the House of Dovid resembled the appearance and disappearance of the moon. Likened to the moon, the glory of Israel's reign slowly began to appear in the time of Avrohom Avinu and developed to its

fullest maturity fifteen generations later in the era of Shlomo Hamelech, Dovid's son. From that point onwards the monarchy, like the moon, began its gradual descent until its total disappearance fifteen kings later during the era of Tzidkiyahu Hamelech. The Maharsha (Sanhedrin 38a) develops this thought and cites that even within the actual dynasty of King Dovid there were thirty figureheads. In fact, the household of Dovid enjoyed fifteen kings until its downfall during the reign of Tzidkiyahu Hamelech. But even after that point there existed a structure of rulership from the House of Dovid for many generations later. The Midrash concludes that when the reign of Dovid will totally disappear the time will be ripe for the gradual appearance of Moshiach.

We conclude the prayers over the new moon with a special request that Hashem restore the moon to its perfect brilliance and then we recite the following passage "And the Jewish People will seek Hashem and their King Dovid". Once again we discover King Dovid as an integral part of our Rosh Chodesh service. Our Chazal (see Rashi Breishis 1:15) teach us that the moon was originally created with the same brilliance as that of the sun. However, the light of the moon was decreased and will remain that way until the era of Moshiach. In this prayer the brilliance of the moon is likened to the glorious reign of Dovid Hamelech. We entreat Hashem to restore the moon to its original brilliance and likewise to restore the reign of Dovid Hamelech to its original splendor. The insightful words of the Maharsha are quoted in completion of this thought that the numerical value of the above cited phrase "Dovid, King over Israel..." equals the exact value of the words "Rosh Chodesh".

We can now appreciate the lesson of this week's haftorah and its encouraging theme. From the view of an outsider the events of the haftorah are terribly disheartening. Dovid had continuously demonstrated remarkable strengths and leadership qualities throughout his faithful years serving as Shaul Hamelech's general. Although Yonasan had been destined to be Shaul's successor, Dovid's superb qualities convinced even Yonasan to step aside and allow Dovid to rise to power. Now, because of King Shaul's grave misunderstanding all must be forfeited and Dovid's glorious career must come to an abrupt end. Yet, Yonasan remains steadfast and is totally convinced that justice will prevail and Dovid will eventually rise to his well deserved position of authority. The moon seems to be disappearing, but Yonasan knows that it will reappear in its proper time. He, therefore reinstates his pact with Dovid (see Malbim 20:13,14) that when he rises to his position of leadership never to forget the household of Yonasan and his father. We draw our faith from these words and, as we look towards the moon, we express our total faith in Hashem. We recognize that the disappearance of the Kingdom of Israel, like the moon, is a guaranteed indication of its reappearance and we entreat Hashem to restore the Kingdom of Dovid to its original glory and splendor, speedily in our days.  
by Rabbi Dovid Siegel, Rosh Kollel, Kollel Toras Chesed, 3732 West Dempster Skokie, Illinois 60076 847-674-7959 fax: 847-674-4023 e-mail: kollel@mcs.com URL: <http://www.mcs.net/~kollel/>  
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Bereishis

Beginning at the "Beginning"

The Torah begins with the words, "In the beginning, G-d created..." and goes on to recount the details of Creation.

In commenting on these opening words, Rashi notes: "By right, the Torah

should have specifically begun from "This month is to you...." Why does it begin with "In the beginning"? Because "He related the power of His actions to His people."

Rashi goes on to explain that this forestalls any complaint by the nations of the world. Should the nations say: "You are thieves; you have conquered the lands of the Seven Nations," we can reply to them: "The entire world belongs to G-d; He created it and gave it to whoever found favor before Him."

Rashi's terminology -- "By right, the Torah should have specifically begun from 'This month is to you...' Why did it begin..." -- indicates that the portions from "In the beginning" until "This month is to you..." should indeed have been included in the Torah, but that they need not have come at the very beginning.

This being so, it is understandable that the answer Rashi provides also explains why the story of Creation is found at the very beginning of the Torah.

Even if the story of Creation were written after "This month is to you..." we would still be able to reply: "The entire world belongs to G-d. He created it and gave it to whoever found favor before Him." The question thus remains: why does the Torah begin with Creation?

An additional question: if the Torah should indeed not have begun with Creation, why would the order have been changed so drastically, simply to negate a possible complaint by the nations?

We must perforce say that beginning with Creation not only provides an answer to the nations, but is of major import to the Jewish people regarding their spiritual service.

The Tzemach Tzedek explains that the spiritual aspect of "conquering the 'land' of the Seven Nations," refers to the Jews' spiritual service within the "land," i.e., within this physical world as a whole.

When a Jew employs the physical world for a spiritual purpose, he is in effect "conquering the land" for spirituality.

The nations' complaint is that everything within the realm of the physical "belongs" to them, so that using it for a sacred purpose and thereby "expanding the boundaries of holiness" constitutes an act of piracy.

The answer to their accusation lies in the fact that "In the beginning G-d created..." Everything derives from the A-mighty, and He gave it to whoever found favor before Him; objects which, prior to man's spiritual service, were not within the realm of holiness, existed where they did specifically so that man could reclaim and "conquer" them through his service, returning them to the domain of holiness.

This is also the meaning of "By right, the Torah should have specifically begun from 'This month is to you....'" The Torah spiritually precedes and is thus loftier than Creation, including the spiritual service of conquering the physical and transforming it into the spiritual. For when a person is occupied with Torah, he is immersed in a sacred matter that is loftier than the world, while when he is occupied with worldly matters, even for a spiritual purpose, he is still involved in things that are close to his corporeal nature.

But if this is so, the question as to why the Torah begins with Creation becomes even stronger! Since the service of Torah and Mitzvos is loftier than the conquest of the physical, this service should have been mentioned first; the tale of Creation and the conquest thereof should have been related only afterwards!

Although the service of "conquest" is of a lower order than Torah and mitzvos, G-d's intent in Creation was a desire to have "a dwelling place in this physical world."

This desire is best fulfilled through the conquest of the physical -- involving as it does the transformation of that which is of the lowest level into a dwelling place fit for G-d. It is for this reason that the Torah begins with Creation.

Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XX, pp. 1-4

#### Boundless Benevolence

The Gemara in tractate Shabbos says: "He who is born on a Thursday will be a benevolent individual, for on that day, the fish and birds were created," i.e., on that day -- as Rashi explains -- G-d created beings that are wholly

sustained by His kindness.

The Gemara, however, informs us in another tractate that all Jews are by nature compassionate and benevolent. This being so, what is special about the Jew born on a Thursday, as compared to Jews born on other days of the week?

The fifth day of Creation was unique, since on that day, as Rashi explains, G-d's benevolence was dominant -- a benevolence that is boundless, for just as G-d Himself knows no limitation, so too are His attributes limitless. Indeed, because His boundless benevolence was dominant on the fifth day, the beings created on that day -- especially fish -- multiply greatly.

Herein lies the difference between all Jews' natural benevolence and the benevolence of one born on a Thursday: The degree of most Jews' natural kindness is limited -- they will act kindly toward others, but not to the extent of foregoing all their own needs or undergoing excessive hardship.

However, he who is born on that day when G-d's kindness was manifest will display a natural tendency to completely disregard his own being in order to assist others.

Conversely, there is special merit to the innate kindness found within all Jews, as opposed to the capacity for kindness and benevolence evinced by those born on a Thursday.

Understandably, being born on a Thursday does not guarantee that a person will be infinitely kind; it simply means that he or she will have a slightly stronger inclination to act kindly, and that this kindness -- if fully realized -- can be boundless. However, the benevolence inherent in every Jew's character is an actual goodness -- not just the Thursday-type potential for goodness and benevolence.

For a person to aspire to infinite benevolence, he must first possess the quality of self-effacement; as long as a person thinks primarily of himself, it will be impossible to give totally of himself to others. Diminishing one's own ego and desires enables one to become immersed in the act of kindness -- a kindness not confined by a sense of self, but a kindness without end. This aspect of self-nullification is also alluded to by the creation of fish on the fifth day. Fish, which multiply greatly -- indicative of an infinite capacity -- are entirely covered by water. As such, they are completely hidden from our view; all a person sees is the water.

Water is, of course, a fish's source of life. Being so completely immersed in one's source that all others see is the source, alludes to complete self-nullification -- a quality that leads to the blessing of, and the capacity to, multiply without limit.

So too regarding man's manner of service. In order to arouse the loftiest degree of benevolence -- which is similar to G-d's boundless kindness -- a person must first nullify himself before G-d. This will cause him to become truly humble, and enable him to perform boundless kindness, free of the constraints of self.

This is also the intent of Rashi's comment to the verse "Cleave to Him," where he notes: "Cleave to His ways, perform acts of benevolence ... just as G-d does."

When a Jew is truly cleaving to G-d, feeling only the A-mighty and himself not at all, then he can rest assured that his acts of kindness will emulate G-d's -- he too will perform acts of boundless benevolence.

Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XXV, pp. 10-12

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How many stories of Creation are there in Parshat Breishit, ONE or TWO? Although this question is more often discussed by Bible critics than yeshiva students, its contains a significant spiritual message.

This week's shiur discusses the structure of Parshat Breishit, in an attempt to better understand the meaning of the Torah's presentation of the story of Creation, and to 'set the stage' for our discussion of the overall theme of Sefer Breishit in the shiurim to follow.

#### PEREK ALEPH & PEREK BET

From a literary perspective, it is quite easy to differentiate between two distinct sections in the Torah's account of the story of Creation.

SECTION I - THE CREATION IN SEVEN DAYS / 1:1 -> 2:3

SECTION II - MAN IN GAN EDEN / 2:4 -> 3:24

SECTION I, better known as PEREK ALEPH, is easily discerned because of its rigid structure, i.e. every day of creation follows a very standard pattern. Each day:

- \* Begins with the phrase: "VA'YOMER ELOKIM...", heralding a new stage of creation (1:3,6,9,14,20,24);
- \* Continues with "VA'YAR ELOKIM ki tov" (1:4,10,12,18,21,31);
- \* Concludes with "VAYHI EREV VAYHI BOKER, YOM..." (1:5,8,13,19,23,31).

Furthermore, within this section, God's Name is exclusively "shem Elokim" (in contrast to the use of "shem Havaya" in the next section). Finally, the use of the verb "bara" (to create ex nihilo - something from nothing) is also unique to this perek.

In addition to its the special structure, the CONTENT of PEREK ALEPH also indicates that it is a self-contained unit. It presents a COMPLETE story of creation, with a classic set of matching introductory and closing psukim: The section opens with:

"BREISHIT (in the beginning), BARA ELOKIM - God created SHAMAYIM and ARETZ. [Beforehand] everything was in a state of TOHU VA'VAHU -total CHAOS, [then]..." (1:1-2).

In contrast to this original chaos, at the conclusion of the six days of creation we find a STRUCTURED UNIVERSE in a state of perfect order. Therefore:

"VAYCHULU ha'SHAMAYIN v'ha'ARETZ... and God blessed the seventh day... for on it He CEASED from all of His work - "asher BARA ELOKIM" - which He created." (2:1-3)

These psukim form an appropriate conclusion to this first section.

SECTION II, better known as PEREK BET (2:4-3:24), seems to present a conflicting account of the story of Creation. We will list several reasons:

- \* Throughout this section, God's Name is no longer simply ELOKIM, rather HASHEM ELOKIM ("shem Havaya").
- \* In contrast to PEREK ALEPH where man is the LAST stage in creation, in PEREK BET he is the FIRST!
- Trees and vegetation grow only AFTER Adam is created/ 2:5;
- Likewise, the animals are created only afterward/2:18-21.

~~\* In contrast to the consistent use of verb "bara" in PEREK ALEPH, PEREK BET uses the verb "ya'tzar" (creation 'something from something'/ see 2:7,19).~~

Although it is possible to reconcile these apparent contradictions (as many of the commentators do), there is no doubt that this section, at least, appears to be presenting a

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conflicting story.

Why does the Torah choose to present the story of Creation in this manner? We obviously cannot accept the claim of the Bible critics that these two sections reflect two conflicting ancient traditions, for the entire Torah was given to Moshe Rabeinu at Har Sinai. Thus, this unique style must be intentional, and we must, therefore, search for the prophetic meaning behind this manner of presentation.

Two renowned Torah scholars of this century have discussed this issue at length. The analytical aspect, the approach of "shtei bchinot" (two perspectives), has been exhausted by Rabbi Mordechai Breuer in his book Pirkei Moadot and in numerous articles in the periodical M'gadim. The philosophical implications have been discussed by Rav Soloveichik ZT"L in his article 'The Lonely Man of Faith' (Adam I & Adam II).

It is beyond the scope of this shiur to summarize these two approaches (it is recommended that you read them). Instead, we will simply conduct a basic analysis of PEREK ALEPH & PEREK BET and offer some thoughts in regard to its significance.

#### PEREK ALEPH - THE CREATION OF NATURE

Because Chumash is a book of "n'vuah" (prophecy), and NOT a book of history or science, we should expect its presentation of the story of Creation to focus primarily on man's relationship with God, the essence of n'vuah. With this in mind, we begin our analysis.

We mentioned above that Perek Aleph exhibits a very rigid structure; God's actions are depicted in a similar fashion. Nevertheless, each day is unique, for on each day something new is created. To help appreciate the progression of the creation process from day to day, we must first summarize what was created on each day. Let's start with a list:

DAY GOD CREATED...

f= fffff

I. LIGHT

II. "RAKIYA" - separating the MAYIM above and MAYIM below.

III. ARETZ (the Land) - which brings forth vegetation

A. seed-bearing plants / "esev mazria zera"

B. fruit-bearing trees / "etz pri oseh pri"

IV. LIGHTS in the SHAMAYIM (sun, moon, stars etc.)

V. LIVING CREATURES:

A. birds in the RAKIYA SHAMAYIM

B. fish in the MAYIM (sea)

VI. LIVING CREATURES who live on the ARETZ (land)

A. animals - all forms

B. Man - b'tzelem Elokim, blessed by God

to dominate all living creatures

C. food for these living creatures:

1. Man - vegetables and fruit (1:29)

2. animals - only vegetables (1:30)

VII. SHABBAT

Now, let's turn our list into a table. If we line up the first three days against the last three days, an amazing parallel emerges:

DAYS 1 ->3

DAYS 4 -> 6

fff==

ffff. LIGHT -- ->

IV. LIGHTS in the heavens

II. RAKIYA SHAMAYIM (above)-> V. Birds in the SHAMAYIM

MAYIM (below- the sea) - -> Fish in MAYIM

III. ARETZ (land) - - -> VI. Animals on the ARETZ

seed bearing plants - - - -> eaten by the Animals

fruit bearing trees - - - -> eaten by Man

It is beyond the scope of the shiur to explain its full meaning, but this parallel in the internal structure of PEREK ALEPH provides further proof that it should be considered a distinct unit. This established, we must now ask ourselves what

precisely was created in these six days.

#### DIVINE EVOLUTION

We mentioned earlier that PEREK ALEPH contains a complete story of the process of Creation. In contrast to a primal state of total chaos, after six days we find a beautifully structured universe containing all the various forms of life which we are familiar with, including plants, animals, and man.

Note that the Torah emphasizes that each form of life is created in a manner which guarantees its survival, i.e. the ability to reproduce:

a. plants: "esev mazria zera" - seed-bearing vegetation

"etz pri oseh pri" - fruit-bearing trees (1:11-12)

b. fish and fowl: "pru u'rvu" - be fruitful & multiply (1:22)

c. Man: "pru u'rvu..." - be fruitful & multiply (1:28)

This end result of this creation process is what we call NATURE -- the exact opposite of TOHU VA'VAHU. Nature, (as defined by Funk and Wagnells), is the entire material universe and its phenomena. What PEREK ALEPH describes then, is God's creation of nature. It informs us that nature was not always there, rather its creation was a willful act of GOD. By keeping Shabbat, resting on the seventh day, as God did, we assert our belief that God is the power behind nature.

[Note, the modern Hebrew word for nature is "teva", but it is not used in Tanach. Rav Breuer, in his articles, relates to the Creation in PEREK ALEPH b'shem ELOKIM as "briyat Olam ha'TEVA".]

This understanding can help us appreciate the Torah's use of the verb "bara" in PEREK ALEPH. Recall that "bara" implies creation ex-nihilo, something from nothing. Now, note where the THREE times active uses of "bara" are found in PEREK ALEPH. They are precisely where we find the creation of each of the basic forms of life (i.e. plants, animals, and man), reflecting the three fundamental steps in the evolutionary development of nature:

\* STEP I - All matter and plants -

"Breishit BARA Elokim et ha'SHAMAYIM v'et ha'ARETZ" (1:1)

This includes everything in the SHAMAYIM and on the ARETZ, i.e. the creation of all "domem" (inanimate objects) and "tzomeyach" (plants). Note that this takes place during the first FOUR days of Creation.

\* STEP II - The animal kingdom

"va'YIVRA Elokim - and God created the TANINIM and all living creatures... by their species"(1:21)

This includes the birds, fish, animals, and beasts etc. which are created on the fifth and sixth days.

\* STEP III - Man

"va'YIVRA Elokim et ha'ADAM..." (1:27)

The creation of man b'tzelem Elokim, in God's image.

#### WHY START HERE?

Why does the Torah choose to begin by telling man that the creation of nature was a willful act of God?

The purpose of n'vuah, we explained, is to define man's relationship with God. Man's most basic relationship is with nature, i.e. with his surroundings and environment. Man does not need God in order to realize that nature exists; it stares him in the face every day. Man can not avoid nature, rather he must contemplate it and struggle with it.

Without the Torah, one could easily conclude that nature is the manifestation of many gods, as ancient man believed. Nature was attributed to a pantheon of Gods, often warring with one another. Modern man usually arrives at quite the opposite conclusion -- that nature doesn't relate to any form of god at all. Chumash MUST begin with story of Creation, for man's relationship with God is based on his recognition that nature is indeed the act of one God. He created the universe and continues

to oversee it.

Furthermore, The Torah's use of the verb "bara" to describe the creation of man is extremely important. One who perceives nature and his relationship with the animal kingdom might easily conclude that he is basically part of the animal kingdom. He may be more advanced or developed than the 'average monkey', but he is biologically no different. The use of the verb "bara" to describe God's creation of man informs us that man is a completely new category of creation. He is created "b'tzelem Elokim", in the image of God, i.e. he possesses a spiritual potential, unlike any other form of nature.

[See the Rambam in the very beginning of Moreh N'vuchim (I.1), where he defines "tzelem Elokim" as the characteristic of man that differentiates him from animal.]

#### MAN - IN PEREK ALEPH

In Perek Aleph, man emerges not only as the climax of the creation process, but also as its MASTER:

"And God blessed man saying: Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and MASTER it, and RULE the fish of the sea, and the birds in the sky, and the living things that creep on the earth..." (1:28).

This blessing to man is NOT a commandment, rather it defines man's very nature. Just as it is natural for vegetation to grow, and all living things to reproduce, it is 'natural' for man to dominate his environment; it becomes his instinct. Perek Aleph teaches man that he must recognize that his nature to dominate all other living things is also an act of God's creation. However, he must ask himself, "Towards what purpose?" Did God simply create man, or does He continue to have a relationship with His creation? Is the fate of man out of His control, or does a connection exist between man's deeds and God's "hashgacha" (providence) over him?

The answer to this question lies in PEREK BET!

#### PEREK BET - MAN IN GAN EDEN

Perek Bet presents the story of creation from a totally different perspective. Although it opens with a pasuk which connects these two stories (2:4), it continues by describing man in an environment which is totally different than that of PEREK ALEPH. In PEREK BET, man is the focal point of the entire creation process. Almost every act taken by God is for the sake of man:

- \* No vegetation can grow before man is created (2:5)
- \* God plants a special garden for man to live in (2:8)
- \* God 'employs' man to 'work in his garden' (2:15)
- \* God creates the animals in an attempt to find him a companion (2:19/ compare with 2:7!)
- \* God creates a wife for man (2:21-23)

In contrast to Perek Aleph, where man's job is to dominate God's creation, in Perek Bet man must be obedient and work for God, taking care of the Garden:

"And God took man and placed him in Gan Eden - L'OVDAH u'l'SHOMRAH - to work in it and guard it." (2:15)

Most significantly, in PEREK BET man enters into a relationship with God which contains REWARD and PUNISHMENT, i.e. he is now responsible for his actions. For the first time in Chumash, we find that God COMMANDS man:

"And Hashem Elokim commanded man saying: From all the trees of the Garden YOU MAY EAT, but from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad YOU MAY NOT EAT, for on the day you eat from it YOU WILL SURELY DIE..." (2:16-17)

This special relationship between man and God in Gan Eden, is paradigmatic of other relationships between man and God found later on in Chumash (e.g. in the Mishkan).

God's Name in PEREK BET - HASHEM ELOKIM (better known as

"shem HAVAYA") - reflects this very concept. The shem HAVAYA comes from the shoresh (root) - "l'hiyot" (to be, i.e. to be present). This Name stresses that Gan Eden is an environment in which man can recognize God's PRESENCE, thus enabling the possibility of a relationship.

Should man obey God, he can remain in the Garden, enjoying a close relationship with God. However, should he disobey, he is to die. In the next chapter, this 'death sentence' is translated into man's banishment from Gan Eden. In biblical terms, becoming distanced from God is tantamount to death. [See Dvarim 30:15-20.]

In the Gan Eden environment, man is confronted with a conflict between his "taava" (desire) and his obligation to obey God. The "nachash" (serpent, recognizing this weakness, challenges man to question the very existence of this Divine relationship (3:1-4). When man succumbs to his desires and disobeys God, he is banished from the Garden.

Whether or not man can return to this ideal environment will later emerge as an important biblical theme (and be the topic of future shiurim).

#### A DUAL EXISTENCE

From PEREK ALEPH, we learn that God is indeed the Creator of nature, yet that recognition does not necessarily imply that man can develop a personal relationship with Him. The environment created in PEREK BET, although described in physical terms, is of a more spiritual nature, for in it, God has created everything specifically for man. However, he must obey God in order to enjoy this special relationship. In this environment, the fate of man is a direct function of his deeds.

So which story of Creation is correct, PEREK ALEPH or PEREK BET? Clearly both, for in daily life man finds himself in both a physical and spiritual environment.

Man definitely exists in a physical world in which he must confront nature and find his purpose within its framework (PEREK ALEPH). There, he must struggle with nature in order to survive. However, man also exists in a spiritual environment which allows him to develop a relationship with his Creator (PEREK BET). In it, he can find spiritual life by following God's commandments while striving towards perfection. Should he not recognize the existence of this potential, he defaults to spiritual death, man's greatest punishment.

Why does the Torah begin with the story of Creation? We need only to quote the Ramban (in response to this question which is raised by the first Rashi of Chumash):

"There is a great need to begin the Torah with the story of Creation, for it is the "shoresh ha'emunah", the very root of our belief in God."

Understanding man's potential to develop a relationship with God, the first topic of Sefer Breishit, is a tenet of Chumash and Judaism.

shabbat shalom

menachem

#### FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. See the first Rashi on Chumash ("Amar Rabbi Yitzchak...), see also the Ramban.

1. In your opinion, does Rashi argue with the Ramban? If so, on what assumption?

2. Read carefully Tehilim 111 (quoted in Rabbi Yitzchak's Midrash). Note the FINAL pasuk of that perek!

Now read Yirmiyahu 27:1-7, especially 27:5!

Who is God taking the land away from? Who is He giving it to and why?

Does the Midrash of Rabbi Yitzchak quote this pasuk? Look carefully. Is this the same context or in a different one?

3. Based on the above, is Rebbe Yitzchak coming to tell us why

God has the right to give us Eretz Yisrael, or why we have an obligation to keep the mitzvot in Eretz Yisrael?

Relate this to theme of Sefer Breishit, and Rashi's original question!

B. The creation story with 'shem Havaya' [PEREK BET] continues in chapter four with the story of Kayin and Hevel. It ends with an ambiguous pasuk regarding the generation of Enosh - "az hu'chal likro b'shem Hashem". There are two opposite explanations of this pasuk. The first is: 'then Enosh BEGAN (hu'chal -- from shoresh l'hatchil) to call out in the name of G-d'. This implies a positive development by mankind towards a search for G-d. The second explanation translates "hu'chal" as 'to profane', from the shoresh l'chalel'. In other words, 'with this generation man began to profane G-d's name'. [See Rashi, Rashbam, and Sforno.]

1. See Rambam Hilchot Avoda Zara 1:1. How did the Rambam understand this pasuk?

2. Should this perek be considered a continuation of the creation story of "perek bet"? If so, explain why.

B. Note that God's name in perek Aleph ("Elokim") is plural!

1. Why should 'one' God have a name in the plural?

2. Can the word Elokim in Chumash refer to something other than God? If so, bring examples.

3. Relate Elokim to the word 'power'.

4. What did ancient man relate the powers of nature to?

(how many Gods?) Relate this to the above shiur.

5. See Rav Yehuda haLevi's explanation of both Shem Elokim and Shem Havayah in Kuzari ma'amar r'vii.

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