

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON BEREISHIS - 5760

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HAMAAYAN / THE TORAH SPRING Edited by Shlomo Katz  
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Sponsored by the Parness family in memory of Anna Parness a"h Daf Yomi (Yerushalmi): Yevamot 67

"To Adam He said, 'Because you listened to the voice of your wife and ate of the tree . . .'" (3:17) R' Aharon Yosef Bakst z"l (Poland; 1869-1941) taught: Why was Adam's repentance not accepted? (We can see that it was not accepted from the fact that the decree of death was not lifted, says R' Bakst [but see the opinion of Rabbenu Nissim z"l, below].)

Adam was not punished for eating from the tree - for which he repented. Rather, he was punished: "Because you listened to your wife."

By listening to Chava when she offered him the fruit, Adam demonstrated that he did not have the willpower to withstand peer pressure. That is a sin for which repentance is impossible. One who succumbs to peer pressure negates his very existence and therefore has no place in this world. In Shmuel I (Ch. 15) we read that King Shaul lost his kingdom because he did not destroy Amalek as he was commanded to do. Shaul himself defended his actions by saying that he was afraid of the people (who wanted to keep Amalek's animals). However, says R' Bakst, it was precisely because Shaul listened to the people that he was not fit to continue in his position. (Lev Aharon p. 68)

A related thought: The mishnah (Sotah 9:15) states that in the last days before the time of Mashiach, "The face of the generation will be like a dog's face." What does this mean? When a man walks his dog, the dog walks in front as if it is leading its master. However, when the dog comes to a crossroads, it stops and looks back to receive instructions from its master. So, too, in the days before Mashiach, "leaders" will pretend to walk ahead of their people as if they are leading. In reality, though, all of their decisions will be based on the polls that tell them what their "followers" want. In this way, the face of the generation - the leaders who walk ahead of a nation as one's face precedes his body - will be like a dog's face. (Heard from R' Moshe Eisemann shlita) ...

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Parashat Bereshit October 9, 1999 Rabbi Emanuel Holzer

On the sixth day of Creation, after G-d created man, the Torah records that "G-d saw everything that He made - vehinei tov meod - and behold it was very good." G-d saw the completeness, the harmony that united everything that He had created.

The Midrash interprets this verse to mean that both the yeitzer hatov, man's good inclination, and the yeitzer hara, man's evil inclination, are part of the complete goodness of this world.

How can this be? How can the evil inclination be included in the statement, "vehinei tov meod"? After all G-d does not foist evil upon man.

In explaining the Midrash, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, zt"l, taught

B'S'Dhat everything G-d created was good, not evil. When man makes use of the gifts G-d set forth on the earth in their proper manner, they are good. But when we take those gifts to the extreme, when we aren't satisfied with good and try to make them very good, they can become evil.

Man's physical desire to eat is good and necessary; but when he goes to one extreme or the other, either gorging himself or fasting, he plays into the hands of the yeitzer hara. In all avenues of life, when we overdo or overeat or overreact, when we turn tov into tov meod, we turn ourselves over to the yeitzer hara.

Man, said Aristotle, should not feel or express great joy or great sorrow, since neither extreme is beneficial for him. In contrast to Aristotle's golden mean, which leaves man devoid of emotion, the Rambam understood that man needs to express great joy and great mourning in their proper times. Nevertheless, man must always be in control of these emotions.

When we view emotions from the Torah's viewpoint, explains Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, zt"l, we cannot allow our emotions to run rampant. To sanction such behavior is to sanction excessive hate and self-abuse. The Torah requires us to control our emotions, not to squelch them. In mourning, we express sadness, but when Shabbos or the holidays arrive, we are required to limit our expressions of grief. The Torah commands us to regulate feelings of love, hate and sorrow. Emotions are only noble when controlled.

The Rambam, in describing the eitz hadaas tov vara - The Tree of Knowledge that knew good and evil - explains that the knowledge the tree offered was the gamut of human emotion and drive, giving man the potential to either do the will of G-d or to go against His will.

If we use this potential wisely, we will learn when to say when, practicing moderation in all areas of life and insuring that we settle for tov and do not chase after tov meod.

Rabbi Emanuel Holzer Rabbi Holzer is chairman of the Rabbinic Kashrut Commission of the Rabbinical Council of America.

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"RAVFRAND" LIST - RABBI FRAND ON PARSHAS BEREISHIS  
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 210, Is Marriage a Mitzvah? Good Shabbos!

Yielding the Right of Way to a Bus on Coney Island Ave

This week's parsha contains the famous verse "Let us create a Man in our image after our likeness..." [Bereishis 1:26] This teaches us that man was created in the image of G-d. The Mishneh [Avos 3:11] teaches that one who publicly humiliates another person loses his portion in the World to Come. The Tosfos YomTov explains that the harshness of the punishment is due to the fact that such a person falls into the category of "Ki Devar Hashem Bazah" [For he has desecrated the Word of G-d - Bamidbar 15:31]. Why? "Because man was created in the image of G-d and is the result of the 'Word of G-d'". When one embarrasses another person, it is not merely an offense against the person. It is an offense against G-d, through whose speech that person came into existence. By such action, one disregards the 'Word of G-d'. To be disrespectful to a human being is to be disrespectful to G-d. This is something that requires our constant attention. A Human being is a "tzelem Elokim" [the Image of G-d]. We take human beings for granted, but we are dealing with entities that are literally the 'Word of G-d'. No one would think of taking a Sefer [sacred volume] and throwing it down. No one would think of going to a Torah scroll and shaming it or cursing it. What the Tosfos YomTov is teaching is that one who curses another human being IS cursing a Sefer Torah. "For he has desecrated the Word of G-d."

I recently heard a story involving Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky. Rav Yaakov was walking in Williamsburg on Shabbos and a funeral procession passed by. Rav Yaakov turned around from the direction he

was going and started accompanying the funeral procession on foot, for several paces. Rav Yaakov's son who was with him asked incredulously, "What are you doing?" Rav Yaakov responded that the law requires that one accompany the deceased - - even on Shabbos. His son persisted, "But you do not even know who the person is!" Rav Yaakov responded that it makes no difference. "All people are created in G-d's Image." This is a mind-boggling story to us!

I heard another such story involving Rav Yaakov. Rav Yaakov was riding in a car with someone on Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. The traffic there is always heavy and frustrating. The driver noticed a city bus that was about to pull away from the curb. Everyone knows that the last thing that a driver wants to do is to get stuck behind a bus on Coney Island Avenue. Like every other driver in the world, this fellow stepped on the pedal and swiftly positioned himself in front of the bus. Rav Yaakov commented, "What are you doing? What happened to Kavod HaTzibbur (the honor due to the community)?" Rav Yaakov felt that by the rules of giving proper honor to the Tzibbur (community), the bus should have been entitled to go first. Such an attitude -- giving a bus priority in heavy traffic -- is a spiritual level that emerges from one who has internalized the importance of a Tzelem Elokim (one created in G-d's Image).

This is something that we must constantly work on -- to always remember who we are dealing with.

"Adam" -- Not Such A Bad Choice of a Name, After All We find later in the parsha that "Adam assigned names to all the creatures... [2:20]". The Medrash mentions that G-d challenged the Angels to name the creatures, but they were unable. G-d showed them that man was greater than them, for Adam was able to name all the creatures of the world. Hebrew names, unlike names in other languages, are not merely arbitrary unique labels. Assigning Hebrew names to the animals was defining their very essence. The Hebrew word "Shor", for example, defines the physical and spiritual essence of what an ox is. This is true for all the other creatures of the world. This is something the angels were incapable of providing. (Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch relates the word 'shem' [name] to 'sham' [there]. The assignment of a name defines where a being exists.) The Medrash then relates that G-d asked Adam to give himself a name and Adam responded that a fitting name for himself would be Adam, "for I was created from the earth (adama)". Here, seemingly, Adam failed. When it came to the ox, Adam was able to define his physical and spiritual essence and give it the name 'shor'. He did not deal with the superficialities and the surface. But when it came to his own name, it seems he just made a simple pun. I should be called ADAM because I was created from the ADAMA.

The Alter from Slabodka says this was a great insight on Adam's part. The challenge of man is to always remember that he comes from the ground. Man can indeed achieve the highest level of spirituality. His wisdom may, in fact, be greater than that of the Angels but it can all fall apart in a split second. Man is very human and very frail, because ultimately he came from the dust of the earth. No matter how high man soars, if he makes the wrong moves he can come back to what he really is ADAM(a) -- dust. Behind all his potential and greatness man is very earthy and earthly.

Many question the choice of the Torah reading for the afternoon of Yom Kippur. In the morning we read the Torah portion from Acharai Mos describing the High Priest's service in the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies (Vayikra 16). We soar, spiritually, at the description of the Temple Service. Yet at Mincha on Yom Kippur afternoon, we read the chapter of the forbidden sexual liaisons (Vayikra 18). We are warned not to commit incest and other forms of sexual immorality. We are even warned against committing acts of bestiality. These acts are the lowest of the low. Is this appropriate for Yom Kippur?! Could not the Rabbis find a more inspirational Torah Reading than this? The answer is that this is

just what we need to hear on Yom Kippur. We should never make the mistake that just because we are soaring in the clouds with the angels, that it cannot all come crashing down the day after Yom Kippur. In the final analysis, we must always remember that we are physical, we are not angels. There is a component of man that is very, very tied to this earth, with earthly pleasures and earthly desires.

The wisdom of Adam was to realize this and give himself a label by which he could never think "I am beyond that". It is always feasible and always possible to slip back. We have temptations of human beings and we must constantly be on guard against them.

Personalities and Sources Tosfos Yom Tov (1579-1654); [Rav Yom Tov Lipman Heller]; Prague; Poland. Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky (1891-1986); Lithuania, U.S. Alter from Slabodka (1849-1927); [Rav Nassan Tzvi Finkel]; Lithuania Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888); Frankfurt-am-Main; Germany. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim dhoffman@torah.org Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 for further information. New! Yad Yechiel Institute is on-line! Visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> ! tapes@yadyechiel.org. RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 602-1351

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From: Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky [SMTP:rmk@torah.org]  
DRASHA PARSHAS BRAISHIS -- OPPOSITES ATTRACT RABBI  
MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY

The creation of man was no simple feat. In fact, Hashem seems to be disappointed with his less-than-perfect creation. He looks at Adam and declares, "It is not good for man to be alone I will create an ezer k'negdo." The word ezer means helper, and the word k'negdo takes on various explanations, each defining the role of woman in completing and perfecting creation. Simply put, the word k'negdo means opposite him. It can even mean against him. Rashi quotes the Talmud that explains that there is no middle ground in relationships. If one merits than the spouse is a helper; and if one does not merit, then the spouse is a k'negdo, against him. Though the word k'negdo may mean opposite him, it need not mean a negative connotation. Opposite him, however, defines a relationship. One can not be opposite of no one. Why, then, does the Torah define this helper in such interesting terms? Why would it not have sufficed to call the new spouse a helper and leave it at that?

With the baseball playoffs fast approaching, a therapist in our community told me a fascinating story that reflects upon the strange state of affairs in some households. A couple came to him for counseling in their predicament. "My husband is only interested in the baseball playoffs! All he's interested is in that stupid baseball! Yankees, Shmankees! That's all he wants to do each night. " "That problem," thought the doctor, "is not so unique. It occurs pretty often in households across the country." He was expecting to hear the husband defend himself with lines like, "it's only once a year," or only when New York is in the playoffs." He didn't. In response the husband put his hands on his hips and faced-off. "And what about her? All she wants to watch are the evening sitcoms and serials! They are meaningless fantasies! How does she expect me to see real men earning an honest living playing ball, when she wants to watch those silly dramas?" The therapist pondered this modern-day struggle and offered his suggestion. "I see that your interests in televised entertainment are quite polarized. But I think there is a simple solution." He smiled broadly and with the confidence of responding with Solomonic wisdom he continued. "You

are quite an affluent couple, and," he added, "you have a large home. Why don't you just buy an additional TV set, and each of you watch your desires in different rooms!" The therapist's smile faded as the couple stared at him in horror. "DIFFERENT ROOMS??" they shrieked in unison. "How can we watch in different rooms? That's the time we spend together!"

Through its contrasting definitions of a spouse's capacity, the Torah does more than warn us of problems. It explains what the best helper is. The appropriate helper and mate is not one who spends his or her time in a different world with different interests and no concern for the other's. Rather, it is one who stand opposite the spouse and faces him. The shared enjoyment of each other's company, the companionship of k'negdo, should outweigh a set of four eyes glued to an event in the distance. The Torah wants two sets of eyes facing each other. Sometimes in agreement, sometimes in disagreement as long as they are k'negdo, opposite the other.

Good Shabbos Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky  
Drasha, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Drasha is the e-mail edition of FaxHomily, a Project of the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org/> Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org) 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208

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From: torahweb[SMTP:torahweb@torahweb.org] [www.torahweb.org](http://www.torahweb.org)  
RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY - PARSHAT BERESHIT JUSTICE AND MERCY: CREATION ONE AND TWO

The creation of the world is introduced to us in two different ways: Each of the days of creation is prefaced by the phrase, "vayomer Elokim," and the entire account begins with, "Bereishit bara Elokim" ; the shem Hashem is not used. However, when the Torah repeats the story, the shem Hashem is used, as it says, "Hashem Elokim" (2:4-21). Rashi (1:1) explains that originally the world was to be created through middat hadin  $\phi$  the strict attribute Divine Justice, as the name Elokim implies. However, the world could not function on such terms and was eventually created according to the rules of justice and mercy combined. This partnership of middat hadin and middat harachamim is alluded to in the description of Hakadosh Baruch Hu as, "Hashem Elokim". Elokim refers to din, and Hashem to rachamim.

The culmination of creation also occurred in two stages: Chazal teach us that the entire creation of the world was dependant upon whether the Jewish people would accept the Torah. The first kabbalat hatorah occurred under the rules of middat hadin, so that when Benei Yisrael sinned they should have immediately been destroyed. Middat hadin dictates that immediate and complete punishment be meted out to one who sins. Eventually, Hashem gave Benei Yisrael another chance and instructed them in the 13 middot shel rachamim, thereby enabling a second kabbalat hatorah. It is this second kabbalat hatorah that binds us today a world of the combined middot.

This change from a pure middat hadin to one tempered by middat harachamim is not an event that occurred only at the time of creation or at the time of matan torah- this shift takes place every year. Rosh Hashana is the yom hadin in the strict sense. Corresponding to the original creation, the world should be judged according to the middat hadin. Yet, Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows that we cannot withstand judgement under those terms so He gave us Yom Hakippurim as a chance to be judged according to middat harachamim.

As the entire world could not stand up to the strictness of middat hadin so to the Jewish people could not live up to the first set of luchot. There are individuals who have reached such an elevated spiritual level that Hakadosh Baruch Hucan relate to them according to the middat

hadin. These are the tzadikim towards whom Hashem is "medakdek kechut hasearah." These are the tzadikim gemurim who do not need Yom Kippur. Chazal tell us that such people are inscribed for life on Rosh Hashana. The day of middat harachamim is only necessary for the benoni  $\phi$  the average person who most of humanity is comprised of. Such people can not live up to the standards of din.

With the yomim noraim still fresh in our minds, let us focus on where we stand in our avodat Hashem as we read parshat Bereishit. Are we going to live our lives like the average person who needs a second creation? Are we going to succumb to the chet haegel in whatever form it manifests itself and need a second set of luchot? Perhaps we can elevate ourselves so that by next Rosh Hashana we are all included in the category of tzadikim gemurim.

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From: Yated[SMTP:yated-usa@yated.com]  
KORTZ UN SHARF SHORT AND SWEET PARSHA VERTLACH BY SHAYA GOTTLIEB

"Beraishis Boro Elokim" In the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth. 1:1 Beraishis  $\phi$  the first thing a Jew must know, is that 'Boro Elokim Es Hashomayim' Hashem created the heavens and earth, and everything that exists therein.  $\phi$  The Sassover Rebbe "Vayehi Erev Vayehi Boker Yom Echod." And it was evening and it was morning, the first day. 1:5 According to Klal Yisroel, the day begins with the night preceding it. The other nations begin their day first, followed by the night. The night alludes to darkness and suffering. First we suffer golus, to be followed by the light of the geulah. As the possuk says, "Tzaddikim begin with yissurim, but end with shalvah, with everlasting peace, while reshaim first enjoy relaxation, followed by suffering."  $\phi$  Imrei Shefer

"Vayomer Elokim Naaseh Odom." And Hashem said, "Let us make man." 1:26 Hashem turned to the other creatures, and said, "let us make man." Every single creation gave of their characteristics in order to perfect mankind. Tznius can be learned from a cat, alacrity from an ant, and swiftness from an eagle, etc.  $\phi$  The Vilna Gaon

During the creation of Odom, Hashem consulted with the angels. However, when Chava was created, Hakadosh Boruch Hu did not consult with them. Therefore, women make a brocho "Sheosani Kirtzono"  $\phi$  He has made me according to His will.  $\phi$  Yeshuas Yaakov

The Medrash relates: When Hashem planned to create man, the attributes of Tzedek and Chesed said he should be created because he will practice righteousness and kindness. However, the attributes of Emes and Sholom were against the idea, saying that man will practice falsehood and machlokes. Hashem threw the 'emes' on the ground and created man. Why was the 'emes' thrown down and not the 'sholom'? Because once the emes is gone there will be sholom. Machlokes is present when everyone fights for the 'emes', for the truth, the way they see it. If one looks away from the 'truth', one can pursue peace.  $\phi$  The Kotzker Rebbe

If the sholom would be thrown away, it would have become broken, and would not have been 'sholom' anymore. However, the emes can never be destroyed. Even a little piece of emes is still emes.  $\phi$  Rav Chaim Brisker

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From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] Weekly-halacha for 5760  
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.  
CORRECTING THE BA'AL KOREH

Every adult male(1) is obligated to hear a portion of the Torah read from a kosher Sefer Torah every Shabbos. While this is an ancient obligation dating back to the days of Moshe Rabbeinu(2), it is

considered a Rabbinical mitzvah(3). Initially, there were various customs as to the length of the portion to be read every Shabbos(4), but eventually it became universally accepted to complete the entire Torah each year, beginning from Shabbos Bereishis and ending on Simchas Torah(5). The reader must read, and the congregation must hear, every single word of the weekly parshah. Even if one word was omitted, the reading must be repeated(6). This is true even if the missing word did not in any way alter the meaning of the phrase or verse(7). The ba'al koreh should read each word clearly, with the proper accentuation (mileil and milra), vocalization (nikud) and cantillation (trop). In order to read the Torah properly he must prepare thoroughly(8) so that the reading will "flow out of his mouth". The reading itself should not be hurried, lest he swallow a word or a letter(9).

**CORRECTING THE READER'S MISTAKES** It is important for the ba'al koreh to read carefully so that he makes no mistakes, not even small, insignificant ones. But if he did make a mistake, there is a difference of opinion among the Rishonim if he must be stopped and corrected or not. The Tur(10) is of the opinion that as long as the word was recited, even if it was seriously mispronounced, it does not matter and the reading is valid. There is no requirement to go back and correct the mistake, and indeed it may be prohibited to do so since it will needlessly embarrass the ba'al koreh who will appear incompetent or ill-prepared. Rambam, however, disagrees and maintains that even the smallest mistake should be immediately corrected. Shulchan Aruch seems to make a compromise between the two views. Whether or not the ba'al koreh needs to be corrected when mispronouncing a word depends on the type of mistake he made. A "major" mistake requires correction while a "minor" mistake does not: therefore, the ba'al koreh should be publicly corrected only for a "major" mistake. Privately, however, the reader is rebuked for his lack of preparedness or inattentiveness to detail(11). The issue to decide, therefore, is what constitutes a "major" mistake and what is considered a "minor" mistake. Rama maintains that if the mistake alters the meaning of the word it is considered "major", but if it only affects the trop or the nikud then it is considered "minor". The latter authorities debate what, exactly, the Rama meant, as there are various opinions as to what constitutes an altered meaning and what does not. In the final analysis there are three groups of mistakes: major, minor and midsize.

**MAJOR MISTAKES INCLUDE:** When a word is completely misread; e.g., bereishis is read berushies or barshyas, etc. When the nikud of a word is pronounced in a manner which alters the translation of the word. For example, the word chalav with a komatz (milk) is read with a tzeirei (fat), or the word ya'aseh (he should do) is read yie'aseh (it should be done). When the trop is completely wrong, to the degree that the reader combines two unrelated words or phrases, or separates two words or phrases which should be read together. The trop indicates not only the musical note on which the syllable or word should be sung, but also the punctuation of the pasuk, as the Torah has no punctuation marks. For example, one could read all of the constants and vowels of the first pasuk in the Torah correctly, and still mangle the trop so that the pasuk would read: In the beginning created, Hashem the, heaven and earth(12). According to some opinions, when the mileil or milra is read completely wrong, to the degree that it alters the meaning of the word; e.g., the word bahah (milra) means 'she is coming,' (present tense) while the same word accented bahah (mileil) means 'she came' (past tense)(13). Similarly, the word binah can mean either 'understanding' or 'perceive', depending on which syllable is accented, binah or binah(14). Other opinions maintain that this type of mistake is not considered a major mistake. In their view, the exact meaning of the word is decided by the context in which it is written; the meaning is not altered by the improper accentuation of the word(15). As stated earlier, Shulchan Aruch and most poskim(16) rule that major mistakes should be rectified immediately. The ba'al koreh, therefore, is stopped mid sentence - even if

he said the Name of Hashem(17) - and told to correct his pronunciation(18). Even if the mistake is realized after the aliyah is over, or even after the entire parshah is finished [but before the final blessing over the Torah is recited](19), the word must be repeated and corrected(20). This ruling of the Shulchan Aruch is the accepted practice in most congregations. Note, however, that several poskim(21) disagree with the Shulchan Aruch and rule in accordance with the Tur that once a mistake was made, even if the meaning of the word was altered, it need not be corrected(22).

**MINOR MISTAKES INCLUDE:** Misreading of vowels which does not alter the basic meaning of the word, e.g., the word "eis" with a tzeirei under the aleph instead of segol (es); the word "kol" with a cholom instead of kal with a kamatz; the word "lecha" with a kametz instead of lach with a sheva(23); the word "aretz" with a kametz under the aleph instead of erez with a segol. There are many more such examples, and they account for most of the errors that the average ba'al koreh commits. Misreading of the trop which does not alter the basic meaning of the verse. e.g., failure to stress the revii note over the word v'hartz in the second pasuk of this week's parshah. The procedure concerning minor mistakes is clear: all of the poskim are in agreement that the reader is not corrected; he is allowed to continue(24). We have mentioned earlier that when there is no requirement to correct mistakes, it may very well be prohibited to do so, since correcting the ba'al koreh publicly embarrasses him. It is puzzling, therefore, why many congregations do not conduct themselves properly and correct even minor mistakes when they should not do so. There are two possible explanations (limud zechus) for their behavior: 1) The ba'al koreh has made it clear to the rabbi or officers of the shul that he does not mind being corrected and does not consider it an embarrassment; 2) If the ba'al koreh is paid for his services, it may be permissible to correct him for even minor mistakes since he is hired to do a perfect job(25).

**MIDSIZE MISTAKES** are significant changes in the pronunciation of the word or even in its exact translation, but not to the degree that it alters the basic meaning of the phrase or the verse. These include(26): When a letter is omitted, e.g., the name Aharon, which contains the sounds of an aleph and a hay, is read as Haron (with a patach), omitting the aleph(27). When a letter is added, e.g., the word Mitzrayim, written with one yud, is read as if it were written with two yuds (Mitzriyim). While these two words are pronounced differently, they have the same meaning essentially. When a letter is added as a prefix, e.g., the letter vov is added to a word, "v'im" (and if) instead of "im" (if). When two letters are inverted but the mistake does not alter the meaning, e.g., the word keves is mistakenly read as kesev. Both words refer to a sheep(28). Regarding these types of mistakes there are two views. Some are of the opinion that they are not significant and do not need to be corrected. The ba'al koreh may continue reading [though he is rebuked privately](29). Others maintain that these types of mistakes must be corrected immediately and one must follow the same procedure as when a major mistake is made(30). While individual shuls may rely on the first view and allow such mistakes to go unchecked, many congregations have adopted the second, more stringent view. It is left to the rabbi and officers of each shul to establish their own standard for kerias ha-Torah.

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 While some authorities maintain that women are also required to hear kerias ha-Torah, the accepted custom is that listening to the Torah reading is not a woman's obligation; Mishnah Berurah 282:12; Aruch ha-Shulchan 282:11. 2 Rambam, Tefilah 12:1. 3 Mishnah Berurah 282:2. 4 See Megilah 29b that in Eretz Yisrael the custom was to finish the Torah once every three years. See Emes l'Yaakov, ibid. for the apportionment of the weekly reading segments based on a three-year cycle. 5 Rambam, Tefilah 13:1. See Igros Moshe O.C. 4:23 and 4:40-5 who explains that once this became universally accepted, it has turned into a full-fledged obligation. 6 O.C. 137:3 and 282:7. 7 Beur Halachah 142:1. 8 Even a ba'al koreh who is familia r

with the parshah should review it at least twice; Aruch ha-Shulchan 139:2. 9 Mishnah Berurah 142:6. 10 O.C. 142. The Tur quotes this view in the name of the Ba'al ha-Manhig, and according to most opinions, this is the Tur's view as well. 11 Rama O.C. 142:1. While Rama does not specify the details of how the ba'al koreh is rebuked, the Tur and Bais Yosef imply that the rebuke should not take place publicly so as to not embarrass the reader. 12 Mishnah Berurah 142:4. 13 As explained by Rashi, Bereishis 29:6. See Aruch ha-Shulchan O.C. 690:20 (concerning Megilas Esther) who mentions this example. 14 Reb Chaim of Volozhin in Keser Rosh (40). 15 See Karyana D'igerta (Harav Y. Y. Kanievsky) 1:138; Emes l'Yaakov (Harav Y. Kamenetsky) O.C. 142:1. See Dikdukei Shai, pg. 160-165, for an explanation of this view. Note, also, that all the major poskim who discuss the laws of correcting a ba'al koreh do not mention this type of mistake as one that must be corrected. 16 Chayei Adam 31:31; Mishnah Berurah 142:4 and Beur Halachah; Aruch ha-Shulchan 142:3-4; Kaf ha-Chayim 142:2. 17 Chayei Adam 5:2; Mishnah Berurah 142:4; Sha'arei Rachamim on Sha'arei Efrayim 3:18. See Tzitz Eliezer 12:40. 18 Preferably, he should start again from the beginning of the pasuk or at the very least from the beginning of the phrase (within the pasuk), see Mishnah Berurah 64:5 and Tehilah l'Dovid 64:1 (concerning Kerias Shema). See also Igros Moshe O.C. 5:20-32 (concerning zeicher and zecher). 19 Chayei Adam 31:31 and Beur Halachah 142:1. 20 See Mishnah Berurah 142:2 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun for the correct procedure. 21 Bach O.C. 142; Eliyahu Rabbah 142:2, Siddur Derech ha-Chayim (15); Da'as Torah 142:1. See also Aruch ha-Shulchan 690:20. 22 While this view is not the accepted practice, the poskim rely on it if the mistake was realized after the final blessing on the Torah was recited. 23 Most often this depends on where in the verse the word appears and/or what the trope is. There is no alteration of meaning. Sometimes, however, lach is written for a nekeivah and lecha is written for zachar; in that case the meaning is altered. 24 As mentioned earlier, he is reprimanded in private. 25 See Eishel Avraham O.C. 142 who suggests a similar idea. 26 Based on Mishnah Berurah 142:4 and Beur Halachah. 27 See Pri Megadim 142:1 who writes that the same applies to reading Avraham instead of Avram or vice versa. 28 See Mishnah Berurah 143:26. 29 Mishnah Berurah 142:4 and all the poskim mentioned earlier who rule in accordance with the Tur against the Shulchan Aruch. 30 Pri Chadash 142, Beur ha-Gra 142, Chayei Adam 31:31, Aruch ha-Shulchan 142:3-4; Kaf ha-Chayim 142:2.

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From: TorahFax[SMTP:torahfax@netaxis.qc.ca] bs"d. Tishrei 26, 5760 / October 6, 1999

This Shabbat, with the reading of Parshat Breishit, we start the Torah again.

Parshat Breishit begins with the story of creation, "In the beginning G-d created the heaven and the earth..." The Torah goes on to describe what G-d created on each of the days of creation until the sixth day when He created Adam & Eve. On the seventh day G-d rested as the Torah states: "And the heaven and the earth were finished.. and on the seventh day G-d finished His work which He has made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He has made. And G-d blessed the seventh day and made it holy..."

The Midrash tells the following story: The Roman Emperor Hadrian once asked the Talmudic sage Rabbi Yehoshua, "You claim that G-d is the creator and master of the universe. If that is true why doesn't He reveal Himself to us at least a few times during the year so that we can all see Him?" Rabbi Yehoshua replied, "G-d tells us in the Torah (Exodus 33:20), 'No man can see Me and live.'" But Hadrian persisted,

"If your claim that there is a G-d is true, I want you to show Him to me!" Rabbi Yehoshua had no choice. He agreed to fulfill the emperor's wish. At noon, Rabbi Yehoshua returned to the palace and asked the Emperor to come out to the courtyard. There, he will show Hadrian the Master of the Universe. When the two men stepped outside Rabbi Yehoshua said to Hadrian, "Now look straight up into the sun and you will see G-d!" "Why, this is impossible! No one can stare at the blazing sun without becoming blind," exclaimed Hadrian. "You have answered your own question!" exclaimed Rabbi Yehoshua. "If at the sun, which is only G-d's creation, you cannot look due to its great light, how can you even conceive of seeing G-d Himself whose light is infinitely greater than the glare of the sun!"

The Midrash also relates the following story: A heathen once approached the Talmudic sage Rabbi Akiva and said, "You claim that G-d created the universe, prove that the universe has a creator." Rabbi Akiva looked at him and said, "Tell me, who made the robe that you are wearing?" "This robe was made by an expert weaver," answered the man. "I don't believe that anyone made it... prove it to me!" "How can you say this?" laughed the heathen. "Look at the design... see the intricate patterns and the many colors. It's quite obvious that my robe was made by an expert weaver!" Rabbi Akiva smiled, "You have just answered your own question! Look around you and see the patterns of the seasons, the daily sunrise, sunset and the sophisticated nature of all living beings... You must acknowledge that all this didn't happen by accident... This too must have been created by an expert!"  
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[BY RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG]

PARSHAT BREISHIT [revised version - 5760]

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 (see 1:3,6,9,14,20,24); \* Continues with "VA'YAR ELOKIM KI TOV" (see 1:4,10,12,18,21,31); \* Concludes with "VAYHI EREV VAYHI BOKER, YOM..." (see 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 section. In addition to its this special structure, the CONTENT of PEREK ALEPH also indicates that it should be considered a self-contained unit. Note how 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]..." (see 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'SHAMAYIM 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, and hence, 1:1 through 2:3 should be considered a distinct unit.

SECTION II, better known as PEREK BET (2:4-3:24), seems to present a conflicting account of the story of Creation. I recommend that you review chapter two, noting the order of Creation. Note that: 1) Nothing can grow before God creates man (see 2:5), therefore: 2) God creates man FIRST (2:6-7), then: 3) Vegetation begins to develop, as God plants a special garden for man to live in (2:8-14); 4) God gives man the job to work and guard this garden (2:15); 5) God commands man concerning what he can/cannot eat (2:16-17); 6) God creates animals for the sake of man (2:18-20) 7) God creates a wife for man, from his own rib (2:21-25). Clearly, the order of creation is quite different. In PEREK BET we find that man is created FIRST, and everything afterward (i.e. the plants and the animals) are created FOR him. In contrast, PEREK ALEPH places man the pinnacle of Creation, but does not depict man as its primary purpose. In addition, there are several other obvious differences between these two sections: \* Throughout this section, God's Name is no longer simply ELOKIM, rather the name HASHEM ELOKIM (better known as "shem Havaya"). \* In contrast to the consistent use of verb "bara" (creation from nothing) in PEREK ALEPH, PEREK BET uses the verb "ya'tzar" (creation 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 conflicting story. Why should 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 Torah in its entirety was given by God 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 "shte bechinot" (two perspectives), has been exhausted by Rabbi Mordechai Breuer in his book Pirkei Breishit. The philosophical implications have been discussed by Rav Soloveichik ZT"L in his article 'The Lonely Man of Faith' (re: 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 with regard to its significance.

**PEREK ALEPH - THE CREATION OF NATURE** Because Chumash is a book of "nevuah", 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 nevuah. With this in mind, we begin our analysis in an attempt to find the primary message of each of these two sections. We begin with Perek Aleph.

As we mentioned above, each day of creation in Perek Aleph begins with the phrase "Va'yomer Elokim" followed a description of what God creates on that day. As your review this chapter, note that there is one primary creation that is introduced by each "va'yomer". [Note also that days three and six have two "va'yomer" stages!] The following list summarizes what was created on each day, based on each introductory

"va'yomerB":

DAY # GOD CREATED... I. "OR" = LIGHT II. "RAKIYA" - separating: A. the MAYIM above [=SHAMAYIM], and B. the MAYIM below [=YAMIM]. IIIa. "YABASHA", called the ARETZ (the Land) - IIIb. Vegetation (on that ARETZ) 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 sky [=RAKIYA SHAMAYIM] B. fish in the sea [=MAYIM] VIa. LIVING CREATURES who live on the ARETZ (land) animals - all forms VIb. MAN - b'tzelem Elokim, blessed by God to dominate all other living creatures Then, God assigns the appropriate food for these living creatures: 1. Man - can eat vegetables and fruit (see 1:29) 2. animals - can eat only vegetables - (see 1:30) VII. SHABBAT God rested, His Creation was complete.

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

DAYS 1-3	DAYS 4-6
=====	=====
I. LIGHT	IV. LIGHTS in the heavens
II. RAKIYA	V. Birds in the SHAMAYIM
SHAMAYIM (above)	Fish in MAYIM
MAYIM (below)	VI. Animals & Man on the ARETZ
III. ARETZ (land)	Seed bearing plants
Plant to be eaten by the Animals	Fruit bearing trees
	Fruit of trees, to be eaten by Man

Again, 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 that describes the creation of a very structured universe. This established, we must now ask ourselves what precisely was created in these six days, and what can we learn from this style of its presentation.

**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 of the various forms of life that we are familiar with; including plants, animals, and man. Note that the Torah emphasizes that each form of life is created in a manner that guarantees its survival, i.e. its 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)

One could summarize and simply state that the end result of this creation process is what we call NATURE - in other words - the exact opposite of TOHU VA'VAHU. What PEREK ALEPH describes then, is God's creation of nature, the entire material universe and its phenomena. 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. This analysis helps us understand why the Torah uses shem Elokim to describe God in this entire chapter. As Ramban explains (toward the end of his commentary on 1:1), the Hebrew word "el" implies someone with power (or strength) and in control. Therefore, shem ELOKIM implies the master of ALL of the many forces of nature. [This explains why God's Name is in the plural form / see also Rav Yehuda ha'Levi, in Sefer Kuzari, beginning of Book Four.]

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 the THREE active uses of the verb "bara" 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 nevuah, we explained, is to define the nature of 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 Morph 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).

Note that this is God's **BLESSING** to man. It is **NOT** a commandment, rather it defines man's very nature. Just as it is natural for vegetation to grow, and for all living things to reproduce, it is also '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 that connects these two stories (2:4), it continues by describing man in an environment that 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 be dominant over 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'T'SHOMRAH** - to work in it and guard it." (2:15) Most significantly, in **PEREK BET** man enters into a relationship with God that 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) - "Thiyot" (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 Devarim 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.

**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 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, yet he must realize that God Himself is the master over all of these Creations. However, at the same time, man also exists in a spiritual environment that 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 this 'double' 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 on the spiritual level, while recognizing the purpose of his placement in a physical world as well, should be the first topic of Sefer Breishit, for it will emerge as a primary theme of the entire Torah.

shabbat shalom, menachem

**FOR FURTHER IYUN** 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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From: Yated[SMTP:yated-usa@yated.com]  
The Power to Heal by Moshe Schapiro

The Chofetz Chaim would often recount the following anecdote: Rav Shlomo Kluger was once asked to serve as sandek at a bris milah. He arrived at the appointed address exactly on time, but as soon as he walked in he saw that the bris was nowhere near beginning. This in itself was not all that surprising as weddings and bris milahs have always and will always begin late but something about the scene in this particular home struck him as odd and discordant. For example, he noticed that all of the important participants were present but baby, mohel, sandek so what could they possibly be waiting for? He also noticed that the people in the room including the infant's mother were looking awfully gloomy on such a joyous occasion. The guests spoke in whispers to one another, and several were sitting with their elbows on their knees and their hands clasped over their faces. Whimpers and stifled cries could be heard on occasion, and some of the ladies were dabbing their eyes with handkerchiefs. It was more like a funeral than a bris milah. "What are you waiting for?" Rav Kluger whispered to the mohel. "Why don't you begin?" The mohel took Rav Kluger to a quiet corner and explained the situation. The infant's father, it seemed, was hovering between life and death, so the family had decided to postpone the bris until after the man's petirah so they could name the infant in his memory.

"No!" Rav Kluger thundered upon hearing the reason for the delay. The word echoed in the suddenly still room. "Begin immediately," Rav Kluger ordered the mohel. "Begin right now, I tell you!" The startled mohel looked at the infant's mother. Wordlessly she signaled her consent. The guests rose. Those who had been crying wiped their tears and stuffed their handkerchiefs back into their pockets and purses. They turned their attention to the mohel and listened attentively as the bris began. It wasn't long before shouts of mazel tov filled the air. The once solemn atmosphere had turned into one of great joy. And the only cry that could be heard in the room was that of the baby, who was being cradled lovingly in his mother's arms. Immediately after the bris, Rav Kluger rushed to the side of the ill father. In a voice filled with emotion, he wished the father mazel tov and blessed him that he should soon recover. Later, Rav Kluger was asked why he had insisted on starting the bris immediately. Why didn't he want to wait for the ill father to pass away? Wouldn't it have been fitting for the boy to be named for his father? "I knew," explained Rav Kluger, "that I couldn't ask the malach of refuah to go out of his way to cure the ill father. But I reasoned that if we busied ourselves with the mitzvah of milah, Eliyahu Hanavi, the Malach Habris, would be come to the bris and stand alongside the mohel and heal the baby. "I felt that since he would be there anyway," continued Rav Kluger, "I could ask him to come with me to visit the ill father and heal him."

The Chofetz Chaim would conclude this story by explaining that that was exactly what happened. Three days later the ill father was back on his feet and was able to walk unassisted to shul.

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From: Rabbi Kalman Packouz[SMTP:packouz@aish.edu] Shabbat Shalom! Bereishit ... DVAR TORAH: based on Growth Through Torah by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin The Torah states, "And the earth was desolate and void, and darkness was upon the waters ... and the Almighty said, 'Let there be light' and there was light." (Genesis 1:2,3). What insight into living can we learn from this? The Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, used to say that these verses serve as a tremendous inspiration in times of darkness. At the beginning of creation, the world was in complete darkness. When the entire world is in total darkness, one statement of the Almighty is sufficient to light up

the whole world! Although there are times when the world -- or even an individual -- is encompassed by a spiritual darkness, in one moment the Almighty can send forth His world and there will be a great light! The rescue of the Almighty comes in the blink of an eyelash.

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From: [Rabbi] Jonathan Schwartz[SMTP:jschwartz@ymail.yu.edu]  
Subject: Internet Chaburah -- Parshas Berashis (fwd)

Prologue: What's in a name? "Adam called her Chava noting that she was the mother of all life (3:21)". The Possuk is quite perplexing. The truth is that Chava was actually not the "mother" of all life for in fact she had been created well after it? Additionally, why does the Torah close the Garden of Eden story with the naming of Chava?

The Meforshim seem to disagree as to the nature of the name of Chavva and the location and timing of her naming:

Rashi notes that the naming of Chava is noted in the Torah so as to return to the original issue of Adam's job of naming all animals. He adds that Adam's naming of Chava was to highlight her job of providing life to her children. The difficulty with the cursory glance at this Peshat is its novel translation of "mother of all life" as Rashi assumes that all life refers to human life. (The Ibn Ezra maintains that for this reason she was called Chava and not Chaya so as to separate her from the animals. Still the question remains as to why this was a definition of Kol Chai?)

Other Meforshim take opposing positions noting that Chava was named at precisely the proper location in the Torah following the punishments in Gan Eden. According to the Alshich (3:20) and others, she was named Chava (and not Chaya) because she brought death into the world. Hashem removes his association from the lack of life and as such Chaya became Chava (See Targum Yehonasan who suggests that the Vav and the Yud are interchangeable). However, the difficulty remains: According to this Peshat, the very reason written in the Torah for Chava's name appears to be contradicted by the death the woman brought onto the world. Additionally, she was still not the mother of life as suggested by the Possukim?

Perhaps a potential common ground for understanding the nature of Chava's name and namesake can begin with a glance at the Or Hachaim. The Or HaChaim suggests that Chava was originally a part of Adam. She shared every aspect of his being including his name. The very name of Adam is Kadosh and unique as Chazal note in a number of significant locations (Atem Keruyim Adam etc.). Following her sin, Adam could no longer associate the name Adam with her and had to select a different label to identify her personality and role on the world. He recognized the ability of the creations to relate to her (Perhaps due to her imperfections following sin? See A.Z. 18a and Prologue to Internet Chaburah Netzavim 5758) and her ability to nurture them. This ability to know what is going on with all the living creatures (Abarbanel, 3:21), and to nurture them as well as her own future generations (Rashi) was a trait that was characteristic to the Mother who served as a mother to all living things highlighting her uniqueness as distinct even from Adam (See Rabbeinu BaChaya, ibid). Recognizing this new distinctiveness, Adam called Chava by her new title. This title was not only a statement of her present abilities but of her potential to nurture the world as a mother can, both physically and most importantly spiritually (Rav Samson Refael Hirsch, 3:20).

Clearly, much goes into a name. This week's Chaburah recognizes the significance of names, particularly of baby girls. It is entitled:

And you call her...?

In the Sefer Ta'amei HaMinhagim (Milah, 923) the author quotes the Maor HaGadol who felt that one must celebrate the naming of his daughter. The reason cited is that the Neshama, which is the connection between the physical world (Olam HaTachton) and the holiness of the spiritual world (Olam HaElyon), enters a person at the time the person is named. The infusion of Kedusha into this world is a reason for

celebration and as a result, a proper Seuda should be held.

The Taamei HaMinhagim adds that R. Shmuel Belzer held that the naming of the child should be done on the third day after birth if that day is Shabbos. He adds that he had a Kabbala from his Rabbeim not to wait 5 days for the naming. Rather, the maximum wait should be three days. He felt that naming a baby at a Monday or Thursday Laining was a proper time for naming a baby.

Similarly, the Darchei Teshuva and his grandfather, the Bnei Issaschar note that through naming a baby, one gives the child an attachment to Kedushas Yisroel. Therefore, these opinions maintain that the naming of children should take place as soon as possible. (This line of reasoning explains why we wait with a boy until the Bris. At the Bris, he is Mamshich onto himself some Kedushas Yisroel and thus is the first appropriate time for baby naming.) Therefore, these opinions feel that the first possible moment following birth should be the best time to name a baby girl. A similar opinion is expressed by Dayan Weiss (Shut Minchas Yitzchak IV, 4-5) in the name of the Baal Hatanya. The author of the Shut Kochav MiYaakov (159) explains that he himself named his daughter on her birthday as it was a Laining day.

Dayan Weiss himself maintains that the issue is dependent upon Minhag Hamakom. He notes that there is a prevalent Minhag to wait until the next Shabbos in order to have a proper Kiddush in honor of the daughter and her naming. Based upon the Maor Hagadol who stresses the importance of this Seuda, Dayan Weiss maintains that the inability to hold the Seuda in proper company as a result of people's need to work is a reason enough to wait to name the baby until the following Shabbos.

Many wanted to base this Machlokes upon the better known Machlokes concerning whether we delay a Mitzva for the opportunity to perform it in the best manner possible (See Shut Chacham Zvi 106). The Chassidim have chosen to explain the preference for a naming on Shabbos as being the result of the idea that Shabbos offers the best time for continuity of extra Kedusha. Therefore, naming a child which infuses "extra" Kedusha in a child should take place in a time of extra Kedusha, namely on a Shabbos, a seemingly more fitting time.

Battala News Mazal Tov to Binyamin Aranoff upon his recent engagement.

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From: Ohr Somayach [SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] \* TORAH WEEKLY  
\* Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Bereishet

A Man's Work "Hashem G-d took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to work it and to guard it" (2:15) What was Adam's work? Ostensibly it would appear that Adam was placed in Eden to work and guard the Garden. However, the gender-endings of the two verbs "to work it" and "to guard it" are both feminine. Garden -- gan -- is a masculine noun. The "it" cannot be referring to the garden. The work and the guarding that Adam had to do was to work and guard his soul. (Soul, neshama, is a feminine noun). How was Adam supposed to work and guard his soul? By fulfilling one simple command. Not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Seems like a simple enough job. G-d places Adam in more than a veritable "garden of Eden." He puts him in the real Macoy. Adam has just one mitzvah and he can't even keep that one. What possessed Adam to eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil? Before Adam ate from the fruit, evil existed in the world only in a state of potential. Evil existed outside of Adam. By eating the fruit, Adam ingested evil into himself, thus bringing evil into actuality. But why should Adam have wanted to bring evil into his body? Why take poison? Adam wanted to serve G-d in the greatest possible way. He reasoned that if his service of G-d consisted of refraining from eating of the fruit when evil was no more than a potential, so to bring the enemy onto his "home ground" and then defeat him would be a much greater way of serving G-d! Adam's motivation was selfless. His mistake was fatal. Literally. He

and Chava (Eve) brought death into the world. Adam tried to second guess G-d. If G-d tells us to do something, He wants us to do exactly that, no less and no more. We can see Adam's mistake from another point of view. The fruit that he was forbidden to eat was not from the "tree of knowledge" as is sometimes misquoted. It was from the "tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil." "Knowledge" in the Torah always connotes connection, conjunction, amalgamation. The union of man and wife is spoken of in terms of "knowledge." Eating from the tree caused a knowledge, a mixing of Good and Evil. It created a world where Good and Evil became very hard to separate.

Sources: \* Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, Rabbi Mordechai Perelman Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel E-Mail: info@ohr.org.il Home Page: <http://www.ohr.org.il>

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From: Rabbi Aaron Tendler[SMTP:atendler@torah.org] Subject: Business-Halacha - Income Liable To Maaser  
Business-Halacha - Hilchos Choshen Mishpat Week Of Beraishis 5760  
Income Liable To Maaser  
Question: FROM WHAT INCOME IS A PERSON OBLIGATED TO SEPARATE MAASER?

Answer: A. Maaser must be separated from any income of liquid assets that a person receives throughout the year, including salary, inheritance, financial gifts, rental income, interest income from a bank, found money, etc. The custom is not to separate Maaser from gifts of items or real estate that a person receives, such as wedding presents or an inherited home or land. However, if the receiver liquidates these gifts or inheritance, or returns the gift for a cash refund, Maaser should be separated from the money that is received. (1)

B. Money that is given as a gift by parents or friends for a specific purpose, e.g. to purchase a car or go on a vacation, is not considered income, and Maaser need not be separated from it. (2)

C. If a person sells a home or a car or any other item, and receives more for it than what they paid, the Halacha is as follows: The profit that was made is liable for Maaser. However, this is only from the portion of the increased value which is because of increased demand for this home or item. If the increase of value is because the cost of living has gone up, or because of devaluation in the local currency, the portion of the profit that reflects this is not liable for Maaser. If, as a result of separating Maaser on the profit from the sale of a home, the person will not be able to purchase a new home that he needs, he may purchase the new home and give to Maaser the amount that he owes over an extended period of time. (3)

D. A person is permitted to make a loan to a poor person, and stipulate that rather than have the poor person pay him back he will collect the debt from his own Maaser obligation. However, he must actually separate the Maaser and then take it back as payment for the debt. This stipulation works only if the borrower is alive and retains his status as a poor person and is thus deserving of Maaser funds, during the entire time that the loan is being paid in this manner. (4)

Sources: (1) See Tosafos in Taanis (9a), the Sefer Chassidim (Ch. 144), the Rabbeinu Yona in Sefer HaYirah, the Teshuvos Yaavetz (Vol. 1 Ch. 8). This is also the conclusion of the Chazon Ish. (2) See the Shulchan Oruch, Choshen Mishpat 241:5, and the S"MA there (15). (3) See the Igros Moshe (Yoreh De'ah Vol. 2 Siman 114), and also my Sefer Minchas Tzvi (Vol. 3 Siman 8) where we elaborate on the reasoning for all of the Halachos discussed above. (4) Stated in the Shulchan Oruch, Yoreh De'ah 257:5, and the Shach there (12-15). See also the Teshuvos Nodeh BiYehuda (Yoreh De'ah Vol. 1 Siman 73, and Vol. 2 Siman 199), and my Sefer Minchas Tzvi (Vol. 3 Siman 9:1, 4, 5) where we elaborate

on the Halachic parameters of such an arrangement.

This week's class is based on a column by Rabbi Tzvi Shpitz, who is an Av Bet Din and Rosh Kollel in the Ramot neighborhood of Jerusalem. His column originally appears in Hebrew in Toda'ah Business-Halacha, Copyright (c) 1999 by Project Genesis, Inc.

From: Mordecai Kornfeld [SMTP: kornfeld@netvision.net.il]  
INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, http://www.dafyomi.co.il  
Megilah 21b AGADAH: THE TEN "MA'AMAROS" WITH WHICH THE WORD WAS CREATED  
The Gemara says that the world was created with ten "Ma'amaros" (utterances) of Hashem. Nine of these Ma'amaros is the word "Va'yomer" which appears nine times in the description of Creation, while the word "Bereishis" is considered the first Ma'amar, making a total of ten. The CHIDUSHEI HA'RIM (Parashas Va'era; LIKUTEI YEHUDAH Parashas Bo p. 54) proposes a theory that links the ten Ma'amaros with which the world was created to the ten Makos which Hashem brought upon Mitzrayim. He proposes that the ten Ma'amaros correspond to the ten Makos in an inverse order, such that the last Makah corresponds to the first Ma'amar, the ninth Makah corresponds to the second Ma'amar, and so on. It was the ten Makos in Mitzrayim that transformed the world from a physical place that did not recognize its Creator by creating a new, spiritual nation that recognizes its Creator, thereby bringing the world to its ultimate purpose. Each Makah effected the spiritual conversion of another Ma'amar, in inverse order. The ninth Makah, the plague of Choshech, effected the conversion of the second Ma'amar, which was the first utterance of Hashem that the Torah describes with the word "Va'yomer"; when Hashem created light (Bereishis 1:3). The Makah of Choshech transformed the statement of Hashem, "Yehi Or" -- "Let there be light," into a spiritual form of creation, by taking away the physical light of the Egyptians and giving the Jews, in its place, a spiritual light through which they were able to see into the closed closets of the Egyptians, as the Midrash says. The tenth and last Makah, Makas Bechoros (the death of the first born of Mitzrayim), transformed the first Ma'amar, the word "Bereishis," into a higher, spiritual form. The word "Bereishis" refers to Klal Yisrael, as Chazal tell us, "Bereishis -- Bi'shvil Yisrael she'Nikra Reishis." Hashem took away the Egyptian Bechorim, the physical "Reishis Onim" (Tehilim 105:36) and replaced them with a new, physical Reishis, "Bni Bechori Yisrael." This complements what is said in the name of the VILNA GA'ON (Divrei Eliyahu, end of Va'era) that the word Bereishis alludes to the Mitzvah of Pidyon ha'Ben, redeeming the firstborn. The six Hebrew letters that spell the word "Bereishis," he explains, are an acronym for "B\*en \*R\*ishon \*A\*char \*Sh\*loshim \*Y\*om \*T\*ifdeh" -- "You shall redeem the firstborn son after thirty days." It is appropriate that this Mitzvah is alluded to in the word "Bereishis," because that word corresponds to the tenth Makah, Makas Bechoros, which is the source that the Torah gives for the Mitzvah of Pidyon ha'Ben (since Hashem saved the Jewish firstborn when He smote the firstborn of Mitzrayim; Shemos 13:15). The ten Makos transformed the ten Ma'amaros with which the world was created, into the creation of the Jewish people and the ten Commandments.

Megilah 25 PITY ON THE MOTHER BIRD: ARE THERE REASONS FOR THE MITZVOS? QUESTION: The Mishnah states that one who says, "Hashem's mercy reaches the mother bird," must be silenced. The Gemara explains (in the second reason) that this is because the Mitzvos are purely Gezeiros, "heavenly decrees upon us to fulfill," and no mercy is involved. How can it be that there are no reasons behind the Mitzvos? Rabbi Shimon explicitly states (see Yevamos 23a, and other places) that all of the Mitzvos have reasons behind them! ANSWERS: (a) The RAMBAM, in Moreh Nevuchim (3:26,48), explains that this opinion in our Gemara indeed argues with Rabbi

Shimon, and maintains that there are no reasons for the Mitzvos. (b) The RAMBAN (Devarim 22:6) explains that the Mitzvos certainly have reasons. Our Gemara means that the reason behind the Mitzvah of sending away the mother bird is not in order to have mercy \*on the bird\*. Rather, it is a "Gezeirah" (a decree upon \*us\*, for our benefit), in order to accustom us to be merciful and inculcate in us that trait. One who is accustomed to being cruel to beasts, becomes cruel by nature in general, even to people.

Megilah 32 HALACHAH: HOW TO RECITE THE FIRST BLESSING WHEN READING FROM THE SEFER TORAH  
OPINIONS: The Gemara records a dispute between Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehudah how exactly to recite the Berachah before reading from the Sefer Torah. Rabbi Meir maintains that one must roll the Sefer Torah closed after looking at the place from which the reader will read, and then recite the Berachah. Rabbi Yehudah maintains that one may leave the Sefer Torah open when one recites the Berachah. The Gemara explains that Rabbi Meir's reason for requiring one to close the Sefer Torah before reciting the Berachah is so that onlookers will not think that the Berachos are written in the Sefer Torah. Rabbi Yehudah, though, maintains that no one would make such a mistake, and therefore it is permitted to leave the Sefer Torah open when reciting the Berachah.

The Gemara concludes by saying that the Halachah follows the view of Rabbi Yehudah. What is the proper practice? It is not clear from the Gemara exactly what Rabbi Yehudah holds. Although he says that one may recite the Berachah with the Sefer Torah open, does that mean that one should \*not\* close it, or that one does not \*have\* to close it?

(a) The BEIS YOSEF (OC 139) cites RABEINU SA'ADYAH who says that one should specifically leave the Sefer Torah open, and not close it, when reciting the Berachah. His source is apparently from the Yerushalmi (Megilah 3:7) which derives from a verse in Nechemyah (8:5-6) that one should recite the Berachah while the Sefer Torah is open. The PRI MEGADIM (Mishbetzos Zahav 139:4) explains that the reason for this is in order to start reading right away and minimize the pause between the Berachah and the reading. In addition, one should have the item upon which one is reciting a blessing (in this case, the Sefer Torah) open and ready in front of him at the time of the Berachah.

(b) However, TOSFOS (DH Golelo) writes that l'Chatchilah one should close the Sefer Torah before reciting the Berachah, so that people not think that the blessings are written in it. B'Di'eved, though, if one recites the Berachah with the Sefer Torah open, that is acceptable, because, Tosfos says, today Amei ha'Aretz who would think that the Berachos are written in the Sefer Torah are not at all common (in the synagogue). How can Tosfos say that one should recite the Berachah with the Sefer Torah closed, like Rabbi Meir? The Gemara itself says that the Halachah follows Rabbi Yehudah! The BACH explains that according to Tosfos, when Rabbi Yehudah says to leave the Sefer Torah open when reciting the Berachah he means that one does not \*have\* to close it. One is allowed to keep it open, but one is not \*required\* to keep it open. Tosfos is saying that even Rabbi Yehudah agrees that it is better to close it, and therefore Tosfos rules accordingly. The MAHARSHA questions the Bach's approach in Tosfos. Tosfos says that nowadays, such ignorant Amei ha'Aretz, who would think that the blessings are written in the Sefer Torah, are not at all common, and therefore we do not reprove one who recites the Berachah with the Sefer Torah open. This implies that in the times of the Gemara, such Amei ha'Aretz were common, and thus one would have to close the Sefer Torah. This, however, is like Rabbi Meir, and not like Rabbi Yehudah! How can the Bach say that Tosfos is ruling like Rabbi Yehudah? The TAZ (OC 139:4) explains that when Tosfos says "nowadays, such Amei ha'Aretz are not common," he is not implying that in the times of the \*Gemara\* they were common. Rather, he is implying that \*after\* the times of the Gemara, such Amei ha'Aretz proliferated and thus it was fitting to be stringent like Rabbi Meir and insist on closing the Sefer

Torah. In the times of Tosfos, such Amei ha'Aretz became less common, and that is why Tosfos says that b'Di'eved one may keep the Sefer Torah open. In either case, according to Tosfos Rabbi Yehudah does not \*require\* closing the Torah, but he certainly allows it.

HALACHAH: The SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 139:4) cites the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah that one recites the Berachah over the Torah with the Sefer Torah open. The REMA says that one should look to the side, away from the Sefer Torah (so that Amei ha'Aretz should not think the Berachah is written in the Torah). The MISHNAH BERURAH cites the CHAYEI ADAM who says that instead of looking to the side, one should close his eyes, so that it not appear as though one is looking away from the Sefer Torah and making a Berachah on something else.

The BI'UR HALACHAH writes that some Poskim rule like Tosfos, that one should close the Sefer Torah when reciting the Berachah. He concludes that both practices are acceptable and that each synagogue should observe its own Minhag. Regarding the Berachah said after the Torah reading, the RAMBAM writes that one \*should\* close the Sefer Torah before reciting the Berachah. (This is based on Maseches Sofrim 13:8, and appears in the Beraisa in our Sugya as well, according to the text of the DIKDUKEI SOFRIM, which seems to have been the text of Tosfos Dh Golelo as well.) As the MAGID MISHNAH explains, we must close the Sefer Torah in any case after reading from it, so we might as well close it before the Berachah (lest Amei ha'Aretz think that the Berachah was written in the Torah). Before reading the Torah, though, Rabbi Yehudah said not to close the Torah because one would just have to open it again before reading it, and he was not concerned with the possibility of Amei ha'Aretz since Tircha was involved. (The reasons suggested by the Pri Megadim for not closing the Torah before the Berachah at the beginning of the Torah reading do not apply to the Berachah after the reading either.)

THE DAFYOMI DISCUSSION LIST Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld  
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C. Shulman asked Megilah 13b - Why is Moshe Rabeinu's birthday more auspicious than his Yortzeit? We commemorate Yortzeits but not birthdays, I thought!

The Kollel replies: Chazal tell us that Hashem fills the years of Tzadikim to the day; by being taken from this world on the same date on which they were born, it is a sign that a person's lifetime was complete and that he was a Tzadik, for he fulfilled his allotted lifespan. The day of his death, therefore, is the day that he arrives at a level of eternal completion, and thus there is no inauspiciousness associated with his day of death at all. The Gemara here means that Haman did not know that Moshe Rabeinu was born on the same date on which he died and that he had lived a complete life, a sign that his day of death was a good omen and not a bad one.

Megilah 022b: Bowing down on Yom Kipur and during Aleinu Efraim Goldstein <Efraim@aol.com> asked: The minhag is to emulate the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur by performing four times " [line 43] HISHTACHAVA'AH - prostration while outstretching one's hands and feet" There appears to be a difference between the HISHTACHAVA'AH of Shem Hashem (3 times) and the HISHTACHAVA'AH of Aleinu, both physically in the manner we do it and also historically (I don't know if the the Kohen Gadol did HISHTACHAVA'AH at aleinu). Two points: 1. What is the accepted Minhag regarding the physical HISHTACHAVA'AH i.e. exact manner to be done at Shem Hashem & aleinu. 2. It is our minhag that we cover either the carpet or the linolium with paper prior to HISHTACHAVA'AH. Me Ikar Hadin I thionk this applies only at stone floors.. what is the mekor for our practice. All thoughts are welcomed. Once again many thanks for your efforts as pioneers marbitzei torah. Efraim Goldstein

The Kollel replies: As we wrote in the Insights, Hishtachava'ah is Asur on a stone floor even without Pishut Yadayim v'Raglayim

(spreading out one's arms and legs), and bowing \*with\* Pishut is Asur even on a floor which is not made of stone. This is only when one brings his head to the floor. When one just bends down (or kneels upon his knees), it is not Asur on a floor not made of stone. Therefore, when bowing for Aleinu and Modim, where it suffices to bow enough so that one's flesh of his stomach is folded over to his chest (as the Gemara describes in Berachos 28b, and as cited as the Halachah in Shulchan Aruch OC 113:4), there is no problem of the Isur of bowing on a stone floor. On Yom Kipur, when we do bring our heads to the floor when bowing down, we do not bow with Pishut, arms and legs outspread, which would be Asur even with a separation (such as a cloth on the floor). We bow on our faces without Pishut, on some sort of separation between us and the floor. We do not treat a non-stone floor differently from a stone floor, but rather we use a separation on both of them. The reason for not bowing directly on a non-stone floor is in order not to err and think that it is also permitted to bow on a stone floor. M. Kornfeld

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