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From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2002
To: weekly1@torahweb.org Subject: Rabbi Mordechai Willig - Like the Sun to subscribe, email: weekly@torahweb.org the HTML version of this dvar Torah can be found at:

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RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG

LIKE THE SUN

"And Hashem made the two great lights"(1:16). The sun and moon were created equal in size, but the moon was reduced because it complained and said, "it is impossible for two kings to use the same crown" (Rashi).

The sun remained the same size because it heard its disgrace by the moon and did not respond. The Talmud (Shabbos 88b) says, "those who are insulted but do not insult, who are disgraced but do not reply, who perform with love and are happy in suffering, regarding them it says, 'those who love Him shall be as the sun going forth in its might' (Da'as Zekainim).

"And it (the sun) is like a groom coming forth from the bridal chamber" (Tehilim 19:6). This pasuk teaches an important lesson to a groom. Notwithstanding mutual love and dedication, a new couple, given the pressures and adjustments in their lives, is likely to experience tension. A new wife may say something that causes her husband to feel insulted. At such a time, the groom is commanded to be like the sun and not reply. By his silence, he will be great like the sun, and enjoy a peaceful marriage.

In fact, men are compared to the sun, a source of light, and women to the moon, who receives and reflects the sun's light. In addition, the sun is the same size and shape each day, whereas the moon's size and shape change each night. This corresponds to gender differences as well. A woman changes more than a man, both physically and emotionally, and this itself is part of her attraction (see Nida 31b). However, a man's role is to always be serene and happy, and a wife relies on this stability.

A husband must talk to his wife calmly, and be neither sad nor angry (Rambam Ishus 15:19). A wife has no such obligation (ibid 20), as by her nature she is more sensitive, and as such, more given to tears. The husband must be supportive, and, like the sun, be a constant source of strength, never replying to an insult.

The Chafetz Chaim (Shmiras Halashon, Sha'ar Hat'vuna 8) points out three ascending levels described in the Gemara (Shabbos 88b, quoted above): 1. A man does not insult someone who insulted him, but does respond 2. A man does not respond at all to an insult, but is bitter in his

heart 3. A man does not respond, out of love for Hashem, and accepts the pain of insult with joy. One is required to be happier over suffering than over good (Tanchuma), and this includes suffering an insult. In this vein, the second part of the description of the sun, rejoicing like a warrior to run the course, is apt for a groom as well. By not responding, and even rejoicing, when insulted, the husband reaches true greatness.

The warrior is happy because he is confident in his strength (Metzudos). At first glance, a confident person is more likely to respond to, and even insult, one who insults him. But in reality the opposite is true. One who lacks self-esteem is more prone to respond and insult in order to defend his honor. A confident person, like the sun, need not engage in verbal self-defense.

Indeed this lesson applies to a husband throughout his marriage, in all situations. In this way he can run the course of a long and happy married life, and be like the sun going forth in its might.

From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2002 To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis - Rabbi Yitzchak is Addressing the Jews, Not Other Nations Rashi [Bereshis 1:1] notes -- in the name of 'Rabbi Yitzchak' -- that it would have been logical for the Torah, which is basically a book of laws, to begin with the first Commandment "This month for you is the beginning of months" [Shmos 12:2]. Why then does the Torah begin with the story of Creation?

The Torah began with the story of Creation because it wished to convey the message of the pasuk [verse] "The power of His acts He told to His people, in order to give them the estate of nations" [Tehillim 111:6]. If the nations of the world will say to Israel 'You are bandits for you conquered the lands of the seven nations who inhabited Canaan', Israel will respond that the whole world belongs to G-d. He created it and He gave it to whoever was proper in his eyes. By His wish He gave it to them and by His wish He took it from them and gave it to us. Reb Elya Meir Bloch asked the question: what would be accomplished by making this point? It is obvious that the nations of the world would not be swayed by this argument. Neither quoting to them from Rashi, nor quoting to them from 'Rabbi Yitzchak' would help convince them in the slightest that the Jews have a right to Eretz Yisrael [The Land of Israel]. Rather, says Reb Elya Meir Bloch, this Rashi is actually for our benefit, not for the benefit of the nations.

If we know and we are really convinced that the Land belongs to us, then that gives us the strength of conviction and the power to stand up to the nations of the world and say emphatically "This is our land". The issue is not which argument we need to use when we defend our rights to the land. Nor is the issue whether they accept our arguments at all. The issue is that we need to understand our rights to the Land of Israel. When a person KNOWS that he is right, he then has the audacity to stand up and say "I am sorry, but it is mine -- it is not yours!" This is the lesson of the first Rashi in Chumash.

Jews must remember that our claim to Eretz Yisrael is based on Rabbi Yitzchak's argument. The argument that "We made the desert bloom" or that it is ours by virtue of force is not the correct argument. The more that we are convinced of the reality that "The power of His acts He told to His people, in order to give them the estate of nations", the more effective we will be in retaining that which is rightfully ours.

The Paradigm of "If At First You Don't Succeed, Try Try Again" The pasuk says, "And G-d saw all that He created and behold (hinei) it was very good" [Bereshis 1:31]. The Medrash explains that G-d created worlds and then destroyed them until he created this world. This is the implication of the world 'Hinei' [behold], which implies that all of a sudden, G-d created a world that was good (so he did not destroy it). The simple reading of this Medrash is that G-d engaged in a number of 'trial runs' until He finally "got it right" and created a world with which He was happy. It is described as if there was an architect at a drawing table with a large pad. He drew out some plans that he did not like. So

he ripped off the paper, crumpled it up, threw it in the garbage, and started over again. "Back to the drawing board!"

This obviously would be heresy and is clearly not what the Medrash is saying. I saw an interesting insight into this Medrash in the name of Rav Soloveitchik, zt"l. Rav Soloveitchik stated that every parsha in the Torah is coming to teach us a lesson. However, the description of Creation (ma'aseh Bereshis) is so obscure and so incomprehensible that one must wonder what its inclusion in the Torah could possibly teach.

Even after reading the account of creation, we still do not understand what happened. It is clearly not a historical account. The account of creation seems very imprecise to us. So what are we supposed to learn from it?

Rav Soloveitchik taught that there is a mitzvah in the Torah called "Mah hu, af atah" (Imitatio Dei -- Just as is with Him; so too it shall be with you). A person must try to emulate G-d. We make a mistake by thinking that the command of "You shall walk in His ways" [Devorim 28:9] is limited to the attributes of compassion and mercy [Shabbat 133b] or to certain very specific acts of kindness (e.g. - burying the dead; clothing the naked, etc.) [Sotah 14a]. Rav Soloveitchik said that "Mah hu, af atah" is a much broader concept than that.

The story of Creation teaches us that G-d is a creator of worlds. But the Medrash is teaching us that one can create worlds and they can be failures, but one should not become discouraged. One should start over and do it again until he succeeds. G-d specifically created worlds and destroyed them -- not because He could not get it right the first time. Rather, He wanted to show us mortals how difficult it sometimes is to create something. Sometimes one can exert effort for a good part of one's life and then realize that the product of his efforts has been a flop. The tendency is to throw up one's hands in despair and proclaim, "I've had it!" The Master of the World, therefore, did something "totally out of character" for Him -- He goofed! Not, Heaven Forbid, out of incompetence; but rather because He wanted to give us the paradigm of not getting it right the first time. Failure should not inhibit our creativity and should not inhibit our ambition. We each must become 'creators of worlds' in our own limited capacities. If our creations fail, so be it. We can follow G-d's example and try it again.

Who was the first 'person' to say, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again"? It was, as it were, G-d Himself. That is the lesson of the Medrash that G-d created worlds and destroyed them.

This Message Was Meant For My Brother - Not For Me!

Kayin and Hevel each brought sacrifices to G-d. G-d accepted Hevel's offering, but not Kayin's offering. Kayin was very upset at this rejection. G-d inquired of Kayin why he was so upset. "If you will do good (from now on and not be cheap in bringing future offerings -- which is why I rejected your offering) then you will be forgiven. But if you will not improve, then the evil inclination will be with you forever. Its desire is toward you, yet you can conquer it" [Bereshis 4:7]. This is the first recorded 'mussar shmooze' [pointed lecture in ethical improvement] in the history of the world.

The very next pasuk says, "And Kayin said to Hevel his brother. And it happened when they were in the field that Kayin rose up against his brother Hevel and killed him" [4:8]. The commentaries are bothered by an obvious question. We are told that Kayin said something to his brother, but we are not told what he said. What was the nature of this conversation? What did Kayin say to Hevel before he killed him?

The Ibn Ezra offers a very simple interpretation that fits in very well with the flow of the pasukim. The Ibn Ezra explains that Kayin repeated to Hevel the contents of G-d's ethical lecture. He told Hevel what he heard from G-d, and then proceeded to kill him.

Rabbi Zev Leff explains that Kayin's reaction to the 'mussar shmooze' from G-d was that "I liked the lecture, but it has nothing to do with me! It does not apply to me. Maybe I'll try it out on my brother Hevel. He is the one who needs to hear this chastisement."

However, Hevel did not accept the mussar from Kayin. "You have the wrong man, Kayin." Then Kayin killed Hevel. This was the first 'mussar shmooze' in history and this is the classic response to every 'mussar shmooze': "He is not talking to me!"

Sometimes when I speak in certain places, I have great trepidation about what I am about to say. I am afraid people will become offended. They might take my comments in the wrong way and think that I am insulting them. But, invariably people tell me "It was a great speech. It is a shame the people who should be hearing it were not here."

This is the classic response to every corrective ethical lecture. The source is Kayin. "G-d did not mean this lecture for ME". (Keep in mind that there were only a very few people in the world at that point.)

The Talmud says that if a Hebrew slave does not want to go free after six years, we pierce his ear and say, "the ear that heard on Sinai 'they shall be My servants (and not servants to other servants)' and ignored this exhortation, shall be pierced". But the question can be asked, why should we pierce the ear lobe? That is not the part of the ear that hears! If we wanted to make this an effective lesson, we should have pierced the eardrum! What does the ear lobe have to do with hearing?

The answer is that the purpose of the ear lobe is to funnel the sound. The eardrum certainly heard the message at Sinai, but it was not directed correctly. The direction of the message was deflected to someone else. "This does not affect me. The message is meant for someone else." That is not the fault of the eardrum; it is the fault of the ear lobe whose function is to properly direct the message.

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These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 344, Marriage and the Birchah Airusin. 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 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. Rav Frand, Copyright © 2002 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc. 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 203 (410) 602-1350 Baltimore, MD 21208

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THE PRACTICAL TORAH
BY RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES
Parshas Bereishis:
THE TIME SHABBOS ENDS

No definitive Halacha LeMa'aseh conclusions should be applied to practical situations based on any of these Shiurim.

After describing what Hashem created on the first day of Creation, the Torah indicates that the day came to an end, and uses the phrase "and there was evening and there was morning..." (Bereishis 1:5). This phrase is repeated following the description of the creation which took place on each of the other five days of Creation (Ibid. psukim 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). The Mishnah and Gemara in Chulin (83a) understand from his phrase, as explained by Rashi (Bereishis Ibid. s.v. Maaseh), that according to the Torah, the new day begins at night, meaning that in considering the 24 hour day, the night-time precedes the day time.

When night begins, then, a new calendar day has begun as well. The question is precisely how to define the beginning of night and, consequently, the end of the previous day according to Halacha. This is a question which obviously has ramifications for a great many Mitzvos and Halachos which depend upon the end of the old calendar day or the beginning of the new one, and is the subject of much discussion among Rishonim and Acharonim. For example, regarding the latest time one may daven Minchah in the afternoon, the Mishnah in Berachos (26a) quotes one view that it may be done until evening, that is, until the end of the day. Rashi (Ibid. s.v. Od HaErev) understands this to mean until nightfall, while Rabbeinu Yonah (Ibid. 18a. In the Rif s.v. Tefillas HaMinchah) learns that it means until sunset. The discussions relating to the first topic of Maseches Berachos, focusing on the time for Maariv and the evening Kerias Shema, also touch on this question.

HaRav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik discusses the precise definitions of day and night and their application to various Halachos in an article on this very subject in one of his Seforim (Shiurim L'Zeicher Abba Mari Z"L

Vol. 1 from p. 91). He mentions the interesting point there (p. 102) that the Torah itself seems to leave us in doubt as to when the old day ends and the new day begins. In this Parsha, the first Posuk cited above (Ibid. pasuk 5) declares that Hashem called the light "Yom" day, and He called the darkness "Lailah", night. The implications of this Posuk is that the day is defined by the presence of light, and the night by the presence of darkness. Thus, even after the sun has set, the night (and hence the new calendar day) has not yet begun because it's still light out; night begins only once it's dark. However, another Posuk in this Parsha (Ibid. pasuk 16) states that the sun is to be out during the day and the moon during the night. The implication of this Posuk is that the day is defined by the presence of the sun; once the sun has set, the day is over and the night begins, even though it is still light out. In short, the basic questions are what moment defines the end of the old day, whether when the sun sets or when the sky gets dark, and how we treat the time known as "Bein HaShemashos," or twilight, when the sun has already set, but the sky is not yet dark.

Another important question is how to precisely define nightfall. Even if we assume that the new day begins not at sunset but when it gets dark, how exactly can one figure out when that is? How long after sunset is this time? One of the many issues that depends upon this question is the issue of when Shabbos is over. Because of the aforementioned doubt about whether the new day begins at sunset or nightfall, we observe Shabbos (and Yom Tov) on both ends: Shabbos begins at sunset on Friday afternoon, but does not end until it gets dark on Saturday night; the Mishnah Berurah (Orach Chaim Siman 261 Sif Katan 23) and the Kaf HaChaim (Ibid. Ote 1) elaborate on some of the details about this. The question is how long after sunset one must wait. The Gemara in Pesachim (94a) states that the time from sunset until it gets dark is equivalent to the time it takes to walk four "Mil." Exactly how long that takes is the subject of another dispute among the Poskim, as presented by the Mishnah Berurah (Orach Chaim Siman 459 Sif Katan 15), and elaborated on in the Biur Halacha (Ibid. s.v. Havei). The Vilna Gaon (Biur HaGra Ibid. s.v. V'Shiur) and the Chok Yaakov (Ibid. Sif Katan 10) discuss this matter at length. The most widely accepted view is that one "Mil" can be walked in 18 minutes; the time between sunset and darkness, which is four "Mil", would thus be 72 minutes. The Gemara in Shabbos (35a), however, implies that from sunset to nightfall is only 3/4 of a "Mil", which is only 13 1/2 minutes, as explained in Tosafos there (Ibid. s.v. Trei). To resolve this contradiction, Tosafos there (Ibid.) and in Pesachim (Ibid. s.v. R. Yehudah) quotes Rabbeinu Tam who explains that there are actually two stages to sunset. The first is what people commonly call sunset and what he calls "the beginning of sunset," and actual nightfall takes place four Mil (72 minutes) after this, as the Gemara in Pesachim (Ibid.) indicates. But then there is what he calls "the end of sunset," which takes place 3/4 of a Mil (13 1/2 minutes) before this actual nightfall, and this is the stage which the Gemara in Shabbos (Ibid.) refers to when stating that from sunset to nightfall is 3/4 of a Mil. It seems clear from Tosafos in Menachos (20b s.v. Nifsal), though, that Rabbeinu Tam considers the time until that last 3/4 of a Mil before this actual nightfall (that is, until 58 1/2 minutes after what people commonly call sunset) to be daytime for all Halachos. This is followed by 13 1/2 minutes called Bein HaShemashos, and finally, 72 minutes after what people commonly call sunset, comes nightfall. Consequently, only then, after those 72 minutes, would Shabbos be over.

Although many Poskim accept this view, including the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim Siman 261 sif 2), the Vilna Gaon (Biur HaGra Ibid. s.v. She'Hu) questions it, saying that one can tell by looking outside that darkness falls long before 72 minutes after what people commonly call sunset, and it's difficult to consider the entire period of 58 1/2 minutes after that sunset to be daytime when it's obviously already dark out. He therefore concludes that sunset has only one stage, and when the sun sets, Bein HaShemashos begins immediately and lasts for 3/4 of a Mil, or 13 1/2 minutes, after which comes nightfall, as the Gemara in Shabbos (Ibid.) states. The 4 Mil period of the Gemara in Pesachim (Ibid.) is the time from sunset until a later time at night, when all the stars are visible, which is relevant for other purposes. The Gaon (Ibid.)

adds, however, that this 3/4 of a Mil represents Bein HaShemashos only in Eretz Yisrael and Bavel, and only at certain times. In other locations, depending on their latitude and longitude and depending on the time of year, the time between sunset and nightfall would be different, and nightfall can be determined by seeing three small stars in the sky (See Ibid. Biur Halacha s.v. M'Techilas). In the New York area, it is generally assumed that at least with respect to the end of Shabbos, nightfall is about 42 minutes after sunset according to this view, which is commonly followed.

Nonetheless, many people do wait longer to conclude Shabbos, following the view of Rabbeinu Tam. Again, there is much discussion as to what he meant by 72 minutes after sunset, and whether that time too varies with one's location and the time of year, and hence there are different customs. The Mishnah Berurah, while in general accepting the Vilna Gaon's definition of sunset (See Siman 233 Ibid. Sif Katan 14), recommends in the Biur Halacha (to Siman 261 Ibid. s.v. She'Hu) that one should wait 72 minutes after sunset before ending Shabbos, seemingly regardless of location or season, although he quotes other views. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Igros Moshe Orach Chaim Cheilek 1 Siman 24) suggests this as well. It should be noted that it is always proper to add a few minutes on to Shabbos both at the beginning and at the end, as indicated by the Gemara in Rosh HaShanah (9a) and implied by the Gemara in Shabbos (118b), and as codified in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim Siman 261 Ibid. and Siman 293 Ibid. Sif 1).

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Torah Tidbits

MEANING IN MITZVOT by RABBI ASHER MEIR

Each week we discuss one familiar halakhic practice and try to show its beauty and meaning. The columns are based on Rabbi Meir's Meaning in Mitzvot on Kitzur Shulchan Arukh.

BLESSING ON FIRE AT HAVDALA

At the Havdala ceremony marking the departure of Shabbat, we bless on a cup of wine and also on fragrances and on fire. (SA OC 298.)

The gemara relates the blessing on fire to the story that human fire was invented then: "On Motzaei Shabbat the Holy One blessed be He gave intelligence to Adam like that found on high; and he brought two stones and ground them together and fire came out of them" (Pesachim 54a). After the loss of our special spiritual level due to the sin of Adam and Chava, and the loss of the special spiritual glow of Shabbat, we are on our own, and have to make our own, material source of light.

The Mishna records a difference of opinion regarding the wording of this berakha. The school of Shammai say, "Who created the light of the fire"; the school of Hillel say "Who creates the lights of the fire"

(Berakhot chapter 8). The Vilna Gaon explains that this dispute is not merely linguistic, but rather reflects a fundamental disagreement regarding exactly what we are praising HaShem for in this blessing. The Gaon writes that according to Beit Shammai, the blessing is on the funda- mental concept of fire, which originated in the past ("created") and is unitary ("light"). But Beit Hillel say that the blessing also praises HaShem for the actual fire which we enjoy. This kind of fire is constantly being brought into existence ("creates") and is encountered in many varieties ("lights") (Shenot Elishu). Halakha is according to Beit Hillel.

This halakhic analysis corresponds beautifully with the Midrash we cited above. The source of this blessing is not the existence of fire per se, but rather the human ability to create and manipulate it, starting with Adam. Even so, the wording of the blessing thanks HaShem for the ongoing creation of this potent natural force.

As Shabbat departs and we begin our work week, we are thankful for human ingenuity which enables us to harness the forces of nature to make our work easier and more productive. At the same time, we acknowledge that all of our supposedly human inventions and contrivances are ultimately being constantly provided for us by the Creator.

Rabbi Meir has completed writing a monumental companion to Kitzur Shulchan Aruch which beautifully presents the meanings in our mitzvot and halacha. It will hopefully be published in the near future.

Rabbi Meir authors a popular weekly on-line Q&A column, "The Jewish Ethicist", which gives Jewish guidance on everyday ethical dilemmas in the workplace. The column is a joint project of the JCT Center for Business Ethics, Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev; and Aish HaTorah. You can see the Jewish Ethicist, and submit your own questions, at www.jewishethicist.com or at www.aish.com.

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The Sun And The Moon

"And G-d made two great luminaries..." (1:16)

Nothing is more dissimilar than the sun and the moon.

The sun is immense. The interior of the sun could hold over 1.3 million earths. It is incredibly hot. In its core, the temperature is 15,000,000 degrees C. The pressure there is 340 billion times earth's air pressure at sea level. Every second, 700 million tons of hydrogen are converted into helium ashes. In the process 5 million tons of pure energy is released.

The moon is an inert body, a mere 3,476 kilometers in diameter. It has a maximum surface temperature of 123 degrees C, and a minimum surface temperature of -233 degrees C.

You could hardly find two objects more different than the sun and the moon, and yet they share a puzzling similarity.

When viewed from the earth, they both seem to be the identical size. Isn't that strange? That of all the places our planet could be located in space, we just happen to be exactly where the sun and the moon look the same?

In the Talmud (Chullin 60b) Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi points out what seems to be a contradiction in this week's Torah portion. One verse says "And G-d made two great luminaries." The verse then continues, "the greater luminary to dominate the day, and the lesser luminary to dominate the night." The verse starts with two great luminaries and then only one is great.

Behind the scenes of this seeming contradiction, there is a fascinating story(*1).

At the dawn of Creation, G-d created the sun and moon of equal size and brightness. The moon said before the Holy One Blessed be He: "Master of the World, is it possible for two kings to use one crown?" G-d said "Go and diminish yourself."

The Jewish People are compared to the moon. Every month the moon gets smaller and smaller until it disappears completely. And then, seemingly miraculously, it is renewed.

The Jewish People have seen times in their history when they seem to have vanished completely and then, miraculously, we are renewed. This power of renewal is intrinsic to the Jewish People. For that reason, we count our calendar by the moon. The first mitzvah that the Jewish People received was the sanctification of the moon when G-d gave Moshe the precise measurement of the time of the moon's orbit so the Jewish People could calculate for all time the exact beginning of the new month.

The Jewish year is measured by the lunar month. The word for month in Hebrew is chodesh(*2) which comes from the same root as chadash which means new, since every month the moon is new. It is renewed. The nations of the world mark the passage of time by the cycles of the sun, by the year.

In Hebrew, the word for year is shana which comes from the same root as the word yashan, "old." The sun is without renewal. It is always the same unchanging yellow orb.

We are not the largest of all the nations. In fact, the Torah calls us the smallest. We are the People of the moon. The moon has no light of its own. It is a reflector. And like the moon, the job of the Jewish People is to be a reflector. The reflector in this world of its Creator.

G-d's light is concealed in this world. We don't see it clearly and brightly. Similarly the Jewish People are not recognized as His emissaries. Thus, it is fitting that the moon is small and diminished. When we look up to the sky, the moon and the sun look the same size to us. We know that one is millions of times the size of the other. But they look same.

Maybe this is a hint. A hint to a time that was. A hint to a time to come. When mashiach comes, the primeval light of Creation will shine again. There will be total clarity. One end of the universe will be visible from the other end.

And then the moon will resume its original radiance and it will shine again as it did at the beginning of time.

Footnotes: *1. A word of warning. This story is not allegorical. However, when we talk of the sun and the moon "speaking", it means their essence was expressing itself to the Creator. In human terms this would be called speaking. *2. In English too, the word "month" is related to "moon."

Written and compiled by RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR
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TorahWeb [From last year]

RABBI MAYER TWERSKY

PARSHA BRAISHIS

R. Yitzchak said: [G-d] need not have begun the Torah but from "This month shall be for you" because it is the first commandment which Israel was commanded. What is the reason that [G-d] began with the book of Genesis? Because [He wished to convey the message of the verse] "The power of His acts He told to his people in order to give them the estate of nations." So that if the nations of the world will say to Israel "You are bandits" for you conquered the lands of the seven nations, Israel will say to them "The whole earth belongs to the Holy One Blessed be He. He created it and he gave it to the one found proper in his eyes. By his wish He gave it to them and by His wish He took it from them and gave it to us". (1)

R. Yitzchak's comment highlights a most striking and jarring contrast. "Of all lands Eretz Yisroel alone is holy" (2); it is the choicest of lands. Rather [the verse means] that Hebron was fertile, with all that was good sevenfold, in comparison to Zoan. [The verse] comes to inform you of the excellence of the Land of Israel, for there is no more rocky terrain in the Land of Israel than Hebron. This is why they set it aside for tombs of the dead. And you have no superior to Egypt among all the lands...and Zoan is the best in the Land of Egypt...yet Hebron was better than it sevenfold. (3)

Eretz Yisroel is the focal point for divine providence. "A land that Hashem, your G-d, seeks out; the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it..." (4)

On the other hand, the seven nations were abominable and loathsome. "When Hashem, your G-d, will cut down the nations ... beware for yourself lest you be attracted after them ... and lest you seek out their gods ... you shall not do so because ... for everything that is an abomination of Hashem, that He hates, have they done to their gods..." (5) "Do not follow the traditions of the nations that I expel from before you, for they did all of these and I was disgusted with them".(6)

In fact, these nations were so thoroughly corrupt and singularly wicked that the Torah singles them out for eradication. "But from the cities of these peoples that Hashem, your G-d, gives you as an inheritance, you shall not allow any person to live". (7)

What are we to glean from the fact that Eretz Yisroel was originally given to the seven nations?

This jarring contrast was intended to foreshadow a fundamental historical pattern – indeed, a veritable law of history – and

metaphysical truth. Sanctity arouses violent opposition. Ruminating in an ahistorical context one might have theorized that morally debased and religiously corrupt people would simply ignore sacred sites. Such sites lie beyond their ken and orbit of interests. However, this has never been the case. On the contrary, those people(s) who constitute and represent forces of evil and impurity are perversely drawn to holy sites. They seek to suppress sanctity by gaining sovereignty over such sacred places from those who would safeguard their sanctity. Thus, for example, Titus, from all of his conquests, singled out the conquest of Jerusalem to be celebrated by the construction of the Roman Arch of Triumph.

This historical pattern continues unabated in present times. Current Palestinian nationalism did not exist while East Jerusalem, including Har ha-Bayis, was occupied by Jordan. Palestinian nationalism is a response to Jewish sovereignty over these sacred sites.

The initial giving of Eretz Yisroel to the seven nations foreshadowed this historical pattern and metaphysical reality. Precisely because of its sanctity, Eretz Yisroel would arouse the forces of evil and become the focal point in the struggle between Good and Evil.

Notes Rashi, based on Medrash Tanchuma, to Braishis 1:1. Translation is from the Saperstein Edition. Mishna Mas. Keilim Chap. 1. Rashi, based on Gem. Sotah, to Bamidbar 13:22. Translation as above. Devarim 11:12. Vide Rashi and Ramban ad loc. ibid 12:29 – 31. Vayikra 20:23. Devarim 20:16.

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[Note to readers - I included most of Rabbi Leibtag's shiurim 7 years ago. It's been a while, so I'm going to try to include them again this year. When there are multiple shiurim on one parsha, I'll include the first one. Chaim]

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Rabbi Abraham Leibtag

PARSHAT BREISHIT [revised version - 5761]

RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG

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

In this week's shiur, we discuss the structure of Parshat Breishit, in an attempt to better understand the meaning of the Torah's presentation of the story of Creation. Our analysis will also 'set the stage' for our discussion of the overall theme of Sefer Breishit in the shiurim to follow.

INTRODUCTION 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

In our shiur, we will first explain what makes each section unique.

Afterward we will discuss how they complement one another.

PEREK ALEPH 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, G-d's Name is exclusively "shem Elokim" (in contrast to the use of "shem Havaya" in the next section). Finally, the use of the Hebrew verb "bara" (to create ex nihilo - something from nothing) is also unique to this section. In addition to this special structure, the content of PEREK ALEPH also indicates that it should be considered a self-contained unit, as it presents a COMPLETE story of creation. For example, note how the introductory sentence is 'matched' by the finale: The section opens with: "BREISHIT (in the beginning), BARA ELOKIM - G-d created SHAMAYIM and ARETZ... (1:1-2) And concludes with: "VAYCHULU [Then came the completion of] ha'SHAMAYIM v'ha'ARETZ... "asher BARA ELOKIM" - that G-d created." (2:1-3) While this 'match' provides us with a 'technical' reason to treat 1:1 through 2:3 as a distinct unit, their content provides with a thematic reason as well. Let's explain: Note how the opening two psukim first describe the pre-creation state of - TOHU VA'VAHU - total CHAOS (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. This is emphasized by the closing statement in 2:1-3 where G-d blesses the seventh day... for on it He ceased from all of His work.

PEREK BET The next unit is 2:4-3:24, better known as PEREK BET. As you review these two chapters, note how they appear to present a conflicting account of the story of Creation. For example, note that: 1) Nothing can grow before G-d creates man (see 2:5), therefore: 2) G-d creates man FIRST (2:6-7), then: 3) G-d plants a garden for man, vegetation develops (2:8-14); 4) G-d gives man the job to work and guard this garden (2:15); 5) G-d commands man concerning what he can/cannot eat (2:16-17); 6) G-d creates animals for the sake of man (2:18-20) 7) G-d creates a wife for man, from his own rib (2:21-25). Clearly, the order of creation is very 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, even though PEREK ALEPH places man the pinnacle of G-d's Creation, it does not depict man as its primary purpose.

In addition, there are several other obvious differences between these two sections: * Throughout this section, G-d'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 commentators do), the question remains - Why does the Torah present these two accounts in a manner that at least appears to be conflicting? We obviously cannot accept the claim of the Bible critics that these two sections reflect two conflicting ancient traditions. As we believe that the entire Torah was given by G-d at Har Sinai (and hence stems from one source), we must conclude that this special manner of presentation is intentional and should carry a prophetic message. Since this is a very fundamental point, let's take a minute to explain why.

WHAT IS "NEVUAH" Before opening a book of any sort, the reader will usually have some idea of what to expect, based on the type of book that he has chosen. For example, when you read a history book, you expect to find history; in a science book you expect to find scientific facts; and when you read a novel you expect to find drama and/or entertainment. In a similar manner, when one reads (or studies) Chumash, he should expect to find "nevuah"; but what does that mean? The popular translation of "nevuah" - prophecy - may be misleading, for it implies the ability to see (or predict) the future. In Tanach, that is not the primary mission of a prophet. Technically speaking, a "navi" is a 'spokesman' [usually for G-d]. Even though this may at times include the prediction of certain events, his primary job is to deliver G-d's message to man. [Similarly, a "navi Baal" - is a spokesman for the Baal god. A "navi sheker" is one who claims to be speaking in the name of G-d, but instead is making it up himself. In other words, anyone speaking for any type of a god can be called a "navi".] [Note that the Hebrew word "niv" - a 'saying' - stems from the same root - see also Yeshayahu 57:19 - "borey niv s'fatayim"]

To clarify this point, let's take an example from G-d's appointment of Moshe Rabeinu to be His "navi". Recall how G-d first commanded Moshe: "... SPEAK to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, everything that I tell you" (6:29); i.e. to become His "navi" = spokesman. Moshe first declines, explaining: "... see I am of impeded speech [aral s'fataim], how then would Pharaoh listen to me?" (see 6:30). To solve this problem, G-d offers a compromise of sorts. Moshe will remain G-d's spokesman, but now due to his 'speech problems', Moshe himself needs a spokesman - towards that purpose Aharon is appointed to become Moshe's NAVI. Note how the Torah explains this: "And G-d responded to Moshe, see - I have appointed you as [a spokesman of] G-d to Pharaoh, but Aharon your brother will be your NAVI - i.e. your spokesman. You will say [to Aharon] everything that I command you, and Aharon your brother will speak unto Pharaoh..." (see 7:1-2)

Hence, a sefer of "nevuah" must be a book that delivers a message from G-d to man, delivered by His spokesman - the "navi". Therefore, when we study a book of "nevuah", we should expect it to contain a message from G-d to man. Therefore, as we study Sefer Breishit, we must assume that purpose of the Torah's presentation of the story of Creation must relate to the nature of his relationship with G-d.

Two renowned Torah scholars of this century have discussed this issue of the two creations stories at length. The analytical aspect, the approach of "shtei bechilot" (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. This will provide a background for those who wish to pursue this topic in greater depth. 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.

PEREK ALEPH - THE CREATION OF NATURE As we mentioned above, each day of creation in Perek Aleph begins with the phrase "va'yomer Elokim" followed a description of what G-d 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'yomer...":

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 their appropriate food:
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.
SHAMAYIM (above)	Birds in the SHAMAYIM
MAYIM (below)	Fish in the MAYIM
III. ARETZ (land)	VI. Animals & Man on the ARETZ
Seed bearing plants	Plants to be eaten by the Animals
Fruit bearing trees	Fruit of trees, to be eaten by Man

This suggests that the potential of G-d's creation in the first three days is actualized in the last three days, but the deeper meaning of this parallel is beyond the scope of the shiur. For our purposes, this shows once again how PEREK ALEPH must 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 G-d's creation of nature, the entire material universe and its phenomena. It informs us that nature itself, with all its complexities and wonders, was a willful act of GOD.

By keeping Shabbat, resting on the seventh day, as G-d did, we assert our belief that G-d is the power behind nature. This analysis helps us understand why the Torah uses G-d's name -Elokim - throughout 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 G-d's Name is in the plural form- for He is all of the powers / 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 G-d 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 G-d's image.

THE TORAH'S FIRST STORY Now we must ponder what may be the Torah's message in telling man that the creation of nature was a willful act of G-d? In his daily life, man encounters a constant relationship with nature, i.e. with his surroundings and environment. Man does not need the Torah to inform him that nature exists; it stares him in the face every day. Nor, can man avoid nature, rather he must constantly contemplate it, and struggle with it. Without the Torah's message, one could easily conclude that nature is the manifestation of many gods - a rain god, a sun god, a fertility god, war gods, etc. - as ancient man believed. Nature was attributed to a pantheon of gods, often warring with one another. In contrast, modern man usually arrives at quite the opposite conclusion -- that nature just exists, and doesn't relate to any form of god at all. One could suggest that Chumash begins with story of Creation, for man's relationship with G-d is based on his recognition that nature is indeed the act of one G-d. He created the universe for a purpose, and continues to oversee it. Now we must explain how this relates to man himself.

MAN - IN PEREK ALEPH In Perek Aleph, man emerges not only as the climax of the creation process, but also as its MASTER: "And G-d 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 G-d's BLESSING to man, and NOT a commandment! One could consider this 'blessing' almost as a definition of man's very nature. Just as it is 'natural' for vegetation to grow ["esev mazria zera"], and for all living things to reproduce ["pru u'rvu"], it is also 'natural' for man to dominate his environment; it becomes his natural instinct. The Torah's use of the verb "bara" at each major stage of creation, and then to describe the creation of man may shed light on this topic. When contemplating nature and his relationship with the animal kingdom, man might easily conclude that he is simply just another part of the animal kingdom. He may be more advanced or developed than the 'average monkey', but biologically he is no different. The Torah's use of the verb "bara" to describe G-d'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 G-d, 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.]

Perek Aleph teaches man to recognize that his nature to dominate all other living things is also an act of G-d's creation. However, he must ask himself, "Towards what purpose?" Did G-d 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 G-d'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 G-d is for the sake of man: * No vegetation can grow before man is created (2:5) * G-d plants a special garden for man to live in (2:8)

* G-d 'employs' man to 'work in his garden' (2:15) * G-d creates the animals in an attempt to find him a companion (2:19/ compare with 2:7!) * G-d creates a wife for man (2:21-23)

In contrast to Perek Aleph, where man's job is to be dominant over G-d's creation, in Perek Bet man must be obedient and work for G-d, taking care of the Garden: "And G-d took man and placed him in Gan Eden - L'OVDAH u'ISHOMRAH - to work in it and guard it." (2:15) Most significantly, in PEREK BET man enters into a relationship with G-d that contains REWARD and PUNISHMENT, i.e. he is now responsible for his actions. For the first time in Chumash, we find that G-d 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 G-d in Gan Eden, is paradigmatic of other relationships between man and G-d found later on in Chumash (e.g. in the Mishkan). G-d's Name in PEREK BET - HASHEM ELOKIM (better known as "shem HAVAYA") - reflects this very concept. The shem HAVAYA comes from the shrosh (root) - "Ihiyot" (to be, i.e. to be present). This Name stresses that Gan Eden is an environment in which man can recognize G-d's presence, thus enabling the possibility of a relationship. Should man obey G-d, he can remain in the Garden, enjoying a close relationship with G-d. 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 G-d 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 G-d. 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 G-d, 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 G-d 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, G-d has created everything specifically for man. However, in return he must obey G-d 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? As you probably have guessed - both, for in daily life man finds himself involved 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 G-d 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 G-d'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 "shrosh ha'emunah", the very root of our belief in G-d."

Understanding man's potential to develop a relationship with G-d 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

From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List [parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il]
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Shabbat_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il Subject: Shabbat Shalom: Parshat
Bereishit by RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN
Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Bereishit (Genesis 1:1-6:8) By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - Our Bible opens with the miraculous and magnificent creations of the world and of humanity _ but then quickly goes on to catalogue the encroachment of chaos into cosmos, horror into harmony. Eden is lost as a result of the cardinal sin of Adam and Eve against the Divine Creator by eating the forbidden fruit, and the future of the re-born world outside of Eden is threatened by the cardinal sin of Cain's fratricide. The first is a crime of human being against G-d; the second is a crime of human against human. The Bible links both sins by placing them in the same Torah portion and by joining them linguistically: G-d punishes Eve by declaring that Adam "will rule over her" ("hu yimshol bakh" Genesis 3:16), and G-d warns Cain that "sin crouches at the door opening, is desirous of overcoming you, but you can rule over it" ("V'ata timshol bo" Genesis 4:7). Furthermore, the Almighty asks a critical question of Adam as well as of Cain after each commits his respective transgression -- and the two questions are likewise linguistically related. Even more to the point, the questions are probably the most important queries with which all of us must comfort ourselves if we wish to pause for a moment in the midst of our unexamined hecticcy and confront the manner in which we are conducting our lives.

After Adam eats the forbidden fruit, "The Lord G-d called out to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" ("Aye'ka" - Genesis 3:9); and after Cain kills Abel, "And G-d said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" ("Aye Hevel akhika" Genesis 4:9). In effect, G-d is asking each transgressor where, next to whom, he is placing himself. G-d expects Adam to be next to Him, standing alongside the G-d who created Him in the Divine image, accepting His commands and thereby performing as His partner to attempt to perfect (complete) an imperfect (incomplete) world. Adam's response, that he was afraid because he was naked and so he hid, is a lame excuse. G-d wants to know where Adam is spiritually and Adam seems to be answering by explaining where he is spatially.

On a deeper level, Adam may well be explaining that he was ashamed -- rather than merely afraid -- because he was naked, because he was defenseless before the Divine charge that he had succumbed to physical lust and defied not only the Divine will but also the divinity within himself; And so he had no recourse but to hide spiritually -- distance himself spiritually -- both from G-d as well as from his truest and best self. And when G-d asks, "Where is Abel your brother," it is clear that the Almighty likewise expects Cain to be standing next to his brother, to cooperate with Abel and to be there to support him in his time of need. Once again, Cain presents a lame excuse, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9). The Divine response is that Cain certainly is his brother's keeper, that we are all our brother's keepers! Indeed, the very similarity in sound in the Biblical Hebrew of both Divine questions, "Aye Ka", and "Ay (ahi)ka" ("where are you" and "where is your brother"), suggests that G-d, Adam, Cain and Abel are all expected to stand together in the same place, all united in one inextricable bond which ought never be severed. A rupture between humans and G-d will cause us to forfeit Eden, and a rupture between sibling humans will cause the forfeiture of human history! The fundamental theological and anthropological underpinning for the inextricable bond between humans and G-d is to be found in the revolutionary verse, "And the Almighty created the human being in His image, in the image of G-d, He created him" (Genesis 1:27). This means that every human being has within him/her self a spark of the Divine, a component of Divine love, creativity and eternity. I call this revolutionary, because at the very least it means that every human being must be seen as an end in him/her self, that no human being may use another human being as a means for his/her end; any such use, or misuse, is enslavement! Hence employers must meet employees, teachers must meet students, husbands must meet wives and parents must meet children in the fullness of the being of the other, not only in the narrow sphere of one particular aspect of the relationship; in the words of Martin Buber, we must always confront each other in a relationship of "I and thou", not "I and it".

And since there is a part of G-d in each of us, there is a part of the other human being in each of us as well; we all share a common essence! Indeed, that is the true meaning of the Biblical mandate, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," which can just as easily be translated, "You shall love your neighbor because he is as yourself, a part of yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). G-d, as it were, gave of Himself to each and every human being, and we must similarly give part of ourselves to everyone else and, in so doing, we are giving to G-d and giving back to ourselves as well, since we are all an inextricable part of each other.

When the Trisker and Voorker rebbes in - training left the Yeshiva where they lived together as inseparable companions, they decided to exchange photographs. The Trisker tore each photograph in half, so that each friend would have two half photos. The message is indubitably clear: without my sibling, I am only half an individual. We are all inseparably bound to each other on the basis of the G-d who unites us all. "You shall love your friend because he is as you; I am the Lord [who has created this inextricable relationship]," (Leviticus 19:18).

Each of us is now left with two vital existential questions: Where are you in relationship to G-d who gave you life and dwells within you, and where are you in relationship to your fellow human being who is always your sibling? The answer to the second question will in large measure determine the answer to the first.

Shabbat Shalom. You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot on the web at: <http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm> Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and Graduate Programs Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chancellor Rabbi Chaim Brovender, Dean

From: Kollel Iyun Hadaf [kornfeld@netvision.net.il] Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2002
Insights to the Daf: Sanhedrin 21-23
INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF THE MORDECAI (MARCUS) BEN ELIMELECH SHMUEL KORNFELD MASECHES SANHEDRIN brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il> SANHEDRIN 21-22 - Mrs. Estanne Abraham-Fawer has dedicated two more days of study material to honor her father, Reb Mordechai ben Eliezer Zvi (Weiner) of blessed memory (Yahrzeit: 18 Teves). May the merit of supporting and advancing the study of the Talmud be l'Ily Nishmaso PLEASE HELP US HELP KLAL YISRAEL! Online donations:

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RABBI MORDECHAI KORNFELD

Sanhedrin 21 HALACHAH: THE CONCEPT OF "PILEGESH" QUESTION: The Gemara, after quoting the verse that says that David ha'Melech married additional wives (Nashim) and concubines (Pilagshim), inquires about the difference between Nashim and Pilagshim. Rav Yehudah in the name of Rav explains that Nashim are wives who are married through the process of Kidushin and who receive a Kesuvah. Pilagshim are married without Kidushin and without a Kesuvah.

How, though, does one marry a Pilegesh if there is no Kidushin? The Gemara does not describe how the marriage of a Pilegesh takes place.

In addition, what is the practice today with regard to marrying a Pilegesh?

ANSWERS: (a) First, we must note that there are other opinions regarding a Pilegesh besides that of Rav in our Gemara. The Yerushalmi (Kesuvos 5:2) discusses an argument between Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehudah regarding whether a Pilegesh receives a Kesuvah.

In addition, the RAMBAM (Hilchos Ishus 1:4) states that after the Torah was given, one who has relations with a woman with intention for Z'nus and without Kidushin is punished with lashes according to the Torah. The LECHEM MISHNEH asserts that the RAMBAM's Girsas of our Gemara reads that a Pilegesh "is" acquired through Kidushin, but without a Kesuvah. The Lechem Mishneh explains that this is why the Rambam prohibits an act of Bi'ah without Kidushin, because, according to the Rambam, such an act does not even constitute an act of taking a Pilegesh.

(b) The RA'AVAD argues with the Rambam there and says that there is no such prohibition, for this act is the act of marrying a Pilegesh (i.e. Bi'ah without Kidushin). (The Ra'avad explains that the word "Pilegesh" is comprised of the words "Pi Shagal," which indicates a woman who is used in both domestic and "marital" ways.)

The KESEF MISHNEH argues with the Lechem Mishneh and maintains that the Rambam himself agrees that a Pilegesh is taken without Kidushin, because the Rambam himself clearly states (in Hilchos Melachim 4:4) that a Pilegesh is acquired without Kidushin and without a Kesuvah! He answers the question of the Ra'avad on the Rambam by explaining that the Rambam maintains that the entire concept of Pilegesh is limited exclusively to kings; an ordinary person may not take marry a Pilegesh.

The RAMBAN poses a strong question on the view of the Rambam. We find that many of the great people of Israel took Pilagshim for themselves (such as Kalev and Gideon. From the incident of Pilegesh b'Givah (Shoftim 19:21; see Background to Bava Basra 116:3) it also seems that there was no sin committed by taking a Pilegesh.

The BI'UR HA'GRA (EH 25:1) answers that it is apparent from the Rambam that all of these instances dealt with a young maidservant who was married through "Yi'ud," the special procedure through which the owner of a Jewish maidservant marries the maidservant (see Background to Bava Basra 108:12a).

(c) The PRI CHADASH (in his comments on the Rambam, MAYIM CHAIM) and the RI MI'TRANI argue that the Rambam states only that a person may not have such relations "with intention for Z'nus" without Kidushin. However, if his purpose is to designate this woman as being exclusively for himself, then this act of taking a Pilegesh is permitted even for an ordinary person. He explains that since the Torah prohibits doing such an act with a woman without such intention, then it would not be permitted for a king to do it just because he is the king!

It appears from the Ra'avad and the Pri Chadash that a Pilegesh is similar to a normal wife, since she has been set aside for a specific man. RAV YAKOV EMDEN in SHE'EILOS YA'AVETZ (Teshuvah 2:15) describes additional qualifications consistent

with this theme. For example, he states that a Pilegesh must have a room set aside as her own room, and she must never transgress the prohibition of Yichud (being alone with another man to whom she is not married) as this would show that she is not really set aside for a specific man.

HALACHAH: The REMA (EH 25:1) quotes the RA'AVAD as stating that a Pilegesh is permitted as long as she is set aside for him and goes to the Mikvah at the appropriate times, like a normal wife. The Rema then quotes the RAMBAM, ROSH, and TUR who rule that marrying a woman as a Pilegesh is forbidden (seemingly agreeing with the Kesef Mishneh's understanding of the Rambam). The BEIS SHMUEL and the CHELKAS MECHOKEK there argue that this is not the opinion of the Rosh and the Tur. The Beis Shmuel also cites other opinions regarding the view of the Rambam (as we mentioned above).

The accepted practice is to follow the ruling of the Rambam according to the Kesef Mishneh and to prohibit the practice of taking a Pilegesh. Although RAV YAKOV EMDEN (loc. cit.) rejects the opinion of the Rambam, he concludes that he would not permit the practice of marrying a Pilegesh unless two other Halachic authorities signed with him to permit it, and thus it has remained the practice not to allow it. (Y. Montrose)

21b REASONS FOR THE MITZVOS QUESTIONS: Rabbi Yitzchak says that the reason why the Torah does not reveal the reason for the Mitzvos is because if a person thinks that he knows the reason for a Mitzvah, he might mistakenly assume that since the reason does not apply to him, neither does the Mitzvah. Indeed, the Torah reveals to us the reason for two Mitzvos, and yet the wisest of all men, Shlomo ha'Melech, erred and transgressed, mistakenly thinking that those two Mitzvos did not apply to him. The Torah states that a king shall not have many wives, so that they not turn his heart away from the service of Hashem. Shlomo ha'Melech said to himself that he certainly would not stray from the service of Hashem, and he married many wives, and yet they indeed "turned his heart away" from serving Hashem (see Parshah Page, Va'era 5758, for an analysis of Shlomo ha'Melech's deeds). Similarly, the Torah states that a king shall not amass horses, lest he be enticed to go back to Mitzrayim to trade horses. Shlomo ha'Melech felt that he would be able to amass horses without going back to Mitzrayim, and yet he indeed ended up going to Mitzrayim.

(a) If revealing the reasons for Mitzvos could cause a person to err (as it did in the case of Shlomo ha'Melech), then why does the Torah reveal the reasons for these two Mitzvos -- the Mitzvah for a king not to have too many wives, and the Mitzvah for a king not to amass horses?

(b) Are we supposed to attempt to understand the reasons for Mitzvos, or are we supposed to refrain from searching for the reasons for Mitzvos?

ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA explains that the reasons for these two Mitzvos had to be revealed, because the reasons themselves are Mitzvos. The reason for not having too many wives is so that one should not let his heart stray from the Mitzvos in general, which itself is a Mitzvah. This is apparent from the opinion of Rabbi Shimon in the Mishnah (21a) who says that it is forbidden for a king to marry even one wife who will make him stray from serving Hashem. Similarly, the reason for not amassing horses is itself a separate prohibition -- not to return to Mitzrayim.

The MARGOLYOS HAYAM points out that the Torah does give reasons for certain Mitzvos in the Torah (for example, the Torah says that we are to dwell in the Sukah during Sukos "so that your future generations will know that I had the Jewish people dwell in Sukos when I took them out of Mitzrayim" (Vayikra 23:43)). However, these reasons do not carry with them the possibility that a person will err and sin because of them, since the reasons are not intrinsic to the fulfillment of the Mitzvah. For example, the Torah commands us to dwell in a Sukah. The fact that the Torah afterwards tells us the reason why we are to dwell in a Sukah cannot cause a person to think that he is exempt from dwelling in a Sukah. In contrast, the Mitzvos of not having too many wives and horses are described in terms of causative factors leading to the more serious sins of straying from Hashem or going to Mitzrayim. Hence, in the case of those two Mitzvos, a person could err and think that those Mitzvos, which seem to be safeguards for more serious Mitzvos, do not apply to him.

(b) Based on this Gemara, we might think that we should not inquire into the reasons for the Mitzvos. However, the Gemara itself in many places states the reasons for many Mitzvos. As stated above, the problem with knowing the reason for a Mitzvah is that one might assume that the reason alone is Hashem's intention in commanding a certain Mitzvah, when, in truth, the reasons given in the Gemara are not absolute and exclusive, but rather they merely express one aspect of the Mitzvah. There obviously could be many more reasons behind any particular Mitzvah.

A dispute about this matter among the Rishonim began with the publishing of the RAMBAM's classic work, MOREH NEVUCHIM. In Moreh Nevuchim, the Rambam gives reasons for a number of Mitzvos. For example, the Rambam states that the reason why the Torah says that one should not shave the sideburns is because that is the manner of idolatrous priests. The TUR (YD 181) dismisses this reason and states that we do not need a reason for it; it is a Mitzvah that we observe regardless of the reason.

The BEIS YOSEF understands that the Tur is saying that we should never try to understand the reasons for the Mitzvos. The Beis Yosef asks, therefore, that we find in the Gemara that Rabbi Shimon would always try to understand the Torah's reasons for Mitzvos. The DARCHEI MOSHE explains that the Tur thought the Rambam was saying that the parameters of the Mitzvah are based on how these priests shaved their hair. The Tur said that this cannot be, as we are to understand the parameters of a Mitzvah based only on the Torah, whether the Written Law or the Oral Law, but not based on our own reasoning. Based on our Gemara, we understand this answer for

the Tur. The Tur knew that the Gemara gives reasons for Mitzvos, and that it is beneficial to know those reasons because it helps us to understand the will of Hashem. However, the Tur thought that there still exists the danger that people might understand the reason as absolute and mishandle the Mitzvah as a result. People would not make such a mistake, however, when the Gemara gives no reason for a Mitzvah; we would not assume on our own to know the reason for a Mitzvah. Many commentators indeed give their own reasons for Mitzvos. It is possible that the Tur would not be opposed to giving reasons for Mitzvos when those reasons have no Halachic ramifications. (see BACH, TAZ (YD 181), and MARGOLYOS HA'YAM here.) (See also Insights to Megilah 25:2, where we quote the MOREH NEVUCHIM and the RAMBAN in Devarim 22:6 with regard to the Mitzvah of Shilu'ach ha'Ken.) (Y. Montrose)

Sanhedrin 22 DAVID HA'MELECH AND AVISHAG QUESTIONS: The Gemara explains that David ha'Melech did not want to marry Avishag because he had already married as many wives as he was permitted to marry. When Avishag heard that, she responded, "When a thief can no longer steal, he presents himself as a peace-loving person," implying that David ha'Melech had lost his strength and therefore did not want to marry her (and not because he was prohibited from taking another wife). David ha'Melech proved to her that he still had his full strength by summoning Bas Sheva to be with him.

There are a number of questions on this Gemara.

(a) First, the Mishnah (21a) permits a king to marry up to eighteen wives. David ha'Melech presumably was telling Avishag that he already had eighteen wives. Why, however, did David ha'Melech not marry Avishag as a "Pilegsh"?

(b) Second, how could Avishag talk with such temerity and brazenness to the king?

(c) Finally, where in the verses does the Gemara see that the king summoned Bas Sheva to prove anything to Avishag? From the verse it seems that the two stories are not related! After relating the incident of Avishag, the verse tells how Bas Sheva came to the king in order to complain that Adoniyah was attempting to usurp the kingship from her son, Shlomo, and that was the purpose of her coming to David ha'Melech!

ANSWERS: (a) The RAMBAM (Hilchos Melachim 3:2) writes that a king is permitted to marry only up to eighteen wives, "including" Pilagshim. He seems to have learned that once the king has eighteen wives, the king is not allowed to take even a Pilegsh. The KESEF MISHNEH writes that this Gemara is the source for the Rambam's ruling. However, the RA'AVAD there argues and says that the verse which permits the king to marry eighteen wives is discussing proper wives, and not Pilagshim. This also appears to be the intention of RASHI (21a, DH v'Ha Kesiv). The CHIDUSHEI HA'RAN in the name of RABEINU DAVID cites proof for this opinion from the verse which describes Rechavam as having eighteen wives, "in addition" to sixty Pilagshim (Divrei ha'Yamim II 11:21). If he limited himself to eighteen wives, it must have been because he was observing the Halachah that a king may not have more than eighteen wives. We see from there that a king is permitted to marry Pilagshim in addition to his eighteen wives.

The Chidushei ha'Ran answers our question by saying that Avishag herself refused to be a Pilegsh. (Perhaps she refused because David ha'Melech was already old, and after a king dies his wives and Pilagshim are not permitted to remarry anyone else, as the Rabanan (18a) rule. She wanted to remain an unmarried Penayah, because even though she would be prohibited to marry someone from non-royal lineage after being with David ha'Melech, she would still be permitted to marry another king, as our Gemara says. By becoming a Pilegsh she would not be a full wife of David, nor would she be able to marry anyone else after his death, not even another king.)

(b) When the Gemara says that "Avishag said," it might mean that Avishag thought to herself (see TOSFOS, beginning of Nazir 10a). David ha'Melech understood what she was thinking and responded accordingly.

The ARUCH LA'NER suggests a novel approach to explain the Gemara. The Yerushalmi explains that in order for David ha'Melech to repent fully from his actions with Bas Sheva, David ha'Melech constantly tried to place himself in the same situation as he was in when the incident with Bas Sheva occurred, and then, in that situation, to act with the utmost righteousness and control. (This is the highest form of Teshuvah, as the RAMBAM states in Hilchos Teshuvah 2:1.) For this purpose, David ha'Melech had beautiful Pilagshim brought to him. For the same reason, David ha'Melech wanted an attendant to be found who would be the most beautiful woman in all of Israel. When Avishag saw that David ha'Melech was already very old, she said, "You no longer have the same desire you had in your youth, and therefore having a beautiful woman around will not serve the purpose for which you intend." This is what she meant by saying that even a thief eventually loses his ability to steal and then claims that he has repented, not out of true repentance but merely out of the inability to steal. David ha'Melech showed her that he was still youthful and thus could still accomplish complete Teshuvah. (Even according to the Aruch la'Ner, Avishag might have had the hidden intention in her statement in accordance with the simple reading of the Gemara.)

(c) It is clear that David ha'Melech summoned Bas Sheva, because no one, even a queen, comes to the king without formally requesting an audience or being invited by the king. The verse does not say that Bas Sheva asked the king's permission to come to him. The Gemara infers that the summons for Bas Sheva involved Avishag since the verse mentions Avishag in the context of Bas Sheva's meeting with the king (see MAHARSHA).

Moreover, it seems that the story of Avishag itself is what prompted Adoniyah to attempt to take the kingship for himself. Adoniyah thought that David ha'Melech was too old to notice or to care about what happened, because his call for Avishag demonstrated his deteriorating health and strength. He did not realize that David

ha'Melech's suffering was caused by a specific sin (see Berachos 62b) and not by old age. When David ha'Melech heard Avishag's comment about his age, he realized that many others might have thought the same, and thus he felt it necessary to show his strength in order to prevent a coup against his kingship. It was at this opportunity that Bas Sheva revealed to the king that indeed there already was a coup in process, and that the time to show his strength had come.

"ZIVUG RISHON" AND "ZIVUG SHENI" QUESTION: Rebbi Yochanan states that making a Zivug is as difficult as Keri'as Yam Suf. RASHI in Sotah (2a) explains that it is so difficult because a person's Zivug is made according to his deeds; he is matched with a woman whose deeds match his deeds.

The Gemara challenges Rebbi Yochanan's assertion that making a Zivug is as difficult as Keri'as Yam Suf from the statement of Rav Yehudah in the name of Rav, who says that forty days before the creation of the embryo, a Bas Kol issues forth and pronounces who his Zivug will be ("Bas Ploni l'Ploni"). If the Zivug is already determined based on Hashem's process of the creation of the person, then it cannot be based on a person's deeds!

The Gemara answers that only the "Zivug Sheni" is so difficult as it is based on the deeds of the person. The "Zivug Rishon" is determined before the person is born. The reason why the Zivug is determined based according to one's deeds is because if a person's deeds are meritorious, he is given a better Zivug (see Rashi in Sotah there). Why, though, is the Zivug Rishon -- which is decreed before the person is born -- not dependent on the person's deeds? That Zivug should also depend on the person's deeds! Why should a person who is a Tzadik be stuck with a woman who is not a Tzadekes just because that is what was decreed for him at the time of his creation?

ANSWERS: (a) When Hashem first created man, He created Adam and Chavah together as one, and then He separated them. The RASHBA (TESHUVOS HA'RASHBA 1:60) explains that Hashem first created man and woman together and then separated them, so that they would later be able to come together and be joined and feel like a single unit. Perhaps it is for this reason that before the man is born a Bas Kol announces who his Zivug will be -- this shows that they both come from the same spiritual root, and that the woman that he eventually marries will be part of his own Neshamah. It would be impossible to bond their souls together in such a way "after" they are created, and therefore Hashem bonds them together before they are created in order for them to be able to bond together strongly. (If one of them is a Tzadik and the other is a Rasha, then one can influence the other to improve since they are bonded together so strongly.) It is only possible, of course, for one man to be bonded to one woman. A second Zivug cannot come from the same spiritual root, and therefore the Zivug Sheni must be "Fi Ma'asav," determined according to one's deeds.

(b) RABEINU TAM cited by TOSFOS SHANTZ in Sotah (2a) explains that "Zivug Sheni" refers to a widow or widower. The Zivug Sheni can only occur after the first Zivug occurred. In order for the Zivug Sheni to occur, Hashem must take the life of one of the spouses in the Zivug Rishon. Rabeinu Tam explains that this is the similarity between Zivug Sheni and Keri'as Yam Suf. In both of them, Hashem must take the life of some in order to benefit others.

According to Rabeinu Tam, it is possible that everything that occurs to a person is based normally on Mazal, unless he is an outstanding Tzadik (as Tosfos says in Shabbos 156a), and when it says that the Zivug Rishon is announced before the person is born, it means that his Mazal is determined already from the time that he is born. The Zivug Sheni also should be determined by his Mazal just like the other major events in his life. However, there are times when a woman loses her husband not because it was the Mazal of her husband to die, but because of the great Zechuyos of another person who deserved her as his wife. This is the Zivug Sheni to which the Gemara is referring.

(c) The ME'IRI takes the opposite approach. He says that, normally, the Zivug should always be determined by the Zechus and actions of a person, like we asked in our question. When the Gemara says that the Zivug Rishon is determined by Mazal, it is referring to the Zivug that a person finds upon reaching the age of Mitzvos, which is the proper time for getting married (see ROSH, Kuntrus Pidyon ha'Ben, end of Bechoros). Since he did not yet have a chance to do many Mitzvos or Aveiros, his Zivug is still determined by his Mazal. However, any spouse that he finds after he has reached the age at which he is rewarded or punished for his deeds, then his Zivug is determined according to his deeds. The Gemara calls it "Zivug Sheni" since when a person gets married at this age it is normally the second marriage (since most people, at that time, became married at the age of Bar Mitzvah).

(d) The Mekubalim explain that "Zivug Sheni" does not refer to a second marriage. Rather, it means a second "matching". Hashem determines -- before a person is born -- who will be the best match for the person. But he only gets that match if he is Zocheh to it through his Ma'asim Tovim. If he is not Zocheh, then he ends up with another woman, and that is what the Gemara calls "Zivug Sheni" (it is like a "secondary" match in place of the primary one). (HAGAHAH in BE'ER SHEVA; YA'AVETZ; see also TASHBETZ 2:1.)

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