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from: torahweb@torahweb.org to: weeklydt@torahweb.org date: Oct 24, 2019, 11:32 PM subject: Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger - "In the Beginning" is Today!

Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger

"In the Beginning" is Today!

This is a "must teach". That is what continues to be reinforced in my mind on many a Shabbos Breishis when I revisit one of the first entries in "Touching History", a gripping personal story of the most charismatic rebbeim from whom I was privileged to learn. There Rav Sholom Gold writes, in a fashion far more dramatic than I would ever attempt, how the "first Rashi on chumash" speaks to our generation in a way that no one who came before us could have imagined.

To be sure, we all remember and are about to review that Rashi "justifies" the recording of creation as Torah's opener as the way to establish Hashem's sovereignty and His resultant right to assign the Holy land of Israel to His people. Thus, Rashi asserts that in some future time we are now fully equipped to respond to unfriendly nations who will accuse of being thieves who have stolen the Holy land away from its rightful owners. Truth be told, there are many questions on this Rashi and they generate discussions that run far and deep.

However, Rav Gold points out how puzzled Jews must have been when a careful reading of the text informs them of a time when we would be held up as land thieves in Israel. Imagine a medieval Jew running from the recent pogrom, or a relatively secure Jew of the 1800's trying to put this together. Before Mashiach comes, how could it come to be that we would ever be accused of stealing any country, especially a land so distant from any significant group of our people? And, of course, this makes no sense after Mashiach. Exactly which generation is going to need this argument? What time necessitated these passages?

Yet the twentieth and twenty first century Jew does not bat an eye on this Rashi. We don't have to travel far at all to find no end of people who look at us as land grabbers. We don't even stop for a moment to think that this Rashi must have been uninterpretable for centuries and perhaps even "metaphorized" to satisfy a skeptical student.

It is remarkable that the opening passuk of the Torah betrays every attempt to make it grammatically consistent with what we think the passuk should say, thus requiring extra textual commentary. Additionally, we are thankfully not at a loss to find prophecies that predict what we witness, be it Yechezkel who speaks of the flourishing land of Israel, the ingathering of the Jews of which the Torah speaks about, or Ramban's assertion that only Jewish hands will successfully bring forth from the land of Israel.

Yet the fact that very opening rabbinic comment on the Torah should speak to us so clearly as it never did before is breathtaking and should deeply impress any heart open to strengthening his or her emunah.

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From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand <ryfrand@torah.org> to: ravfrand@torah.org
date: Oct 24, 2019, 7:49 PM subject: Rav Frand - Lessons from the Moon's Consolation Prize

By Rabbi Yissocher Frand

Dedicated to the speedy recovery of Mordechai ben Chaya Parshas Bereishis

Lessons from the Moon's Consolation Prize

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: CD #1090– Bracha on Havdalah Candle: Before or After? Good Shabbos!

The Moon Receives a Consolation Prize—Let It Be a Lesson for All of Us

The Torah teaches, "And G-d made the two great lights, the greater light to dominate the day and the lesser light to dominate the night—and the stars." [Bereshis 1:16]. Rashi famously comments: "They were created equal in size, but the moon was reduced in size because it complained and said, 'It is impossible for two kings to use the same crown.'" Originally, Rashi explains, the sun and the moon were the same size, and besides that, the moon also possessed its own source of light. Today, as we all know, the moon just reflects the light of the sun, and it is much smaller than the sun. The moon is basically just a rock which has the sunlight bouncing off of its surface. However, when the Ribono shel Olam first created these heavenly bodies, they were equal in size and in power of illumination. The moon's diminishment resulted from its complaint to the Almighty. This is a famous teaching of Chazal.

Rashi comments on the last words of the pasuk ("and the stars") by saying "Because He reduced the size of the moon, He made its hosts many, to conciliate it." It appears from Rashi that the stars as well were part of "Plan B." Apparently, "Plan A" did not include stars in the sky – just two equally large and powerful luminaries. Once the moon advanced its complaint (that it is impossible for two kings to use the same crown), then the Almighty introduced Plan B – including a smaller moon accompanied by galaxies of stars, the stars being a "consolation prize", so to speak, for the moon.

If we think about it, this is an amazing thought. There are billions of stars in the heavens. Nowadays, because of all the artificial light in our cities, we cannot see all the stars. However, if someone who is out in the desert or the wilderness looks up on a clear night towards the sky, the amount of stars visible is magnificent. If we think about it, why are there stars? Rashi here says that the huge quantity of stars was provided to appease the moon! Why was this necessary? The Almighty could simply have told the moon, "It is your fault for complaining that you could not co-exist with the sun as equals, so now live with the consequences of your argument!"

I heard two insights to explain this phenomenon, both homiletic in nature, but I think they are both beautiful thoughts. One of them I mentioned in past years; the other I heard for the first time very recently.

The Ramo rules in Shulchan Aruch: "There are those who say one should make the chuppah (bridal canopy) under the heavens as a good omen that the couple's offspring should be like the stars of the heaven." [Even HaEzer

61:1] This is something I advise my young students to be particular about. When a fellow gets married, he has all kinds of questions about which wedding ceremony protocols are significant and which are less so. For many of these “customs” there is no authoritative source. I advise “Don’t worry about it!” However, our master the Ramo says it is a nice custom to make the chuppah under the stars. This is worth taking into account. That is why virtually all wedding halls in New York, where people are particular about such matters, have “skylights.” Even in Baltimore, many shuls were built with skylights for that reason.

My daughter got married in January. It was freezing. She got married at Beth Tefilla. There were two chuppah parts – there was an inside chuppah and an outside chuppah. They went outside to the “outdoor chuppah” for the siddur kiddushin. Why? Because of this Ramo. It is a siman tov (positive omen).

I once heard that there is another message in this custom, besides the fact that it is a segulah for having many children. The idea is that the couple wants their children to be “like the stars in heaven.” In what way? This means that if the entire purpose of the creation of the stars was to appease the feelings of the moon and make it feel better after having lost its status—we want that type of children. We want to have children who have the same sensitivity as the stars in the heavens, children who sense that their mission in life is to make someone else feel better.

Of course, the moon has no feelings, and all these statements of Chazal are metaphors. The metaphor is that even if it is necessary to punish a person and put him in his place on occasion, still, after administering the punishment, you give him a hug. This is the significance of the couple standing under the heavens at their chuppah—so that their descendants should be like the stars of heaven.

That is the thought I heard long ago. Recently I heard another interesting thought from the Tolner Rebbe:

The Gemara [Bava Basra, 8b] expounds on a pasuk in Daniel—“The wise will shine like the radiance of the firmament, and those who teach righteousness to the multitudes will shine like the stars forever and ever.” [Daniel 12:3]. The Gemara says that the reference to “those who teach righteousness to the multitudes” (matzdeekei haRabim) refers to teachers of school children (melamdei tinokos). They are like the stars of the heavens.

Dozens of interpretations have been given to explain this simile. The Tolner Rebbe’s comment was that this, too, is part of the job of the teacher of school children. I, Baruch Hashem, teach adults. They are all mature. Obviously, a teacher should never say anything demeaning or insulting to such students. But when you are teaching little kids, they sometimes act up, and the teacher sometimes needs to discipline them. When you discipline a child improperly, it can have repercussions that will last a lifetime. Unfortunately, far too many children were turned off to Yiddishkeit because of an abusive Rebbe – physically abusive and/or verbally abusive: Too strong, too strict, patch, this and that.

A teacher of children needs to be “like stars.” Yes, you need to discipline, but attempts to “appease their mind” must always accompany discipline—to provide the disciplined child with some kind of consolation prize, as it were, just as the Almighty gave the stars to the moon as a consolation prize after insisting the moon “diminish itself.” I do not know if anyone in this audience will become a professional teacher of children, but anyone who is or will become a parent, is by definition “a teacher of children.”

Parents raise children, and children can be frustrating. Raising children is the hardest job in the world. It can be very trying at times. Parents lose their temper. They lose their patience. But they always need to remember that there needs to be an appropriate follow-up to the administration of discipline. There always must be a plan to provide appeasement to the disciplined child. The Talmud uses the expression “With a child, one should push away with the left hand and draw near with the right hand” [Sanhedrin 107b]. The weaker hand should discipline and the stronger hand should draw him back.

If the Almighty created the stars to appease the moon, the teachers of children—which is a title that can be given to any person who merits to have and raise children—should always apply this concept of appeasing their “disciples” to make sure that even when there is a “klap”, it is immediately followed with a consolation prize.

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Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD

dhoffman@torah.org This week’s write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand’s Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion. A listing of the halachic portions for Parshas Bereshis is provided below: CD# 026 – Adoption: Problems and Solutions CD# 068 – Artificial Insemination CD# 117 – Inducing Labor: A viable option? CD# 164 – Weddings in Shuls: Is there a Problem? CD# 210 – Is Marriage a Mitzvah? CD# 254 – Truth Tellings and Shidduchim CD# 300 – A Mamzer’s Obligation in Mitzvos CD# 344 – Marriage and the Birchas Airusin CD# 388 – The “Kedushai Ketanah” Controversy CD# 432 – Choices in Marriage Partners CD# 476 – Melacha of Planting CD# 520 – Kavod and Oneg Shabbos CD# 564 – You and Your Wife – Ishto Kegufo CD# 608 – The Tefilah of Modeh Ani CD# 652 – The Tefilah of Asher Yatzar CD# 696 – The Bracha on the Havdala Candle CD# 740 – When Exactly Does Shabbos Start? CD# 784 – The Beautiful Esrog – How Much More? CD# 828 – The Baal Teshuva and Piryu Ve’Rivya CD# 872 – Marrying Someone With The Same Name As Your Mother CD# 916 – Not Having Children? CD# 959 – The Case of the Mixed Up Wedding Ring CD#1003 – The Case of the Missing Shabbos Bathroom Tissue CD#1047 – Mogen Avos on Friday Night – When and Why? CD#1090 – Bracha on Havdalah Candle: Before or After? CD#1133 – Bracha of ELokai Neshama She’Naasata Be CD#1176 – Chupa: Inside or Outside? In a Shul or Not In A Shul? CD#1220 – Forgetting Mashiv HaRuach on Friday Night CD#1264 – Can Women Drink from the Wine of Havdala 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 redes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Torah.org. Both the author and Torah.org reserve certain rights. Email copyrights@torah.org for full information. Torah.org: The Judaism Site Project Genesis, Inc. 2833 Smith Ave., Suite 225 Baltimore, MD 21209 <http://www.torah.org/> learn@torah.org (410) 602-1350

From: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> reply-to: shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org date: Oct 24, 2019, 8:04 PM subject: Humpty Dumpty Parsha Lesson

A Parsha Lesson from Humpty Dumpty

Rabbi Moshe Taragin

October 24, 2019 Around twenty five years ago, on Shabbat Bereishit, I attended a Friday night talk of Rav Aharon Lichtenstein zt”l prior to Ma’ariv prayers. These extensive wide-ranging talks usually lasted more than an hour and challenged weary Friday-night audiences. During his speech Rav Lichtenstein spoke eloquently about original sin and the fall of Man.

At one point, his Hebrew language speech was interrupted by an English quote: “And all the king’s horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put Humpty Dumpty back together again.”

I was startled by this quote from a popular children’s rhyme. It was not uncommon for my Rebbe to quote non-Jewish scholars who had written passionately about religion. However, a quote from the Mother Goose collection seemed incongruous.

Evidently, this line about a rotund figure who fell from a high wall was more than a children’s rhyme. Apparently, it was a metaphor about the stunning and irrecoverable fall of Man. By disobeying the Divine command, humanity fell so precariously that we were shattered beyond repair- even with great effort on behalf of all the king’s horses and all the king’s men.

Throughout history a debate has raged surrounding the innate essence of Man. Was he created primarily good and virtuous or fundamentally evil and immoral? Many modern thinkers such as Dostoyevsky and Orwell have suggested that Man was created evil and morally damaged. This approach is deeply rooted in Christianity in the concept of original sin- every person is born into this world through an act of sin.

Additionally, some of the horrors committed by Man in the past century corroborated the sense that Man was profoundly and innately sinful. Judaism flatly denies this view and asserts that G-d fashioned Man in the Divine Image and vested him with unlimited potential as the pinnacle of creation. Man was created noble and pure and to underscore this primal nobility, the creation of Man concludes on the sixth day with effusive Divine praise at the spectacle of Man: “Va’Yar Elokim et kol asher asa v’hinei tov me’od – G-d beheld his masterpiece and it was surpassingly good.” Moreover, in the very book in which Shlomo Hamelech addresses the vanity and futility of our

world, he nonetheless remarks that “G-d fashioned Man as good but man sought complications and distortions.” At his core Man was created kind, good and noble!

Even amongst those who affirm the essential goodness of Man, many assert that this innate virtue was squandered through Man’s first disobedience of partaking of the Tree of Knowledge. After all, this rebellion triggered Divine punishments which have fundamentally altered the human condition. Unlike his ideal conditions in Eden, Man must labor and toil to feed himself and support life.

Our very birth into this world is occasioned by pain and physical discomfort. Though it may be true that original Man was created pure and perfect, by sinning, he forfeited that original status. “Original” Man may have been empowered as the pinnacle of G-d’s creation however “Fallen” Man no longer possessed that great potential. We have fallen from our original stature in Eden and we now live flawed lives; we inhabit a different and bleaker world. This view of fallen and compromised humanity dominated much of Jewish outlook in general, and, in particular, of the world of Jewish mussar. Man has abdicated his original lofty position and was now mired in a state of ineptitude. Under these futile conditions, Man’s only salvation is careful adherence to Divine command amidst minimal engagement in the affairs of a fallen world. Stuck in a confusing maze of a pointless world, redemption could only be achieved through withdrawal from that dark and confusing world.

About 140 years ago one of the great leaders of pre-war Eastern European Jewry asserted a radically different view of human experience. Rabbi Noson Tzvi Finkel- affectionately known as the “Alter of Slobodka”- served as the mashgiach in the great Slobodka Yeshiva. He articulated a revolutionary manner of understanding the great fall of Man. Though “Fallen” Man was punished and was banished from Eden, he still retained his original grand and elevated potential.

The expulsion didn’t fundamentally alter Man’s identity and we continue to live in that original state of empowerment as pinnacles of Divine creation. Indeed, sin has significantly muddled moral clarity and complicated human experience. Indeed, our vast potential isn’t as easily applied or implemented as it was in Eden.

However, at our core, we still possess majestic potential to affect our world and author history. We are still princes – though fallen and marred! Striving for a morally and religiously sensitive life isn’t driven by the acknowledgement of the futility or the hopelessness of human experience. Quite the contrary, Man continues to live an empowered life, and his enormous potential entails great responsibility and uncommon duty.

Proper human behavior can redeem and advance the human condition just as our errant behavior can wreck the entire world. Precisely because of Man’s lofty status he must live an “epic” lifestyle so that creation itself can advance. This mussar of “empowerment and expectation” constituted a major shift from the conventional view that we inhabit a dark and empty space amidst a world of defeat. G-d places great expectations even upon “Fallen” Man and this recognition should produce religious drive and ambition.

Many find this approach more suitable to the modern context. For several millennia Man inhabited a confused and regressive world in which the human condition was plagued by violence, socio-political inequality and widespread inertia. This backward world did indeed seem bleak and dreary, inviting the more classic view of “Fallen” Man. Modern Man has flipped the script and fashioned a world of science, progress and potential. In this context, the notion of helpless and powerless Man is detached from reality.

The Slobodka doctrine which asserts that Man still retains his original unlimited potential is far more resonant and reflective of the world we occupy. We live in a world of meaning and progress and we are mandated to express the prodigious potential which characterizes Man while advancing our world to greater levels of moral and religious achievement.

From: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> reply-to: shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org date: Oct 24, 2019, 8:04 PM

The Genesis of Love

Britain’s Former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

In *The Lonely Man of Faith*, Rabbi Soloveitchik drew our attention to the fact that Bereishit contains two separate accounts of creation. The first is in Genesis 1, the second in Genesis 2-3, and they are significantly different.

?In the first, God is called Elokim, in the second, Hashem Elokim. In the first, man and woman are created simultaneously: “male and female He created them.” In the second, they are created sequentially: first man, then woman. In the first, humans are commanded to “fill the earth and subdue it.” In the second, the first human is placed in the garden “to serve it and preserve it.” In the first, humans are described as “in the image and likeness” of God. In the second, man is created from “the dust of the earth.”

The explanation, says Rabbi Soloveitchik, is that the Torah is describing two aspects of our humanity that he calls respectively, ‘Majestic man’ and ‘Covenantal man’. We are majestic masters of creation: that is the message of Genesis 1. But we also experience existential loneliness, we seek covenant and connection: that is the message of Genesis 2.

There is, though, another strange duality – a story told in two quite different ways – that has to do not with creation but with human relationships. There are two different accounts of the way the first man gives a name to the first woman. This is the first:

“This time – bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman’ [ishah] for she was taken from man [ish].”

And this, many verses later, is the second:

“And the man called his wife Eve [Chava] because she was the mother of all life.”

The differences between these two accounts are highly consequential. [1] In the first, the man names, not a person, but a class, a category. He uses not a name but a noun. The other person is, for him, simply “woman,” a type, not an individual. In the second, he gives his wife a proper name. She has become, for him, a person in her own right.

?[2] In the first, he emphasises their similarities – she is “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.” In the second, he emphasises the difference. She can give birth, he cannot. We can hear this in the very sound of the names. Ish and Ishah sound similar because they are similar. Adam and Chavah do not sound similar at all.

[3] In the first, it is the woman who is portrayed as dependent: “she was taken from man.” In the second, it is the other way around. Adam, from Adamah, represents mortality: “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground (ha-adamah) since from it you were taken.” It is Chavah who redeems man from mortality by bringing new life into the world. [4] The consequences of the two acts of naming are completely different. After the first comes the sin of eating the forbidden fruit, and the punishment: exile from Eden. After the second, however, we read that God made for the couple, “garments of skin” (“or” is spelled here with the letter ayin), and clothed them. This is a gesture of protection and love. In the school of Rabbi Meir, they read this phrase as “garments of light” (“or” with an aleph). God robed them with radiance. Only after the man has given his wife a proper name do we find the Torah referring to God Himself by His proper name alone, namely Hashem (in Genesis 4). Until then He has been described as either Elokim or Hashem Elokim – Elokim being the impersonal aspect of God: God as law, God as power, God as justice. In other words, our relationship to God parallels our relationship to one another. Only when we respect and recognise the uniqueness of another person are we capable of respecting and recognising the uniqueness of God Himself.

Now let us return to the two creation accounts, this time not looking at what they tell us about humanity (as in Soloveitchik’s *The Lonely Man of Faith*), but simply at what they tell us about creation.

In Genesis 1, God creates things – chemical elements, stars, planets, lifeforms, biological species. In Genesis 2-3, He creates people. In the first chapter, He creates systems, in the second chapter He creates relationships. It is fundamental to the Torah's view of reality that these things belong to different worlds, distinct narratives, separate stories, alternative ways of seeing reality.

There are differences in tone as well. In the first, creation involves no effort on the part of God. He simply speaks. He says "Let there be," and there was. In the second, He is actively engaged. When it comes to the creation of the first human, He does not merely say, "Let us make Man in our image according to our likeness." He performs the creation Himself, like sculptor fashioning an image out of clay: "Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."

In Genesis 1, God effortlessly summons the universe into being. In Genesis 2, He becomes a gardener: "Now the Lord God planted a garden ..." We wonder why on earth God, who has just created the entire universe, should become a gardener. The Torah gives us the answer, and it is very moving: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." God wanted to give man the dignity of work, of being a creator, not just a creation. And in case the man should view such labour as undignified, God became a gardener Himself to show that this work too is Divine, and in performing it, man becomes God's partner in the work of creation.

Then comes the extraordinarily poignant verse, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" God feels for the existential isolation of the first man. There was no such moment in the previous chapter. There, God simply creates. Here, God empathises. He enters into the human mind. He feels what we feel. There is no such moment in any other ancient religious literature. What is radical about biblical monotheism is not just that there is only one God, not just that He is the source of all that exists, but that God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. God knew the loneliness of the first man before the first man knew it of himself.

That is what the second creation account is telling us. Creation of things is relatively easy, creation of relationships is hard. Look at the tender concern God shows for the first human beings in Genesis 2-3. He wants man to have the dignity of work. He wants man to know that work itself is Divine. He gives man the capacity to name the animals. He cares when He senses the onset of loneliness. He creates the first woman. He watches, in exasperation, as the first human couple commit this first sin. Finally, when the man gives his wife a proper name, recognising for the first time that she is different from him and that she can do something he will never do, He clothes them both so that they will not go naked into the world. That is the God, not of creation (Elokim) but of love (Hashem).

That is what makes the dual account of the naming of the first woman so significant a parallel to the dual account of God's creation of the universe. We have to create relationships before we encounter the God of relationship. We have to make space for the otherness of the human other to be able to make space for the otherness of the Divine other. We have to give love before we can receive love.

In Genesis 1, God creates the universe. Nothing vaster can be imagined, and we keep discovering that the universe is bigger than we thought. In 2016, a study based on three-dimensional modelling of images produced by the Hubble space telescope concluded that there were between 10 and 20 times as many galaxies as astronomers had previously thought. There are more than a hundred stars for every grain of sand on earth.

And yet, almost in the same breath as it speaks of the panoply of creation, the Torah tells us that God took time to breathe the breath of life into the first human, give him dignified work, enter his loneliness, make him a wife, and robe them both with garments of light when the time came for them to leave Eden and make their way in the world.

The Torah is telling us something very powerful. Never think of people as things. Never think of people as types: they are individuals. Never be content with creating systems: care also about relationships.

I believe that relationships are where our humanity is born and grows, flowers and flourishes. It is by loving people that we learn to love God and feel the fullness of His love for us.

from: Mordechai Tzion toratravaviner@gmail.com [ravaviner] <ravaviner-noreply@yahoogroups.com> to: ravaviner@yahoogroups.com date: Oct 24, 2019, 11:37 PM subject: [ravaviner] A Brief History of the Universe

Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim
From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"a

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion Visit our blog:
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A Brief History of the Universe

[Translation by Rabbi Barry Kornblau, Chief Content Officer at Canfei Nesharim: Sustainable Living Inspired by Torah]

"Adon Olam... The Ruler of the Universe who ruled before any creation was formed."

More than 13.8 billion years ago, "In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth."

"Le-Et Naasah... At the time all was done, all was made according to His will." All was concentrated in one point, the Singularity, tiny beyond measure, compressed beyond measure ["Ein Sof"], in which were united all forces and particles.

After 10-43 seconds began the great explosion, the Big Bang, the Tohu Va-Vohu. At that point, the creation of time, space, matter begin, and the laws of physics – gravity, the strong force, the electromagnetic force, and the weak force – became distinguished.

From 10 seconds thereafter until 380,000 years later was the period of photons - "Let there be light".

After 400 million years, stars began to form along with heavy elements, until [the atomic number of] iron, since until that time only hydrogen existed. Then tremendous explosions of stars (known as supernovas) began, releasing 4,000,000,000 times the energy of the Sun, and atoms heavier than iron were created. As since it is not good for an atom to be alone (cf. Bereshit 2:18), molecules were formed.

8 billion years ago, our galaxy, the Milky Way, was formed.

5 billion years ago, our Sun was formed.

4.6 billion years ago, Earth was formed.

About 3.8 billion years ago, large molecules of millions of atoms appeared, known as prokaryotes: a single cell, without a nucleus, with a membrane separating it from other material – such as bacteria. They know how to replicate themselves, and thus are the foundation of biological life..

About 2 billion years ago, eukaryotes appeared. They have a nucleus and organelles – a great revolution which later enabled them to split into different organs such as the heart, brain, liver, male and female, adult and young.

(Notably, it took 0.8 billion years for prokaryotes to appear, another 1.8 billion years until eukaryotes appeared, and another 2 billion years until the [large] creatures we recognize today appeared. Maran Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook writes: "Physical reality's slowness, nature's restrictions, its external sloth, the contraction of spiritual ascents, the transience of miracles: these are all supporting foundations of the unending ascent constituting the ultimate foundation of physical reality. The latter includes internal limitations which prevents reality's revelation from sinking until its lowest depth, as well a darker thought which promotes the eternal, unending ascent." – Orot Ha-Kodesh 2.529; cf. 2.539, 2.547)

1.2 billion years ago, reproduction by male and female appeared. Previously, a single cell duplicated itself, but this process requires two different cells. The offspring has only 50% of each of its progenitors' traits

but is nonetheless doubly enriched in traits, doubling its survival rate. “They shall be male and female” (Bereshit 6:19)

900 million years ago, multi-celled organisms appeared – pre-sponge creatures.

(The pace is now faster.)

580 million years ago, a creature with nerves and muscles: jellyfish.

570 million years ago, creatures with six or eight limbs.

550 million years ago, flatworms with head and tail, front and back, and a controlling brain.

550 million years ago, the first species of fish.

475 million years ago, plants on land.

405 million years ago, freshwater fish.

400 million years ago, plants with seeds and insects.

315 million years ago, amphibians with lungs and gills, living in the sea and coming onto land.

255 million years ago, finally land creatures.

220 million years ago, mammalian ancestors.

150 million years ago, birds.

125 million years ago, placental animals which protect the fetus inside.

120 million years ago, flowers.

65 million years ago, a small mammal living in trees, ancestor of the primates.

40 million years ago, division of primates into different types.

25 million years ago, Proconsul africanus, a primate.

13 million years ago, a primate whose body structure approaching our own, including flexible elbows, a hard spinal base, and more.

10 million years ago, the appearance of hominids that branched off from gorillas.

7 million years ago, hominids separate from chimps [Maran Ha-Rav Kook: “Zohar (Parashat Vayikra, p. 10) states that there were many types of man before Adam mentioned in the Torah.” – Letters Vol. 1, page 108]

3.5 million years ago, Kenyanthropus Platyops. [“And Adam became a living being” (Bereshit 2:7) – “At that point, Adam was only a living being, unspeaking until he was formed in [G-d’s] Image and Likeness” – Commentary of Rabbenu Ovadiah Seforno, cited in The Torah of Rav Gedalyah Nadel, pp. 99-100]

2.5 million years ago, Homo Habilis.

1.8 million years ago, Homo Erectus which walks erect.

1.5 million years ago, Homo Georgicus which mastered fire.

700,000 years ago, the predecessor of Neanderthal Man and modern man.

350,000 years ago, Neanderthal Man himself.

160,000 years ago, Homo Sapiens, the predecessor of Adam. He knew how to bury the dead and to slaughter.

150,000 years ago, Homo Sapiens Sapiens.

50,000 years ago, migration to eastern Asia.

40,000 years ago, migration to Australia and Europe; Cro-Magnon man.

10,000 years ago, the Neolithic Era.

6,000 years ago – Year 0: After a long process, man was elevated to the status of Adam the First and our mother, Chava. They are the first with the Image of God, which expresses the permanent, holy [familial] relationship between them [Adam and Chava]. (Maran Ha-Rav Kook, Shemoneh Kevatzim 1.594)

Year 1056, Noach, the righteous man.

Year 1948, our father Avraham.

Year 2048, our father Yitzchak.

Year 2108, our father Yaakov.

Year 2368, our teacher Moshe.

Year 2488, the Exodus from Egypt.

Year 2528, the Conquest of the Land.

Year 2923, King David.

Year 2929, Building of the Temple.

Year 3338, Destruction of the Temple.

Year 3408, Renewal of the Temple.

Year 3828, Destruction of the Second Temple.

Year 5642, the First Aliyah [to Eretz Yisrael].

Year 5664, the Second Aliyah.

Year 5679, the Third Aliyah.

Year 5684, the Fourth Aliyah.

Year 5692, the Fifth Aliyah.

Year 5699, the Sixth Aliyah.

Year 5708, the Establishment of the State of Israel.

Year 5727, Return to Yerushalayim.

How great are Your works, Hashem! (Tehilim 92:6)

If our mouths were as filled [with Your praise as water] fills the sea, It would still not suffice to thank You.

From: **Rabbi Yochanan Zweig** <genesis@torah.org> reply-to: do-not-reply@torah.org to: rabbizweig@torah.org date: Oct 24, 2019, 11:30 AM subject: Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha - The Eternal Embrace

The Eternal Embrace

Parshas Bereishis

Posted on October 24, 2019 (5780) By Rabbi Yochanan Zweig | Series: Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha | Level: Intermediate Beginner

“...for on the day you eat of it, you shall surely die” (2:17)

Adam is warned that on the day he eats from the Tree of Knowledge, he will die. The commentaries explain that the death to which Adam was subjected, was the loss of his immortal status; after Adam ate from the forbidden fruit, man became mortal{1}. The punishment visited upon mankind for Adam’s disobedience appears to be vastly disproportionate to the transgression. What is the correlation between the transgression and the punishment? The very notion that Hashem meted out such a severe punishment evokes images of the vengeful and punitive G-d. How do we reconcile this event with the description of Hashem being a loving and merciful G-d?

The thought of one’s own mortality or the mortality of a loved one often leaves a person feeling depressed. Therefore, we frequently block out all thoughts of death because of the morbid feelings it evokes. How does a person view death with a healthy attitude?

Among the nations of the world respect to the deceased is shown by burying the body in a fancy casket. This also offers solace to the mourners. The most durable and impenetrable coffin is sought out. In some cases hermetically sealed containers are acquired to retard the decomposition process. In contrast, Halacha dictates that the coffin should be easily decomposable{2}. The custom in Eretz Yisroel is to bury without a casket, placing the body directly into the soil. Seeing a loved one placed ignominiously into the earth is among the most excruciating experiences a person will endure in his lifetime. Why would the Halacha appear to be insensitive to these feelings?

The Midrash states that Hashem created the potential for death in the world even before Adam transgressed. Commenting on the verse describing the sixth day of creation “And Hashem saw that it was very good”, the Midrash relates that “good” refers to the potential for life, while “very good” refers to the potential for death{3}. How can death be described as “very good”?

The verse records that Hashem created man from the dust of the earth. Rashi cites two opinions as to the source of this dust. According to one interpretation, Hashem gathered dust from all the corners of the earth to ensure that “kol makom sheyamus sham tihiyeh koltaso lekevurah” – “wherever man dies, the earth will absorb his remains after burial{4}.” The simple reading of the text implies that had man not been formed in this manner, his corpse would be rejected by the earth. Decomposition is a function of the soil interacting with organic matter. All creatures decompose in the soil, irrespective of whether they were created from the dust of the four corners of the world. What then does Rashi mean when he says “so the earth will absorb man’s remains”? The second interpretation is that man was

formed from earth which was taken from the place where the Altar would rest in the Temple. Axiomatic to the study of Rashi's commentary to the Torah is the rule that whenever Rashi offers more than one interpretation, the interpretations coalesce with each other; they are different perspectives of the same concept. How can these two interpretations be reconciled?

The Talmud records that Cleopatra asked Rabbi Meir whether man will emerge clothed after the resurrection. He answered her that if a simple seed of grain planted in the ground emerges layered with many husks, surely man will emerge well attired. Rabbi Meir was revealing to us the Jewish definition of burial{5}. The purpose of burial is not to dispose of the corpse; rather, burial is the beginning of the recreation process. Just as a seed flourishes and blossoms after being planted, the burial process reconnects man to his source, allowing him to be recreated and emerge in a perfected manner determined by his actions when he was alive.

Soil in each part of the world reacts differently to various types of seeds. Hashem created man from all the types of soil to ensure that the planting of his body would not be inhibited by the soil of the place where he would be buried. Rashi's words are that man should be "niklat" in the soil. This term is used to describe the successful implanting of a seed or conception. Burial is not just a process that allows for the disintegration of the body; it is the process that allows the perfected body to sprout, ready to accept the soul at the resurrection.

The Hebrew word for grave is "kever", which is also the Talmudic term for the womb. The grave represents the beginning of eternal life in the same manner as the womb is the home for a new child. The two interpretations as to where the dust used to create man came from are offering the same insight. The Altar on the Temple Mount was the place through which man connected to his Creator. Man was formed from the same place through which he connects to his source. Similarly, man is created from the four corners of the earth in a manner which allows him to reconnect back to his source.

Adam was created with the perfect body and soul, allowing him to experience an unparalleled relationship with his Creator. The sin distanced him from Hashem and imbedded imperfection within both his body and soul. Death was not a punitive act by a vengeful G-d. On the contrary, death is the process by which we can once more reconnect to our Creator and remove the imperfections that hinder our relationship with Him. Allowing man to reconnect is the ultimate chesed. Hence, Hashem saw that it was "very good" for this process allows both our souls and our bodies to reconnect.

The burial is the process by which we recreate the body, divesting it of all impurities. Therefore, Halacha does not allow for the preservation of the body in its current state, for this would deprive a person of the great chesed that Hashem has given us. The nations of the world who view death as the final step in a person's life attempt to preserve the dead body, thereby maintaining the last vestiges of his existence.

The Jewish perspective on death is comforting to a person for it diminishes the fear we have of the finality of death. Instead of being disconnected, we are actually reconnecting. The Torah appropriately refers to death as "asifa" – "ingathering".⁶ This sense of reconnection is borne out by those who have been present at the time of a person's death. It is common for a person to exclaim "I am coming father" or "I am coming mother" for the feeling of reconnection prevails upon the soul as it is departing.

1.Ramban 2:17 2.Rambam Hilchos Avel 4:4, Shach Y.D. 236:1 3.Zohar Parshas Bereishis 4.2:7 5.Sanhedrin 90a 2.25:8

From: **Daniel Keren** <keren18@juno.com> via gmail.mcsv.net reply-to: Daniel Keren <keren18@juno.com> date: Oct 24, 2019, 8:59 AM ...

His Son and Her Daughter

The Ben Ish Chai related the following story: A widower married a widow, and each one brought a child into the marriage: he a son, and she a daughter. Several weeks after the wedding, the husband began to suspect that his new wife was violating their marriage agreement by taking from the money that

belonged to the couple and transferring it to her daughter. When the husband raised the issue with his wife and aired his suspicions, she responded by saying that she similarly suspected him of transferring their money to his son! The two came to the Ben Ish Chai for advice, and the Ben Ish Chai said that the best idea would be to marry off the two children to each other, and give them the money that belonged to their parents jointly. The couple agreed and after their children were married, they no longer suspected each other and the love and friendship between them grew. The Ben Ish Chai used this story to explain the concept of "Shabbat shalom." What connection is there between Shabbos and shalom, peace? The answer, the Ben Ish Chai explained, is that during the week, people are unhappy, because their two inclinations are in constant struggle. The neshama, the soul, and the yetzer hatov (good inclination) pull the person toward the beis medrash (house of Torah study), but the body and the yetzer harah (evil inclination) pull him toward the temptations and desires of the physical world. Since it is impossible to satisfy both inclinations, the person is in a perpetual state of tension and struggle; the struggle between kodesh and chol (holy and profane), between tahara and tumah (purity and impurity). However! When Shabbos arrives, even the body pulls the person towards mitzvos and avodas Hashem (service of G-d), for the mitzvos of the day are enjoying Shabbos through tasty food, nice clothing, and the like. On Shabbos, even our physical actions are rooted in holiness, so both the body and the soul delight simultaneously. In this way, Shabbos causes peace to reign between a person's two inclinations. And this is the meaning of 'Shabbat shalom,' Shabbos that brings peace (Aleinu L'Shabei'ach, Devarim, p.394-395).

Reprinted from the Nitzavim 5779/Rosh Hashanah 5780 email of A Short Vort by Mrs. Michal Horowitz.

From: **Rabbi Kalman Packouz** <RabbiPackouz@shabbatshalom.org> date: Oct 23, 2019, 2:35 PM subject: How Old is the Universe? Shabbat Shalom Breishis

Breishis (Genesis 1-6)

GOOD MORNING! How old is the universe? 13.8 billion years or 6,000 years? Did Creation take place in 6 twenty-four hour days or were they longer? This week I bring to you a fascinating approach from a fascinating man. Daniel Friedmann holds a master's degree in engineering physics and is the Chairman of Carbon Engineering, a company dedicated to removing CO₂ from the air to solve climate change and ex-CEO of the Canadian company that made the robotic arm for the Space Shuttle. He lays out his research in his book, The Biblical Clock.

Why did Mr. Friedmann start investigating the connection between the Torah's story of Creation and the scientific timeline? The Talmudic sages teach that "God looked into the Torah and created the world" (Midrash Rabbah on Gen. 1:2). Mr. Friedmann concluded that if the Torah is the blueprint of the universe, then the Torah account of creation and scientific account of the age of the Universe must coincide.

About 700 years ago Rabbi Isaac of Akko made the assertion that time – while God was creating and man had not yet appeared – was different than time as we keep today. Mr. Friedmann, based on this insight and on classical sources, aligns the dates of key events as described in Genesis 1 and 2 with those derived from scientific theory and observation. How? One Creation Day = 1,000 x 365.25 x 7,000 = 2.56 billion years.

The factor of 1,000 comes directly from Psalm 90:4: "For a thousand years in Your sight are as a day" – where we learn that one day for God equals 1,000 human years.

The 365.25 number is simply a conversion from days to years (being the number of days in a year). The factor of 7,000 relates to cosmic cycles. The Talmud, (Sanhedrin 97a), which was redacted approximately 1,500 years ago states, "The world will exist for six thousand years and in the seven-thousandth year, it will be destroyed." Various Kabbalistic works, dating back to the first century, write that there are 7 cosmic cycles of 7000

thousand years (analogous to the sabbatical cycles). The factor of 7000 relates to these cycles. (This would explain the finding of ancient fossils of the dinosaurs).

The Torah provides a detailed timeline of the creation events. Genesis describes the timeline for the formation of the universe and the appearance of life on Earth. Each event is provided in sequence with a time of occurrence. For example, we are told that the sun was completed at the end of Day 4, that life first appeared in the oceans at the beginning of Day 5, and that the animals were made in Day 6; careful examination of the Genesis text reveals about 20 separate creation events. Much of the information in Genesis is further detailed in the Oral Torah to reveal a more accurate timeline of events.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 38b) provides the detailed account of Day 6, hour-by-hour: "The day consisted of twelve hours. In the first hour, his (Adam's) dust was gathered... in the fifth, he arose and stood on his feet; in the sixth, he gave (the animals) their names; in the seventh, Eve became his mate; in the eighth, they ascended to bed as two and descended as four (i.e., Cain and Abel are born); in the ninth he entered the Garden of Eden and he was commanded not to eat of the tree; in the tenth, he sinned; in the eleventh, he was tried; and in the twelfth, he was expelled (from Eden)..."

Mr. Friedmann then calculates that the Age of the universe from the start of Day 1 to today: exactly 13.74 billion years, coinciding with the latest scientific measurements.

Beginnings of life: from first thing on Day 5 ("let the waters teem" Gen. 1:20) to today corresponds to 3.52 billion years which is in agreement with the scientific time for "universal ancestor" – the single cell.

Plant life (on the land): from hours 6 to 9 on Day 6 until today ("God planted a garden ... and there He placed the man... And God caused to sprout from the ground every tree" Gen. 2:8, 9) corresponds to 426-106 million years ago which he reports is in agreement with the fossil record.

The Author of the Torah is one and the same as the Creator of the Universe. Therefore, there cannot be a contradiction between Torah and science. The Biblical Clock is available at Amazon.com

Torah Portion of the Week

Bereishis, Genesis 1:1 - 6:8

The Five Books of Moses begins with the Six Days of Creation, the Shabbat, the story of the Garden of Eden -- the first transgression, consequences and expulsion; Cain & Abel, the ten generations to Noah, the Almighty sees the wickedness of man in that generation and decrees to "blot out man" (i.e.. the flood).

One of the most profound verses in the whole Torah is "And God created man in His own Image." Since God does not have a physical being, this means that we are endowed with free-will, morality, reason and the ability to emulate God Who bestows kindness. Also, if we really appreciate that we are created in the image of God, we realize that we have intrinsic worth. Therefore, there is no need to be depressed wondering if you have intrinsic worth!

Dvar Torah

from Twerski on Chumash by **Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.**

The Torah states, "In the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1, 1) ... God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He abstained from all His work which God created to make (Gen. 2, 3).

These two verses encompass all of Creation. The opening three words end in the Hebrew letters taf, aleph, mem which comprise "emet" (truth), and the closing three words end in aleph, mem, taf which spells "emet." Reb Simcha Bunim of P'shis'che cites the Talmudic statement, "The seal of God is emet" and comments, "It is customary for an author to place his name in the opening of his book. God placed His Name, emet, in the opening chapter of the Torah. Emet thus envelops all of creation, a testimony to God as the Creator."

Divrei Shaul notes that all traits can be a matter of degree. There can be greater beauty and lesser beauty, greater wisdom and lesser wisdom,

greater strength and lesser strength. Only one trait cannot be more or less: truth. Something is either true or it is not true.

God is identified with truth. Just as truth can never be altered, because altered truth is no longer truth, there can be no change in God (Malachi 2:6).

The Talmud says that emet is broad-based, consisting of the first letter of the alphabet, aleph, the middle letter, mem, and the last letter, taf (Shabbos 55a). Truth, therefore, has stability and durability. Falsehood, on the other hand is the Hebrew word sheker, consisting of three letters near the end of the alphabet. Sheker is top-heavy and cannot endure.

To the extent that a person lives with truth is the extent one identifies with God. Any falsehood distances a person from God.

From: **Chanan Morrison** <ravkooklist@gmail.com> reply-to: rav-kook-list+owners@googlegroups.com to: Rav Kook List <Rav-Kook-List@googlegroups.com> date: Oct 24, 2019, 1:53 AM subject: **[Rav Kook Torah]** Bereishit: Be Fruitful and Multiply

?Bereishit: Be Fruitful and Multiply

Immediately after creating man and woman, God commanded them, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the land and conquer it" (Gen. 1:28).

One might think that the very first mitzvah in the Torah should be some central precept - not worshipping idols, for example, or belief in one God. What is so important about procreation, that this was God's first command to humanity? And why was it necessary for God to command that which comes naturally to humans?

Foundation for Morality

The fact that pru u'revu (procreation) is a mitzvah is central to Judaism's worldview. This means that this activity is rooted in absolute holiness and goodness. Indeed, recognizing the holiness in procreation is the very basis for an ethical outlook.

If one is unable to perceive the absolute good that comes from the continued survival of the human race, then life itself is merely the lamentable triumph of our natural drives over the desire for good. Such a pessimistic view is the root of all negative traits and immoral behavior. The ultimate conclusion of such an outlook is that "Might makes right," that the strong and the fit deserve to rule over the weak.

However, when procreation is revealed to us as a holy obligation, then we must acknowledge that our inner drive for the formation of life is not a blind biological instinct, but an expression of innate Divine goodness. This knowledge should impress upon us the inner goodness to be found in all aspects of life.

Advancing the World

Nonetheless, we know that life is not easy. Life in this world is full of pain and suffering. The Sages concluded that it would better for the soul not to have been born (Eiruvin 13b). How can we bring children into such a world?

Just as this mitzvah reinforces our natural aspirations for goodness, so, too, it elevates our thoughts to recognize an underlying unity over time. The past, present, and future are all bound together. It is not for the flawed world of the present, nor the cruel world of the past, that we bear and raise children. Rather, we bring new souls into the world to advance the universe towards the infinitely bountiful world of the future.

Through the mitzvah of pru u'rvu, we actively participate in the world's gradual progression. We help advance the universe to attain the lofty state when life will be revealed in its noblest form - when cognizant, sentient living beings will attain a state of incomparably refined and meaningful life. Humanity will experience a world in which life is no longer an onerous burden, but a precious gift and a wonderful blessing.

The Divine mandate of "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the world" demands that we perfect the world in all aspects. We are charged to advance the world, both physically and spiritually. We are commanded to "fill the world" both quantitatively and qualitatively.

We rise to this challenge when we overcome the harsh features of a raw and untamed world, through our efforts to settle and refine it.

(Adapted from Otzarot HaRe'iyah vol. II, pp. 518-519)

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com
from: Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>
reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com
subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein
Home In My Opinion IT LOOKS GOOD

Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

We are all aware that looks can be quite deceiving. When the Torah describes for us the concept of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, it refers to it as being most desirous and pleasant in the eyes of our mother Eve. As we all know, this became the source of human mortality and the bitter sin that led to expulsion from Paradise.

So, the lesson should be obvious that not everything that looks good is good. Yet it is within the nature of human beings to judge people, events and life generally based on superficial looks and proposed ideas. We believe that if it looks and sounds good, its authenticity is validated,

This is the basis for all social theories and societal engineering that has overtaken much of world over the past few centuries. The ideas and predictions became almost irresistible though they turned out to be failures, with the cost of tens of millions of lives. It looked good and it sounded good, but it ended up being the bitter fruits of the Garden of Eden. It is amazing how gullible human beings are and it is even more amazing how the intelligent and smart ones, those who inhabit the world of academia, are the most gullible and foolish humans when it comes to realizing that not everything is as it appears.

The Western world, having taken an undigestible bite from the fruit of the tree of knowledge, is now racing to transform society in order to achieve what currently is believed to be good. Because equality in achievement is so desirous and appealing, the smart ones do not look at the real facts of life or the results of the programs they have initiated and enforced.

It should be obvious by now that teaching sixth and seventh grade students all about sexual preferences has only led to the great degeneration of human society, not only in the moral sense but simply in the practical sense as well. It has legitimized promiscuity, minimized the importance of marriage and family and sanctified the killing of millions of unborn fetuses. Because of this misguided educational blunder, the cost of a government that supplies the welfare to the victims of this type of education has soared. All of us, whether we wish to learn or not, are forced to support this scheme that looks so good and sounds so reasonable... but has turned out to be so disastrous. And the same can be said for many of the social programs introduced in Western society over the past half-century that promised paradise but produced only disappointment, problems, crime and generational dependency.

The commercial world is built upon making things look good and attractive. It influences us to buy things that we don't need and to engage in behavior in order to impress others about whom we really don't care. It creates such a false world that it is hard for us to discover our true self within such a society of media propaganda, advertising bombardment and continued social engineering.

But at the end of the day, we come to realize that all of this really does not matter in the long run. It is the inner person, the still small voice within us that stubbornly refuses to be silenced, that really determines what we are and what we have. We must be wary of the fruits of the tree of knowledge. Technology is wondrous and has made our physical lives easier and more comfortable. However, it is not the solution to any of the problems that beset human beings individually or as a society. Without true moral foundations upon which to view societal initiatives, all of history teaches us that disaster and disappointment lurk in the wings. We are bidden in the Torah to avoid following the temptations of the world that our eyes reveal to us. Not everything that looks good is good and all decisions, both personal and national in Jewish society, must be balanced by the reality and results that

they will engender.

Shabbat shalom

Berel Wein

From: Esplanade Capital [mailto:jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com]
Subject: Rabbi Reisman's Chumash Shiur - Audio and Print Version
Rabbi Reisman - Parshas B'reishis 5770

1:16 The Posuk says לְמַמְשֵׁלֵת הַיּוֹם, הַמְאֹרֵר הַגָּדֹל-אֵת. The Michtoim Eliyahu says an incredible thing. He says the Yoid'ai Dina, the ones who understand know, the word Gadol as used in Tanach does not mean physically large. Gadol means giving. So the sun is called Gadol because it gives the entire B'riya everything it has. We have examples in Tanach of Gadol meaning giving. For example, when Dovid Hamelech is running away and we find that a man named Barzilai feeds him. The Pasuk calls Barzilai a Gadol B'anashim. We find in the Gemara that this Barzilai was Shataf B'zima, meaning he wasn't a Ba'al Madreiga at all. So why does the Pasuk use the term Gadol B'anashim? According to this P'shat it is very good, because it means he was a very giving person.

We find the same thing by the Isha Hashunamis. She was called Haisha Gedoila M'oid. This does not mean that she was very large. It means she was a very giving person. There is a M'koir for this in Rashi to Devarim 3:24. It says in the Posuk there, וְעַבְדְּךָ-אֶתְּהָה הַחַלּוֹת לְהַרְאוֹת אֵת, דָּךְ הַסְּוֹקָה-וְאֵת, גְּדֹלְךָ-אֵת, meaning you Hashem have begun to show your servant your greatness and your powerful hand. Rashi on גְּדֹלְךָ says, מִדַּת טוֹבָךְ meaning this refers to your attribute of kindness. That is the concept of an Adam Gadol, a person willing to give of himself.

We say that a Bar Mitzvah boy becomes a Gadoil, this is technically, Halachically true because a Katoin cannot give. We know that a Katoin can only receive and not give.

This is also Noigea to our Kavana in Shemoneh Esrei. Rebbi once mentioned the GRA's Teitch of the first B'racha of Shemoneh Esrei which mentions Hakeil Hagadol Hagiboir V'hanoira like in Parshas Eikev 10:17. That was discussing a Tefillah of Moshe Rabbeinu. We have that B'racha as well. What comes after Hakeil Hagadol Hagiboir V'hanoira is the Teitch of those words. Hakeil = Keil Elyoin, Hagadol = Goimel Chasadim Toivim, meaning one who gives. This fits well with this concept.

1:31 & 2:1 This Pshat was mentioned in Parshas Pinchus. Every one of the Mussafim has a Sa'ir L'Chatas except for Shabbos. Shabbos is the only time there is no Chattas at all. Why is Shabbos different in that it has no Chattas?

The Pachad Yitzchok has a beautiful thought. Rav Hutner writes, the first time we have Ein Mukdim U'muchar B'Toira is in Parshas B'reishis. B'reishis starts with the first day, second day, third day... then after the sixth day, Vayichulu Hashamayim and the description of Shabbos. This is out of order because the original Cheit of Adom took place on the sixth day. Shabbos is spoken about before the Cheit even though the Cheit took place earlier. Why is that so?

Rav Hutner writes that Shabbos is a day of Kedusha where a Yid has an ability to connect to the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam that is L'maylo Min Hacheit. The day of Shabbos has a level of D'veikus with Hashem that makes it K'ilu there never was a Cheit. If the Cheit of Adom was written first and then Shabbos, it would be a Shabbos that was L'achar Hacheit. Shabbos is really L'mayla Min Hacheit. If someone uses Shabbos properly he can connect to Hakadoish Baruch Hu. Shabbos is special in that Hashem is with those people who are M'aneig on Shabbos. The Zohar compares it B'derech Mashul to a father who gets down on his hands and knees and plays with his child. Since Shabbos is L'mayla Min Hacheit, it has no Korban Chattos. Chattas is a Korban that can only come after the Cheit. That is Pshat in what we say in Mussaf, Tikanta Shabbos Ratzisa Korbanoiseha, that Hashem established Shabbos and found favor in its offerings. The reason the Korban of Shabbos is special, is because Shabbos doesn't have a Korban Chattas. Normally a Korban Chattas is offered first to be Metaheir and only then is

the Korban Oilah brought. Here by Shabbos, there is no Korban Chattas brought and we go straight to the Korban Oilah.

Rebbi mentioned that he hopes that we who are in the working world now are using Shabbos properly in our Avodas Hashem, and we should be Mekareiv our children in the Ahavah of the Yoim Hashabbos to see the Kedushah of the Yoim Hashabbos. In addition, Rav Hutner adds, the Posuk says Vayar Elokim Es Kol Asher Asah V'hinei Toiv M'oid. Hakadoish Baruch Hu looked at everything and said it is good. Once he said it was good, the B'riya was able to continue. That idea that an Ayin Toiv gives Kiyum to the B'riya is something we have to appreciate. What was the Toiv M'oid, this was at the end of the 6th day which had the Cheit of Adam, expulsion of Adam from Gan Eden, Kayin killed Hevel. After all this, Hashem still says V'hinei Toiv M'oid. This is an Ayin Toiv. Not only is it Toiv but Toiv M'oid. Everything will work out. This says Rav Hutner is in the Mitzios of the B'riya.

Rav Pam in the Atara L'melech has a Nikuda that goes along these lines that is Nogeia especially to learning. The Gemara says in Maseches Nedarim 38a about 9 lines from the top, that Hashem gave the Pilpula of Torah to Moshe Rabbeinu and his children, however, because Moshe had a Toivas Ayin, so it was given to the B'nei Yisrael. It is hard to understand how the Pilpula of Torah the Tumuling in learning was not given to Klal Yisrael as that is an integral part of learning.

Rav Pam explains that Hashem gave the Pilpula of Torah to Moshe Rabbeinu to give over to Klal Yisrael, because the Pilpula of Torah, the Leibidig'keit of Torah can only come with a Toiv Ayin. It can't be given with a Mesorah. Moshe Rabbeinu gave it with a Toiv Ayin and it remained that way for all the Doirois. If a Rebbi or a father wants to be successful in teaching, and give the child a Geshmak for learning, the B'racha will only be Mitzuya with a Toiv Ayin. Pressuring the child to memorize a Mishna will not accomplish that goal. The learning must be done with a Toiv Ayin.

3:14 & 3:17 This Pshat was mentioned Pesach time. In the Amar Rabbi Elazar Ben Azarya section of Maggid we say - Kol Yimei Chayecha is L'hovi Limois Hamashiach. The GRA at his Seder would say at this point, Ein Tikvah L'nachash. To explain this to his talmidim the GRA would say that it says in Parshas Beraishis regarding the K'lalah of the Nachash that Afar Toicel Kol Yemei Chayecha. Since it says Kol Yemei Chayecha, if you hold that it means L'hovi Limois Hamashiach then the Nachash has no hope of ever getting its legs back. However, it says Kol Yimei Chayecha by Adam as well regarding the earth that will have to be toiled to obtain food. Rabbi Chaim Kanievisky asks this Kashya in his Haggadah.

3:1 When the Nachash is talking Chava into doing the Cheit, Rashi mentions the motivation of the Nachash is that V'nisava Lah, meaning he coveted her. It seems hard to understand. She ate as well from the Eitz Hada'as at it says in 3:6, so what was the plan of this cunning Nachash to be able to have Adam die and marry Chava. If they both ate from the Eitz Hada'as then they would both die. This seems to be a problem in basic P'shat here in Rashi? There was no answer offered.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas B'reishis 5769

This week we learn about Maasei B'reishis. We learn in the Posuk (1:5), Vayahi Erev Vayahi Boiker Yom Echad. That there was day and night even before the sun was created (the sun was created on the 4th day.) So does day and night depend on the sun or doesn't it depend on the sun? Is the fact that the sun rises make it day (a Sibah), or no, there is a rotation of day and night that Hakodosh Boruch Hu set into the Briyah, and the suns synchronization to day and night is a Siman to that fact?

It would look like from Vayahi Erev Vayahi Boiker Yom Echad, that the sun is a Siman L'dovor. If we allow such a Chiddush, then what R' Elchonon says in the beginning of Maseches Pesochim in Koivetz Shiurim, which is similar to this, would leave us with a Kasha. In the beginning of Parshas Vayeitzei, we learn Ki Bo Hashemesh, that the sun set 2 hours early. Rashi says, that took place in order that Yaakov should sleep there. It is very shver.

We are off by 2 hours. If the sun is synchronized to day and night, then Bishlomo that you learn that the sun is a Sibah, so then if the sun goes down 2 hours earlier, then it is night. However, if you learn that day and night are in the Briyah, and the sun is only a Siman L'dovor, so when Hashem made the sun go down early, Takeh Yaakov thought it was night, but we know it was 2 hours early.

This Kasha is not a Kasha, it is a Rayah L'dovor. In B'reishis Rabbah, the Medrash says, the 2 hours that the sun went down early in Parshas Vayeitzei, when were those 2 hours paid back? When Yaakov Avinu was limping from the Makah that the Sar Shel Eisav gave him, the sun stayed up 2 hours longer, which equalized for the hours it went down early. What is P'shat in the Medrash, why should there be a reason to GIVE back 2 hours? If a miracle happens, it has to be paid back?

According to what we are saying, it is Geshmak. Really, the sun is only synchronized to day and night; it is not Mamash day and night, so that is why the Medrash could ask when were those 2 hours given back.

In Yehoshua (Perek Yud, Posuk Yud Bais) it says, he also held the sun up, Shemesh B'givon Doim, and you may ask the same question, Ai it is not synchronized? Rashi in Yehoshua says, Shemesh B'givon Doim, was a full 24 hours delay, so everything is still synchronized.

There is a strange din. You are allowed to daven Maariv an hour and a Quarter before nightfall. This makes no sense as Maariv is a Tefillah for Laylah, so why would we have this exception? Maybe the Pshat is where do we learn about Tefillas Arvis?

From the incident of Yaakov Avinu at Har Hamoriah. The sun went down 2 hours early, he thought it was night, however, it really wasn't night. How early did Yaakov Avinu daven? It is possible that the original Tefillas Arvis was davened during the hour and a quarter before nightfall, which is commonly referred to as Plag Hamincha. Maybe this is the reason that for generations we can daven Maariv earlier as well.

1:29 & 1:11 In the Meshech Chochmah (on page # 4) it says, there is a Man D'omar that the Eitz Hadaas was an Esrog tree. That fits very Geshmak with what the Gemarah in Maseches Sukkah 35a (top line) says (ר פרי עץ הדר עץ"ן) (שטעם עצי ופריו שיהי אומר זה אחריו) that the Siman of the Esrog is, Eitz Shetam Piryo V'Eitzi Shavah that the Tam of the tree is like the Tam of the Esrog. This is important, because at the beginning of the Parshah it says Hakodesh Boruch Hu commanded that the trees should have the taste of the fruit. The trees understood, Eitz Oiseh Pri not Eitz Pri, so they were Meshaneh from what Hashem said. It would make sense that from all the trees, the Eitz "Hadaas" would listen to what Hashem commanded. So it is Geshmak that Esrog is a fruit in which the tree tastes like the fruit.

The Bais Haleivi once went over to someone who was dancing very leibidig on Simchas Torah, and asked him, I know you, you don't have any sedorim. So why are you dancing so leibidig? He answered, I was thinking of that. Yom Kippur just passed, I clapped Al Cheit for many different Aveiros, I didn't do all those Aveiros. For example, I am not a judge, so I never took a bribe. So obviously, we are clapping Al Cheit for all of Klal Yisroel. So if I can Clapp for Klal Yisroel, then I can dance for Klal Yisroel as well. B'emes, the whole Hemshech of Yomim Nora'im to Sukkos, Shmini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah, is a feeling of togetherness of Klal Yisroel, an Achdus.