

B'S'D'

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON BEREISHIS - 5761

To receive this parsha sheet in Word and/or Text format, send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@egroups.com, or go to <http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/parsha>. Please also copy me at crshulman@aol.com. For archives of old parsha sheets see <http://www.egroups.com/messages/parsha>. For links to Torah on the Internet see <http://www.egroups.com/links/parsha>.

<http://www.torahweb.org/> [From last year]

RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY

Parshat Bereshit ϕ Justice and Mercy: Creation One and Two

The creation of the world is introduced to us in two different ways:

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

The culmination of creation also occurred in two stages:

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

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

As the entire world could not stand up to the strictness of middat hadin so the Jewish people could not live up to the first set of luchot. There are individuals who have reached such an elevated spiritual level that Hakadosh Baruch Hucan relate to them according to the middat hadin. These are the tzadikim towards whom Hashem is "medakdek kechut hasearah." These are the tzadikim gemurim who do not need Yom Kippur. Chazal tell us that such people are inscribed for life on Rosh Hashana. The day of middat harachamim is only necessary for the benoni ϕ the average person who most of humanity is comprised of. Such people can not live up to the standards of din.

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

From: RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY rmk@torah.org]

Subject: Drasha - Parshas Braishis -- Goal Tending

PARSHA PARABLES 3 IS FINALLY HERE! For your copy, e-mail Rabbi Kamenetzky at rmk@torah.org for your inscribed edition!

Parshas Braishis -- Goal Tending

This week we are introduced to a formidable foe who greets us upon our entry into this world and attempts to accompany our every action throughout our mortal existence. He is known as the Yetzer Harah, the Evil Inclination. After Kayin has an inferior offering rejected, he is very upset. G-d talks to him frankly about the nature of his act and the hidden beast that undermines our good intentions, the Yetzer Harah. "Surely, if you improve yourself, you will be forgiven. But if you do not improve yourself, sin crouches at the door. Its desire is toward you, yet you can conquer it." (Genesis 4:7). Though the imagery of sin crouching in wait seems quite ominous, the allegorical allusion to an evil force blocking a doorway lends a simile to a story I recently heard that may be quite applicable to the lessons of the finale of any sport season. It may even be a lesson to those of us who have our ears glued to the rumblings of the subway, shutting high-flying frivolity from the Bronx to Queens.

Rabbi Sholom Schwadron had noticed that one of the students at the yeshiva was missing on Sunday and Monday. Tuesday morning he approached him, inquiring to the reason he missed those two days.

"I know you for two years. You never missed a day of yeshiva. I am sure that something important is happening. Please tell me what's going on." The boy did not want to say, but after prodding, the boy finally blurted out. "I would tell, but, Rebbe, you just wouldn't understand."

"Try me," begged Reb Sholom, "I promise I will try my hardest to appreciate what you tell me."

"Here goes," responded the student, conceding to himself that whatever explanation he would give would surely be incomprehensible to the Rabbi, who had probably had never seen a soccer ball in his life.

"I missed yeshiva because I was at the Maccabi Tel Aviv football (soccer) finals. In fact," the boy added in embarrassment, "I probably won't be in yeshiva tomorrow as well. It's the final day of the championship."

Rabbi Schwadron was not at all condescending. Instead, he furrowed his brow in interest. "I am sure that this game of football must be quite exciting. Tell me," he asked, "How do you play this game of football? What is the object? How do you win?"

"Well," began the student filled with enthusiasm, "there are eleven players, and the object is to kick a ball into the large goal. No one but the goalkeeper can move the ball with his hands or arms!"

Rabbi Schwadron's face brightened! He knew this young boy was a good student and wanted to accommodate him. "Oh! Is that all? So just go there, kick the ball in the goal, and come back to yeshiva!"

The boy laughed. "Rebbe, you don't understand! The opposing team also has eleven men and a goalkeeper, and their job is to stop our team from getting the ball into their goal!"

"Tell me," Rabbi Schwadron whispered. These other men the other team. Are they there all day and night?" "Of course not!" laughed the student. "They go home at night!"

What was the Rabbi driving at? He wondered.

Rabbi Schwadron huddled close and in all earnest continued with his brilliant plan. "Why don't you sneak into the stadium in the evening and kick the ball into the goal when they are not looking! Then you can win and return to yeshiva!"

The boy threw his hands up in frustration. "Oy! Rebbe! You don't understand. You don't score if the other team is not trying to stop you! It is no kuntz to kick a ball into an empty net if there is no one trying to stop you!"

"Ah!" cried Reb Sholom in absolute victory. Now think a moment! Listen to what you just said! It is no kuntz to come to the yeshiva when nothing is trying to hold you back! It is when the urge to skip class is there, when the Yetzer Harah is crouching in the goal, that it is most difficult to score. That is when you really score points. Come tomorrow, and you can't imagine how much that is worth in Hashem's scorecard!"

Needless to say, the boy understood the message and was there the next day the first in class!

The Torah tells us not only about the nature of the Yetzer Harah as an adversary, but rather as our ultimate challenger. He stands crouched in the door, ready to block any shot and spring on a near hit. Our job is to realize that we must overcome him when the urge is the greatest. Because when it is most difficult to do the right thing, that is the time we really meet, and even score, the goal!

Dedicated in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of our son, Benzion Raphael, by Karen and David Portal and family Mordechai Kamenetzky Yeshiva of South Shore The Dr. Manfred & Jamie Lehmann Campus 1170 William Street Hewlett, NY 11557 <http://www.yoss.org/> - rmk@torah.org 516-374-7363 x114 Fax 516-374-2024 Drasha web site: <http://www.torah.org/learning/drasha> Drasha, Copyright © 2000 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc. Drasha is the e-mail edition of FaxHomily, a Project of the Henry and Myrtle Hirsch Foundation. Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky is the Associate Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore, <http://www.yoss.org/>. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208

From: riskin@lists.virtualjerusalem.com parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il
To: RABBI RISKIN'S Parshat Hashavua List
Subject: [riskin] Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Bereishit by Shlomo Riskin
Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Bereishit (Genesis 1:1-6:8) by Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - How should the Torah view the explosion of scientific discoveries, the experiments in cloning, infertility, biological juggling, genetic engineering? Is everything that comes out of the lab ipso facto kosher, inductive reasoning and logical deduction serving as our supreme and absolute truth? Or do we adopt a much more circumscribed outlook, insisting that "the heavens belong to G-d, the earth was given to humanity- and there are many areas which human beings dare not touch but must leave to G-d." Are there limits to the extent of our scientific inquiry and discovery?

The difficult and almost mysterious Biblical account between the murder of Abel and the birth of Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, reveals an interesting approach to our question at hand. After Cain kills his brother, the Torah records Cain's punishment as a perennial rover and roamer (NA V'NAD), and then goes on to list Cain's descendants. Except for names, no details are given about five generations of Cain's progeny until we arrive at Lemech, the sixth generation.

Lemech, we are told, had two wives, Adah and Tzilla. Adah gives birth to two sons, Yaval and Yoav, the Torah identifying them by their professions: YAVAL is the "father of such as abide in tents, and graze herds" (Genesis 4:20) His brother YUVAL is "...the father of such as handle the harp and pipes." (4:21) The text then introduces us to the son of his wife, Tzilla. "And Tzilla also gave birth to TIVAL-CAIN, forger of every sharp implement in brass and iron..." (4:22) A second child, Naamah, is named but not described; she is a woman, and the Midrash identifies her as Noah's wife. So far, so good. But what follows is one of the strangest and most cryptic dialogues of the entire Bible: "And Lemech said unto his wives: Adah and Zillah hear my voice; wives of Lemech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man by wounding (him) and a child by bruising (him); If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold (or, in the seventh generation) then Lemech seventy and sevenfold (or, in

the seventy-seventh generation)." (Genesis 4:23-24)

What exactly is Lemech talking about, and what is the context of his declaration? There seems to be a gaping hole between the verse that speaks of Tuval-Cain forging brass and iron, and Lemech's powerful and poetic statement to his wives.

Rashi was bothered by this question and he quotes a Midrash which provides the missing step in the sequence. He informs us of what was apparently a well-known traditional tale that Lemech was blind, and he would go out hunting with his son Tuval-Cain. On one occasion hearing noise behind a bush which they assumed to be game, Tuval-Cain told his father to release the bow; only afterwards did they discover - to their horror - that the 'animal' was none other than their ancestor Cain. In anguish, the blind Lemech chaffed his two hands together squashing his young son's head between his powerful palms and killed him. Lemech's wives were understandably upset with their husband, and refused to have intimate relations with him. Writes Rashi, "...he endeavored to appease them. 'Hear my voice' - obey me and return to me; for the man Cain I slew - was he slain by my wounding? Did I then kill him or the young lad by premeditation? ...And if Cain was punished for the premeditated murder of Abel only in the seventh generation, I will certainly be reprieved until the 77th generation!" (see Rashi Genesis 4:23-24).

Certainly, Rashi is closing a circle by informing us that Abel's murder is finally avenged with Cain's death - albeit seven generations later. But Rashi's interpretation does not connect in anyway the explicit inclusion of the professions of Lemech's sons with their father's declaration. This is where the Ramban steps in. He writes: "...Lemech was a very wise man in every craft. He taught his eldest son Yaval the business of pasturing according to the nature of the cattle, and his second son Yuval the art of music. He taught the third one (Tuval-Cain) to forge metals and make swords, spears, javelins and all instruments of war. His wives were then afraid that he might be punished because he brought the sword and murder into the world, thus continuing the evil deed of his ancestor (Cain)" (Ramban, Genesis 4:24)

Let us attempt to analyze the words of the Ramban in depth. The Book of Genesis seems to contrast civilization and culture, science and humanity, technology and ethics. Abel was a shepherd, sensitively watching over his flock with much time for study, prayer and contemplation; Cain was a tiller of the fields, father of technological advance which leaves little time or energy for the world of the spirit. It may very well be that the tension between these two contrasting life-styles and philosophies brought about humanity's first murder.

As the generations progressed, the aggressive and wily hunter Esau is contrasted with the more studious and naive shepherd tent-dweller Jacob, much as Joseph the dreamer of Egyptian farm technology is contrasted with Judah, the traditional Israeli shepherd. Joseph proves himself to be a master of Egyptian civilization, adept at politics and economy, whereas Judah - at least according to our Sages - founds the first Torah academy in Goshen. Yaval the shepherd tent dweller (shades of Jacob) And Yuval the musician represent culture par excellence; indeed, their names resonate YOVEL, the 50th Jubilee year which portends freedom for all, remissions of debts, return to ones' ancestral lands - in short, redemption. Rashi even defines the Hebrew word YOVEL as meaning the ram's horn, an implement of music and exhortation.

Tuval-Cain, the third son, is engaged in a contrasting endeavor: he is "the forger of every sharp implement in brass and iron" (4:22). Brass and iron can be used to make tools for the trade of agriculture or weaponry for destructive warfare; in either case, Tuval-Cain represents civilization rather than culture, technology rather than ethics. Rashi suggests that the Hebrew "TIVAL" comes from TAVLIN, which means spice; just as spices refine and improve the taste of food, Tuval-Cain - our spiced-up Cain - "refined and improved the works of Cain by providing weapons for murderers." (Rashi, on verse 22).

From this perspective, the wives of Lemech refuse to consort with

him because he has brought weapons of destruction into the world. His response - that he certainly did not strike a premeditated blow because he merely taught a neutral technology - can easily be transposed to the more modern arguments of Oppenheimer and Einstein; Yes, atomic energy may very well be used to produce bombs of mass destruction, but it can also serve to cure cancer!

The Jubilee will announce freedom, peace and redemption when we learn to emphasize the spiritual values of Yaval and Yuval; at best, Tuval-Cain may be their handmaiden, enhancing culture through the comforts wrought by civilization. At the end of the day, Judah the shepherd is declared ruler of his brothers and progenitor of the Messiah; Joseph, master politician and technocrat, must pave the way and prepare the infrastructure for the advent of Judah. Only when Tuval-Cain understands that his technology must be refined and ennobled by doctors of the spirit that humanity soar upwards rather than self-destruct.

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: listmaster outlooks@jen.co.il Subject: Outlooks & Insights by RABBI ZEV LEFF

Parshas Bereishis

Why is it "In the Beginning?"

In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and the earth (Bereishis 1:1).

R'Yitzchak said: "It was not necessary to begin the Torah [here] but rather with "This month shall be to you," the first mitzvah commanded to the Jewish people (Rash) to Bereishis 1:1).

Rashi begins his classic commentary to Chumash with the question of R' Yitzchak. R' Yitzchak's question is not immediately understood. The Torah is not, after all, a compendium of mitzvos. Even after the giving of the first mitzvah, many entire parashiyos are primarily narratives of the events in Egypt and the desert. If so, why was it so apparent to R' Yitzchak that the Torah should start with the first mitzvah?

To fully appreciate R' Yitzchak's question requires an understanding of the purpose of the Torah. Rambam (Hilchos Melachim 12:2) casts much light on this issue. The Torah, he writes, gives few hints concerning the coming of Mashiach. The details were not revealed either to the prophets or the Sages. Because these details were obscured, says Rambam, they should not form the focus of one's learning. Rambam then adds: "For these details do not bring one to love or fear of G-d." Rambam, it would seem, is explaining why there is no clear tradition concerning these details. The purpose of the Torah is to bring one to the love of G-d or fear of G-d.

The word Torah is derived from hora'ah (guidance) and hints at the Torah's role as a guide to coming closer to the Creator. Only that which furthers this goal is contained in the Torah. Everything else is excluded. Matters of only historic or scientific interest have no place.

Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky, zt"l, made a similar point concerning the penultimate verse of Megillas Esther: "All the great deeds of Mordechai ... are recorded in the history books of the royalty of Persia and Medea." Why did the Megillah refer us to the history books of Persia and Medea for further information concerning Mordechai? Did anyone ever read them? Were they ever available for our perusal? The intent of this verse, says Rabbi Abramsky, is to put Megillas Esther into perspective. If you seek historical information, the Megillah tells us, then read the royal histories of Persia and Medea. Megillas Esther, however, is not the source of such information, but rather a source of fear of Heaven.

In this light, we can understand the puzzling differences between two almost identical portions of the Torah. At the end of parashas Bereishis, the Torah records the ten generations between Adam and Noach, and at the end of parashas Noach it similarly records the ten generations between Noach and Avraham. But the two accounts differ. In the first, the Torah provides us with three basic facts concerning the representative of each generation: how old he was at the birth of his principal child, how long he lived after that birth, and his age at death. But of those mentioned in parashas Noach, we are not told their age at death or even that they died at all.

The Mishnah (Pirkei Avos 5:2-3) relates that there were ten generations between Adam and Noach and also ten generations between Noach and Avraham. The parallel beraita in Avos d'Rav Nasan asks why this information is necessary and answers: the first ten generations teach us how long-suffering and slow to anger Hashem is; the second ten teaches us that one person such as Avraham can reap the entire reward of ten generations of people who did not fulfill their purpose in the world.

In order to convey the lesson of G-d's patience, it was important to know that the ten generations between Adam and Noach lived, had children, and died at a ripe old age. Therefore the first genealogy contains information concerning the age at death of the representatives of each generation. But to convey that Avraham received all the reward of ten generations, we need know nothing about the ages at death of the ten preceding generations. Since it is irrelevant to the message the Torah wishes to convey, it is omitted.

The purpose of the Torah also explains why the Biblical narrative does not follow a straight chronological order. Because that purpose is to inculcate yiras shamayim (fear of Heaven), not to teach history, the most effective way to convey the lesson governs the order of the Biblical narrative.

There is an essential difference between Torah and chachmah (wisdom). Wisdom, Chazal tell us, is found among the nations; Torah is not. Wisdom need not influence the behavior of the one who possesses it. There have been great geniuses in the arts, humanities and sciences, whose personal characters were nevertheless reprehensible. (Indeed, that seems more the rule than the exception.) Their lack of integrity did not detract from their wisdom, and their wisdom added nothing to their character. When Bertrand Russell, then a professor of ethics at City College in New York, was accused of leading a singularly immoral life, he responded that just as he did not need to be triangle to teach geometry, neither did he have to be a moral person to teach ethics.

Torah, on the other hand, must influence the behavior and character of the one who studies it to qualify as Torah. A person possesses wisdom; Torah possesses the person. Torah is compared to fire, for like fire it must leave an imprint. Where study of the Torah does not transform the student, whatever knowledge he obtains is not Torah but secular wisdom.

The blessing recited upon seeing one who possesses exceptional secular wisdom is "Blessed are You, Hashem, our G-d, King of the universe, Who has given of His knowledge to human beings." The wisdom is given unconditionally, its recipient remains flesh and blood. On the other hand, the blessing recited over an exceptional Torah scholar is "Blessed are You, Hashem, our G-d, King of the universe, Who has apportioned of His knowledge to those who fear Him." Torah is not given but apportioned out. It remains attached to its Divine source, and is therefore reserved only for those who are G-d-fearing.

A talmid chacham is the embodiment of Torah by virtue of having made its lessons part of himself. The creation of such people is the very purpose of the Torah. For this reason, Chazal cast scorn on the foolishness of those who rise for a sefer Torah but not for a talmid chacham, for the latter is a living sefer Torah.

The Written Torah was given in such a way that it could not be understood without the Oral Torah to insure that it would not be

confused with book knowledge-something which can be read, mastered and memorized. Rather, Torah must be learned from a teacher who is a living sefer Torah.

My Rosh Hayeshivah, Rabbi Mordechai Gifter, has observed that our Sages are not called chachamim (wise) but talmidei chachamim (students of the wise). They do not merely possess wisdom but are guided by it; they are its students

Now R' Yitzchak's question can be understood. Since the purpose of every word of the Torah is to guide those to whom it was given, its very essence is mitzvos, commandments. As the Zohar says, the narratives of the Torah are merely mitzvos disguised in the garb of narrative.

When one writes a book, it is normal to begin by acquainting the reader with the nature of the material contained within. Since all of the Torah is mitzvos, it would have been logical to start with the first clear-cut mitzvah to establish the pattern for all that would follow, and thereby make clear that even the narratives are included only for their eternal message of ahavas Hashem (Love of G-d) and yiras Hashem (Fear of G-d). By starting with the narrative of Creation there was a risk that the true function of the Torah as a source of guidance would be insufficiently understood. That is what provoked R' Yitzchak's question.

Every time we begin the Torah again, we must constantly keep in mind that every letter of Torah is an eternal lesson in ahavas Hashem and yiras Hashem. If at first glance the lesson is not perceived, then one must delve deeper. "For it [the Torah] is not something empty from you" (Devarim 32 47). If it appears empty, it is "from you," - i.e., from your lack of understanding and not the absence of meaning.

The Answer A Preface to Torah

If the nations of the world say to you that you are thieves because you conquered the lands of the seven nations, say to them, "All the world is HaKadosh Baruch Hu's. He created it and He gives it to whomever it is good in His eyes. By His Will He gave it to you, and by His Will He took it from you and gave it to us (Rash) to Bereishis 1:1).

Rashi answers the question of why the Torah begins with an account of the Creation by quoting the verse (Tehillim 111:6): "The power of His deeds He related to His nation to give them the inheritance of nations." If the nations of the world contest our claim to Eretz Yisrael and charge us with stealing it from the seven Canaanite nations, we will be able to answer that all of Creation belongs to G-d. He created it and apportioned it out to whom He pleases. Originally His will was to give Eretz Yisrael to the seven nations, and subsequently His will was to take it from them and give it to us.

Thus it would seem that the entire reason that the Torah begins with the Creation is to provide us with a claim to Eretz Yisrael. This is hard to understand for many reasons. First, it is far from clear that this response will have any effect on those to whom it is ostensibly directed. How can we expect the nations of the world to accept this answer when they do not believe in the Torah? Were the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations to quote R' Yitzchak, it is highly improbable that the Arab world would relinquish its claim to Eretz Yisrael.

When, in fact, the Canaanite nations laid claim to Eretz Yisrael in front of Alexander the Great, on the grounds that the Torah itself calls it Eretz Canaan, Gev'ia teen P'sisa did not answer them by citing Bereishis. Rather he argued that Canaan is a slave to his brothers, and all that a slave acquires reverts to his master (Sanhedrin 91a). If the entire account of Creation was recorded only to be used as a response to a claim by the nations, why was it not utilized when the claim was in fact made?

Moreover, the answer does not satisfactorily explain why the Torah has to begin with Creation and not merely include an account of Creation.

And there is a deeper question raised by this response. Why did G-d ordain that we should conquer Eretz Yisrael from seven nations who had inhabited it for hundreds of years? Why was it necessary that we wipe

out those nations? Why did Eretz Yisrael have to become ours in a manner so open to challenge that the Torah had to start from Bereishis just to provide the answer?

If we carefully scrutinize Rashi's words, we find that in fact the Torah does begin with the first mitzvah-hachodesh hazeh lachem. Bereishis is not the beginning, but rather the preface (pesichah) to the Torah. "Why did the Torah open (pasach) with Bereishis?" is the question Rashi addresses.

The answer is that this preface is not for the sake of the nations of the world; it is for us. G-d told us the power of His deeds. We must know this fact; we must be convinced that we are not thieves. Hashem sought to teach us a lesson so significant that it is the foundation of the entire Torah. Without this preface we are not ready to approach the first mitzvah.

Understanding this lesson requires a clear understanding of the role of the Jewish people. The ultimate purpose of Klal Yisrael is to be "a nation of kohanim (priests), a holy nation." As kohanim we are Hashem's representatives in this world, and that requires us to be a holy nation. That holiness must permeate every aspect of life, from the ostensibly mundane-eating, sleeping, dressing in the morning - to the most elevated. Each of the Divinely decreed actions of Hashem's Chosen People must proclaim His existence.

To achieve this goal, we must be a nation that dwells apart, insulated from other cultures. This isolation and insulation from the world is part of our very essence, an inescapable reality.

The Midrash tells us that the Jewish people are compared to oil, and the nations of the world to water. By their very nature they cannot mix. When we recognize the importance of maintaining our unique, holy existence in isolation, we experience the promise "The Jewish people will dwell in security alone, apart" (Devarim 33 28). The oil flows calmly on the water, and the two coexist in peace.

But if we seek to assimilate into the foreign cultures, we will be forced to read, "How do you dwell apart?" to the lament of Eichah. As Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin so poignantly expressed it "Either the Jew makes Kiddush or the gentile makes havdalah." History has shown that when we sanctify ourselves- Kiddush-and dwell apart, we lead a life of holiness in secure isolation. When we attempt to assimilate and adapt foreign lifestyles -as in Egypt or Spain or Germany-our host nations eventually make havdalah and remind us that we are different.

Sifra comments on the verse, "I separated you from the nations of the world to be mine" (Vayikra 20 2) "If you are separated, then you are Mine. If not, you belong to Nevchadnezzar and his cohorts." The obvious meaning seems to be that if we separate ourselves, we will merit Divine protection; and if not, Hashem will deliver us into the hands of our enemies. I would like, however, to suggest an alternative reading in closer conformity to the literal wording of the Sifra.

A non-Jew is required to observe only seven mitzvos. As long as he observes the minimal ethical code dictated by Hashem for civilization, he has a share in the World to Come. One might think that a Jew living the same type of life, although remiss in the observance of the rest of the mitzvos, would nevertheless be judged no worse than his non-Jewish neighbor.

Sifra informs us otherwise. The Jew exists for an entirely different purpose,-to create a Mikdash, a place of sanctity, a place where the Divine Presence will be felt. This Mikdash finds potential expression in the person of every Jew. Thus any Jew who fails to sanctify himself, to lead a life of exceptional holiness, as defined by the Torah's commandments, is in fact destroying his personal Mikdash. He has joined the ranks of Nevchadnezzar and his cohorts, destroyers of the Mikdash. He 'belongs' to Nevchadnezzar.

One who observes six hundred and thirteen mitzvos but does not understand the underlying, all-encompassing lifestyle they seek to engender, one who ignores the implications of those mitzvos in creating

a Torah outlook, personality and weltanschauung, one whose goals, standards and values remain basically secular-such a person does not have six hundred and thirteen mitzvot, but rather six hundred and thirteen problems. Mitzvot cannot be observed in a framework foreign to Torah ideals.

Upon returning from his twenty year sojourn with Lavan, Yaakov told his brother Esav, "I dwelt with Lavan, but I kept all six hundred and thirteen mitzvot and did not learn from his evil ways." It seems superfluous for Yaakov to add that he did not learn from Lavan's evil ways, after stating that he kept all six hundred and thirteen mitzvot. Assimilation, we learn from Yaakov's words, means not only rejecting mitzvot but adopting values and lifestyles foreign to Torah. Even if one observes all the mitzvot, if his values remain those of the surrounding culture, he is merely a glatt kosher gentile. We must create a total Torah environment to insulate ourselves and our families from the influences of the secular society in whose midst we temporarily find ourselves.

To promote our being a nation that dwells apart, Hashem measured every land and found no land more suitable for the Jewish people than Eretz Yisrael, and no people better suited to Eretz Yisrael than Am Yisrael (Vayikra Rabbah 13). Eretz Yisrael is a holy land, the land that Hashem personally supervises at all times, the land that Hashem calls His own. And Am Yisrael is a nation that Hashem calls a holy nation, the nation that merits direct Divine Providence, the nation that Hashem calls His own. Hence, Eretz Yisrael and Am Yisrael complement each other perfectly.

Eretz Yisrael provides a setting where we can develop our potential to be a uniquely sanctified nation. (This, it should be noted, is the very antithesis of secular Zionism, which envisions Eretz Yisrael as a setting for us to develop at long last into a nation like all other nations.) Thus, the answer to R' Yitzchak's question is not for the nations. It is we who are supposed to see clearly that Eretz Yisrael is legitimately ours, given to us by Hashem.

Hashem gave us Eretz Yisrael as He did to teach us the one lesson upon which all else depends: all our moral and ethical standards have only one source-Hashem Yisborach. If He tells us to conquer and kill, that is by definition ethical and moral. And similarly, where He mandates mercy and peace, then that is ethical. Our value system has no basis other than the Written and Oral Torah.

The seven Canaanite nations had forfeited their right to Eretz Yisrael by their abominations. Hashem could have destroyed them by Himself without any action on our part. But He told us to conquer the land so that we would be forced to recognize His will as the source of all morality. He is the Creator of all that exists, and only He can dictate proper conduct among the nations. That is why our conquest constituted neither murder nor theft.

The Torah, at the very outset, is laying the framework for all mitzvah observance. It is not incidental that this lesson is taught through Eretz Yisrael. Our holy books emphasize that only in the Land of Israel can a Torah society uninfluenced by foreign values and standards be created-a society dwelling apart and enhanced by the special qualities of the land.

Since Eretz Yisrael is given to us to place all mitzvah observance in proper perspective, we have a legitimate claim to it only if we accept G-d as the arbiter of every aspect of our lives. If, however, we adopt the standards of the nations, we are murderers and thieves with no claim to the Land. Without that acceptance, the Land is, in fact, useless to us.

Questions

The first chapter of the Book of Bereshit (Genesis) poses a challenge to the believing Jew of the 21st century, especially to a Jew with an academic background.< The problem is that there seem to be a large number of discrepancies between the "facts" as represented by well-known scientific knowledge and the "facts" as implied by a literal rendering of the biblical text.< This apparent discrepancy between Torah and science is particularly striking in the biblical account of the origin of man.

At the conclusion of the six days of creation, the Book of Genesis strongly implies (verses 1:27-29) that the entire universe exists solely for the benefit of man.< This idea is elaborated upon in the Talmud, where the following parable is brought:

Man was created on the eve of the Shabbat, and why? This can be compared to a king of flesh and blood who built a palace and furnished it and prepared a meal; and after that, he brought in his guests.(1)

The claim that everything in the universe exists to serve man seems to be utterly without foundation.< To become convinced of this, one need only consider the distant stars.< The universe is filled with many billions of galaxies and each galaxy contains many billions of stars.< What possible relevance to man could there be in all these countless stars that stretch across the vast expanses of outer space? In fact, before the recent invention of powerful telescopes, no one was even aware that so many stars existed.< The belief that there is some connection between man and the distant stars may be dismissed as mere astrology and superstition. The above represents the popular view.< In this essay, we shall present the current scientific evidence that provides an explanation of the biblical text.

The Distant Stars Recent advances in astronomy have revealed a remarkable link between life on Earth and< the distant stars.< In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that, without the stars, life on Earth would have been impossible. The bodies of all living organisms contain the chemical elements, carbon, hydrogen,<< oxygen and nitrogen, plus smaller but crucial amounts of several other elements.< What is the origin of these chemical elements? According to the firmly-established modern theory of cosmology, (2) in the very early history of the universe, the only chemical elements that existed were hydrogen and helium.< There was neither carbon nor oxygen nor nitrogen nor any other element essential for life.< These elements were formed only much later, in the blazing interior of large stars.< Professor Michael Zeilik explains:

Massive stars have relatively short lifetimes, after which they catastrophically explode.< During their short life span, the thermonuclear furnace deep within them manufactures elements as heavy as carbon and iron; at their death, the awesome violence of the supernova explosion forges elements heavier than iron and blasts as much as 90% of the star's material into interstellar space.< Out of this recycled material, new stars and planets will be born: stars such as the sun and planets such as the Earth.< Life arose on our planet because massive stars lived and died.< Without supernova explosions, the carbon that is the key to life as we know it would not have been distributed throughout interstellar space. (3)

These results were discovered recently.< The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Astronomy writes: It used to be supposed that the universe has always had the composition we observe today.< It is not widely appreciated that all the atoms on Earth (except hydrogen) had to be created inside a generation of stars that evolved before the birth of the Sun and planets.< The elucidation of this process, by which elements were and are created in the cosmic environment, will stand in history as one of the greatest advances of the physical sciences in the twentieth century< Every atom of our bodies was fused together in past aeons of an almost fantastic galactic history.< In truth, we are the children of the

From: Torah and Science[SMTP:torahandscience@mail.jct.ac.il]
To: pr@mail.jct.ac.il
Bereshit (Genesis)
Man as the Pinnacle of Creation
By PROFESSOR NATHAN AVIEZER

Universe.(4)

There is yet another important connection between ourselves and the stars, which relates to the vast distances that separate us from them.< It is now recognized that these distances are crucial to our existence.< Stellar explosions emit not only the chemical elements that are essential for life; they also emit "cosmic radiation," which is deadly.< We are saved from cosmic radiation only because the stars are so very far away from our planet.< Over the enormous distances that cosmic radiation must travel before reaching the Earth, it becomes so reduced in intensity that it is no longer harmful.< Professor Freeman J.< Dyson of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton explains: The vastness of the interstellar spaces has diluted the cosmic rays enough to save us from being fried or at least sterilized by them.< If sheer distance had not effectively isolated the quiet regions of the universe from the noisy ones, no type of biological system would have been possible. (5)

The Biblical Text Having described some recent findings in astronomy that relate to Man, we are in a position to make a comparison between the biblical text and current scientific knowledge.< We shall relate to the question that was raised at the beginning of this essay.

It is a fundamental principle of the Sages of the Talmud that Man is the pinnacle of creation, and that everything in the universe was formed for his benefit.<< Nowhere is this principle demonstrated more strikingly than in the recent scientific discovery that even the distant stars played a vital role in making it possible for Man to exist.< ("Life arose on our planet because massive stars lived and died.") (6) It is now recognized that all the chemical elements that are necessary for life (except hydrogen) were originally formed deep in the interior of the stars.< These elements were later ejected into space whenever a star underwent a violent supernova explosion.< Eventually, the chemicals reached our solar system to form the living tissues of plants, animals, and Man.< ("In truth, we are the children of the Universe.") (7)

The explosion of distant stars is merely one example of a large number of different events that were necessary for the existence and wellbeing of Man.< Indeed, the numerous "accidents of nature" that seem to have happened for our benefit are so remarkable that many scientists have commented on this phenomenon.< Particularly perceptive are the impressions of Professor Freeman J.< Dyson: As we look out into the universe and identify the many accidents of physics and astronomy that have worked together to our benefit, it almost seems as if the universe must in some sense have known that we were coming. (8) We note the harmony between these words of a world-famous secular scientist and the writings of the Sages of the Talmud quoted earlier.< Indeed, in contrast to the widespread misconception, there exists remarkable agreement between many biblical passages and recent scientific discoveries in the fields of cosmology, astronomy, geology, climatology, paleontology, anthropology and archaeology.< It is not too much to say that modern science has provided us with a unique opportunity to discover new and deeper insights into numerous biblical passages that otherwise seem enigmatic.< Far from being the antagonist of the Torah, scientific knowledge has proved to be an important tool for its understanding. <

This article is based on Professor Aviezer's recent book on this subject, In the Beginning: Biblical Creation and Science (Ktav Publishing House; translated into Hebrew under the title Bereshit Bara).

Notes 1.<<<< Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 38a. 2.<<< A detailed description of the big-bang theory of cosmology is given by Nathan Aviezer,< In the Beginning: Biblical Creation and Science (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1990), Chapter 1. 3.<<< M.< Zeilik, Scientific American, vol.< 238, April 1978, p. 110. 4.<<< S. Mitten, editor-in-chief, The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Astronomy (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), pp.< 121, 123, 125. 5.<<< F.J.< Dyson,

Scientific American, vol.< 225, September 1971, p.< 57. 6.<<< Zeilik, p.< 110. 7.<<< Mitten, p.< 125. 8.<<< Dyson, p.< 59.

Senior Editor:< Prof. Leo Levi, Rector Emeritus, Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev Junior Editor:< Avi Polak Translation:<< Eliyahu Weinberg Published by:< Jerusalem College of Technology 21 Havaad Haleumi St., POB16031 Jerusalem, 91160 ISRAEL Tel:< 972-2-675-1193< Fax:< 972-2-675-1190 <

From: Jeffrey Gross[SMTP:jgross@torah.org] neustadt@torah.org
Subject: Weekly Halacha - Parshas Bereshis

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5761

SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS BEREISHIS
BY RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT

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

EATING BEFORE KIDDUSH and HAVDALAH

In keeping with the Rabbinical prohibition against eating before one is about to fulfill a mitzvah, it is prohibited to eat before kiddush, both on Friday night and on Shabbos morning. The Rabbis forbade eating prior to fulfilling a mitzvah for fear that one would become distracted during mealtime and forget to perform the mitzvah. But unlike other mitzvos where it is forbidden to have a meal before performing the mitzvah, it is prohibited to have even a morsel of food or a drink of water before reciting kiddush. One of the explanations offered(1) for this stringency is that the Rabbis wanted kiddush to be recited as close as possible to the time when it ought to be recited ideally - right when Shabbos starts on Friday night and immediately after davening on Shabbos morning. To keep the ideal time-frame intact insofar as possible, they prohibited consuming any food or drink(2) before kiddush is recited.

Since women, too, are obligated to recite or hear kiddush, they, too, cannot eat before kiddush. But children under the age of bar/bas mitzvah are permitted to eat before kiddush(3).

The prohibition against eating begins as soon as one "accepts" Shabbos, or inevitably at sunset. Women generally "accept" Shabbos when they light candles and they should not eat or drink after that. If, however, one is extremely thirsty after lighting candles, she may take a drink until she verbally "accepts" Shabbos upon herself(4).

One who knows that he will not have wine or any other beverage or challah over which to make kiddush, may eat without reciting kiddush(5).

On Shabbos morning before davening it is permitted to drink coffee, tea or soda etc., without first making kiddush. This is allowed because kiddush need not be recited until it is zeman seudah, the time when it is permitted to eat a meal. Since one is not allowed to eat a meal before davening, it is not time for kiddush and one may take a drink. Even if one wants to be stringent and recite kiddush before drinking, he may not do so for two reasons: 1) A requirement of Kiddush is that it be followed by a meal, otherwise the kiddush is invalid. Since one is not allowed to eat before davening, he cannot make kiddush. 2) Drinking wine before davening is considered "haughty behavior" and is not permitted.

What about a person who is ill or elderly and is allowed to eat before davening? Mishnah Berurah(6) rules that such a person should recite kiddush before he eats, for as soon as it is zeman seudah for him, he is obligated to make kiddush. The fact that he is drinking wine before davening is not a problem since he must drink wine in order to eat. He may not even drink water before kiddush, since for him it is already zeman seudah(7).

The ruling by the Mishnah Berurah regarding an ill or elderly person making kiddush when eating before davening was challenged by some later poskim(8). While many poskim agree with his basic ruling(9), they

suggest that the practical halachah will depend on what exactly the person in question is going to eat. If he is just going to eat fruit or even cereal and milk or other cooked mezonos items, he should eat without reciting kiddush first. If, however, his health demands that he wash over bread or eat at least a k'zayis of cake or any other baked mezonos items, he should make kiddush before he eats(10).

WOMEN and CHILDREN

Whether or not women need to make kiddush on Shabbos morning is subject to much debate. In a previous column we wrote that although it is prohibited to eat before davening on weekdays, many women eat breakfast after reciting a brief supplication and finish davening later on in the morning. We noted that the poskim allow them to do so, since they may rely on the view of the Rambam who maintains that women fulfill their davening obligation with a brief supplication. Thus, they are eating after "davening". On Shabbos morning, though, they are obligated to make kiddush in addition to the daily obligation to daven. As soon as they meet their basic davening obligation by reciting a brief supplication, it is for them zeman seudah and they cannot eat until they make kiddush(11).

Many married women, however, do not make kiddush for themselves. They rely upon the poskim who hold that it is not zeman seudah for them until their husbands are ready to eat, which is not until davening is over in shul(12). Other poskim do not agree with this argument(13). In either case, unmarried women, including girls who eat at their father's table, do not have this leniency to rely upon.

Children who are allowed to eat before davening do not need to make kiddush before eating(14).

EATING BEFORE HAVDALAH

For the same reason that it is prohibited to eat before kiddush, it is also prohibited to eat before havdalah is recited. Accordingly, it is prohibited to eat or drink once the sun has set and bein hashemashos begins. But, b'dieved, if one did not start eating seudah shelishis - a meal in which both men and women(15) are obligated to partake - before bein hashemashos, he may start his meal until one half hour before nightfall(16).

While it is permitted according to the halachah to drink water before havdalah(17), many people refrain from doing so based on the Kabbalistic teachings of the Arizal that it is "dangerous" to drink water during this time - unless it is part of his Seudah Shelishis(18).

One who began his meal before sunset may continue eating and drinking until after nightfall. But this applies only to a meal that includes bread, not a meal which consists of eating mezonos or drinking wine(19).

Women, who are obligated to hear havdalah just as men are, may not eat before hearing [or reciting] havdalah either. While it is customary that women do not make havdalah for themselves, a woman who cannot hear havdalah recited by a man should recite her own havdalah(20).

As with kiddush, children under the age of bar/bas mitzvah can eat and drink before havdalah.

Even if one recited atah chonantonu during Shemoneh Esrei, he still may not eat until he recites or hears havdalah over wine or grape juice, etc.(21).

One who presently has no wine or other halachically acceptable beverage over which to recite havdalah but expects to obtain some later on, should - if he can - put off eating until he obtains wine etc., up to midday Sunday(22). If he is a weak person who cannot wait so long, or if he does not expect to find wine etc., beverage by that time, he does not need to wait and may eat after davening Maariv and reciting atah chonantonu(23).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Mishnah Berurah 271:11 based on Shulchan Aruch Harav 271:9. See an additional reason in Beur ha-Gra, ibid.

2 Medication, with or without water, may be taken before kiddush.

3 Chayei Adam 66:10; Mishnah Berurah 269:1.

4 See Da'as Torah 271:4. A nursing mother who knows that she will need to drink after lighting candles, should stipulate that she is not "accepting" Shabbos until she is finished drinking; Ketzos ha-Shulchan 74:17.

5 Mishnah Berurah 289:10. If he knows that he will find wine etc., later in the night, he should wait up until midnight to eat, if he can wait that long; ibid.

6 Beur Halachah 289:1 (s.v. chovas).

7 Da'as Torah 289:1; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Nishmas Avraham, vol. 1, pg. 54).

8 Some suggest that the obligation of kiddush begins only after davening - even for a person who is allowed to eat before davening - since only then is it zeman seudah for all; see Keren L'David 84, Igros Moshe O.C. 2:28 and Chelkas Yaakov 4:32.

9 See Emes le-Yaakov O.C. 652:2 who quotes a Taz as a source for this ruling.

10 Igros Moshe O.C. 2:26. Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 52, not e 37) holds that it is better to make kiddush and eat cake than to eat cereal etc. without kiddush.

11 Pri Megadim O.C. 289:4; Minchas Yitzchak 3:28; Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 52:13.

12 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:101-2.

13 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 52, note 46).

14 Mishnah Berurah 269:1.

15 Shulchan Aruch rules definitively that women are obligated to eat Seudah Shelishis; O.C. 291:6, and it is important that woman should be reminded of this; Aruch ha-Shulchan 291:4. The fact that some women are not careful to perform this mitzvah is very difficult to justify; see Avodas Yisrael (Sukkos, s.v. beparashas, quoting the Arizal).

16 Mishnah Berurah 299:1. One should try to avoid delaying this long, since some poskim disagree and allow Seudah Shelishis to start only a few minutes after sunset (see Igros Moshe O.C. 4:69-6 and Az Nidberu 13:22) and some do not allow starting after sunset at all (see Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 56 note 17).

17 O.C. 299:1.

18 Minchas Shabbos 96:11; Kaf ha-Chayim 299:6 See also Aruch ha-Shulchan 299:1. Mishnah Berurah does not quote this warning.

19 Aruch ha-Shulchan 299:5.

20 Mishnah Berurah 296:35.

21 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 299:5.

22 Mishnah Berurah 296:21. One does not, however, need to put off eating in order to obtain besamim and/or a havdalah candle.

23 Ibid. 17

Weekly-Halacha, Copyright 1 2000 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis, Inc. The author, Rabbi Neustadt, is the principal of Yavne Teachers' College in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also the Magid Shiur of a daily Mishna Berurah class at Congregation Shomre Shabbos. The Weekly-Halacha Series is distributed L'zchus Doniel Meir ben Hinda. Weekly sponsorships are available - please mail to jgross@torah.org. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 510-1053

From: yitorah@lists.virtualjerusalem.com
abba@bigfoot.com To: Young Israel Divrei Torah List Subject: NCYI
Weekly Divrei Torah - Parshat Bereshit

Parshat Breishit

RABBI DR. CHAIM WAKSLAK

Young Israel of Long Beach, NY

29 Tishrei 5761 Daf Yomi: Nazir 11

Each year we begin the Torah anew with a re-introduction to the mysteries of the six-day process of creation as we read a lengthy description of this most glorious event. Why does the Torah go into such detail to describe an event that is beyond the comprehension of the human intellect? Yet we know that every word of the Torah is there for a reason and here too, hidden in the description of HaShem's dramatic creative process lies a wonderful understanding and a lesson relevant to man's own growth and development.

This approach to the Torah's description of creation is evident in a dispute between the school of Beit Shammai - which states that the heavens were created first, the school of Beit Hillel-which states that the earth was created first, and the Rabbanim - who state that they were created simultaneously (Chagiga 12). This dispute is significant in that it reveals the underlying attitudes of Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel with regard to the nature of man and a better comprehension of their halachic positions throughout the Talmud. Given the dual nature of man, which includes both spiritual and physical components, Beit Shammai states that heaven or the spiritual realm is of primary importance and in all endeavors every individual is obligated to strive towards the highest levels spirituality. In contrast, Beit Hillel is more appreciative of man's inherent limitations and his earthly nature and offers halachic decisions which are more lenient and tolerant. Each individual starts out at his own

level and should strive to build upward from there to achieve a more lofty level of performance and behavior. Hence, Beit Hillel is of the opinion that the primacy of creation belong to the earth. The Rabbonim advocate a balanced approach with each individual assessing the particular issue with a balanced evaluation that factors in the idealism of heaven with the realities of earth.

We understand the Al-Mighty to be perfect and it is our expectation that everything that HaShem created would also be immediately perfect. (This is an idea that raises questions when we consider the notion that HaShem created many worlds before settling on this version, but this concept is beyond the scope of this discussion.) Yet, we find that on each day of creation there was some type of a modification, or at least an adjustment, to what appears to have been the original plan. From the very first day, when HaShem created light and darkness, we are told that He initially also created a brilliant light. (Or HaGanuz) which possessed such illumination that one could look from one end of the world to the other. HaShem made an adjustment and that special light was hidden and will only be available to the righteous some time in the future.

On the second day HaShem created a division between the waters of the firmament calling them heaven and earth. Once again we find a delicate adjustment. It seems, according to the Midrash, that the waters that were left below complained that they were distanced from the Divine presence. In response, HaShem made a commitment for the future that every sacrifice would require salt, which comes from the ocean waters below and every holiday of Succot there would be water libation during the Simchat Beit HaShoeva.

On the third day HaShem created the earth's vegetation, grass and trees. We learn that it was HaShem's intention that the bark of each fruit taste the same as the fruit it bore. Yet we know that the trees yielded fruits whose taste was not reflected in the bark of the trees which produced them.

On the fourth day when the sun and moon were created it appears that the initial intention was for both heavenly bodies to be of identical size. Again, the outcome was very different in that the moon was reduced in size and serves merely to reflect the rays of the sun.

On the fifth day HaShem created the sea creatures and birds. The Midrash tells us that initially two sea monsters (Leviathans) were created but when HaShem recognized that they would multiply and destroy the world he killed the female partner and eliminated the possibility of procreation. The Midrash continues that the carcass was preserved and will be made available for future use by the righteous.

On the sixth day, when man was created, it appears that the initial design consisted of a man and woman connected as one body and only later was there a re-design resulting in the formation of two separate and distinct male and female beings. What sense are we to make of the adjustments and modifications which occurred on every single day of creation? We have been given an imperative to emulate HaShem in all of ways: "Just as G-d is merciful so you shall be merciful, just as HaShem is compassionate so you shall be compassionate". By extension, therefore, it seems logical to assume that just as HaShem is a creator, the one who created the universe, so must we strive to emulate this creative capacity. While we cannot aspire to create in the full sense of HaShem's creative powers (ex nihilo) but on some level we must yet strive to create - if nothing more than to create who we are and what we can innovate in our service of HaShem.

G-d encourages us to confront a challenge for if not why does He place the forbidden Eitz HaDa'at and Eitz HaChaim in the center of Gan Eden (Bitoch HaGan) and not on the periphery where it is less accessible? Apparently, HaShem wants us to face the challenge and make the proper decision.

To face the challenge of creative growth and development, to push ourselves to higher achievement in Avodat HaShem, to climb higher than we have ever reached before is by definition an awesome

undertaking. Individuals are often reluctant to face these challenges because of fear of the unknown, fear of failure, insecurity, general complacency and satisfaction with the status quo. HaShem encourages us to become creative people despite the inherent risks, chances of failure and need for re-direction or modification. The greatest Creator of all demonstrates this approach and attitude within the context of His own wonderful and glorious creation.

A Project of the National Council of Young Israel
<http://www.youngisrael.org> Kenneth Block (abba@bigfoot.com) Project Coordinator

From: Menachem Leibtag[SMTP:ml@tanach.org]
Subject: PARSHAT BREISHIT - Abstract

This will be the LAST time that the abstract is being sent to all of the lists. From now, if you want to receive the abstract by e-mail, you need to subscribe to the special list called PAR-ABS to so, visit the TSC website www.tanach.org/subscribe or send an email to lists@tanach.org in text of message - write JOIN PAR-ABS [followed by your email address]

THE TANACH STUDY CENTER www.tanach.org Shiurim by Menachem Leibtag In memory of Rabbi Abraham Leibtag
Abstract for shiur on: Parshat BREISHIT

In Parshat Breishit, we find two accounts of how G-d created the world: once in the first chapter (i.e., the seven days of creation - 'perek Aleph'), and again in chapters 2 & 3 (i.e. the Gan Eden narrative - 'perek Bet'). According to the first account, creation developed in a very structured, evolutionary type pattern, beginning with the heavens and earth, through the division between sky and sea, the creation of primitive life forms, and ultimately the most advanced creature, man. Each day brought a new level of development, as the world steadily progressed from "tohu vavohu" - total chaos - to a spectacularly organized natural order. According to the second account, by contrast, man exists before all else. In fact, all of creation comes into existence specifically to serve him (see 2:5). Additionally, whereas in 'Perek Aleph' G-d creates nature but does not engage therein, in 'Perek Bet' we find the Almighty intensely involved in the world. He not only speaks to man, but also demands his obedience. The special 'relationship' between man and G-d introduces a primary Biblical theme of "schar v'onesh" - reward and punishment. What is the underlying meaning of this 'double' presentation of creation? Whereas the Torah is not a historical work, but rather a didactic text that teaches man about his relationship with G-d, differing accounts of a single event should not surprise us. They reveal the complexity of a given element of the human being's religious experience. The seemingly contradictory accounts of creation reflect the two distinct aspects of man's encounter with nature. In Perek Aleph, the human being finds himself part of the natural order. Creation develops one stage at a time, culminating in the emergence of man. He is the crown jewel of nature, but part of nature nonetheless. He must work within the natural order and struggle therewith in order to survive, establishing his dominion over the rest of creation and manipulating the natural forces for his own needs (see 1:28-29). By contrast, the human being of 'Perek Bet' lives outside the natural order, called upon for a higher purpose. He exists not to engage nature and master it, as do the rest of the world's creatures, but rather as G-d's devout servant, to "serve and guard" the garden for the Almighty (2:15). However, should man disobey G-d, and thus fail his mission, he will be distanced from his Creator; and hence default to the lower spiritual level of G-d's other creations.

From here we can deduce the basic message of these two distinct accounts. Man is, at once, both a physical and spiritual being. Addressing physical man, Perek Aleph serves as a reminder that the brilliant, harmonious order of nature evolved from the handiwork of the

supreme Creator. As man establishes his dominion on earth, he must never forget the higher authority over him. This is why throughout the first chapter Chumash refers to G-d as "Elokim," the divine name that denotes power and control. In chapter 2, however, G-d is described with the name, "H-V-Y-H," a derivation of the verb "to be." In this chapter, G-d accompanies man; He not only set the world in motion, but remains forever involved therein, through His unique relationship with man. Whereas the world in chapter 2 enjoys the intimate involvement of G-d, man stands out from the rest of the universe, being the only creature capable of maintaining this type of intense relationship. Here man is primarily a spiritual being, his primary quality being his potential for communion with G-d.

The complex account of creation thus speaks of the basic dichotomy of man's existence. On the one hand, he lives in the world of Perek Aleph, as part of nature, compelled to engage in the physical world and master it for his own needs. The deeper 'purpose' of this creation, however, is revealed only in Perek Bet. Man is singled out to nurture a unique relationship with G-d, which requires his unwavering obedience to His command. Should he disobey G-d's rules, He is driven out of the garden, losing his unique companionship with the Creator.

From: dafyomi@lists.virtualjerusalem.com
The Weekly Daf #349
By RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH, Dean, Ohr Somayach
Institutions

REMEMBERING WITH WINE

"Remember the Shabbat," says the Torah, "to keep it holy." How do we remember the Shabbat? The gemara (Mesechta Pesachim 106a) informs us that this is done by making kiddush over wine. The obligation to say a blessing declaring the sanctity of the Shabbat is unquestionably of Torah origin, but is the need for doing this over wine also a Torah requirement, or is it of rabbinical origin?

This is the subject of a debate between the commentary presumed to be Rashi and the commentary of Tosefot in our gemara. Their debate focuses on the gemara's discussion of whether a nazir who is forbidden to drink wine may drink the wine of kiddush. Rashi's understanding of the gemara is that the need to make kiddush over wine is of Torah origin and therefore the vow to abstain from that wine cannot take effect. Tosefot, on the other hand, contends that the wine part of the kiddush is only of rabbinical origin, so that the vow takes effect and makes that wine forbidden to him.

In explaining why there is a need for making kiddush over wine, the Sefer Hachinuch points out that it is human nature to be stimulated by wine which causes both satiety and joy (Mesechta Berachot 35b). Where wine is not available, kiddush can be said over bread because the satisfaction of his hunger can also be a source of stimulation.

Since most authorities agree with Tosefot's opinion that the Torah obligation is fulfilled with words alone, it would seem that one who says the ma'ariv service on Shabbat Eve has already discharged his Torah obligation and his need to make kiddush at home on wine is only of rabbinical origin. This is indeed the position of Magen Avraham (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 271:1) who discusses an interesting ramification regarding making kiddush for women who have not prayed ma'ariv. Mishnah Berurah (ibid.) takes sharp issue with his approach and concludes that one does not fulfill the Torah mitzvah of kiddush until he says it over wine before his Shabbat Eve meal.

There is one occasion, however, for relying on the ma'ariv service for kiddush. This is when Yom Kippur is on Shabbat and kiddush is not made on wine. Some authorities therefore advise having in mind in the ma'ariv of Shabbat Yom Kippur to fulfill with that service the mitzvah of kiddush.

* Nazir 4a