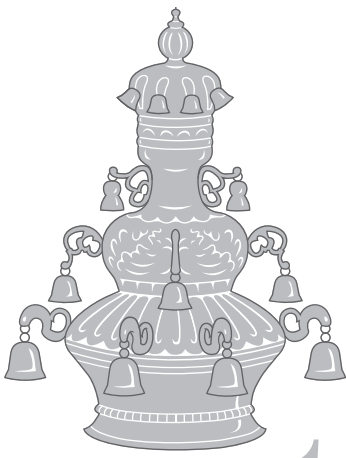




THE
TORAH

חומש

בראשית

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TORAH

CHUMASH BEREISHIT

The Book of Genesis

Parshat Bereishit

*A free excerpt from the Kehot Publication Society's
new Chumash Breishis/Book of Genesis with commentary
based on the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
produced by Chabad of California.*

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*With an Interpolated English Translation
and Commentary Based on the Works of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe*

THE TORAH - CHUMASH BEREISHIT

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

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חומש בראשית

THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation
and Commentary Based on the Works of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*

CHUMASH BEREISHIT

The Book of Genesis

Parshat Bereishit



Kehot Publication Society

770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11213

Foreword

It is very fitting that this volume of the Torah is being published on the fortieth anniversary of the opening of the world's first Chabad House. Written with the "Chabad House" reader in mind, this edition of the Torah presents traditional Jewish principles in a way that informs and inspires readers regardless of their religious education. It was in 5729 (1969) that the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, established this unique institution at the UCLA campus in Westwood Village, California. Since then, this special seed that he planted has blossomed and grown, spreading not only across California, but throughout America and around the globe.

Over the last four decades, "Chabad House" has become a household word in the Jewish world—and to a large extent, even the non-Jewish world—synonymous with the time-honored values of education, hospitality, caring, and support. Chabad Houses are now an integral element of the Jewish landscape on every continent, each one serving as a beacon of light and warmth to guide us through life's spiritual and emotional challenges.

The success of the Chabad House movement is a living testament to the vision and dedication of the Rebbe. When presented with the key to that first Chabad House, the Rebbe asked whether this meant that the new house was his home. We immediately replied, "Yes, of course." Our selfless leader then said, "My hand will be on the door of this house to keep it open twenty-four hours a day for young and old, men and women alike."

The Rebbe then proclaimed: "'Chabad House' will grow like a chain of shopping centers and spread from the West to the North, from the North to the South and then to the East."

As part of his devotion to the welfare of others, the Rebbe made tireless efforts to spread the study of the Torah—on all its levels, among all types of Jews. Seasoned scholars, struggling students, young pupils, men and women from all walks of life—the Rebbe constantly encouraged all of us to increase the quantity and quality of our Torah study.

Therefore, we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the first Chabad House by publishing another volume in this Torah. It is worth noting that this project's editor-in-chief was first touched by the Rebbe's message within the walls of that original Chabad House at UCLA.

The Rebbe teaches us that the study of the holy Torah and the application of its values are at the center of the humanity's purpose. By publishing this new edition, we hope to inspire greater Torah study and to foster a more personal identification with its timeless message. Our goal is help bring about the fulfillment of the Rebbe's vision for the Ultimate Redemption—in the words of Maimonides, "a time when the knowledge of God will fill the earth as the waters fill the sea."

Chabad of California

Erev Rosh HaShanah 5769

Preface

The idea for a new translation of the Five Books of Moses, the Torah, was born of necessity. The last decade has seen a significant increase in synagogue attendance—perhaps owing to the many Chabad-Lubavitch centers that have opened in recent years—by Jews from all walks of life.

Many of them, new to Torah and unfamiliar with its Hebrew text, needed a *Chumash* that would facilitate their study of the weekly *parashah* and allow them to comfortably follow along with the Torah readings at prayer services.

This project follows the success of the recently published Annotated Siddur, which has quickly gained widespread use in synagogues around the world. But it is not without trepidation that our team of translators and editors approached this task. Even the finest translations may never be fully reflective of the layers of meaning embedded in the words of the Torah, the word of God and the most sacred text of the Jewish people. At best, they offer the non-Hebrew reader a good approximation of the original text. With this in mind, the new translation includes a commentary that helps significantly to illuminate the plain text.

The commentary is composed of two parts. The first interpolates Rashi's commentary into the new English translation of the text.

These interpolations are based on Rashi's commentary as expounded upon in the writings of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of blessed memory. Also included in this section are chronological charts that summarize the historical events; topic titles to help the reader navigate the subject matter; and illustrations, charts, diagrams, and maps.

The second part of the commentary is an exposition of the inner dimension of Torah as expounded in the teachings of the Rebbe and his predecessors.

Each of the 53 sections of the Torah is prefaced by an overview and the Rebbe's reflections on its relation to the larger themes of the Torah. Included as well is a study of the name of each section and its relevance to the respective text.

May this book succeed in its aim to further Torah awareness and the spreading of Chasidus and thus contribute to the speedy realization of the final and complete redemption.

Kehot Publication Society

3 Tammuz 5764

GENESIS
Bereishit 1 בראשית

Noach
Lech Lecha
Vayeira
Chayei Sarah
Toldot
Vayeitzei
Vayishlach
Vayeishev
Mikeitz
Vayigash
Vayechi

EXODUS

Shemot
Vaeira
Bo
Beshalach
Yitro
Mishpatim
Terumah
Tetzaveh
Ki Tisa
Vayakheil
Pekudei

LEVITICUS

Vayikra
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Tazria
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NUMBERS

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Ki Tavo
Netzavim
Vayeilech
Ha'azinu
Vezot Habrachah



1 בְּרֵאשִׁית Bereishit

Overview

The word *Torah* means “teaching,”¹ and as we should therefore expect, much of the Torah consists of God’s instructions regarding how He wants us to relate to Him, to our fellow human beings, to the world around us, and even to ourselves.

Yet, if we carefully examine all Five Books of Moses, we see that God’s explicit instructions are addressed exclusively to the Jews, and, more specifically, to the Jews as they constitute *a people*, that is, a collective entity formed for a specific purpose and sharing common responsibilities. True, the Torah does also contain God’s instructions to the rest of humanity, but these instructions are presented solely in the context of the Jewish people’s responsibility to impart them to the non-Jewish world. It is thus clear that the Torah is a book of instruction addressed primarily to the Jewish people.

It is therefore intriguing to note that the intended recipients of the Torah’s message, this entity known as the Jewish people, does not technically come into being until well into the second of the Five Books, Exodus. Only when God gives them their first commandment, as He is about to redeem them from Egypt,² do they officially begin to be identified as a nation. And only when God announces at Mount Sinai, some two months later, that He is transforming them into “a kingdom of nobles and a holy nation,”³ are they forged forever into a collective unity suitable to receive the Torah. Until that point, there is no such thing as a *Jew*; there are only people. True, long before this, God starts to focus His attention on the bloodline from which the Jewish people will eventually emerge—saving its bearers from the Flood, settling them in their homeland, giving them a few practices to distinguish them from the rest of humanity, weeding out their less worthy offshoots, and so on. But legally and practically, this developing family still remains a group of people, no different than any other, until the Exodus and the Giving of the Torah transform them into the Jewish nation.

This being the case, why is the Book of Genesis—which is devoted to the creation of the world and the early history of humanity in general, and which is altogether bereft of any explicit Divine instructions to the Jews *as a people*—included in the Torah?

The most fundamental answer to this question is that it is in the Book of Genesis that God “presents His credentials,” as it were, establishing Himself as the Creator of the

1. Zohar 3:53b; Gur Aryeh on Genesis 1:1; Rabbi David Kimchi on Psalms 19:8, *Sefer HaShorashim* s.v. *yud-hei-reish*. 2. Exodus 12:1-2. 3. Exodus 19:6.

World who, as such, has the right to define and demand a certain standard and mode of behavior from His creations. Still, for this purpose, it would have sufficed for the Torah to document the creation of the world and then skip the intervening history of humanity.

A seemingly more fitting answer, then, is that in the Book of Genesis, we are introduced to the patriarchs and matriarchs, whose righteous behavior is the model upon which we are supposed to fashion our own.⁴ It is for this reason that the Book of Genesis is called, later in the Bible, “the Book of the Upright,”⁵ in reference to the patriarchs and matriarchs. But to this end, it still would have sufficed to jump from the account of creation directly to the account of the lives of these great personalities. Why the detailed chronicle of humanity as a whole, from creation down to the genesis of the Jewish people?

The answer to this question is provided by the Midrash: “God desired to make His home in the lower realms.”⁶ That is, God created the world as a “lower realm” with regard to Divine consciousness—initially devoid of it and even antagonistic to it—intending that humanity then introduce Divine consciousness into the world and ultimately fill it with this consciousness. As a result, God would become “at home” in this physical world; He would be able to be as “present” in it—that is, as revealed in it—as easily and naturally as we are in our own homes.

❧ INNER DIMENSIONS ❧

God, of course, did not “lack” anything before creating a lowly world to dwell in. Why, then, did He nonetheless desire this home?

By way of analogy, we can point out that we experience the greatest satisfaction when we meet a seemingly impossible challenge; we are most intrigued when the seemingly incongruous occurs. Making the world into God’s home, being the most impossibly incongruous challenge of all, would

afford God the greatest imaginable satisfaction.

Ultimately, however, this answer is insufficient, since the correlation between challenge and satisfaction is itself God-made. Therefore, the ultimate answer can only be that this desire was somehow rooted deep within God’s essence, and as human experience bears out, there are some desires for which no logical reason can be given.

The tool God gave humanity to enable it to perform this feat is the Torah. By living life according to the Torah’s instructions, humanity would be able to transform a world initially antagonistic to Divinity into one conducive to Divinity. The drama of creation thus required three elements: the world, the human race, and the Torah, serving respectively as the setting, the actors, and the script.

This being the case, it is clear that the physical, “lower” world was created for the explicit purpose of fulfilling God’s vision for it as expressed in the Torah, as the “setting” in which the Torah’s drama would be acted out. Put another way, the Torah preceded creation; in the idiom of the Midrash, the Torah was God’s “blueprint” for creating the world.

The originality and audacity of this claim form the essence of the Torah’s opening verse: by recounting the creation of the world, the Torah is boldly asserting that the world and everything in it, as well as all of history, exist “within” the Torah, meaning that their significance is determined by the Torah rather than vice versa. The Torah is not a part of the world, one of many features or components of life; rather, the world is a part of the Torah.

⁴ *Torat Chaim* 84d ff, 135b ff; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 458 (*Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 22, p. 360), vol. 8, p. 225, vol. 15, p. 245, vol. 10, p. 53, vol. 20, p. 110. ⁵ Joshua 10:13; *Avodah Zarah* 25a. ⁶ *Tanchuma*, *Naso* 7:1.

It follows directly that neither the world nor anything in it can ever constitute an obstacle to fulfilling the Torah's directives. That this may not always seem to be the case is only a mirage, a test of our dedication and belief. But the truth is exactly the opposite: God, in fact, created the world and everything in it precisely to *aid* us in fulfilling the Torah's directives.⁷

But precisely because the world was created in such a way as to obscure God's presence, we are given the free choice to ignore Him and His intentions for the world. This is exactly the choice that humanity made in *parashat Bereishit*, and for the most part has continued to make ever since—whether knowingly or unwittingly, and despite any lip service it may pay to the contrary. The early history of the world is the record of humanity pushing God further and further out of the picture, out of life, so it could be free to pursue a life of immediate gratification without having to address the issue of His possible existence and/or involvement. Rather than come to terms with a transcendent yet personal God, humanity chose to lavish its devotion on the spurious gods of nature (*teva*, in Hebrew), in which God has hidden and submerged (*tava*) His presence under the guise of the immutable laws of causality. In keeping with His own decision to allow free choice, God obliged, so to speak, by retreating to the spiritual realms, leaving humanity increasingly to its own devices while hiding His presence even further behind the façade of nature.

Yet God did not despair of His original vision of being welcomed by humanity into the apparently mundane world; rather, He implemented His contingency plan. He took the one family that continued to nurture the original ideal of Divine consciousness and forged it into a nation—the Jewish people—whom He then entrusted with the mission of fulfilling His original purpose for creation. The Torah, the tool originally intended to enable all humanity to accomplish this mission by leading a God-imbued life—thereby transforming the mundane world into God's "home" by supplanting material consciousness with Divine consciousness—was now given specifically to this family and its descendants. To the rest of humanity God gave a subset of the Torah's directives, which they would use to establish and maintain an orderly, civilized, and just society.⁸ The Jewish people would both serve as an inspiration and example for the rest of humanity and encourage them to play their role in His scheme for transforming the world into His home.

The Book of Genesis, then, and particularly its first *parashah*, *Bereishit*, is not merely a chronicle of historical facts; it documents God's original vision for the world and humanity, and why it became necessary—because of the choices made by humanity—to transfer the role originally intended for humanity in general to the nascent Jewish people in particular.

The imperative to make the world into God's home by sanctifying mundane reality extends beyond the physical façade of creation. Every one of us possesses an inner soul, but by virtue of having been born into a physical body, we naturally relate to reality in purely physical terms—and as we learn to cater to our physical needs, our souls become further encrusted by acquired materialism. Freeing our souls from the shackles of this materialistic perspective is an additional aspect of our Divine mission to reveal the inner intent of creation.⁹

7. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, p. 80, et al. 8. These are the seven categories of commandments incumbent upon non-Jews, which comprise approximately one tenth of the 613 commandments that express the Jewish people's role in creation. See on Exodus 19:5 and the appendix at the end of Deuteronomy in this edition of the Torah. 9. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, p. 439.

In this context, the Ba'al Shem Tov—translating the word for “created” (*bara*) according to its additional meaning of “outside”—interpreted the first sentence in the Torah as follows: “The beginning [of our Divine mission is] to draw out [the inner,] Divine [dimension of everything in] heaven and earth.” Our challenge in life is to refuse to take the world at face value, but rather to peer behind the veil and reveal God’s inner intent in everything.¹⁰

So we see that rejecting the world’s material orientation and revealing the Divinity within it is not an attempt to impose an artificial perspective on a perfectly functioning world; it is rather an endeavor to restore the world to its intended and true state. The materially oriented world, overburdened with its own egocentricity, is sick, and it is our task to heal it. This fact is also alluded to in that same first verse of the Torah, if we translate the word for “created” (*bara*) according to yet another of its meanings, “healthy” (*bari*): “The beginning [of our Divine mission is] to heal the heavens and the earth.”¹¹

Needless to say, we are able to heal the world of its materialistic, egocentric outlook only to the same degree that we purge our own selves of that very outlook. It is therefore essential for us to always keep in mind that God is the source of all the blessings we have at our disposal, both spiritual and material. It is thus fitting that the Torah alludes to this very perspective on life in its first verse: “The beginning [of our Divine mission is to constantly recall that] God created the heavens [i.e., all our spiritual blessings] and the earth [i.e., all our physical blessings].”¹²

Healing the world by putting it back “into” the Torah is a lifelong task requiring both our fullest dedication and the best of our abilities. But aside from the satisfaction inherent in the knowledge that we are fulfilling our true life’s purpose, and indeed, the purpose of Creation altogether, we are assured that our efforts, in the messianic future, will bear the ultimate fruit: the world’s consummate transformation into God’s intended home.¹³

10. *Keter Shem Tov*, addendum 4. 11. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5699, p. 72. 12. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, p. 437. 13. Based on *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 1-15; vol. 10, pp. 3-6; *Sefer HaSichot* 5752, vol. 1, pp. 62-67; *Yom Tov shel Rosh HaShanah* 5666, pp. 1-9.

INNER DIMENSIONS

God created everything that exists, so He is therefore beyond all categories of existence and beyond any description. Even terms such as “infinite,” “transcendent,” and “eternal” cannot help us define Him; He created all these categories, so He is beyond the limitations of being “infinite,” “transcendent,” or “eternal.”

By the same token, He is beyond any category of gender, so when we speak of Him in the masculine it is because the neuter “It” is too impersonal (and in fact, there is no neuter in Hebrew) and because by assuming the role of the Creator of a universe, He adopts, mainly, the attributes that He will define in the context of this world as masculine.

Despite this inscrutability, God makes Himself at all times accessible to His creatures. Significantly, He chose to create reality by first assuming specific attributes that serve to channel His creative energy. Everything created thus reflects these Divine attributes in one way or another, and therefore, by observing creation through the lens of God’s revealed teachings, we can gradually come to know God Himself.

In order to create a world antagonistic to Divinity, God had to remove His “presence,” i.e., the awareness of Him, from a realm of reality specifically designated to be void of it. This withdrawal (*tzit-mtzum*) of God’s presence produced a realm vacant of Divine consciousness.⁷ This realm is figuratively described as “circular” or “spherical,” because Divine consciousness was withdrawn equally in all

“directions.” Into this vacated realm God beamed a ray (*kav*) of Divine consciousness, with which He created numerous spiritual worlds, each populated by various grades of spiritual entities, archetypes, and so on. The “higher” the world on the ray, the greater the Divine consciousness that characterizes it. Although this process brought an infinite number of worlds into being, they may be divided into four general worlds, of which all the others are gradations: *Atzilut* (“Emanation”), *Beriah* (“Creation”), *Yetzirah* (“Formation”), and *Asiyah* (“Action”).

The world of *Atzilut* is considered the ideal representation of Divine consciousness, in which God’s reality is so self-evident that there is no “room” for self-awareness. The creatures of the lower worlds of *Beriah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah* are characterized by increasing degrees of self-awareness. The world of *Asiyah* is the spiritual archetype of our physical universe, in which self-awareness is total and there is no a priori Divine consciousness at all.

All these stages of creation evolved in a logical sense, but not in a temporal sense, because actual time, as noted, did not begin until the first day of physical creation.

Each of the four worlds is governed by a set of Divine attributes known as the *sefirot*. These are arranged in a logical hierarchy, which groups the *sefirot* into categories, and along three “axes,” which define the mutual relationships between them:

In this hierarchy, supra-intellect rules intellect, intellect rules emotions, emotions rule behavior, and

sefirot			
category	left axis	middle axis	right axis
supra-intellect		<i>keter</i> (“crown”)	
intellect	<i>binah</i> (“understanding,” “reasoning”)		<i>chochmah</i> (“wisdom,” “insight”)
		<i>da’at</i> (“knowledge,” “subjectivity”)	
primary emotions	<i>gevurah</i> (“might,” “severity”)		<i>chesed</i> (“loving-kindness”)
		<i>tiferet</i> (“beauty”)	
behavioral emotions	<i>hod</i> (“splendor”)		<i>netzach</i> (“victory”)
		<i>yesod</i> (“foundation,” “loyalty”)	
expression		<i>malchut</i> (“kingdom”)	

7. *Torah Or* 5b.

Background

In the idiom of the Midrash, God created the world in order “to have a home in the lower realms,”¹ which means so He could be present in a realm not inherently conducive to the awareness of His presence. The blueprint He prepared for creating the world so it would fulfill this purpose is the Torah. In this sense, the Torah “preceded” creation,² just as the plan precedes the execution.³ In the idiom of the Midrash, again, this primordial Torah was “written with black fire on white fire.”⁴

The world, however, is just the stage on which the cosmic drama of making a home for God “in the lower realms” is to be played. The protagonists in this drama are the human race, on whom God made the accomplishment of this goal dependent. The conscious essence of a human being is its soul. Every soul has a unique role to play in making reality into God’s home; this unique task gives rise to the soul’s unique personality. The world, thus, was created both for the sake of the Torah and for the sake of humanity.

Inasmuch as the world was created in accordance with the vision, purpose, and plan specified in the Torah, the Torah also constitutes humanity’s quintessential guidebook to living life in order fulfill its purpose.

Nonetheless, before detailing these instructions, the Torah first describes the creation of the world and the genesis of the Jewish people. This digression is required in order to explain how the task of fulfilling God’s purpose on earth eventually necessitated the existence of a unique nation among the human race—the Jewish people—living life according to the Torah in the context of a specific homeland—the Promised Land of Israel. The Torah therefore describes how the necessity for a chosen people living in a chosen land came about.⁵

The creation account establishes God, the creator, as the true “owner” of the entire world. This sovereignty would allow Him, when the time would come, to expropriate the future Jewish homeland from the people whom He had allowed to settle there in the meantime.

The creation of the physical universe in which we live was the final stage in the creative process. Its creation was preceded by the creation of a number of spiritual realms. Among these spiritual realms is the abode of souls before they are born; each soul is sent into a physical body in this world in order to accomplish its unique task. After humanity became mortal,⁶ this realm would also serve as the abode of souls who have completed their task on earth and died. Relative to our perspective in this world, this abode is therefore known as “the World to Come.” If the soul needs to be “cleansed” of any materialistic perspective it has acquired during its stay in the body, it enters Purgatory, an additional spiritual realm where this cleansing occurs, before entering the World to Come. When the task of making the physical world conducive to the revelation of God’s presence has been completed, the souls waiting in the World to Come will be restored to their physical bodies and live again in the perfected, physical world.

1. *Tanchuma*, *Naso* 7:1. 2. Rashi on Proverbs 8:22; *Bereishit Rabbah* 1:4. 3. *Bereishit Rabbah* 1:1. 4. Rashi on Deuteronomy 33:2. 5. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 1-15, vol. 20, p. 541, vol. 10, pp. 1-6. 6. Below, 3:19.

The physical universe, at the moment of its creation, constituted nine concentric spheres. The outermost sphere is that of the celestial vault. Inside this is the sphere where the stars would be placed. Inside this are the spheres designated for the five planets visible to the naked eye (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury). Inside these is the sphere of the sun; inside this is the sphere of the moon. Inside this innermost sphere is the earth (see Figure 1). All these spheres are solid; the outer eight are filled with a primeval substance called the “ether.”

The earth, in contrast, is composed of four types of physical matter, or “elements,”¹¹ which were, at the moment of creation, layered in four concentric spheres. A sphere of solid earth, the heaviest, was at the center, surrounded by a layer of liquid water, surrounded in turn by a layer of gaseous air, surrounded in turn by a layer of “fire” (plasma, see Figure 2). In the context of the physical universe, the upper two spheres are termed “heaven”¹² and the lower two “earth.”

The physical earth was created fully matured, e.g., layers of sedimentary rock that would naturally have taken many years to form were already in place, etc.

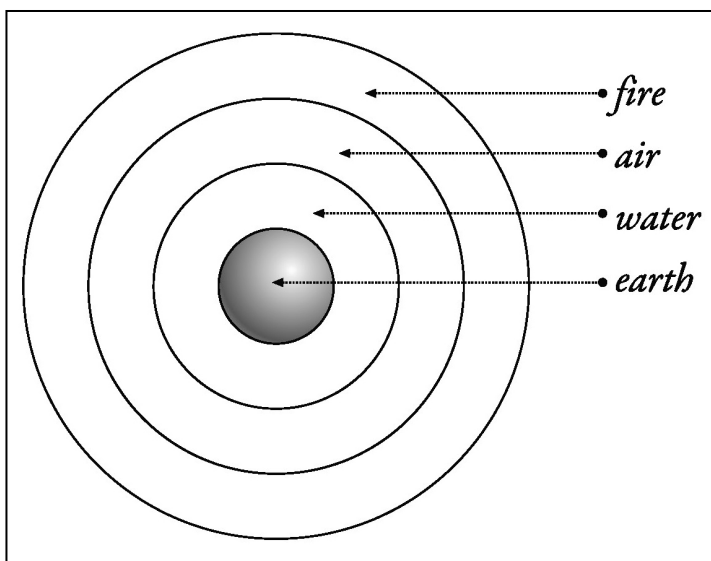


Figure 2: The Earth at Creation

All elements of creation are conscious, both as collective “species” and as individual entities. They also possess a certain degree of free choice.¹³

The moment physical reality came into being, time also came into being. “Before” this moment, there was only a hierarchy of order in the pre-physical creative process, but no physical time. The first day of physical time was designated as the 25th day of the month of Elul, year -1.

Everything mentioned in the account of creation was created by God at that first moment, with the exception of the first human being. The creative process that would unfold during the subsequent week consisted simply of either placing everything in its proper place or activating it.¹⁴

11. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5708, pp. 204 ff. 12. *Hitva'aduyot* 5746, vol. 1, pp. 460-464. 13. See Rashi on, *inter alia*, v. 11 (regarding vegetation), v. 16 (the moon), 4:11 (the ground), Deuteronomy 32:1 (heaven and earth); *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 19, p. 334. 14. Rashi on 1:6, 1:14, 1:24, 2:4.

God is known by many Names, in accordance with the specific Divine attribute He manifests at any given moment. In this context, God created the physical world and the World to Come with the Name *Kah* (spelled *yud-hei*, יה): the World to Come with the letter *yud* and the physical world with the letter *hei*. The form of the letter *hei*—three sides with the fourth side open at the bottom—alludes to the fact that, as stated above, if the soul acquires too materialistic a perspective on life while in the physical world, it has to “descend” into Purgatory.⁸

On the other hand, the Divine Name used throughout the creation narrative (i.e., until 2:3) is *Elokim*, which signifies God’s attribute of

limitation and restraint. This is because God created the world to operate according to strict, consistent rules. Later, with the creation of humanity, it became possible to mitigate Divine rigidity with Divine mercy, which is signified by the Name *Havayah*.⁹

God’s primary attribute is love; in order for Him to act with strict justice and severity, His more essential nature had to be concealed. Thus, the Name *Elokim* also indicates Divine concealment, whereas the Name *Havayah* indicates Divine revelation.¹⁰

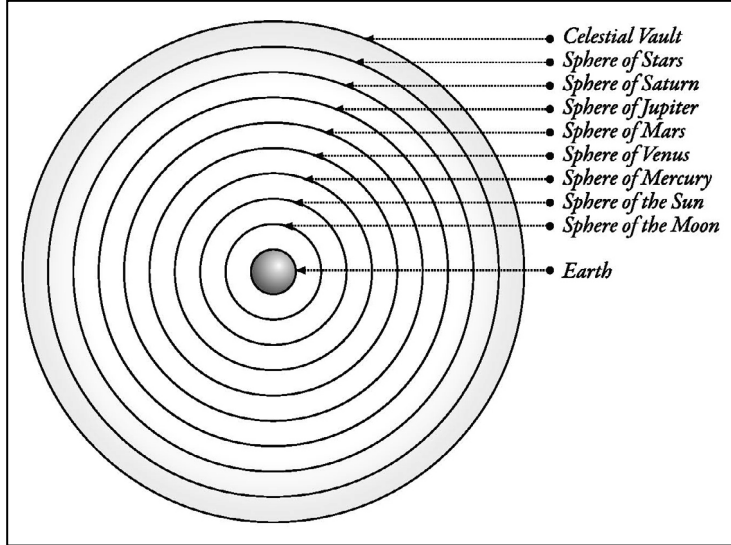


Figure 1: The Celestial Spheres

INNER DIMENSIONS

[continued...] behavior determines expression.

Within this structure, the various *sefirot* sometimes act as conduits that transmit content to other *sefirot*, or alternatively as recipients of this content, which then express it in new contexts. The role any particular *sefirah* takes in this process determines its “gender” in that context. For example, the *sefirot* of the right axis are “male” relative to the *sefirot* on the same level of the left axis, which in this context are “female”; the three *sefirot* of the intellect are col-

lectively “male” relative to the six emotions, which in this context are collectively “female”; and the six emotions are collectively “male” relative to *malchut*, the *sefirah* of expression, which in this context is “female.”

The *sefirot* within each world subdivide ad infinitum, each *sefirah* comprising ten sub-*sefirot* (*chochmah* of *chochmah*, *binah* of *chochmah*, etc.), and each sub-*sefirah* comprising ten sub-sub-*sefirot*, etc.

8. See 1:8, below; Rashi on 2:4, below. 9. *Sha’ar HaYichud V’haEmunah* 5. 10. This is expressed allegorically in the verse, “For as the sun and its shield is *Havayah Elokim*” (Psalms 84:12).

ONKELOS

11 בקדמין ברא יי ית שמיא
וית ארעא: 2 וארעא הות צדיא
וריקניא וחשוכא על אפי תהומא
ורוחא מן קדם יי מנשבא על
אפי מיא:

1:1 בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:
2 וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחָשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ
אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם:

RASHI

תחלה נבראו, ופרשו: בראשית הכל ברא אלו, ויש לך
מקראות שמקצרים לשונם וממעטים תבה אחת, כמו:
"כי לא סגר דלתי בטני", ולא פרש מי הסוגר, וכמו:
"ישא את חיל דמשק", ולא פרש מי ישאנו, וכמו:
"חרוש בבקרים", ולא פרש: אם יחרוש אדם בבקרים,
וכמו:
"מגיד מראשית אחרית", ולא פרש: מגיד
מראשית דבר אחרית דבר — אם כן, תמה על עצמך,
שהרי המים קדמו, שהרי כתיב: "ורוח אלהים מרחפת
על פני המים", ועדין לא גלה המקרא ברית המים מתי
היתה, הא למדת שקדמו המים לארץ, ועוד, שהשמים
מאש ומים נבראו, על כרחך לא למד המקרא בסדר
המקדמים והמאוחרים כלום: **ברא אלהים**. ולא אמר
"ברא ה'", שבתחלה עלה במחשבה לבראתו במדת
הדין, ראה שאין העולם מתקנם, והקדים מדת רחמים
ושתפה למדת הדין, והינו דכתיב: "ביום עשות ה'
אלהים ארץ ושמים": **2 תהו ובהו**. "תהו" לשון תמה
ושמון, שאדם תוהה ומשתומם על "בהו" שבה: **תהו**.
אישטורדישון בלעז: **בהו**. לשון ריקות וצד: **על פני**
תהום. על פני המים שעל הארץ: **ורוח אלהים מרחפת**.
כסא הכבוד עומד באויר ומרחף על פני המים ברוח
פיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא ובמאמרו, כיונה המרחפת
על הקן, אקוביט"ר בלעז:

1 **בראשית**. אמר רבי יצחק: לא היה צריך להתחיל את
התורה אלא מ"החדש הזה לכם", שהיא מצוה ראשונה
שנצטוו בה ישראל, ומה טעם פתח ב"בראשית"?
משום: "כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים",
שאם יאמרו אמות העולם לישראל: לסטים אתם
שכבשתם ארצות שבעה גוים, הם אומרים להם: כל
הארץ של הקדוש ברוך הוא היא, הוא בראה ונתנה
לאשר ישר בעיניו, בראונו נתנה להם ובראונו נטלה
מהם ונתנה לנו: **בראשית ברא**. אין המקרא הזה אומר
אלא דרשני, כמו שדרשוהו רבותינו וזכרונם לברכה:
בשביל התורה שנקראת "ראשית דרכו", ובשביל
ישראל שנקראו "ראשית תבואתה". ואם באת לפרשו
כפשוטו, כך פרשהו: בראשית בריאת שמים וארץ,
והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך, ויאמר אלהים יהי אור.
ולא בא המקרא להורות סדר הבריאה לומר שאילו
קדמו, שאם בא להורות כך, היה לו לכתב: "בראשונה
ברא את השמים" וגו', שאין לך ראשית במקרא
שאינו דבוק לתבה של אחריו, כמו: "בראשית ממלכת
יהוים", "ראשית ממלכתו", "ראשית דגנה". אף כאן
אתה אומר: "בראשית ברא אלהים" וגו', כמו בראשית
ברא. ודומה לוי: "תחלת דבר ה' בהושע" — כלומר,
תחלת דבורו של הקדוש ברוך הוא בהושע — ויאמר
ה' אל הושע" וגו'. ואם תאמר: להורות בא שאילו

1. שמות יב, ב. 2. תהלים קיא, ו. 3. בראשית רבה א, ו; ויקרא רבה ד, לו. 4. משלי ח, כב. 5. ירמיה ב, ג. 6. ירמיה כז, א. 7. בראשית י, י. 8. דברים יח, ד.
9. הושע א, ב. 10. איוב ג, י. 11. ישעיה ח, ד. 12. עמוס ו, יב. 13. ישעיה מו, יא. 14. פסוק ב. 15. בראשית ב, ד. 16. עקפון, הקלם, מבוכה. 17. לקסות.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

tenable to accept the Torah's geocentric perspective.²⁴

2 God's spirit: In the idiom of the sages, this spirit is God's "Throne of Glory," which was hovering over the water, unable to settle on earth. The imagery of the throne is that of a place where God's presence can settle, much as a chair offers a person a fixed place of repose.²⁵ God's presence desired to dwell on earth, so to speak, but was unable to do so because the earth was unsuited for it. This tension initiated the entire creative process that followed.

The sages also call this spirit "the spirit of the Messiah,"²⁶ i.e., the redeemer who will bring the world to its perfection. The vision of the ultimate fulfillment

and perfection of creation was present from its very inception and constitutes an intrinsic element of all reality: all reality is "hardwired" to aspire to the final redemption and progress towards it. All events subsequent to the creation are steps leading toward this ultimate goal.

There is a lesson to be learned from the fact that God's spirit was present even in the void and darkness of primal reality. Even when prospects seem bleak, the spirit of messianic optimism is there; all we have to do is reveal it. How do we do this? "And there was light!" By illuminating the world with the light of the Torah.²⁷

24. Likutei Sichot, vol. 10, pp. 181-2. 25. Sichot Kodesh 5737, vol. 1, pp. 480-482d. 26. Bereishit Rabbah 2:4. 27. Hitva'aduyot 5713, vol. 1, pp. 131-133.

The First Week

1:1 On this first day of creation, **in the beginning of God's creation *ex nihilo* of heaven** and everything in it **and earth** and everything in it—

2 **when the earth was astonishingly void, with darkness over the surface of the abyss**, i.e., the water, **and God's spirit**, i.e., His intention to make the world into His home, **hovered over the surface of the water**, ready to initiate this process—

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

1 God: The orderly functioning of the world that was established during the process of creation—i.e., nature—is a concealment of God, since the world appears to function so perfectly on its own that it does not betray the fact that any being outside of creation is involved in running it. In fact, God is so well hidden in nature that it is possible to entertain the notion that the world always existed and was not created, or that there is no creator at all. This is reflected in the fact that the numerical value of the word for “nature” (הטבע, 86) is equivalent to that of the Name of God used in the creation narrative, *Elokim* (אלהים).

Heaven and earth: The terms “heaven” and “earth” are relative. On the physical plane, “heaven” means the sky and all the heavenly bodies that appear to us to be in it, while “earth” means the ground. On a grander scale, “earth” includes the entire physical universe, while “heaven” refers to the spiritual realms. Similarly, various spiritual realms may be termed “heaven” and “earth” relative to each other.

In any case, the archetypal division of reality at any given level into “heaven” and “earth” implies a duality

of consciousness in creation—a realm of greater and lesser God-consciousness. This was necessary in order to facilitate the purpose of creation, the making of the “lower” realm into a home for God, for in order to make the lower realm into a home for God, there must first of all be a lower realm, and secondly there must be a higher realm (that is not itself God) through which the lower realm can attain progressively higher levels of Divine consciousness.

This conceptual division immediately implies a geocentric perspective—i.e., that “heaven” is defined as that which is above and beyond “earth,” and that our perspective on creation is therefore oriented from the vantage point of earth.

Scientifically, we are nowadays accustomed to the heliocentric (Copernican) view of the solar system rather than the earlier geocentric (Ptolemaic) view. However, according to the theory of relativity, there really is no absolute scientific validity to either view; today's preference for the heliocentric one is due to the fact that it simplifies the equations describing the planetary motion. Objectively, however, it is scientifically entirely

❧ INNER DIMENSIONS ❧

[1] Heaven: The seven lower sub-sub-sefirot of *malchut* of *malchut* of *Asiyah*¹⁵ are sometimes referred to

as “the seven heavens.”¹⁶ Specifically, these realms are, in ascending order:¹⁷

Hebrew name	translation	content
<i>Vilon</i>	“Curtain”	none; hides daylight during the night and is drawn open in the morning, renewing the creation of the world
<i>Rakia</i>	“Firmament”	sun, moon, stars, planets
<i>Shechakim</i>	“Millstones”	Manna ¹⁸
<i>Zevul</i>	“Abode” ¹⁹	The spiritual Jerusalem, including the spiritual Temple ²⁰
<i>Ma'on</i>	“Residence” ²¹	Ministering angels
<i>Machon</i>	“Resting Place” ²²	Sources of harmful natural phenomena (later transferred to earth)
<i>Aravot</i>	“Clouds” ²³	Right, judgment, righteousness, life, peace, blessing, souls, the dew of resurrection, angels, the Divine throne

15. Or *HaTorah*, *Vayikra*, vol. 3, p. 782. 16. Rashi on Deuteronomy 4:35. 17. *Chagigah* 12b. 18. Psalms 78:23-24. 19. Isaiah 63:15. 20. 1 Kings 8:13. 21. Deuteronomy 26:15. 22. 1 Kings 8:39. 23. Psalms 68:5.

— ONKELOS —

3 ואמר יי יהי נהורא וְהוּא
נהורא: 4 וחזא יי ית נהורא ארי
טב ואפרש יי בין נהורא ובין

3 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהי אור וַיְהי־אור: 4 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־
הָאור כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאור וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ:

— RASHI —

כך פרשנו: ראהו כי טוב ואין נאה לו ולחשך שיהיו
משתמשים בערבבא, וקבע לזה תחומו ביום ולזה
תחומו בלילה:

4 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאור כִּי טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל. אף בזה אנו
צריכין לדברי אגדה¹⁸: ראהו שאינו כדאי להשתמש בו
רשעים, והבדילו לצדיקים לעתיד לבא. ולפי פשוטו,

18. חגיגה יב, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

The phrase “God said” appears nine times in the account of creation, but the words “in the beginning” also imply an act of creation, i.e., that all the four elements of creation not mentioned explicitly were also created by God’s word.³³

This articulation is not phrased “God said” because God’s first creation was the letters of language itself. This creation is alluded to in the words “In the beginning of God’s creating,” followed in the Hebrew by the un-translated sign of the accusative, *et* (אֶת). This word alludes to all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, from the first letter (*alef*, א) to the last (*tav*, ת). Allegorically, then, the first phrase in the Torah can be read: “In the beginning, God created language.” Only after creating the letters did God “say” the subsequent nine articulations.³⁴

Light: Light, both physically and allegorically, is a prerequisite to sight, awareness, consciousness, knowledge, and perspective. Without light (or “enlightenment”) there could be no perception and therefore no progress. The first change introduced in the state of primordial creation is therefore light, i.e., the ability to perceive the differences between the various elements of creation. This itself implies the imperative to order these elements in one’s consciousness, and order implies a hierarchy of values. Light is thus the first step in the actualization of the redemption-oriented “spirit of God” that hovered over the waters, the first move towards infusing reality with Divine consciousness.

And there was light: Despite the initial gloomy state of reality—void, chaos, and darkness—light broke through and illuminated the world. The lesson for us here is that no matter how depressing or hopeless a situation may seem, we should not despair: at any moment God may turn the tables and light and order will displace chaos and darkness.³⁵

4 God reserved this quality of light as a reward for the righteous in the messianic future: God created not only light, but the whole world a priori in its full perfection.³⁶ Even if this perfection was only temporary and God later lessened the quality or intensity of most aspects of reality, the initial experience of perfection imbued reality with the impetus and potential to later strive to restore it.³⁷ Although we are accustomed

to think of our familiar reality as “normal” and the changes reality will undergo in the messianic era as being “miraculous,” it follows that, on the contrary, our familiar reality is actually an aberration of the world’s natural state and the messianic redemption will simply restore reality to its natural condition.

That the light was good: Throughout the account of creation, we are repeatedly told that God saw that what He had created was good. In most cases, this statement follows the description of God’s creative activity on each of the six days of creation. These expressions of satisfaction mean that each stage of creation represents a further readying of the world for its role in the Divine plan, as a stage for the drama of making the world into God’s home.

On a deeper level, “good” is a relative term: something is called “good” in comparison with something else that is not as good. In this sense, the repetitions of “it was good” refer indirectly to the higher spiritual realms: the physical world was in some way better than its spiritual antecedents. The spiritual worlds are indeed higher on the hierarchy of spirituality than the physical world, but precisely because of this, they are inferior to it in terms of being suited for God’s purpose in creation.³⁸

God separated between the light and the darkness: Here again, just like the establishment of the dichotomy between heaven and earth, it was necessary to polarize light and darkness. In order to be fully effective, light must be contrasted with darkness, enlightenment with ignorance, clarity with confusion, objectivity with subjectivity, rationality with irrationality.

In other words, although God saw that “the light was good,” He did not do away with the darkness, allowing daylight to rule the entire 24-hour day. Darkness serves a purpose; in fact, this purpose is so important that for half the year there is more darkness than light. This equality of light and darkness clearly indicates that darkness does not simply serve to allow us to value and appreciate the light, but that the dark side of life is useful in and of itself, and can be harnessed, like the rest of creation, in the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

Still, “God saw that the light was good.” Despite their equal status, the dark side of life must always be subordinate to and guided by the clarity of light.³⁹

33. Avot 5:1. See Rosh HaShanah 32a; Zohar 3:11b ff; Tikunei Zohar 83ab; Pelach HaRimon (commentary on Pardes Rimonim) 2:2, 2:4 (quoted in Melechet Shlomo on Avot 5:1). 34. Or Torah 3. 35. Likutei Sichot, vol. 2, p. 657. 36. Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit 8. 37. Likutei Sichot, vol. 10, p. 9. 38. Bereishit Rabbah 3:7; BeShaah SheHikdimu 5672 §438, etc. 39. Bereishit Rabbah 2:5; Likutei Torah 2:7d.

3 God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. This primeval light did not emanate from any specific heavenly body, since the sun and moon were not fixed in their orbits until the fourth day. Also, it did not shine during any fixed portion of the day; darkness and light alternated randomly.²⁸

4 God saw that this primeval light not only illuminated the world, making it physically visible to its future inhabitants, but that it **was** also “good,” in that it revealed the Divine energy sustaining everything from within. Such an obvious display of Godliness would not allow humanity free choice, so **God separated** this spiritual “goodness” of **the light** from its simple, optical dimension and reserved this quality of light as a reward for the righteous in the messianic future. **God then saw that the remaining, physical light was good** and would enable life to function in an orderly manner were it to shine consistently rather than randomly, **so God separated between the light and the darkness**, setting aside half the day for each.²⁹ This was a further step in transforming the world from a state of chaos to a state of order. This ambient light shone for the duration of the creation week, after which only the light emitted by the heavenly bodies shone on earth.³⁰

— ❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧ —

3 God said: Throughout the account of creation, everything is brought into being through God’s “speech.”

Of the three modes of self-expression—thought, speech, and action—thought is the most intense and action the least: one can think much more and much more quickly than he can articulate, and articulate much more than he can do. Thought is therefore considered the mode “closest” to the individual’s essence. Conversely, action requires more physical effort than speech and speech more effort than thought. Speech is thus in the middle of both continuums, similar to action in being removed from the individual’s essence and similar to thought in how little effort it requires. Thus, by saying that God created the world through “speech,” the Torah indicates, on the one hand, that the world is separate from God, just as one’s words separate from him and “leave” him after he has spoken them (while one’s thoughts remain within him), and, on the other hand, that creating the world did not require God to change, just as the effort expended in speaking does not require the exertion that action does.

The faculty of speech that God used to create the world is the origin of language. The words He used were formed out of the specific creative energies He needed

to blend in order to fashion the particular object He was creating. These specific creative energies became the letters of the language of creation; the various combinations of these energies/letters became the words He spoke. This creative language God used is what we know today as Biblical Hebrew. Hebrew is therefore called in Jewish tradition the “holy language,” because the form, sound, and position in the alphabet of each letter (the origin of the concept of number) express one of the different types of Divine energy used in creation. The name of any given entity in Hebrew is thus a precise description of its essence, expressed through the combination of the letters that form its name.³¹ In any case, the idiom of “speech” indicates a constriction of God’s infinite creative energy into a specific creation. Since, as we have stated, the Divine Name used for “God” here, *Elokim*, indicates Divine concealment, the statements beginning “God said let there be...” in the creation account can be understood to mean: “The infinity of the Divine creative energy was concealed, thus revealing finite Divine creative energy, which was then focused on producing such-and-such a creation”; the Hebrew letters that reflect how this finite Divine creative energy was channeled in this process constitute the name of the created entity.

❧ INNER DIMENSIONS ❧

[3] The light was “good”: This “goodness” refers to the transcendent Divine light (sovev kol almin), as opposed to the immanent Divine light (memalei kol almin). Inasmuch as the transcendent light has been set aside for the messianic future, we can no

longer “see” it or “see” with it; we can only infer its existence logically. The immanent Divine light, however, remains accessible to us; with a certain amount of effort, we can sense the Divinity pulsating through creation and enlivening it.³²

28. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 1-2. 29. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, pp. 3-9. 30. Rashi on 1:14; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, p. 4, note 24. 31. *Sefer Yetzirah*; *Sha’ar HaYichud V’haEmunah*; Rashi on 2:22. 32. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 25, p. 8.

ONKELOS

חשוכא: 5 וקרא יי לנהורא יממא
ולחשוכא קרא לילא והנה רמש
והנה צפר יום חד: 6 ואמר יי יהי
רקיעא במציעות מייא ויהי מפריש
בין מייא למייא: 7 ועבר יי ית רקיעא
ואפריש בין מייא די מלרע לרקיעא
ובין מייא די מעל לרקיעא והנה
כן: 8 וקרא יי לרקיעא שמייא והנה
רמש והנה צפר יום תנין:

5 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לָאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי-
עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: פ
6 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רָקִיעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וַיְהִי מַבְדִּיל בֵּין
מַיִם לְמַיִם: 7 וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָרָקִיעַ וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם
אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת לָרָקִיעַ וּבֵין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מַעַל לָרָקִיעַ וַיְהִי-
כֵן: 8 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לָרָקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר
יוֹם שֵׁנִי: פ

RASHI

הַרְקִיעַ לַמַּיִם שֶׁעַל הָאֶרֶץ. הָא לְמִדַּת, שֶׁהֵם תְּלוּיִם
בְּמַאֲמְרוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ: 7 וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָרָקִיעַ. תִּקְנוּ
עַל עֲמֻדוֹ, וְהִיא גְּשֻׁתוֹ, כְּמוֹ²¹: "וַיַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת צִפְרֻנִּיהָ":
מַעַל לָרָקִיעַ. "עַל הָרָקִיעַ" לֹא נֶאֱמַר, אֶלָּא "מַעַל
לָרָקִיעַ", לְפִי שֶׁהֵן תְּלוּיִן בְּאֵוִיר. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה לֹא נֶאֱמַר
"כִּי טוֹב" בַּיּוֹם שֵׁנִי? לְפִי שֶׁלֹּא נִגְמְרָה מְלָאכַת הַמַּיִם עַד
יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי, וְהָרִי הִתְחִיל בָּהּ בַּשֵּׁנִי, וְדָבָר שֶׁלֹּא נִגְמַר
אֵינוֹ בְּמִלּוּאוֹ וְטוֹבוֹ. וּבְשְׁלִישִׁי שֶׁנִּגְמְרָה מְלָאכַת הַמַּיִם
וְהִתְחִיל מְלָאכָה אַחֶרֶת וְגִמְרָהּ, כִּפֶּל בּוֹ "כִּי טוֹב" שְׁתֵּי
פְּעָמִים, אַחַת לִגְמֹר מְלָאכַת הַשֵּׁנִי, וְאַחַת לִגְמֹר מְלָאכַת
הַיּוֹם: 8 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לָרָקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם. "שָׁא מַיִם", "שֵׁם
מַיִם", "אֵשׁ וּמַיִם", שֶׁעָרְבָן זֶה בְּזֶה וַעֲשֶׂה מֵהֶם שָׁמַיִם:

5 יום אחד. לפי סדר לשון הפרשה היה לו לכתב "יום ראשון", כמו שכתוב בשאר הימים "שני" "שלישי" "רביעי", למה כתב "אחד"? לפי שהיה הקדוש ברוך הוא יחיד בעולמו, שלא נבראו המלאכים עד יום שני. כך מפרש בבראשית רבה 6: "יהי רקיע". יתחזק הרקיע, שאף על פי שנבראו שמים ביום ראשון, עדין לחים היו, וקראו בשני מגערת הקדוש ברוך הוא באומרו: "יהי רקיע". והוא שכתוב²⁰: "עמודי שמים ירופפו" כל יום ראשון, ובשני "יתמהו מגערתו", כאדם שמשותמים ועומד מגערת המאים עליו: בתוך המים. באמצע המים, שיש הפרש בין מים העליונים לרקיע, כמו בין

19. ג, יא יב. 20. איוב כו, יא. 21. דברים כא, יב.

rant souls of the spiritual impurity they would accumulate through misdeeds performed during their physical lifetimes.⁴⁷

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

5 **There was evening and there was morning:** Allegorically, this means that any new perception of reality or consciousness of God's purpose must first be experienced as "darkness"—subjectively, irrationally—and only then clarified with the help of Divine light. How-

ever, even then, the dark aspect of this awareness is not altogether superseded by the light, for "there was evening and there was morning, one day"—they are both essential components of the whole experience, or "day."⁴⁸

A CLOSER LOOK

[5] **There was evening and there was morning:** Thus, the Torah defines a "day" as the 24-hour period from one nightfall to the next. Therefore, for

example, the Sabbath and the holidays all begin in the evening of the "day before."

INNER DIMENSIONS

[5] **There was evening and there was morning:** Evening preceded morning because God brought the light of creation into being by "dimming" the spiritual light—Divine consciousness—that shines in the spiritual worlds antecedent to our physical world. Once the light of the spiritual worlds was

withdrawn or "contracted" (*tzimtzum*), there was room for physical light.⁴⁹

[8] **Purgatory:** Since Purgatory (in Hebrew, *geihi-nom*) is a spiritual realm, it is only allegorically that we speak of the soul "descending" into Purgatory or "ascending" out of it in the afterlife. Nonethe-

5 God called to the light and assigned it to the **day**, and **He called to the darkness** and assigned it to the **night**.⁴⁰ He assigned the night to the first half of the day, and the day to the second half. Thus, **there was evening**, followed by the rest of the night, **and then there was morning**, followed by the rest of the day; together night and day constituted **one full day**. It was clear while the primeval light was shining that God was the only being to possess intrinsic existence and that all other beings' existence is dependent upon His.

6 As was said above, the sphere of water was originally surrounded by the sphere of air. The primordial sphere of water included both what was to become atmospheric water as well as what was to remain below as oceanic water; it was thus not exactly what we know today as liquid water, but something between a gas and a liquid. **God said, "Let there be a sky in the midst of the waters, and it shall separate between atmospheric water and ocean water."** Here, God raised and suspended the gaseous-moisture part of the water above the sphere of air, resulting in five concentric spheres instead of four⁴¹ (see Figure 3). Once again, God distinguished between higher and lower aspects of reality by imposing a hierarchical order on an initially chaotic state.

Implicit in this hierarchy was the fact that the physical concepts of "higher" and "lower" reflected their spiritual counterparts; in other words, the higher an entity is on the physical hierarchy, the greater its consciousness of God. Therefore, when God separated the atmospheric water from the ocean water, the ocean water complained that it, too, wanted to enjoy the Divine consciousness granted to atmospheric water. God appeased it with the promise that its salt would be offered with the meat of the sacrifices in the Temple service; in this way it would ascend to the spiritual realms.⁴²

7 So God positioned the sky, and thus separated the water below the sky from the water above the sky. And so it was.

8 God called the sky "Heaven" [*Shamayim*—a contraction of the words for "suspended water" (*sa mayim*), "water is there" (*sham mayim*), and "(made of) fire (e.g., thunder) and water" (*eish umayim*)].

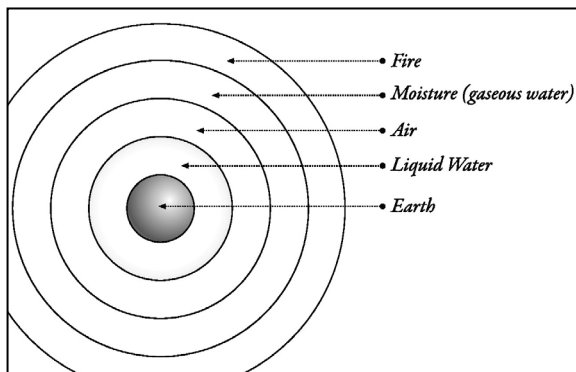


Figure 3: The Separation of the Waters

God also created the angels on this day.⁴³ The angels, who populate some of the spiritual realms, are "personifications" of God's attributes or messengers He creates ad hoc in order to send on specific missions. The angels who personify God's attributes of mercy and judgment form God's "court of law,"⁴⁴ which judges cases based on the principles of justice and mercy with which He created the world. The head of the angels of mercy is Michael⁴⁵ and the head of the angels of judgment is Gabriel.⁴⁶

Also on this day, God created Purgatory, a spiritual realm in which to cleanse er-

40. *Hitva'aduyot* 5743, vol. 1, pp. 354-355. 41. *Sefer HaMa'amaramim* 5708, *ibid.* 42. Rashi on Leviticus 2:13; *Tikunei Zohar* 5 (19b); cf. *Bereishit Rabbah* 5:4. 43. Rashi on v. 5, above. 44. Rashi on v. 26, below. 45. Daniel 10:21, *et al.* 46. Daniel 9:21, *et al.* 47. *Bereishit Rabbah* 4:6, 11:9; cf. Rashi on 2:3, below. 48. *Shabbat* 77b; *Torah Or* 81c; *Likutei Torah* 1:3d. 49. *Or Torah* 2.

ONKELOS

9 ואמר יי יתבנשון מיא מתחות
שמיא לאתרא חד ותתחזי יבשתא
והיה כן: 10 וקרא יי ליבשתא
ארעא ולבית כנישת מיא קרא
יממי וחזא יי ארי טב: 11 ואמר יי
תדאית ארעא דתאה עשבא דבר
ורעה מודרע אילן פירין עבד פירין
לונה די בר ורעה בה על ארעא
והיה כן: 12 ואפקת ארעא דתאה
עשבא דבר ורעה מודרע לונה
ואילן עבד פירין דבר ורעה בה
לונה וחזא יי ארי טב: 13 והיה
רמש והיה צפר יום תלית:

9 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם מִתַּחַת אֶל־מָקוֹם
אֶחָד וַתֵּרָאָה הַיִּבְשָׁה וַיְהִי־כֵן: 10 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים
לַיִבְשָׁה אֶרֶץ וְלַמָּקוֹה הַמַּיִם קָרָא יָמִים וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־
טוֹב: 11 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תִּדְשֵׂא הָאָרֶץ דְּשֵׂא עֵשֶׂב מִזֶּרַע
זֶרַע עֵץ פָּרִי עֵשֶׂה פְרִי לְמִינֹו אֲשֶׁר זֶרַע־בוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ
וַיְהִי־כֵן: 12 וַתּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ דְּשֵׂא עֵשֶׂב מִזֶּרַע זֶרַע לְמִינֵהוּ
וְעֵץ עֵשֶׂה־פְרִי אֲשֶׁר זֶרַע־בוּ לְמִינֵהוּ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־
טוֹב: 13 וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי: פ

RASHI

איריבדיי"ץ, בלן בערפכניא, וכל שרש לעצמו נקרא
"עשב": מוריע זרע. שייגדל בו זרעו, לזרוע ממנו במקום
אחר: עץ פרי. שיהיה טעם העץ כטעם הפרי, והיא לא
עשתה כן, אלא "ותוצא הארץ וגו' ועץ עשה פרי" ולא
העץ פרי, לפיכך בשנתקלל אדם על עונו נפקדה גם
היא על עוניה ונתקללה: אֲשֶׁר זֶרַע בו. הן גרעיני כל
פרי, שמהן האילן צומח כשנוטעין אותו: 12 ותוצא
הארץ וגו'. אף על פי שלא נאמר "למינהו" בדשאין
בצווייהן, שמעו שנצטוו האילנות על כך, ונשארו קל
וחמר בעצמן. כמפרש באגדה בשחיטת חליו:⁵⁹

9 יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם. שהיו שטוחים על פני כל הארץ, והקוים
באוקיינוס, הוא הים הגדול שבכל הימים: 10 קרא ימים.
והלא ים אחד הוא? אלא, אינו דומה טעם דג העולה
מן הים בעכו, לטעם דג העולה מן הים באספמיה:
11 תִּדְשֵׂא הָאָרֶץ דְּשֵׂא עֵשֶׂב. לא דשא לשון עשב
ולא עשב לשון דשא. ולא היה לשון המקרא לומר:
"תעשבי הארץ", שמיני דשאין מחלקין כל אחד לעצמו
נקרא "עשב פלוני", ואין לשון למדבר לומר "דשא
פלוני", שלשון "דשא" הוא לבישת הארץ בעשבים
כשהיא מתמלאת בדשאים: תִּדְשֵׂא הָאָרֶץ. תתמלא
ותתקפה לבוש עשבים. בלשון לעז נקרא "דשא" —

22. מכלול עשבים. 23. ס, א.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

9 Let the waters...be gathered to one place: The second stage of the work involving water actually involved the lowest, most central sphere, that of earth. Here God contoured the smooth surface of this sphere, producing mountains and valleys. As the surface of the earth rose in some places and sunk in others, the land-mass displaced the water, forming all the oceans and other bodies of water.⁵⁹ Since this second half of the work of arranging the water was really work involving the earth, it was done on the third day, together with

the other work involving the earth. But since the end result was the formation of the various bodies of water, the work of the water was not considered complete until this point, and therefore only now does God see "that it was good."

In creating the seas and revealing dry land, God further prepared the world for humanity. Once again, we see the division of reality into two contrasting states, here the division of the surface of the earth into land and sea. The land, in this context, is the lower state,

A CLOSER LOOK

[continued...] less, since spiritual truths always have physical correlates, the physical subterranean "underworld" does reflect some characteristics of Purgatory. For example, the fact that in Purgatory the soul's encrusted sins have to be "burned" off⁶⁰ (through embarrassment, and so on⁶¹) is reflected in the fact that there are places underground where the temperature is hotter than it is on the earth's surface. Similarly, the Talmudic sages ascribe the heat of the earth's hot springs to their "proximity"

to Purgatory.⁶² On the other hand, we are taught that certain sins (such as laziness, etc.) are rectified in Purgatory through spiritual "snow."⁶³

Normally, twelve months in Purgatory is sufficient to cleanse the soul of the effects of the sins it committed during its lifetime in the body.⁶⁴ Only in very specific cases does the soul require more cleansing, or even, in extreme, rare cases, to be cleansed until the final redemption, at which time Purgatory will cease to exist.⁶⁵

59. Sefer HaMa'amarim 5708, *ibid.* 60. Berachot 56b. 61. Likutei Torah 2:35c, 3:35b, etc. 62. Shabbat 39a; Eiruvin 19a. 63. Likutei Torah (Arizal), *parashat Shemot*. 64. Eduyot 6; Shabbat 33b. 65. Nedarim 8b.

9 As stated above, when the world was created, the perfectly spherical body of earth was completely covered with water. In order to further prepare the world for humanity, **God said, “Let the waters below the heaven be gathered to one place, and dry land shall be seen,”** and so it was.

10 **God called the dry land “Earth,” and He called the gathering of water “Seas.”** Each location assumed its own uniqueness, resulting from the different blend of geographic variables in each place. This breakdown into distinct geographic regions further prepared the world for humanity, for it allowed for the propagation of differing cultures, each of which would reveal the Divinity inherent in the world in its unique way. God designated the future Land of Israel for the future Jewish people. This designation, however, did not yet make the Land of Israel qualitatively different from any other place on earth; this transformation occurred only when the Jewish people entered it and conquered it.⁵⁰

Now that the work involving water that began on the second day was completed,⁵¹ **God saw that it was good.**

11 **God said, “Let the earth begin to sprout vegetation underground: seed-bearing plants and trees whose bark tastes the same as its fruit that produce fruits with seeds according to their species, on the earth.” And so it was.** God explicitly commanded only the fruit-trees to bear seeds according to their species; He did not command the seed-bearing plants to do so.

12 The plants did not strictly adhere to God’s command. **The earth gave forth vegetation: plants bearing seeds according to their species,** even though God had not explicitly commanded this. The plants reasoned: “If God commanded trees, who grow far apart from each other and are easily distinguishable, to produce only their own species, then plants, which grow close together and are similar to each other, should certainly only produce their own species.” In contrast to the plants, who did *more* than God had commanded them, the trees did *less* than God had commanded them. The trees felt that if they had edible bark, as God had commanded, it would endanger the perpetuation of their species. The earth therefore gave forth **trees whose bark did not taste the same as their fruit, only producing fruits containing seeds according to their species.** Although the trees’ intentions were honorable, the ground was later punished⁵² for not relying on God to ensure the trees’ continued existence.⁵³ Both the plants and trees began to grow underground, but stopped just short of breaking the surface.⁵⁴ God did not make the vegetation grow *above* the surface of the earth until the sixth day.⁵⁵ **God saw that it was good,** despite the trees’ disobedience.

God designated a specific location as the future⁵⁶ Garden of Eden, an appropriate habitat for humanity.⁵⁷ A detailed description of this garden will be given when the narrative focuses on the story of humanity’s beginnings.⁵⁸

13 **And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.**

50. See below, on 12:1. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 9-10. 51. Rashi on v. 7, above. 52. 2:17, below. 53. Chizkuni. 54. Rashi on 2:5. 55. Below, 2:5. 56. *Hitva’aduyot* 5745, vol. 1, p. 427. 57. *Bereishit Rabbah* 11:9, 15:3; cf. Rashi on 2:3, below. 58. Below, 2:8-14.

— ONKELOS —

14 וַיֹּאמֶר יי' יִהְיוּ נְהוּרִין בְּרָקִיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא לְאַפְרָשָׁא בֵּין יָמָא וּבֵין לַיְלָא וַיְהוּן לְאַתָּן וּלְזִמְנִין וּלְמִמְנֵי בְּהוּן יוֹמִין וְשָׁנִין: 15 וַיְהוּן לְנְהוּרִין בְּרָקִיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל אֶרֶצָא וְהָיָה כֵן: 16 וַעֲבַד יי' יֵת תְּרִין נְהוּרִיָּא רַבְרָבִיָּא יֵת נְהוּרָא רַבָּא לְמַשְׁלַט בִּימְמָא וְיֵת נְהוּרָא זְעֵרָא לְמַשְׁלַט בַּלִּילָא וְיֵת בּוֹכְבִּיָּא: 17 וַיְהִי יִתְהוּן יי' בְּרָקִיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל אֶרֶצָא: 18 וּלְמַשְׁלַט בִּימְמָא וּבַלִּילָא וּלְאַפְרָשָׁא בֵּין נְהוּרָא וּבֵין חֲשׂוֹכָא וְחֻזָּא יי' אֲרִי טָב: 19 וְהָיָה רִמְשׁ וְהָיָה צֶפַר יוֹם רַבִּיעִי: 20 וַיֹּאמֶר יי' יִרְחֲשׁוּן מִיָּא רַחֲשׁ נִפְשָׁא חַיָּתָא וְעוֹפָא יִפְרַח עַל אֶרֶצָא עַל אִפִּי רָקִיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא:

14 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֶת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאַתָּת וּלְזִמְעָדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם: 15 וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֶת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי-כֵן: 16 וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֶת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַשְׁשֵׁלֶת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַשְׁשֵׁלֶת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֶת הַבּוֹכְבִּים: 17 וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: 18 וּלְמַשֵּׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים בִּי-טוֹב: 19 וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם רְבִיעִי: פ 20 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִשְׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם שָׂרָץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף יְעוֹפֵף עַל-הָאָרֶץ עַל-פְּנֵי רָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם:

— RASHI —

על המועדות, והם נמנים למולד הלבנה: **ולמים**. שמוש החמה חצי יום ושמוש הלבנה חציו, הרי יום שלם: **ושנים**. לסוף שלש מאות וששים וחמשה ימים ימרו מהלכן בשנים עשר מזלות המזרחיים אותם, והיא שנה. וחזורים ומתחילים פעם שניה לסבב בגלגל כמהלכן הראשון: 15 **והיו למאורות**. עוד זאת ישמשו שיאירו לעולם: 16 **המארת הגדולים וגו'**. שוים נבראו, ונתמעה הלבנה על שקטרה ואמרה: אי אפשר לשני מלכים שישתמשו בכתר אחד: **ואת הבוכבים**. על ידי שמעט את הלבנה, הרבה צבאיה להפיש דעתה: 20 **נפש חיה**. שיהא בה חיות: **שרץ**. כל דבר חי שאינו גבוה מן הארץ, קרוי "שרץ", בעוף — כגון זבובים, בשקצים — כגון נמלים וחפשיין ותולעים, ובבריות — כגון חלד ועכבר וחמט וכיוצא בהם, וכל הדגים:

14 **יהי מארת וגו'**. מיום ראשון נבראו, וברביעי צוה עליהם להתלות ברקיע. וכן כל תולדות שמים וארץ נבראו מיום ראשון, וכל אחד ואחד נקבע ביום שנגזר עליו. הוא שכתוב: "את השמים" — לרבות תולדותיהם, "ואת הארץ" — לרבות תולדותיה: **יהי מארת**. חסר וי"ו כתיב, על שהוא יום מארה לפול אסכרה בתינוקות, הוא ששינונו: בברביעי היו מתענים על אסכרה שלא תפל בתינוקות: **להבדיל בין היום ובין הלילה**. משנגזר האור הראשון, אבל בשבעת ימי בראשית שמשו האור והחשך הראשונים יחד, בין ביום ובין בלילה: **והיו לאתת**. כשהמאורות לוקין סימן רע הוא לעולם, שנאמר: "מאורות השמים אל תחתו", בעשותכם רצון הקדוש ברוך הוא, אין אתם צריכין לראג מן הפרענות: **ולמועדים**. על שם העתיד, שעתידיים ישראל להצטוות

24. תענית כז, ב. 25. ירמיה י, ב.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

where man feels more fully "grounded" and independent. The creatures of the sea are submerged within their environment and dependent upon it to a much greater extent than the creatures of the land. (Colloquially, we speak of someone totally immersed in something as "swimming" in it.) Spiritually, then, the sea and its creatures represent a greater dependence upon one's life-source, whereas the land and its creatures represent a more independent, self-sufficient consciousness.⁷⁴ This dichotomy is a prerequisite for the worldly consciousness that God will want humanity to transform into Divine awareness.

16 The greater...the lesser: God here, once again, was establishing the duality in creation between male/fe-

male (or giver/recipient) by creating two luminaries, one radiating and one reflective. He intended from the outset that there be a greater and a smaller luminary. But since both are necessary components of creation, neither is intrinsically superior to the other; from God's perspective, they are both "great luminaries." Still, in the context of creation, there is an implied superiority of the giver over the recipient, and, in order for the creative drama to unfold, creation's perspective must be allowed to prevail over the Creator's. Thus, as soon as it was created, the moon was immediately diminished. However, once creation took on creature-consciousness (as opposed to Creator-consciousness), God had to ensure that it would not lose sight of the goal of

74. Likutei Sichot, vol. 35, pp. 5-6.

14 God created the sun, the moon, the planets, and the stars on the first day; He now placed them in their respective celestial spheres. **God said, “Let there be luminaries in the heavenly sky to separate between day and night** later, after the first creation week.⁶⁶ **They shall serve as signs:** their eclipses indicate the times God has designated for punishment; at these times He is more likely to mete out punishment for certain misdeeds.⁶⁷ The luminaries shall also serve **for** setting the dates of the Jewish **festivals**, which will occur at specific points in the lunar month and in specific seasons of the solar year. They shall also serve **for** reckoning **days and years**—one orbit of the sun measuring a day and one turn of the sun through the zodiac measuring a year.

15 Finally, **they shall serve as luminaries in the heavenly sky, to shine on the earth.” And so it was**, as follows:

16 **God positioned the two great luminaries**, the sun and the moon. They were originally equal in size, but the moon immediately protested over having to rule jointly with the sun, so God made it smaller. When it then complained about this treatment, God attempted to appease it by pointing out that its diminished light would allow starlight to be visible, giving the moon the appearance of being attended by many servants; when this failed, God promised that in the future, an atonement offering would be brought on His behalf in the Temple every new moon for having diminished it.⁶⁸ In the messianic future, the light of the moon will again be as great as the light of the sun.⁶⁹ God assigned **the greater light**, the sun, **to rule the day and the smaller light**, the moon, **to rule the night accompanied by the stars** and planets. The stars were placed in the sky together with the light emitted from them, making their light immediately visible on earth even though it would have naturally taken many years for their light to reach it. Where necessary, light appeared to shine from stars that had already become extinct.

17 **God placed them in the heavenly sky to shine on the earth,**

18 **to rule by day and by night, and to separate between the light and the darkness. God saw that it was good.** Nonetheless, the fourth day of the week was made unpropitious to infant health.⁷⁰

19 **And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.**

20 **God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of mobile, living creatures, and fowl that issue from the mud of the swamps⁷¹ shall fly over the earth across the face of the heavenly sky.”**

✧ INNER DIMENSIONS ✧

[14] **As astrological signs:** At this point, God programmed the mechanisms of predetermination and predestination into creation. The only beings exempt from this mechanism will be humanity, who, if they so elect, may exercise a certain degree of free will.⁷² Theoretically, it is possible to “read” the celestial map of destiny and thereby provisionally predict the future (but only provisionally, since free will can override predestination), and there are instances in the Torah of pagan astrologers doing

this.⁷³ Astrology as practiced today, however, has suffered from millennia of corruption and therefore cannot be considered reliable, even provisionally.

For setting festivals: The Torah’s calendar is a combination of the lunar and solar calendar. Months begin at the new moon, but an extra month is periodically intercalated to align the months and the seasons (which are determined by the solar cycle) consistently.

66. In which the primeval light shone, as stated above (v. 3). 67. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 9. 68. *Chulin* 60b; Rashi. 69. Isaiah 30:26. 70. Rashi on v. 14, above. 71. Rashi on 2:19, below. 72. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 7-12. 73. See Exodus 1:22.

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21 וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַתַּיִם וְאֶת כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה | הָרֹמֶשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵהֶם וְאֶת כָּל־עוֹף כְּנָף לְמִינֵהוּ וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: 22 וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הַמַּיִם בַּיָּמִים וְהָעוֹף יִרְבַּ בָּאָרֶץ: 23 וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם חֲמִישִׁי: פ
24 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ בְּהֵמָה וְרֶמֶשׂ וְחִית־אֶרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי־כֵן: 25 וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חֵית הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינָהּ וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: 26 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרֹדוּ בְּדַגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֶשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

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בפמליא שלו, שכן מצינו באחאב שאמר לו מִיכָה²⁹: "ראיתי את ה' יושב על כסאו, וכל צבא השמים עמד עליו מימינו ומשמאלו". וכי יש ימין ושמאל לפניו? אלא, אלו מימינים ליכות, ואלו משמאילים לחובה. וכן³⁰: "בגורת עירין פתגמא ומאמר קדישין שאלתא". אף כאן, בפמליא שלו נמלך ונטל רשות. אמר להם: יש בעליונים כדמותי, אם אין בתחתונים כדמותי — הרי יש קנאה במעשה בראשית: נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם. אף על פי שלא סיעוהו ביצירתו, ויש מקום למינים לדרות, לא נמנע הכתוב מללמד דרך ארץ ומדת ענוה, שהיא הגדול נמלך ונטל רשות מן הקטן. ואם כתב "נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם", לא למדנו שהיה מדבר עם בית דינו אלא עם עצמו. ותשובת המינים כתב בצדו: "ויברא אלהים את האדם", ולא כתב "ויבראו": **בצלמנו**. בדפוס שלנו: **כדמותנו**. להבין ולהשקיל: **וירדו בדגת הים**. יש בלשון הוזה לשון רדוי ולשון וירדה, זכה — רודה בחיות ובבהמות, לא זכה — נעשה ירוד לפנייהם, והתורה מושלת בו:

21 **התנינים**. דגים גדולים שבנים. ובדברי אגדה²⁶: הוא ליתין וכן זוגו, שבראם זכר ונקבה, והרג את הנקבה ומלחה לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, שאם יפרו וירבו לא יתקיים העולם בפניהם. "התנינים" כתיב: **נפש החיה**. נפש שיש בה חיות: 22 **ויברך אותם**. לפי שמחוסרים אותם וצדין מהם ואוכלין אותם, הצרכו לברכה. ואף החיות הצרכו לברכה, אלא מפני הנחש שעתיד לקללה, לך לא ברך. שלא יהא הוא בקלל: **פרו**. לשון פרי, בלומר, עשו פרות: **ורבו**. אם לא אמר אלא "פרו", ה'ה אחד מוליד אחד ולא יותר, ובא "ורבו", שאחד מוליד הרבה: 24 **תוצא הארץ**. הוא שפרשתי²⁷ שהכל נברא מיום ראשון, ולא הצרכו אלא להוציאם: **נפש חיה**. שיש בה חיות: **ורמש**. הם שרצים, שהם נמוכים ורומשים על הארץ, ונראים כאלו נגדרים, שאין הלוכין נכר. כל לשון "רמש" ו"שרץ" בלשוננו קונמוברי²⁸:
25 **ויעש**. תקנם בצביונם בתקונן ובקומתן: 26 **נעשה אדם**. ענותנותו של הקדוש ברוך הוא למדנו מכאן, לפי שהאדם כדמות המלאכים ויתקנאו בו, לפיכך נמלך בהן. וכשהוא דן את המלכים, הוא נמלך

26 בבא בתרא עד, ב. 27 פסוק יד. 28 רחשים. 29 דברי הימים ב, לב, טו. 30 דניאל ד, יד.

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the giver/recipient duality: the ultimate reunification of the radiating and reflective elements of creation. This He did by "appeasing" the moon, i.e., granting it certain aspects of greatness. Similarly, the atonement offering brought every new moon is a reminder that the sun/moon dichotomy is not intended to be permanent; it is only a temporary situation occasioned by the need to bring creation to its fulfillment.⁸⁴

This "sin" of the moon and its subsequent banishment from the daytime is the precursor of the sin of Adam and Eve and their subsequent banishment from the Garden of Eden, as will be elucidated further.

26 Rule: The purpose of creation is for us to "conquer" the world by bringing consciousness of God's infinity into finite reality. Logically, it would seem that only God Himself can do this, since only He can override

21 God created the great sea creatures, including the male and female leviathan. The leviathans were so large that God foresaw that they would overrun the world if He were to allow them to reproduce, so He immediately killed the female and preserved her flesh for the redemption feast He will serve the righteous in the messianic future. In addition to these large sea creatures,⁷⁵ God created **every particular species of living being that swarms, with which the waters teemed, and every particular species of winged fowl. God saw that it was good.**

22 God blessed the fish, birds, and amphibians, **saying**, “In the future,⁷⁶ I will allow humans to eat you and some of you to eat each other. Therefore, **be not only fruitful**, reproducing yourselves once, but **be also prolific**, having many offspring throughout your lives.⁷⁷ **Fill the waters in the seas, and let the flying creatures multiply on the land.**”

23 And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

24 God said, “**Let the earth bring forth mobile, living creatures according to their species: livestock, reptiles and all swarming creatures**, such as insects, amphibians, worms, ants, beetles, worms, moles, snails etc., **and beasts of the earth according to their species.**” **And so it was.**

25 God made beasts of the earth according to their species, livestock according to their species, and reptiles and swarming creatures of the ground according to their species. God saw that it was good, but He did not bless the beasts to be fruitful and prolific, because He foresaw that the serpent would rebel⁷⁸ and did not want to include him in a blessing.

26 Since the angels are created in God’s likeness in that they possess a measure of free will, God presumed that they might object to another form of life also being created in His likeness. He therefore humbly asked their leave to create human beings. **God said** to His heavenly court, “**Let us make a human in our image**, i.e., in an upright form reflecting the same hierarchy of faculties I used to create the world⁷⁹ and with which I made you, **and according to our likeness**, i.e., possessing discernment and intellect.” Even though it was only God, not the angels, who created the human being (as is evident in the next verse), He phrased His intention as to include them. Some of the angels opposed the creation of humanity,⁸⁰ but God convinced the angels by saying that if beings created in His likeness (i.e., like them) were to exist only in heaven and not on earth, it would cause an imbalance in creation. He continued: “If this human lives up to his Divine image, **he shall rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the livestock animals, and all the earth, as well as all the reptiles that crawl on the earth.** If he does not, he will be inferior to the animals⁸¹ and the wild beasts will prevail over him.”⁸²

✧ INNER DIMENSIONS ✧

[26] Let us make a human: God phrased the creation of humanity in the plural because the human being is unique in that he comprises all the Divine

attributes, or *sefirot*. Other creatures, in contrast, are principally manifestations of one or another of God’s attributes.⁸³

^{75.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 16-19. ^{76.} See 1:29-30, 9:3, below. ^{77.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 72, note 7. ^{78.} Rashi on v. 22, above. ^{79.} Rashi on v. 27, below. See *Inner Dimensions* before v. 1, above. ^{80.} *Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit* §44; see below, 6:2. ^{81.} The Hebrew sub-root (*reish-dalet*) forms the roots meaning “rule” (*reish-dalet-hei*) and “descend” (*yud-reish-dalet*), allowing this word to be interpreted both ways. ^{82.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 6, p. 150. ^{83.} *Or HaTorah, Devarim*, vol. 3, p. 1229. ^{84.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, pp. 8-15.

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27 וברא יי את אדם בצלמה בצלם
אלהים ברא יתה דבר ונוקבא
ברא יתהוה: 28 וברך יתהוה יי
ואמר להוה יי פושו וסגו ומלו ית
ארעא ותקופו עלה ושלוטו בנוני
ימא ובעופא דשמיא ובכל חיתא
דרחשא על ארעא: 29 ואמר יי
הא יתבית לכוה ית כל עשבא
דבר ירעה מוורע די על אפי כל
ארעא וית כל אילנא די בה פירי
אילנא דבר ירעה מוורע לכוה
יהי למיכל:

27 וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצִלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים
בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם: 28 וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם
אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
וּכְבִּשְׁתָּהּ וּרְדוּ בְּדִגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּה
הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל־הָאָרֶץ: 29 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם
אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב אֲשֶׁר זֶרַע זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־
כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בוּ פְרִיעֵץ זֶרַע זֶרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָה:

RASHI

בריתן, ופרש לה במקום אחר: 28 וכבשה. חסר וי"ו,
ללמדך שהזכר כובש את הנקבה שלא תהא יצאנית.
ועוד, ללמדך שהאיש שדרכו לכבוש מצוה על פריה
ורביה, ולא האשה: 29 לכם יהיה לאכלה ולכל חיות
הארץ. השנה להם הכתוב בהמות וחיות למאכל, ולא
הרשה לאדם ולאשתו להמית בריה ולאכל בשר, אף
כל ירק עשב יאכלו יחד בלם. וכשבאו בני נח, התיר
להם בשר, שנאמר: "כל רמש אשר הוא חי וגו' פירק
עשב" — שהתירתי לאדם הראשון — נתתי לכם
את כל:

27 וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצִלְמוֹ. בְּדָפוּס הָעִשְׂוִי
לו, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִבְרָא בְּמֵאֶמֶר וְהוּא נִבְרָא בְּיָדִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר:
"וַתֵּשֶׂת עָלַי כַּפְכָּה". נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחֹתָם, כְּמִטְבֵּעַ הָעִשְׂוִיָּה
עַל יְדֵי רֶשֶׁם שְׁקוּרִין קוִי"ן בְּלֻעִי³², וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר:³³
"תַּתְּהַפֵּךְ כַּחֲמֹר חֹתָם": בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ. פֶּרֶשׁ
לָהּ, שְׁאוֹתוֹ צֶלֶם הַמִּתְקֵן לוֹ, צֶלֶם דִּיּוּקָן יוֹצְרוֹ הוּא:
זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם. וְלִהְיוֹת³⁴ הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת
מִצִּלְעֹתַי" וְגו', בְּמִדְרַשׁ אַגְדָּה:³⁵ שֶׁבָּרָאוּ שְׁנֵי פְרָצוּפִים
בְּבְרִיאָהּ רֵאשׁוֹנָה, וְאַחֵר כֶּף חֶלְקוֹ. וּפְשׁוּטוֹ שֶׁל מִקְרָא:
כָּאֵן הוֹדִיעָךְ שֶׁנִּבְרָאוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּשֵׁשׁ, וְלֹא פֶרֶשׁ לָהּ כִּיצַד

31. תהלים קלט, ה. 32. מטבע, הצורה הטבועה באסימון. 33. איוב לח, יד. 34. בראשית ב, כא. 35. בראשית רבה ח, א. 36. בראשית ט, ג.

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ther" of his students. This precept is so essential that it is the first commandment of the Torah.⁹⁴

Although God phrased this command in the plural, addressing both Adam and Eve, He obligated them differently, in accordance with the innate differences in their psychological makeup, which will be explained

below.⁹⁵ Women, whom God made intrinsically self-motivated to concretize the Divine presence on earth, do not require any specific legal obligation to have children. In contrast, men, who are more intrinsically abstract, would not necessarily seek to procreate without a specific command to do so, and therefore the Torah explicitly obligates them to procreate.⁹⁶

A CLOSER LOOK

[28] God blessed them and God said to them: In general, the very act of issuing commands implies that there are consequences for obeying or disobeying those commands. Thus, from the dawn of creation, it was always implicitly understood that God would reward compliance with His will and take corrective measures against non-compliance with His will. In addition, the very fact that God created the world for a purpose implies that humanity is held responsible to behave in way consonant with that purpose, promoting the effective functioning of the world and the maintenance of a just, Godly society.

This corpus of explicit commands and implicit expectations, together with to additional, edifying

norms that humanity voluntarily adopted over the years, together formed a universal legal system by which all people were bound. Aberrant behavior was liable for punishment by God and, in some cases, by human agency. The age at which people became legally culpable in this system was 100 years.

This legal system remained in force until the formal Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. At that time, the legal distinction between Jew and non-Jew became formalized when God bound humanity at large by the Seven Noahide Laws and the Jewish people in particular by the legal system delineated for them in the Torah. Also⁹⁷, the age of culpability for transgressing any law God explicitly articulated was reduced to 13 for men and 12 for women.⁹⁸

94. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, p. 114, in the name of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi. 95. On 2:23. 96. *Yevamot* 65b; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Even HaEzer* 1:13; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 26, pp. 267-268. 97. Rashi on 5:32, below. 98. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 147, p. 153, note 30, vol. 17, p. 317.

27 So God created the human in his image, i.e., in the mold that God had decided upon: **He created him in the image of God**, i.e., in a form reflecting the hierarchy of faculties He used to create the world. He also created him according to His likeness,⁸⁵ i.e., possessing discernment and intellect. Whereas God brought all other creatures into being directly from His speech, He created the human being's body figuratively by "hand," i.e., by first pouring dirt into a mold.⁸⁶ Furthermore, **He created them** as a single, androgynous being comprising both **male and female** bodies, attached back to back.

When the human being realized that the vegetation of the world was waiting for rainfall so it could sprout, he asked God to make it rain. God made it rain and the earth quickly became covered with vegetation in all stages of maturity.⁸⁷

28 After separating the androgynous human into male and female bodies, as will be described in greater detail further on, **God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and prolific. Fill the earth and master it:** subdue its apparent antagonism to Divinity and reveal its inner desire to express the Divinity within it. **Rule also over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living creatures that crawl on the earth.** Nonetheless, do not attempt to refine the world beyond your capacities to do so. In particular, the female is apt to venture beyond her abilities in this regard, so the male should therefore restrain her when necessary."

29 God said to the man and woman, "Behold, although I have made you masters over the animals, I do not permit you to kill them in order to eat them,⁸⁸ for I do not want anyone to confuse your dominion over life with Mine. You must always be aware that you are only a creature. Rather, **I have only given you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the entire earth, and every tree that has seedbearing fruit; they shall be yours for food.** You may also eat the meat of animals that die naturally.⁸⁹

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

the natural, finite order that He himself established. In fact, however, God delegates the conquest of the world to us.

The tool God gives us to accomplish this feat is the Torah. The Torah is both "in" the world and "outside" it: It is "in" the world in that it couches God's will in worldly contexts—how to conduct business, how to observe the Sabbath, and so on. But at the same time, the Torah is "outside" the world: it enables us to transcend the limitations of the world and ascend the ladder of Divine consciousness. The Torah is therefore the bridge between Divinity and the world.

Since we "assist" God in this mission—even though our ability to do this stems from the Torah—we are credited for our efforts. In the words of the Talmud, we become "partners with God in [fulfilling] creation."⁹⁰

However, the power to rule also entails responsibility. By charging us with the task of bringing creation to its fruition, God also made us responsible for it. If

we succeed, all of creation benefits; if we fail, all of creation suffers. The flow of Divine beneficence into the world and all its creatures hinges on our actions.⁹¹

27 He created them male and female: The male part of the human being was not aware of the female body attached to him as anything other than an extended part of himself; he therefore later on⁹² feels that he has been created without a mate. Since this androgynous human was the being created "in God's image," it follows that God is, so to speak, both male and female, comprising the qualities we associate with both.

28 Be fruitful and prolific: Populating the world with human beings created in God's image is an essential facet of God's charge to humanity to fill the world with Divine consciousness, especially if they live up to their Divine calling.

In addition, we are enjoined to "create" other people in the spiritual sense as well, by encouraging them to fulfill their Divine mission, as the Torah requires of them. The Talmud⁹³ considers a teacher of Torah to be the "fa-

85. Below, 5:1. 86. See 2:6-7, below. 87. Below, 2:7. 88. God revoked this prohibition after the Flood (see 9:3, below). 89. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 20, pp. 7-11. 90. *Shabbat* 119b; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 41 and footnote 39. 91. *Likutei Torah* 4:47a. See 6:7, below. 92. 2:20. 93. *Sanhedrin* 19b.

ONKELOS

30 ולכל חיות ארעא ולכל עופא
דשמיא ולכל דרחש על ארעא
די בה נפשא חיתא ית כל ירוק
עשבא למיכל והוא כן: 31 והוא
יית כל די עבד והא תקן לחדא
והוא רמש והוא צפר יום שתייתי:
2:1 ואשתכללו שמיא וארעא
וכל חיליהון: 2 ושיצי יי ביומא
שביעאה עבדתה די עבד ונח
ביומא שביעאה מכל עבדתה
די עבד:

30 וְלִכְל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְלִכְל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְל־רֶמֶשׂ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֶת־כָּל־יֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב לְאֹכְלָהּ
וַיְהִי־כֵן: 31 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה־טוֹב
מְאֹד וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי: פ
2:1 וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָם: 2 וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלֹאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
מִכָּל־מְלֹאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

RASHI

שמעון אומר: בשך ודם שאינו יודע עתיו ורגעיו —
צריך להוסיף מחל על הקדש, הקדוש ברוך הוא שיוֹדֵעַ
עתיו ורגעיו — נכנס בו כחוט השערה, ונראה כאלו
כלה בו ביום. דבר אחר: מה היה העולם חסר? מנוחה,
באת שבת באת מנוחה, כלתה ונגמרה המלאכה:

31 יום הששי. הוסיף ה"א בששי בגמר מעשה
בראשית, לומר שהתנה עמדם על מנת שיקבלו עליהם
ישראל חמשה חמשי תורה. דבר אחר: "יום הששי",
כלם תלויים ועומדים עד יום הששי, הוא ששי בסיון
המוכן למתן תורה: 2 ויכל אלהים ביום השביעי. רבי

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creation is for this physical world to attain consciousness of God, the creative activity of the week is not an end in itself, but is directed toward the specific end of the heightened Divine awareness available to us on the Sabbath. By placing Sabbath rest at the end of the week, God gave reality the drive toward its goal, the messianic future, when the work of perfecting the world will be finished and our sole occupation will be to know and experience God.

In this sense, the Sabbath stands apart from the work-week and is not subject to the normal limitations of time and space. Time was also created by God; on each of the six days of creation a distinct aspect of time was created. The fact that God ceased creating on the Sabbath implies that He ceased creating time as well, which in turn implies that the Sabbath is, in a sense, beyond time.¹⁰⁴

As was mentioned above, the Name of God used throughout the creation narrative is *Elokim*, which indicates the concealment of God's infinity within the finitude and limits of nature. Inasmuch as the Sabbath overrides the limitations of nature, it is a revelation of Divinity that transcends the aspect of God revealed through the Name *Elokim*. Thus, the phrase "and God [*Elokim*] finished" may be interpreted to mean "and there was an end to the limitations of Divine revelation imposed by the Name *Elokim*."

Still, despite the radical difference between the six days of creation and the Sabbath, there is a mutual interdependence between them. The Sabbath gives meaning to the work of the preceding six days.¹⁰⁵ Since the ex-

perience of creation's perfection is repeated every Sabbath, this glimpse into the future provides the inspiration and impetus to continue the work of perfecting creation during the coming week, as well.¹⁰⁶

Even so, the Sabbath is the seventh after the six days; it is their culmination and completion. The extent to which we sense the spirituality of the Sabbath is proportional to the effort we invest in spiritually orienting the mundane tasks of the six preceding days. Thus, God enjoins us to remember and feel the Sabbath felt during the workweek as well. In this way, the transcendent consciousness of the Sabbath can begin to permeate the finite consciousness of the week. This union of the infinite and the finite is an intrinsic aspect of the purpose of creation, as will be explained further on.

Sabbath rest is thus not a begrudged concession to man's inability to work without stopping, but rather a positive and essential component of life.¹⁰⁷

He ceased: God's "resting" was His re-experience, so to speak, of the original thought of creation that gave rise to the whole process of creating the world. During the week of creation, God attended to the details of executing His designs; after the master architect completed His masterpiece, He surveyed it and reviewed it as the culmination of His plan. Inasmuch as everything is continuously being brought into being by the energy God infuses into the world, on the Sabbath, everything is brought into being by God's "reviewing" mentality rather than by His "executing" mentality. This idea is the basis for all the laws that will define Sabbath-observance.¹⁰⁸

104. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, p. 60. 105. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 2, p. 793. 106. These two aspects of the Sabbath—the completion of the previous week's work and the inspiration for the next week's work—are alluded to in the word for "were completed" in verse 1. This word (*vayechulu*) is related both to the word for "consumption" or "consummation" (*kilayon*), alluding to the perfection of the past week, as well as to the word for "vessel" (*keli*), alluding to the blessings for the coming week that are received and stored up by the Sabbath (*Sichot Kodesh* 5724, p. 13). 107. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 335-337. 108. See on Exodus 35:1-2.

30 All plant vegetation shall also serve for food for every creature of the earth, for every bird of the heavens, and for everything that crawls on the ground, which possesses a living soul, but those animals whom I have created as carnivores may kill for food, unlike you.”⁹⁹ And so it was.

In the final moments of the sixth day, God created the demons,¹⁰⁰ i.e., spiritual beings that serve as agents of good or evil in accordance with the power God grants them, often commensurate with humanity’s meritorious deeds or misdeeds. He also prepared Moses’ grave.¹⁰¹

31 At the end of the sixth day, God saw all that he had made, and behold, now that He created a human being, it was not only “good” but *very good*, for only humanity is capable of bringing creation to its fruition and purpose. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2:1 Heaven and earth, and all their components, were thus completed on the sixth day.

2 In fact, however, God continued putting the finishing touches on creation up to and into the first moment of the seventh day. Thus, **God technically finished His work that He had done on the seventh day**, and the seventh day therefore also appeared to be one of the days of creation. But since the amount of work God actually did on the seventh day was infinitesimal and therefore inconsequential, creation is still considered to have been completed on the sixth day. Alternatively, God did not create anything on the seventh day, but rest and spiritual renewal are themselves a necessary ingredient of creation. In this sense, **with the seventh day God finished His work that He had done, for He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had been doing.**¹⁰² In fact, the Sabbath’s position at the *end* of the creation week indicates that the Sabbath is the goal and purpose of creation.

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2 God continued: It is significant that God kept creating into the seventh day—even if only slightly—and did not stop just before its onset. Evidently, God wanted to keep the creation process going up to (and therefore just beyond) the very last instant of the sixth day, “filling” its every last moment with the act of creation. Something would have been lacking had God ceased His work even one instant before the Sabbath.

The lesson God was teaching us here is indeed astounding. True, as Rashi points out, we are required to cease working somewhat before the Sabbath begins in order to ensure that we do not inadvertently violate the nature of the day. But until that moment, we must be sure to fill every moment with productive “work”—there must be no empty moments, no idling or loafing.

Those of us whose main occupation is earning a living are allowed to fulfill their obligation to study the Torah by setting aside limited daily study periods. But full-time Torah scholars must not compare themselves to part-time students and think that since they are anyway spending the greater part of their day studying, what’s the harm if a minute or two goes to waste? God

Himself demonstrated that every element of creation, including every iota of time, has a purpose; it is therefore both our responsibility and privilege to use it to its utmost.

Moreover, the very fact that an additional moment remains is in itself a sign from above that we can expand or improve what we are working on, just as God kept putting the finishing touches on creation until the last moment.

As a people, we might be collectively tempted to make the same error in judgment: Looking back on the Jewish people’s imposing accomplishments in its rich history, we might wonder what further contribution we could possibly make toward readying the world for redemption. God’s own use of every possible moment teaches us that our contributions, however objectively minor, still carry great significance. We must not underestimate our ability to put the finishing touches on creation and usher in the cosmic “Sabbath,” the messianic era.¹⁰³

God finished: What sets the Sabbath apart from the workweek is the unique Divine consciousness available to us on it: on the Sabbath, we are meant to experience creation as a finished work. Since the purpose of

^{99.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 20, p. 10. ^{100.} *Bereishit Rabbah* 7:5, 11:9; cf. Rashi on 2:3, below. ^{101.} Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:6. ^{102.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 24-30. ^{103.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 33-35.

ONKELOS

3 וברך יי ית יומא שביעאה וקדיש
יתא ארי בה נח מפל עבדמה די
ברא יי למעבד: 4 אלן תולדת
שמניא וארעא כד אתבראו ביומא
די עבד יי אלהים ארעא ושמיא:
5 וכל אילני חקלא עד לא הוו
בארעא וכל עשבא דחקלא עד
לא צמח ארי לא אחית מטרא
יי אלהים על ארעא ואגנש לית
למפלח ית אדמתא:

3 וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יוֹם וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ
שָׁבַת מִכָּל־מְלָאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: פ
שני 4 אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם
עָשׂוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וּשְׁמַיִם: 5 וְכָל־
טֶרֶם יִהְיֶה בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִצְמַח
כִּי לֹא הָמְטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְאָדָם אֵין לַעֲבֹד
אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה:

RASHI

שהיא קטנה באותיות: 5 טרם יהיה בארץ. כל "טרם"
שבמקרא, לשון "עד לא" הוא, ואינו לשון "קדם". ואינו
נפעל, לומר הטרים כאשר יאמר הקדים, וזה מוכיח,
ועוד אחר: "כי טרם תיראון"³⁹, עדין לא תיראון. ואף
זה תפרש: עדין לא היה בארץ, כשנגמרה בריאת
העולם בששי קדם שנברא אדם, וכל עשב השדה עדין
לא צמח. ובשלישי שקתוב: "ותוצא הארץ", על פתח
הקרקע עמדו עד יום ששי. ולמה? "כי לא המטיר". ומה
טעם לא המטיר? לפי ש"אדם אין לעבד את האדמה",
ואין מכיר בטובתן של גשמים, וכשבא אדם וידע שהם
צריך לעולם, התפלל עליהם וירדו וצמחו האילנות
והדשאים: ה' אלהים. ה"ה הוא שמו, "אלהים" שהוא
שופט ושליט על כל. וכן פרוש זה בכל מקום לפי
פשוטו: ה' שהוא אלהים:

3 וַיְבָרֶךְ וַיְקַדֵּשׁ. ברכו במקו, שכל ימות השבוע היה
יורד להם עמר לגלגלת, ובששי לחם משנה. וקדשו
במקו, שלא ירד כלל בשבת, והמקרא כתוב על שם
העתידי: אשר ברא אלהים לעשות. המלאכה שהיתה
ראויה לעשות בשבת, כפל ועשאה בששי, כמו שמפרש
בבראשית רבה: 4 אלה. האמורים למעלה: תולדות
השמים והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות ה'. למדך, שכלם
נבראו ביום ראשון. דבר אחר: "בהבראם" — בה"א
בראם, שנאמר³⁸: "בנה ה' צור עולמים", בשתי אותיות
הללו של השם יצר שני עולמים, ולמדך כאן, שהעולם
הזה נברא בה"א, רמז שיורדו הרשעים למטה לראות
שחת, בה"א זאת שסתומה מכל צדיקה, ופתוחה למטה
לרדת דרך שם. רמז כמו שהה"א פתוחה למטה, כך
העולם פתוח לשבים בתשובה. ועולם הבא נברא
ביורד, לומר שצדיקים שבאותו זמן מועטים כמו יורד

37. יא, י. 38. ישעיה כו, ד. 39. שמות ט, ל.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

3 From all His work that God had created to make:
This phrase may be read as "from all His work that
God had created [for humanity] to make," i.e., fin-
ish. In other words, God created the world intention-
ally unfinished, in order that humanity be actively in-
volved in bringing it to its intended goal, to become a
home for God.¹¹⁷

Therefore, we should never think that by opposing the
material nature of reality and spiritualizing the world
we are somehow opposing God's intentions. God pur-
posely created the world "unfinished" in this way so
we can perfect it.¹¹⁸

4 Earth and heaven: Heaven is mentioned first in the To-
rah's description of creation, for in fact, heaven (spiritu-
ality) was created before earth (physicality). But when it
discusses how He "made" them—i.e., how He put the
finishing touches¹¹⁹ on them—earth is mentioned first,

because the ultimate purpose of creation is expressed
more in the physical realm than the spiritual realm.¹²⁰

Also, earth is mentioned first because the Torah is now
about to focus on the history of humanity. In this con-
text, earth is of greater importance than heaven, since
the purpose of creation is to transform it into a home
for God.

God: As was mentioned above,¹²¹ the Divine Name *Elo-*
kim signifies God's concealment and attribute of strict
judgment. The Torah now introduces another Name
of God, *Havayah*, which signifies God's revelation and
attribute of mercy. Throughout the entire creation
process, the Name *Elokim* is used exclusively, for only
by concealing His overpowering oneness could God
bring creatures that consider themselves separate from
Him into being. Humanity's mission, however, is to
bring light into the darkness, to reveal God within the

109. Exodus 16:5, 22-23. 110. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 21, note 36. 111. See Exodus 20:8-11. 112. Exodus 16:25-26. 113. Rashi on 1:31, below. 114. See *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 42, note 34. 115. Above, 1:1. 116. Rashi; *Hitva'aduyot* 5743, vol. 1, p. 479. 117. *Bereishit Rabbah* 11:6; Commentary attributed to Rashi *ad loc.* 118. *Sichot Kodesh* 5716, p. 66. 119. This is how Rashi defines the verb "to make" in his comment on Genesis 1:25. 120. *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 1, pp. 699, 707. 121. On 1:1.

3 God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. “Blessing” means increase; the blessing of the Sabbath was that the work people would do during the preceding six days would produce enough bounty to provide for the seventh day as well. This blessing was first witnessed with the manna.¹⁰⁹ “Sanctification” implies being set aside as something higher than the norm;¹¹⁰ the sanctification of the Sabbath was that the character of the day would be uniquely conducive to spiritual renewal and above the normative consciousness of the weekday. For this reason, weekday work would be forbidden on it.¹¹¹ This sanctification, too, was first witnessed with regard to the manna.¹¹² God Himself intentionally rested on the Sabbath, **for on the Sabbath, God ceased from all His work**, including **that which God had created** and planned **to make** on that day: On each of the first five days, God created three entities; on the sixth day He created six—three for the sixth day and three that had been “scheduled” to be created on the Sabbath.

day	creation
Sunday	heaven, earth, light
Monday	sky, angels, Purgatory
Tuesday	trees, vegetation, Garden of Eden
Wednesday	sun, moon, stars
Thursday	birds, fish, Leviathan
Friday	beasts of the earth, livestock, reptiles, man, woman, demons

Once the fulfillment of creation’s purpose became dependent on the Jewish people’s fulfillment of the Torah, the justification for world’s continued existence became contingent upon the Jewish people’s acceptance of the Torah. Thus, retroactively, from the time of its creation, the world only existed provisionally until the Giving of the Torah.¹¹³

The Garden of Eden

- ◆ *Second Reading 4* The preceding account of creation¹¹⁴ **is the chronicle of how everything in heaven and earth began to function at its proper time, everything having been created on the day that God made earth and heaven, i.e., on the first day.**¹¹⁵ **These are the chronicles of heaven and earth, having been created on the day that God made earth and heaven.**

5 The creation of the first human beings was mentioned earlier, as a detail in the account of the first seven days. However, because of humanity’s pivotal role in life, the Torah now focuses on its creation in greater detail.¹¹⁶

After having created the beasts and livestock on the sixth day, God gathered particles of earth from all over the world to create the first human being, so that human bodies would decompose and revert to earth when they died, no matter where they would be buried. In particular, He used earth from the future site of the altar of the holy Temple in Jerusalem, which would in the future allow humanity to atone for its misdeeds. God thereby made repentance and atonement an essential part of humanity’s physical being. **No shrub of the field was yet on earth nor had any grass of the field yet sprouted.** Although vegetation was created and began to grow underground on the third day, it remained just below the surface of the earth until the sixth day. This was **because God had not brought rain upon the earth, for there was no human to work the ground** and appreciate the value of rain.

— ONKELOS —
 6 וַיִּנְגַּן הָיָה סָלִיק מִן אֶרְעָא
 7 וַיִּבְרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים יֵת אָדָם עֶפְרָא
 מִן אֲדָמָתָא וּנְפַח בְּאַנְפוּדֵי נִשְׁמָתָא
 דְּחַיֵּי וְהוּת בְּאָדָם לְרוּחַ מְמָלְאָא

6 וְאָדָם יַעֲלֶה מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁקָה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה:
 7 וַיִּיצֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֶפְרָא מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח
 בְּאַפֵּי נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה:

עֲשָׂאוּ מִן הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים וּמִן הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים, גּוֹף מִן הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים
 וְנִשְׁמָה מִן הָעֲלִיּוֹנִים. לְפִי שְׂבִיּוֹם רִאשׁוֹן נִבְרָא שְׂמִים
 וְאָרֶץ, בְּשֵׁנִי בְּרָא רִקְיעַ לְעֲלִיּוֹנִים, בְּשִׁלְשִׁי תִרְעָה
 הַיָּבֵשָׁה לַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, בְּרִבְעִי בְּרָא מְאוּרוֹת לְעֲלִיּוֹנִים,
 בְּחִמְשִׁי יִשְׂרָצוֹ הַמִּים לַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, הִזְקַק בְּשִׁי לְהִבְרָאוֹת
 בּוֹ בְּעֲלִיּוֹנִים וּבַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, וְאִם לֹא יֵשׁ קִנְיָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה
 בְּרָאשִׁית, שִׁדְּהוּ אֱלֹ רַבִּים עַל אֱלֹ בְּבְרִיאת יוֹם אֶחָד:
 לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה. אֵף כִּהְיָה וְחַיָּה נִקְרָאוּ "נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה", אֵף זֶה
 שֶׁל אָדָם חַיָּה שֶׁבְּכָלֵן, שְׁנוֹטֶסֶף בּוֹ דְּעָה וְדַבּוּר:

6 וְאָדָם יַעֲלֶה. לְעִנְיָן בְּרִיתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הָעֹלָה אֶת הַתְּהוֹם
 וְהִשְׁקָה הָעֲנָנִים לַשְּׁרוֹת הָעֶפְרָא, וְנִבְרָא אָדָם, כְּגִבְלָא זֶה
 שְׁנוֹתָן מִמֶּנּוּ וְאַחֵר כִּף לֵשׁ אֶת הָעֶסֶה, אֵף כֵּן "וְהִשְׁקָה"
 וְאַחֵר כִּף "וַיִּיצֶר": 7 וַיִּיצֶר. שְׁתֵּי יִצִּירוֹת, יִצִּירָה לְעוֹלָם
 הַזֶּה, וַיִּצִּירָה לְתַחֲיִית הַמֵּתִים. אֲבָל בְּבִהְמָה, שְׂאִינָה
 עוֹמֶדֶת לְדִין, לֹא נִכְתָּב בִּיצִירָתָהּ שְׁנֵי יוֹדִין: עֶפְרָא מִן
 הָאֲדָמָה. צִבְרָ עֶפְרָא מִכָּל הָאֲדָמָה מְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת, שֶׁכָּל
 מְקוֹם שִׁימוֹת שֶׁם תֵּהָא קוֹלְטָנוּ לְקַבּוּרָהּ. דְּכָר אֶחָד: נִטְלָא
 עֶפְרָא מִמְּקוֹם שְׂנָאֵמֶר בּוֹ¹³⁰: "מִזֹּבֵחַ אֲדָמָה תַּעֲשֶׂה לִּי",
 אֶמֶר: הַלֹּאִי תֵהָא לּוֹ כְּפָרָה וְיִכָּל לְעַמּוֹד: וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפֵּי.

40. שמות כ, כא.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

body together, He created the human being in two: He first formed the body from the lifeless earth and only afterwards introduced the soul to give it life.

God could create the animals' souls and bodies simultaneously because their souls and bodies are akin in nature. The animal soul is oriented primarily toward self-preservation, and the various forms of the animal body are also designed mainly to procure food, grow, and reproduce. The human being's soul, however, is oriented to search for meaning beyond self-preservation, and could therefore not be created together with a body oriented merely toward self-perpetuation. Instead, God formed an inanimate body first, inferior even to the animals' bodies—which were created alive—and only then introduced a soul to animate it.¹³⁰

This dichotomy is reflected in the name "Adam." On the one hand, the basic derivation of the word adam is from the word for "earth" (adamah), the origin of the body. On the other hand, the word adam is also related to the word adameh, which means "I will resemble," alluding to humanity's innate aspiration to imitate and even resemble God Himself.¹³¹

God created the human being in this way for three reasons:

First, the fact that for human beings, the soul's entry both precedes and causes the lifeless body's transformation into a "living being" indicates that our spiritual nature is meant to be ascendant over our physical nature.

Second, if an entity is to ascend, even its lowest part must ascend with it. Thus, if we are to fulfill our mission to spiritually perfect the world, we need to be

linked with every aspect of creation. Therefore, the body was formed of the lowest common denominator, so that we can rectify even the lowest elements on the spiritual hierarchy.¹³² This gives us additional insight into Rashi's statement that God collected earth from all over the world to create the first human's body. In doing so, God included within us the entire material world we are to elevate.

Third, our mission is to combine two opposites: the spiritual consciousness of Godliness with the spiritual darkness of the physical world. By creating us through a similar fusion of extremes, God endowed us with the natural capacity to fulfill this mission.¹³³

The knowledge that we were formed from the dust and that we were the last being to be created should humble us. If we live up to our potential, we are indeed the purpose of creation; if not, we are nothing more than a body that was created secondary both in time and essence to that of all other creatures.¹³⁴

This awareness also has practical implications. As we approach God, we are often tempted to aspire prematurely to lofty levels of spiritual feeling and insight, focusing on our desire for spiritual fulfillment. The Torah reminds us that the first component of our being was the dust of the earth. We must begin with a simple, unassuming acceptance of God's will; only then can we aspire to acquire a "soul of life."¹³⁵

The human became a living being: This phrase is proof of our connection with God. Even though God "blew into his nostrils a soul of life," this does not rule out the possibility that human nature somehow conceals and obstructs the Divinity within it. Therefore, the Torah proceeds to tell us that "man became a living being,"

130. *Torah Or* 3d. 131. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 1, pp. 295-296. 132. *Torah Or*, p. 7. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5714, pp. 126-127. 133. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5708, pp. 57 ff; *Hitoa'aduyot* 5750, vol. 1, p. 301; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5721, pp. 343-344. 134. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 1, pp. 7-8. 135. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5744, p. 202.

6 So, a mist rose up from the earth and watered the entire surface of the ground.

7 Using this mist, God then formed the human out of dust of the ground by “kneading” the dust into a body. God blew into his nostrils a soul of life, and the human became a living being, possessing vitality, as do animals, but also possessing the faculties of understanding and speech. Both the body and the soul were fashioned from pre-existing matter: the body from the earth, and the soul from the essence of God.¹²² This was necessary in order to preserve the balance between the days devoted to heavenly and earthly creations:

day	heavenly creation	earthly creation
Sunday	heaven	earth
Monday	sky	
Tuesday		dry land
Wednesday	celestial bodies	
Thursday		fish and birds
Friday	soul	animals and human body

God named the human “Adam,” cognate to the word for “earth” (*adamah*), from which he was made.¹²³ When Adam realized that the vegetation was waiting for rainfall so it could sprout, he asked God to make it rain. It rained, and the surface of the earth became immediately covered with vegetation in all stages of growth.¹²⁴

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

corporeal world. We have the singular capacity to reach beyond the world with all its limitations and connect with God on an infinitely deeper plane. Therefore, once the Torah begins the story of humanity, it uses the Name *Havayah*, to indicate our potential and destiny as human beings.¹²⁵

Still, the Name *Havayah* does not appear here by itself. As long as the narrative takes place in the Garden of Eden, God is referred to unusually¹²⁶ and exclusively by the dual Name *Havayah Elokim* (the only exception being the dialogue between Eve and the snake—but then the Torah per se is not talking; it is only recording a conversation). This clearly indicates that the full fusion of the Divine attributes of judgment and mercy was possible only as long as humanity remained in the Garden of Eden. After the expulsion, God became predominantly known by the Name *Havayah*, for the condition of exile requires that He principally manifest His attribute of mercy.

Another reason this dual Name is used in the story of the Garden of Eden is that this episode is the archetypal drama of the conflict between humanity’s good and evil inclinations. The good inclination originates in the Name *Havayah*, Divine revelation; the evil inclination

originates in the Name *Elokim*, Divine concealment.¹²⁷

7 **And He blew:** In contrast to the rest of creation, which God created by speaking, God put the soul into the body by blowing. We all breathe constantly and can talk for hours on end, but after blowing for just a short time we become exhausted. This is because the breath we use when blowing comes from deeper in the lungs than the breath we use when simply breathing or talking. Thus, the idiom of God “blowing” the soul into the body indicates that our soul originates deeper “within” God than does the rest of creation. This simply means that humanity is the primary purpose of creation while everything else is subordinate to us. Our Divine soul is a spark—i.e., a part—of God.

This soul can never lose its intrinsic connection with God. Our challenge is to ensure that this connection remain manifested within our physical being. Just as when one blows, the air only reaches its destination if there are no obstructions, so can the Godly soul shine only if there are no obstacles that obscure it.¹²⁸

A living being: This term is also used to describe the animals,¹²⁹ but the human being became a “living being” only after God blew a “soul of life” into it. Whereas God created the animals in one phase, soul and

122. There is no mention of “creation” in this verse. *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5748, p. 14. 123. 5:2, below. 124. Rashi on v. 5, above. 125. *Likutei Torah* 5:32a; *Sefer HaMa’amarim Melukat*, vol. 1, pp. 346-347; *Hitva’aduyot* 5748, vol. 3, p. 163. 126. This combination occurs only once again in the entire Five Books of Moses (Exodus 9:30). Throughout the rest of the books of the Bible it occurs only another 16 times. 127. *Or HaTorah*, *Bereishit*, vol. 3, p. 1044. 128. *Tanya*, ch. 2; *Iggeret HaTeshuvah*, ch. 4-5. 129. Vv. 20, 21, 24, above.

ONKELOS
8 וַיִּצְמַח לוֹ גֵן עֵדֶן, וַיְנַיִחָהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן, וַיַּפֵּל עָלָיו תְּרִדְמָה,¹⁵¹
מִלְקָדְמִין וְאַשְׁרֵי תַמָּן יֵת אָדָם
דִּי בְרָא: 9 וַאֲצֻמַּח יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִן
אַרְעָא כָּל אֵילָן דְּמִרְגָּג לְמַחְזֵי וְטֵב
לְמִיכָל וְאֵילָן חַיָּא בְּמִצִּיעוֹת גִּתָּא
וְאֵילָן דְּאֶבְלִין פִּירוּהֵי חֲבִימִין בֵּין
טֵב לְבִישׁ: 10 וַנְהָרָא הָהּ נְפִיק
מִעֵדֶן לְאַשְׁקָאָה יֵת גִּתָּא וּמִתַּמָּן
יִתְפָּרֵשׁ וְהָיִי לְאַרְבַּעָא רִישֵׁי נְהָרִין:

8 וַיִּטֵּעַ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גֶּן-עֵדֶן מִקְדָּם וַיִּשֶׂם שֵׁם אֶת-
הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר: 9 וַיִּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן-הָאָדָמָה
כָּל-עֵץ נֶחֱמָד לְמִרְאָה וְטֹב לְמֵאכֹל וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ
הָגֵן וְעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וָרָע: 10 וַנְהַר יֵצֵא מִעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת
אֶת-הָגֵן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרֹד וְהָיָה לְאַרְבַּעָה רָאשִׁים:

RASHI

וַיִּצְמַח לוֹ גֵן עֵדֶן, וַיְנַיִחָהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן, וַיַּפֵּל עָלָיו תְּרִדְמָה,¹⁵¹
הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ סְבוּר שְׂבוּרָה מִעֲשֵׂה אַחֵר, וְאִינוּ אֶלָּא פְּרִטוֹ
שֶׁל רָאשׁוֹן. וְכֵן אֶצֶל הַבְּהֵמָה חוֹר וְכַתְּבָה: "וַיִּצֹר ה'
אֱלֹהִים מִן הָאָדָמָה כָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה", כְּדִי לִפְרֹשׁ "וַיִּבְרָא
אֶל הָאָדָם" לְקִרְוַת שֵׁם, וּלְלַמֵּד עַל הַעוֹפּוֹת שֶׁנִּבְרְאוּ מִן
הָרֶקֶק: 9 וַיִּצְמַח. לְעִנְיַן הָגֵן הַכְּתוּב מְדַבֵּר: בְּתוֹךְ הָגֵן.
בְּאַמְצָע הָגֵן:

8 מִקְדָּם. בְּמִזְרְחוֹ שֶׁל עֵדֶן נָטַע אֶת הָגֵן. וְאִם תֹּאמַר:
הָרִי כְּבֹר נֶאֱמַר: "וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם" וְגו',
רְאִיתִי בְּבִרְיָתָא שֶׁל רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בְּנוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי יוֹסִי
הַגִּלְלִי מְשַׁלְשִׁים וּשְׁתֵּים מִדּוֹת שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה נִדְרָשָׁת,
וְזוֹ אַחַת מֵהֶן: כָּלֵל שְׁלֹאֲחֶרְיוֹ מִעֲשֵׂה, הוּא פְּרִטוֹ שֶׁל
רָאשׁוֹן. "וַיִּבְרָא וְגו' אֶת הָאָדָם" וְהוּא כָּלֵל, סֵתֵם בְּרִיָּאתוֹ
מִהֵיכָן וְסֵתֵם מִעֲשִׂיו, חוֹר וּפְרֹשׁ: "וַיִּצֹר ה' אֱלֹהִים וְגו',

41. בראשית א, כז. 42. פסוק יט.

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does it lose sight of its true purpose and become truly evil. Rabbi Dovber, the Maggid of Mezeritch, likened this to how a broomstick, which is made for the positive purpose of sweeping the house, becomes evil if it is used for an evil purpose, such as striking a child.¹⁵¹
There is nothing wrong per se with knowing the difference between good and evil.¹⁵² The angels possess this knowledge¹⁵³ and it does not effect them adversely. But this is because an angel has no free choice. He knows what is good and what is evil, but has no inclination to choose evil. True, the first human being is given a command shortly after being brought to the Garden of Eden, and this implies that he possesses the free choice to obey it or transgress it. But this knowledge of good and evil—both the angels' and humanity's before the Fall—is purely objective: they know that there is such a thing as disobeying God's command, but they have no motivation to do so. Since they have

no sense of ego or independent self, they do not evaluate whether to choose evil or good on the basis of what they think would be best for their own interests as opposed to God's purposes. Rather, they choose good because it is, by definition, the right choice. Since their perception of evil is entirely objective, good and evil are totally distinct; that is, evil can never be misconstrued as good and thereby tempt them.
Thus, before the Fall, evil—and by extension, free choice—existed only as theoretical constructs. Evil was there to provide us with free choice, but our original nature precluded the possibility of our ever choosing to sin.
As will be explained later,¹⁵⁴ eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge would impart subjective knowledge of good and evil. God, in fact, intended for the first human to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, but He wanted him to first eat from the Tree of Life, as indi-

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[10] **A river issued from Eden to water the garden:** In mystical terms, "Eden" denotes the Divine bliss that is beyond any direct relationship with the physical world. The "river" that flows out of Eden is the conduit that channels some of this supernal delight into "the garden," i.e., the physical pleasures of this world. To this end, the river "divided and became four heads," that is, it divided into the four worlds of Emanation, Creation, Formation, and Action, through which Godliness is "processed" and

reduced to the point where we can experience it as physical pleasure.¹⁵⁵
Our challenge is to transform and elevate the material pleasures of this world into experiences of God's sublime transcendence. This transformation is accomplished through another "garden" (גן, whose numerical value is 53)—the 53 parashiot of the Torah.¹⁵⁶ The Torah enables us to bring Godliness into our daily lives.¹⁵⁷

151. *Likutei Torah* 4:77a. 152. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5713, p. 425. 153. See 3:22, below. 154. On v. 17. 155. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5737, pp. 53-54. 156. There are actually 54 parashiot in the Torah, but *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* are considered one parashah that is occasionally split in two, as is noted in the Overview to parashat *Nitzavim*. 157. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5717, p. 236.

8 After creating Adam, **God planted a garden** to serve as humanity's habitat, in the location He had previously designated for that purpose,¹³⁶ **the eastern part of Eden** ["(land of) delight"], and **He placed there the human whom He had formed**, as will be seen presently. But before continuing the narrative,¹³⁷ the Torah digresses to describe the greatness of the Garden of Eden.

9 The surface of the earth was already covered with vegetation, but now¹³⁸ **God caused the ground** of the Garden of Eden **to give forth** especially lush growth: **every tree that is of pleasing appearance and good for food. The Tree of Life**, whose fruit imparts immortality to whoever eats it,¹³⁹ **was in the center of the garden, as was**¹⁴⁰ **the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil**, which was a fig tree.¹⁴¹ Although it contained all types of fruit trees, the Garden of Eden was mainly an apple orchard.¹⁴²

10 **A river issued from somewhere in Eden to water the garden, and from there it disappeared into subterranean channels, divided, and surfaced outside of Eden**¹⁴³ and **became four riverheads**. This river was so rich in minerals and nutriments that even its *offshoots* endowed the lands they watered with great abundance,¹⁴⁴ as follows:

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i.e., that the Godly infusion was indeed successful, and that the Divine soul became fully manifest in the human being.¹⁴⁵

He asked God to make it rain: The world was created to be perfected by humanity.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, until humanity began to refine the world and perfect it, the means to do so were superfluous. Until we began to "work the ground," there was no reason for rain.

Creation up to this point was carried out independently of human effort or merit, a heavenly grace period extended solely by God's kindness. From this point onward, however, it became incumbent upon humanity to catalyze the flow of God's beneficence to the world. God, of course, did not need to involve us; He simply chose to have the completion of the world be dependent upon our efforts.¹⁴⁷

8 God planted a garden: God planted the Garden of Eden after He created the first human, implying that the garden was planted solely for humanity's sake. Similarly, every individual should consider the creation of the whole world to be solely for his or her sake. This will lead us to realize and appreciate our own infinite worth, which will in turn lead us to realize and appreciate our personal responsibility and role in creation.¹⁴⁸

Furthermore, the fact that God's first act after creating the world was to plant a garden stresses the centrality of agriculture in civilization. A healthy civilization must be based on a healthy and vibrant agricultural sector that works the earth responsibly, simultaneously maximizing the health-giving qualities of its produce

and the sustainability of its resources. An unworked or overworked earth will destroy a civilization.

Agriculture is the model for spiritual health, too. Just as the farmer must cultivate trees and plants to bear fruit, so too, we must pursue our spiritual goals in order to maximize their effect on the physical world. We must not allow ourselves to lie desolate: our lives must bear fruit. They must affect both ourselves and others in a lasting and meaningful way.¹⁴⁹

9 Good and evil: It is God is, of course, who determines what is good and what is evil; without the Torah's guidelines, the definitions of good and evil vary widely across cultures and times. The truest definition of good and evil, therefore, is "that which accords with God's will" and "that which opposes God's will." To say that God created good and evil at the outset of creation means that He created the possibilities both to obey and transgress His will.

This possibility is a prerequisite to free choice, reward and punishment, and on a deeper level, to the existence of a "lower realm" initially antithetical to Divinity that can be transformed into God's home. Seen in this context, evil is also part of the Divine plan, and also "good," in that sense. The *Zohar*¹⁵⁰ likens evil to a prostitute hired by a king to test the moral fortitude of his son, the prince. Even though the king commands the prostitute to do her best to seduce his son, he hopes she fails; moreover, the prostitute, even while using all her devices to ensnare the prince, hopes she fails, too! Only when evil is allowed to overtake a person's consciousness and silence his "good inclination," his conscience,

136. Above, 1:12. 137. In verse 15. Or *HaChaim*. 138. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 1, pp. 427-428. 139. Below, 3:22. 140. Below, 3:3. 141. Rashi on 3:7, below. 142. Rashi on 27:27, below. 143. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 1, p. 425. 144. Seforno; *Sichot Kodesh* 5729, vol. 1, pp. 103-105, 110-111. 145. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5732, p. 154. 146. See on v. 3, above. 147. *Likutei Torah* 4:53d, etc. 148. *Hitva'aduyot*, vol. 1, pp. 425, 427-428, 451-452. 149. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 20, p. 378. 150. 2:163a.

ONKELOS

11 שום חדר פישון הוא דמקוף ית
כל ארע חוילה די תמן דהבא:
12 ודהבא דארעא ההיא טב תמן
בדלקא ואבני בורלא: 13 ושום
נהרא תנינא גיחון הוא דמקוף
ית כל ארע כוש: 14 ושום נהרא
תליתאה דגלת הוא דמהלך
למדנקא דאתור ונהרא רביעאה
הוא פרת: 15 ודבר יי אלהים
ית אדם ואשריה בגנתא דעדן
למפלחה ולמטרה:

11 שם האחד פישון הוא הסבב את כל-ארץ החוילה
אשר-שם הזהב: 12 וזהב הארץ הוא טוב שם הבדלח
ואבן השלם: 13 ושם-נהר השני גיחון הוא הסבב את
כל-ארץ כוש: 14 ושם-נהר השלישי חדקל הוא ההלך
קדמת אשור ונהר הרביעי הוא פרת: 15 ויקח יהוה
אלהים את האדם וינחהו בגן-עדן לעבדה ולשמרה:

RASHI

שמימיו חדין וקלין: פרת. שמימיו פרין ורבין ומברין
את האדם: כוש ואשור. עדן לא היו וכתב המקרא
על שם העתיד: קדמת אשור. למזרחה של אשור: הוא
פרת. החשוב על כלם, הנזכר על שם ארץ ישראל:
15 ויקח. לקחו בדברים נאים, ופתחו לכנס:

11 פישון. הוא נילוס נהר מצרים, ועל שם שמימיו
מתברכין ועולין ומשקין את הארץ נקרא "פישון",
כמו: "ופשו פרשיו". דבר אחר: "פישון", שהוא מגדל
פשתן, שנאמר על מצרים: "ובשו עבדי פשתים":
13 גיחון. שהיה הולך והומה, והמיתו גדולה מאד,
כמו: "וכי יגח" שמנגח והולך והומה: 14 חדקל.

43. חבקוק א, ח. 44. ישעיה יט, ט. 45. שמות כא, כח.

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Egyptian civilization.¹⁶³

15 To cultivate it: God commanded humanity to improve the Garden of Eden even though it was already perfect, possessing "every tree that is of pleasing appearance and good for food"¹⁶⁴ and being more blessed with natural resources than any other place on earth. This idea is also expressed in the interpretation of the phrase "all His work that God had created to make"¹⁶⁵ cited above, namely, that God intentionally left the world unfinished so that humanity could perfect it further.¹⁶⁶

The world's initial perfection was only within its own context; it was as perfect as a finite world could be. Humanity's mission is to reach beyond the limitations of creation and infuse the world with Godly, infinite light. The world as God created it lacked this dimension of reality—even before the primordial sin.¹⁶⁷

The reason why specifically we human beings can perfect creation is that we alone possess free choice. From the perspective of choice, creation may be divided into three realms: the forbidden—that which we must not do; the permitted—that which we may do but are not

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[11] The name of the first is the Nile: The first of the four "riverheads"—the experiences of consciousness becoming successively less Divine and

more self-aware¹⁶⁸—is the Nile. Egypt, expressing the first stage of separation from Divinity, is therefore the archetype of all Jewish exiles.¹⁶⁹

A CLOSER LOOK

[12] The Garden of Eden: The Garden of Eden was located near the Euphrates River, northeast of the Land of Israel.¹⁷⁰ Its exact location is open to speculation, but it was definitely an actual garden that existed somewhere in the physical world.¹⁷¹ The reason we cannot see it is because, as will be seen later, the physical nature of the world—including that of our physical bodies and senses—became coarser after Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The Garden of Eden, in contrast, re-

tained its original purity. It is therefore invisible to our eyes.¹⁷²

[13] Gichon: Kush is often identified as Ethiopia, in which case the Pishon and Gichon Rivers could be the White and Blue Niles. On the other hand, there is a mountain range in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan known as the "Hindu Kush"; if this is the Biblical Kush, the Pishon would be the Nile in its entirety and the Gichon could be the Indus.

164. V. 9. 165. Above, 2:3. 166. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, pp. 120-121; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5731, p. 306. 167. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 2, p. 101; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5741, p. 103. 168. See on v. 10, above. 169. *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5747, pp. 42-43. 170. *Nachmanides* on 3:22, below; *Tosefot* on *Bava Batra* 84a, s.v. *B'tzafta Chalfa*; on *Kidushin* 71a, s.v. *Ad Heichan*; on *Bechorot* 55b, s.v. *Mitra BeMa'arava*; sources cited in *Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtza'i, Vayikra*, vol. 2, p. 702, note beginning *MiGan Eden*; *Sefer HaSichot* 5749, vol. 1, p. 357, note 25. 171. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 17, p. 206. 172. *Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtza'i, Vayikra*, vol. 2, p. 703.

11 The name of the first river is the Nile [*Pishon*, “gushing” or “increasing”]. It floods the land of Egypt annually, this being the basis of Egyptian agriculture. The name is also related to the word for “flax” (*pishtan*), which is grown in abundance in Egypt and highly valued.¹⁵⁸ The river **is the one that traverses the entire land** that would later be called¹⁵⁹ **Chavilah** [from *chol*, “sand,” i.e., Egypt], **where gold is found.**

12 The gold of that land is good. Also found there are crystal and the onyx stone.

13 The name of the second river is Gichon [“roaring”]; **it is the one that encircles the entire land** that would later be called **Kush.**

14 The name of the third river is Tigris [*Chidekel*, “sharp (tasting) and light.”], **which flows to the east of the land** that would



Figure 4: The Four Rivers

later be called **Assyria. The fourth river is the most distinguished of the four, the Euphrates** [*Perat*, “fertile”], for it will serve as one of the boundaries of the Land of Israel.¹⁶⁰ The Tigris and Euphrates are the two rivers that make Mesopotamia fertile (see figure 4).

In addition to its physical luxuriousness, the Garden of Eden was a spiritually superior environment, as well: The rest of the world, having been created directly by God, was spiritually unsuited to self-initiated change, and therefore not conducive to repentance or self-refinement. The Garden of Eden, however, was designed to be the appropriate setting for human activity, which centers principally on free choice.¹⁶¹

15 After digressing to describe the greatness of the Garden of Eden, the Torah recapitulates the narrative: God told the human that He was going to take him from the place where he was created, settle him in the Garden of Eden, and charge him with certain commands which would fulfill both the purpose of his creation and the creation of the whole world. When the human heard this, he did not want to enter the Garden of Eden, because he was intimidated by the overwhelming responsibility involved. **God therefore persuaded the human to enter, and He placed him in the Garden of Eden, having motivated him to cultivate it and guard it enthusiastically.**¹⁶²

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cated by the order in which these trees are mentioned in this verse.

11 The name of the first is the Nile: Because Egypt

was the first recipient of the waters of Eden, it later became the cradle of civilization and secular wisdom. Many components of later civilizations were rooted in

¹⁵⁸ See Isaiah 19:9; Exodus 25:4. ¹⁵⁹ Rashi on v. 14. ¹⁶⁰ Below, 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7, 11:24. ¹⁶¹ *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 52. ¹⁶² *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 1, pp. 453-454. ¹⁶³ *Hitva'aduyot* 5749, vol. 2, pp. 184, 191.

— ONKELOS —
 16 וּפְקִיד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים עַל אָדָם
 לְמִיָּמָר מִכָּל אֵילָן גִּנְתָּא מִיכָּל
 תִּיכּוּל: 17 וּמֵאֵילָן דְּאִכְלִין פִּירוּחֵי
 חֲבִימִין בֵּין טַב לְבִישׁ לֹא תִכּוּל
 מִנָּה אָרִי בְיוֹמָא דְּתִיכּוּל מִנָּה מָמוֹת
 תָּמּוֹת:

16 וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל-הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר מִכָּל עֵץ-הָגֶן
 אָכַל תֹּאכַל: 17 וּמֵעֵץ הָדָעַת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ
 כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת:

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God first gives Adam permission to eat of every tree in the garden and only then—almost as an afterthought—forbids him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge implies that, at least in potential, God intended to permit the fruit of this tree as well. There are two ways in which the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge can be considered “permissible”:

First, even something that is prohibited can still be considered usable, for by abstaining from it, we are indeed “using” it—to fulfill God’s prohibition against using it. In other words, everything in God’s creation exists to serve a purpose, and our task is to use it for that purpose. Although in many cases this requires us to act—e.g. through fulfilling a prescriptive commandment with the object or otherwise using it for a Godly purpose—there are also situations in which we are required to refrain from acting upon or using an object. But even when God commands us to avoid something, we are still elevating it—by avoiding it rather than by actively engaging it.

Thus, Adam was at first permitted to eat from the fruit of all the trees, signifying his responsibility to elevate each and every one of them, including the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Only afterwards was the stipulation added that the manner in which he was to elevate the fruit of this specific tree was by not partaking of it.¹⁷⁹

Second, we are taught that God originally prohibited Adam and Eve from eating from the tree only temporarily: either for the three hours left until the onset of the Sabbath,¹⁸⁰ or until after eating from the Tree of Life. (This can be seen from the fact that God informs Adam that “on the day you eat of it you shall surely die.” This warning could only be applicable before Adam ate of the Tree of Life.)

As was mentioned above,¹⁸¹ “eating” the knowledge of good and evil—i.e., internalizing it—means making our knowledge of good and evil subjective. When this happens, we no longer evaluate everything purely based on its objective good or evil, but rather based on our own interests, i.e., if it is good or bad for us. It becomes extremely difficult for us to extricate ourselves from this subjective perspective and be sure that any attempt at objectivity not be tinged with ulterior motives. Good and evil are fully intertwined: everything we perceive as good is tainted with selfishness and everything we perceive as evil contains some kernel of good. There are no longer any absolutes in the world; everything contains both good and bad, differing only

by the ratio of one to the other.

In contrast, by eating of the Tree of Life first, Adam would have internalized the consciousness of God’s eternity, i.e., His infinity, and in this way become unencumbered by the limitations of finite reality. Our consciousness would then have been so thoroughly saturated with Divinity that we would have been solidly anchored in the reality of God; no ungodly aspect of life could have held any fascination for us. We would have been in the paradoxical state of simultaneously possessing self-awareness while experiencing our self-awareness as being null and void within our overpowering awareness of God’s reality.

Once we would have attained such consciousness, there would be nothing wrong with acquiring subjective knowledge of good and evil, since our ego, our “I,” would already have been totally submerged in Divinity. Put another way, our only “self” would have been our Divine self. Were this the case, we would be able to safely evaluate reality from a subjective perspective, since our subjectivity would be, in essence, God’s subjectivity—not merely human, limited subjectivity.

However, once Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Knowledge before eating of the Tree of Life, and thereby internalized subjective knowledge of good and evil at the lower level of consciousness, God forbade them to then eat of the Tree of Life. Their new level of consciousness had to be rectified and restored to its original state, rather than be allowed to become permanent. Like every other physical object, their bodies now incorporated aspects of evil, and this evil could not be allowed to survive eternally.¹⁸²

We re-experience this challenge every day of our lives. Every morning, when we begin life anew, we must first and foremost reinforce our consciousness of God’s infinity, of His absolute reality that encompasses all finite reality within it. Only then can we proceed safely with our daily activities of evaluating and sifting through the issues of life based on our subjective perception of what is good and what is evil. By devoting the beginning of each day to prayer and Torah study, we fulfill God’s intention of tasting of the Tree of eternal Life before tasting of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil.

If, however, we eat of the Tree of Knowledge before the Tree of Life—if we allow the nature of our relationship with God to be determined by the boundaries of our limited consciousness—a real danger exists. At any time, our personal calculations may obscure the

179. *Hitva’aduyot* 5743, vol. 4, p. 1928. 180. *Sifteí Kohen* on Leviticus 19:23, s.v. *Od Unetatem* (42b), based on *Bereishit Rabbah* 21:7; *Kuntres Eitz HaChaim* (R. Shalom Dovber of Lubavitch) 10, quoting Rabbi Chaim Vital; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 24, p. 133. 181. On v. 9. 182. *Sefer HaMa’amarim Melukat*, vol. 2, pp. 277-278.

16 God commanded the human, saying, “Of every tree of the garden—including the Tree of Life—you may eat freely.

17 But you shall not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat of it you will die.”¹⁷³

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required to do; and the obligatory—that which we must do. The forbidden is that which is antithetical to Divine awareness and consciousness; the obligatory is that which promotes Divine awareness and consciousness. By choosing to do that which is obligatory and not to do that which is forbidden, we increase the extent to which Divine awareness permeates the world (or, by resisting the forbidden, we prevent the decrease of Divine awareness). As for the permitted, here too, our role is pivotal. If we choose to indulge in the permissible for evil or selfish reasons, we lower the level of Divine consciousness in the world; if we choose to partake of the permissible for holy reasons, we elevate the world, along with ourselves.

As was said above, evil existed at this point solely as a theoretical construct. It was God’s intention that even this abstract evil be eliminated from creation, and this task He left for Adam and Eve to accomplish by eliciting ever higher and more intense revelations of Divinity in the Garden of Eden. In this way, these increasingly higher states of Divine consciousness that would permeate reality would render evil completely irrelevant and thus do away with it altogether.

To guard it: In addition to improving the garden, Adam was also required to guard it. Our work always consists of these two aspects, the active pursuit of good and the avoidance of any situation that could lead to evil. It is never enough just to pursue the good.

The Garden of Eden proves this point. It was so pure and holy that it simply could not tolerate evil, as evidenced by its rejection of Adam and Eve after their sin. Nevertheless, even there, vigilance was required. Even if it seems to us that we are totally absorbed in Divine consciousness, totally involved in doing God’s bidding, we must still be on guard. As long as we are aware of ourselves and even slightly conscious that, for example, we love God because He is good to us, or because He is the basis of our existence, and so on, then these same rational calculations can eventually lead to unfortunate consequences. Adam was therefore warned to guard the garden, his Divine environment, in order to ensure that his service of God be carried out with pure, ego-less love. It was, in fact, precisely in this area that Adam soon erred.¹⁷⁴

To cultivate it and to guard it: Adam and Eve’s care of the Garden was equivalent to the mission that God would later give to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. The spiritual effect of cultivating the Garden was the

same as that of the 248 active commandments; the spiritual effect of guarding the Garden was the same as that of the 365 passive commandments.¹⁷⁵

This first responsibility placed upon humanity serves to underscore an important lesson in human psychology. Work and activity are an intrinsic facet of our makeup, not only an answer to our needs. Even when humanity existed in the Garden of Eden, with all of its needs provided for, and in a state of perfection before the onset of sin, God still directed us to work, to improve the world and improve ourselves. Similarly, no individual or community should ever allow itself to fall into complacency or sloth. There is always work to be done, always an aspect of creation to be perfected and uplifted, since that is the very purpose for which we were created.¹⁷⁶

The intrinsic value of work, however, does not imply that all types of work are the same. It is indeed praiseworthy to be an upstanding and productive citizen—and this is included in God’s directive to cultivate and guard the garden—but mere mundane productivity will not enable us to fulfill the mission that was placed upon Adam and Eve.

It is in this sense that Adam and Eve’s cultivation of the Garden of Eden was the equivalent of the Jewish people’s later fulfillment of God’s commandments, as mentioned above. The commandments are the conduit between spirituality and physicality, through which we can infuse mundane, finite reality with God’s infinite energy and thereby transform the world into a loftier, more spiritual place. Only this type of work both allows us to accomplish what is expected of us and fulfills our psychological need for true accomplishment, as well.¹⁷⁷

16 God commanded the human: In its broadest sense, this means that God taught Adam and Eve the entire Torah.¹⁷⁸ The “Torah” God taught them is not the Torah as we know it today, with all the stories of what transpired during the rest of Adam’s lifetime and in the ensuing millennium and a half. Rather, God taught them the purpose of creation, the proper way to live and relate to the world, the rules and societal conventions He wanted humanity to follow, and how to ascend the ladder of spiritual and Divine consciousness. All these Divine ideas and notions were later embodied in the Torah as we know it today.

17 You shall not eat: On a deeper level, the fact that

¹⁷³. See below, 3:17, 19, 22-24. ¹⁷⁴. *Hitea’aduyot* 5712, vol. 1, pp. 102-108; *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5720, pp. 27, 33. ¹⁷⁵. *Targum Yonatan*; *Tikunei Zohar* 21, 55; *Zohar* 1:27a. ¹⁷⁶. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, pp. 240-241, vol. 16, p. 196; *Sichot Kodesh* 5732, vol. 2, pp. 97-98; *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 1, p. 240. ¹⁷⁷. *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5715, pp. 208-209; *Tanya*. ¹⁷⁸. *Zohar* 1:37b; *Tikunei Zohar* 55 (88b); *Zohar Chadash* 18b, 22b; *Keter Shem Tov* 319.

— ONKELOS —
 18 ואמר יי אלהים לא תקן למהוי
 אדם בלחודוהי אעבד לה סמך
 לקבלה:

18 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הָיִית הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ
 אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ עֶזְרָא בְּנִגְדּוֹ:

— RASHI —

18 לא טוב היות וגו'. שלא יאמרו שתי רשויות הן, בתחתונים ואין לו זוג: עזר בנגדו. זכה — עזר, לא זכה הקדוש ברוך הוא יחיד בעליונים ואין לו זוג, וזה יחיד — בנגדו להלחם:

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

seeming paradox. God therefore created us a priori absolutely void of subjective knowledge, making the awareness of this prior state of grace forever etched in our consciousness as a possibility that could serve as an ideal to strive for. Then, through the temptation of the snake, God plunged us headlong into the maelstrom of the conflict between subjective good and subjective evil. By overcoming the evil within us, we can now realize our Divine potential in the fullest. When the process is completed and good is fully extricated from evil and once again totally separated from it, humanity and creation will have returned to the spiritual state of the Garden of Eden before the sin. However, we will still retain the appreciation of Divinity and the drive for it we acquired during our stay outside the garden. Even though basking in Divinity, we hunger for it with the same intensity we knew in the darkest nights of exile. In the future, redeemed world, the advantages of both states of being—pristine naiveté and wisdom born of sad experience—will be paradoxically wed.¹⁹⁰

This is similar to the process of maturation we all ideally undergo in our own lives. The innocence of youth is shattered by the crisis of adolescence, which in turn gives birth to the wisdom of adulthood. The challenge of adulthood is wedding the innocence and idealism of youth with the sagacity of maturity.¹⁹¹

You will die: This implies that God originally intended for human beings to live forever. Inasmuch as in the messianic future, death will cease to exist,¹⁹² we see here again¹⁹³ God creating things (in this case, human beings) a priori in their messianic state; the non-messianic state is a “temporary” aberration from the natural order.

Our present-day Garden of Eden, our opportunity to lose our self-awareness in intense unity with God, is our study of the Torah. The Torah also has two “trees,” and we must partake of both of them in order to attain full spiritual health. The “Tree of Life” is the Written Torah, for inasmuch as it is the literal word of God, it imparts to its students a taste of the infinite source of life. The “Tree of Knowledge” is the Oral Torah, for through its study we experience “good and evil”: its dialectic analysis of the Written Torah leads us through the maze of applying God’s word to this world, pains-

takingly sifting through potentials and possibilities until it brings us to the clear perception of truth.

On a more general level, the entire exoteric dimension of Torah—both written and oral—can be seen as “the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil.” It contends with the realities of this world, even its more unsavory aspects: damages and false claims, disqualified and forbidden entities, defilement and impurity. The esoteric dimension of the Torah, in contrast, is the “Tree of Life.” It does not deal with the mundane at all, but rather with the study of God Himself, the true reality and source of all life.¹⁹⁴

Allegorically, the word for “tree” (עץ) can be considered an abbreviated form of the word for “advice” (עצה). The Torah is the Tree of Life in that it provides the best advice for living life.¹⁹⁵ God tells us to eat of the Tree of Life—to learn the Torah with the intention of applying it to our daily lives, but not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge—not to learn the Torah as an abstract, theoretical exercise in academic philosophy.¹⁹⁶

18 It is not good: Whereas the animals were created together with their mates, the first human being was created initially androgynous in order that he feel the lack of a mate and appreciate companionship. This occurred in the middle of the sixth day. It was only after rectifying this “not good” situation that, at the end of the sixth day, God “saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”¹⁹⁷ Thus, the creation of woman and the union of the first human couple was an essential prerequisite to the world being “very good.”

God’s commandment not to eat the forbidden fruit is followed immediately by the story of the creation of woman. Only after finishing this episode and Adam and Eve have mated does the narrative return to the topic of the Tree of Knowledge.¹⁹⁸ Since, as will be seen, it was through the woman that the first couple came to eat the fruit, it follows that once God commanded them not to eat the fruit, He immediately put in motion a series of events that would precisely lead them to eat it.

In order to internalize the subjective knowledge of good and evil, the human being had to first become a subjective, relational creature; God accomplished this by separating him into mutually dependent, male and

190. Based on *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 412 ff. 191. Based on *Torah Or* 24a-25b. 192. Isaiah 25:8. 193. As on 1:3, above. 194. *Hitva'aduyot* 5747, vol. 1, pp. 269-270. 195. Proverbs 3:18. 196. *Keter Shem Tov* 319. 197. 1:31. 198. 3:1.

18 This human, having been formed by God Himself and created in His image, was so impressively perfect and well-suited for his task of manifesting Divinity on earth that God had to ensure that neither he mistake himself nor any other creature mistake him for a second deity. **God said, “It is not good that the human be alone,** without a helpmate, for this gives the impression that he is a self-sufficient deity, since I, too, have no mate. I will therefore separate his female aspect from him, rendering him incomplete without her and in need of her assistance. **I will make** this female aspect into a separate being, **a compatible helper for him** to give him this assistance.¹⁸³ If he is deserving, she will help him do good; if not, she will oppose his will.”

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

truth and ultimately lead us to choose other, improper, paths.

The Sabbath, the taste of perfection,¹⁸⁴ is a foretaste of the messianic future, when “death will be swallowed up forever.”¹⁸⁵ The Sabbath and the Tree of eternal Life are thus in a certain sense equivalent. Their common denominator is the consciousness of God’s infinity that overrides the prevailing consciousness of the limited, created world. The Sabbath affords us a step outside the natural world, just as eating of the Tree of Life means internalizing the awareness of God’s transcendence. Thus, even if Adam and Eve had not eaten of the Tree of Life first, the Tree of Knowledge would have become permitted to them once the Sabbath began,¹⁸⁶ since the essence of the Sabbath and the essence of the Tree of Life are one and the same.¹⁸⁷

Adam and Eve’s error, then, was in thinking that it would be preferable to eat of the Tree of Knowledge first, before eating of the Tree of Life.¹⁸⁸ Someone who does not possess any subjective knowledge of good and evil is essentially devoid of any pernicious sense of ego. Unconscious of himself as separate from God, he is constantly connected to the source of life and therefore immune to death. Just as the sign of a healthy limb or organ is that it does not call attention to itself, the sign of spiritual health and life is when the individual’s consciousness is totally absorbed in God and His will. Even if he is aware of himself, his awareness is not tainted by any selfishness, greed, or envy. Thus, before the Fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed the delights of this world—including marital relations—in an infinitely more intense, pure, and selfless (i.e., holy) way than they could after they ate the forbidden fruit.¹⁸⁹

Nonetheless, there is an advantage to subjective knowledge of good and evil: that of contrast. One who has never fallen into sin will not pursue righteousness with the same zeal as someone who has. As exalted and exhilarating as the life of the fully righteous individual

can be, it by definition lacks the pathos and passion that characterize the life of a fallen individual who now ardently seeks his restoration and reinstatement into Divine grace. Thus, paradoxically, without subjective knowledge of evil, the otherwise perfect human is flawed, unable to actualize his potential for intense aspiration to holiness. This is why the forbidden fruit contained the knowledge of both good and evil (and not just evil)—good can be “known,” appreciated, and valued much more by someone who has tasted evil than it can by someone who has not.

This in no way detracts from the greatness or vigor of existence without this knowledge. There is a heavy price to be paid for the passion of the Fall, and that is the loss of innocence and purity. We should not fall into the trap of one-sidedly glorifying the anguished pathos of the knowledge of evil while considering the pristine, sinless existence somehow boring or monotonous. On the contrary, there are real dangers involved in the descent into subjective knowledge of evil, not the least being the danger of failing in the struggle to ascend out of it, at least temporarily. Thus, both modes of existence have their advantages and disadvantages.

The question, then, is: do the prospective benefits of the descent into subjective knowledge of evil outweigh the dangers involved in taking the risk? The answer, paradoxically, is both yes and no. Yes, the Divinity revealed in the world (and let it not be forgotten that this is the purpose of creation!) is immeasurably greater and “deeper” when elicited by the anguish of falling. But no, because the mutual pain of exile for Creator and creature, not to mention the suffering to which humanity undergoes when exposed to this knowledge, is so agonizing that no ends can justify it.

Thus, it is clear that God wanted us to live without this knowledge (and He therefore forbade eating the fruit) and yet to have it (and He therefore planted the tree within easy reach). Since these two seem mutually exclusive, it was necessary to devise a solution for this

183. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 20. 184. See above, on 2:1. 185. Isaiah 25:8. 186. *Sifteí Kohen* on 3:1, below and Leviticus 19:23; *Likutei Torah* 2:29a; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, p. 747. 187. See *Or HaTorah*, *Bereishit* 46a; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 24, p. 133, n. 14; vol. 36, p. 75. 188. *Sefer HaMa’amaram* 5713, pp. 425-430. 189. *Torah Or* 5c; cf. Rashi on 2:25.

— ONKELOS —

19 וַיִּצְרֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאָדָמָה כָּל־חַיֵּי הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לִרְאוֹת מִה־יִּקְרָאֵלוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵלוֹ הָאָדָם נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ:
 20 וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכָל־חַיֵּי הַשָּׂדֶה וּלְאֶדָם עֹזֶר בְּגִבּוֹדוֹ:
 21 וַיִּפֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | תַּרְדֵּמָה עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצִּלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֵּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתָּנָה:

— RASHI —

וַיִּצְרֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאָדָמָה. הָאָדָמָה הָיָה יִצְרָה הָיָה עֲשִׂיהָ הָאָדָמָה לְמַעַלְהָ: "וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חַיֵּי הָאָרֶץ" וַיִּצְרֵם אֱלֹהִים, בָּא וּפָרַשׁ שְׁתֵּי־עוֹפוֹת מִן הַקֶּקֶק נִבְרָאוּ, לִפְי שְׁאָמַר לְמַעַלָּה מִן הַפִּיִּים נִבְרָאוּ, וְכָאן אָמַר מִן הָאָדָמָה נִבְרָאוּ. וְעוֹד, לְמִדָּה בָּאן, שֶׁבִּשְׁעַת יִצְרָתָן מִדָּ בֹּ בְיוֹם הַבְּיָאִים אֶל הָאָדָם לְקָרוֹת לָהֶם שֵׁם. וּבְדַבְּרֵי אֲגָדָה: "וַיִּצְרָה זֶה לְשׁוֹן רִדּוּי וְכַבּוּשׁ, כְּמוֹ: "כִּי תִצְוֶה אֶל עִיר", שֶׁכִּבְשָׁן תַּחַת יָדוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם: וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא לוֹ הָאָדָם נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

46. א, כח. 47. בראשית רבה יז, ד. 48. דברים כ, יט. 49. שמות כו, כ. 50. לעיל א, כז.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

the animals before the angels, but they could not name them. God brought the animals before Adam and he named them.²⁰⁹

Certainly the angels could discern the spiritual antecedents of the animals, the names of their spiritual archetypes, as well as Adam. But they found it inconceivable that physical animals should be given these same names, which would reflect the bond between their spiritual source and physical being. In the normal order of things, heaven and earth do not meet, and a created being's spiritual source is of an altogether different order than its physical manifestation. Only the human being can remove this barrier, for (as explained above²¹⁰) we are created in God's image and thus, like God, transcend the incongruity of heaven and earth.

Adam's achievement—revealing the connection between reality's spiritual source and its physical manifestation—was only the beginning. As will be seen,²¹¹ the giving of the Torah connected the essence of Godliness, which is too transcendent to be a direct source of anything, with physicality. Since the angels, by nature, cannot imagine how the gulf between spirituality and materiality can be bridged, they could not fathom how God could dare give the Torah to corporeal man, just as they could not understand how Adam dared to name the animals.²¹²

And whatever the man called each living thing was indeed its name: Adam named each creature correctly;

the names he gave them were the words God had used to create them.

Even though the human race on the whole no longer possesses Adam's deep spiritual insight, when parents choose a name for their child, their choice is subconsciously guided by Divine inspiration to suit the particular soul-characteristics of the child.²¹³

The human did not, at this point, name the fish: Fish are derived from a spiritual realm in which God's reality is obvious and nothing else appears to possess independent being. Animals, on the other hand, stem from a lower spiritual realm, in which Godliness is hidden and everything else therefore feels autonomous. For this reason, fish are physically submerged in their source: they live and eat in the water and will die if they are removed from it. Animals, in contrast, live outside of their source of sustenance—the earth.

Due to their higher spiritual source, fish can more easily be elevated to holiness. This is why fish do not require ritual slaughtering, as do animals,²¹⁴ since the purpose of slaughtering is to raise the animal to a level where we can elevate it by consuming it.

As was said above, by naming the animals Adam animated the connection between them and their spiritual source. Fish, however, are inherently united with their Divine source, and therefore do not need their connection activated. Adam therefore did not name the fish.²¹⁵

209. Bereishit Rabbah 17:4. 210. On 1:26. 211. On Exodus 19 and 20. 212. Likutei Sichot, vol. 15, p. 15. 213. Likutei Sichot, vol. 17, p. 6. 214. Chulin 27b. 215. Hivra'aduyot 5749, vol. 1, p. 233.

19 Before He separated the primordial human into a man and a woman, God wanted this being to feel the need to be bipartite. He did this in the following way: As described above, **God had formed out of the ground every wild beast and every bird of heaven**—the birds from the mud of the swamps.¹⁹⁹ Now, **God brought them to the human to see what he would name each one**, and also placed them under his rule, as He had promised. God brought the animals to the human being in male-female pairs,²⁰⁰ in order to make him realize that his unitary state was unnatural and to induce him to search for a suitable helpmate from among the animals. God therefore did not present the fish to him to name,²⁰¹ since there was no reason to suppose he would consider any of the fish as a possible companion.²⁰² The human proved to be outstandingly insightful: he deduced what each creature's name should be based on its characteristics and qualities. Therefore, **whatever the human called each living thing remained its name** permanently.

◆ *Third Reading* 20 **The human gave names to every livestock animal and bird of the sky, as well as to all the wild beasts.** As God intended, the human noticed that the animals were naturally heterosexual, and examined²⁰³ them all for a suitable helpmate. **But the human did not find among the animals any helper who was compatible for himself**—whom God had named **Adam**. This troubled him.

21 God did not want the human to witness its female side being severed from its male side, for this might lead the male to disrespect the female, **so God cast a deep sleep upon the human, and he slept. He then took one of its sides**—the female side—off of the male side, **and closed the cut made in the flesh in its place.**

— ❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧ —

female halves. The human could only succumb to the allure of the subjective knowledge of good and evil once his subjective nature was made dominant in his female half, as will be explained presently.²⁰⁴

In making us subjective creatures, God once again²⁰⁵ melded the two extremes of spirituality and physicality in the human being. Angels are entirely spiritual and do not mate; animals mate but their drive to do so is purely physical. In contrast to both, the human drive to mate is both spiritual and physical: we do not feel fulfilled unless we mate on both planes, with both aspects enhancing each other. If we mate with our spouse only physically we feel degraded; if we mate with our spouse only spiritually we feel frustrated.

By creating us as spiritual-physical heterosexual beings, God made us inherently subjective. As opposed to all other creatures, we experience life in a relational fashion; we evaluate and organize our experiences into a hierarchy of relevance. God had to make us this way in order for us to be able to fulfill our role as the perfecters of creation; it is crucial that we feel the relationship between God and creation and thereby be inspired to enhance and perfect it.

It is for this very reason that only the human being was

forbidden to eat of the Tree of Knowledge; only in him would this knowledge become subjective, becoming instantly enmeshed in the fabric of his sense of self, as explained above.

19 **To see what he would name each one:** As was said above,²⁰⁶ the Hebrew name for something is an expression of its essence and nature. In naming each creature, Adam had to analyze the essence and nature of each one and thereby deduce its name.²⁰⁷ In so doing, he realized that none of these creatures was a fitting mate for him.

By naming the animals in accordance with their spiritual source, Adam did more than display his brilliance—he articulated the notion that physical reality can and should express its spiritual origin and be true to its spiritual essence. In this sense, he animated the bond between the animal and its source. It was at this point that Adam began the process of fulfilling the purpose of creation, i.e., of making the world into a home for God.

When God consulted with the angels before creating Adam,²⁰⁸ the angels asked Him, “What is the nature of this human?” God answered, “Its wisdom is greater than yours.” To demonstrate this, God now brought

199. 1:20-21. 200. Rashi on v. 20. 201. Cf. *Tosafot*, *Chulin* 66b. 202. Abarbanel; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 2, note 6. 203. Rashi on v. 23, below. 204. On v. 23, below. 205. See on 2:7, above. 206. On 1:3. 207. *Or Torah* 14. 208. See above, 1:26.

ONKELOS

22 ובנא יי אלהים ית עלעא דנסיב מן אדם לאתתא ואיתיה לות אדם: 23 ואמר אדם הדא זמנא גרמא מגרמי ובסרא מבסרי לדא יתקרי אתתא ארי מבעלה נסיבא דא: 24 על כן ישבק גבר בית משכבי אבוהי ואמה וידבק באתתה ויהוין לבסרא חד: 25 והו תרויהון ערשילאין אדם ואתתה ולא מתפלמין: 31 וחויא הוה חבים מכל חיות ברא די עבד יי אלהים ואמר לאתתא בקושטא ארי אמר יי לא תיכלון מכל אילן גנתא:

22 וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַצֵּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבָאָהּ אֶל־הָאָדָם: 23 וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הַפֶּעַם עֵצִים מַעֲצָמִי וּבִשָּׁר מִבְּשָׁרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחְתִּי־זֹאת: 24 עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהֵיוּ לְבָשָׁר אֶחָד: 25 וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עֲרוּמִּים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְּׁשׁוּ: 3:1 וַהֲנַחֵשׁ הָיָה עֲרוֹם מְכֹל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל עֵץ הַגֶּן:

RASHI

שלא היו יודעים דרך צניעות להבחין בין טוב לרע. ואף על פי שנתנה בו דעה לקרות שמות, לא נתן בו יצר הרע עד אכלו מן העץ, ונכנס בו יצר הרע וידע מה בין טוב לרע: 1 והנחש היה ערום. מה ענין זה לכאן, הוה לו לסמוך "ויעש לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם" — אלא, ללמדך מאיזו סבה קפץ הנחש עליהם — ראה אותם ערמים ועוסקים בתשמיש לעין כל, ונתאנה לה: ערום מכל. לפי ערמתו וגדלתו היתה מפלתו, ערום מכל — ארור מכל: אף כי אמר וגו'. שמה אמר לכם "לא תאכלו מכל" וגו'. ואף על פי שראה אותם אוכלים משאר פרות, הרבה עליה דברים, כדי שתשיכנו ויבא לדבר באותו העץ:

22 וַיִּבֶן, בִּבְנוֹן, רִחְבָּה מִלְמָטָה וּקְצָרָה מִלְמַעְלָה, לִקְבֹּל הוֹלֵךְ, כְּאוֹצֵר שֶׁל חֲסִים שֶׁהוּא רִחֵב מִלְמָטָה וּקְצָר מִלְמַעְלָה, שֶׁלֹּא יִכְבִּיד מִשָּׂאוֹ עַל קִירוֹתָיו: וַיִּבֶן אֶת הַצֵּלַע וְגו'. לְהִיּוֹת אִשָּׁה, כְּמוֹ: "וַיַּעַשׂ אוֹתוֹ גִּדְעוֹן לְאִפּוֹד", לְהִיּוֹת אִפּוֹד: 23 זֹאת הַפֶּעַם, מִלְמַד שֶׁבָּא אָדָם עַל כָּל בְּהֵמָה וְחַיָּה, וְלֹא נִתְקַרְרָה דַּעְתּוֹ עַד שֶׁבָּא עַל חַיָּה: לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ וְגו'. לְשׁוֹן נוֹפֵל עַל לְשׁוֹן, מִכָּאֵן שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם בְּלִשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ: 24 עַל כֵּן יַעֲזֹב אִישׁ, רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ אוֹמֶרֶת כֵּן, לְאִסּוּר עַל בְּנֵי נֶחַ אֶת הָעֲרִירוֹת: לְבָשָׁר אֶחָד, הוֹלֵךְ נוֹצֵר עַל יְדֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם, וְשֵׁם נַעֲשָׂה בְּשָׂרָם אֶחָד: 25 וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְּׁשׁוּ.

151. שופטים ח, כז.

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the impulse to raise the consciousness of reality to a higher level of Divine awareness; the "female" side of a relationship is the impulse to concretize the implications of this consciousness in the context of the real world. Both approaches are of course necessary, and the healthy equilibrium of inspiration and actualization is dependent on the regulation of the male-female dynamic in creation.

25 They felt no shame: Since they did not possess any sense of self-centeredness before they ate the forbidden fruit, they engaged in marital relations with the same innocence they felt, for example, when eating. They ate

not in order to satisfy any lust for the delights of the palate but to satisfy their hunger and enjoy the goodness God had given them; likewise, they engaged in marital relations not to satisfy any egocentric lust for the delights of the flesh but to unite with each other, enjoy the goodness God had given them, and to procreate.²²⁵

1 The most cunning: As was mentioned above, the first human was originally created without subjective knowledge of good and evil. God's intention was that by "cultivating and guarding" the Garden of Eden, humanity would raise the level of Divine consciousness

INNER DIMENSIONS

[21] Woman: The ability and drive to understand and apply the implications of Divine consciousness is called *binah* ("understanding"). Its heightened presence in the woman's psychological makeup is alluded to by the word for "and he built" in this verse (ויבן), which is cognate to *binah* (בִּינָה).²²⁶ Be-

cause of this inherent superior sensitivity to the world, women mature psychologically quicker than do men. Thus, Jewish law considers a female a responsible adult at age twelve but a male only at age thirteen.²²⁷

216. 3:20, below. 217. Bereishit Rabbah 14:7. 218. 1:28-30. 219. Rashi on 5:1, below. 220. 4:1-2. 221. Sefer HaSichot 5749, vol. 1, p. 24. 222. Rashi on 4:25, 5:3. 223. Likutei Sichot, vol. 10, p. 15. 224. Rashi on v. 15, below. 225. Likutei Sichot, vol. 3, p. 893. 226. Nidah 45b. 227. Nidah 46a; Likutei Torah 4:42b.

22 God built up the side that He had taken from the human into a woman, shaping her so she could carry children within her, **and He brought her to the man**. Adam and his wife—whom he would later name Eve²¹⁶—were created as mature, twenty-year old adults.²¹⁷

23 The man said, “This time, in contrast to all the creatures I examined previously, **this one is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. She shall be called ‘Woman’ [ishah], because she was taken from man [ish].”** Thus Adam completed the process of naming all creatures.

24 God decreed that a man shall therefore leave his father and his mother and cleave only to his wife—forbidding extramarital relationships—**and** that husband and wife **shall** combine to **become one flesh** in their children. After separating them into man and woman, God blessed them, commanding them to procreate, and gave them the fruit of the earth as food, as recounted above.²¹⁸

25 The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame in this. Since they were not conscious of themselves as being independent of God, they considered all their physical desires as a natural part of God’s intention for them. Their consciousness was not tainted by self-interest, so there was nothing to be ashamed of. Adam and Eve engaged in marital relations, and shortly after conceiving,²¹⁹ Eve gave birth to twins—a son and a daughter—as will be described in detail further on.²²⁰

The Tree of Knowledge

3:1 The Torah now interrupts its description of the events of the sixth day of creation with the account of how Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden, which occurred after the creation week,²²¹ in fact, after Eve’s first *two* births.²²² It places this narrative here because the antagonist of this episode, the serpent, initiated the train of events that led to the expulsion after observing Adam and Eve engage openly in marital relations.

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild beasts that God had made. He also possessed the means to express his cunningness:²²³ he stood upright on his feet and could talk. After observing Adam and Eve engaging in marital relations, he wanted Eve for his wife. He decided the best way to eliminate Adam was to have him eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, since God had made this punishable by death. But he knew he would not be able to entice Adam to do this, so he decided to work through Eve, whom he assumed would serve the fruit to her husband before she ate any of it herself.²²⁴ Although the serpent had seen Adam and Eve eating all kinds of fruits in the garden, **he said to the woman** in order to open a conversation, **“Did God really say, ‘You may not eat from any of the trees of the garden?’ ”**

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23 Woman: God intended for husband and wife, in “cleaving” to one another (v. 24), to identify with each other’s mentality, but before they could cleave to one another He separated them into two distinct beings, each with their own mindset and propensities. Simply, this is because since man was designed to be a relational being, it was necessary for him to be able to empathize

with both sides of any given relationship, the “male” side and the “female” side. The woman relates first and foremost to the “female” side of relationships and the man to the “male” side; their full mental, spiritual, and physical union allows them both to experience the other side as well and develop sensitivity toward it. Broadly speaking, the “male” side of a relationship is

ONKELOS

2 ואמרת אתתא לחי'א מפירי
אילן גנתא ניכול: 3 ומפירי אילנא
די במציעות גנתא אמר יי לא
תיכלון מנה ולא תקרבון בה דלמא
תמוותון: 4 ואמר חו'א לאתתא לא
ממת תמוותון: 5 ארי גלי קדם יי
ארי ביומא דתיכלון מנה ויתפתחון
עיניכון ויהיון כרברבין חפמיין בין
טב לביש:

2 וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל-הַנָּחַשׁ מִפְּרִי עֵץ-הַגֶּן נֹאכֵל:
3 וּמִפְּרִי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ-הַגֶּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ
מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ פֶּן-תָּמּוּתוּן: 4 וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּחַשׁ אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה
לֹא-מֹות תָּמּוּתוּן: 5 כִּי יָדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְכֶם
מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִפְקַחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וְהִיִּיתֶם כַּאֲלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:

RASHI

מיתה בנגיעה, כף אין מיתה באכילה: 5 כי ידע. כל
אמן שונא את בני אמונתו, מן העץ אכל וקרא את
העולם: והייתם כאלהים. יוצרי עולמות:

3 ולא תגעו בו. הוסיפה על הצווי, לפיכך באה לידי
גרעון, הוא שנאמר⁵²: "אל תוסף על דבריו": 4 לא
מות תמותון. דחפה עד שנגעה בו, אמר לה: כשם שאין

משלי ו, 1.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

knew that the purpose of humanity was to make God a home in this lowest of all worlds. How appropriate, then, to internalize the knowledge of good and evil, allowing humanity to descend in its spiritual status and thus be able to elevate the lowest levels of Divine consciousness. The serpent became Eve's inner voice.

This is the inner meaning of the serpent's wish to supplant Adam; subjective knowledge of good and evil wanted to replace objective knowledge as the consort of Eve, the impulse to concretize Divinity in the world. In the end, this is essentially what happened: Adam ate (i.e., internalized) the knowledge of good and evil, and thus in this sense "became" the snake.

2-3 The woman replied to the serpent: Still, Eve initially resisted the snake's suggestion. But she had evidently already erred in exactly the direction the serpent was leading her: by mistakenly assuming that it was forbidden to touch the tree as well as to eat from it, she was denying herself more than necessary and was exaggerating the danger involved in the full exercise of her powers.

The lesson here is that it is imperative to neither underestimate nor overestimate our capabilities and the limits of our permitted sphere of activity. It is stated in the Talmud²³¹ that God will hold us answerable for every rejection of a permissible pleasure. On the other hand, we are also bidden to create a "fence around the Torah"²³² so that if a breach does occur, the Torah is not violated, and a certain amount of voluntary asceticism is considered a prerequisite to holiness.²³³ The resolution of this apparent contradiction is that the relative weight accorded these opposing approaches to life depends on the spiritual state of the individual. The average person needs restrictions. He should not indulge in every permissible pleasure, for this would dull his spiritual sensibilities. On the other hand, someone who is constantly attuned to God's will, as was Eve was be-

fore the primordial sin, need not fear that partaking of the permissible will corrupt her. Indeed her failure to do so was sinful, since she forfeited the chance to elevate another element of creation to holiness.²³⁴

Why—or perhaps more to the point, how—did Eve erroneously exaggerate this way? How could she think that when God said not to eat He really did mean also not to touch? Apparently, God implanted in her thought processes the awareness of the need to take precautions. This awareness is indeed essential for the "female" consciousness to fulfill its role of seeking the actualization of Divine consciousness in the world. When wrestling with mundane consciousness, there is always the danger of being drawn into its perspective and losing sight of the purpose of the descent. Thus, precautions are quite legitimate and called for. The error lies in being so cautious that we do not exercise our capacities to the extent God requires.

4 The serpent pushed Eve against the tree: Even if the serpent demonstrated to Eve that touching the tree was harmless, thereby convincing her that eating it would also prove harmless, it is still inconceivable that she could have disobeyed God's explicit command if she still retained her original level of Divine consciousness. Therefore, the sages teach us that the serpent not only pushed Eve but also raped her.²³⁵ Whether or not this is to be understood literally, the implications are spiritual: the serpent injected into Eve's mind the consciousness of self-orientation, defiling her pristine innocence. She thus gained a "foreign" semblance of post-Tree-of-Knowledge subjectivity that induced her to evaluate the serpent's arguments from the perspective of her own ego and ultimately to make her decision on that basis.

5 You will be like God and be able to create worlds: i.e., you will be able to bring far greater levels of Divine consciousness into the world than you would be able

231. Y. Kidushin, end. 232. Yevamot 21a; Avot 1:1. 233. Avot 3:13; Sotah 9:15. 234. Likutei Sichot, vol. 1, p. 253. 235. Shabbat 145b-146a. This is also mentioned in the first printing of Rashi (on v. 14), but it seems to be the printer's inclusion of a passage of Rashi's commentary on Nazir 23b.

2 The woman replied to the serpent, “We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden,

3 but as to the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, which is in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’

“In fact, God had not forbidden them to *touch* the fruit, but Eve thought that He forbade them to eat the fruit because the tree was poisonous, and that touching its bark would therefore also prove deadly.”²²⁸

4 The serpent pushed Eve against the tree, showing her that touching it did not harm her. He said to the woman, “Just as you did not die from touching it, you will certainly not die from eating its fruit!” When Eve saw that touching the tree did not harm her, she could not believe that eating its fruit would kill her.²²⁹

5 “Rather,” the serpent continued, “God did not forbid you to eat the fruit for your own good, that is, because He wants you to live forever and He knows that eating the fruit will make you mortal. He forbade it out of jealousy. He does not want you to infringe upon the aspect of perfecting the world He has reserved for Himself. **God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened** to your own potential: you will see yourselves as independent agents, masters of your own destiny. **You will thus be like God** and be able to create worlds, just as He did. This is because **you will know good and evil** subjectively.”

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

of the world and thereby annihilate evil without having to engage it directly. Furthermore, humanity at this stage possessed no inclination or motivation to transgress God’s will.

Yet God also wanted humanity to be able to fill creation with the sort of Divine revelation and consciousness that could not possibly be elicited without subjective knowledge of good and evil. God therefore gave this subjective knowledge a voice in the person of the snake, and via him devised that Adam and Eve should eat the forbidden fruit.

The word for “cunning” in Hebrew (*arum*) also means “naked.” Thus, the primordial couple and the primordial snake are described similarly. But whereas the nakedness of Adam and Eve expresses their innocence, the nakedness of the snake describes his being stripped of full Divine consciousness. The snake personified the partial awareness of God that pays lip service to His existence and omnipotence, but dupes itself and others into thinking that God can be “outsmarted.” In this sense, the snake’s “nakedness” and “cunning” are one and the same.²³⁰

Did God really say: The snake’s “cunning” was argument from misconstruction. He knew full well, of course, that God had not forbidden any fruit other than that of the Tree of Knowledge, and that Eve knew this as well. However, by suggesting that God had forbidden other fruit, the snake planted the thought in Eve’s mind that perhaps the Divine prohibition of eating this fruit was exaggerated. “Perhaps God means

to deny you the complete experience of the fullness of His creation.” Inasmuch as their life in the garden was meant to be an ongoing expansion of Divine consciousness brought about by “cultivating and guarding” it, the serpent meant to imply—and Eve understood this—that by depriving them of the fruit of this tree, God was limiting their ability to accomplish His ends. Since He was not letting them use every available means to make this world His home and was denying them the opportunity to summon all their inherent powers towards this end, He was in effect sabotaging their efforts. “If He has denied you this fruit, He may as well have denied you all fruit!” The snake in effect convinced Eve that he knew better than God Himself how to accomplish God’s ends. This rationalization has been the arch-technique of the evil inclination ever since: it does not (initially, at least) attempt to convince us to sin, for we as humans are logical thinkers and would refuse. It instead convinces us that transgressing God’s express will is a shortcut to accomplishing God’s true purpose, that the supposedly sinful act is meritorious.

Significantly, the serpentine voice-of-subjective-knowledge did not address Adam but Eve. In separating the first human into male and female, God endowed the woman with the drive to concretize the Divine ideal within reality, as was said above. It is precisely in this area that we are most vulnerable to the arguments of evil. Evil seduces us to descend where we are not supposed to, misleading us into believing that, by so doing, we will be better able to accomplish our goals. Eve

²²⁸. Gur Aryeh *ad loc.* ²²⁹. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 218, note 35. ²³⁰. *Hitva’aduyot* 5749, vol. 1, p. 236, n. 96.

— ONKELOS —
 6 וְחָזַת אֶתְחָא אָרִי טַב אֵילָנָא
 לְמִיכָל וְאָרִי אָסִי הוּא לְעִינִין
 וּמִרְגָּג אֵילָנָא לְאַסְתָּכְלָא בַּהּ
 וְנִסִּיבַת מֵאֲבָה וְאָכַלַת וַיְהִי בַת אָף
 לְבַעֲלָה עֲמָה וְאָכַל: 7 וְאֶתְפַּתְחָא
 עֵינֵי תְרוּיָהוֹן וַיִּדְעוּ אָרִי עֲרִטִילָאִין
 אֲנוּן וְחִטִּיטוּ לְהוֹן טְרָפִי תְאֲנִין
 וַעֲבָדוּ לְהוֹן זְרוּיָן:

6 וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה בִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמֵאֲכָל וְכִי תֹאמַר הוּא
 לְעִינִים וְנִחְמַד הָעֵץ לְהִשְׁכִּיל וְתִקַּח מִפְּרִי וְתֹאכַל וְתִתֵּן
 גַּם לְאִישָׁה עִמָּה וַיֹּאכַל: 7 וְתִפְקַחְנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיִּדְעוּ
 כִּי עִרְמָם הֵם וַיִּתְּפוּ עָלֶיהָ תֹאמַר וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֹת:

— RASHI —

כִּשְׁהוּא עָרוֹם, אֶלָּא, מִהוּ "וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי עִרְמָם הֵם" —
 מִצְוָה אַחַת הָיְתָה בֵּינָם, וְנִתְעַרְטְלוּ הֵימָנָה: **עַלֶּה תֹאמַר.**
 הוּא הָעֵץ שֶׁאָכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ, בְּדָבָר שֶׁנִּתְקַלְקְלוּ בוֹ נִתְקַנּוּ,
 אָכַל שֶׁאָר הָעֵצִים מִנְעוּם מִלְטֹל עֲלֵיהֶם. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה לֹא
 נִתְפָּרַס הָעֵץ? שְׂאִין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הִפְךָ לְהוֹנוֹת
 בְּרִיָּה, שְׁלֹא יִכְלִימוּהוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ: זֶהוּ שִׁלְקָה הָעוֹלָם עַל
 יָדוֹ. מִדְּרַשׁ רַבִּי תַנְחוּמָא²³⁹:

6 וַתֵּרָא הָאִשָּׁה. רָאִתָּה דְּבָרֵיו שֶׁל נָחֵשׁ וְהִנָּאוּ לָהּ,
 וְהִיאֲמִינָתוּ: **כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ.** לְהִיּוֹת כְּאֵלֹהִים: **וְכִי תֹאמַר הוּא**
לְעִינִים. כִּמּוֹ שֶׁאָמַר לָהּ²⁴⁰: "וְנִפְקַחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם": **וְנִחְמַד הָעֵץ**
לְהִשְׁכִּיל. כִּמּוֹ שֶׁאָמַר לָהּ²⁴¹: "יִדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע": **וְתִתֵּן גַּם**
לְאִישָׁה עִמָּה. שְׁלֹא תִמּוֹת הִיא וַיְהִיָּה הוּא, וַיִּשָּׂא אַחֲרֶיהָ:
גַּם. לְרִבּוֹת בְּהִמָּה וְחִיָּה: 7 **וְתִפְקַחְנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם.**
 לְעִנֵּין הַחֲכָמָה דְּבַר הַפְּתוּב, וְלֹא לְעִנֵּין רֹאשִׁיהָ מִמֶּשֶׁ, וְסוּף
 הַמִּקְרָא מוֹכִיחַ: **וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי עִרְמָם הֵם.** אָף הַסּוּמָא יוֹדֵעַ

53. פסוק ה. 54. שם. 55. וירא יד.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

And he ate: As was seen above,²³⁹ Adam was such a paragon of perfection that God had to take measures to prevent the rest of creation from deifying him. He was highly intelligent, possessed great moral purity, and had heard God prohibit the fruit explicitly. It therefore seems incredible that he was not able to resist eating the forbidden fruit, especially in the context of the midrashic view²⁴⁰ that Adam knew that the prohibition was to be in effect for only three hours and he transgressed the command after only one hour.

The fact that this was a serious test for Adam gives us some important insight into the workings of free choice: the more crucial a particular Divine commandment is for a specific person, the harder that person's evil inclination exerts itself to cause him not to fulfill it. Objectively, fulfilling the commandment may be simple in itself, but because it is important at this particular juncture that this person fulfill it, the gravity of the situation demands that it be made difficult for him, in order to force him to fully exert his free choice.²⁴¹

She also fed the fruit to the animals: The animals were not forbidden to eat the fruit. Because the human being is a subjective creature, knowledge of good and evil would be harmful to him and only him. It would

not be detrimental to animals.

7 They sewed together fig leaves: By using the very leaves of the Tree of Knowledge to clothe themselves and express their remorse for what they did, Adam and Eve articulated a deep understanding of repentance. The goal of true repentance is not only to repair the damage that has been done, but also to transform the negative force into a positive one. Past failings, when utilized as impetuses for virtue, become a force for good.²⁴²

And made themselves loin cloths: As soon as they acquired subjective knowledge of good and evil and the accompanying sense of heightened self-awareness and self-centeredness, they recalled their recent physical intimacy and how pleasurable it had been. They realized that, in their new consciousness, physical intimacy could become something that could be pursued purely for sensual pleasure, and thereby a potentially powerful agent for intensifying self-orientation and desensitizing humanity to Divinity. Therefore, of all their naked limbs, they became ashamed first and foremost of their procreative organs, and tried to lessen their power over human consciousness by keeping them covered.²⁴³

239. 2:18. 240. See above, on 2:17. 241. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, p. 747. 242. *Sefer HaChakirah (Derech Emunah)* 67a. 243. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, p. 893.

6 The serpent persisted in trying to convince Eve, taking care to converse with her when Adam was not present. He eventually convinced **the woman**, who then **saw that the tree was good for eating** because it would make them godlike, **and desirable to the eyes** because it would open their eyes to their own potential, **and that the tree was attractive as a means to gain intelligence** because it would enable them to know good and evil subjectively. So, she decided to eat the fruit. But to the serpent's chagrin, **she took some of its fruit herself and ate**. When Adam came back, she described the effect of eating the fruit to him and reiterated the serpent's arguments, convincing him to partake as well. Also, even though the serpent had convinced her that the fruit was not deadly, she was still afraid that it might be, and she didn't want to die and leave Adam alive to marry someone else. Adam knew that the fruit was forbidden, but he was confused by the fact that Eve, whom God had created to help him, was offering it to him.²³⁶ Thus, Eve **also gave some to her husband with her, and** because of this confusion, **he ate**. She also fed the fruit to the animals, but it did not have any effect on them.

7 **Then the eyes of both of them were figuratively opened**: they suddenly understood that they had lost their original Divine consciousness: they were no longer aware of themselves as a part of God, but as independent beings. **They thus realized that they were figuratively naked**, i.e., stripped of the one commandment God had given them, which was precisely to *avoid* descending to this level of consciousness. They were ashamed of having been stripped of their original Divine consciousness, and instinctively expressed this shame by trying to reverse the process. They knew that the physical body is a reflection of the soul, and sought to counteract their new self-exposure by covering their naked bodies.²³⁷ Toward this end, they tried to pluck leaves from other trees in the garden, but found that they could not; these trees refused to be involved in this subterfuge. Having no other choice, **they sewed together fig leaves** they plucked from the Tree of Knowledge, **and made themselves loincloths**. The Torah does not explicitly disclose the identity of the Tree of Knowledge in order that people not disdain the type of tree involved in Adam and Eve's sin.

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to otherwise, in effect "creating" higher "worlds" or states of existence. As stated above, this ascent is made possible by the descent into subjective knowledge of evil, which in turn serves as the impetus for greater efforts to draw close to God.

6 **The woman saw that the tree was good for eating**: She was fully aware that the purpose of her existence was to make a home for God in the lower realms, and understood that this would be possible to a far more profound extent if she would follow the serpent's advice.

The woman saw: This demonstrates how important it

is to use the gift of sight properly. Our misdeeds usually begin with looking where we should not look. We rationalize that there is no harm in only looking, but looking leads to desire, desire leads to action, and action leads to misleading others into misdeed, just as Eve convinced Adam to go along with her. No matter how spiritually advanced we are, we must not delude ourselves into thinking that we are immune to the lure of sight: are any of us purer than Eve, who was created directly by God? Let us rather direct our eyes to positive and holy sights, and teach our eyes to focus only on the good.²³⁸

236. *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 3, p. 158. 237. Rashi on 2:25, above. 238. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, p. 612.

ONKELOS

8 וישמעו ית קל מיימרא דיי
אלהים מהלך בגנתא למנח יומא
ואשמר אדם ואשתה מן קדם יי
אלהים בגו אילן גנתא: 9 ויקרא יי
אלהים לאדם ואמר לה אן את:
10 ואמר ית קל מיימרך שמעית
בגנתא ודחלית ארי ערטילאי
אנא ואשמרית: 11 ואמר מאן חוי
לך ארי ערטילאי את המן אילנא
די פקדתך בדיל דלא למיכל מנה
אכלת: 12 ואמר אדם אתתא
דיהבת עמי היא יהבת לי מן
אילנא ואכלית:

8 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּגֵן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם
וַיִּתְּחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ
הַגֵּן: 9 וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל-הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵיכָּה:
10 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת-קֻלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגֵן וַאֲיָרָא בִּי-עֵינִים אֲנֹכִי
וַאֲחָבָא: 11 וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עֵינִים אֶתָּה הֵמָּן
הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵבָלְתִּי אֲכַל-מִמֶּנּוּ אַכְלָתָ: 12 וַיֹּאמֶר
הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נָתַתָּה-לִּי מִן-הָעֵץ
וָאָכַל:

RASHI

והם סרחו בעשירות: 9 איכה. יודע היה היכן הוא,
אלא לבנס עמו בדברים, שלא יהא נבהל להשיב אם
יענישהו פתאום, וכן בקין אמר לו⁵⁶: "אי הבל אחיך",
וכן לבלעם⁵⁷: "מי האנשים האלה עמך", לבנס עמיהם
בדברים. וכן בחזקיה בשלוחי מרדך בלדך: 11 מי
הגיד לך. מאין לך לדעת מה בשת יש בעומד ערום: המן
העץ. בתמיה: 12 אשר נתתה עמדי. כאן כפר בטובה:

8 וישמעו. יש מדרשי אגדה רבים, וכבר סדרו
רבותינו על מכוונם בבראשית רבה ובשאר מדרשות,
ואני לא באתי אלא לפשוטו של מקרא ולאגדה
המישבת דברי המקרא, דבר דבור על אפניו: וישמעו.
מה שמעו? שמעו את קול הקדוש ברוך הוא שהיה
מתהלך בגן: לרוח היום. לאותו רוח שהשמש באה
משם, וזו היא מערבית, שלפנות ערב חמה במערב,

56. בראשית ד, ט. 57. במדבר כב, ט.

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knew subjective knowledge of good and evil would entail. In other words, he succumbed to fatalism: instead of focusing on how to return to God, Adam proceeded to accept his fallen status as an irrevocable fact of life.

12 The man replied: "It is Your fault. Had you not created us with this feminine perspective, this overwhelming drive to manifest Your presence in the lowest possible realms, we would not have fallen for the enticements of this serpent who personified the subjective knowledge of good and evil." Thus, instead of recognizing the female aspect of his partnership as a boon to their joint relationship and mutual goal in life, he saw it only as an obstacle.

Besides being ungrateful to God for giving him Eve, Adam was also not on the path to true repentance. King Solomon said, "He that covers his sins will not succeed,"²⁵⁰ for as long as a person justifies his misdeeds, he cannot completely repent. Genuine repentance is possible only when we acknowledge that we have willingly and knowingly abandoned God, without blaming any external factors.²⁵¹

Because he and Eve expressed regret: God's earlier statement that "on the day you eat of it you will die"²⁵² now came to mean "on the day you eat of it I will prevent you from eating of the Tree of Life, and thus you will become mortal and eventually die."

Alternatively, it still meant that they would die on the same day they ate the fruit, but since "a thousand years in Your eyes are but as yesterday that has passed"²⁵³—i.e., God's "day" is a thousand years—it now came to mean that they would die within a thousand years.

In either case, Adam and Eve's repentance mitigated the implication of God's threat considerably. They repented only partially—they regretted their actions but they tried to shift the blame to someone else. Nonetheless, repentance is so powerful that instead of dying on that very day, Adam (and presumably Eve) lived almost a thousand years!²⁵⁴ Thus, at the very beginning of the Torah, God teaches us that regardless of what has been decreed or what punishment has been deserved, the doors of return are always open.²⁵⁵

250. Proverbs 28:13. In the Midrash, this verse is applied to Adam. 251. Cf. *Ikarim* 4:26. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, p. 202. 252. Above, 2:17. 253. Psalms 90:4; Rashi *ad loc.* 254. Below, 5:5. 255. *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 3, pp. 151-152, 157-159.

8 Adam and Eve would have tried to clothe themselves further,²⁴⁴ but just then, at 4:00 PM,²⁴⁵ **they heard the voice of God, which was moving about in the garden in the direction of day's end.** Attempting to quickly cover their remaining nakedness, **the man and his wife hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden.**

9 **God** knew where Adam was, but in order to open the conversation and give him the opportunity to express remorse, **He called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"**

10 **He replied, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I am naked, so I hid."**

11 God obviously knew that Adam and Eve had eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, but in order to give Adam another chance to confess and express remorse over his sin, **He said, "Who told you that you are being naked** and that there is any shame in this? **Did you eat of the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?** You obviously did, otherwise you would not have felt any shame in being naked."

12 But rather than admitting his error in judgment, Adam rationalized his behavior by blaming God. **The man replied, "The woman whom You gave to be with me and help me—she gave me of the tree, and I ate.** I assumed that since You created her to help me, she would not lead me astray." But by shifting the blame to Eve, Adam only committed a further offense: ingratitude for God's goodness in giving him a wife. Nonetheless, because he and Eve expressed remorse, and because Adam had at least a partial excuse, God commuted their sentence and did not make them die on the very day they ate the fruit; He only made them mortal.²⁴⁶

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8 **They heard the voice of God moving about:** Instead of hearing God's voice in close proximity, they heard it coming from afar. They sensed that the Divine Presence was departing the world because of their sin.²⁴⁷

9 **Where are you:** God meant, "Look, Adam, where have you fallen to! What has become of you?" By asking the question, He intended to give Adam the opportunity to confess his sin and atone for it. This would have mitigated the effect of the sin and avoided the need for restorative punishment. Had he repented, Adam would have ipso facto fulfilled the purpose for which God "made" him sin, i.e., to anguish over the

distance from God implied in self-centeredness and thereby achieve an infinitely greater yearning for Him than otherwise possible.

These words pose an eternal question to every person: "Where are you? Are you aware of the purpose of your existence on this earth? How much of your life's mission have you accomplished?"²⁴⁸

10 **I heard Your voice:** Adam did not hear the implied message in God's "where are you," for he did not believe that it was possible for him to return to his former state of grace—at least not without the hard work he

— INNER DIMENSIONS —

[8] **They heard the voice of God moving about:** Specifically, Adam and Eve's sin caused the Divine

Presence to retreat from the earth to the first firmament.²⁴⁹

244. *Hitva'aduyot* 5747, vol. 1, p. 449. 245. *Sanhedrin* 38b. 246. *Sichot Kodesh* 5739, vol. 3, pp. 151-152, 157-159. 247. *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:1; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5710, pp. 111 ff. 248. Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, quoted in *Beit Rebbe* 1:15 (29a); *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 73-75. 249. *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:1; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5710, pp. 111 ff.

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13 וַאֲמַר יי אֱלֹהִים לְאִתָּתָא מִא דִּא עֲבַדְתָּ וְאִמְרַת אִתָּתָא חוּיָא אֲטַעֲנִי וְאִכְלִית: 14 וַאֲמַר יי אֱלֹהִים לְחוּיָא אֲרִי עֲבַדְתָּ דִּא לִיט אֶת מִכָּל בְּעִירָא וּמִכָּל חַיּוֹת בְּרָא עַל מַעַךְ תִּיזִיל וְעַפְרָא תִיכּוֹל כָּל יוֹמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 15 וּדְכַבּוּ אֲשׁוּי בִּינָךְ וּבִין אִתָּתָא וּבִין בְּנִיךְ וּבִין בְּנֵהָא הוּא יְהִי דְכִיר לָךְ מִא דְעֲבַדְתָּ לָהּ מִלְקָדְמִין וְאֵת תְּהִי נָטַר לָהּ לְסוּפָא: 16 לְאִתָּתָא אָמַר אֲסַגָּאָה אֲסַגִּי צַעֲרִיכִי וְעִדּוּיכִי בְּצַעַר תִּלְדִּין בְּנִין וְלֹת בְּעִלִּיךְ תִּהְיֵא תְאוּבָתִיךְ וְהוּא יִשְׁלַט בִּיךְ:

13 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאִשָּׁה מִה־זֹּאת עֲשִׂית וְתֹאמַר
הָאִשָּׁה הִנֵּחַשׁ הַשִּׂיאוֹנִי וְאָכַל: 14 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים |
אֶל־הִנֵּחַשׁ כִּי עֲשִׂית זֹאת אָרוּר אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה
וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה עַל־גִּהְוֹנֶךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְעַפָּר תֹּאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי
חַיֶּיךָ: 15 וְאִיבָהּ | אִשִּׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זֶרְעָךָ
וּבֵין זֶרְעָהּ הוּא יִשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עֶקֶב: ׀
16 אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הִרְבָּה הִרְבָּה עֲצָבוֹנְךָ וְהִרְנָךְ בְּעֶצֶב
תִּלְדִּי בָנִים וְאֶל־אִישְׁךָ תִּשְׁקָתְךָ וְהוּא יִמְשָׁל־בָּךְ: ׀

RASHI

בְּעִלְיָהּ, לְפִיכָךְ "וְאִיבָה אִשִּׁית": יִשׁוּפֶךָ. יְכַתְּתֶךָ, כְּמוֹ:
"וְאָכַת אֶת־וְ", וְתִרְגּוּמוֹ: "וְשָׁפִית יְתֵה": וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ
עֶקֶב. לֹא יְהִי לָךְ קוֹמָה, וְתִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּעֶקְבוֹ, וְאֵף מִשָּׁם
תִּמְתִּינּוּ. וְלִשׁוֹן "תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ", כְּמוֹ "נִשְׁף בָּהֶם", כִּשְׁהִנְחַשׁ
בָּא לְנִשּׁוֹף הוּא נוֹשֵׁף בְּמִין שָׂרִיקָה. וְלִפִּי שְׁהִלְשׁוֹן נוֹפֵל
עַל הַלְשׁוֹן, כְּתִב לְשׁוֹן נִשְׁפָּה בְּשִׁנָּיהֶם: 16 עֲצָבוֹנְךָ. זֶה
צַעַר גְּדוֹל בָּנִים: וְהִרְנָךְ. זֶה צַעַר הָעִבּוּר: בְּעֶצֶב תִּלְדִּי
בָּנִים. זֶה צַעַר הַלֵּידָה: וְאֶל אִישְׁךָ תִּשְׁקָתְךָ. לְתִשְׁמִישׁ.
וְאֵף עַל פִּי כֵן אֵין לָךְ מִצַּח לְתוֹכְעוֹ בְּפֹה, אֶלָּא "הוּא
יִמְשָׁל בָּךְ", הַכֹּל מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא מִמָּךְ: תִּשְׁקָתְךָ. תִּתְּנֶהָ,
כְּמוֹ: "וְנִפְשׁוּ שׁוֹקֵקָה":

13 הַשִּׂיאוֹנִי. הַטְּעֵנִי, כְּמוֹ: "אֵל וְשִׂיא אֶתְכֶם חֻקִּיהוּ":
14 כִּי עֲשִׂית זֹאת. מִכָּאן שְׂאִין מִהֶפְכִּים בְּזִכְרוֹתָ שֶׁל
מִסִּית, שְׂאֵלוֹ שְׂאֵלוֹ: לָמָּה עֲשִׂית זֹאת? הִיָּה לוֹ לְהִשִּׁיב:
דְּבָרֵי הָרֵב וְדְבָרֵי הַתְּלִמִּיד, דְּבָרֵי מִי שׁוֹמְעִין: מִכָּל
הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה. אִם מִבְּהֵמָה נִתְקַלֵּל, מִחַיָּה
לֹא כָּל שֶׁכֵּן? הָעֵמִידוֹ רְבוּתִינוּ מִדְּרֹשׁ זֶה בְּמִסְכַּת
בְּכוֹרוֹת: "לְלֶמֶד, שְׂמִי עִבּוּרוֹ שֶׁל נָחֹשׁ שָׁבַע שָׁנִים: עַל
גִּהְוֹנָךְ תֵּלֵךְ. רִגְלִים הָיוּ לוֹ וְנִקְצְצוּ: 15 וְאִיבָהּ אִשִּׁית.
אַתָּה לֹא נִתְבּוֹנֶת אֶלָּא שְׂמִימוֹת אָדָם כְּשִׂיאֵכֶל הוּא
תִּחְלָה, וְתִשָּׂא אֶת חוּהָ. וְלֹא בְּאֵת לְדַבֵּר אֶל חוּהָ תִּחְלָה,
אֶלָּא לִפִּי שְׁהִנְשִׁים קְלוֹת לְהִתְפַּתּוֹת, וְיִוָּדְעוֹת לִפְתּוֹת אֶת

58. מלכיס"ב יח, כב. 59. ח, א. 60. דברים ט, כא. 61. ישעיה מ, כד. 62. ישעיה כט, ח.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

The serpent had hoped to wed Eve and father children through her. Instead, God promised that their respective offspring would always be enemies.

In the messianic era the snake—and darkness in general—will shed its evil shell. Only its essence, its spark of holiness, will remain.²⁶¹

16 To the woman he said: All the "punishments" of the Torah are in fact the means God provides for rectifying the flaw in consciousness that precipitated the associated sin. The suffering experienced in pregnancy, childbirth, and childrearing is unique to the human species and is meant to rectify the flaw of conscious-

ness that precipitated the primordial sin. As explained above, Adam and Eve succumbed to the temptations of the snake because they lacked faith in God's ability to bring the world to its final perfection in the most expedient way possible; they exhibited a lack of patience. The pain accompanying pregnancy, childbirth, and child-rearing all result from tension and stress, which in turn result from insufficient faith in God's loving care and concern—exactly what caused Eve to succumb to the temptation of the snake. All these types of pain can be greatly reduced through various physical and mental exercises; the pain is there to remind us to

A CLOSER LOOK

[14] Your gestation period will be 7 years: Although it is commonly observed that snakes gestate for only a few months, periods of time between

fertilization and birth of seven years have also been documented.²⁶²

261. Cf. Bereishit Rabbah 54:1; see Hitva'aduyot 5746, vol. 1, p. 389. 262. See The Science in Torah, pp. 113-114.

13 God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” giving her the chance to realize that it was possible to repent and repair the damage that had been done. But **the woman**, too, tried to shift the blame. She **replied, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”**

14 God did not address any question to the serpent, so as not to allow him to exonerate himself by pointing out that Eve should have had the sense to know that God’s command should override the serpent’s enticements. Rather, **God said immediately to the serpent, “I distinguished you above the other animals by giving you the power of speech, but you misused it by enticing Eve to sin. Because you did this, I will repay you measure for measure: I will entirely rescind your ability to speak, and thus, instead of being the most *gifted* of animals, you are now more accursed than all the livestock and all the wild beasts.** Not only will you lose your natural ability to speak; you will even lose your ability to make sounds like other animals: your voice will be reduced to a hiss.²⁵⁶ Since the other animals also partook of the forbidden fruit, I will curse them as well. They will no longer reproduce on the same day they conceive: the wild beasts will now have a minimum gestation period of 52 days, and the livestock will have a maximum gestation period of 1 year, which is seven times as long. But here, too, I will curse *you* even more: your gestation period will be seven times longer still, i.e., seven years. Furthermore, I will take away your feet so **you shall** from now on **move on your belly, and you shall** appear to **eat dust all the days of your life.**” This is an idiom for being scorned.²⁵⁷ Because it abused its superior gifts that had made it the most preeminent of the animals, the serpent was reduced to being the lowliest animal.²⁵⁸ When God removed its feet, the serpent screamed.²⁵⁹

15 “You wanted to take Eve as your wife; instead, I will plant hatred between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will pound you on the head, and you will hiss as you bite him in the heel.”

16 To the woman He said, “I will greatly increase your difficulty in raising children and in your pregnancy from now on.” Eve already had children, so she would experience the pain of raising them before the pains of her next pregnancy; this is why God mentioned child rearing before pregnancy and birth.²⁶⁰ **“You will give birth to children in anguish. Furthermore, your longing will be for your husband, but despite your longing for your husband, he will dominate you: You will be embarrassed to ask him explicitly to have marital relations with you.”**

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

13 The serpent deceived me: Eve here adopted the theme of her husband, namely, that it is too late and there is nothing left to do but to rationalize her behavior. That the serpent had deceived her was correct, of course, and since God made the serpent the cunning voice of the Tree of Knowledge, it was His fault that Eve succumbed to his deception. Once humanity has been introduced to subjective knowledge of good and evil, it is no longer possible to expect us to be totally

objective. Nonetheless, Eve still had free choice not to succumb.

14 Accursed are you: Once the serpent had effectively injected the venom of subjective knowledge of good and evil into humanity, it had finished serving its purpose as the voice of this perspective and became the simple creature we know it to be.

15 And between your offspring and her offspring:

²⁵⁶. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, p. 13. ²⁵⁷. See Micah 7:17; Psalms 72:9. ²⁵⁸. Rashi on v. 1, above. ²⁵⁹. Rashi on Jeremiah 46:22. ²⁶⁰. Eitz Yosef.

ONKELOS

17 וְלָאָדָם אָמַר אֲרִי קִבְלַת
לְמִימַר אֶתְהָר וְאֶכְלָת מִן אֵילָנָא
דִּי פְקֻדְתָּהּ לְמִימַר לָא תִּיכּוֹל
מִנְהָ לִּטָּא אֶרְעָא בְּדִילָךְ בְּעִמְלָא
תִּיכּוֹלָנָה כּל יוֹמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 18 וְכּוֹבֵיץ
וְאֶטְדִין תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ וְתִיכּוֹל יֵת
עֲשָׂבָא דְחֻקְלָא: 19 בּוֹיַעְתָּא דְאֶפְרָא
תִּיכּוֹל לְחֻמָּא עַד דְּתַתּוּב לְאֶרְעָא
דְּמִנָּה אֶתְפְּרִיתָא אֲרִי עֲפָרָא אֶת
וְלַעֲפָרָא תַתּוּב:

17 וְלָאָדָם אָמַר כִּי שִׁמְעֶתָ לְקוֹל אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וְתֹאכַל מִן־הָעֵץ
אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה
בְּעִבּוּרָךְ בְּעֲצָבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 18 וְקוֹץ וְדֹרְדֹר
תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ וְאֶכְלָתָ אֶת־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה: 19 בּוֹעֵת אֶפְרָיִם
תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֶכֶךָ אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה כִּי מִמֶּנָּה לִקְחָתָ כִּי־
עֲפָר אֶתָּה וְאֶל־עֲפָר תָּשׁוּב:

RASHI

וְרַע" וְגו' אֵלָא, מָה אָמַר כָּאן בְּרֹאשׁ הָעֲנָן: "אֲרוּרָה
הָאֲדָמָה בְּעִבּוּרָךְ, בְּעֲצָבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה", וְאַחֵר הָעֲצָבוֹן —
"וְקוֹץ וְדֹרְדֹר תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ", כְּשֶׁתּוֹרֶנָּה קִטְנִיּוֹת אוֹ יִרְקוֹת
גָּדָה, הִיא תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ קוֹצִים וְדֹרְדָרִים וְשָׂאֵר עֲשָׂבֵי שָׂדֶה,
וְעַל כֵּן הָיָה תֹּאכְלֶנָּה: 19 בּוֹעֵת אֶפְרָיִם. לְאַחֵר שֶׁתִּטְרַח בּוֹ
הַרְבֵּה:

17 אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה בְּעִבּוּרָךְ. מַעֲלָה לָךְ דְּבָרִים אֲרוּרִים,
כְּגוֹן וְכּוֹבִים וּפְרַעֲוִשִׁים וּנְמָלִים. מִשָּׁל לִיּוֹצֵא לְתִרְבוֹת
רָעָה, וְהַבְרִיּוֹת מְקַלְלוֹת שְׂדִים שִׁנְק מֵהֶם: 18 וְקוֹץ
וְדֹרְדֹר תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ. הָאֶרֶץ כְּשֶׁתּוֹרֶנָּה מִיְּמֵי וְרַעִים,
תַּצְמִיחַ קוֹץ וְדֹרְדֹר קוֹנֵדֵס וְעִבְיּוֹת, וְהֵן נֹאכְלִים עַל יְדֵי
תַקּוֹן: וְאֶכְלָתָ אֶת עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה. וְמָה קָלָה הִיא זו, וְהִלָּא
בְּבִרְכָּה נֹאמַר לוֹ: "הִנֵּה נִתְּתִי לָכֶם אֶת כָּל עֵשֶׂב זֶרַע

63. בראשית א, כט. 64. פסוק יז.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

has been greatly reduced. Here again, the lesson being taught is that of patience.

19 "You shall eat bread by the sweat of your brow: God commanded Adam to "work" the garden before he sinned, but now this work has become infinitely harder. Farming is the archetype for separating good from evil and cultivating good. Every aspect of working the soil and painstakingly producing food has its parallel in the work of self-refinement we must perform on ourselves to eventually restore ourselves to Adam and Eve's spiritual status before the sin.

As we till the soil, the lessons we must learn in order to rectify the Fall are repeatedly impressed upon us. First of all, we learn patience and perseverance: our experience teaches us that we need to make repeated attempts if we wish to see results and that we must wait patiently for our efforts to bear fruit. Next, we learn the need for preparation: just as the soil must be prepared to accept seed, we must prepare ourselves for spiritual self-refinement. We must "fertilize" ourselves with spiritual input that promotes spiritual growth, and we must "plow" ourselves, breaking up the hard complacency that renders us impervious to new ideas. Then, just as we must select good seeds to sow in the ground, we must decide what areas of spiritual growth we need to cultivate. Once we see results, we must "harvest" them—make sure to apply them to our lives—taking care to separate the kernels of truth from the inevitable chaff. We then have to "grind" our new

selves, i.e., chew over the results and make sure they are consonant with our overall spiritual goals; "sift" out impurities once again, if found; and "knead" them into a cohesive new way of living by mixing them with "water," our desire to cling to God through our efforts. Finally, in order to digest this "dough," to assimilate it and make it part of us, we must "bake" it with the "fire" of our ardent passion for our goal, our quest to fill the world with Divine consciousness.²⁶⁶

You shall return to dust: In consequence of the primordial sin, the physicality of the world became opaque to Divinity. Therefore, in order for people to experience the Divine consciousness they earn by working in this world, they have to die, for only thus can the soul be freed of the perceptual and conceptual limitations imposed on it by the body. For this reason, the Ba'al Shem Tov said that because of the spiritual benefits gained by returning the body to the earth, he preferred physical death to a bodily ascent to heaven, like the prophet Elijah's.²⁶⁷

Nowadays, however, our proximity to the messianic era and the impending return of human immortality enables us to experience the positive elements of death and burial by "killing" and "burying" our pride and adopting earth-like humility. As we say in our daily prayers, "May my soul be like earth before everyone." This is the spiritual significance of returning to the earth and the way that it was to be experienced prior to the primordial sin.²⁶⁸

266. See *Likutei Torah* 2:40bc, 48bc, etc. 267. *Hitva'aduyot* 5712, vol. 2, p. 191. 268. Cf. *Zohar* 3:159a; *Hitva'aduyot* 5748, vol. 2, p. 273.

17 And to Adam He said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate of the tree about which I commanded you—saying, ‘Do not eat from it’—the earth, from which you were created and therefore is somewhat responsible for your character, will be cursed because of you. I will simultaneously punish it now for not producing trees whose bark tastes the same as their fruit.²⁶³ It will produce flies, fleas, and ants; because of this you will produce food from it with difficulty²⁶⁴ all the days of your life.

18 Specifically, when you plant grain, the earth **will bring forth thorns and thistles for you, and you will have to eat the grass of the field**, i.e., the thorns and thistles that will grow when you plant grain, because not enough grain will grow for you to live on. You will have to cook these weeds and eat them, too.” This situation persisted until Noah invented farming tools, such as the plow and hoe.

19 “You shall eat bread only by the sweat of your brow, until you return to the ground, for you were taken from it. For you are dust, and as you shall now be mortal; you shall return to dust.”

At this point, the world descended from its original lofty, pristine spiritual state. The major purpose of life, from this point on, became to rectify the effects of Adam and Eve’s sin and restore reality to its original state. The first stage of this restoration will occur with the advent of the Messiah; the second stage will occur with the resurrection. At that point, all the souls of those people who lived on earth and died will be restored to their bodies.²⁶⁵

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

relax and rely more on God. When the primordial sin is rectified in the messianic era, these experiences will no longer be accompanied by pain, and since it will no longer be necessary to learn patience, both pregnancy and childbirth will be much shorter than they are now. This will be a restoration of the situation as it was prior to the primordial sin, for, as was seen above, before the sin Eve conceived and bore children in the space of a few hours.

Your longing will be for your husband, but he will dominate you: Eve had evinced unwarranted boldness in attempting to expand the borders of human endeavor. To rectify this presumptuousness, she was given a heightened sense of modesty and an acute sensitivity to boundaries. Her desire to acquire subjective knowledge of good and evil was an ill-advised quest to intensify the passion in life. To rectify this impetuosity, she was made uncomfortable about openly articulating her passion and taught the value of propriety. These changes in Eve became part of woman’s psychological makeup. Women possess more innate shame and modesty than men, and therefore, rather than asking for marital intercourse outright, they prefer to drop their husbands hints and have them appear to initiate relations.

17 Because you listened to your wife: God separated woman from man in order that each express and develop their own unique perspectives. These are meant to be complimentary and both partners are meant to learn from each other, but not at the expense of either partner’s particular contributions. Adam should have asserted his power of male abstraction in order to help Eve channel the desires she expressed in adopting the snake’s reasoning. Instead, he abdicated his role and deferred to her.

It will produce flies, fleas, and ants: These insects propagate to excess when humanity neglects the earth and does not tend it properly. Adam sought in the forbidden fruit a shortcut to accomplishing his task on earth; the lesson we must learn here is the value of industriousness and consistency.

Significantly, God applies the word “curse” only to the snake and the earth, but not to Adam or Eve. He made their life harder in order to teach them correct consciousness, but He in no way reduced their innate potential.

With anguish: This is the same word used above to describe child-raising. Instead of having ready-made food as he did in the garden, Adam must now painstakingly raise his crops from an earth whose fertility

²⁶³. See 1:12, above. ²⁶⁴. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 469. ²⁶⁵. Rashi on 2:7, above.

ONKELOS

20 וקרא אדם שום אתמה חיה
ארי היא הות אמא דכל בני
אנשא: 21 ועבר יי אלהים לאדם
ולאתמה לבושין דיקר על משך
בשרהון ואלבשנו: 22 ואמר
יי אלהים הא אדם היה יחידי
בעלמא מנה למדע טב וביש וכען
דלמא יושטי ידה ויסב אף מאילן
חיא ויכול ויחי לעלם:

20 ויקרא האדם שם אשתו חיה כי הוא היתה אם כל-
חי: 21 ויעש יהוה אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור
וילבשם: פ
רביעי 22 ויאמר יהוה אלהים הן האדם היה באחד
ממנו לדעת טוב ורע ועתה פן ישלח ידו ולקח גם
מעץ החיים ואכל וחי לעלם:

RASHI

”היה”: 21 כתנות עור. יש דברי אגדה⁶⁵ אומרים:
חלקים בצפרן היו מדבקים על עורן. ויש אומרים: דבר
הבא מן העור, כגון: צמר הארנבים שהוא רך וחס,
ועשה להם כתנות ממנו: 22 היה באחד ממנו. הרי
הוא יחיד בתחתונים כמו שאני יחיד בעליונים, ומה
היא יחידתו — “לדעת טוב ורע”, מה שאין כן בבקמה
וחיה: ועתה פן ישלח ידו וגו’. ומשיחיה לעולם, הרי
הוא קרוב להטעות הבריות אחריו, ולומר אף הוא
אלוה. ויש מדרשי אגדה, אבל אין מושבין על פשוטו:

20 ויקרא האדם. חזר הכתוב לענינו הראשון⁶⁵: “ויקרא
האדם שמו”, ולא הפסיק אלא ללמדך שעל ידי
קריאת שמות נודעה לו חיה, כמו שכתוב: “ולאדם
לא מצא עור כנגדו” לפיכך “ויפל תרדמה”. ועל ידי
שכתב: “ויהיו שניהם ערומים”, סמך לו פרשת הנפש,
להודיעך שמתוך שראו אותם ערומים וראה אותם
עסוקים בתשמיש נתאנה לה, ובא עליהם במחשבה
ובמרמה: חיה. נופל על לשון “חיה”, שמחיה את
ולדותיה, כאשר תאמר⁶⁷: “מה היה לאדם”, בלשון

65. ב. כ. 66. שם. 67. קהלת ב, כב. 68. בראשית רבה כ, יב.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

tional kindness. Toward the beginning of the Torah it is written, ‘and He clothed them,’ and toward the end it is written, ‘and [God] buried [Moses].’²⁷⁷

These acts of kindness take place not only at opposite ends of the Torah, but also on opposite sides of the spiritual spectrum: Adam and Eve were spiritually naked; still, God bestowed His kindness on them.²⁷⁸ In contrast, Moses at his death was on the highest spiritual level attainable by man, yet God’s burying him is considered an act of gratuitous kindness rather than an earned reward. From God’s kindness to Adam we learn that one should never despair of hope, since God is abundantly kind and forgiving. From God’s kindness to Moses we learn that no matter how lofty our deeds, God’s kindness is still so out of proportion to them that it is still considered gratuitous.²⁷⁹

Although on the contextual level, the sin and expulsion took place some time after the creation week, the Talmud and Midrash place them together with the

other events that occurred on the first Friday. This Friday was the first day of the month of Tishrei, which later became fixed as the date of *Rosh HaShanah*, the first day of the Jewish calendar year. Thus, since *Rosh HaShanah* is the anniversary of these events, they are reenacted every *Rosh HaShanah*. On *Rosh HaShanah* we come before God denuded of protective merit and we can only beg His mercy. In the words of the *Rosh HaShanah* liturgy: “We come to You not with deeds...for we are left naked.” Yet we are promised that God will make us garments, transforming the impure skin of the snake into garments of glory.²⁸⁰

22 Now that the man has become like the Unique One among us: As human beings, our knowledge of good and evil and our absolute freedom to choose between the two derive from God’s uniqueness—that He and He alone is absolutely free to do as He sees fit. In other words, because our soul is a part of God, “man has become like Me,” and no one can dictate his behavior.²⁸¹ According to this, this verse does not imply that free

INNER DIMENSIONS

[21] **Skin-garments:** In Kabbalah, the “skin of the serpent” is a metaphor for the realm of evil, which feeds off the energy generated by our unholy activi-

ties. The use of the serpent’s skin as a garment symbolizes the recapturing of these energies and their subsequent elevation to holiness.²⁸²

277. Deuteronomy 34:6. 278. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 19, p. 197. 279. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 1. 280. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 2. 281. *Likutei Torah* 2:38b; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 30, p. 203, from *Mishneh Torah*, *Teshuvah* 5:1. 282. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 2, from *Sefer HaChakirah—Derech Emunah* 67b.

The Expulsion

20 The narrative now returns to where it left off before the digression of the episode of the Tree of Knowledge.²⁶⁹

After Eve gave birth to her first children, Adam gave her an additional name. Besides describing her as “woman,” indicating her compatibility with “man,” **the man now named his wife also “Eve” [Chavah], because she was and would be the mother of all the living [chai], i.e., all future generations.** She not only gives birth to her children, but also nurtures them until they are independent, since they cannot survive without her care.²⁷⁰

21 Having concluded its account of the sixth day of creation, the narrative continues with the aftermath of the incident of the Tree of Knowledge. God was about to banish Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, but He preceded this act of judgment with an act of mercy, in order to show that even His judgments are in truth expressions of His mercy.

Adam and Eve had already made loincloths out of fig leaves,²⁷¹ but had not had a chance to make garments to clothe themselves fully. **God therefore made skin-garments for Adam and his wife.** These were miraculously skin-tight garments that fit Adam and Eve as closely as their own fingernails, and were therefore perfectly comfortable. God Himself **clothed them** in these garments, because only He could put them on them. Alternatively, these were warm and soft garments made out of animal hides and fur, and even though Adam and Eve could have made and put on such garments by themselves, God made these garments and clothed Adam and Eve in them as an act of kindness.²⁷²

- ◆ **Fourth Reading 22 God said, “Behold, just as I am unique in the heavens, so are Adam and Eve unique on earth, in that they alone know good and evil subjectively, even though they are incomplete by themselves. Now that the man has become like the Unique One among us, knowing good and evil, what if he should stretch forth his hand and also take fruit from the Tree of Life and eat it, and live forever?!** If he lives forever he might appear to the rest of creation to be a second deity.”

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

21 **Skin-garments:** According to some opinions,²⁷³ God made these garments from the skin of the serpent. This would constitute a complete transformation of evil to good. The skin is essentially a protective layer over the body; it is secondary to the vital organs. It can thus be considered the “lowest” aspect of the serpent, who was the primordial embodiment of evil. Adam and Eve, in contrast, were the first human beings, the highest order of creation, fashioned directly by God Himself. Yet, as perfect as they were, clothing afforded them an aura of dignity and additional beauty. On the one hand, clothing represents a fall from our pristine innocence and selflessness; yet it also has the power to inspire us to be to our best selves and can bring out the best

in us. God had the priests wear garments of “dignity and splendor,”²⁷⁴ and, in our function as His emissaries in filling the world with His consciousness, we are all considered priests. Thus, God transformed the serpent skin from serving the lowest conceivable level of morality to the highest.

The lesson here for us is that we should strive to transform even apparent setbacks into forward strides. God shows us here that even the cause of our downfall can be transformed into a means for helping us achieve our highest aspirations.²⁷⁵

And He clothed them: The sages point out²⁷⁶ that “the Torah both begins and concludes with acts of uncondi-

269. 2:25, above. 270. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, pp. 138-139. 271. Above, v. 7. 272. *Hitva'aduyot* 5747, vol. 1, pp. 444-445, 447-450. 273. *Targum Yonatan*; *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Bereishit* §34. 274. Exodus 28:2. 275. *Hitva'aduyot* 5747, vol. 1, pp. 385-388; *Hitva'aduyot* 5749, vol. 1, p. 236. 276. *Sotah* 14a.

ONKELOS

23 וְשִׁלְחָהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִגִּנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן
לְמַפְלַח בְּאַרְעָא דְאַתְבָּרִי מִתְמַן:
24 וְתֵרַץ יֵת אָדָם וְאִשְׁרֵי מַלְקָדְמִין
לִגְנֵתָא דְעֵדֶן יֵת כְּרוּבִיא וְיֵת שֹׁנָן
חִרְבָא דְמִתְהַפֵּכָא לְמִשְׁרָא יֵת אוֹרַח
אֵילָן חַיִּיא: 41 וְאָדָם יָדַע יֵת הָיָה
אֲתַתְהָ וְעַדִּיאַת וִילִידַת יֵת קִין
וְאַמְרַת קַיִתִּי גִבְרָא מִן קָדָם יְיָ:
2 וְאוֹסִיפַת לְמִילַד יֵת אַחוּהִי יֵת
הָבֵל וְהָיָה הָבֵל רָעִי עֲנָא וְקִין הָיָה
פֹּלֵחַ בְּאַרְעָא: 3 וְהָיָה מִסּוּף יוֹמִין
וְאִתִּי קִין מֵאֲבָא דְאַרְעָא קוֹרְבָנָא
קָדָם יְיָ:

23 וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִגֶּן־עֵדֶן לְעֹבֵד אֶת־הָאָדָמָה
אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִשָּׁם: 24 וַיִּגְרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכֹּן מִקֶּדֶם
לְגִן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרֻבִּים וְאֵת לֶהֱט הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת
לְשֹׁמֵר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים: 8
4:1 וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־קַיִן
וַתֹּאמֶר קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: 2 וַתִּסָּף לָלֶדֶת אֶת־אָחִיו
אֶת־הָבֵל וַיְהִי־הֵבֶל רָעִה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה:
3 וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרִי הָאָדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה:

RASHI

ה'. כמו "עם ה'", בְּשִׁבְרָא אוֹתִי וְאֵת אִישִׁי, הוּא לְבָדוּ
בְּרָאנוּ, אֲבָל בּוֹה שְׁתַּפִּים אָנוּ עִמּוֹ: אֵת קִין אֵת אָחִיו
אֵת הָבֵל. שְׁלֹשׁ "אֵתִים" רַבּוּיִים הֵם, מִלְּמַד שְׁתֵּאוּמָה
נוֹלָדָה עִם קִין, וְעַם הָבֵל נוֹלְדוּ שְׁתֵּים, לָכֵן נֶאֱמַר:
"וַתִּסָּף": 2 רָעִה צֹאן. לְפִי שְׁנֵיתִי לֵאמֹר, פֶּרֶשׁ
לֹא מִעֲבוֹדָתָה: 3 מִפְּרִי הָאָדָמָה. מִן הַגְּרוּעִי, וַיֵּשׁ אֲגִידָה
שְׁאוּמֶרֶת: זֶרַע פִּשְׁתָּן הָיָה. דָּבָר אַחֵר, "מִפְּרִי", מֵאִינוֹה
שֶׁבֶא לִידוֹ, לֹא טוֹב וְלֹא מִבְּחָר:

24 מִקֶּדֶם לִגְן עֵדֶן. בְּמוֹרָחוֹ שֶׁל גֶּן עֵדֶן, חוּץ לִגְן: אֵת
הַכְּרֻבִּים. מִלְּאֲכִי חֲבֵלָה: הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת. וְלֵאמֹר לֵהֱט
לֵאמֹר עָלָיו מִלְכָּנִס עוֹד לִגְן. תְּרָגוּם "לֵהֱט" "שֹׁנָן", וְהוּא
כְּמוֹ: "שֹׁלֵף שֹׁנָנָא". וּבִלְשׁוֹן לְעוֹ לִמְ"א⁷⁰. וּמִדְּרָשִׁי אֲגִידָה
יֵשׁ, וְאֵנִי אֵינִי בֹא אֶלָּא לְפִשְׁטוֹ: 1 וְהָאָדָם יָדַע. כִּבְר
קָדָם הֶעֱנִין שֶׁל מַעֲלָה, קָדָם שְׁחָטָא וְנִטְרַד מִגֶּן עֵדֶן,
וְכֵן הִתְרִיץ וְהִלִּידָה, שְׁאֵם כְּתִב "וַיֵּדַע אָדָם", נִשְׁמַע
שֶׁלְאַחֵר שֶׁנִּטְרַד הָיוּ לוֹ בָּנִים: קִין. עַל שֵׁם "קַיִתִּי": אֵת

69. סנהדרין פב, א. 70. להב. 71. תנחומא בראשית ט.

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and Eve's thinking and behavior. When this flaw will be corrected, humanity will return to the spiritual state in which it existed before the expulsion.

Nachmanides and Maimonides differ as to what happened to the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve were expelled from it. According to Nachmanides, the Garden became a spiritual realm; according to Maimonides, it remained a physical location but was concealed and will remain so until the future redemption.²⁸⁸

The fall of consciousness that humanity experienced when the fruit was eaten affected the world at large, as well.²⁸⁹ The spiritual constitution of the material world "descended" or "thickened," i.e., became more self-oriented. Before the sin, materiality did not constitute an obstacle to Divine consciousness, but from that point on, partaking of the physical world began to reinforce the material orientation of the partaker. Special efforts are required to neutralize or counteract this effect.

The one exception to this general fall of reality was the Garden of Eden, which remained unaffected by Adam and Eve's sin. It remained a realm of innocent Divine consciousness, and as such, became the abode of the

soul after life. In the Garden of Eden, the soul experiences the pristine Divine consciousness it worked for during its lifetime in the physical world, unencumbered by the spiritual limitations imposed by the self-awareness and self-orientation it acquires upon incarnation into this lower, physical world.²⁹⁰

3 Cain and Abel decided to bring offerings to God: Although the Talmud records that Adam also brought an offering,²⁹¹ this is the Torah's first explicit mention of anyone bringing an offering. Adam and Eve assuredly told their children the story of their creation and expulsion, and raised them to dedicate their lives to restore reality to its former innocence. Presumably, then, Cain and Abel were motivated to bring offerings shortly after they began working in their respective "professions" in order to express their aspirations and hope that their work serve to rectify their parents' sin and restore humanity to its original closeness to God. The general word for "offering" or "sacrifice" in Hebrew (*korban*, קָרְבַּן) means "a means of drawing close." An essential facet of feeling close to God is the need to express how one's life is dedicated to Him; offering Him a select portion of the fruit of one's efforts serves this purpose.²⁹²

288. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 17, p. 206. 289. See above, on 1:26. 290. *Derech Mitzvotcha* 15a. 291. *Shabbat* 28b. 292. Based on *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 22, pp. 1-5.

23 God thereupon banished him and his family **from the Garden of Eden, to work the ground from which he was taken.**

24 He drove the man out, and Adam and his family settled just east of the Garden of Eden.²⁸³ God **stationed to the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim**, angels of destruction, equipped with **the revolving sword blade**, which appeared to be flashing and therefore looked frightening, **to guard the path to the Tree of Life** against entry.

Cain and Abel

4:1 Adam separated from Eve after having disobeyed God's commandment not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.²⁸⁴ **But**, as mentioned above, **the man had known his wife Eve** carnally prior to their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, **and** when he did so, **she conceived and** shortly thereafter **gave birth to** twins, a son and a daughter. This phenomenon of short pregnancy will again become the norm in the messianic age. She named the son **Cain** [*Kayin*], **saying, "I have acquired [*kaniti*] a man together with God."** She expressed her delight in being a partner with God in the creation of a human being. This was the first time this had occurred, for she and Adam had been created solely by God Himself.

2 Soon after giving birth to Cain and his twin sister, **she conceived and gave birth again—to his brother Abel** and two twin sisters. It was only after all five children were born that the serpent succeeded in persuading Eve to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and God banished Adam and his family from the Garden of Eden.

When they matured, the boys married their twin sisters. Although incest was forbidden to Adam and his descendants, God made an exception and allowed Cain and Abel to marry their sisters in order to perpetuate the human race.²⁸⁵

Although God intended the human race to be farmers, **Abel** instead **became a shepherd**, since the ground had been cursed due to Adam's sin. In contrast, **Cain** was not fazed by this curse; he **became a worker of the soil**.

3 In the course of time, Cain and Abel decided to bring offerings to God. Cain, being the firstborn, brought his offering first. **Cain brought some of the inferior produce of the choicest species the ground**, flaxseed,²⁸⁶ **as an offering to God**. Cain reasoned that it was important to offer the choicest *species* possible, while the actual quality of the offering was nonessential.

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choice is a new reality precipitated by the sin (since Adam and Eve's Divine souls were given to them as soon as they were created) but rather that our knowledge of good and evil has become subjective, and in this sense is now like God's (which is also subjective). "Behold, now the man has internalized his knowledge of good and evil and in this way has become like Me." What if he should take from the Tree of Life and eat,

and live forever: Once Adam and Eve internalized evil, it became imperative for them to not eat from the Tree of Life. If they would have, the evil would have remained internalized forever, negating any chance of ever finishing the work of separating good from evil, upon which the redemption is contingent.²⁸⁷

23 God thereupon banished him: Banishment from the Garden of Eden resulted from a spiritual flaw in Adam

²⁸³ Rashi on 4:16, below. ²⁸⁴ Rashi on 4:25, 5:3, below. ²⁸⁵ *Sanhedrin* 58b. ²⁸⁶ See above, 2:11; below, 41:42. ²⁸⁷ *Sefer HaMa'amaram Melukat*, vol. 2, p. 277, from *Torah Or* 5c.

4 וְהָבֵל הֵבִיא גַם־הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוּ וּמִחֶלְבֵהֶן וַיֵּשַׁע
יְהוָה אֶל־הָבֵל וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ: 5 וְאֶל־קַיִן וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ
לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו: 6 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֶל־קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לְךָ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָּנֶיךָ: 7 הֲלוֹא אִם־
תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לַפֶּתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ
תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ:

4 וְהָבֵל הֵבִיא גַם־הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוּ וּמִחֶלְבֵהֶן וַיֵּשַׁע
יְהוָה אֶל־הָבֵל וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ: 5 וְאֶל־קַיִן וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ
לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו: 6 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֶל־קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לְךָ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָּנֶיךָ: 7 הֲלוֹא אִם־
תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לַפֶּתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ
תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ:

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קִבְּרָךְ חֲטָאתְךָ שְׁמוֹר: וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ. שֶׁל חֲטָאת.
הוּא יֵצֵר הָרָע, תְּמִיד שׁוֹקֵק וּמִתְאַוֶּה לְהִכְשִׁילָךְ: וְאַתָּה
תִּמְשָׁל בּוֹ. אִם תִּרְצֶה תִּתְּגַבֵּר עָלָיו:

4 וַיֵּשַׁע. וַיִּפֹּן. וְכֵן: "לֹא שָׁעָה אֶל מִנְחָתוֹ", לֹא פָּנָה,
וְכֵן: "וְאֶל יִשְׁעוֹ", אֶל יָפְנוֹ, וְכֵן: "שָׁעָה מֵעֲלִיר", פָּנָה
מֵעֲלִיו: וַיֵּשַׁע. יִרְדָּה אֵשׁ וְלִחְכָּה מִנְחָתוֹ: 7 הֲלוֹא אִם
תֵּיטִיב. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ פְּרוּשׁוֹ: לַפֶּתַח חֲטָאת רֹבֵץ. לַפֶּתַח

72. עיין פסוק ה. 73. שמות ה, ט. 74. איוב יד, ו.

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ation disappear and become meaningless.

By offering the first and fattest of his flock, Abel demonstrated that his relationship with God was not an afterthought but rather the focus of his life. Maimonides derives from this verse that we should always offer our finest to God: When we build a house of prayer, we should make it nicer than our own home. When we feed the hungry, we should proffer the best and sweetest delicacies of our table. When we clothe the naked, we should give him our best suit.²⁹⁷

4-5 God paid heed to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed: Although the story begins with Cain, we are informed first of Abel's success and only then of Cain's failure. Cain's true failure was that he did not learn from God's positive response to Abel's offering. He failed to learn that selecting the finest is essential, regardless of the species offered.²⁹⁸

7 If you improve yourself, you will be forgiven: Had Cain offered a second offering, this time of the choicest

of his crop, God would have accepted it. God here tried to teach him that if an individual learns from his errors, his slate can be wiped clean. However, Cain refused to admit his error. Convinced of the rightness of his perspective, he felt that if Abel were eliminated, his own view would necessarily prevail.

But you can dominate it: Though we might never succeed in removing our base inclinations from our heart, we can control them, for the mind rules the heart.²⁹⁹ Though we have little control over our desires and emotions, we can control their means of expression, their "garments": our conscious thoughts, words, and deeds. We can think, speak, and act in a positive way, regardless of our natural drives.

This verse is a balm to those of us who are frustrated by their inability to rid themselves of their mundane instincts and feelings. Our mission in life is to focus on improving the "garments." Through the struggle of keeping these pure, our soul can reach a greater intimacy with God than it could otherwise.³⁰⁰

INNER DIMENSIONS

[7] Sin is crouching at the door: The Torah is the blueprint of creation. The Torah was given while Moses was on Mount Sinai for forty days. Forty is the numerical value of the letter *mem*, which has two forms, a regular form (מ) and a final form (ם). The regular *mem* is open at the bottom, alluding to the effect of the contraction of Divine consciousness (*tzimtzum*) that allows unholy powers to draw sustenance from Divinity. In contrast, the final *mem* is closed on all sides, symbolizing a state of absolute

holiness that does not allow the intrusion of non-Divine consciousness. The regular *mem* thus indicates the reality of this world, while the final *mem* alludes to the reality of the messianic era, when evil will be obliterated. The capacity for sin is thus alluded to in the "doorway" of the regular form of the letter *mem*.³⁰¹

Cain's sin caused the Divine Presence to retreat from the first firmament to the second.³⁰²

297. *Mishneh Torah*, *Isurei Mizbeach* 7:11. 298. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 22. 299. *Zohar* 3:224a; cf. *The Guide for the Perplexed* 3:8. 300. This is the theme of the first half of the first part of *Tanya*. 301. *Sefer HaMa'amaram* 5716, p. 407. 302. *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:1; *Sefer HaMa'amaram* 5710, pp. 111 ff.

4 Abel also offered some of the firstborn of his flock, from the fattest ones. In contrast to Cain, Abel reasoned that the particular species offered was not important, and therefore did not offer one of the most impressive animals he raised—a cow or bull—but merely a sheep. Rather, he felt that it was important to offer the *best* of whatever species was selected. He was correct, so **God paid heed to Abel and his offering**—fire descended from heaven and consumed it—

5 but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed. Cain was sorely grieved and his face fell. Even after he saw that God had accepted Abel's offering of the best of the particular species he had chosen to offer, Cain stubbornly refused to acknowledge that he had not acted properly.²⁹³ True, Cain was no longer in the Garden of Eden, and the spiritual atmosphere of the world at large was not conducive to repentance. But because he was born in the Garden of Eden, he still retained a residue of its spirituality and could be expected to exercise his free choice properly.²⁹⁴

6 God said to Cain, consoling him, "Why are you grieved? Why has your face fallen?"

7 After all, if you improve your actions, you will be forgiven for your previous, misguided behavior. **But if you do not improve yourself** during your lifetime and clean your record, you will find that your **sin is crouching at the door** of your grave, so to speak, and you will have to be cleansed of it in your afterlife. Your evil inclination continuously **lusts after you**, seeking to make you sin, **but you can dominate it.**" But Cain still refused to admit that he had acted wrongly.

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

Cain brought some of the produce: Cain was not a jealous murderer, but an idealist of the highest order, and his offering was not a begrudged, token gift, but an expression of his idealist philosophy. Cain assumed that offering the finest species of his produce, namely flax, was paramount.

The basic preeminence of flax over other plants lies in the fine, elegant clothing that is fashioned from it. Beyond this, however, flax alludes to a sublime level of Divine consciousness. Each flaxseed yields one stalk, an allusion to and expression of the singular nature of God. This singularity is not a unity of many parts but a simple and intrinsic oneness. When we focus on this level of Divinity, God is not simply one with the world; there is no independent world—everything is God and God is all there is. Cain therefore offered the best species—the one that expressed the oneness of God—but purposely did not bring from the best of his crop, since the very notion of "best" admits plurality: best, average, and worst. Thus, Cain had reason to believe that his offering would please God and was upset when it did not.

His mistake was his failure to realize that the pervading consciousness of the world we inhabit is not meant to be that of God's absolute oneness. Sublime and

exalted though it may be, the consciousness of God's oneness prevents the individual from descending into the world of plurality. This explains why God did not accept his offering at all—it was antithetical to the purpose for which the world was created, to make a home for God in the lower realms. Our mission is rather to draw from the oneness-consciousness and apply it to the pluralistic world we inhabit.²⁹⁵

4 Abel also offered some of the firstborn of his flock, from the fattest ones: By offering our choicest, we acknowledge that everything we own really belongs to God; that is why He deserves the choicest portion. This notion is not limited only to the superior species. When we give the best of whichever species we are offering, we demonstrate that every species of our possessions—not only the choicest—belongs in essence to God.²⁹⁶

In contrast, giving a nondescript portion of the choicest species implies that God's sovereignty extends only to the aspects of creation that are refined enough to accept it; that God is too holy to permeate anything other than the most refined aspects of reality. As long as our focus is fixed on this refined aspect of reality, the quality of the specific offering does not really matter, for in that context the consciousness of God is so great that there is no other reality and all distinctions within cre-

²⁹³. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 20-23. ²⁹⁴. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 53, note 41. ²⁹⁵. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 25. ²⁹⁶. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 25.

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8 ואמר קין להבל אחוהי ויהיה במהויהוין בחקלא וקם קין בהבל אחוהי וקטלה: 9 ואמר יי לקין אן הקל אחור ואמר לא ידענא הקטר אחי אגא: 10 ואמר מא עבדת קל דם ורעין דעתידין למפק מן אחור קבלין קדמי מן ארעא: 11 וכען לית אגא מן ארעא דפתחת ית פמה וקבילת ית דמי אחור מן ידך: 12 ארי תפלה בארעא לא תוסיף לממן חילה לך משלטל וגלי תהי בארעא: 13 ואמר קין קדם יי סגי חובי מלמשבק: 14 הא תרבת יתי יומא דין מעל אפי ארעא ומן קדמך לית אפשר לאטמרא ואהי משלטל וגלי בארעא ויהי כל דישכחנני יקטלנני: 15 ואמר לה יי בכן כל דיקטול קין לשבעא דרין יתפרע מנה ושווי יי לקין אתא בדיל דלא למקטל יתה כל דישכחנה: 16 נפס קין מן קדם יי ויתבי בארעא גלי ומשלטל דהוה עבדא עלוהי מלקדמין בגנתא דעדן:

8 ויאמר קין אלהי הבל אחיו ויהי בהיותם בשדה ויקם קין אלהי הבל אחיו ויהרגהו: 9 ויאמר יהוה אל לקין אי הבל אחיך ויאמר לא ידעתי השמר אחי אנכי: 10 ויאמר מה עשית קול דמי אחיך צעקים אלי מן האדמה: 11 ועתה ארור אתה מן האדמה אשר פצתה את פיה לקחת את דמי אחיך מידך: 12 כי תעבד את האדמה לא תסוף תת-כחה לך נע ונר תהיה בארץ: 13 ויאמר קין אליהוה גדול עוני מנשוא: 14 הן גרשת אתי היום מעל פני האדמה ומפניך אסתגר והייתי נע ונר בארץ והיה כל-מצאי יהרגני: 15 ויאמר לו יהוה לכן כל-הרג קין שבעתים יקם וישם יהוה לקין אות לבלתי הכות- אותו כל-מצאו: 16 ויצא קין מלפני יהוה וישב בארץ- נוד קדמת-עדן:

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מכה יבסי ויגע בצנור, ולא פרש מה יעשה לו, אכל דבר הכתוב ברמו: כל מכה יבסי ויגע בצנור, ויקרב אל השער ויכבשנו, ואת העורים וגו', וגם אותם יכה, על אשר אמרו "העור והפסח לא יבא אל תוך הבית", המכה את אלו — אני אעשנו ראש ושר. כאן קצר דבריו, ובדברי הזמים פרש: "היה לראש ולשר": וישם ה' לקין אות. חקק לו אות משמו במצחו. דבר אחר, "כל מצאי יהרגני", הבהמות והחיות, אכל בני אדם עדן לא היו שירא מהם, רק אביו ואמו, ומהם לא היה ירא שיהרגהו, אלא אמר: עד עכשו היה פחדי על כל החיות, כמו שכתוב⁷⁵: "ומוראכם וגו", ועכשו בשביל עון זה לא ייראו ממני החיות ויהרגוני, מיד "וישם ה' לקין אות", החור מוראו על הכל: 16 ויצא קין. יצא בהכנעה, כגונב דעת העליונה: בארץ נוד. בארץ שכל הגולים נדים שם: קדמת עדן. שם גלה אביו כשגורש מגן עדן, שנאמר⁷⁶: "וישכן מקדם לגן עדן", לשמור את שמירת דרך מבוא הגן, שיש ללמוד שהיה אדם שם, ומצינו רוח מזרחית קולטת בכל מקום את הרוצחים, שנאמר⁷⁷: "אז יבדיל משה וגו' מזרחת שמש". דבר אחר: "בארץ נוד", כל מקום שהיה הולך היתה הארץ מודעזעת תחתיו, והבריות אומרות: סורי מעליו, והו שהרג את אחיו:

8 ויאמר קין אל הבל. נכנס עמו בדברי ריב ומצה, להתעולל עליו להרגו. ויש בזה מדרשי אגדה, אף זה ישובו של מקרא: 9 אי הבל אחיך. להכנס עמו בדברי נחת, אולי ישוב ויאמר: אני הרגתי וחסאתי לך: לא ידעתי. נעשה כגונב דעת העליונה: השמר אחי. לשון תימה הוא, וכן כל ה"א הנקודה בחטף פתח: 10 דמי אחיך. דמו ודם ורעותיו. דבר אחר: שעשה בו פצעים הרבה, שלא היה יודע מהיון נפשו יוצאה: 11 ארור אתה מן האדמה. יותר ממה שנתקלה היא כבר בעונה, וגם בזה הוסיפה לחטוא: אשר פצתה את פיה לקחת את דמי אחיך וגו'. והנני מוסיף לה קללה אצלך⁷⁸: "לא תסוף תת כחה": 12 נע ונר. אין לך רשות לדור במקום אחד: 13 גדול עוני מנשוא. בתמינה: אתה טוען עליונים ותחתונים, ועוני אי אפשר לטעון: 15 לכן כל הרג קין. זה אחד מן המקראות שקצרו דבריהם, ורמזו ולא פרשו: "לכן כל הרג קין", לשון גערה, בה יעשה לו, כך וכך עונשו, ולא פרש עונשו: שבעתים יקם. איני רוצה להנקם מקון עכשו, לסוף שבעה דורות אני נוקם נקמתי ממנו, שיעמד למך מבני ויהרגהו. וסוף המקרא שאמר "שבעתים יקם", והיא נקמת הבל מקון, הא למדנו, שתחלת המקרא לשון גערה היא, שלא תהא ברירה מויקתו. וכיוצא בו⁷⁹: "ויאמר דוד כל

75. פסוק יב. 76. שמואל ב ה, ח. 77. דבה"א יא, ו. 78. בראשית ט, ב. 79. בראשית ג, כד. 80. דברים ד, מא.

8 Cain then had words with his brother Abel, and it happened that when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. He stabbed him all over his body, for he did not know which blow would prove fatal.

9 God knew what had happened, but in order to open the conversation and give Cain the opportunity to confess his sin and repent, God asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” Cain did not take advantage of the opportunity God was giving him. He replied, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?!”

10 God said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood and the blood of the souls who could have been his descendants are crying out to Me from the ground!”

11 So now you shall be cursed by having to work the ground even harder than you have to already.³⁰³ The ground will be cursed more than the ground has already been cursed, because it opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.

12 “When you work the ground, it will no longer give you its full fertile strength. It will produce even less for you than before. Furthermore, you shall be a perpetual wanderer in the world; I will not allow you to settle in one place.”

13 Hearing this, Cain repented somewhat, and said to God, “Is my sin too great for You to bear? Can You not overlook it?”

14 Behold, today You have banished me from the face of the earth—but can I be hidden from Your presence?! I am to be a perpetual wanderer in the world, and whoever among the future inhabitants of the earth finds me will kill me because they know that I murdered my brother, making me liable to the death penalty. And moreover, whoever among the animals finds me will kill me, because when I sinned, my Divine image was diminished and the animals no longer fear me.”³⁰⁴

15 God said to him, “Therefore, because you are afraid of what people will do, let it be known that whoever kills Cain will be punished! No one should take it upon himself to punish Cain for his sin, for vengeance for this sin will be exacted only after seven generations.” To publicize this oath, God placed a mark—a letter of His Name—on Cain’s forehead, so that whoever found him would not kill him. As for Cain’s fear of the animals, God placed a mark on Cain—He restored his Divine image—so that whoever among the animals found him would not kill him.

16 But Cain did not repent fully, even after God quieted his fears. Rather, Cain left God’s presence with feigned humility. Wherever he went, the earth trembled beneath him, and people said, “Stay away from him, for he killed his brother.” Instead of wandering the earth as he was commanded to, Cain settled in Nod [from *nad*, “wanderer”], to the east of Eden, where his father Adam had settled after being banished from the Garden of Eden. God had designated this place as a refuge for murderers, so Cain was confident that he would be safe there.³⁰⁵

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13 Is my sin too great to bear? On a deeper level, the verb “to bear” can be interpreted to mean “to lift up,” “to elevate.” Cain was asking God, “If I repent, does that

not elevate my misdeed and transform it into an impetus for good?³⁰⁶ And if so, is that not sufficient reason to forgive me?”³⁰⁷ But since Cain’s repentance was only

303. Above, 3:17-19. 304. See above, 1:26, and below, 9:2. 305. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, p. 81, note 16. 306. As above, on 3:7. 307. *Tzava’at HaRibash* 141.

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17 וידע קין את אשתו ותלד את חנוך ויהי בנה עיר ויקרא שם העיר כשם בנו חנוך: 18 ויולד לחנוך את עיזר ויעיזר ילד את מחיאל ומחייאל ילד את מתושאל ומתושאל ילד את למך: 19 ונסיב לה למך תרתינן נשין שום חדא עדה ושום תנייתא צלה: 20 וילדת עדה ית לכל הוא הוה רבהון דיתבי משכנין ומרי בעיר: 21 ושום אחוהי יובל הוא הוה רבהון דכל דמנגן על פום נבלא דעזי זמר כנורא ואבוקא: 22 וצלה אף היא ילדת ית תובל קין רבהון דכל דעזי עיבדות נחשא ופרזלא ואחתה דתובל קין נעמה:

17 וידע קין את אשתו ותלד את חנוך ויהי בנה עיר ויקרא שם העיר כשם בנו חנוך: 18 ויולד לחנוך את עיזר ויעיזר ילד את מחיאל ומחייאל ילד את מתושאל ומתושאל ילד את למך:

חמישי 19 ויקחלו למך שתי נשים שם האחת עדה ושם השנית צלה: 20 ותלד עדה את יובל הוא היה אחי יישב אהל ומקנה: 21 ושם אחיו יובל הוא היה אחי כל תפיש כנור ועוגב: 22 וצלה גם היא ילדה את תובל קין למש כל חורש נחשת וברזל ואחות תובל קין נעמה:

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ייטיב, כמו שמפרש באגדת "חלק" 85. עדה. היא של פריה ורביה, ועל שם שמנגנה עליו ומוסרת מאצלו. "עדה" תרגום של "סורה": צלה. היא של תשמיש, על שם שיושבת תמיד בצל. דברי אגדה הם בבראשית רבה: 20 אבי ישב אהל ומקנה. הוא היה הראשון לרועי בהמות במדברות וישב אהלים, חדש כאן וחדש כאן, בשביל מרעה צאנו, וכשכלה המרעה במקום הוה הולך ותוקע אהליו במקום אחר. ומדרש אגדה: 86. בונה בתים לעבודה זרה, כמה דאת אמר: "סמל הקנאה המקנה". וכן אחיו תפיש כנור ועוגב, לומר לעבודה זרה: 22 תובל קין. תובל אמנותו של קין. ו"תובל" לשון תבלין, תבל והתקין אמנותו של קין, לעשות כלי זין לרוצחים: לטש כל חורש נחשת וברזל. מתחדד אמנות נחשת וברזל, כמו: "ילטש עיניו ל". "חורש" אינו לשון "פעל", אלא לשון "פועל", שהרי נקוד קמץ קטן, וטעמו למשה, כלומר מתחדד ומצחצח כל כלי אמנות נחשת וברזל: נעמה. היא אשתו של נח:

17 ויהי קין בנה עיר, ויקרא שם העיר לזכר בנו חנוך: 18 ויעיזר ילד. יש מקום שהוא אומר בזכר "הוליד", ויש מקום שהוא אומר "ילד", שהלידה משמשת שתי לשונות: לידת האשה, ניישטר"א בלעז, וזריעת תולדות האיש, אינינדריר"ר בלעז. כשהוא אומר "הוליד" בלשון הפעיל, מדבר בלידת האשה, פלוני הוליד את אשתו בן או בת. כשהוא אומר "ילד", מדבר בזריעת האיש, והוא בלעז אינינדריר"ר: 19 ויקח לו למך. לא היה לו לפרש כל זה, אלא ללמדנו מסוף הענין שקדם הקדוש ברוך הוא הבטחתו שאמר: "שבעתים זקם קין", עמד למך לאחר שהוליד בנים ועשה דור שביעי והרג את קין, והו שאמר: 87. "כי איש הרגתי לפצעי" וגו': שתי נשים. כך היה דרכן של דור המבול, אחת לפריה ורביה ואחת לתשמיש. זו שהיא לתשמיש, משקה כוס של עקרין כדי שתעקר, ומקשטת בכלה, ומאכילה מעדנים, וחברתה נזופה ואבלה כאלמנה. והו שפרש איוב: 88. "רעה עקרה לא תלד, ואלמנה לא

81. להגיד וגם ללדת. 82. להוליד. 83. בראשית ד, כג. 84. איוב כד, כא. 85. דף קח, א. 86. כג, ב. 87. עיין בראשית רבה כג, ג. 88. יחזקאל ח, ג. 89. איוב טו, ט. 90. צירי.

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er, as will be seen.

17 Cain knew his wife: Cain repented by bringing another life into this world to replace the one he had cut short. Furthermore, he reached beyond himself and his

penitence and contributed to the building of society by constructing a city. All this demonstrates that repentance must involve more than beating one's chest in pious regret; it must also translate into deeds that undo the harm caused by the sin.³¹²

Cain's Descendants

17 Cain knew his wife, his twin sister, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch [*Chanoch*, “educated”]. Cain wished to demonstrate that even though God had punished *him* to be a perpetual wanderer, this punishment did not extend to his progeny, who would indeed be able to attain permanence and comfort in this world and contribute toward the building of civilization. So he **became a city-builder** and, with his relatives,³⁰⁸ built the first city.³⁰⁹ In order to further cement the permanence of his bloodline, **he gave the city he built the same name as his son, Enoch**, in order to perpetuate his son’s memory after he would die.

18 To Enoch was born Irad; Irad was the father of Mechuyael [“wiped out by God”]; **Mechuyael was the father of Metushael** [“torn out by God”]; **and Metushael was the father of Lemech**. In contrast to Cain’s hopes, the names his progeny chose to give their children reflected their increasingly anti-Divine philosophy of life.³¹⁰

- ◆ **Fifth Reading 19** By this time, society’s mores had degenerated to the point that men were objectifying female beauty and depersonalizing women. It became customary for a man to marry one woman solely for her beauty, consorting with her continuously, and a second woman by whom he would have children—discharging his duty to procreate—and then ignore. The first wife would be given a contraceptive drug in order that pregnancy and childbearing not mar her beauty. In accord with this custom, **Lemech married two women. The name of the first was Adah** [“removed”]; she was the wife designated solely for procreation and was “removed” from Lemech’s daily company. **The name of the second was Tzilah** [from *tzeil*, “shadow”]; she was the wife designated solely for carnal relations, so she accompanied him everywhere and in this way was always “in his shadow.”

20 Adah gave birth to Yaval; he was the forerunner of all those who live in tents and keep herds, periodically moving to new locations in search of new pastures for their herds to graze. He was the first to build temples for idol worship.³¹¹

21 His brother’s name was Yuval; he was the forerunner of all those who play the harp and flute for idolatrous purposes.

22 Even though she took contraceptives, **Tzilah also gave birth to a son, Tuval-Cain** [“the one who perfects (the art of) Cain”], **who sharpened all copper and iron tools**, thereby furnishing murderers with efficient weapons. **Tuval-Cain’s sister was Na’amah** [“pleasant”], who married Noah.

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partial, God’s forgiveness could also only be partial. Although he did not repent fully, Cain, like his parents, admitted that he sinned and expressed remorse for do-

ing so. God therefore mitigated his punishment. Although Cain never retreated from his original stance, he did try to make amends for having killed his broth-

308. *Hitva’aduyot* 5748, vol. 1, p. 441. 309. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, p. 118, note 24. 310. Below, 6:5. 311. See below, v. 26.

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23 ואמר למך לנשוי עדה וצלה שמעה קלי נשי למך אציתא למימרי לא גברא קטלית דבדילה אנא סביל חובין ואף לא עולמא חבלית דבדילה ושתיצו זרעי: 24 ארי שבקא דרין אתליאו לקין הלא ללמך ברה שבקין ושבקא: 25 וידע אדם עוד ית אתה וילידת בר וקרת ית שמה שות ארי אמרת יתב לי יי בר אחרון חלה הבל דקטלה קין: 26 ולשת אף הוא אתליד בר וקרא ית שמה אנוש בכך ביומיה חלו

ששי 23 ויאמר למך לנשיו עדה וצלה שמען קולי נשי למך האזנה אמרתי כי איש הרגתי לפצעי וילד לחברתי: 24 כי שבעתים יקם קין ולמך שבעים ושבקעה: 25 וידע אדם עוד את-אשתו ותלד בן ותקרא את-שמו שת כי שת-לי אלהים ורע אחר תחת הבל כי הרגו קין: 26 ולשת גם-הוא ילד-בן ויקרא את-שמו אנוש אז הוחל לקרא בשם יהוה: ס

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שבקעה דורות, אמרו: מה אנו יולדות לבהלה, למחר המבול בא ושוטף את הכל. והוא אומר להן: וכי איש הרגתי לפצעי, וכי אני הרגתי את הבל שהיה איש בקומה וילד בשנים, שיהא זרעי בלה באותו עון? ומה קין שהרג — נתלה לו שבקעה דורות, אני שלא הרגתי — לא כל שכן שיתלו לי שביעיות הרבה? וזהו קל וחמר של שטות, אם כן, אין הקדוש ברוך הוא גובה את חובו ומקנים את דברו: 25 וידע אדם וגו'. בא לו למך אצל אדם הראשון וקבל על נשיו, אמר להם: וכי עליכם לדקדק על גזירתו של מקום, אתם עשו מצותכם, והוא יעשה את שלוו אפרו לו: קשט עצמך תחלה, והלא פרשת מאשתך זה מאה ושלשים שנה משונקנסה מיתה על ידך. מיד "וידע אדם עוד" וגו'. ומהו "עוד", ללמדך, שנתוספה לו תאנה על תאנתו: 26 אז הוחל, לשון חלין, לקרא את שמות האדם ואת שמות העצבים בשמו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, לעשותן עבודה זרה ולקרותן אלהות:

23 שמען קולי. שהיו פורשות ממנו מתשמיש, לפי שהרג את קין ואת תובל קין בנו, שהיה למך סומא, ותובל קין מושכו ורצה את קין ונדרמה לו בחיה, ואמר לאביו למשוך בקשת והרגו, וכיון שידע שהוא קין וקנו, הזה כף אל כף וספק את בנו ביניהם והרגו. והיו נשיו פורשות ממנו והוא מפסוק: "שמען קולי" להשמע לי לתשמיש, וכי איש אשר הרגתי, לפצעי הוא נהרג? וכי אני פצעתיו מזיד, שיהא הפצע קרוי על שמי? וילד אשר הרגתי, לחבורתי נהרג, כלומר, על ידי חבורתי? בתמיה, והלא שוגג אני ולא מזיד, לא זהו פצעי ולא זהו חבורתי: פצע. מכת הרב או חץ, נברידור"א בלעז: 24 כי שבעתים יקם קין. קין שהרג מזיד, נתלה לו עד שבקעה דורות, אני שהרגתי שוגג, לא כל שכן שיתלה לי שביעיות הרבה: שבעים ושבקעה. לשון רבוי שביעיות אחר לו. כך דרש רבי תנחומא: ומדרש בראשית רבה: לא הרג למך בלום, ונשיו פורשות ממנו משקמו פריה ורביה, לפי שנגזרה גזרה לכלות זרעו של קין לאחר

91. פצע. 92. בראשית יא. 93. כ, ד.

honored them by making them His servants, we should praise them and honor them. It must certainly be God's will that we honor those that He honors." They therefore built temples to the heavenly bodies and began offering sacrifices to them and prostrating themselves before them in order to ascertain God's will, or so they thought. After many years, false prophets arose who declared that God wants people to serve these heavenly bodies and to offer sacrifices to them. These false prophets also fashioned idols, declaring them to be images of the heavenly bodies, which these heavenly bodies had revealed to them. They associated specific idols with specific Divine powers, and assured the masses that worshipping the various idols would secure them benefits or protect them from calamities. In this manner, idolatry spread throughout the world and people eventually forgot about God, serving only idols.³¹⁷ Adam managed to preserve and convey pure monotheism to only a few select individuals among his descendants.

God, allowing humanity free choice, did not actively counteract this process, but

- ◆ **Sixth Reading 23** Counting Cain as the first generation, Lemech was the sixth, and his children were the seventh. Once Lemech's children were born, it was time for vengeance to be exacted from Cain.³¹³ In (or just before) the year 130,³¹⁴ God again removed the Divine image from Cain, giving him the appearance of a beast.³¹⁵

Lemech was blind and his son, Tuval-Cain, would lead him. Once, Tuval-Cain saw Cain and was frightened, so he told Lemech to shoot an arrow at him; Lemech did so and killed Cain. When Lemech learned what he had done, he clapped his hands together in grief, but in doing so, he struck his son and killed Tuval-Cain, too. His wives, in anger, refused to cohabit with him anymore. **Lemech said to his wives, "Adah and Tzilah, hear my voice; wives of Lemech, listen to my speech. Did I kill a man [Cain] by my wound and a child [Tuval-Cain] by my bruise?! Did I kill them intentionally?!"**

24 If Cain, who committed murder, was to be avenged after seven generations, then for Lemech, who only committed manslaughter, God's postponement of punishment should surely be many times seven generations! You therefore do not have to worry that your children will be punished on my account."

Lemech's wives refused to cohabit with him once they had fulfilled the minimum requirement to have children for another reason, as well: they were aware of God's oath to punish Cain after seven generations. They erroneously assumed that this meant that all of their children would be killed, and they did not wish to keep having more children just to see them die. To this, Lemech replied, [23] **"Did I kill Abel—who was a man in maturity and a child in years—by my wound and my bruise, that I should be punished?!"** [24] **If Cain, who murdered Abel, was to be avenged after seven generations, then for Lemech, who did *not* murder him, God's postponement of punishment should surely be many times seven generations!"**

Seth and His Descendants

25 Lemech's faulty reasoning did not impress his wives; they understood that such an argument would mean that God would never fulfill the oath He made regarding Cain's descendants. So Lemech complained to Adam about their refusal to cohabit with him. Adam told them that they should not concern themselves with the intricacies of Divine justice but rather fulfill God's command to engage in marital relations unconditionally. In response, they took him to task for having separated from Eve ever since the sin, that is, for 130 years³¹⁶—directly contradicting his own advice. He admitted his error, and returned to her. **So Adam knew his wife carnally again—now with greater passion than before—and she gave birth to a son. She named him Seth [Sheit], saying, "because God has granted [shat] me other offspring in place of Abel, whom Cain killed."**

26 In the year 235, a son was also born to Seth; Seth named him Enosh. Then, during Enosh's lifetime, **the name of God was invoked profanely.** The people of this generation, including Enosh himself, reasoned, "Inasmuch as God created heavenly bodies in order to conduct the affairs of the world through them and has

³¹³. Above, v. 15; Rashi on v. 19. ³¹⁴. As evident from 5:3, below. ³¹⁵. See above, vv. 14-15. ³¹⁶. Rashi on 5:3, below. ³¹⁷. *Mishneh Torah, Avodat Kochavim* 1:1-2.

ONKELOS

בני אָנְשָׁא מִלְצָלָהּ בְּשֵׁמָא דִּי: 5 וְיִן סִפְר תּוֹלְדֵת אָדָם בְּיוֹמָא דִּבְרָא יִי אָדָם בְּדִמּוּת אֱלֹהִים עֲבַד יְתָה: 2 דְּכַר וְנוֹקְבָא בְּרָאנוּ וּבְרִיךְ יִתְהוּן וְקָרָא יְתָ שׁוּמְהוּן אָדָם בְּיוֹמָא דְּאֶתְבְּרִיאָו: 3 וְחֵיָא אָדָם מָאָה וּתְלָתִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּדִמּוּתָהּ דְּדָמִי לָהּ וְקָרָא יְתָ שְׁמָה שֵׁת: 4 וְהוּא יוֹמֵי אָדָם בְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יְתָ שֵׁת תִּמְנִי מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: 5 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי אָדָם דְּחֵיָא תִּשְׁעָ מָאָה וּתְלָתִין שָׁנִין וּמִית: 6 וְחֵיָא שֵׁת מָאָה וְחֲמִשָּׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יְתָ אָנוֹשׁ: 7 וְחֵיָא שֵׁת בְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יְתָ אָנוֹשׁ תִּמְנִי מָאָה וְשִׁבְעָ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: 8 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי שֵׁת תִּשְׁעָ מָאָה וְתִרְתִּי עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנִין וּמִית: 9 וְחֵיָא אָנוֹשׁ תִּשְׁעִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יְתָ קִינָן: 10 וְחֵיָא אָנוֹשׁ בְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יְתָ קִינָן תִּמְנִי מָאָה וְחֲמִשָּׁ עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: 11 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי אָנוֹשׁ תִּשְׁעָ מָאָה וְחֲמִשָּׁ שָׁנִין וּמִית:

5:1 וְהָ סִפְר תּוֹלְדֵת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בְּדִמּוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ: 2 זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הַבְּרָאָה: 3 וַיְחִי אָדָם שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בְּדִמּוּתוֹ בְּצִלְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת: 4 וַיְהִי יָמֵי־אָדָם אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־שֵׁת שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 5 וַיְהִי כָּל־יָמֵי אָדָם אֲשֶׁר־חַי תִּשְׁעָ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: 6 וַיְחִי־שֵׁת חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּמֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־אָנוֹשׁ: 7 וַיְחִי־שֵׁת אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־אָנוֹשׁ שִׁבְעָ שָׁנִים וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 8 וַיְהִי כָּל־יָמֵי־שֵׁת שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנָה וּתִשְׁעָ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: 9 וַיְחִי אָנוֹשׁ תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־קִינָן: 10 וַיְחִי אָנוֹשׁ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־קִינָן חָמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 11 וַיְהִי כָּל־יָמֵי אָנוֹשׁ חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּתִשְׁעָ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: 12

RASHI

1 וְהָ סִפְר תּוֹלְדֵת אָדָם. זוֹ הִיא סְפִירַת תּוֹלְדוֹת אָדָם. שְׁנֵבָרָא הוֹלִיד: 3 שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאֹת שָׁנָה. עַד כָּאֵן פֶּרֶשׁ מִן הָאִשָּׁה:

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CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

26 The name of God was invoked profanely: As has been seen,³²⁵ the source of sin is the misconstruction or perversion of some idea that is in itself entirely holy.³²⁶ The source in holiness for idolatry is the plurality of opinions in the Torah. The fact that it is possible to interpret aspects of the Torah in different ways can eventually lead us to feel that there are numerous powers at work in the world.

This is only possible, however, if we approach the Torah mistakenly, that is, if we lose sight of the fact that all the various opinions recorded in it originate in God's wisdom. If we mistakenly understand the fact that the Torah encompasses various opinions and approaches to mean that it is not a unity, reflecting God's unity, this can lead us to legitimize our own interpretations of the Torah, even if they are not solidly grounded in the Torah itself. From there, it is possible to degenerate further and view the apparently diverse forces at work in the world as deriving not from the one God, but from an entire pantheon of gods or natural forces.

From this we see how important it is when studying the Torah to always remain cognizant of the fact that the different approaches and opinions it encompasses are actually all reflections of the Torah's unity and God's unity.³²⁷

3 Adam lived 130 years: By recording the years of Adam and his descendants, the Torah provides us with the exact age of the world. The importance of this information is that it articulates one of Judaism's most basic beliefs: that the world was created and did not always exist.

The Midrash³²⁸ relates that in the second century, a Greek named Aquilas observed of the Jewish people that "even the least of them knows how many years have passed since the creation of the world." This made such a strong impression on him that he converted to Judaism, and later authored a Greek translation of the Torah. He was deeply impressed by the fact that our belief in creation is not an abstract article of faith; we know when it happened, down to the day.³²⁹

323. Shir HaShirim Rabbah 5:1; Sefer HaMa'amaram 5710, pp. 111 ff. 324. Likutei Sichot, vol. 20, pp. 25-28. 325. On 3:1, above. 326. Sefer HaMa'amaram Kuntresim, vol. 1, pp. 382 ff. 327. Likutei Sichot, vol. 11, pp. 150-152. 328. Shemot Rabbah 30:12. 329. Likutei Sichot, vol. 20, p. 28.

He did issue a warning: in Enosh's days, He partially flooded the world.³¹⁸ But humanity did not heed God's warning, nor did they take advantage of the ample time He gave them to realize that idolatry was false and to reverse the associated degeneration of morals that has been described and will be described further. Eventually, humanity became so thoroughly convinced of the truth of idolatry that it would have been impossible to convince them of its falsehood. It thus became necessary to radically cleanse the world of idolatry. The Torah therefore now details the lineage of Noah, the individual whom God would select to reestablish the human race after it was destroyed.

5:1 The following is the record of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. For the first ten generations, Adam's descendants lived extraordinarily long, relative to later generations. This is because during this era, God provided the world with His beneficence without regard to human merit.³¹⁹ This would change afterward, as will be recounted later.³²⁰

2 He created them as an androgynous being, **male and female.**³²¹ **He blessed them and named them together Adam on the day that they were created** in this form.³²² Eve was then separated from the male half of this being, who retained the name Adam.

3 Adam lived 130 years, and he had a son in his likeness and form, and he named him Seth.

4 Adam lived 800 years after he had Seth, and he had other sons and daughters.

5 All the days that Adam lived came to 930 years, and he died in the year 930.

6 Seth lived 105 years, and in the year 235, he had a son, Enosh.

7 Seth lived 807 years after he had Enosh, and he had other sons and daughters.

8 All the days of Seth came to 912 years, and he died in the year 1042.

9 Enosh lived 90 years, and in the year 325, he had a son, Keinan.

10 Enosh lived 815 years after he had Keinan, and he had other sons and daughters.

11 All the days of Enosh came to 905 years, and he died in the year 1140.

✧ INNER DIMENSIONS ✧

[26] The name of God was invoked profanely: The practice of idolatry that began in the time of Enosh

caused the Divine Presence to retreat from the second firmament to the third.³²³

✧ A CLOSER LOOK ✧

[3] Adam lived 130 years: This is the first chronological genealogical list in the Torah. It is important to note that the numbers of years given in these lists are approximate, in that a person can be considered to have lived x years even if he is as much as sixth

months short of his xth birthday. So when the Torah says so-and-so was x years old when he had a son, that son could have been born any time during a span of eighteen months.³²⁴

³¹⁸. Rashi on 6:4, Deuteronomy 32:7. ³¹⁹. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 54. ³²⁰. See below, 11:10 ff. ³²¹. Above, 1:27. ³²². Above, 2:7, 1:28.

— ONKELOS —

12 וַיְהִי קִינָן שִׁבְעִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד
 יֵת מִהֶלְלָאֵל: 13 וַיְהִי קִינָן בְּתֵר
 דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת מִהֶלְלָאֵל תִּמְנִי מָאָה
 וְאַרְבַּעִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן:
 14 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי קִינָן תִּשְׁעָה מָאָה
 וְעֶשְׂרִי שָׁנִין וּמֵית: 15 וַיְהִי מִהֶלְלָאֵל
 שְׁתֵּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יֵת יֵרֵד:
 16 וַיְהִי מִהֶלְלָאֵל בְּתֵר דְּאוֹלִיד
 יֵת יֵרֵד תִּמְנִי מָאָה וְתַלְתִּין שָׁנִין
 וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: 17 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי
 מִהֶלְלָאֵל תִּמְנִי מָאָה וְתִשְׁעִין שָׁנִין
 וּמֵית: 18 וַיְהִי יֵרֵד מָאָה וְשְׁתֵּין
 וְתַרְתִּין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יֵת חֲנוּךְ:
 19 וַיְהִי יֵרֵד בְּתֵר דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת חֲנוּךְ
 תִּמְנִי מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן:
 20 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי יֵרֵד תִּשְׁעָה מָאָה
 וְשְׁתֵּין וְתַרְתִּין שָׁנִין וּמֵית: 21 וַיְהִי
 חֲנוּךְ שְׁתֵּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יֵת
 מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח: 22 וְהָלִיךְ חֲנוּךְ בְּדַחֲלָתָא
 דִּי בְּתֵר דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח
 תַּלְתַּת מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן:
 23 וְהוּא כָּל יוֹמֵי חֲנוּךְ תַּלְתַּת מָאָה
 וְשְׁתֵּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין: 24 וְהָלִיךְ חֲנוּךְ
 בְּדַחֲלָתָא דִּי וְלִיתּוּהִי אַרְי אַמִּית
 יֵתָהּ: 25 וַיְהִי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח מָאָה
 וְתַמְנִין וְשִׁבְעָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יֵת לִמְךָ:
 26 וַיְהִי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח בְּתֵר דְּאוֹלִיד
 יֵת לִמְךָ שִׁבְעָה מָאָה וְתַמְנִין וְתַרְתִּין
 שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: 27 וְהוּא כָּל
 יוֹמֵי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח תִּשְׁעָה מָאָה וְשְׁתֵּין
 וְתִשְׁעָה שָׁנִין וּמֵית:

12 וַיְהִי קִינָן שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד אֶת־מֵהֶלְלָאֵל: 13 וַיְהִי
 קִינָן אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־מֵהֶלְלָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה
 מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 14 וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי קִינָן
 עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנִים וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ם

15 וַיְהִי מֵהֶלְלָאֵל חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד אֶת־
 יֵרֵד: 16 וַיְהִי מֵהֶלְלָאֵל אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־יֵרֵד שְׁלֹשִׁים
 שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 17 וַיְהִי
 כָּל־יְמֵי מֵהֶלְלָאֵל חֲמִשׁ וְתִשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת
 שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ם

18 וַיְחִי־יֵרֵד שְׁתֵּים וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד אֶת־
 חֲנוּךְ: 19 וַיְחִי־יֵרֵד אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־חֲנוּךְ שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת
 שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 20 וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־יֵרֵד שְׁתֵּים
 וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ם

21 וַיְהִי חֲנוּךְ חֲמִשׁ וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד אֶת־מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח:
 22 וַיִּתְּהֵלֶךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־
 מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 23 וַיְהִי
 כָּל־יְמֵי חֲנוּךְ חֲמִשׁ וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה:
 24 וַיִּתְּהֵלֶךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיָנָנוּ כִּי־לָקַח אֹתוֹ
 אֱלֹהִים: ם

שביעי 25 וַיְהִי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח שִׁבְעָה וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה
 וַיֻּלֵּד אֶת־לִמְךָ: 26 וַיְהִי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־
 לִמְךָ שְׁתֵּים וּשְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וּשִׁבְעָה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֻּלֵּד
 בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 27 וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי מִתּוֹשֶׁלַח תִּשְׁעָה וְשִׁשִּׁים
 שָׁנָה וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ם

— RASHI —

בְּעוֹלָם לְמַלְאוֹת שְׁנוֹתָיו: כִּי לָקַח אֹתוֹ. לִפְנֵי זְמַנּוֹ, כְּמוֹ:
 "הִנְנִי לָקַח מִמְּךָ אֶת מַחְמַד עֵינֶיךָ":

24 וַיִּתְּהֵלֶךְ חֲנוּךְ. צָדִיק הָיָה, וְקָל בְּדַעְתּוֹ לָשׁוּב
 לְהַרְשִׁיעַ, לְפִיכָף מֵהַר הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְסָלְקוּ וְהִמִּיתוּ
 קִדְּם וְזָמְנוּ. וְהוּא שְׁשָׁנָה הִכְתוּב בְּמִיתָתוֹ לְכַתֵּב: "וַאֲיָנָנוּ"

12 Keinan lived 70 years, and in the year 395, he had a son, Mahalalel.

13 Keinan lived 840 years after he had Mahalalel, and he had other sons and daughters.

14 All the days of Keinan came to 910 years, and he died in the year 1235.

15 Mahalalel lived 65 years, and in the year 460, he had a son, Yered.

16 Mahalalel lived 830 years after he had Yered, and he had other sons and daughters.

17 All the days of Mahalalel came to 895 years, and he died in the year 1290.

18 Yered lived 162 years, and in the year 622, he had a son, Enoch.

19 Yered lived 800 years after he had Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters.

20 All the days of Yered came to 962 years, and he died in the year 1422.

21 Enoch lived 65 years, and in the year 687 he had a son, Methuselah.

22 Unlike the rest of humanity in this era, Enoch walked with God, i.e., he was righteous. He lived for 300 years after he had Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters.

23 All the days of Enoch came to 365 years in the year 987.

24 Enoch walked with God, but because God saw that he was no longer able to resist the temptation to sin, God rewarded him for resisting temptation until this point in his life by removing him from the world earlier than he would otherwise have died. Thus, although he did not die as did the rest of humanity, he was no longer in the physical world, because God had taken him alive directly into the afterlife.

◆ *Seventh Reading* 25 Methuselah lived 187 years, and in the year 874, he had a son, Lemech.

26 Methuselah lived 782 years after he had Lemech, and he had other sons and daughters.

27 All the days of Methuselah came to 969 years, and he died in the year 1656.

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

22 **Enoch walked with God:** Enoch was a shoemaker.³³⁰ Yet because of his holiness, his mundane stitching of leather did not distract him from his service of God. On the contrary, we are taught that with every stitch he brought about a further degree of harmony within the spiritual spheres.³³¹

So it is with all righteous individuals: even their mundane actions have cosmic repercussions. We, on our own level, can mimic the righteous: our earthly activities can affect the heavens.³³²

24 **God had taken him:** Enoch's lofty soul kept him righteous even in the midst of the most corrupt society in history. However, he lived before the giving of the

Torah, when spirituality and physicality were unable to affect or influence each other.³³³ In this mode of reality, there were almost no means by which an individual could sanctify himself or his environment; the most someone aspiring to spirituality could do was to remain open to Divine inspiration. Thus, Enoch was only able to withstand temptation to a certain point, since his righteousness was not self-developed, but rather "borrowed," so to speak, from heaven. This is analogous to a teacher who conveys a concept to a student but fails to teach the student to think on his own. Such a student will be lost without his teacher.³³⁴

In the merit of his righteous behavior up until that point, he was spared further temptation, which God

330. *Midrash Talpiot*. 331. *Emek Hamelech*, Kiryat Arba, 94. 332. *Hitva'aduyot* 5749, vol. 1, p. 247. 333. This was especially true before the Flood, as we shall see. 334. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 86.

ONKELOS

28 וְחַיָּא לְמָךְ מֵאָה וְתַמְנִין וְתַרְתִּין שְׁנֵין וְאוֹלִיד בֶּרֶ: 29 וְקָרָא יֵת שְׁמוֹה נָח לְמִימָר דִּין יְנַחֲמָנָא מְעוּבְרִינָא וּמִלְאוֹת יִדְנָא מִן אֶרְעָא דִּי לְטָטָה יִי: 30 וְחַיָּא לְמָךְ בֶּתֶר דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת נָח חֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה וְתַשְׁעִין וְחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנֵין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנִין: 31 וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי לְמָךְ שְׁבַע מֵאָה וְשִׁבְעִין וְשִׁבַּע שְׁנֵין וּמֵיִת: 32 וְהוּוּ נָח בֶּר חֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה שְׁנֵין וְאוֹלִיד נָח יֵת שֵׁם יֵת חָם וְיֵת יִפֶּת: 61 וְהוּוּ כֹד שְׁרִיאוּ בְנֵי אֲנָשָׁא לְמַסְגִּי עַל אִפִּי אֶרְעָא וּבִקְנָתָא אֲתִילִידָא לְהוּן:

28 וַיְחַי־לְמֹךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בֶּן: 29 וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ נֹחַ לֵאמֹר זֶה יִנְחָמֵנוּ מִמַּעַשְׁנוֹ וּמִעֲצָבוֹן יִדְּנוּ מִן־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אָרָרָה יְהוָה: 30 וַיְחַי־לְמֹךְ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־נֹחַ חֲמֵשׁ וְתַשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וְחֲמֵשׁ מֵאֵת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: 31 וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־לְמֹךְ שִׁבְעָ וּשְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: 32 וַיְהִי־נֹחַ בֶּן־חֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד נֹחַ אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יִפֶּת: 6:1 וַיְהִי כִּי־הִחֵל הָאָדָם לָרֹב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה וּבָנוֹת יִלְדוּ לָהֶם:

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אם רשעים הם — יאבדו במים ורע לצדיק זה, ואם צדיקים הם — אטריח עליו לעשות תבות הרבה. כבש את מעינו ולא הוליד עד שהיה בן חמש מאות שנה, כדי שלא יהא יפת הגדול שבבניו ראוי לעונשין לפני המבול, דכתיב³⁴⁰: "כי הנער בן מאה שנה ימות" ראוי לענש לעתיד, וכן לפני מתן תורה: **אֵת שֵׁם אֶת חָם וְאֵת יִפֶּת**, והלא יפת הוא הגדול? אלא, בתחלה אמה דורש את שם שהוא צדיק, ונולד כשהוא מהול, ושאברהם יצא ממנו וכו', בבראשית רבה³⁴¹:

28 וַיּוֹלֶד בֶּן. שִׁמְמוֹנוּ נִבְנָה הָעוֹלָם: 29 זֶה יִנְחָמֵנוּ. יִנְחֵם מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת עֲצָבוֹן יִדְּנוּ. עַד שֶׁלֹּא בָּא נֹחַ לֹא הָיָה לָהֶם כָּלִי מִחֲרִישָׁה, וְהוּא הָכִין לָהֶם, וְהִיָּתָה הָאָרֶץ מוֹצִיָּאָה קוֹצִים וְדוֹרָדִים כְּשׁוֹרְעִים חֲטִים מְקַלְלֵתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הָרָאוּשׁ, וּבִימֵי נֹחַ נִחָה. וְהוּוּ "יִנְחָמֵנוּ" — יִנְחֵם מִמֶּנּוּ. וְאִם לֹא תִפְרְשֶׁהוּ כֵךְ, אֵין טַעַם הִלְשׁוֹן נוֹפֵל עַל הַשֵּׁם, וְאִתָּה צָרִיךְ לִקְרוֹת שְׁמוֹ מִנְחָם: 32 בֶּן חֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹדֵן: מַה טַעַם כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת הוֹלִידוּ לְמֵאָה שָׁנָה וְזֶה לְחֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת? אָמַר הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא:

95. ישעיה סה, כ. 96. כו, ג.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

knew he did not have the capacity to withstand.³⁴⁰

When God took Enoch, he was transformed into an angel whose purpose was to unify various distinct spiritual energies by revealing in them their common essence within Divinity.³⁴¹ Thus, in this capacity, he continues to "sew shoes together," i.e., to accomplish on a grander scale what he did in this world. The reason that even in his angelic state he is described as a shoemaker is to teach us that even a shoemaker's ultimate purpose in life is to reveal Divinity in the world.³⁴²

Both Cain and Seth had descendants named Enoch. Cain and Seth represent paradoxical elements of our Divine service: Cain embodies transcendence and rejection of the physical. He lived in the physical impermanence of the pre-flood era; all but one of his descendants perished in the flood. In contrast, Seth expresses the ideal of accepting the reality of the physical world, while using it as a conduit for expressing the Divine.

Of the three sons of Adam, it was Seth and his descendants that build the post-flood world.

Yet both of them had descendants named Enoch, their antithesis. Enoch, son of Cain, was a Seth-like person—a city is built in his name. Enoch, descendant of Seth, was a Cain-like person who shuns the world and abandons it.

This teaches us that while both ideals are necessary—a person must yearn inwardly to soar to spiritual heights, yet remain conscious of the fact that God's purpose is served in expressing Divinity in this world—each must cross-fertilize the other. The ultimate concern of the mystic in us must be the practical application of Torah in this world. And the pragmatic servant of God in us must also yearn for transcendence.³⁴³

29 This one will bring us relief: Technology is thus seen as one of the tools man can use to rectify sin.

340. *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 25, p. 42. Thus, his removal from this world did not constitute a denial of free choice, since it was not in his capacity to overcome further temptation. This also explains why he was taken from the world while the rest of society was forced to stay: the rest of society did not merit this removal. 341. *Zohar* 1:37b and 56b. 342. *Hitva'aduyot* 5742, vol. 1, p. 304. 343. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, pp. 11-13.

28 Lemech lived 182 years, and in the year 1056, he had a son whom God would choose to rebuild the world after the future Flood.

29 Lemech prophetically named him Noah [*Noach*], saying, “This one will bring us relief [*yenachameinu*] from our work and from the anguish of our hands caused by the soil that God has cursed.” Noah invented the plow, and thus enabled humanity to reap benefit from the soil in a way not possible ever since God had cursed it in response to Adam’s³³⁵ and Cain’s³³⁶ sins.

30 Lemech lived 595 years after he had Noah, and he had other sons and daughters.

31 All the days of Lemech came to 777 years, and he died in the year 1651.

32 In the year 1556, when Noah had lived 500 years, he began to have children. Although people usually began having children in those days at a much younger age (as can be seen from the previous lineage list), God kept Noah infertile until this age for two reasons: (a) so that he not have many offspring by the time the flood began—for had they been wicked, they would have been wiped out with the rest of humanity, and had they turned out righteous, Noah would have had to build many arks to save them all from the flood—and (b) so

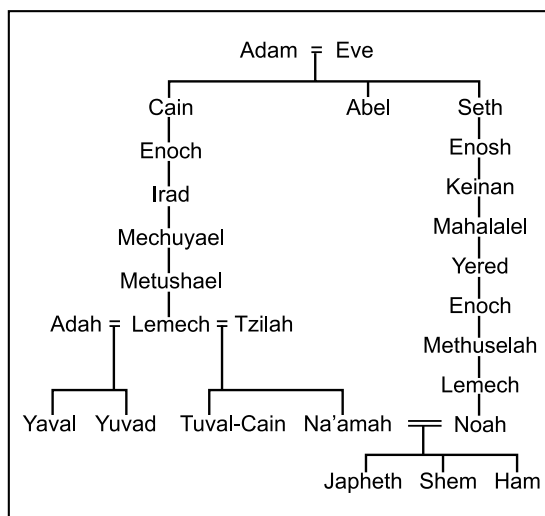


Figure 5: From Adam to Noah

that Noah’s eldest son be less than 100 years old when the flood began,³³⁷ and thus not be legally culpable.³³⁸ Noah had a son, Shem—who was the ancestor of Abraham, the first Jew, and therefore is mentioned first—as well as Shem’s younger brother, Ham, and his older brother, Japheth. Japheth was born first, in the year 1556; Shem was born second, in the year 1558; and Ham was the youngest.³³⁹

Prelude to the Flood

6:1 The Torah now backtracks in order to recount additional details about how the world became increasingly corrupt during the ten generations from Adam to Noah.

Now when humanity began to increase on the face of the earth and daughters were born to them,

335. Above, 3:17-18. 336. Above, 4:12. 337. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 20, p. 26, note 14. 338. See above, 2:17. 339. Rashi on 10:25, below; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, pp. 115-116, notes 20 and 24-26.

— ONKELOS —
 2 וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי רִבְרֵיָא יְת בְּנֵת אֲנָשָׁא
 אֲרִי שְׁפִירָן אֲנִין וְנִסְיָבו לְהוֹן
 נִשְׁתִּין מִכָּל דִּי אֲתֵרֵיָא: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 לֹא יִתְקִים דָּרָא בִישָׁא הָדִין
 קָדְמִי לְעֵלָם בְּדִיל דְּאֲנֹן בִּשְׂרָא
 וְעוֹבְדֵיהוֹן בִּישָׁא אֲרִכָּא יִהְיִית
 לְהוֹן מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין אִם יִתּוּבֹן:
 4 גְּבִרְיָא הוּוּ בִּאֲרַעָא בְיוֹמֵיָא הָאֲנֹן
 וְאַף בְּתֵר כֵּן דִּי עֲלִין בְּנֵי רִבְרֵיָא
 לְוֹת בְּנֵת אֲנָשָׁא וַיִּלְדֹן לְהוֹן אֲנֹן
 גְּבִרְיָא דְּמַעֲלָמָא אֲנָשִׁין דְּשָׂמָא:

2 וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הָנָה
 וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 לֹא־יִדּוֹן רוּחִי בָאָדָם לְעֹלָם בְּשֹׁגֶם הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיוּ יָמֵיו
 מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה: 4 הַנֶּפְלִים הָיוּ בְּאַרְצָן בְּיָמִים הָהֵם
 וְגַם אַחֲרֵיהֶן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם
 וַיִּלְדוּ לָהֶם הֵמָּה הַגִּבּוֹרִים אֲשֶׁר מַעֲוָלָם אֲנָשִׁי הַשָּׁם: פ

— RASHI —

וגו'. עד מאה ועשרים שנה אצריך להם אפי, ואם לא
 ישובו אביא עליהם מבול. ואם תאמר: משנולד יפת
 עד המבול אינו אלא מאה שנה? אין מקדם ומאוחר
 בתורה, כבר היתה הגזירה גזירה עשרים שנה קדם
 שהוליד נח תולדות, וכן מצינו ב"סדר עולם"י. יש
 מדרשי אגדה רבים ב"לא ידון", אבל זה הוא צחצוח
 פשוטו: 4 הנפלים. על שם שנפלו והפילו את העולם.
 ובלשון עברית לשון ענקים הוא: בימים ההם. בימי דור
 אנוש ובני קין: וגם אחרי כן. אף על פי שראו באבדן
 של דור אנוש, שעלה אוקינוס והציף שליש העולם,
 לא נכנע דור המבול ללמוד מהם: אֲשֶׁר יבאו. היו
 יולדות ענקים כמוהם: הגבירים. למרוד במקום: אנשי
 השם. אותן שנקבו בשמות: עירד, מחויאל, מתושאל,
 שנקראו על שם אבדן שנמוחו והתשו. דבר אחר: אנשי
 שממון, ששממו את העולם:

2 בני האלהים. בני השמים והשופטים. דבר אחר: "בני
 האלהים", הם השרים ההולכים בשליחותו של מקום,
 אף הם היו מתערכים בהם. כל "אלהים" שבמקרא לשון
 מרות, וזה יוכיח: "ואתה תהיה לו לאלהים", "דא
 נתייף אלהים": 8. כי טבת הנה. אמר רבי יודן: "טבת"
 כתיב, בשהיו מטיבין אותה מקשטת לכנס לחפה, היה
 גדול נכנס ובויעלה תחלה: מכל אשר בחרו. אף בעולת
 בעל, אף הזכר והבהמה: 3 לא ידון רוחי באדם. לא
 יתרגע ויריב רוחי עלי, בשביל האדם: לעולם. לארץ
 ימים. הנה רוחי נדון בקרבי אם להשחית ואם לרחם,
 לא יהיה מדון זה ברוחי לעולם, כלומר לארץ ימים:
 בשגם הוא בשר. כמו "בשגם", כלומר בשביל שגם
 זאת בו שהוא בשר, ואף על פי כן אינו נכנע לפני, ומה
 אם יהיה אש או דבר קשה. כיוצא בו: "עד שקמתי
 דבורה", כמו "שקמתי", וכן: "שאתה מדבר עמי",
 כמו "שאתה". אף "בשגם" כמו "בשגם": והיו ימיו

97. שמות ד, טו. 98. שמות ז, א. 99. שופטים ה, ז. 100. שופטים ו, יז. 101. פרק כח. 102. כז, ד.

world,³⁵³ they did not heed this warning, but rather persisted in their wickedness. **These princes were the mighty and rebellious ones of old, men** whose depravity was indicated by their **names**, which expressed their anti-Divine philosophy and lifestyle.³⁵⁴ Their idolatry and sexual excesses led them into disrespect for property rights, as well, and thus the foundations of society—honesty, integrity, and justice—were undermined and replaced by dishonesty, corruption, and larceny. Their behavior made the world into an uncivilized, frightening place in which to live.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

2 Shamchazai and Azazel: Later on,³⁵⁵ these angels are referred to as "fallen ones."³⁵⁶ When an angel enters the physical world, it "falls"; it cannot resist the materialism and arrogance of the world. It is not in the capacity

of the angel to be in the world and at the same time remain attached to Divinity that transcends the world. Only human beings, who are created in God's image, can, like God, unite heaven and earth.³⁵⁷

353. Above, 4:26. 354. Above, 4:18. 355. Numbers 13:33. 356. Likutei Sichot, vol. 28, pp. 85-91. 357. Likutei Sichot, vol. 15, p. 15.

2 the sons of the rulers saw how pretty the rest of humanity's daughters were, and they took themselves wives from whomever they chose. They would take brides from their wedding ceremonies and have intercourse with them before their grooms did. They also practiced forbidden extramarital relations: adultery, homosexuality, and sodomy.

Over time, this degenerate behavior became so pervasive that God considered wiping out humanity. At one point, when these generations were steeped in idolatry, two angels, Shamchazai and Azael, approached God and said, "Master of the Universe, did we not tell You when You created Your world that You should not create man?³⁴⁴ Wipe out humanity!" God replied, "Yes, but what will become of My world after I wipe them out?" They said, "Master of the Universe, we would be happy to have it." God replied, "I know that if you dwell on earth, the evil inclination will overcome you and you will behave even worse than the human race has." They said, "Give us permission to dwell with Your creatures now and You will see how we sanctify Your Name!" He said, "Go and dwell with them." They assumed physical form as extremely large giants.³⁴⁵ They were immediately corrupted by the world's beautiful girls and could not control their impulses.³⁴⁶ They, too, took brides from their bridal chamber and had intercourse with them before their grooms did, and practiced forbidden relations: adultery, homosexuality, and sodomy. Their offspring grew to be giants like them.³⁴⁷

Because of their depravity, humanity gradually lost their Divine image and thereby forfeited the protection it gave them from the animals. The people of these generations had to therefore protect themselves from the attacks of wild beasts, which had been previously afraid of them.³⁴⁸

3 By the year 1536, the situation had reached the point where God said, "My spirit shall not continue to deliberate over humanity forever, since they are mere flesh and nonetheless behave arrogantly. They have 120 years left. If they do not repent, I will wipe them out." In order to encourage them to repent, God commanded Noah to begin building an ark, as will be recounted later.³⁴⁹

Obviously, God knew when He created humanity that society would degenerate, but He created it anyway for the sake of the righteous few who would resist the moral downfall and from whom He would rebuild the world after it was cleansed of its corruption.³⁵⁰

4 The corrupt princes became known as the "fallen ones," for they both "fell," i.e., were wiped out, and caused others to "fall," i.e., be wiped out because of their misdeeds.³⁵¹ Although they were not giants like the offspring of the fallen angels, they behaved as if they were, doing whatever they pleased. They were on the earth in those early days, i.e., in the days of Enosh and the initial descendants of Cain, and also later, when the sons of the rulers consorted with the daughters of man and they bore them children.³⁵² Even though they witnessed the partial flooding of the

^{344.} Above, 1:26. ^{345.} Numbers 13:33; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, p. 90-91. ^{346.} *Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit* §44. ^{347.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, pp. 90-91. ^{348.} Rashi on 9:5, below. ^{349.} Below, 6:11 ff. ^{350.} Rashi on v. 6, below. ^{351.} *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 28, p. 86. ^{352.} Above, v. 2.

ONKELOS
5 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים בְּיָמֵי אָדָם וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים בְּיָמֵי אָדָם וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים בְּיָמֵי אָדָם
לְבַד לְחֹד בֵּשׂ כָּל יוֹמָא: 6 וְתַב
בְּמִימְרָה אָרִי עֶבֶד יְת אֲנִישָׁא
בְּאֶרְעָא וְאָמַר בְּמִימְרָה לְמַתְבֵּר
תְּקַפְּחוֹן כְּרַעְתָּה: 7 וְאָמַר יְיָ
אֲמַחִי יְת אֲנִישָׁא דִי בְרַאֲתִי מֵעַל
אֲפִי אֶרְעָא מֵאֲנִישָׁא עַד בְּעִירָא
עַד רְחִישָׁא וְעַד עוֹפָא דְשָׁמַיָא אָרִי
תַּבִּית בְּמִימְרֵי אָרִי עֶבְדְּתָנּוּ: 8 וְנָח
אֲשַׁכַּח רַחֲמִין קָדְם יְיָ:

מפטיר 5 וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה בִּי רַבָּה רַעַת הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־
יֵצֵר מַחֲשַׁבֶּת לְבָוֹ רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם: 6 וַיִּנָּחֵם יְהוָה בִּי־
עֲשֵׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב אֶל־לְבָבוֹ: 7 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֲמַחֶה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בָּרַאֲתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה
מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נַחֲמָתִי
כִּי עָשִׂיתִם: 8 וְנָח מִצָּא חַן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: פ פ פ

קמ"ו פסוקים. אמציה סימן. יחזקיה"ו סימן.

RASHI
הן. אָמַר לוֹ: וְהָאֵל כְּתִיב: "וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב אֶל לְבָבוֹ" אָמַר לוֹ:
נולד לך בן זכר מִימִיךָ? אָמַר לוֹ: הֵן. אָמַר לוֹ: וְמָה
עָשִׂיתָ? אָמַר לוֹ: שְׁמַחְתִּי וְשִׂמְחָתִי אֶת הַכֹּל. אָמַר לוֹ:
וְלֹא הָיִיתָ יוֹדֵעַ שְׁשׁוּפֹה לְמוֹת? אָמַר לוֹ: בְּשַׁעַת חֲדוּתָא
חֲדוּתָא, בְּשַׁעַת אֲבָלָא אֲבָלָא. אָמַר לוֹ: קִי מַעֲשֵׂה
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אֵף עַל פִּי שְׁגָלוֹי לִפְנֵי שְׁשׁוּפֹן לְחִטּוֹא
וְלֹאבְדָן, לֹא נִמְנַע מִלְּבָרֵאן בְּשִׁבִּיל הַצְדִּיקִים הַעֲתִידִים
לְעִמּוּד מָהֶם: 7 וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֲמַחֶה אֶת הָאָדָם. הוּא עֶפֶר,
וְאֵבִיא עָלָיו מִים וְאֲמַחֶה אוֹתוֹ, לִכְךָ נֶאֱמַר לְשׁוֹן "מַחֲיוֹ":
מֵאָדָם עַד בְּהֵמָה. אֵף הֵם הַשְׁחִיתוּ דָרְכָם. דָּבָר אַחֵר:
הַכֹּל נִבְרָא בְּשִׁבִּיל הָאָדָם, וְכִינּוֹן שֶׁהוּא כֹלָה מֵה צֶרֶף
בְּאֵלֹ: כִּי נַחֲמָתִי כִּי עָשִׂיתִם. חֲשַׁבְתִּי מֵה לַעֲשׂוֹת עַל
אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִם:
חסלת פרשת בראשית

6 וַיִּנָּחֵם ה' כִּי עָשָׂה. נַחֲמָה הֵיטָה לִפְנֵי שְׁבָרָא
בְּתַחְתּוּנִים, שְׂאֵלוּ הָיָה מִן הַעֲלִיּוֹנִים הָיָה מִמְרִידָן.
בְּבִרְאשִׁית רַבָּה¹⁰²: וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב. הָאָדָם "אֶל לְבָבוֹ" שֶׁל
מָקוֹם, עָלָה בְּמַחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם לְהַעֲצִיבוֹ. זֶהוּ תִּרְגוּם
אֲנָקְלוֹס. דָּבָר אַחֵר: "וַיִּנָּחֵם", נִהְפָּכָה מִחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ שֶׁל
מָקוֹם מִמִּדַּת רַחֲמִים לְמִדַּת הַדִּין, עָלָה בְּמַחֲשַׁבָה לִפְנֵי
מֵה לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּאָדָם שֶׁעָשָׂה בָּאָרֶץ. וְכֵן כָּל לְשׁוֹן "נַחֲמָה"
שֶׁבְּמִקְרָא לְשׁוֹן נִמְלֵךְ מֵה לַעֲשׂוֹת: "וְכֵן אָדָם וַיִּתְּנָחֵם"¹⁰³,
"וְעַל עֲבָדָיו יִתְּנָחֵם"¹⁰⁴, "וַיִּנָּחֵם ה' עַל הָרָעָה"¹⁰⁵, "נַחֲמָתִי
כִּי הִמְלַכְתִּי"¹⁰⁶, כֹּלֵם לְשׁוֹן מַחֲשַׁבָה אַחֲרֵת הֵם: וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב
אֶל לְבָבוֹ. נִתְאֵבַל עַל אֲבָדָן מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו, כְּמוֹ¹⁰⁷: "וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב
הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל בְּנוֹ". זֶהוּ בְּתַבְתִּי לְתִשׁוּבַת הַמִּינִים, אֲפִיקוּרוֹס
אֶחָד שֶׁאֵל אֶת רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן קֶרְחָה, אָמַר לוֹ: אֵין אֲתָם
מוֹדִים שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא רוֹאֶה אֶת הַנּוֹלָד? אָמַר לוֹ:

103. במדבר כג, יט. 104. דברים לב, לו. 105. שמות לב, יד. 106. שמואלא טו, יא. 107. שמואלובכב יט, ג.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS
speech, its reality becomes more concretized — after all, God created the world through His speech — and therefore harder to revoke. Similarly, we should always be aware of the awesome power of speech: by articulating a negative assessment of someone—even if he is unaware that we have done so—we have unwittingly helped concretize the reality of something that previously existed only in the abstract realm of thought

(which was bad enough). This serves to reinforce that negative trait in the person about whom we have spoken and make it harder for him to rid himself of it.

We should therefore think twice before uttering a negative judgment about anyone; on the contrary, we should always seek to make positive, constructive comments about others.³⁶³

INNER DIMENSIONS

[5] God saw how great was man's wickedness on earth: The sinfulness of this generation caused the

Divine Presence to retreat from the third firmament to the fourth.³⁶⁴

363. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, p. 29 ff. 364. *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:1; *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5710, pp. 111 ff.

◆ **Maftir 5** From all this, after the 120-year period of waiting, **GOD saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and that every impulse of the thoughts of his heart was only for evil, all day long.** In particular, their antinomian behavior toward each other all but negated the justification for the world's existence, since God intended the world to function in a moral fashion.³⁵⁸

6 GOD was comforted by the fact **that He created humanity as earthly beings**, for at least that way they could not incite the angels to rebel against Him, as well. **In His heart**, God **decided to grieve** for humanity. Because of their misdeeds,³⁵⁹ **GOD changed** His attitude toward the fact **that He had made humanity on earth**: instead of relating to them through mercy, He evaluated them in terms of judgment, and found them overwhelmingly unworthy and deserving to be destroyed. But **His heart was pained** over the prospect of destroying all humanity.

7 So GOD said, "Instead of destroying humanity altogether, I will only wipe out those who are culpable. I made human beings out of earth, so **I will simply dissolve** the errant elements of **humanity, which I have created, from the face of the earth** by flooding the world with water. Furthermore, because the animals engaged in cross-species breeding, I will destroy them as well—from **human to livestock, reptiles, and even birds of the sky.** (Even had the animals not become degenerate, I would have to eliminate them, for I created them for the sake of humanity, so if I wipe out most of humanity, they are superfluous.) **For I have changed My mind** from My previous thought to destroy them altogether, **for after all, I created them.** Since they are My creations, they should be preserved to whatever extent possible. Furthermore, it is because the world is innately not conducive to repentance that humanity did not repent properly during all these years. I need to 're-create' the world such that it is easier to refine reality and to repent."³⁶⁰

8 Out of the entire human race, only **Noah found favor in the eyes of God.** He and his family were righteous, so God's resolve to obliterate the guilty elements of humanity did not apply to them.³⁶¹ God therefore had to provide a way for this family to survive the impending flood and regenerate humanity afterwards.

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Bereishit* may be found on p. 335.



∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

7 GOD said: When God initially evaluated humanity's moral condition, He did not articulate His initial reaction—His decision to wipe out the entire world. Only after He found grounds to allow humanity to survive did He pronounce His revised decision to only obliterate the culpable.

This teaches us that when we encounter a person who seems bereft of any redeeming qualities, even one

whose "thoughts are evil all day long," we should check our initial impulse to articulate our judgment of him. As God did, we should first recall that this person, too, is "God's handiwork."³⁶² This will silence our negative thoughts or words about him.

The reason God did not articulate His initial decision is because when an idea descends from the more abstract realm of thought into the more concrete realm of

³⁵⁸. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p. 73; vol. 15, p. 73. ³⁵⁹. Rashi on 8:1, below. ³⁶⁰. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 15, pp. 52-53. ³⁶¹. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 16, pp. 27-31. ³⁶². Isaiah 60:21.

Haftarah for any Sabbath that Falls on the 29th of the Month

(Machar Chodesh)

This *haftarah* is superseded by the *Haftarah* of the First Sabbath of Chanukah (below, p. 377).

1 Samuel 20:18-42

This *haftarah* begins with the words, “Tomorrow is the new moon,” the first day of the month.

20:18 King Saul, noticing how David’s popularity was increasing with his successive victories in battle, suspected him unfairly of challenging his authority, and therefore sought to have him killed. King Saul’s son, Jonathan, was David’s friend and knew that he was loyal to the king. He had recently convinced his father not to kill David, but after David’s most recent victory, King Saul tried again to kill David. Jonathan found this hard to believe, so they devised a test to determine the king’s true intentions. David was to be absent from the royal meal held on the first of the month, and Jonathan would note Saul’s reaction. **Jonathan said to David, “Tomorrow is the new moon,** and as you know, it is the custom of the king’s inner circle to dine at his table on the first day of the month. **You will be remembered** by my father, and he will ask where you are, **for your seat will be vacant.** 19 **After three days, you shall descend** into a hiding place and hide **very well**, for in three days the king’s men will seek you.

You shall come to the hiding place where you hid today, which is a day of work, and you shall stay beside the traveler’s stone that serves as a landmark. 20 **I shall come there and pretend to practice shooting arrows. I shall shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a mark.** 21 **Behold, I shall send the youth that I will bring with me, saying, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to the youth, ‘Behold, the arrows are on this side of you,’ emerge from your hiding place and take them and come, for it is well with you, and there is nothing the matter, as God lives.** 22 **But, if I say thus to the youth, ‘Behold, the arrows are beyond you,’ then go! For it means that God has sent you away by making my father displeased with you, and you must flee for your life.** 23 **Concerning the matter which we have spoken, I and you—the covenant we have made that I shall protect you and you shall protect my family when you become king¹—behold, God is the witness between me and you that we shall honor it forever.”** 24 **David hid in the field, and when it was the new moon, Saul sat down to the meal to eat.** 25 **The king sat upon his seat, as at other**

20:18 וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִבְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפְקֹד מוֹשְׁבֶדְךָ: 19 וְשִׁלְשֶׁת תֵּרֵד מֵאֹד וּבֹאֲתָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־נִסְתַּרְתָּ שָׁם בַּיּוֹם הַמַּעֲשֶׂה וַיִּשְׁבֶּתָּ אֵצֶל הָאֲבִן הָאֵוֹל: 20 וְאֲנִי שִׁלְשֶׁת הַחֳצִים צִדָּה אוֹרֶה לְשַׁלַּח־לִי לַמַּטְרָה: 21 וְהִנֵּה אֶשְׁלַח אֶת־הַנָּעַר לָךְ מִצָּא אֶת־הַחֲצִים אִם־אָמַרְ אֲמַר לְנָעַר הִנֵּה הַחֲצִים | מִמֶּנִּי וְהִנֵּה קָחְנוּ וּבֹאֲהָ בִּי־שָׁלוֹם לָךְ וְאִין דָּבָר חַי־יְהוָה: 22 וְאִם־כִּזָּה אֲמַר לְעֵלָם הִנֵּה הַחֲצִים מִמֶּנִּי וְהִלָּאָה לָךְ כִּי שִׁלַּחְךָ יְהוָה: 23 וְהִדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וְאַתָּה הִנֵּה יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ עַד־עוֹלָם: 24 וַיִּסְתֵּר דָּוִד בְּעֵדָה וַיְהִי הַחֹדֶשׁ וַיָּשָׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל (אֶל־) הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכֹל: 25 וַיָּשָׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־מוֹשְׁבֹו בַּפֶּעַם | בַּפֶּעַם אֶל־מוֹשֵׁב הַקִּיר וַיִּקָּם יְהוֹנָתָן וַיָּשָׁב אֲבִנָּר מִצֵּד שָׁאוּל וַיִּפְקֹד מְקוֹם דָּוִד:

1. 1 Samuel 20:11-17.

times, upon the seat by the wall. Usually, David sat next to Saul and Jonathan next to David, because it was disrespectful for Jonathan to recline next to his father. But, this time, David was absent, so there was no one intervening between Saul and Jonathan. **So Jonathan arose**, rather than recline while seated next to his father, **and did not sit down again until Avner**, Saul's general, **sat down beside Saul**. In any case, **David's place was vacant**. 26 Saul did not say anything about this on that day, for he thought, "It is probably due to an incident of seminal emission that David is not here; he is probably **not pure** since he did not get a chance to immerse himself.² He did not come **because he is not pure** and does not wish to contaminate the food." 27 It was, on the next day, the morrow of the new moon, the second day of the month, that David's place was again vacant, and Saul said to Jonathan, his son, "Why has not David, the son of Jesse, come to the meal either yesterday or today?" 28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem, where his family lives. 29 He said, 'Let me go away now, for we have a family sacrifice in the city, and Eliav,³ my eldest brother, commanded me to come. Now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let me slip away now, just for one day, and see my brothers.' He, therefore, did not come to the king's table." 30 Saul did not believe this. His wrath was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, cursing him, "You son of a parading woman, deserving of punishment! Don't you think that I know that you choose to be loyal to David the son of Jesse rather than to me, to your shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? By remaining loyal to David rather than me, you imply that there is something amiss in how you were conceived, rendering you unfit to inherit the crown. 31 You should realize that as long as the son of Jesse is living on the earth, you and your kingdom will not be established. Now, send for him and take him to me, for he is condemned to death." 32 Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" 33 Saul cast the spear upon Jonathan to strike him, and Jonathan knew that his father had indeed decided to put David to death. 34 Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger. He did not eat any food on that day, the second day of the month, for he was grieved concerning David, for his father had put him to shame. 35 In the morning, Jonathan went out into the field for the meeting with David, and a small boy went with him.

26 וְלֹא־דָבָר שָׁאוּל מֵאוֹמֶה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי אָמַל מִקֶּרֶה הוּא בִלְתִּי מָהוּר הוּא כִּי־לֹא מָהוּר: 27 וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרַת הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי וַיִּפְקֹד מְקוֹם דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן בְּנֹו מִדּוֹעַ לֹא־בָא בֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל גִּם־תְּמוֹל גִּם־הַיּוֹם אֶל־הַלֶּחֶם: 28 וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שָׁאוּל נִשְׁאֵל נִשְׁאֵל דָּוִד מִעֲמֻדִי עַד־בֵּית לָחֶם: 29 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחֲנִי נָא כִּי זָבַח מִשְׁפָּחָה לָנוּ בְּעִיר וְהוּא צְוָה־לִּי אֲחִי וְעָתָה אִם־מִצָּאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אִמְלֹטָה נָא וְאַרְאֶה אֶת־אֲחִי עַל־כֵּן לֹא־בָא אֶל־שֻׁלְחָן הַמֶּלֶךְ: 30 וַיַּחֲרֹאֶף שָׁאוּל בִּיהוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בְּנֵי־נָעוֹת הַמִּרְדּוֹת הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־בָחַר אֶתָּה לְבֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבִשְׁתָּךְ וּלְבִשֶׁת עֶרְוַת אִמֶּךָ: 31 כִּי כָל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר בֶּן־יִשְׂרָאֵל חָי עַל־הָאָדָמָה לֹא תָכֹן אֶתָּה וּמַלְכוּתְךָ וְעָתָה שְׁלַח וְקַח אֹתוֹ אֵלָי כִּי בֶן־מָוֶת הוּא: 32 וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שָׁאוּל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָמָּה יוֹמַת מֶה עָשָׂה: 33 וַיִּטֵּל שָׁאוּל אֶת־הַחֲנִית עָלָיו לְהַכּוֹת וַיִּדַּע יְהוֹנָתָן כִּי־כָלָה הִיא מִעַם אָבִיו לְהָמִית אֹתִי דָּוִד: 34 וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן מֵעַם הַשֻּׁלְחָן בַּחֲרִי־אָף וְלֹא־אָכַל בַּיּוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לָחֶם כִּי נִעְצַב אֶל־דָּוִד כִּי הִכְלָמוּ אָבִיו: 35 וַיְהִי בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשֶּׁדֶה לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וְנָעַר קָטָן עִמּוֹ:

2. See Leviticus 15:16. 3. 1 Samuel 16:6; 17:13.

36 He said to the boy, "Run ahead, and please find the arrows that I shoot." The boy ran; and he shot the arrow beyond him. 37 The boy came up to the place where the arrow that Jonathan had shot had landed. Jonathan called after the lad, and said, "Isn't the arrow beyond you?" 38 Jonathan called after the lad, "Quickly! Hasten; do not stand still!" Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. 39 The boy knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the matter. 40 Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy who accompanied him, and said to him, "Go, bring them into the city." 41 The boy departed, and David arose from the landmark toward the south. He fell upon his face on the ground three times, and prostrated himself three times. He and Jonathan kissed one another and wept one with the other, until David exceeded Jonathan's weeping. 42 Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace! And remember that we have sworn both of us in the name of God, saying, 'May God be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"

36 וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרוֹ רֵץ מֵעַתָּה נָא אֶת־הַחֲצִים
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מוֹרֶה הַנֶּעַר רֵץ וְהוֹאִי־רָה הַחֲצִי
לְהַעֲבֹרוֹ: 37 וַיָּבֹא הַנֶּעַר עַד־מְקוֹם הַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר
יָרָה יְהוֹנָתָן וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר וַיֹּאמֶר
הֲלוֹא הַחֲצִי מִמֶּנִּי וְהִלָּאֵה: 38 וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן
אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר מִהֲרָה חֲיֹשֶׁה אֶל־הַתַּעֲמֹד וַיִּלְלֵם
נָעַר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־הַחֲצִי (תְּחִצִּים) וַיָּבֹא אֶל־
אֲדֹנָיו: 39 וְהַנֶּעַר לֹא־יָדַע מֵאוֹמֶה אֶדְיָה יְהוֹנָתָן
וְדָוִד יָדְעוּ אֶת־הַדְּבָר: 40 וַיִּתֵּן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־
כִּלָּיו אֶל־הַנֶּעַר אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֵךְ הִבֵּי
הָעִיר: 41 הַנֶּעַר בָּא וְדָוִד קָם מֵאֶצֶל הַנֶּגֶב
וַיִּפֹּל לְאַפָּיו אֶרֶצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פַּעֲמִים
וַיִּשְׁקֹן אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּכְבְּלוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ
עַד־דָּוֶד הִגְדִּיל: 42 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ
לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִהְיֶה אֲנִי וּבֵינְךָ וּבֵין זֵרְעִי וּבֵין
זֵרְעֶךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:



Dedicated in honor of our children

**Nathan, Yitzchok,
Moshe Lev,
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways
of our holy Torah*

Yuri and Deana Pikover

