

B'S'D'

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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON Bereishis - 5762

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND [SMTP: ryfrand@torah.org]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2001 9: 50pm Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis
The "Ki Tov" (That It Was Good) of Monday Was Delayed Until Tuesday

The third day of Creation [Bereshis 1: 9-13] is the only day in which the expression "G-d saw that it was good" is mentioned twice. This expression is mentioned both following the gathering of the waters which divided the seas from the dry land, and following the sprouting of vegetation and seed-bearing plants - both of which occurred on the third day of Creation.

As a result of the fact that Tuesday had a double portion of "ki tov" [that it was good], Tuesday is considered a particularly fortuitous day of the week. Many people specifically plan their wedding for this day. When moving into a new house, many people plan to move on Tuesday. Many people try to start a new job on Tuesday.

On the other hand, on the second day of Creation, there is no mention at all of the expression "that it was good". Rash"i comments that the reason "ki tov" is not mentioned on the second day is because the creation of the water (i.e. - its assignment to the seas) was not completed until the third day. A value judgment of "ki tov" could not be pronounced until the work was complete. Therefore "ki tov" is mentioned twice on Tuesday - once in connection with the completion of the water (which was started previously) and once in connection with the vegetation (which was both started and completed on that same day).

This, however, begs for further explanation. G-d is all powerful. What does it mean that "he did not complete the job on Monday?" Why not? Clearly, He does not become tired or run out of time. Rather, He purposely did not finish the job on Monday. What is this trying to teach us?

The Shemen HaTov writes that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, is teaching us a lesson through the events of Creation that we as human beings must learn. This lesson is that "it's not over, until it's over." Sometimes things occur in life and we do not see the benefit therein. Sometimes we do not understand exactly what is happening.

Sometimes we will be able to understand what the event was really about, on the very next day. Then we will see the benefit of the inexplicable occurrence of the previous day. In the middle of creating the world, the All Powerful went out of His way to leave something undone, to leave something with a question mark at the end of the day, to leave something where the "ki tov" was not immediately apparent. The lesson is that "life" follows the same pattern as the days of Creation. We do not always immediately perceive the "ki tov".

Life would be much easier to live if within 24 hours we would immediately perceive that elusive "ki tov". Sometimes we do not

even understand events the following week or year. Sometimes we do not even understand until the next lifetime. But the lesson of the delayed "ki tov" is that we should not expect to always see immediate results and immediate outcomes. Sometimes the good does not come until later.

G-d disrupted the order of Creation, leaving something purposely unfinished, in order to teach us this crucial lesson of life.

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These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 300, A Mamzer's Obligation in Mitzvos. Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrand, Copyright 1 2001 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B learn@torah.org Baltimore, MD 21208

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The incoming Editorial Board of Daf Hashavua wishes to thank Rev. Bernard Koschland for his outstanding editorship of the Daf over the last 7 years.

Sponsored by the Wagman Family in memory of Sam Wagman on his yahrzeit

Judaism in Practice
WHAT'S IN A NAME BY RABBI EMANUEL LEVY,
Palmer's Green & Southgate Synagogue

In our Sidra we find that "Adam gave names to every animal and to every bird and to every wild beast of the field" (2: 20).

It is the prerogative of parents to choose a name for their newborn child. Daughters are named on the nearest Monday or Thursday following the birth, when the father can be called to the Torah; some wait for Shabbat. After his aliyah a special "Mi Shaberach" is made in which the name of the newborn girl is given, and because the ceremony takes place in the presence of a minyan the name is thereby publicised.

Following the example of the Almighty Himself, who gave Abraham a new name at his circumcision, we traditionally name a boy at his brit milah.

Many parents give their children two Hebrew names, each name after a different member of the family. The Chasam Sofer justifies this practice by referring to the name "Shneur". He cites the case of one parent who wanted the newborn to be named "Meir" (Giver of Light) after one grandfather. The other parent wanted the child to be called "Yair" (May he Shine) after the other grandfather. To meet both requirements, the baby was called "Shneur" (Shnei-Or) which actually means "two lights" and this is the origin of that name.

The middle letters of the word "neshama" (the Soul) are "shin" and "mem", forming the word "Shem" meaning "name". This has been taken to mean that the Hebrew names which we give to our children actually have an affect upon their spiritual wellbeing.

It goes without saying that the Hebrew names which we lovingly bestow upon our children should only be given after careful deliberation.

Ask the Dayan...Our Dayanim answer your questions

Q I will be a patient in hospital over Shabbat. The hospital authorities will not allow me to light Shabbat candles. What should I do?

A DAYAN CHANOCH EHRENTREU answers-

The obligation to light candles is a twofold one. Firstly, in the area where the Friday night meal will be eaten one is obligated to kindle the traditional candles or oil-based lights. Secondly, one is obligated to have a light in any room that will be used on Friday night. Our Sages instituted this so that one would be able to safely navigate in the house without fear of injury that would disrupt the harmony of Shabbat. Today, we rely on electrical lights for this purpose. The question which remains is, can the first part of this Mitzvah, i.e. the kindling of the lights where the Friday meal will be eaten, be fulfilled by electrical lights and can a blessing be recited when switching them on?

Halacha authorities differ. Some say that it is permissible to use electricity for Shabbat candles and the proper blessing may be recited. Others disagree. Some authorities give permission to use electric lights but say that no blessing should be recited. In a hospital where lighting candles is prohibited one should rely on the electric lights for Shabbat candles. If the lights are on they should be switched off and then turned on for the sake of the Mitzvah. Harav Aaron Kotler ztl ruled that a woman who gives birth in a hospital may switch on the electric lights with a blessing and Harav Moishe Feinstein ztl ruled that no blessing should be recited. As there exists no accepted custom, each person should follow their Rabbi's directive.

Please forward your questions for our Dayanim to the Editor.

THE JEWISH BOOKSHELF

Rabbi Ya'akov Grunwald, of Pinner Synagogue, suggests some additions to your library

RITE AND REASON by Shmuel Pinchas Gelbard

In this book the author explains 1050 Jewish customs and their sources. Our religious life is replete with customs which we often follow without knowing why. Customs fall into various categories and originate from different times and communities. Some customs change and others lose their significance. Many have surprising reasons. One example will suffice: it is customary not to call two brothers up to the Torah one after the other. Why? One reason given is because of the verse in Psalms (19: 8): "The testimony of Hashem is faithful". Since they are not acceptable as witnesses together, we do not call them up to the Torah one after the other.

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The Chief Rabbi's Faith Lecture Series Last year the Chief Rabbi embarked on an ambitious lecture series with the intention of dealing with six of the most difficult theological questions facing modern Jews. The Chief Rabbi chose the following subjects: the nature of faith, the problem of evil, Creation, Revelation, the concept of the Chosen People and the Messianic idea. These lectures can now be read on the Chief Rabbi's website. I strongly recommend them. The Chief Rabbi is able to present even the most difficult concepts in a brilliantly attractive and enjoyable manner. I feel that these lectures form a most convincing and original presentation of Orthodox Jewish Beliefs today. These lectures may be found on the Chief Rabbi's website www.chief Rabbi.org

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<http://www.enayim.org/archives/bereishis5760.html>
[From 2 years ago]

Enayim L'Torah SOY Parshat Bereishit 5760

THE LINK BETWEEN THE GOOD AND THE HOLY

RABBI YOSEF BLAU In the description of creation, the Torah uses the term "ki tov" (that it was good) for that which G-d had made. Only with the introduction of the seventh day, Shabbos, does the term "vayikadesh" (he sanctified) appear. The distinction between the six days of physical creation, which are good, even very good, and the day of Shabbos, which adds the dimension of holiness, is clear.

Yet there is a link in the text of B'reishis between chol (the mundane world) and kedusha (holiness) even though the term does not yet appear. An underlining theme in the six days of creation is havdala (separation or division). On the very first day, G-d separates between two opposites, the light and the darkness. On the second day, He divides water from water, the same object.

The bond between kedusha and havdala is expressed by the Rambam in Hilchos Shabbos (29: 1), where he includes within the biblical obligation of remembering the Shabbos both havdala and kiddush. The Jewish concept of kedusha invariably requires some type of separation. A day is sanctified by a prohibition of work. A location is hallowed by restrictions on access. The higher the level of kedusha the greater the limitations. Havdala is made when a holiday falls out on a Saturday night to differentiate between the sanctity of Shabbos and that of the holiday.

A critical aspect of a halachic perspective is to continuously make distinctions and acknowledge nuances. When one appreciates that the world of "good" requires differentiation, then one has begun the process of raising that world into one which can encompass holiness.

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Subject: MIDEI PARSHA BY RABBI ELIEZER CHRYSLER
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ha'Ga'on Rav Binyamin n.y.

Parshas Bereishis

That's What Rebbi Yitzchak Said (Part 1) The Torah ought really to have begun with "ha'Chodesh ha'zeh lochem Rosh Chodoshim" (the joint Mitzvah of Rosh Chodesh and the Korban Pesach), the first Mitzvah that K'lal Yisrael were commanded, says Rashi, quoting a Medrash Yalkut in the name of Rebbi Yitzchak.

The Torah's main objective, after all, is to teach Yisrael the Mitzvos, as is inherent in the word Torah (which means teaching or guide). The stories that precede "ha'Chodesh ha'Zeh" and which lead up to it, appear at best, to be of secondary importance, and certainly do not seem to belong here at the beginning of the Torah.

So why does the Torah begin with "Bereishis", asks Rebbi Yitzchak?

It is to counter the claims of the nations of the world, he replies, should they accuse us of having stolen Eretz Yisrael when we conquered it from the Canaanites. Therefore, this Parshah comes to teach us that G-d created the world, in which case the world is His. Consequently, He gave Eretz Yisrael to the

Cana'ananim in the first place, and He was perfectly entitled to take it away from them and give it to K'lal Yisrael, when he saw fit to do so.

Rebbi Yitzchak does not for one moment suggest, the K'li Yakar explains, that the Torah should have omitted the whole of Seifer Bereishis. Not at all! The creation and the episode of the Flood, he points out, are vital to teach us G-d's existence and the concept of Divine reward and punishment, respectively. And besides, Bereishis contains a number of Mitzvos, albeit given to individuals - Eiver min ha'Chai to No'ach, B'ris Milah to Avraham and Gid ha'Nasheh to Ya'akov, and Mitzvos, as we explained, are what the Torah is all about.

Rebbi Yitzchak is therefore suggesting that, seeing as the Torah's main objective is the Mitzvos that were given to Klal Yisrael, as we explained earlier, all other teachings are of secondary importance. Consequently, they would seem to belong, not at the beginning, of the Torah, but at the end, after all the Mitzvos have been listed.

The fact that, for the reason mentioned, the Torah begins with "Bereishis", demonstrates the depth of our right to Eretz Yisrael, even to the point that it overrides the importance of the Mitzvos. This is not at all surprising, when we bear in mind that those very Mitzvos are enhanced and their sanctity magnified when they are performed in Eretz Yisrael (as the Ramban explains in a number of places).

The K'li Yakar however, explains that the Torah here is stressing its abhorrence of theft. Indeed, G-d has indicated on numerous occasions, just how much He detests theft, as we find for example, in the generation of the Flood, whose fate was sealed primarily because of the sin of theft. This theme recurs with Adam ha'Rishon, where the Medrash stresses that G-d accepted the bull that he brought as a sacrifice, because it was not stolen. Yitzchak too, instructed his son Eisav to bring him two goats that were not stolen. And Yisrael in Egypt were told to "Draw and take your animals for the Korban Pesach" and not stolen ones (because G-d hates theft) as the Ba'al ha'Turim explains.

Had the Torah not preempted the nation's claims by stressing that Yisrael did not steal the land from the Canaanim, then all of the above would have been lost on them. Even though they would later copy the Torah from the twelve stones that Yehoshua erected in Gilgal (in which case they might have eventually arrived at "Bereishis" at the end of the Torah, as we explained earlier), nevertheless who says that they would read it all? Who said they would reach 'Bereishis' at the end of the Torah?

What transpires is that G-d anticipated the terrible Chilul Hashem that would ensue, should the nations of the world accuse His people of theft, and Him of turning a blind eye to this terrible sin. Indeed, all the other examples of G-d's abhorrence (that we cited above) would be rendered meaningless.

And that is why the Torah found it necessary to begin with "Bereishis Boro Elokim".

In spite of the Medrash, the K'li Yakar concludes, the Torah needed to begin with "Bereishis", because from it we learn the vital principle of Creation, precluding the notion that the world created itself. Without it, he says, there would be no basis for Kabbolas ha'Torah - and not for the Mitzvos either.

In two basic issues, the K'li Yakar disagrees with the Ramban, as we shall see.

CHRONOLOGICALLY SPEAKING ...

The Chronological order of events that took place from the Creation until the fortieth year in the desert. (based mainly on the Seider ha'Doros).

DATE EVENT

1-930 Adam
year 1 (day 1) Birth of Kayin and Hevel & twin sisters
(day 52) Kayin murders Hevel
130 Adam returns to Chavah after a hundred and thirty years of abstinence;
130-1042 Sheis
235-1140 Enosh
325-1235 Keinan
395-1290 Mahalalel
460-1422 Yered
622-987 Chanoch
687-1656 Mesushelach
874-1651 Lemech
987 Chanoch is taken up to Heaven. He becomes the angel Matatron.
1056-2006 No'ach
1536 G-d decrees the Flood
1556 Ya'fes
1557 Cham
1558-2158 Shem
1656 (10th Cheshvan) Mesushelach the Tzadik dies.
17th Cheshvan The Great Flood
27th Kislev The rain stops falling; the water level begins to rise
1st Sivan The water begins to recede
17th Sivan The Ark rests on Mount Ararat
1st Av The tops of the mountains appear
10th Ellul No'ach opens the window of the Ark; he sends the pigeon for the first time ...
17th Ellul ... for the second time ...
24th Ellul ... and for the third time
1657 (1st Tishri) No'ach removes the cover of the Ark
27th Cheshvan The world is dry once again
1658-2098 Arpachshad (son of Shem)
1695-2126 Shelach
1723-2160 Eiver
1757-1966 Peleg
1787-2026 Re'u
1819-2049 Serug
1849-1997 Nachor
1878-2083 Terach
1948-2123 Avraham Avinu
1949-1997 Nachor
1959-1998 Haran
1958 (1st Tishri)-2085 Sarah Imeinu
1973 Avraham marries Sarah
1998 Avraham smashes his father's idols, and is subsequently cast into the furnace by Nimrod
1996 The Tower of Bavel
2000 Terach takes his family from Ur Kasdim to Charan; Avraham and Sarah preach monotheism to the people
2006 No'ach dies
2083 Terach dies
2085 The Akeidas Yitzchak. Sarah Imeinu dies.

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP: skatz@torah.org] To: hamaayan@torah.org Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring - Parashat Bereishit

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz
Bereishit: The Book of the Straightforward and Upright
Volume XVI, No. 1 26 Tishrei 5762 October 13, 2001

Sponsored by the Parness family, in memory of Anna Parness a'h

Today's Learning: Bava Metzia 3: 1-2 Orach Chaim 527: 3-5 Daf Yomi (Bavli): Bava Kamma 78

R' Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin z"l (the "Netziv"; 1817-1893; rabbi and rosh yeshiva of Volozhin) writes: The book which we are now beginning, which we call Bereishit, was called by the prophets, "Sefer Hayashar." R' Yochanan explains in the gemara (Avodah Zarah 25a) that the term "yashar" / "straightforward" or "upright" refers to the Patriarchs Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov.

Why were they called specifically by this adjective? We read in Ha'azinu (Devarim 32: 4) that G-d is "tzaddik" / righteous and "yashar." In contrast, the generation of the destruction of the Temple consisted of tzaddikim / righteous people, but they were not yesharim. They did not act straightforwardly with each other; to the contrary, they harbored within themselves hatred of each other. When they saw someone whose way of fearing G-d was different from their own, writes the Netziv, they labeled him an apikorus / heretic. This in turn led to murder and to all of the other sins which eventually resulted in the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash.

What is praiseworthy about the Patriarchs is that besides being tzaddikim, besides loving Hashem to the greatest extent possible, they were yesharim. This means that they acted with love toward every person and they sought the welfare of all of mankind, as required for the continued existence of creation. Avraham, for example, prayed for the welfare of Sdom. Though he hated them and their king intensely, he nevertheless desired their continued existence. Like a father who desires the well-being of his wayward son, so the Patriarchs acted toward the wicked people of their time. This is why their book, the Book of Bereishit, is known as Sefer Hayashar. (Preface to the commentary Ha'emek Davar on Bereishit).

"Hashem Elokim said, 'It is not tov / good for man to be alone . . .'" (2: 18)

Our Sages state in Pirkei Avot (6: 3), "There is no tov other than Torah." Accordingly, commented R' Moshe Hager shlita (the "Vizhnitzer Rebbe"), this verse can be understood as teaching that one should not learn Torah at home, alone. Rather, one should study in a bet midrash setting among other people. (Quoted in Sichot U'maamarei Kodesh, p. 106)

"But Noach found grace in the eyes of Hashem." (6: 8)

R' Yerucham Levovitz z"l (the "Mirror Mashgiach"; died 1936) writes: As his name suggests, Noach was a man of "menuchah" (literally, "rest"). Menuchah is a trait which the Torah holds in very high esteem. We read, for example (Bereishit 2: 2), "On the seventh day, G-d completed His work which He had done, and He abstained on the seventh day from all His work which He had done." This implies that something was created on the seventh day itself. What was it? Rashi explains: "What was the world lacking [at the end of the Six Days of Creation]? Menuchah. But when Shabbat came, menuchah came with it."

R' Levovitz continues: Noach was very concerned for the comfort of his generation. He not only prayed for their comfort, our Sages teach as well that he was an inventor. As hinted to in verse 5: 29, "This one will bring us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands, from the ground which Hashem had cursed," Noach invented the plow and other farm implements. He did all this so that his generation could experience menuchah.

What is the purpose of menuchah? It is not, of course, so that a person can have more time to devote to foolishness. The answer is found in the Shabbat afternoon prayers, where the menuchah of Shabbat is described as follows: "A rest of love and magnanimity, a rest of truth and faith, a rest of peace and serenity and tranquility and security, a perfect rest in which You find favor . . ." Noach found grace in G-d's eyes and achieved immortality

because he made such menuchah possible.

It is incredible, therefore, writes R' Levovitz, to think of the great reward that awaits all inventors who create things that make people's lives easier. Modern technology can help to bring menuchah and all other good things to mankind. It is not an inventor's fault if man sometimes misuses his invention.

The gemara (Avodah Zarah 2b) relates that at the time of the final judgment, the Roman and Persian Empires will ask G-d to reward them for the roads, bathhouses, aqueducts, etc. that they built, ostensibly for the convenience of the Jewish people, so that the Jewish people will be able to study Torah and perform mitzvot. Hashem will respond, "You fools! You did it all for immoral purposes or to make money." The implication of the gemara, however, is that the world's road builders would have been rewarded had they done their work for noble purposes. It is terrifying to think of the opportunity that the Romans and Persians lost, writes R' Levovitz.

For our part, concludes R' Levovitz, we owe hakarat hatov / a debt of gratitude to all inventors and builders, even if their work was not motivated by altruism. After all, how much menuchah have we realized because of their efforts! (Haggadah Shel Pesach Rashei Yeshivat Mir p. 59)

From the Midrash . . .

Rabbi Eliezer bar Chanina said in the name of Rav Acha: For 26 generations [from Adam to Moshe] the letter aleph complained before Hashem's throne. She said, "Master of the Universe! I am the first of the letters, but you did not create Your world with me." [The first word in the Torah, "Bereishit," begins with the second letter, bet.]

Hashem responded: The entire world and everything in it were created for the Torah. In the future I will give the Torah at Sinai and I will begin with you, as it is written, "Anochi" / "I am Hashem." (Bereishit Rabbah, ch. 1)

R' Shmuel Yitzchak Hillman z"l (1868-1953; rabbi in Glasgow and London; father-in-law of Israeli Chief Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Halevi Herzog z"l) explains this midrash as follows:

Ordinarily one would have a purpose in mind for a building before he begins to build the building. One does not usually gather the materials and build the building before determining what the purpose of the building will be.

In this sense, the purpose of a building can be called its "aleph" and the construction of the building its "bet." The world, too, was created for a purpose, i.e., so that man could keep the Torah's laws. That was (and is) the "aleph" of the world.

Yet, Hashem waited 26 generations before giving the Torah. For 26 generations, man did not know what the world's purpose was. For 26 generations, the "aleph," the purpose, was ignored and the "bet," the construction of the world, was given primacy.

Why? R' Hillman explains that just as Torah cannot be taught to a newborn baby, so the earliest generations could not receive the Torah. True, some individuals, for example Avraham, did discover the world's purpose and did keep the Torah even before it was given, just as some precocious children may be prepared to learn before their contemporaries are. However, not until 26 generations of development and maturity had been attained was the world as a whole ready for the Torah. (Derashot Ohr Hayashar, No. 1)

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www.torahweb.org/torah/2000/parsha/rhab_braishis.html
[from last year]

RABBI YAAKOV HABER
THE HUMAN MICROCOSM

"And G-d brought [all of the living creatures] to Man to see what he would call [them]; and all the animals that he called [with names] is his name (B'raishit 2: 19)." With this passage, the Torah relates the episode of Adam naming the animals. What was the purpose of this procedure? Why didn't the same Creator who endowed Adam with knowledge and language skills also include a "database" of the names of the animals in his brain?

Furthermore, on the passage "let us make Man (1: 26)," the Midrash quotes several positions as to whom the Creator was addressing with the word "us." Rashi quotes the opinion that He consulted with the angels before creating Man. Even though G-d did not need the angels' input and they did not assist in Man's creation, He nonetheless solicited their advice in order to teach us that a greater individual should always consult with people of lesser stature before embarking on major projects. However, the Midrash states another, enigmatic opinion that the subject of "us" is the six days of creation. How can we understand this cryptic passage?

The Malbim (R. Meir Leibush Malbim), in his commentary to our Parasha, gives a fascinating answer to both of these questions which provides for us a penetrating insight into the complex creature that is Man. Man's mission to elevate his soul-body partnership in the service of his Creator would require the marshalling of a diverse group of characteristics for different situations. The Man would require diligence, courage, kindness, compassion, quickness and a host of other qualities. The human being would also need a dose of cruelty, brazenness and other qualities which we would normally associate with evil to be utilized at the proper time in the service of G-d: cruelty for the destruction of the enemies of Israel (see Midrash Tanchuma M'tsora 1 and Kohelet 3: 8) and brazenness to allow the believer in G-d to ignore the taunts and disdain of a non-believing world around him (see Ramo, Orach Chaim 1: 1). The Creator's "partnership" with the other days of creation indicates that he placed within Man qualities of all of the elements of the universe in addition to the Divine soul which came directly from G-d. It is well known that diverse species of animals possess different instinctual traits which they utilize for survival; Man received a dose of all of them. Thus, Adam and his descendants would be a microcosm of all of creation. Indeed, in many Jewish philosophical works, Man is referred to as an "olam katan" -- a mini-world.

Hashem wished to inform the pinnacle of creation of the plethora of qualities that were implanted within him. Therefore, He told Adam to name the animals. Names in Hebrew, the Holy Tongue, the language with which the world was created (see Ramban, Exodus 30: 13), represent the essence of that particular object. Thus, Adam when naming each creature analyzed its most salient feature and called it appropriately. Now, Adam, having been informed by Hashem that all of the qualities of all of the animals had been placed within him, was essentially discovering himself by scrutinizing the qualities of each animal. If, in the future, the human being would erroneously think that he did not have courage, he need only remind himself of the lion within him. If he would question his ability to soar to great heights of divine service, he would recall that he is also like the eagle.

The idea of gaining insight into our talents from the animal kingdom appears in several other places in the statements of Chazal. Yehuda ben Taima directs in Avot (5: 20) that we should

be as "bold as the leopard, light as the eagle, fast as the deer, and courageous as the lion to execute the will of your Father in Heaven." Perhaps this Tanna is not merely using members of the animal kingdom as similes for good qualities, but highlighting the fact that all of their traits were placed within man. Similarly, we read in Tractate Eiruvin (100b) that had the Torah not been given, we would have learned various good characteristics from different animals. If all of these animal-traits were placed in Man at the time of his creation, it is not surprising then that he should relearn them from the animals themselves.

Many often think that they are locked into patterns of behavior which began in youth and continue throughout their life. The insight to be gathered from the presence of all qualities in an individual, albeit in different doses, should inspire us to change for the better and harness all of these talents, some latent, some patent, in the service of our Creator.

From: Zomet Institute[SMTP: zomet@netvision.net.il] To: shabbat-zomet@yerushalayim.net Subject: Shabbat-B'Shabbato: Bereishit 5762

Shabbat-B'Shabbato - Parshat Bereishit
WHY IS THE TANACH SO IMPORTANT?

by RABBI SHMUEL ELIYAHU, Chief Rabbi of Tzefat, member of the Council of the Chief Rabbinate

The number is 1,080 - that is the number of languages into which the Tanach has been translated. Most people do not realize that there are so many distinct languages and dialects in the world. But there are, and each of these has its own translation. The number of copies that have been printed is 3,950,000,000 (three billion, nine-hundred-fifty million). This several billion more than any other book that was written. The Tanach has meaning for the Chinese, the Japanese, the Indians, the Russians, the Ethiopians, the English, the Hungarians, the Persians, and hundreds of other nations.

What is written in the Tanach? From the beginning until the end, it covers about 3400 years of human life. The first two portions, Bereishit and Noach, describe the first 2000 years, and the rest of the 24 volumes, from Lech Lecha to the end of Malachi, discusses another 1400 years. The first 2000 years, before Avraham, are described very briefly, not because nothing happened during that time but rather because what is really important to humanity is what happened to the nation of Yisrael. This is clearly shown by the relative space in the Tanach. In fact, what is written in the first two Torah portions is also only what will be relevant later for the role of Bnei Yisrael. Anything that was irrelevant was not written down.

Why is all this interesting? It is because G-d speaks through the history of this specific nation. Through Yisrael the world learned about the Ten Commandments, and it has tried to observe them with moderate success. G-d has spoken through His prophets and through actions. He has spoken through rain - "if you listen to His mitzvot" [Devarim 11: 13] - and through snakes - if one speaks evil slander (see Bamidbar 21: 6). He guides and instructs, He strikes and punishes. He has used many different ways to pass His words on to Bnei Yisrael, and from there to the entire world.

What about today? In modern times too, G-d talks to the world through our day-to-day life. He has done this by establishing a country, through the way it is being managed, and through the settlers, who are "making history." According to CIA analysis, the most sensitive place in the world is the Temple Mount, "for this is the place where G-d commanded the blessing" [Tehillim 133: 3]. A small neighborhood in Chevron, with a population of no more than a few dozen Jews, is extensively

discussed in meetings of the United Nations by representatives of all the nations of the world, more than cities with populations of millions. This is not "politics!" They know or have a gut feeling that we are the ones about whom it was said, "All the families of the world will be blessed through you and your children" [Bereishit 28: 14]. If we do not bring a blessing to the world, we will be forever put to shame.

What will happen in the future? "The Temple Mount will be known as the highest of the mountains... and all the nations will make their way to it" [Yeshayhu 2: 2]. It will be a pity if we stand by the wayside, it is very worthwhile to be part of the actions of G-d - the redemption.

A Halachic Note: ELECTRIC SHAVERS - BY RABBI YISRAEL ROZEN

For several years, Zomet Institute has tested the halachic aspects of various brands of electric shavers. The certification process is carried out in cooperation with the import agents and not the main company.

Within the last few months, we have encountered a new problem with the latest models of Philips shavers. We have received many questions about this matter, and the following note is meant to clarify the situation.

(1) Modern halachic experts disagree whether an electric shaver is defined as a "razor," so that it is halachically forbidden by Torah law, or if it is considered a "razor-like scissors," which is permitted. (See Yoreh Dei'ah 181: 10. The RAMA differentiates between the "top" and the "bottom.") On one hand, modern shavers cut the roots of the hair, so that the result is the same as a razor. On the other hand, it may be that the shaver "head" separates between the cheek and the blade, so that it has the status of a scissors.

(2) In volume 13 of Techumin (page 200), we published an article by Rabbi Shabtai Rapaport (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein's grandson and editor of his writings; Rabbi Rapaport notes that Rabbi Feinstein approved his rulings in this matter). He gives a practical test for an electric shaver. If it can cut hair even without the head attached, it is considered a razorblade, while if the head is necessary for the action of the machine it is considered scissors and it may be used (since two parts are needed for the cutting action).

(3) Zomet Institute has accepted this criterion, and runs regular tests on electric shavers (these are quite complicated and may cause damage to the specific machine). Zomet has certified various shavers, from different vendors. The list can be obtained by fax, at 02-9931889.

(4) With Philips shavers of model number 6000 and above, we have encountered blades that are able to shave hair even when the head has been removed. We cannot approve these machines, even though they are outwardly similar to the blades used in earlier machines.

(5) When we discovered this, we contacted the importers of the Philips brand (Electra-Sachar), in an effort to import a hybrid machine, where a model 6000 would use blades of the earlier type. We were able to operate such a machine. While the importer would indeed like to agree to our request, they must have permission from the manufacturers in Holland, and this has not yet been received.

(6) Therefore, for the time being we cannot give our approval to Philips shavers of model number 6000 or higher. Perhaps pressure by the consumers might help in this matter. (The phone number of the importer is 03-9530582.)

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From: rsiegel@torah.org[SMTP: rsiegel@torah.org] Reply To: kollel@mcs.com;genesis@torah.org To: haftorah@torah.org Subject: Haftorah - Parshas Breishis Parshas Breishis Yeshaya 42: 5 - 43: 10 by Rabbi Dovid Siegel

We introduce the year's Haftorah reading with a penetrating message defining our awesome role in this world. Rashi quotes the Sages' Aggadic interpretation of the Torah's opening word, "Breishis" to mean, "For the sake of the choice". Based on references from the books of Yirmiyahu and Mishle, the Sages explain the Torah's first verse in the following manner, "Hashem created the world for the sake of His sacred people and His sacred Torah." (comment of Rashi to Breishis 1: 1) Hashem revealed at the outset that His master plan called for standards of elevation. Although the world would develop into seventy nations Hashem created His world with one nation in mind, the Jewish people. Similarly, although the world's moral fiber would consist of seven human principles Hashem created His world with a greater moral standard in mind - the adherence to six hundred and thirteen principles.

Concurring with the Torah's opening thought the prophet Yeshaya develops this and translates it into our levels of responsibility. In order to appreciate this we refer to Rashi's opening comment to the entire Torah. The Sages question the Torah's need to begin with the historical account of over two thousand years of world existence. They reason since the Torah is essentially a book of Mitzvos it should most appropriately begin with Hashem's first Mitzva to His people. They answer that Hashem wished to substantiate our claim to Eretz Yisroel. He therefore began the Torah with the unequivocal fact that He created the world and apportioned His land to whomever He deemed worthy of residing therein.

These words are cryptic and perplexing but their underlying message is that the Torah's lessons go far beyond the scope of Mitzvos. Hashem declared through His opening words that His all encompassing purpose for creation is to be recognized as the source of existence. Nachmanides crystallizes with these classic words, "For Hashem has no interest in all below other than for mankind to know and acknowledge Him as their creator." (comment of Nachmanides to Sh'mos 12: 16) This explains why Hashem began the Torah with an elaborate history lesson. The opening chapter describes in detail every step of creation. This first statement declares for all time the direction of the world and its primary purpose- to recognize and acknowledge Hashem as the source of all. The world's foremost obligation is to preserve this truth thereby fulfilling Hashem's sole interest in all of mankind.

Nachmanides develops this and shows how the book of Breishis is one long display of Hashem's sovereignty over His world. Although the world seems to run on its own Hashem truly controls it and responds to all human conduct. Breishis teaches us that Hashem rewards those who follow His program and acknowledge His existence and punishes those who ignore and deny His existence. Hashem is extremely harsh on those who rebel against Him attempting to eradicate His name from this world. Conversely, Hashem is also extremely kind and compassionate to those who dedicate themselves to His program

and publicize His existence. Adam's short lived privilege in Gan Eden and his subsequent rejection begin the lesson. The devastating flood and disastrous tower of Bavel continue the lesson. Canaan's corrupt behavior and Shem's commendable concern complete this segment of things. (Nachmanides to Breishis 1: 1)

Following this pattern of creation Hashem designated a specific area of His world wherein His Divine presence could be recognized and intensified. The said purpose for this elevated land was to increase His recognition amongst those who sought to further their relationship with Him. The seven Canaanite nations residing therein had no such goal in mind and were immersed in the most repulsive pagan culture ever to exist. They were, by definition, the antithesis of Eretz Yisroel and defied the entire world's purpose for existence. The Jewish nation, on the other hand, served as the focal point of existence and undoubtedly deserved to further their relationship with their Creator in His chosen land.

Maimonides explains that the world at large was on a decline since the early generation of Enosh who created the platform for idolatry. By the time Avrohom Avinu discovered Hashem the world's population totally forgot Hashem's truth of creation. Avrohom Avinu painstakingly nurtured his family into the only people that recognized and preserved the truth. These experiences clearly display the need for a chosen people without whom the entire purpose of creation would have been forgotten.

The beginning of the book of Sh'mos provides our second lesson, the need for the elevated standard of Torah. Maimonides explains that the Jewish people's exposure to and association with Egyptian culture threatened to destroy Hashem's truth from the world's sole remnant of pure thinkers. Even Avrohom Avinu's devoted family became influenced by its surroundings and began adopting disgraceful foreign ideologies. One sacred branch of the Jewish nation, the tribe of Levi, remained loyal to Hashem's truth and preserved the family tradition. Maimonides explains that Levi's family was privileged to immerse itself in Torah study throughout the trying period of exile and remained steadfast to Torah principle. (Maimonides Hilchos Avoda Zara 1: 3) This experience proves the need for an elevated moral standard without which the basic truths of creation would be lost forever.

We now understand that the basic truth of creation, "Breishis Bara", called for an elevated people and standard of conduct, "For the sake of Yisroel and Torah". Although Hashem allowed for the existence of other nations with basic moral conduct this could not preserve the purpose of creation. The books of Breishis and Shmos historically display the absolute need for an elevated nation with elevated ethical standards. History itself teaches us that without the Jewish people and the Torah the world could never fulfill Hashem's basic interest in creation and would forfeit its right to exist.

These thoughts provide the backdrop for our Haftarah which outlines the privileges and responsibilities as the Chosen nation. The prophet Yeshaya begins by saying, "So says Hashem the creator of the heavens and their expanse, He who spreads the land and its sprouts, gives breath of life to the people residing upon it and Heavenly spirit to those who walk there." The Sages interpret this passage to refer specifically to those who reside in Eretz Yisroel and traverse its soil. They deduce that a maid servant from gentile decent who resides in Eretz Yisroel will merit everlasting life. In addition, they deduce that even one who traverses Eretz Yisroel's soil will merit an elevated spirit in Olam Habba. (Mesichta K'subos 111a) As stated, Hashem's sole interest in creating His world is to be recognized by His creatures and establish an ongoing relationship with them. Whoever resides in Eretz Yisroel is privileged to an intense relationship

with Hashem that mature into an everlasting one. Even traversing Eretz Yisroel's produces intense feelings of closeness to Hashem that translate into eternity. Yeshaya therefore says all who merit to enter Eretz Yisroel epitomize Hashem's sole interest in creation, to be acknowledged as the creator of the world thereby yielding an ongoing relationship with Him.

Yeshaya continues, "I established you a covenant of people to enlighten the nations." Radak explains that the Jewish people's merit gives reason for the existence of the entire world. All nations owe their existence to the Jewish people who single-handedly continue and further the world's purpose. As we have learned the world was created for the sake of those who acknowledge their creator and continues to exist solely for that purpose. Yeshaya, however, adds a significant dimension to this and reminds us that we were chosen to enlighten the nations. Radak explains that Hashem demands from His people to serve as a shining example to the rest of the world. Hashem's purpose for creation was for all nations to recognize Him and acknowledge Him through their ethical conduct maintaining basic human behavior. We, the Chosen nation, must conduct ourselves with such perfection that the entire world will appreciate the truth of creation. We must effectively impress them with this truth that everything belongs to Hashem, the creator and master of the universe. (comment of Radak ad loc)

Yeshaya continues and prophesies that the time will come when the nations of the world will question Hashem's favoritism to his chosen people. Hashem will respond, "Let the earlier ones inform us by giving their testimony and proving our righteousness." (Yeshaya 43: 9) The Sages explain that at the end of time Hashem will call upon Nimrod, Lavan, Potiphar's wife, Nebbuchadnetzar and Daryovish to attest to the Jewish people's moral conduct. (Mesichta Avoda Zara 3a) The perfect devotion of Avrohom Avinu, Yaakov Avinu, Yosef Hatzadik and the like will unequivocally prove the truth of "Breishis" - that the world was created solely for the sake of His devoted people.

Yeshaya adds another dimension to our lesson and states in Hashem's name, "All that is called by My name was created for My glory." (Yeshaya 43: 7) The Sages question, "Who dares call himself by Hashem's name?" They answer that the pasuk refers to our obligation to emulate His ways. We must be identified through our attributes of kindness, compassion and piety in the same way that Hashem is known. (Yalkut Shimoni 452) This completes our lesson of Breishis - for the sake of His people. We, the Jewish nation, are elevated expressions of Hashem's creation. In addition to acknowledging our Creator our responsibility goes beyond. Because we are His Chosen people we carry His stamp of creation, being created in His sacred image. This image demands of us awesome levels of perfection in order that our essence reflects Him as our creator. Our elevated standard of conduct must unequivocally project a resounding message that we are His creatures privileged to be created solely to serve Him.

May we merit in our difficult traumatic era to serve our Creator wholeheartedly thereby bringing Him the true glory He deserves to receive from all.

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Bava Kama

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Bava Kama 73b
"TOCH KEDEI DIBUR K'DIBUR DAMI" OPINIONS: The Gemara
discusses the concept of "Toch Kedei Dibur, k'Dibur Dami." We know, as
the Gemara explains, that "Toch Kedei Dibur" is the length of time that it
takes for a student to say a greeting to his teacher (e.g. "Shalom Alecha
Rebbi"). "K'dibur Dami" means that within this small amount of time, we
view an act or speech as not yet completed and still continuing. Thus, even
though the person has, with regard to his actions, already stopped
performing the act, within this amount of time he may act or say something
that will abrogate his previous actions or words, or, in the case of our
Gemara, may add something to his previous words which will be
considered to have been said at the same time as his previous words.

The Rishonim differ regarding the source for this principle and
regarding the mechanics of how it works.

(a) The RAN (Nedarim 87a) writes that the principle of "Toch Kedei
Dibur" (as well as its exceptions) are "mid'Oraisa". The logic behind this is
that a person is never totally committed to his actions and reserves the
right to renege within the small amount of time of Toch Kedei Dibur.
However, when performing actions which are of such a severe nature (the
exceptions mentioned in the Gemara in Nedarim, such as blaspheming
(Megadef), idolatry (Avodah Zarah), marriage, and divorce), a person does
not begin the action until he is absolutely committed to doing it, and
therefore he does not reserve in his mind the right to renege.

The RITVA in Nedarim says that "Toch Kedei Dibur" is "k'Dibur Dami"
because within that amount of time a person's lips are still involved in
the speech that he just articulated, and it is considered as though he is still
speaking.

(b) TOSFOS here (DH Ki Leis Lei) quotes RABEINU TAM who explains
that the Halachah of "Toch Kedei Dibur" is a Takanah d'Rabanan. The
Rabanan instituted this principle in order to enable a buyer to greet his
teacher or his friend while in the middle of a purchase, or to enable a
witnesses to greet his teacher or his friend while in the middle of giving
testimony (since the Gemara in Berachos (6b) says that one who is greeted
by someone else and does not return the greeting is called a "Gazlan"),
without that greeting acting as an interruption between the words he was
saying beforehand and the words he says afterwards. TOSFOS cites this
opinion in the name of Rabeinu Eliezer. Tosfos asks, however, that it "Toch
Kedei Dibur" cannot be a Takanah d'Rabanan, because it is said even with
regard to Halachos that are mid'Oraisa.

(c) The RASHBAM (Bava Basra 129b) writes that the principle of "Toch
Kedei Dibur" is mid'Oraisa in all cases, including those exceptions
mentioned in the Gemara in Nedarim (that is, one can rescind within "Toch
Kedei Dibur" even in cases of Megadef, Avodah Zarah, marriage, and
divorce), but the Rabanan enacted that it does *not* work in those cases.
The Rabanan enacted that it not work in cases of Megadef and Avodah
Zarah because of the severity of the act, and that it not work in cases of
marriage and divorce in order to prevent rumors from spreading which
would ruin the reputation of the children born from the union.

QUESTION: These explanations of "Toch Kedei Dibur," however, do
not seem to be consistent with the Sugya of our Gemara. The Gemara
explains that according to Rabbi Yosi, when the witnesses (who testified
about the Geneivah and about the Tevichah) are found to be lying (they are
Edim Zomemim) about the Tevichah, their testimony about the Geneivah is
also invalidated. We can understand that we invalidate, retroactively, all of
their testimonies that they gave *after* the moment that they testified falsely
about the Tevichah. But why should we also invalidate them for the

testimony that they gave (i.e. about the Geneivah) *before* the Tevichah?
Just because it was within "Toch Kedei Dibur" of their testimony about the
Tevichah is not a reason to invalidate it!

ANSWER: The AMUDEI OR answers this question by proposing the
following explanation. He suggests that since the principle of "Toch Kedei
Dibur" enables the witnesses to retract their testimony (about the
Geneivah) within the time of "Toch Kedei Dibur," we view their entire
testimony as taking effect only *after* "Toch Kedei Dibur" has passed from
the time that they stop testifying. It is at that point -- when they can no
longer retract what they say -- that they show that their intentions are
absolute and irrevocable, and thus it is at that point that their testimony
takes effect and becomes binding and official. Therefore, when they are
proven to be Edim Zomemim with regard to their testimony about the
Tevichah, this also invalidates their testimony about the Geneivah, since it
is considered to have been said all at the same time -- the moment that
"Toch Kedei Dibur" passed and they could no longer retract any of their
testimony. (I. Alshich)

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