



BS"D

To: parsha@parsha.net
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **BEREISHIS** - 5773

In our 18th year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Please also copy me at cshulman@gmail.com. A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net>. It is also fully searchable.

This week's Internet Parsha Sheet is sponsored anonymously in memory of
Chaim Yissachar z"l ben Yechiel Zaydel Dov

This week's Internet Parsha Sheet is sponsored anonymously for a Refuah Shleimah for
Yitzchak Yaakov ben Basia Sarah
Henna Sara bat Fayga Malya
b'soch sha'ar cholei yisroel

To sponsor a parsha sheet (proceeds to tzedaka) contact cshulman@parsha.net

<http://torahweb.org/thisWeek.html>

Rabbi Hershel Schachter

Experimental Judaism: Playing with Fire, Part II

Parshas Breishis describes G-d's originality and creativity which were manifest in His creation of the universe. The Torah tells us that man was created b'tzelem Elokim (Breishis 1:27), and man's desire to be original and creative is a positive expression of this tzelem Elokim. In fact, the Torah instructs us to "go in the ways of G-d" (Devarim 28:9), i.e. to preserve this tzelem Elokim which we all possess (also see On the Matter of Masorah on this topic). Similarly, just as G-d is unique (see Chagigah 3a), so too each person should be unique as an expression of his tzelem Elokim (see Sefer Nefesh Harav, p. 60).

In shiras Devorah we read (Shoftim 5:8) that because the Jews chose to worship other gods, they were punished and war broke out in the cities of Eretz Yisroel. The Jews were not at all prepared for war and had neither any weapons nor shields. The midrash (Yalkut Shimoni 345) offers an additional level of interpretation of that entire passuk: G-d appreciates chidushei Torah and therefore talmedei chachomim engage in "milchamta shel Torah" to come up with correct chiddushim in order to, k'vayachol, please Him. The midrashim, however, speak only of original ideas of a talmid vasik (a fully qualified scholar) as pleasing Hashem (see Sefer Ginas Egoz, p. 5 - 7).

In the introduction to the Ketzos Hachoshen (a classic commentary on Choshen Mishpat) the author points out that often one might come up with an original Torah insight or idea (i.e. a chiddush) which is not

correct, and such a chiddush is a distortion of the Torah and of Hashem (since the entire Torah is a veiled description of Hashem). One of the Rambam's thirteen principles of faith is that the laws of the Torah are immutable. As such, while chiddush (a new insight which deepens our understanding of the Torah) is highly desirable, the distortion inherent in a shinui (an incorrect "insight" or idea) is a violation of this principle of our faith. Rav Soloveitchik has pointed out (see note 98 in "Halachic Mind") that there is a fine line between chiddush and shinui, and one must be quite a Torah scholar to discern the difference.

The Chasam Sofer states (in his teshuvah, Orach Chaim #15b) that even to judge whether a new minhag, which is not really a matter of halacha, is "in the spirit of the law" one must be a highly qualified talmid chacham (see at length my essay entitled "Tze'i Lach B'ikvei haTzon").

In Breishis we read about the korbanos brought by Kayin and Hevel. From the simple reading of the pesukim (4:3-5) it appears that Kayin was the original thinker who came up with the idea of offering a korban to Hashem. However, Kayin didn't properly work out all the details of his idea; Kayin thought that since Hashem doesn't really need the korban, and the whole idea of the offering is merely a symbolic act, it would be bal tashchis to bring choice fruits or vegetable, so he offered produce of inferior quality. Hevel, on the other hand, was not the original thinker in this case, and merely copied the good idea of Kayin (see Kli Yakar), but he improved upon it by bringing from the choicest sheep. The Torah tells us that Hevel's korban was accepted while Kayin's was not. The end of the story is very bitter, and its moral is that to be "oisgehalten" (correct and proper) is more important than to be original.

Creativity and originality are important expressions of one's tzelem Elokim when one is a talmid vasik and the chiddush is a chiddush amiti (a correct insight or idea). But if the chiddush is not "oisgehalten", then it's not actually a chiddush but rather a shinui which is not acceptable.

Our generation is not unique in that talmidim shelo shimshu kol tzorchoim have come up with original ideas, both in the area of halacha as well as the area of minhag, which are simply not "oisgehalten". The Rema (Choshen Mishpat 25) recommends that whenever a talmid chacham comes up with an original chiddush he should check its validity with other Torah scholars before implementing it. Unfortunately, the talmid who is not a talmid vasik will be lacking the degree of humility needed to realize that there are other contemporary Torah scholars who are greater than him. Hashem recorded in the parsha (see Breishis 1:26 with Rashi) that He consulted with the angels before creating man to teach us that one should always consult with others when it comes to a chiddush even if the others are clearly less intelligent and less learned.

All these lessons from parshas Breishis (tzelem Elokim, creativity, originality, oisgehalten, consulting others) are as important in our generation as ever before.

From rvadlerstein@torah.org Davar B'Ito **by Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein** Introduction: **Maharal's Gur Aryeh**

Dear Subscribers, Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein is starting a new Parsha Series, Maharal's Gur Aryeh. Below is the introduction to his Parsha Series as well as this week's Torah portion, Bereishis. Please note that you will be automatically signed up for the new Series. The Series is in the process of being set up on the technical side. Please bear with us as we complete the transition. Thank you, The Editors

Four hundred years after his death, the Maharal of Prague remains a larger than life figure, just like his statue that stands in front of the Prague city hall. He was a bridge figure between worlds. He helped to close the gaps between the medieval period and the stirrings of modernity in the Enlightenment; between Torah and science; between philosophy and mysticism. Above all, he is appreciated for explicating the most difficult passages in the Aggadah, making the intent of Chazal clear to the student intent on mining their deep wisdom from their sometimes obscure words. His running commentary on Rashi enjoys wide distribution, because it

appeared in the most-often used collection of tools in understanding Rashi, Otzar Peirushim Al Ha-Torah. Maharal's Gur Aryeh commentary, however, is too often given a wide berth by students. Rabbi Yehoshua Hartman, whose magisterial treatment of Maharal has no peer (and to whom these essays will be in heavy debt) explains the ironic reason for this. Gur Aryeh is sometimes extremely straightforward, analyzing Rashi's words and the options that Rashi rejected. At other times, Gur Aryeh is deeply philosophical or mystical. Students looking for simple pshat in Rashi and nothing more are sometimes stymied by the deep and difficult pieces, while others who are interested primarily in the creative and probing analysis tire of the pieces that hew closely to simple pshat. As a result, both give up on Gur Aryeh, denying themselves its gems and treasures. This series will present selections from both kinds of pieces in Gur Aryeh. Each week, we will offer our readers one or two passages from the weekly parshah. They will not be verbatim translations, but paraphrases and adaptations. It is our hope that they will stimulate readers to spend more time not only with Gur Aryeh, but with all of Maharal's priceless and timeless thought.

Parshas Bereishis The Disobedience of the Earth

G-d said: Let the earth bring forth...fruit trees bearing fruit!

Rashi: [By "fruit trees" the Torah means that] the tree's taste should be the same as that of its fruit. The earth did not do this, but gave forth "trees bearing fruit" – but not "fruit-trees." Therefore, when Man was cursed for his sin, the earth was remembered for hers, and also cursed.

The earth did not willfully "disobey" Hashem's command. It has no yetzer hora, which is only given to beings who are expected to choose between listening to G-d or rejecting His wishes. The earth is incapable of making any choices. On the other hand, the earth does have the capacity to depart from the ideal order of things. All things in the physical universe are "fuzzy" enough in their design to allow for different ways of expressing their potential, including ways far from the ideal. This less-than-ideal expression does not come about through a decision making process, but it does happen, largely in response to the decisions made by Man. Moreover, it is the rule, rather than the exception that the earth will act imperfectly. "The heavens belong to Hashem; He gave earth to the children of Man²." Part of the distinction between those two realms is that the heavens, i.e. the spiritual universe, does not know of any departure from Hashem's ideal plan. The lower universe, however, does not translate the Divine blueprint into an instant model of perfection and efficiency. Because the lower universe is bound by the limitations of space, time, and physical properties, it is by nature deficient relative to the pure spirituality of the heavens. There, no such limitations exist; it is closer to the absolute lack of limitation enjoyed only by Hashem Himself. The real perfection of the spiritual world will not and cannot routinely reflect itself in events and objects in our world. Rather, the physical world constantly evidences its deficiency. The relationship between Man's sin and this quasi-sin of the earth should be obvious. Man was created from the earth. As such, he is possessed of the same inherent deficiency, fallibility and imperfection. This nature allowed for and contributed to his sin. The Torah had good reason to speak of the inherent deficiency of all physical things through the device of the "disobedient" earth. There may be no more powerful image to remind us of the difference between ideal and actual than considering the relationship between earth, trees and fruit. It is easy for us to focus only on the fruit. That, to most of us, is all that is of interest. (In fact, as we shall see later, this was precisely Adam's sin: pursuing the fruit, and ignoring where it came from.) The apple that we are poised to eat does not appear ex nihilo, however. All sorts of ingredients and building blocks have to be delivered to it to initiate and maintain its growth. The tree channels crucial substances to the blossom that eventually becomes the fruit. Our entire physical universe functions according to a similar model. Nothing can exist outside of the Will of Hashem. In a complex process, this Will, which of course is entirely spiritual, finds its way to

our finite world, energizing, shaping and crafting the products that we see. In sense, all of our world is a fruit, created by Hashem's Will. The spiritual apparatus— the pipes and conduits of the heavens – channel this Will to us as a tree does to its fruit. Our world is the fruit, and the upper worlds are its tree. So much of our discernible, tangible world mirrors realities in the more elevated spiritual world. The behavior (or misbehavior) of the earth in regard to fruit trees follows from the ultimate source of the relationship between tree and fruit in the way heaven and earth interact. The earth, which is the ultimate fruit from the standpoint of the heavens, cannot create any physical phenomenon radically different from the earth's spiritual role and essence. As a fruit, the earth can help develop and nurture physical fruit. It cannot, however, spawn something that is both a channel and a fruit at the same time. In the spiritual world, the final product appears only after the "tree" – the complex of transmutations of Hashem's Will – has finished all its work, but not before. If our earth were to produce physical trees that displayed the properties of the final product, it would be exceeding its own nature. Instead, the earth took Hashem's ideal command and translated it into something consistent with its own physical reality. It created a sharp distinction between tree and fruit, just as this distinction exists between heavens and earth. It is easy for us sometimes to ignore what feeds and sustains our world, in the same way that we consider the fruit, and not how it came into being. Had the earth not sharply differentiated between tree and fruit, all fruit would be nothing more than an undistinguished and undifferentiated part of the larger tree. Fruit would have nothing to offer us more than the tree itself. More importantly, perhaps, we would not be able to ignore the tree as the source of the fruit. The connection would be too apparent. By "refusing," as it were, to give the tree properties of the fruit, the inherent deficiency of the fruit – its utter dependence on factors outside of itself to come into existence – is masked. All we see, all we care about, is a colorful orb that promises delight to our palates. We see the attractiveness, and find nothing wanting. We remain oblivious to its vulnerability and deficiency in the greater scale of things. We can too easily ignore its source and its roots.

This, then, was the sin of Adam. He saw the fruit – but ignored its deficiency. Bewitched by the promise of temporal pleasure that it offered, he could pluck it from the tree, and forget for the moment where the fruit came from. He, too, created division between tree and fruit. He created the capacity for Man to take of this world without regard for the spiritual Tree that directly creates and sustains all things. That plucking, that division, that separation left Man – and the earth – cursed to this very day. 1. Bereishis 1:11 2. Tehillim 115:16

Questions or comments? Email feedback@torah.org.

Join the Jewish Learning Revolution! Torah.org: The Judaism Site brings this and a host of other classes to you every week. Visit <http://torah.org> or email learn@torah.org to get your own free copy of this mailing.

Need to change or stop your subscription? Please visit our subscription center, <http://torah.org/subscribe/> -- see the links on that page.

Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Torah.org. Both the author and Torah.org reserve certain rights. Email copyrights@torah.org for full information.

<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/berachos/points/br-ps-061.htm>
 POINT BY POINT OUTLINE THE NEFF FAMILY MASECHES
 BERACHOS prepared by Rabbi P. Feldman of Kollel Iyun Hadaf, Yerushalayim
 daf@dafyomi.co.il, www.dafyomi.co.il Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld
 BERACHOS 61 prepared by Rabbi P. Feldman of Kollel Iyun Hadaf,
 Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, www.dafyomi.co.il Rosh Kollel: Rabbi
 Mordecai Kornfeld

BERACHOS 61 12TH CYCLE: Dedicated by Dr. Shalom Kelman of Baltimore in honor of Hagaon Rav Yehudah Copperman, dean of Michlala and author of many important Torah publications, including the annotated edition of the Meshech Chochmah and, most recently, "Mavo l'Limud Torah."

1) THE FORMATION OF CHAVAH

(a) (Rav Huna): A person should say few words in front of Hash-m (Maharsha - he should not pray excessively for relief from his afflictions, speak about them or question His ways) - "Al Tevahel Al Picha v'Libcha Al Yemaher... Yiheyu Devarecha Me'atim."

(b) Question (Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda): Why are there two letters Yud in "va'Yitzer Hash-m Elokim Es ha'Adam"?

(c) Answer #1 (Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda): This teaches that man was created with two Yetzarim (inclinations), the Yetzer Tov and Yetzer ha'Ra. (However, Rashi to Bereishis 2:25 and Yeshayah 5:2-7 says that before eating from the Etz ha'Da'as, Adam did not have a Yetzer ha'Ra! Based on Nefesh ha'Chayim (1:6, Hagah DH veba'Inyan) we can say that his Yetzer ha'Ra was not an internal Yetzer ha'Ra. It was external (in the Nachash). Also, at first, each Yetzer was separate. After eating from the Etz ha'Da'as, they became mixed.)

(d) Objection (Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak): Regarding animals, "va'Yitzer" has only one Yud. Will we say that they lack a Yetzer ha'Ra?! We see that they damage, bite and kick! (Rashash - we know that they have a Yetzer Tov, for they work for man.)

(e) Answer #2 (R. Shimon ben Pazi): (The two Yuds allude to two ways to read the word.) Woe to me from Yotzri (Hash-m, the One who formed me, if I succumb to Yitzri, my Yetzer ha'Ra). Woe to me from Yitzri (my Yetzer ha'Ra will torment me if I obey Yotzri, the One who formed me).

(f) Answer #3 (R. Yirmeyah ben Elazar): Hash-m created Adam with two Partzufim -- "Achor va'Kedem Tzartani." (The bodily form of his back resembled his front.)

(g) (Rav or Shmuel): "Va'Yiven Hash-m Elokim Es ha'Tzela" -- Chavah was formed from one Partzuf of Adam;

(h) (The other of Rav and Shmuel): She was formed from a tail (with which Adam was created).

(i) Question: According to the first opinion, we understand "Achor va'Kedem Tzartani." According to the latter opinion, What is the meaning of?

(j) Answer (R. Ami): Adam was Achor (the last) of Creation, and he was Kedem (first) to be punished.

(k) Question: We understand that he was the last of Creation, for he was created on Erev Shabbos. In what sense was he first to be punished?

1. Suggestion: He was first to be punished for the sin [of eating from the Etz ha'Da'as] due to the snake.

2. Rejection (Beraisa - Rabbi): When giving grandeur, we begin with the most important -- "va'Yedaber Moshe El Aharon v'El Elazar v'El Isamar..."

i. When punishing or cursing, we begin with the least important. First the snake was cursed, then Chavah, and then Adam.

(l) Answer: Man was punished first in the flood, before animals -- "va'Yimach... me'Adam v'Ad Behemah."

(m) Question: According to the first opinion (Chavah was formed from a Partzuf), we understand the two Yuds in "va'Yitzer";

1. However, according to the latter opinion, why are there two Yuds?

(n) Answer: It teaches like R. Shimon ben Pazi -- "woe to me from Yotzri..."

(o) Question: According to the first opinion, we understand "Zachar u'Nekevah Bera'am." (One Partzuf was male, and the other was female);

1. According to the latter opinion, how can we explain this?

(p) Answer - contradiction (R. Avahu): It says "Zachar u'Nekevah Bera'am," and it says "Ki b'Tzelem Elokim Asah Es ha'Adam," which implies that he was a single creation!

1. Resolution: Hash-m had intent to create two, but He actually created only one.

(q) Question: According to the first opinion, we understand "va'Yisgor Basar Tachtenah." (He put skin in place of the removed Partzuf.) According to the latter opinion, how can we explain this?

(r) Answer (R. Yirmeyah): He covered up the place where he cut [off the tail].

<http://dafyomi.co.il/berachos/insites/br-dt-061.htm>

INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF

daf@dafyomi.co.il, www.dafyomi.co.il

Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld

BERACHOS 61 1) TWO THAT ARE ONE

QUESTION: The Gemara teaches in the name of Rabbi Avahu that Hash-m originally intended to create two humans, but then he made only one. However, He then made the one into two, Adam and Chavah.

How are we to understand this Gemara? How can we say that Hash-m changed His mind?

ANSWERS:

(a) The RASHBA (TESHUVOS HA'RASHBA 1:60) explains that when the Gemara says that Hash-m "thought about creating two" and then He created one, it means that He carefully planned and considered with His infinite wisdom whether to create them as one or as two. It does not mean that He changed His mind, but rather that His creation was done with thorough consideration.

Why, then, did He eventually make two humans?

The two that were eventually created were not the same two of His original plan. Originally, Hash-m considered the implications of creating man and woman as two completely separate species that would not propagate together, or serve as counterparts to each other. Hash-m decided not to create two types of humans but instead to create one being, meaning one species of human beings, which included both man and woman.

Alternatively, Hash-m originally considered creating man and woman from the outset as two individual entities (of the same species), but in the end He decided that both man and woman should come from one body. The reason for this decision was that man and woman would feel eternally bonded to each other. When they would later come together, they would feel like a single unit, aware of the common root from which their Neshamah came. Again, Hash-m never changed His mind, so to speak. Rather, His infinite wisdom pondered all of the possible ways to create the human being before He decided to do it one way.

(b) The VILNA GA'ON explains that when the Gemara says that Hash-m initially "thought to create two," it means that when He created one, He already had in mind to eventually make two out of that one. The goal and purpose of Hash-m's creation is always the first and the beginning of His thoughts. "Hash-m thought to create two" means that His original thought was actualized later when He took two out of one. (The term "Alah b'Machshavah" refers to the ultimate purpose of Creation, for "Sof Ma'aseh, b'Machshavah Techilah"). If man and woman were created as one, it would not have been possible for a person to fulfill his ultimate purpose of toiling in Hash-m's Torah and serving Hash-m, because his worldly responsibilities would have been too great. Therefore, Hash-m created man and woman separately so that they could share the responsibilities and enable each other to accomplish their respective goals. The creation of one in the middle was just a step to get to the final two (for the reason given by the Rashba above).

Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items:

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
<info@jewishdestiny.com>
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Weekly Parsha :: BERESHITH :: **Rabbi Berel Wein**

There are many moral lessons that are derived from the story of creation as related to us in this parsha and also in next week's parsha of Noach. One of the insights that I find most relevant and instructive has to do with the relationship of humankind to the animal kingdom and the rest of the natural world.

According to Jewish tradition Adam and Chava and their immediate descendants were herbivorous, subsisting on the fruit, plants and the bounty of the earth. According to rabbinic tradition the animal kingdom imitated the human species and also refrained from killing other creatures to satisfy their own daily need for food. The lion ate as did the elephant, the leopard as did the giraffe. In short, the animal kingdom followed the lead of the human species.

It was only after the Great Flood and the new lower level of human existence that the Lord allowed humankind – Noach and his descendants – to become flesh eaters and to kill animals for human purposes and gain. The rabbis again taught us that this change in human behavior precipitated a change in animal behavior as well. Now deadly predators and killers stalked other creatures in the animal world.

Judaism sees humans as the primary creature in the process of creation. It is human behavior that influences animal behavior. Those who deny a Divine Creator have it the other way round - it is animal behavior that influences human behavior and civilization. To them, humans are not exceptional and unique creatures. A human is just a more dangerous lion or leopard or crocodile.

The prophet Yeshayahu, in his majestic and soaring description of the utopian era – the end of days – states that the lion will lie down with the lamb and that war between nations will no longer be possible.

Maimonides chooses to view this prophesy in an allegorical sense rather than in a literal sense. He interprets it as stating that large and powerful nations will no longer impose their will and wring unfair concessions from poorer and weaker countries.

This is in line with his statement that nature will not change in any given way even when the messianic era of the end of days arrives. However there are many great scholars and commentators who reject this idea of a rather bland messianic era as foretold by Maimonides. Instead, they state categorically that nature will change and that predators such as the lion and the bear will now revert back to their original state at the time of creation and become wholly herbivorous.

Again that seems to presuppose that humans, when giving up war and violence in the messianic era will no longer eat the flesh of animals, and herbivorous humans will influence the animal world to do the same. There remains the problem of what to do then with animal sacrifices in the Jerusalem Temple.

Answers are advanced but as is easily understood, the topic is esoteric and no one really knows what that world of the messiah will look like. But it is clear that Judaism preaches that the animal kingdom follows the behavior of the human race and certainly not vice versa.
Shabat shalom

From Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>
To Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com>
Subject **Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum**

Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Parshas BEREISHIS

It is not good that man be alone; I will make him a helper corresponding to him. (2:18)

The Torah clearly states that woman was created for the specific purpose of helping her husband. There are two ways to provide help for a person: the individual in need of assistance is aware of his need and understands that he cannot do it alone; the individual is unaware of his need-- in fact, he thinks that he needs nothing and no one. In the latter circumstance, the helper must first make the individual aware of his own needs. Likewise, there are two forms of challengers and challenges. In one situation, the individual perceives the challenger as a threat and reacts accordingly. In the second scenario, the challenger is actually attempting to help him, much like a trainer in a gym, who works opposite his client in an attempt to spur his positive development.

Hashem created man with an enormous potential for achievement. Being alone, however, can destroy one's potential. One is either challenged to maximize his potential or it will remain dormant. Someone alone on an island does not have to open a business, since there is no one present but him. Yet, even in a challenge, some challenges and challengers work to harm the other person. They are not trying to help him, but rather, to destroy him. Man's overwhelming awareness of his capabilities can cause his downfall. He fears failure; thus, he shies away from competition. Others have no idea that they have capabilities. No one has told them. In both situations, being alone can catalyze the individual's lack of growth - and even his downfall.

Hashem saw that the man He had created with incredible potential was either going to allow that potential to lie dormant or - worse - indulge in behaviors that would block the awareness of his potential. If one does not rise to the challenge, he cannot fail. These two scenarios presented themselves. Hashem created woman/wife who would serve in a twofold capacity. She would possibly be an eizer, helping her husband, working with him side-by-side as he reaches his capacity for growth. In those circumstances, when man/husband is either unaware of his abilities or refrains from reaching out for fear of failure, then the woman becomes k'negdo, opposite him, subtly challenging, politely goading, respectfully encouraging, to the point that he overcomes his fear and achieves success.

There is another drawback to levado, being alone: One does not feel the need to be overly accountable to anyone for his actions. He acts as he pleases with total impunity and lack of conscience. This could have devastating consequences for a person. Accountability is not only important - it is a requisite for life. One must be aware that his actions beget reactions, that life is about consequences. A person who lives alone, by himself - and, especially for himself - develops no sense of accountability. One who lacks a sense of accountability ultimately loses his fear of Hashem.

Chavah was created to augment Adam, so that he should not be alone. Adam alone was lo tov, not good. He would neither grow as a human being, nor would he develop properly as a spiritual person. He would either - out of lack of confidence - shy away from challenge or - out of a sense of unbridled arrogance - renege against his Creator. Chavah saved the day. This is the essence of marriage.

And G-d called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" (3:9) Adam HaRishon was hiding from Hashem. Having committed the first sin, the very first deviation from a Heavenly command, primordial man was cringing with fear, filled with guilt and shame. Hashem turns to him and asks: Ayeca? "Where are you?" Clearly, this is a strange question coming from the omniscient Creator. If Hashem was trying to engage Adam in conversation, then this question is nothing more than an innocuous opportunity for Adam to explain himself. Otherwise, it does not seem to be insightful - especially knowing the Source.

At first blush, the question was really focused on Adam's hiding from Hashem. "Where are you?" could mean: "Why are you hiding?" Why

would a creation of Mine, whom I have endowed with so much, want to hide from Me? Is this right? There is room for discussion concerning this question. What was Adam really trying to prove by hiding? Perhaps he was ashamed of his actions, and he thought concealing himself would delay the inevitable. After all, it is not as if Adam had much experience with sin and repentance. In his treatise on Biblical questions, Rabbi Emanuel Feldman explains that Ayeca? has many parts to it. The most significant aspect is: "Where are you now that you have sinned? Do you realize how exalted you were prior to your debacle with the forbidden fruit? Now - look where you are; and do you have any idea where you will be tomorrow?" We take the effects of sin for granted, not realizing that a sin places us in circumstances of a downward spiral such that each day that goes by in which we do not correct the error of our ways, we descend further into moral decay and spiritual oblivion. Ayeca? Do you know where you are today? Do you know where you will be tomorrow? - These are questions we must ask ourselves - constantly!

Rabbi Feldman observes that this question did not receive an answer - but, then, there is no such thing as an unanswered question from Hashem. If He asks - we must respond. The letters of Ayeca did not disappear. Instead, they hovered in the cosmos until they formed another word, indeed, a word of lament, the saddest word in Tanach: Eichah? "How?" Eichah and Ayeca are spelled with the same letters, but the question is different. Instead of, "Where are you?", it becomes "How did this happen?" "How could it happen?" "How could it be?" Hidden in the crevices of the question, "Where are you?" is the bitter answer - the result of hiding from Hashem, a lament. Yes, the one who does not reflect on "Ayeca?", will have to deal with "Eichah."

"Where are you?" is not a spatial, geographic question. It is not about location, but about existence. It is an existential question, inquiring: Where are you spiritually - intellectually, morally, ethically, now that you have distanced yourself from Me? Who are you really hiding from? Is it from Me, or are you hiding from yourself? The path that begins with Ayeca?, ends with Eichah? How important this is for us to understand. How many people could have been saved had they stopped at the very beginning of their journey away from observance and asked themselves, "Am I really better off today than I was yesterday? And where will I be tomorrow?" Stop and think. It will make a world of difference at the end of the journey.

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will pound your head and you will bite his heel. (3:15)

The Midrash HaNe'elam applies a homiletic rendering to this pasuk and uses it as a tactic for prevailing over the blandishments of the yetzer hora, evil inclination. The serpent/ yetzer hora/ symbol of evil seduces the Jew to trample on the mitzvos with his eikav, heel. The Jew is able to triumph over him by using his rosh, head, and applying himself to the study of Torah. Why the heel? I think it is because the yetzer hora knows that if the mitzvah "gets off the ground," the Jew will study it and eventually embrace it. It is best not to take the chance, and trample it while his foot remains poised over it. This is why our enemies, from without and from within, have fought against the study of Torah. By allowing the Jew access to the Torah is to create the necessary opening in which the Jew can learn about and understand what he has been deprived of. The problem is getting the secular Jew to "come in from the cold," attend a Torah class. Once he has come, the light of Torah will guide his return home.

The Lachmei Todah offers an alternative exegesis to explain the concept of the eikav, heel, with regard to mitzvah performance. He explains that Hashem was telling the serpent, "If you attempt to cause the Jew to sin with his rosh, head, with his entire body, he will triumph over you. The Jew will not turn away with his whole body; he will not directly deviate from Hashem's will. A Jew, however, sins neither wholeheartedly, nor maliciously. If you instigate him to sin with his "heel," which is an

allusion to the Rabbinic fences that have been erected around the mitzvos Lo Saase, prohibitive commandments, to protect and discourage us from transgressing the entire sin, you will succeed." This, of course, in turn generates the domino effect of going beyond the fences and sinning without the catalyst.

Is this not how the primordial serpent misled Chavah? He began by exhorting her to distance herself from the tree, stay away from the object of sin. Heaven-forbid she should she touch the tree. G-d would not want that. Then, he pushed her against the tree and - lo and behold - nothing happened. No bolt of lightning descended from Heaven to strike her. Apparently, she received no punishment for touching, so there must, likewise, be no punishment for eating. Chavah thought about it for a moment and decided that the serpent was correct: There probably was nothing wrong with eating the fruit. Once she took her first bite and quickly noticed how sweet and delicious the fruit was, she was trapped. She broke through the fence; the rest is history.

Sadly, this has been the tragedy of Jewish observance - or lack thereof - throughout history. Whenever we break fences, it becomes the precursor for total deviation and full-fledged sin. The yetzer hora does not have the power to ensnare us to sin, but he does have the ability to convince those who are weak to overlook and disregard the gedarim, fences.

If we go back in time a few hundred years, we may observe this approach as the root of the scourge that ate away at the underpinnings of Orthodoxy in Germany. The Haskalah was inspired by the European Enlightenment with a subtle Jewish bend to it. The term Haskalah is derived from seichel, reason, intellect, thus promoting a movement based upon rationality. Everything had to make sense, fit into the parameters of reason and intellect. Jews were encouraged to think outside the box and, thus, eschew anything that was beyond the scope of their comprehension. Understandably, this undermines belief in the Torah, which, being Divinely authored, is beyond the limited comprehension of the human mind. This is how it first started.

The next step in breaking down the barriers established for our protection was the rejection of Yiddish, our mama lashon, mother tongue, which had been the Jew's choice of language since the fourteenth century. German became the chosen language, since, as the secularists claimed, it was the language of culture and breeding, thus granting the Jews access to German literature and eventual acceptance by the outside world. Indeed, Moses Mendelssohn, the ideologue and progenitor of Haskalah and its reformation of Torah Judaism, authored a controversial literary venture, a commentary to Tanach, called Biur, which was a translation of the Tanach into German. The German text was printed in Hebrew letters, instead of the usual Roman Alphabet. This would facilitate easier reading and comprehension, allowing the student to develop greater proficiency in the German language. Unlike the Babylonian translations which sought to greater familiarize the Jew with the Torah, Mendelssohn's Biur sought to acquaint the Jews with the German language.

The Maskilim did not have the audacity to "take on" the religion per se, Torah, mitzvos, the Mesorah, tradition. They would not succeed in diverting the nation from Hashem. It was the subtle and not-so-subtle changes made to fences, customs and rituals that eventually catalyzed their temporary success. I underscore "temporary," because today they have nothing, at best nothing more than a sham replica of what they perceive to be Jewish culture. The Torah, mitzvos, Hashem, no longer play a role in their lives. They have nowhere to go, but back. It is our function to welcome them home.

For you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (3:19)

Chavah - and by extension every human being who followed after her - was meted with a grave punishment. Death, in its various forms, comes to all of us as a result of Chavah's transgression. She ate from the forbidden fruit and so her life and that of all her future progeny was put on temporary status. Why was she given such a serious punishment?

True, she transgressed Hashem's command; and true, she had only one command to observe, but still, did she deserve death for that? Is it fair that one woman sins, and the entire world pays?

I recently came across the Gemorah in Sanhedrin 38b which posits that both Kayin and Hevel were born in Gan Eden - before the chet of Eitz Hadaas, sin of eating of the Tree of Knowledge. According to Chazal's timeline, Kayin and Hevel were born during the eighth hour. During the ninth hour, Hashem commanded Adam and Chavah not to eat of the Eitz Hadaas. The tenth hour was when the sin was carried out. When Chavah sinned, she did so as a mother. Her status was different. A mother's responsibility for her actions is quite different, and has greater ramifications, than one who does not have the next generation under her wings.

A mother's actions affect her family, affect generations, because someone is always observing and eventually emulating. This is why Chavah's sin was punished with a b'chiah l'doros, generations of weeping. We do not live for ourselves. Our children are watching. We might find it hard to pass on "certain" activities, but when our impressionable children are entered into the equation, we suddenly have a change of heart - or, at least, we should. Chavah's sin was not the action of a lone woman. It was the action of a mother - not just any mother, but the mother of all life. Her actions carried serious consequences. Thus, her punishment affected not only herself, but all life that would extend from her.

We often conveniently forget or ignore the far reaching ripples our actions have on others; or how, over time, the implications of a slight deviation can generate a virulent backlash on ourselves and others. Let us look at the following example. Chazal teach that the earth/fruit tree was the first creation guilty of non-compliance with Hashem's command. Hashem commanded the earth to produce fruit trees whose bark would be as flavorful as its fruit. The earth did not do so. Instead, it brought forth trees whose fruit was tasty, but whose bark was inedible. Therefore, when Adam HaRishon was cursed for his sin, the earth, too, was taken into account for its sin and also cursed. What does this have to do with Adam, Chavah and their sin?

The Chasam Sofer explains that Chavah was tempted by the Eitz Hadaas because it was different from all of the other trees. While the bark of all other trees was inedible, resulting from the earth's deviation from Hashem's command, the bark of the Eitz Hadaas, was edible and quite appealing. He derives this from the pasuk's description of the Eitz Hadaas, ki tov ha'eitz l'maachal, "The tree was good for eating" (Ibid. 3:6). This implies that - not only the fruit- but the tree itself was good for eating.

Now, let us imagine that if all of the trees had been like the Eitz Hadaas, whereby the bark was flavorful, Chavah would not have been tempted to eat. It was the allure of the unknown, something different, that swayed her to eat from the forbidden tree. Thus, had Hashem's original command been strictly followed, Chavah's sin would not have occurred, death would not have been decreed and life on this world would be much simpler and happier. For the role the earth played in catalyzing Chavah's sin, it was also punished together with Adam and Chavah. One deviation brought down a world.

And the man called his wife's name Chavah, because she had become the mother of all the living. (3:20)

One mitzvah - that is all Adam HaRishon had to observe. Hashem had commanded him not to eat from the Eitz Hadaas, Tree of Knowledge. It should have been easy to observe this one single mitzvah. Apparently, nothing is as simple as it seems. We have no idea of the guile of the serpent, nor can we perceive the pleasing nature of Adam. His wife had fallen under the serpent's spell, and Adam deferred to his wife. Everything is relative. We can neither fathom the spiritual plateau of primordial man and woman, nor can we appreciate the depth of evil and craft which comprised the serpent's character. In any event, these three were punished, with the serpent the first to receive its due. The

punishments were unusual in their severity, changing the conditions of life for man as he wades through life's currents in his attempt to achieve closeness with Hashem. Mankind was meted the severest punishment. No one would escape his mortality. We all must meet the Malach HaMaves, Angel of Death

Clearly, after this episode, the shalom bayis, marital harmony, factor in Adam's house must have been stretched to the limit - or so one would think. It is, therefore, strange that following the sin and their expulsion from Gan Eden, Adam gave his wife her name, Chavah, "because she had become the mother of all the living." This has to be the least expected name that Chavah could receive. Why does the Torah write about Chavah's naming immediately following the punishment for eating from the Eitz Hadaas?

In his volume, A Short Vort, Rabbi Sholom Smith quotes Horav Avraham Pam, zl, who offers an insightful lesson to be derived from here. The Rosh Yeshivah focuses on the preservation of shalom bayis, marital harmony, as Adam's goal in his choice of names for Chavah. Discord results from negativity. Adam sought to overlook Chavah's mistake, thus circumventing a blowup in their marital relationship. Let us digest this idea. Chavah did not just make an error. Her blunder could not just be corrected. She had just caused the greatest disaster known to mankind. As a consequence of Chavah's actions, death was decreed on mankind. This is not a blunder - this is a calamity of epic proportion! Can one imagine the anger that should have been seething within Adam? Words cannot describe the effects of this sin. Yet, we do not find Adam losing it. We do not find him lashing out at Chavah for her complicity. While he did, indeed, shift the blame for his own participation in the sin onto his own wife, he did not bring his complaints "home." On the contrary, he probably comforted Chavah by giving her a name which accentuated her positive contribution to mankind: "True, you were the cause of death, but, without you, there would be no life. You are the mother of all mankind."

It is so easy to underscore the negative, to harp over a spouse's mistake, to reprove and poke fun. Finding the silver lining in Chavah's life was a task for Adam - which he successfully completed. This is why the Torah tells of Chavah's naming at this point. We are being taught how one must react to a spouse's mistake. Do not totally ignore it - but certainly do not magnify it! There will always be a time to "revisit" the situation and address it from a rational, constructive vantage point.

The Rosh Yeshivah explains that concentrating on the positive contribution a spouse makes to the marriage is the greatest segulah, recipe for harmony. Indeed, Rav Pam explains that this is why the Torah immediately writes that Hashem fashioned garments of skin for Adam and Chavah. Since Adam covered up the "shame" associated with his wife's shortcoming, Hashem covered up their shame with clothing. Veritably, the above is obvious. If one wants to maintain a harmonious relationship, he will focus on the positive and eschew any negativity in his relationship with his spouse. Yet, couples still fight, and, when one of them "blows it" and makes a mistake, the other one just does not stop harping about it. Why? How does one prevent what is sadly so common? I think it is all about ego. An individual who feels the need to put down a spouse when something goes wrong is a very insecure person. Clearly, in every marriage there are differences of opinion between husband and wife, but, through a concerted effort on the part of both participants, the issues can be amicably resolved. The problem is that some people do not like to lose.

An individual who thinks of his own ego first and foremost is missing the primary ingredient essential for a happy marriage. There should be no place for egos between husband and wife. They are supposed to be one unit. In addition, one who is prone to dissention demonstrates a lack of caring for his children. A child growing up in a home where discord is predominant may end up feeling insecure. Children are the primary casualties of a contentious marriage. Consistent with this idea, it has well

been said that "the greatest gift that you can give your children is the love that you give your wife."

Having explained that Adam HaRishon was a special man who went out of his way to overlook his wife's sin, it is hard to accept that he would blame her for his own eating of the forbidden. When Hashem confronted Adam, the immediate response was finger pointing at ha'ishah asher nosata imadi, "the woman whom You gave to be with me - she gave me of the tree and I ate" (Ibid. 3:12). Indeed, Rashi calls Adam a kafui tov, ingrate, for intimating that Hashem is the One who gave him the woman, and look what happened! How do we understand Adam blaming Chavah - yet giving her such a commendatory name that reflects her most positive function in life?

I think that actually Adam was not blaming Chavah in a bad way, but rather, attempting to present what had occurred in the most constructive manner. Adam emphatically says, ho'ishah asher nosata imadi - "the woman whom You gave to be with me." What Chavah did was an honest mistake on her part. The fact that she shared her fruit with me was because nosata imadi, "You gave her to be with me." The first person she thought of was me. Chavah acted like the perfect wife. She shared, immediately thinking of her husband when she obtained a tasty fruit. While Adam was inadvertently laying blame on Chavah, he was also commending her as being the perfect wife.

Sponsored by Etzmon and Abigail Rozen and children in loving memory of their Father and Zaide NATHAN ROZEN HaRav Nosson Meir ben Yecheil z"l niftar 2nd day of succos(16 Tishrei) 5748 t.n.tz.v.h

http://www.ou.org/torah/author/Rabbi_Dr_Tzvi_Hersh_Weinreb

Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

Orthodox Union / www.ou.org

Rabbi Weinreb's Parsha Column, Parshat Bereshit

Sponsored in memory of Nathan and Louise Schwartz a"h

"Time Management"

Loyal readers of this weekly column will remember Richard, Leon, and Simon. They were the three young men who signed up for my class on the Book of Genesis, Sefer Bereshit, many years ago. I then used Genesis as the source text for an introductory course on basic Jewish philosophy. My experience was a most interesting, surprising, and successful one, as you will remember. It led me to subsequently attempt to use Genesis as a source text for several other topics. I would like to dedicate this week's column, and those of the next twelve weeks as well, to a description of one of those "experiments."

A topic that has always fascinated me is the topic of leadership. I have taken courses and read many books on the subject, and I have spoken and written about leadership from many perspectives. Once, and this too was many years ago, a national Jewish organization requested that I give a course to young men and women, newly active on their synagogue boards, who would benefit from learning about effective leadership in the Jewish community.

I accepted the challenge and decided to use Sefer Bereshit as a text upon which to base my lectures, and as a springboard for classroom discussion.

I ask you, dear reader, to bear with me over the next three months or so as I introduce you to some of the colorful personalities in the class, and as I highlight some important lessons on the subject of leadership. I entered the classroom to find about a dozen eager young adults. It looked to me like a varied group, comprised of mostly men and just two or three women. Some men in dark suits and ties, others dressed less formally. Women all modestly dressed, and sitting adjacent to one another.

I had decided to begin the course by stressing the importance of time management. I told them that I once interviewed quite a famous Jewish

leader who told me that the best way to know whether a person was suited for leadership was to determine how well he managed his time. Then I immediately challenged the class: "What can we learn about time management from this week's Torah portion, Parshat Bereshit?"

Several hands shot up, but I won't share the more obvious contributions with you. I will tell you what Zalman, who eventually proved himself to be the class scholar, had to say. "It always struck me as important that the Torah begins with a long list of things the Almighty created in the realm of three-dimensional space. They include mountains and oceans, birds and mammals and man. But we only find one thing that he created in the dimension of time, and that is Shabbat, the Sabbath: 'And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy...'. (Genesis 2:3)"

Zalman had a lot to say about his observation, and I certainly cannot claim to remember all of it. But I will always remember his comments about what the Sages say in Midrash Tanchuma, which he was able to quote verbatim. It is a Midrash on the text in Leviticus 22:27 which reads, "When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall stay seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on shall be acceptable as an offering..."

The Midrash comments: "This is to be compared to a king who enters a new province and announces that no one can have an audience with him until he first has an audience with the Queen. So too, no animal is a fit sacrifice to the King of Kings until it first experiences a Shabbat. Hence, 'seven days shall it stay with its mother.' During those seven days it will experience one Shabbat."

That bit of erudition was just the beginning, as Zalman went on to quote another commentary which pointed out that circumcision, brit milah, also cannot take place before eight days, so that the newborn boy must live through one Shabbat before entering into the Covenant. Leadership, whether in the symbolic form of an animal fit for sacrifice, or whether in the form of a new member of the Jewish society of potential leaders, must include an encounter with the Queen, with Shabbat.

At this point, I stopped Zalman. After all, I found myself thinking, "I am the teacher here, not him."

"Zalman," I said aloud, "you are helping us see the value for time management of the Shabbat. There must be one day of the week when the leader not only rests in the physical sense, but allows himself or herself to recharge spiritually. The leader requires a respite; time for personal study and reflection, and time for spouse and children and friends."

Priscilla, the young woman who would consistently prove herself to be the most practical of the group, offered her first insight to the class: "One of the problems that leaders have to face is burnout. Shabbat is one effective way to prevent, or at least forestall, burnout."

"Wow," I exclaimed to myself. "This group is moving very fast. It is tackling both Torah content and general leadership issues, and just in the opening moments of a new class!" I was once more convinced of the value of Sefer Bereshit as a teaching tool. It worked for teaching Jewish philosophy, and now it was rapidly showing promise as a text for the study of leadership.

The discussion, and I am only sharing a snippet of it here, also taught me what every teacher eventually learns; namely, you learn more from your students than from anyone else. I learned something I had frankly never thought of before. Among the many blessings that Shabbat has brought to the Jewish people, there is one that few have ever considered.

Observing Shabbat can be a component of good time management, and well-spent Shabbatot make for effective leadership.

This was just the opening volley in what ultimately proved to be a most exciting intellectual journey. I invite you to read next week's column to learn what clues to good leadership the class found in Parshat Noach. But meanwhile, try to think of some of those clues on your own, and don't hesitate to bring them to my attention at execthw@ou.org.

from: Shabbat Shalom shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org
reply-to: shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org
subject: Parsha - Shabbat Shalom from the OU

Orthodox Union / www.ou.org

Britain's Chief Rabbi **Lord Jonathan Sacks**

A Living Book

It is the most famous, majestic and influential opening of any book in literature: "In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth."

What is surpassingly strange is the way Rashi – most beloved of all Jewish commentators – begins his commentary:

Rabbi Isaac said: The Torah should have begun with the verse (Ex. 12: 1): "This month shall be to you the first of the months", which was the first commandment given to Israel.

Can we really take this at face value? Did Rabbi Isaac, or for that matter Rashi, seriously suggest that the Book of books might have begun in the middle – a third of the way into Exodus? That it might have passed by in silence the creation of the universe – which is, after all, one of the fundamentals of Jewish faith?

Could we understand the history of Israel without its prehistory, the stories of Abraham and Sarah and their children? Could we have understood those narratives without knowing what preceded them: G-d's repeated disappointment with Adam and Eve, Cain, the generation of the Flood and the builders of the Tower of Babel?

The fifty chapters of Genesis together with the opening of Exodus are the source- book of biblical faith. They are as near as we get to an exposition of the philosophy of Judaism. What then did Rabbi Isaac mean?

He meant something profound, which we often forget. To understand a book, we need to know to what genre it belongs. Is it history or legend, chronicle or myth? To what question is it an answer? A history book answers the question: what happened? A book of cosmology – be it science or myth – answers the question: how did it happen?

What Rabbi Isaac is telling us is that if we seek to understand the Torah, we must read it as Torah, which is to say: law, instruction, teaching, guidance. Torah is an answer to the question: how shall we live? That is why he raises the question as to why it does not begin with the first command given to Israel.

Torah is not a book of history, even though it includes history. It is not a book of science, even though the first chapter of Genesis – as the 19th-century sociologist Max Weber pointed out – is the necessary prelude to science, because it represents the first time people saw the universe as the product of a single creative will, and therefore as intelligible rather than capricious and mysterious. It is, first and last, a book about how to live. Everything it contains – not only commandments but also narratives, including the narrative of creation itself – is there solely for the sake of ethical and spiritual instruction.

It moves from the minutest details to the most majestic visions of the universe and our place within it. But it never deviates from its intense focus on the questions: What shall I do? How shall I live? What kind of person should I strive to become? It begins, in Genesis 1, with the most fundamental question of all. As the Psalm (8: 4) puts it: "What is man that You are mindful of him?"

Pico della Mirandola's 15th century Oration on Man was one of the turning points of Western civilization, the "manifesto" of the Italian Renaissance. In it he attributed the following declaration to G-d, addressing the first man:

"We have given you, O Adam, no visage proper to yourself, nor endowment properly your own, in order that whatever place, whatever form, whatever gifts you may, with premeditation, select, these same you may have and possess through your own judgement and decision. The

nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted within laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by your own free will, to whose custody We have assigned you, trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. I have placed you at the very center of the world, so that from that vantage point you may with greater ease glance round about you on all that the world contains. We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine."

Homo sapiens, that unique synthesis of "dust of the earth" and breath of G-d, is unique among created beings in having no fixed essence: in being free to be what he or she chooses. Mirandola's Oration was a break with the two dominant traditions of the Middle Ages: the Christian doctrine that human beings are irretrievably corrupt, tainted by original sin, and the Platonic idea that humanity is bounded by fixed forms.

It is also a strikingly Jewish account – almost identical with the one

given by Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik in Halakhic Man: "The most fundamental principle of all is that man must create himself. It is this idea that Judaism introduced into the world." It is therefore with a frisson of recognition that we discover that Mirandola had a Jewish teacher, Rabbi Elijah ben Moses Delmedigo (1460-1497).

Born in Crete, Delmedigo was a Talmudic prodigy, appointed at a young age to be head of the yeshivah in Padua. At the same time, he studied philosophy, in particular the work of Aristotle, Maimonides and Averroes. At the age of 23 he was appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Padua. It was through this that he came to know Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who became both his student and his patron. Eventually, however, Delmedigo's philosophical writings – especially his work *Bechinat ha-Dat* – became controversial. He was accused, by other rabbis, of heresy. He had to leave Italy and return to Crete. He was much admired by Jews and Christians alike, and when he died young, many Christians as well as Jews attended his funeral.

This emphasis on choice, freedom and responsibility is one of the most distinctive features of Jewish thought. It is proclaimed in the first chapter of Genesis in the most subtle way. We are all familiar with its statement that G-d created man "in His image, after His likeness". Seldom do we pause to reflect on the paradox. If there is one thing emphasized time and again in the Torah, it is that G-d has no image. "I will be what I will be", He says to Moses when he asks Him His name.

Since G-d transcends nature – the fundamental point of Genesis 1 – then He is free, unbounded by nature's laws. By creating human beings in His image, He gave us a similar freedom, thus creating the one being capable itself of being creative. The unprecedented account of G-d in the Torah's opening chapter leads to an equally unprecedented view of the human person and our capacity for self-transformation.

The Renaissance, one of the high points of European civilization, eventually collapsed. A series of corrupt rulers and Popes led to the Reformation, and to the quite different views of Luther and Calvin. It is fascinating to speculate what might have happened had it continued along the lines signalled by Mirandola. His late 15th century humanism was not secular but deeply religious.

As it is, the great truth of Genesis 1 remains. As the rabbis put it (Bereishith Rabbah 8: 1; Sanhedrin 38a): "Why was man created last? In order to say, if he is worthy, all creation was made for you; but if he is unworthy, he is told, even a gnat preceded you." The Torah remains G-d's supreme call to humankind to freedom and creativity on the one hand, and on the other, to responsibility and restraint – becoming G-d's partner in the work of creation.

To read more writings and teachings from the Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, please visit www.chiefrabbi.org.

From Rabbi Chanan Morrison <ravkooklist@gmail.com>
reply-To rav-kook-list+owners@googlegroups.com
To Rav Kook List <Rav-Kook-List@googlegroups.com>
Subject [Rav Kook List]
Rav Kook List

Rav Kook on the Torah Portion

Breishit: Cain's Offering

"God did not turn to Cain and his offering. Cain became enraged and his face fell." (Gen. 4:5)

In the story of the world's first murder, it was God's decision not to accept Cain's offering that triggered Cain's anger and jealousy, and ultimately his murder of Abel.

Why did God refuse to accept Cain's offering? What was wrong with it?

The Cainite Philosophy

Rav Kook suggests that the very fact that Cain, soon after this incident, would go kill his own brother, indicates that terrible evil was already lurking in Cain's soul. The potential to kill a human being was inside Cain's personality makeup at the very hour that he brought his offering to God.

Such an offering is an abomination. It only serves to amplify the power of evil. The Cainite approach does not seek to purge itself from evil and immorality. Rather, it prefers to cover up inner evil with an outward appearance of holiness. In this fashion it gives strength and influence to evil within that which is good and holy.

This is the core philosophy of paganism and heresy. They do not try to refine human desires and sanctify life. They reject God's great plan to elevate the world through the formation of Israel as a holy people, a people from which all nations can draw inspiration and benefit. But in its inner soul, heresy knows that God rejects it and its path. Its face falls, and rage smolders within. At every opportunity, the violent hand of a murderer is revealed.

Only by Toil

The world must recognize that one cannot gain admission to Paradise solely on the basis of a one-time pronouncement of theoretical faith, while an entire storehouse of evil, cruelty and atrocity permeates every chamber of one's spirit. The purport of such a philosophy is that there is no need for character refinement and ethical study, inner inspection and spiritual growth.

An end, however, will come to this darkness. Humanity will realize that all of its energies need to be directed toward purifying the spirit. Elevating the nations requires the essence prepared by God, the establishment of one nation in the world, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The Jewish people is a sign that Divine light penetrates the lives of nations.

Then it will become clear that holiness is not some cheap trinket to be grabbed by tainted hands. It is a treasure that is acquired through tenacious toil and self-sacrifice, through the merit of a heritage of generations who carried this sacred burden with love. Heresy's mask of hypocrisy will be exposed. Its path of appeasement will be recognized as a sham, an ideology that blinds the eye and contaminates the soul.

"They will no longer harm nor destroy on My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of knowledge of God" (Isaiah 11:9).

(Adapted from Orot, pp. 32-34)

Comments and inquiries may be sent to:
mailto:RavKookList@gmail.com

From Yeshiva.org.il <subscribe@yeshiva.org.il>
reply-To subscribe@yeshiva.org.il

By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Eating before Kiddush

By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: Reuven calls me: "I have not been feeling well lately, and find that I need to eat something shortly after awaking. On weekdays, I go to shul to daven shortly after I wake up, but there is no available minyan for me to attend early Shabbos morning. What should I do?"

Question #2: Ahuva asks: "It is difficult for me to wait for Kiddush until my husband returns from shul. May I eat something before he arrives home?"

Question #3: "Someone told me that a woman may not eat in the morning before she davens, but I remember being taught in Beis Yaakov that we may eat once we say the morning berachos. Is my memory faulty?"

Answer:

Observing Shabbos includes the mitzvah of reciting Kiddush Friday evening: borei pri hagafen and the special beracha of Kiddush, preceded by the passage of the Torah beginning with the word Vayechulu (Rambam, Hilchos Shabbos 29:7). This Kiddush fulfills the Torah's mitzvah of Zachor es yom hashabbos lekadsho, Remember the day of Shabbos to sanctify it.

There is another Kiddush, introduced by our Sages, which is simply reciting borei pri hagafen and drinking wine prior to the Shabbos day meal. This article will discuss under what circumstances one may eat before reciting the daytime Kiddush.

First, we need to categorize our subjects as follows:

May one eat before reciting Kiddush?

May one eat before davening in the morning?

May one eat before reciting Kiddush, either at night or day?

May one eat or drink prior to reciting the Torah-required evening Kiddush? Although the Tanna, Rabbi Yosi, holds that someone eating a meal when Shabbos begins is not required to interrupt it, but may complete his meal and then recite Kiddush afterwards, the Gemara concludes that we do not follow this approach. Once Shabbos arrives it is forbidden to eat or drink anything until one recites or hears Kiddush (Pesachim 100a). The poskim conclude that one may not even drink water before Kiddush (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 271:4).

What is the halacha regarding eating or drinking before daytime Kiddush? This matter is disputed by the two great pillars of halacha, the Rambam and the Raavad. The Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos, 29:10) declares that one may not taste anything before reciting the daytime Kiddush, whereas the Raavad contends that this prohibition applies only to the evening Kiddush, but not to the morning Kiddush.

What is the underlying issue of this difference of opinion? At first glance, it would seem that the Rambam and the Raavad are disputing the following question: When our Sages required Kiddush in the daytime, did they provide it with all the rules of evening Kiddush? After all, there is a general halachic principle Kol detikun rabbanan, ke'ein de'oraysa tikun, when the Sages instituted a new law, they followed the pattern of the Torah's mitzvos. (For brevity's sake, I will henceforth refer to this concept simply as Kol detikun rabbanan.) Kol detikun rabbanan would indicate that just as one may not eat or drink before evening Kiddush, similarly one may not eat or drink anything before morning Kiddush. It would seem that the Rambam is contending that Kol detikun rabbanan applies to daytime Kiddush, whereas the Raavad disputes this for some reason that we will soon explain.

However, a careful reading of the Rambam demonstrates that this analysis is somewhat oversimplified, since the Rambam himself does not fully apply the concept Kol detikun rabbanan to daytime Kiddush. Whereas he introduces the laws of nighttime Kiddush in Chapter 29 of Hilchos Shabbos by stating: It is a positive mitzvah of the Torah to sanctify Shabbos with words, when he begins discussing the daytime Kiddush, he says It is a mitzvah to recite a beracha over wine on Shabbos morning before one eats the second meal of Shabbos, and this is called Kiddusha Rabbah. Evidently, the daytime Kiddush is not a second mitzvah of Kiddush, but simply introduces the daytime meal as being in honor of Shabbos. (The early commentaries note that the term Kiddusha Rabbah [literally, the great Kiddush] for the daytime Kiddush, whose origin is in the Gemara itself [Pesachim 106a], is intentionally overstated.) We could say that the evening Kiddush is a sanctification of Shabbos, whereas the daytime Kiddush is a proclamation announcing the coming meal.

Reciting Kiddush over Bread

Now that we understand that evening Kiddush and daytime Kiddush accomplish dissimilar purposes, we can explain why there are other halachic differences between them. For example, one may recite evening Kiddush over the challah-bread that one is using for the meal, but one may not use the bread of the day meal as a substitute for the daytime Kiddush. After all, if daytime Kiddush is to proclaim that the coming meal is in Shabbos's honor, this proclamation must precede the meal and be somewhat extraordinary.

So now we need to ask: If daytime Kiddush serves a different function than does evening Kiddush, why does the Rambam prohibit eating before daytime Kiddush? The answer is that he understands that some laws of Kiddush still apply to the daytime Kiddush. Thus, the dispute between the Rambam and the Raavad is the degree to which daytime Kiddush is compared to evening Kiddush.

The Halacha

The accepted halacha follows the Rambam, that one may not eat before daytime Kiddush (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 289:1), although as we will soon see, the Raavad's opinion is not completely ignored by later authorities. They often factor the Raavad's opinion when other mitigating circumstances exist, a halachic concept called tziruf. For example, the Elyah Rabbah (286:9) rules that a weak person who has no beverage available on which to recite Kiddush may rely on the Raavad together with another opinion who contends that there is no obligation to make Kiddush until one has completed davening musaf. (According to this latter opinion, someone who eats or drinks after completing Shacharis has no requirement to recite Kiddush before eating.)

May one drink water before Kiddush?

In regard to the evening Kiddush, the halacha is that one may not drink anything, even water, once Shabbos begins before reciting Kiddush. Does the same law apply to morning Kiddush? The Tur cites a dispute whether one may drink water before davening on Shabbos morning since one has as yet not recited or heard Kiddush. He quotes the Avi HaEzri as prohibiting this, whereas the Tur's own father, the Rosh, permitted drinking water before Kiddush and he himself drank before Shabbos morning davening. The Rosh reasoned that drinking before Kiddush is prohibited only once the time for reciting Kiddush has arrived, which is not until one has davened. Prior to davening, since one is prohibited from eating the time for the Shabbos meal has as yet not arrived, and therefore the time for Kiddush has also not yet arrived. However, as we will soon see, one may drink tea or coffee before davening on weekdays, and the Rosh permits this also on Shabbos morning.

May one eat before morning davening?

At this point, we can discuss the first question raised above: "I have not been feeling well lately, and find that I need to eat something shortly after awaking. On weekdays, I go to shul to daven shortly after I wake up, but there is no available minyan for me to attend early Shabbos morning. What should I do?"

Reuven's question involves an issue that we have as yet not discussed: May one eat before davening in the morning, even on a weekday morning?

The Gemara states: "What do we derive from the verse, You may not eat over blood? That you may not eat (in the morning) before you have prayed for your 'blood'... The verse states, in reference to someone who eats and drinks prior to praying: You have thrown me behind your body (Melachim 1 14:9). Do not read your body (in Hebrew gavecha), but your arrogance (gai'echa). The Holy One said: After this person has indulged in his own pride (by eating or drinking), only then does he accept upon himself the dominion of heaven (Berachos 10b)!?" The halacha that results from this Gemara is codified by all authorities. To quote the Rambam: "It is prohibited to taste anything or to perform work from halachic daybreak until one has prayed shacharis" (Hilchos Tefillah 6:4).

Would you like tea or coffee?

Although all poskim prohibit eating and drinking before morning davening, we find early authorities who permit drinking water before davening, since this is not considered an act of conceit (Rosh quoting the Avi HaEzri; the Beis Yosef cites authorities who disagree, but rules like the Avi HaEzri). Most later authorities permit drinking tea or coffee, contending that this is also considered like drinking water, but the poskim dispute whether one may add sugar to the beverage. The Mishnah Berurah and others prohibit this, whereas the Aruch Hashulchan and other later authorities permit it. They are disputing whether adding sugar to the beverage promotes it to a forbidden beverage or whether it is still considered water that one may drink before davening.

Hunger

The Rambam rules that someone who is hungry or thirsty should eat or drink before he davens, so that he can daven properly (Hilchos Tefillah 5:2).

Similarly, some authorities contend that it is permitted to eat or drink before davening for medical reasons. They explain that the Gemara prohibited only eating or drinking that demonstrates arrogance, whereas that done for medical reasons is, by definition, not done for arrogance (Beis Yosef, quoting Mahari Abohav). This approach is accepted as normative halacha by the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 89:3).

I will be hungry!

What is the halacha if someone is as yet not hungry, but he knows that he will be so hungry by the end of davening that it will distract him from davening properly: is he permitted to eat before davening, so that the hunger does not distract him? This question impacts directly on Reuven's question.

The answer to this question appears to lie in the following Talmudic discussion:

"Rav Avya was weak and as a result did not attend Rav Yosef's lecture that was delivered prior to musaf. The next day, when Rav Avya arrived in the Yeshiva, Abayei saw Rav Avya and was concerned that Rav Yosef may have taken offence at Rav Avya's absence. Therefore, Abayei asked Rav Avya why he had failed to attend the previous day's lecture, after which the following conversation transpired:

Abayei: Why did the master (addressing Rav Avya) not attend the lecture?

Rav Avya: I was not feeling well and unable to attend.

Abayei: Why did you not eat something first and then come?

Rav Avya: Does the master (now referring to Abayei) not hold like Rav Huna who prohibits eating before davening musaf?

Abayei: You should have davened musaf privately, eaten something and then come to shul (Berachos 28b).

We see from Abayei's response that someone who is weak should daven first and then eat, even if this means that he davens without a minyan. Based on this passage, several authorities rule that someone who will not be able to wait until after davening, and cannot find an early minyan with which to daven, should daven privately (biyechidus), eat and then attend shul in order to hear the Torah and fulfill the mitzvos of answering Kaddish and Kedusha (Beer Heiteiv 89:11; Biur Halacha 289; Daas Torah 289, quoting Zechor Le'Avraham; Shu"t Igros Moshe, Orach Chayim 2:28 at end of teshuvah). Thus, it seems that we can positively answer Reuven's question: If he cannot wait until davening is over to eat, then he should daven biyechidus, make Kiddush and eat something, and then come to shul to answer Borchu, Kedusha, Kaddish and hear keriyas Hatorah.

May a woman eat before Kiddush?

At this point, we have enough information to discuss Ahuva's question: "It is difficult for me to wait for Kiddush until my husband returns from shul. May I eat before he arrives home?"

Of course, Ahuva may recite Kiddush herself and eat something before her husband returns home. To fulfill the mitzvah, she needs to eat something that fulfills the halacha of Kiddush binkom seudah, a topic we will leave for a different time. However, Ahuva either does not want to recite Kiddush, or does not want to eat something to accompany the Kiddush. Is there a halachic solution to permit her to eat or drink before Kiddush?

There are some authorities who suggest approaches to permit Ahuva to eat or drink before Kiddush. Here is one approach:

Although most authorities obligate a woman to recite the daytime Kiddush and prohibit her from eating before she recites Kiddush (Tosafos Shabbos 286:4, 289:3; Pri Megadim, Mishbetzos Zahav 289:1; Mishnah Berurah 289:6), this is not a universally held position. One early authority (Maharam Halavah, Pesachim 106, quoting Rashba) contends that women are absolved of the requirement to recite daytime Kiddush, for the following reason:

Since the daytime Kiddush is not an extension of the mitzvah of evening Kiddush, but is to demonstrate that the meal is in honor of Shabbos, this requirement does not devolve upon women. Although this approach is not halachically accepted, some authorities allow a woman to rely on this opinion, under extenuating circumstances, to eat before reciting morning Kiddush (Shu"t Minchas Yitzchak 4:28:3).

When does a married woman become obligated to make Kiddush?

Rav Moshe Feinstein presents a different reason to permit a married woman to eat before Kiddush. He reasons that since a married woman is required to eat the Shabbos meal with her husband, she does not become responsible to make Kiddush until it is time for the two of them to eat the Shabbos meal together, meaning after davening (Shu"t Igros Moshe, Orach Chayim 4:101\2). In Rav Moshe's opinion, she is not yet obligated to make Kiddush, since the time for her meal has not yet arrived. However, the Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasah (Chapter 52, note 46) quotes Rav Shelomoh Zalman Auerbach as disputing Rav Moshe's conclusion that a married woman has no obligation yet to make Kiddush. Firstly, he is unconvinced that she is halachically required to eat her meal with her husband, and furthermore, even if she is, that this duty permits her to eat before Kiddush.

If we do not follow the lenient approaches mentioned, when does a woman become obligated to recite Kiddush and, therefore, at what point may she no longer drink tea, coffee, and water? The Acharonim debate

this issue, but understanding their positions requires an understanding of a different topic:

What must a woman pray?

All authorities require a woman to daven daily, but there is a dispute whether she is required to recite the full shemoneh esrei (I will call this the "Ramban's opinion"), or whether she fulfills her requirement by reciting a simple prayer, such as the morning beracha that closes with the words Gomel chasadim tovim le'amo Yisrael. (I will refer to this as the "Magen Avraham's opinion.") Allow me to explain.

When may she eat?

According to the Ramban's opinion that a woman is required to recite the full shemoneh esrei, she may not eat in the morning without first davening (see the previous discussion), whereas according to the Magen Avraham's opinion that she fulfills her requirement once she has recited a simply prayer or morning berachos, she may eat once she recited these tefilos.

Some authorities rule that a woman becomes obligated to hear Kiddush as soon as she recites berachos, since she has now fulfilled her requirement to daven and she may therefore begin eating her meals. According to this opinion, now that she recited morning berachos she may not eat or drink without first making Kiddush (Tosafos Shabbos 286:4, 289:3). This approach contends that before she recites morning berachos, she may drink water, tea or coffee, but after she recites morning berachos, she may not even drink these beverages without first reciting Kiddush.

There is another view that contends that a woman can follow the same approach that men follow, and may drink water, tea or coffee even after she recited berachos before she has davened (Pri Megadim, Eishel Avraham 289:4 as understood by Halichos Beisah page 204).

At this point we can address the third question I raised above: "Someone told me that a woman may not eat in the morning before she davens, but I remember being taught in Beis Yaakov that we may eat once we say the morning berachos. Is my memory faulty?" Many authorities contend that although a woman should daven shemoneh esrei every morning, she may rely on the opinion of the Magen Avraham in regard to eating, and may eat at home after reciting morning berachos. In many institutions, this approach was preferred, since it accomplishes that the tefillah that the girls recite is a much better prayer, and they learn how to daven properly.

Conclusion

According to Rav Hirsch, observing Shabbos, and declaring its holiness, means recognizing that the arrival of Shabbos signifies that man's activity has attained its goal. Now it is time to recognize Hashem's creation and devote ourselves to developing our spirituality. When we recite Kiddush, we should internalize this message