



I am Creation: Prepared for Greatness

Think about your own creation story and that of your family.

- Tell the story of your own birth.
- Tell a story about your family history.
- What values do you learn about yourself and your family from these stories?

Genesis 1:26-28 - (26) And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, the cattle, and over all the earth, and all the creeping things that creep upon the earth.' (27) **And God created man in God's own image**, in the image of God created him; male and female God created them. (28) And God blessed them; and God said unto them: 'Be fruitful, and multiply, fill the earth and master it; and rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and over all the living things that creep upon the earth.'

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (as quoted by Rabbi Arthur Green) - "Why are we forbidden to make images of God? It is not because God is beyond all images, so that no image could possibly depict God. If that were the case, images would merely be harmless. God *has* an image, and that is you. You may not *make* the image of God because you *are* the image of God. The only medium in which you can make God's image is the medium of your entire life, and that is precisely what we are commanded to do. Everything you do, everything you say, each moment and the way you use it are all part of the way you build God's image. To take anything less than a full, living human being - like canvas or a piece of marble - and call it the image of God would be to diminish God, to lessen God's image.

R' Y.Y. Weinberg, quoting the Saba of Slobodka: This verse cannot be passed over offhandedly. We must delve deeply into the idea contained in it. In addition to man's corporeal nature, which is visible to us in his body and bodily needs, there is also a creative and dynamic spiritual dimension, with has in itself elements of the creator.

One may not forget this idea for even an instant, for it is the most basic of all principles in Judaism. According to this, man is meant to be the witness to the existence of God in the world. The created being must testify to his Creator, not by what he says, but by his very being, by his inner being and outer appearance. Man's mission is to elevate himself and

attain a spiritual and moral level that will make apparent his resemblance to his Creator. Every person can attain this level, and not only exceptional people. In each person there is a divine spark. Each person can merit the appearance of God in his soul.

Genesis 2:7, 15

וַיִּצְרֵף יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו
נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה... וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחָהוּ בְּגֶן־עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ:

Then the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul... The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it.

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, Chayei Moharan #37

"If you want to return ... [to God]... you must make yourself into a new creation. You can do this with a sigh! We never stop breathing - releasing the stale air and drawing in fresh air. Our very lives depend on this. The physical air we breathe has its root above.... The sigh begins when you draw in extra air. This is similar to what happens just before a person dies: he draws in extra air and then the spirit leaves him. Every exhalation is the death of the moment that has passed, in preparation for the birth of the new moment. Thus when you take a deep sigh, you release yourself from ... the old and impure and open yourself to the pure air [in order to receive new vitality.] This is *Teshuvah*, returning from

impurity to pure, from old to new, in order to gain new life. The very body is renewed, because "Sighing breaks a person's whole body" (*Berachot 58b*), and therefore the body is remade."

Orot Hakodesh 1:177 -R' Abraham Isaac Kook:

The Inner Spark - The inner essence of the soul, which reflects, which lives, the true spiritual life, must have absolute, inner freedom. It experiences its freedom, which is life, through its originality in thought, which is its inner spark that can be fanned to a flame through study and concentration. But the inner spark is the basis of imagination and thought. If the autonomous spark should not be given scope to express itself, then whatever may be acquired from the outside will be of no avail. This spark must be guarded in its purity, and the thought expressing the inner self, in its profound truth, its greatness and majesty, must be aroused. This holy spark must not be quenched through any study or probing. The uniqueness of the inner soul, in its own authenticity – this is the highest expression of the Divine light, the light planted for the righteous, from which will bud and blossom the fruit of the tree of life.

"I AM CREATION" Action Items:
