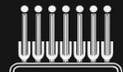




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# Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



6 Oct 2018 Parshas Bereishis 27 Tishrei 5779

## The Psychology of Sin by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of G-d hovered over the face of the waters. And said G-d, "There shall be light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:1-3)

To discover the mystical light hidden within these words, we will have to re-read them in a new way. The Torah is not written with sentences and paragraphs. We will let go of our pre-set expectations of how the words have to be read, and take a new, deeper look at the words as they fall into a new form.

*In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth...*

The Torah speaks to each individual, describing the choices that each one of us will be faced with in life. G-d created two paths for us to choose. He created "the heavens," a life of spiritual meaning, and "the earth," a strictly physical existence. The person must choose the life that he will lead: the "heavens" or the "earth."

*...And the earth...*

The person chooses earth, the life of the body. He is drawn to the firmness and tangibility he sees in physical, worldly life. It seems so real and solid, something he can hold on to.

*...was chaos and void...*

He is lost. He craved order and fulfillment and found only its opposite. He wanted clarity and fulfillment, but now he only feels lost and empty, the life of body, ego and physical comfort never providing the peace for which he yearns. He knows now he must look for something else.

*...and darkness was upon the face of the deep...*

But it is dark and he has fallen deep. He seeks clarity, he searches for truth. But it is so hard to see what is right.

And what is to be with his inner, spiritual self that languishes, its silent cry felt somewhere deep but never heard?

*...and the spirit of G-d hovered upon the face of the waters...*

The spirit of G-d, man's G-dly soul, the divine spark placed within each of us. It flounders, flying waywardly over the torrential waters.

But there is hope.

*...And said G-d...*

And said, "G-d!" He, the person himself, cries out, "G-d!" From the darkness and depths, he realizes it is G-d for whom he seeks. He cannot find his way out on his own, and he does not need to, for he knows now what the Realness is that he has been seeking all along.

*"There shall be light,"*

It is now clear. There is light for him.

*"and there was light."*

And light for the world.

### Live & Laugh

Q: How can you tell if someone is half Catholic and half Jewish?  
A: When he goes to confession, he takes a lawyer with him

### What's Nu?!

**The Barmy Boy  
Ilan Alhadeff**

Mazal Tov to Alan & Lorette.

### Calendar

*Shabbos Mevorchim MarCheshvan.*

*Molad: Tuesday 9 Oct 21:09:10*

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl: 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by the **Alhadeff Family** in honour of Ilan's Bar Mitzvah.
- ◆ **Sushi & Black Label Farbrengen.**
- ◆ Mincha: 5:30 pm
- ◆ Shabbos Ends: 6:41 pm
- ◆ **Rosh Chodesh: Tues 9 & Wed 10 Oct**

- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.

If we are all descended from Adam and Eve, then it stands to reason that our characteristics - both positive and negative, fine points and foibles - can all somehow be traced back to our earliest ancestors.

If one studies the accounts of the first man's first sin in the Talmud and Midrash, one is struck by a most remarkable observation. The commandment not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge was given to Adam and Eve only after most of Friday (the sixth day, when they were created) had passed. Furthermore, the prohibition was only until that Shabbos. And it's not as if there was nothing to eat. I mean, there was a whole Garden of Eden with fruit trees galore. Could they not have started with a perfect pear, or a magnificent mango? Did they absolutely have to eat from the one and only tree that was forbidden to them?

The problem is further compounded when one considers that Adam and Eve were not just a couple of homeless hobos. They were hand made by G-d, formed and fashioned personally by the Creator! Surely such august creatures could have waited a few hours and occupied themselves with the other fruit first. Why did it have to be *that* fruit?

We all know the answer, don't we? Forbidden fruit is always sweeter, isn't it? We play mind games. We imagine that the one forbidden fruit in a paradise island with dozens of other exotic options has simply got to be the most deliciously delectable fruit on the planet. And we just have to get our hands

on it - and it has got to be now.

We do the same thing as Adam and Eve. But when it comes to our own choices we rationalize, whereas their sin seems ridiculous, foolish and unforgivable. The truth is that it's always the same story all over again. It has been since the beginning of time. It is simply the psychology of sin. It doesn't matter how difficult something is. It might be the easiest commandment, but once we *have* to do it, it becomes difficult in our minds.

Is it really so hard to be a Jew? Are our traditions so onerous? Is the Torah so demanding and burdensome? Are all those who do keep it such otherworldly saints? Of course not. It's all in the mind.

Is playing golf on Saturday so much more fun than on Sunday? Why can we walk and jog for miles all week long but to walk a mile to Shul on Shabbos is not even up for discussion? Are *shikhs* really more beautiful than Jewish girls? If we are honest and objective, we will recognize the truth.

The psychology of sin is that we imagine things to be more difficult than they really are, just as Adam imagined the forbidden fruit to be sweeter than all the others. He had one mitzvah of a few hours duration and he still blew it. No doubt, it would be the same for us even if the entire Judaism were reduced to one easy commandment. We would still complain and find it too hard.

The sooner we realize it's a mind game, the sooner we will be able to win the game. Good luck.

# Parsha Pointers

*Bereishis: Artscroll Chumash pg 2;  
Living Torah pg 3*

G-d creates the world in six days. On the first day He makes darkness and light. On the second day He forms the heavens, dividing the "upper waters" from the "lower waters." On the third day He sets the boundaries of land and sea and calls forth trees and greenery from the earth. On the fourth day He fixes the position of the sun, moon and stars as timekeepers and illuminators of the earth. Fish, birds and reptiles are created on the fifth day; land-animals, and then the human being, on the sixth. G-d ceases work on the seventh day, and sanctifies it as a day of rest.

Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden and commanded not to eat from the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil." The serpent persuades Eve to violate the command, and she shares the forbidden fruit with her husband. Because of their sin, it is decreed that man will experience death, returning to the soil from which he was formed, and that all gain will come only through struggle and hardship. Man is banished from the Garden.

Eve gives birth to two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain quarrels with Abel and murders him, and becomes a rootless wanderer. A third son is born to Adam, Seth, whose tenth-generation descendant, Noah, is the only righteous man in a corrupt world.

## Man and Woman

*By Rabbi Manis Friedman*

When G-d created Adam, at the moment Adam opened his eyes, what was his psychological profile? He had no Oedipus complex because he had no mother. He didn't have a birth trauma, because he wasn't born. He had no sibling rivalry... What was this man like?

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What was the makeup of his psyche?

Interestingly, Adam didn't have a survival instinct either. That's why when G-d said, "The day you eat from this tree, you'll die," Adam wasn't impressed. "Oh, so I'll die." He had no survival instinct. So, what was going on in his mind?

Adam had a death wish. That was his psyche. He had a death wish because life felt so unnatural. In a sense, when G-d said, "From dust you are, and to dust you shall return," that described Adam's psyche. "I come from dust, I want to go back."

Back to what? Back to dust. Back to nothingness. Men, to this day, have this complex. If you strip away the externalities, the trappings — if you take away his car, and his money, and his blue suede shoes — there's nothing, there's dust. Every man is terrified that in the end, he will have amounted to nothing, regardless of his accomplishments. He can be the wealthiest, most powerful and successful person, the most talented and the most admired. Deep down, inside he is afraid that it is all going to go away and he is going to remain a nothing, a non-entity, a zero.

Women don't have this. A woman does not have a fear or a suspicion of her own nothingness. It doesn't exist. Because Eve was not created from dust, she was created from Adam. So where a man is afraid of being reduced back to nothing, a woman, if you take away all her accomplishments, all her achievements, will be reduced to a man.

When you take away a woman's being, she doesn't become a nothing, she becomes him. She loses herself in him. When you take away a man's being, he doesn't lose himself in her, he becomes nothing.

That's why a man needs to accomplish. He must accomplish, because he needs to deny this nothingness. Whereas a woman doesn't need to accomplish in order to exist — she needs to accomplish in order to be appreciated.

Because if you're a nothing and you have to become a something, then accomplishment is everything, and respect is what you need more than anything else. Respect means you are a something.

A woman, who is not afraid of becoming nothing, does not understand and can not tolerate

when her somethingness is not appreciated. So what a woman needs more than anything else is appreciation.

The Talmud says that a man should honor his wife and be very careful with her feelings. A man should be careful of his wife's honor, because a woman is sensitive to injustice. This is not just an idle observation about women. At the core of a woman's being, it is the injustice that bothers her. She is being treated as if she was nothing, and that's not true. She is something, and that injustice hurts.

When a man is treated like nothing, it's not the injustice that hurts him — it is the truth that hurts. He is nothing and he hates being reminded of it. His reaction is not as to an injustice, it is not a moral indignation, it's a personal hurt. Whereas with a woman, no matter how badly she is abused or devastated, it remains a moral injustice to her.

This is why there can be a woman who is abused for years in a relationship, and all the while she tells herself that she deserves it. A man cannot do that. He can not say, "I deserve it," because that's not the issue. The issue, to the man, is "am I or am I not." If you abuse me, then I am not and I can't take that. I can not be diminished to nothing and go on living. A woman, on the other hand, simply tells herself, "I deserve this, therefore it is not an injustice." In this way she can go on living.

This explains why men are aggressive. A man is desperate to be recognized as a something, and so he needs to prove himself, he needs to achieve, he needs to acquire. This need to acquire is an aggression. Whereas a woman is determined to retain what is hers, to remain herself. No matter how intensely she pursues that, it is not aggression, because she's not out to acquire — she is trying to preserve.

When the lion goes hunting, he's aggressive. When the lioness goes hunting, she's trying to sustain her family. Though she may be more violent than the male, it is not aggression — it is maintenance. When you threaten a bear cub when its mother is around, you're in big trouble. You say, "Oh, this mother is aggressive." Yet she's not, she's totally passive. If you don't present a threat she's fine, she's not out to get

you. She doesn't want anything you have. She wants to maintain what she has and that she'll do ferociously. But that's maintaining, so it's not aggression.

In contrast, the male lion wants what you have, and he's going to get it. So even if he does it nicely, even if he does it gently, it's aggression. Even a very subtle and polite seduction is aggression, because you are trying to get what isn't yours. You are out to get something, you're acquiring, you are a predator. You can be a nice predator, but that, too, is aggressive.

Men are called aggressive because they need something they don't have. Women are called passive, because they don't necessarily want what they don't have; they like what they do have. We are not talking about physical possessions, rather psychological, the psyche.

This helps us to understand the blessings men and women make before the Morning Prayer.

A man says, "Thank You for not making me a woman." A man is grateful for what he is not. Because he can't make a positive statement, he can't say, Thank You for what I am. He's never sure he is anything.

A woman says, "Thank You for making me as You want me to be." A woman can make a positive statement about herself, because she knows that she is. She is grateful for what she is.

## The Heavens and the Earth

*By Rabbi Shais Taub*

The Torah which G-d has given us contains both an inner and an outer dimension. The outer dimension is the simple meaning of the narratives and laws, while the inner dimension is the essence of the Torah, its secrets and mystical truths. One who studies the Torah according to its inner dimension receives an entirely different perspective on G-d's wisdom and His guidance in our lives than does one exposed only to the Torah's plain meaning.

This radical advantage can already be seen just in the way one reads the very first three verses of the Torah.

The Torah begins:

*In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was chaos and void,*