Points to Ponder

Berashis 5780

**אֵ֣לֶּה תֽוֹלְד֧וֹת הַשָּׁמַ֛יִם וְהָאָ֖רֶץ בְּהִ֣בָּֽרְאָ֑ם This is the story of heaven and earth when they were created (2:4)** - The letter “Heh” is small here. **Rashi** notes that everything was created on the first day and this is the hint in the small 5 additional days. Problem is, we know that things were created all 6 days of creation so what is the message here? **Rav Aharon Soloveitchik ztl** explained that the “Heh” here is the “heh” of distinction — everything and everyone created needs to be able to consider that the world was created for him/her.

**תַּרְדֵּמָ֛ה עַל־הָֽאָדָ֖ם Hashem put Adam to sleep (2:21)** - When creating Chava, Hashem put Adam to sleep as **Rashi** explains, so that he should not be disgusted that she was created from a piece of meat that came from him. **Rav Yisrael Reisman Shlita** quotes from **Rav Moshe Braverman Shlita** that the lesson here is that when couples don’t see eye to eye and that there are times that a wife does something that a husband should simply cover his eyes, go to sleep or merely ignore it. Rav Reisman added that the idea of noticing and highlighting good things in a spouse is not to be considered a job but rather normal (hence there was no “job” for the Malach who came to make Avraham aware of his wife’s humility and dignity thus only 3 malachim and not 4).

**יֹֽדְעֵ֖י ט֥וֹב וָרָֽע You will be like Hashem knowing good and Evil (3:5) - Rav Schachter Shlita** would point out to us that prior to the Sin, Adam and Chava were raised knowing right and wrong. They classified themselves and the world around them from a purely legal and logical perspective. However once they tasted Taavah, they now had to contend with what was “good” and “bad” and sometimes that which feels “good” is not necessarily right. The added consideration would prove to be difficult for them in the future.

**כִּ֛י הִ֥וא הָֽיְתָ֖ה אֵ֥ם כָּל־חָֽי: He called her Chava for she was the mother of every living thing (3:20)** - Why does Adam name Chava at this point? **Rav Eliyahu Baruch Shulman Shlita** explained that Adam needed to choose a perspective here. He realized that although he was furious at his wife for the episode in the garden, anger fleets but names stay. Adam chose a perspective that would look forward rather than to unpleasant memories that corrode our past.

**כָּתְנ֥וֹת ע֖וֹר וַיַּלְבִּשֵֽׁם: Hashem made them clothes of leather (3:21)** - If they fashioned clothes from fig leaves, why did Hashem make them clothes from leather? **Rav Sternbuch Shlita** learns that Hashem was teaching Adam that the main purpose for all things created was to serve man and if man needed clothing then he was to be able to utilize animals for that purpose. Hashem reminded Adam at this time that given this big power, Adam was to use it in the service of Hashem.

**מִגַּן־עֵ֑דֶן  He sent them from Gan Eden (3:23) - Sfas Emes** notes that this sounds like He sent them on a mission. Where were they to go? **Sivan Rahav Meir** suggests that the sending from Gan Eden was not just punishment, it was a purposeful mission to find the Gan Eden that exists in the entire world. In other words, Adam now had a mission to find the pieces of Gan Eden that were now scattered among everything in the world and to nurture it in order to turn the entire world into Gan Eden.

**גָּד֥וֹל עֲוֹנִ֖י מִנְּשֽׂוֹא: My sin is too great to bear (4:13) - Rashi** comments that Kayin’s comment needs to be read as a question. He was asking Hashem how could it be that Hashem can carry the entire universe but cannot bear his sin. **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ztl quoted Rav Yerucham Levovitz ztl** who learned an incredible lesson here — if one wants to carry a burden, he can carry it. If one does not, the burden will crush him/her.

**Haftara: יַגְדִּ֥יל תּוֹרָ֖ה וְיַאְדִּֽיר Hashem desires the expansion of Torah and its value (Yeshayahu 42:21) - Rav Shach ztl** would often note that the Rambam explains this possuk as referring to the fact that one only merits Olam Haba if s/he does a Mitzva as prescribed - PERFECTLY. The hope is that in the myriad of Mitzva chances that one gets in his life, he will do at least ONE correctly and wholly — without ulterior motive. Rav Shach would add that the things in life that are public are not able to illuminate. Only things with a sense of Tzniyus can properly enlighten (See Gemara Berachos about Rabbi Yochanan who uncovered his arm to light up an otherwise darkened home).