

The focus of the narrative then turned back to the facet of the Divine Persona Torah calls **Elohim**, and we saw Him engage with His Creation in a wide variety of glorious ways the text of Torah described for us with the following verbs.

amar [He spoke]

badal [He divided]

qara [He called]

ra'ah [He looked/perceived/saw]

asah [He made/built]

qavah [He gathered],

natan [He established, set in place and motion, and/or gave]

barach [he blessed, i.e., released from restrictions and limitations, commissioned, and empowered]

kalah [He finished-out, made complete and presentable] and

shabat [He ceased, desisted, got still, took a seat, and rested].

The result of these interactions of the Holy One with His Creation was dazzling.

The **sh'mayim** [heavens] and the **eretz** [earth] first appeared in our sight in a primeval state of **tohu v'vohu** [English, *without form, and void*]. Then we saw the waters of the primeval stew start to stir and swirl in response to the **Ruach's** brooding movement over them. And then, as **Elohim breathed** upon those waters and broke the Deep Primeval Silence we saw molecules and atoms and matter and mass and vapors and waters all rushing to respond to the prophetic, creative words that came forth. At the first declaration, '**Yehi Ohr**', Divine Light *shone*, piercing the primeval darkness forever.

That was just the beginning, of course. But have you ever wondered *what kind of Light* it was that came forth that first day? Have you ever pondered what its *Source* was, what its intensity was, and what its *effect* was? The answer to those questions is not as simple as you may think. The light introduced in Genesis 1:3 was **not**, after all, the light of the sun or moon or stars – for those lights were not be introduced into Creation until **Yom Ha-Revi'i** [the 4th Day].

The light of **Yom Echad** [Day 1 – the time of perfect unity] that came forth in perfect submission to the prophetic "**Yehi ohr**" call of the Holy One was not any light we have ever seen. It was, instead, *Light as Messiah is Light*. It was *Light as Torah is Light*. It was *Light as the Holy One Himself is Light*.

Consider the implications. The Holy One shook Himself, and spoke, and vibrations – waves - went forth. And from His very Being, released through the powerful energy of His Words themselves, Divine Light *poured forth*. And of course what

was released was exactly the right amount and intensity of Light to set the stage for *the next phase of Creation*.

The Holy One then began to divide the *ohr* that emanated from His Words into a spectrum of visible and invisible matter. The process of dividing and reconstituting the Divine *Ohr* is described in Torah as *bara*. In English, we translated it ‘*He created*’. He summoned [Hebrew, *qara*] everything that would be visible to the human eye together on one side, and He summoned everything that would remain invisible to the human eye on the other.

The Holy One then continued at a measured pace the process of dividing, and categorizing, and simultaneously infusing with creativity and setting limits on all the things which He *bara*-ed [created] by His words. He thus progressively and perfectly brought *form* to that which was *tohu* [without form], and *meaning and purpose* to that which was *vohu* [void, meaningless, purposeless]. He shook Himself *seven times*, and spoke *ten phrases*, and thereby brought into being all that we know or can comprehend.

And that brings us to today’s aliyah.

Spotlight Right – Enter the Creature Called “Man”

In today’s aliyah we will focus on what the Holy One did to make the world He had *bara*-ed in yesterday’s aliyah ready for the creature the Holy One made *b’tzelem Elohim* [‘in the image of God’] – the creature we know as *man*. We were told at the conclusion of the first chapter of *B’reshit* that the Holy One *bara*-ed man *b’tzelem Elohim* – i.e. *in the image – or shadow - of the Creator*.

The Holy One was not just experimenting with new species until He got it right. He had this last creature in mind all along. Everything else He *bara*-ed was created for this creature. The creature called “man”, you see, was intended all along to ‘***rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.***’ Genesis 1:26.

How was man different from the animals he was to rule? For one thing, he, unlike the animals, was created *b’tzelem Elohim* [in the image – or as the earthly ‘shadow’ - of the Creator].

Secondly, we are told that the creature man received a blessing/empowerment from the Holy One that far exceeded that given any other species. The Holy One blessed/empowered the creature ‘man’ for six specific tasks :

1. to be His 'shadow' upon the earth, revealing His characteristics and attributes into the world in real interactions in real time;
2. to 'bear fruit'
3. to multiply
4. to fill the earth
5. to subdue the elements
6. to rule over the other creatures the Holy One created.

These six things were not just Adam's mission and reason to be alive – they are yours and mine as well!

In the verses of chapter 2 of Genesis we learn many additional things about man, and about the special relationship for which the Almighty created him - a relationship far and away more intimate than the Holy One has with any other aspect of Creation. We will learn, first of all, that man not merely *bara*-ed [created by the sheer force and prophetic energy of the Holy One's Word] – he, uniquely in all Creation, was also **formed**. Torah states it this way:

Vayitzer Adonai Elohim et ha-adam

"And Elohim formed the human

afar min ha-adamah

of dust from the ground . . .

[Genesis 2:7(a)]

The operative Hebrew verb of this passage, the one our English Bibles translates as 'formed', is a form of the Hebrew verb root **yatzar**². Strong's Concordance tells us this verb means "*to form, to fashion, to frame*". It may help you to understand that this is the verb root from which is derived the Hebrew noun that translates into English as 'potter' [i.e. Hebrew *yotzir*].

Yatzar-ing involves *direct, purposeful, long-term contact* between the one doing the forming and that which is being formed. Picture in your mind a continuous, flowing interaction - a process of repeated adjustments and improvements.

Unlike the rest of Creation, the human was not just *spoken* into existence – he alone among created things was lovingly *nurtured* and *perfected* in the embrace of the Holy One.

The Hebrew 'word picture' which is formed by the consonants that make up the word *yatzar* is illustrative of the intimacy involved. The first consonant of the

² *Yatzar* is *yod, tzade, resh*, Strong's Hebrew word #3335, pronounced *yaw-tzar*'.

word *yatzar* is the Hebrew letter *yod* [which, at the beginning of a word, as here, makes what in English sounds like a ‘y’ sound]. This letter, like all Hebrew letters, however, is more than a symbol representing a sound. It, like all Hebrew letters, is also – and perhaps most essentially - a *pictograph*. The *yod*, at least when it is, as here, the first letter of a word constitutes a picture of *an extended hand* – usually, and certainly in this case – the Hand of the Holy One. As a potter does his forming with his hand, so is the Holy One pictured as doing His work with a Divine Hand.

The second letter of the *yatzar* shoresh is the Hebrew consonant *tzade*. This is the Hebrew letter that makes a *tz* sound [say ‘*ritz*’, or *pizza*, and you will get pretty close]. This letter is also a pictograph – specifically, one showing a son/heir bowing or kneeling in total submission under an extended hand [here, again, the Hand of the Holy One].

The final consonant of the *yatzar* shoresh is *resh*, the Hebrew consonant that makes the ‘r’ sound. The shape of this letter constitutes a pictographic representation of a *king* or *head of a household*.

The message declared when one combines these particular pictographs into a Hebrew verb is a flowing mural showing *the Holy One extending His Hand to a man in an inferior, immature, and imperfect state*, and thereby *transforming the man to whom He has extended His Hand into a king, or head of his household*.

This is certainly an accurate picture of what the Holy One did with *Adam* in *Gan Eden*. It is also true of each and every one of us. Every one of us needs, and does best to yield in total submission to, the *yatzar*-ing Hand of the Holy One. There is no room in the Holy One’s plan for a ‘self-made’ man. He is the potter – we are privileged beyond imagination to be the clay He has chosen.

Understanding and embracing this truth is one of the most critical steps through which any and every human being desiring to enter into a relationship with God must process. But Beloved, believe it or not, there is one thing that we as human beings need from the Holy One even more than His *yatzar*-ing Hand.

The Primeval State of the Eretz – No Weeds!

We know that, though by the time today’s aliyah begins the *eretz* had been prepared fully and was totally ready for Adam to inhabit, the truth was that Adam was not quite ready, just yet, to inhabit it. Though Adam’s *physical body* had been formed of the clay through the *yatzar* process, and though man’s purpose in regard to the rest of creation had been clearly declared, two things still remained to be done by the Holy One to ‘set the stage’.

What were those two things? We will read about them in today's aliyah. First, however, note the manner in which Torah describes the condition of the *eretz* just prior to the Holy One's introduction of Adam into it:

V'chol siach ha-sadeh terem yihyeh v'aretz
All the wild shrubs did not yet exist on the earth,

V'chol-esev ha-sadeh terem yitz'mach
and all the wild plants had not yet sprouted.

ki lo himetir Adonai Elohim al-ha-aretz
This was because God had not brought rain on the earth,

v'adam ayin l'avod et-ha-adamah
and there was no man to work the ground.

V'ed ya'aleh min-ha-aretz v'hishkah
A mist rose up from the earth, and it watered

et-kol-p'nei ha-adamah
the entire surface of the ground.

Ahhh - there were ***no weeds*** on the *eretz*, Dear Reader. All that grew from the *eretz*, prior to the introduction of man, was what the Holy One had specifically spoken forth. Before man was placed in the Garden, every living thing in the *eretz* appeared exactly where it was supposed to and grew according to plan, in perfect harmony with everything else.

Nothing exceeded its bounds. Not even by a fraction of a millimeter. All was perfectly in the place established for it to grow and prosper. Only later – after the fall of the creature ‘man’- would the land start to produce thorns, thistles, and require the sweat of a man's brow. Ah, but that is *another story* As stated above, the preparation that was still needed as we begin today's aliyah was not the preparation of the *eretz* - it was the preparation of *Adam*.

At the end of Genesis 1 Adam was a creature formed in the image of the Holy One, it is true – but at that time Adam still lacked two things that were absolutely necessary for him to fulfill His potential. Both of the things Adam was lacking at the conclusion of Genesis 1 will be provided for him in today's aliyah. The first will be an amazingly intimate and empowering ‘*kiss of life*’ from the Holy One. The second will be something often translated into English as a ‘**suitable helper**’.

Let us consider first the ‘kiss of life’.

The First Essential: The Holy One's Intimate Kiss of Life

We have heretofore learned that the creature called man was subjected to and blessed by a different means of Divine creativity than the rest of the life forms of the universe, in that he was not just *spoken* into existence, but was physically *yatzar*-ed – carefully and delicately *molded by Hand* - by the Holy One.

The most significant difference between man and the rest of Creation however is that when making the creature man the Holy One also did something way above and far more wonderful even than *yatzar*-ing – something which gave man a source and quality of life far superior to that which the Holy One gave to the animals.

What was it? It has to do with ‘breath’. The breath of all the animals the Holy One created was simply *bara*-ed [spoken into existence by the Holy One]. Man’s breath, on the other hand, was ***physically breathed into his nostrils by the Holy One***. Here is how Torah puts it:

v'yipach pe'apav nish'mat chayim
and He breathed into his nostrils a breath of life.

vayehi ha-adam l'nefesh chayah
and in this manner Man became a soul with life-force.
[Genesis 2:7]

Can you picture it, Beloved? The Holy One, Who created the stars and planets of a billion galaxies with a breath of His mouth took the creature He called Adam gently into His Fatherly arms [please forgive the anthropomorphic analogy], drew Adam’s face closer and closer to His own until the two touched – and He *exhaled*. The Holy One thus gave part of Himself – part of His own *life force* – to *ha-adam*. And in that instant, by and through that outpouring from the Holy One, Adam received a kind and quality of life vastly different from that possessed by the animals, or by the birds of the air, or the fish of the sea. Through that intimate ‘kiss’ from his Creator, Adam received a burst of the very eternal, abundant, intelligent life theretofore possessed by the Holy One alone.

Adam had *existed* before this kiss. He had existed since he was *bara*-ed spoken into existence in Genesis 1:27. Now, however, something extraordinary happened to him. He did not, anymore, merely *exist* – now, he truly ***LIVED!***

The Holy One caused a carefully measured portion of His *Ruach HaQodesh* [Holy Spirit] to indwell Adam. By reason of this empowerment Adam was now ready to

assume his role as the Holy One's designated and duly appointed ruler of the world. And now, so empowered, he was ready – if not for the *eretz*, at least for the Garden.

Nish'mat Chayim

Wow! The Holy One has given something of Himself, of His own essence, to man. But what? How? What exactly did the Holy One breathe into *ha-adam* that so vastly set him apart from the rest of created beings?

In Hebrew, what the Holy One imparted to *ha-adam* when He breathed into his nostrils is called '*nish'mat chayim*'. In English, that phrase is usually translated the 'breath of life'. But let's look deeper. The Hebrew word *nish'mat* - which English translations often translate as *breath* in this verse - is a noun derived from the primitive verb root *nasham*³. This verb root is found in its primitive form [i.e. in the *pa'al* form] only once in the TaNaKh⁴– in this week's haftarah. It means *to pant as a woman in the throes of childbirth*⁵.

When the Holy One held Adam close and breathed into him, it was as if He was *giving birth* to Adam. He *travailed over* Adam. He emptied Himself, as it were [as if such a thing were possible], of all that He willed for Adam. And He *brought Him forth as a woman in labor*. And that is what caused man to be '*a living soul*' – in Hebrew, *nefesh chayah*.

What is a 'Soul'?

The sages teach that the human soul is composed of three distinct elements: *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah*. The *nefesh* – or life force – they say, is the externally oriented part of the human being, the senses and drives which connect him with the world around him. The survival drives for food, sex, shelter, and the like, which sustain the human race, are said to have their origin in the *nefesh* - the life force which supports the body.

The second element of the human soul recognized by the sages is the *ruach*, or spirit. This is said to be the internally oriented part of the human being – that which

³ *Nasham* is *nun, shin, mem sofit*, Strong's Hebrew word #5395, pronounced *naw-shawm*'.

⁴ The TaNaKh is what most English speakers have come to know as the 'Old Testament'. The word is actually an acronym of sorts, the T standing for Torah [the first five books], the N standing for Nevi'im [i.e., the prophetic books], and the K standing for Ketuvim, and referring to the 'writings' – i.e., the historical books and the wisdom literature (Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations, etc.)

⁵ See Gesenius, Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon To the Old Testament (1979), page 571, regarding Strong's Hebrew word # 5395, *nasham*. Cf. the inexplicable [except by rough application of the rule of context] KJV translation of *nasham* as 'destroy' in Isaiah 42:14.

enables him to think and feel, and gives rise to his sense of self. The *ruach* is, therefore, said to be the origin of all man's intellectual, emotional, and social activity.

The third element of the human soul is said to be the *neshamah* – an eternal, supernal soul. It is this aspect of man's soul, the sages say, that is the human being's link with the trans-physical realms of the Creation, with the spiritual world in general, and with the Creator in particular. The *neshamah* is said to be the source of the human being's craving for a relationship with the Creator.

Free will can be used to direct one's *ruach* and *nefesh* in one of two directions:

1. towards relationship with and the service of the Creator and all creation, or
2. towards supplying himself with comfort, pleasure, leisure, and gratification.

In the first case a man's *ruach* and *nefesh* will serve to express the yearnings of his *neshamah*, which seeks always to know the Holy One, to hear and follow the Holy One's instructions, and to reflect the Holy One's goodness by serving and giving to others unselfishly. In the later case however a man's *ruach* and *nefesh* will be reduced to self-gratification – the *ruach* will be reduced to satisfying desires for power, possession, and prestige, and the *nefesh* will be reduced to seeking out pleasurable stimulations.

A human being experiences inner joy and peace, the sages say, when the *neshamah* of a man is predominant, and guides the *nefesh* and *ruach* in a course of action whereby the human being can subordinate his desires and drives to a higher good, and can thereby sanctify every aspect of life to the Holy One. It is then that the *nefesh* of a man becomes a *nefesh chayah* [a living soul].

Introducing the Concept of A 'Garden of Delight'

In verse 8 of chapter 2 of Genesis we read what happened next:

Vayita Adonai Elohim gan-b'Eden m'kedem

The Holy One Elohim planted a garden in Eden to the east.

V'yasem sham et-ha-adam asher yatzar

There He placed the man that He had formed.

[Genesis 2:8]

The Hebrew verb our English Bibles translate as ‘planted’ in this verse is a derivative of the primitive verb root **nata**⁶. It means to *establish*, to *stretch out*, or to *cause to grow*.

What did the Holy One **nata**’? Our English Bibles call it a ‘garden’. The Hebrew noun is **gan**, *gimel, nun sofit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #1588, pronounced **gawn**. This noun is derived from the verb root **ganan**, *gimel nun, nun sofit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #1598, meaning to *surround and hover over something (or someone) as a mother hen, so as to protect and to defend it (or him)*. The Hebrew word picture presented by the word **gan** is thus a *closely guarded and carefully protected enclosure*.

From what was the *gan* which the Holy One had **nata**-ed to be protected by man? *Patience*, Beloved. We will discover *that* in tomorrow’s aliyah. In the meantime, please note merely that the Holy One not only carefully selected and circumscribed the environment within which Adam was to function, but further specifically planned, prepared and cultivated the site from which Adam was to rule on the Holy One’s behalf.

Where exactly was this carefully selected and guarded site located? Our English Bibles tell us merely that the place was ‘*in Eden*’ [Hebrew, **b’Eden**] ‘*to the east*’ [Hebrew, **m’kedem**]. In the Hebrew text, what we know as Eden is *ayin, dalet, nun sofit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #5731, pronounced **ay’-den**, and usually translated as ‘*delight*’. The Hebrew letters *ayin, dalet, and nun sofit*, which make up this word, form a very interesting hieroglyphic message – a message which can be translated as ‘*the visible, or manifest [ayin], pathway [dalet] of/to the Messiah [nun sofit]*’. The Holy One delights in the pathway of the Messiah – which is, of course, none other than the pathway of **Torah**. Messiah, like the blessed man described in Psalm 1, is He whose ‘*delight is in the Torah of the Holy One*’.

Do you get it? Here is the point: *The pathways of Torah are to be Eden for us, just as the garden was Eden for Adam.*

The second term used to describe the location of the *gan of delight [Eden]* is ‘*to the east*’. In Hebrew, this is written as **m’kedem**. This is a form of the word **kedem**⁷. **Kedem** is sometimes used figuratively to mean ‘eastward’, but that is only by implication. Literally, **kedem** means ‘*coming before*’, or ‘*pre-existing*’, *ancient*, or ‘*from of old*’. In this instance, it very likely means not merely ‘Eastward’, but ‘pre-existing’ and ‘from of old’ – referring to an element of the eternal realm that

⁶ *Nata* is **נָטָה**, *nun, tet, ayin*, Strong’s Hebrew word #5193, pronounced *naw-tah*’.

⁷ *Kedem* is **קֵדָמָה**, *kuf, dalet, mem sofit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #6924, pronounced *keh’-dem*.

existed long before the Holy One instituted *time*. From before the foundation of the world, the Holy One had designated a place for man, from which man would rule and reign on His behalf. It was a delightful garden. From it, we are told:

*Out of the ground the Holy One God made every tree to grow
that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food;
the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*
[Genesis 2:9]

The River

Torah then describes for us the ‘irrigation system’ the Holy One built for Gan Eden. Previously, with regard to the earth in general, we have been told that ***lo himetir Adonai Elohim al ha-eretz*** [the Creator had not brought rain on the earth], and that instead, ***v'ed ya'aleh min ha-eretz v'hishkah et kol penei ha-adamah*** [a mist rose up from the earth and watered the entire surface of the ground.] **Genesis 2:5-6**. Now we are told *that a river [Hebrew nahar] ‘flowed out of Eden to water the garden’*.

V'nahar yotze m'Eden l'ha-shkot et ha-gan
A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden.

Why did the Holy One water ***Gan Eden*** with a river, rather than the mist with which He watered the rest of Creation? The secret may lie in the Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as ‘river’. That word is ***nahar***, *nun, hey, resh*, Strong’s Hebrew word #5104, pronounced *naw-hawr*. This word is usually translated as a stream or a river, but its verb root means to shine, to beam, to give off light, or to glow. The Hebraic word picture revealed by the Hebrew word ***nahar*** is that of a *son* or *heir* [the word picture of the first Hebrew letter of the *shoresh*, namely *nun*] being *inspired* and *revealed* [the word picture of the second Hebrew letter of the *shoresh*, namely *hey*] to be *king/ruler* [the word picture of the 3rd and final letter of the *shoresh*, namely *resh*].

The connection between a son/heir *becoming a king, shining, and a river* becomes apparent when you consider that, in Hebrew practice, kings were anointed [made to shine with oil] by the side of a river or body of water. Perhaps Gan Eden needed a *nahar* because that is where the son/heir [***ha-adam***] would be anointed as king/ruler⁸.

⁸ Mike Clayton of joinedtoHaShem.org, offers an interesting insight in his *Joined to HaShem Newsletter* for October 23, 2003, where he says: “*Tradition says that after the fall, Adam would go and sit in the river, longingly looking to The Garden. He would sit in the river because those waters had been where he once was! It was his only contact with that which he had lost. I wonder how many tears flowed from Adam’s eyes into that river?*

Now, I know that this story cannot be proven, nor can it be disproved. That is not the point. The point is that man longs to be restored to the garden, but the time of restoration is not in our control. Our spirits join with creation, groaning for the day that we read about in the Book of Revelation”

The Two Predominant Trees of the Garden

In the garden the Holy One made many trees to grow, all of which would bombard Adam's senses with beauty and fragrance, and all but one of which would bring Adam both pleasure and nourishment. In the midst of the garden He planted – deliberately - two predominant and offsetting trees - the *tree of life* [Hebrew, *etz ha-chayim*] and the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* [Hebrew, *etz ha-da'at tov v' ra*]. The Holy One **knew** when He placed these trees there that Adam would eventually choose the latter over the former. He **knew** when He gave the first negative *mitzvah*⁹ – to not eat of the latter tree – and when He warned Adam of the consequences of eating that tree, that Adam would choose to eat of it anyway.

So why did the Holy One place that second tree - *etz ha-da'at tov v' ra* [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] – in the garden at all? He planted it. Why not just leave it out – or at least put cherubim with flaming swords all around it to make it inaccessible?

Why did the Holy One leave the pathway to death and destruction open?

Because Beloved *freedom of choice* is an essential element for the creature 'created in the image of The Holy One'. The Holy One has the power and the capacity to choose the *paths of life* or the *paths of death*. If we are truly made in His image, so must we have that power and capacity. And if we have the power and the capacity, we must have the *opportunity*. And hence, there were two predominant trees in the garden. And one was '*a tree of life to them that lay hold of her*'. **Proverbs 3:18**. And the other was a tree of *knowledge* – knowledge of good and evil – knowledge that destroys, rather than nourishes¹⁰.

What is so bad about knowledge, we may ask? We in this world strive mightily to *educate* and *inform* ourselves. We laud the *information age* in which we live. We

⁹ The Hebrew word *mitzvah* is usually translated into English as 'commandment', but has a much deeper and more substantive meaning than 'commandment' can capture. The idea behind the Hebrew word *mitzvah* is the establishment of a fixed point of connection. When the Holy One speaks to us in a way that draws us to Him and establishes a connection to Him, what He speaks is a *mitzvah*. The emphasis is not on obedience, *per se* – but is, instead, upon *deepening the relationship, and tightening the covenant bond* that already exists. Obedience, though a necessary part of the appropriate response, is, from the Hebrew perspective, a relatively small part of the *mitzvah* process. Grudging, embittered, or legalistic obedience, for instance, is not a satisfactory response at all – as it actually may, under the circumstances, weaken the connection/covenant rather than nurture it, as intended.

¹⁰ The kind of "knowledge" [Hebrew, *da'at*] referred to here is not mere "head knowledge", or insight obtained through logical analysis. The kind of knowledge referred to here is gained by *real life experience*. Mankind attains *da'at* of good and evil, not by intellectualizing about what is right or wrong, or moral or immoral, but by experiencing "good and evil" - and the consequences of each - in a raw, direct way.

read, we study, we attend classes and lectures. What is so wrong with that? Ah, Beloved, that is one of the main messages of Torah. The world – and our own flesh – tell us we must do what we evaluate as ‘right’. Torah says we are to do **what the Holy One says**, whether it appears to us to be ‘right’ or not. We are to *sh’ma* [listen for, pay rapt attention to, hear, meditate on, obey, and fully conform our lives to] the words of the Holy One, We are not to choose between alternative courses of action based upon our powers of logic, on considerations of expediency, or even on our sense of morality.

Logic, expediency, and even fairness and morality are, you see, all fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Logic – divorced from the eternal perspective of Torah – is *foolishness*. Expediency – separated from the miraculous aspects of the Holy One’s power as manifest in Torah – is merely a convincing apparition. Fairness and morality – divorced from Torah – are completely relative, and transitory. The focus of our life is not to be on such things, however highly they may be esteemed by our society – but is to be on whatever words and instructions the Holy One has spoken or shall speak. We are to surrender the right to determine what is good and what is evil to the Holy One. Hence, we are to **‘judge not, that [we] be not judged.’** Matthew 7:1.

But the Holy One will not make that choice for us. We must make it for ourselves. He does not however leave us without Divine instruction and guidance.

The First Divine Instruction: The Prototype for All That Would Follow

After describing the ‘river of life’ that issues forth from the Garden Torah tells us how the Holy One communicated to Adam that which was to be His purpose and His focus of existence. In Torah we read:

*The Holy One Elohim took the man, and put him into the garden of `Eden to dress it [Hebrew abad] and to keep it [Hebrew, sh`mar]*¹¹.
[Genesis 2:15]

Adam was also warned about what would interfere with his purpose and his mission and deprive him of the breath of life the Holy One had breathed into him:

*The Holy One Elohim instructed the man, saying,
"Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat:
but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you are not to eat of it:
for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die."*

¹¹ The Zohar suggests that what the Holy One meant by telling Adam to **tend** the Garden was to perform the *positive commandments* of Torah, and that what the Holy One meant by telling Adam to **guard** the Garden was to refrain from violating the *prohibitive commandments* of Torah. **Zohar I, 27b.**

[Genesis 2:16-17]

As it was with Adam, so it is with us. We have just begun the study of Torah – the instructions of the Holy One regarding our purpose, our destiny, and the pathway to the tree of life. We can try to reason it all out, applying logic, expediency, and morality to the instructions and teaching Torah presents us – like Adam and Chava did – or we can simply *sh'ma*, and surrender our wills to His.

The first instruction the Holy One gave man is the prototype for all the others that have followed. We can *sh'ma*, or *lo sh'ma*. The choice *is ours*.

It Is Lo Tov [Not Good] That Man Should Be Alone

Each time previously that the Holy One has looked upon what He created, he has said “*tov*” [usually translated as ‘it is good’]. When the Holy One looks upon the situation of *ha-adam* after he has been given the Divine Instruction to *abad* and *sh'mar* the garden, however, the Holy One does not say “*tov*”, but “*lo tov*” [usually translated as ‘it is not good’¹²]. And what was *lo tov* was that *ha-adam* should ‘be alone’. For the Creator said:

lo tov heyot ha-adam levado

It is not good for man to be alone.

e'eseh-lo ezer kenegdo

I will make a complementing, completing helper for him.'

[Genesis 2:18]

The Holy One does not however go right to work on Adam’s *ezer kenegdo* [complementing, completing helper] as we might expect. Instead, without any explanation He does something that seems totally unconnected. He initiates something like the first circus parade – bringing *every wild beast* and *every bird of heaven* He had created into the garden [*Oy vey*, what a mess that must have made, don’t you think?].

. . . Lions! And Tigers! And Bears!

Adam seemed to know what to do – he gave each living creature that the Holy One brought to him a *shem* [name]. **Genesis 2:19.**

In Hebrew a *shem* [name] is not just a title one is called. It is an expression of the *essential characteristics* of whatever is named. Imagine therefore how long it took

¹² According to Rashi the naming of living creatures follows the Holy One’s declaration that it was not good for man to be alone, and precedes the separation of Adam into man and woman, because the Holy One wanted to stir in Adam a craving for the companionship of a mate and to cause him to realize the necessity of her existence to his well being before the Holy One created her and presented her to him.

for Adam to accomplish this task. We are not talking about two or three species here – we are talking about *every single living creature – except perhaps creatures of the sea – the Holy One had made*. What a Hebrew vocabulary Adam must have developed, coming up with names for all those species.

***Uh, What Was That You Said Earlier About a
‘Complementing, Completing Helper’?***

All this animal-naming stuff is very interesting of course. But we must ask ourselves, what does this pre-Noach’s Ark animal parade, or Adam’s impressive demonstration of vocabulary, have to do with the Holy One making *ha-adam* an *ezer kenegdo* [complementing, completing helper]? Perhaps a clue is provided in verse 20:

Vayikra ha-adam shemot l’chol ha-behemah

The man called out the names of every livestock animal

ul’of ha-shamayim ul’chol chayot ha-sadeh

and bird of the sky, as well as all the wild beasts.

Ul’Adam lo-matza ezer kenegdo

But the man did not find a complement/helper for him.

Hmmmmn. Did the Holy One *set Adam up*? Did the Holy One bring every creature in the world into Adam’s presence, two-by-two, male and female, to *send him a message*, and prepare him for what was about to happen? Was the Holy One trying to instill in Adam a desire for an *ezer kenegdo* – *even before He provided him one*? Seeing all other living creatures in the world had a mate – all but him, that is - did Adam now feel *a yearning* for a mate himself?

The Holy One knew full well, long before the parade, that Adam’s *ezer kenegdo* was not going to be from the animal kingdom. But as Adam saw all the pairs of animals the Holy One had made, he had to look at himself and say: “What about me?”

V’yapel Adonai Elohim tardemah al ha-adam vayishan

God then made the man fall into a deep state of unconsciousness, and he slept.

V’yikach achat mitzal’otav

He took one of his tzelot

V’yisgor basar tach’tenah

and He closed the flesh in its place.

Note first of all that the process starts with the Holy One ‘knocking Adam out’. Adam is to have no participation in this operation. He is not even to know it is going on until it is over.

Secondly, note that what is taking place is that the Holy One is *taking something out* of Adam. In our English translations, we have come to call this a ‘rib’. In Hebrew [the language in which the event was recorded], what was taken out of Adam was *tzela*, *tzade*, *lamed*, *ayin*, Strong’s Hebrew word #6763, pronounced *tsal-aw*. Usually translated ‘side’ this interesting Hebrew noun is derived from a verb root [Strong’s Hebrew word #6760], which means ‘to limp’. One limps because he has a *stronger side* and a *weaker side*. The essence, then, of what was taken out of Adam was not a rib, but everything pertaining to his *weaker side*.

This makes sense if you understand that heretofore *ha-adam* was ‘male and female’ – all in one – as is the Holy One. For the Holy One, the presence of attributes we think of as masculine and feminine is no problem – the two are perfectly balanced by and consumed in His Divine Unity. But *ha-adam* is different. He was created not just with the Divine Breath but also with the dust of the earth. And for the sake of the rest of Creation, and for the sake of the Holy One’s Divine Plan, *ha-adam* must reproduce. And now that the prophetic empowerment to ‘be fruitful and multiply’ had been spoken the time was drawing near for *ha-adam* to do just that. It was why he was created.

The Holy One could, of course, have just made a few million, or billion, more Adams. He had the technology. Or he could have just made Adam capable of reproducing himself in some other way. But the Holy One deemed it good, for *ha-adam*, and for Creation, for *ha-adam* to reproduce through physical union with another, feminine person like unto him. Hence, he removed from *ha-adam* the feminine aspects of humanity with which he had been created, and he *built* [*yiven*, from the Hebrew verb *banah*, *beit*, *nun*, *hey*, meaning to build, such as a man builds a city] what he had removed into an *ezer kenegda* [complement/helper] for *ha-adam*.

Vayiven Adonai Elohim et ha-tzela
And God built the tzela

asher-lakach min ha-adam l'ishah
that he took from the man into a woman

vayevi'eha el ha-adam
and He brought her to the man.

For This Reason . . .

How, pray tell, would Adam respond? Would he *faint*? Would he *run away*? Would he *beat his chest* and say ‘AAAA-AAA-AAA-AAAAHHH’ like Tarzan? Would he do his best ‘*moonwalk*’ to impress the lady as he racked his brain for a good ‘pick-up’ line? Would he jog down to Barnes & Nobles to pick up a copy of “*Men are from Mars, Women are From Venus*”? Would he *propose*, or whip out a ***ketuvah*** [*betrothal/marriage contract*] ***for her and the Holy One to sign***? He did nothing of the sort. He did something even more strange. He *prophesied*. Adam opened his mouth and declared;

zot ha-pa'am etzem me'atzamai uvasar

'This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.

mibesari l'zot yikare ishah

She shall be called Ishah

ki me'ish lukacha-zot

because from ish she was taken.'

Al-ken y'azov-ish et-aviv v'et imo

A man shall therefore leave his father and mother

V'davak b'ishto v'hayu l'vasar echad

and be united with his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

[Genesis 2:23-24]

When Adam saw Chava [Eve] his eyes were opened and he saw – and blurted out in prophecy - something far beyond himself, or the Garden, or the days of his lifetime or the lifetimes of his children. What exactly Adam saw that caused him to make this prophetic announcement I will leave to your prayerful meditation.

Questions for Today's Study

1. In Strong's and Gesenius look up the words “**garden**”, “**eastward**” and “**Eden**”. Write the Hebrew words for each in Hebrew as well as in English transliteration, and describe the Hebraic word picture you see developing with regard to each word.
2. How was the eretz [earth] watered before the Holy One caused it to rain? Where was the source of this water?
3. How was the Holy One's creation of man different from His creation of everything else? Give at least two differences.
4. What four rivers went out from Eden to water God's garden?

5. What was the first thing the Holy One saw that made Him say it was not good? What did He do about it?

6. In today's Haftarah reading from the prophet Isaiah we read:

*Behold, the former things have happened, and new things do I declare.
Before they spring forth I tell you of them.*

*Sing to the Holy One a new song, and his praise from the end of the eretz;
you who go down to the sea, and all that is therein, the isles, and the inhabitants of it.*

*Let the wilderness and the cities of it lift up [their voice],
the villages that Kedar does inhabit; let the inhabitants of Sela sing,
let them shout from the top of the mountains.*

Let them give glory to the Holy One, and declare his praise in the islands.

*The Holy One will go forth as a mighty man; He will stir up [his] zeal like a man of war:
He will cry, yes, He will shout aloud; hH will do mightily against his enemies.*

*I have long time held my **shalom**; I have been still, and refrained myself:
[now] will I cry out like a travailing woman; I will gasp and pant together.*

*I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs;
and I will make the rivers islands, and will dry up the pools.*

*I will bring the blind by a way that they don't know; in paths that they don't know
will I lead them; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight.*

These things will I do, and I will not forsake them.

[Isaiah 42:9-16]

[A] What 'new things' does the prophet say he will declare? What is 'new' about these things?

[B] The prophet calls for numerous sources to sing a new song of praise to the Holy One. List the sources from which praise is to spring forth?

[C] Is the Holy One promising a 'good' thing or an 'evil' thing in the concluding verses of this aliyah? Explain your answer.

7. Today's reading from the apostolic Scriptures is taken from John 1:4-5. This passage reads:

*In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness hasn't overcome it.*

[A] The words "life" and "Light" are used to describe the One known to Yochanan [John] as 'the Word'. Look up in Strong's and Gesenius the Hebrew words used here for "life" and "Light" and those words in Hebrew and in their English transliterations. Describe the Hebraic word pictures you see developing with regard to each of them. Then explain in your own words how "life" and "Light" come from the "Word", and how that relates to today's aliyah of Torah.

[B] According to John 1:5, what do those who love darkness do when Light shines on it? How does this describe what happened when Y'shua came to earth and *tabernacled* [i.e. make *sukkah*] with men?

*May you know the kiss of the Holy One this day;
and may you experience the beauty and fragrance of His garden of delight.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 19:1-11

*The heavens declare the glory of God. The expanse shows his handiwork.
Day after day they pour forth speech, and night after night they display knowledge.*

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

*Their voice has gone out through all the eretz,
their words to the end of the world.*

*In them he has set a tent for the sun,
which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,*

Like a strong man rejoicing to run his course.

*His going forth is from the end of the heavens, His circuit to its ends;
here is nothing hidden from its heat.*

The Holy One's Torah is perfect, restoring the soul.

The Holy One's testimony is sure, making wise the simple.

The Holy One's precepts are right, rejoicing the heart.

The Holy One's mitzvah is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of The Holy One is clean, enduring forever.

The Holy One's ordinances are true, and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the extract of the honeycomb.

Moreover by them is your servant warned. In keeping them there is great reward.