

# JewishTimes

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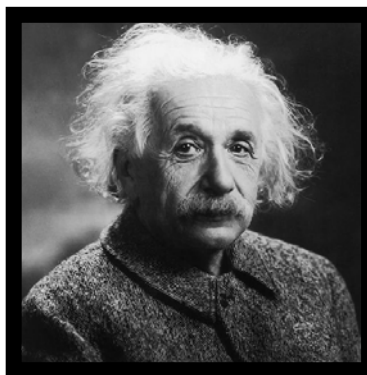
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"The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything."

Albert Einstein

## ISRAEL

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# Responding to Tragedy

"Reward and Punishment" is one of the fundamentals of Judaism; it's how God relates to mankind. Torah mandates our response for when we are far from God...when we sin, and deserve punishment:

*"Let's search our ways and examine, and return to Hashem our God" (Lam. 3:40).*

Although without a prophet we cannot determine conclusively what earned us this current tragedy, we must follow this precedent above and reflect on our ways, repent, and improve. The rabbis reflected upon the destruction to both Jewish Temples and attributed those tragedies to the sins of idolatry and baseless hatred. Responding to this current tragedy, we must once again introspect

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to discover our shortcomings. And while Tehillim helps us focus on the proper values, we must not stop at mere recital, but follow Lamentations above and use Tehillim as a magnifier on our lives and change where we don't act as Tehillim's author outlines.

In exploring ourselves individually, as communities and as a nation, we must identify what areas we fail at in religious practice, education, child rearing, morality, social interaction, sexually, politically, militarily, in family matters, nationally, financially, in business, through aggression, ego, greed, callousness, lies, charity, and in all activities and personal traits. Without abandoning our sins and flaws, God won't remove the punishments for these imperfections.

Torah shares many instances of Reward and Punishment, and God's response of salvation:

*"This practice [sounding trumpets] is one of the paths of repentance, for when a difficulty arises, and the people cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, everyone will realize that [the difficulty] occurred because of their evil conduct, as [Jer. 5:25] states: 'Your sins have turned away the rains.' This [realization] will cause the removal of this difficulty" (Maimonides, Laws of Fasts 1:2).*

*"In addition, it is a rabbinic ordinance to fast whenever there is a difficulty that affects the community, until there is a manifestation of Divine mercy" (Ibid. 1:4).*

*"If only My people would listen to Me, if Israel would follow My paths, then would I subdue their enemies at once, strike their foes again and again" (Psalms 81:14,15).*

Thus, following God, we can rid ourselves of trouble. God freed the Jews from 210 years of Egyptian bondage for 2 reasons: the Jews rejected idolatry (slaughtering the Egyptian lamb god) and they controlled their sexuality (circumcision). These two commands address our 2 halves: our intelligence and our instincts respectively. The Shima says the same: "Love God



with all your heart"—with both your intellect and your emotions. The lesson: God's will is that both our faculties—intellect and emotions—are guided by truth, by Torah ideals: we must not cater to sexual deviance or excess, or to idolatry or superstition.

Maimonides quotes God warning us not to dismiss tragedy as natural, or mere chance, unrelated to Torah violation:

*Conversely, should the people fail to cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, and instead say, 'What has happened to us is merely a natural phenomenon and this difficulty is merely a chance occurrence,' this is a cruel conception of things, which causes them to remain attached to their wicked deeds. Thus, this time of distress will lead to further distresses. This is implied by the Torah's statement [Levi. 26:27-28]: 'If you remain indifferent to Me, I will be indifferent to you with a vengeance.' The implication of the verse is: When I [God] bring difficulties upon you so that you shall*

*repent and you say it is a chance occurrence, I will add to your [punishment] an expression of vengeance for that indifference [to Divine Providence]. (Ibid. 1:3)*

Thus, we must introspect and identify our flaws and sins, and reverse our path. This must follow our recital of Tehillim.

Repentance saves: for societies and individuals:

*"God saw what they [the city of Ninveh] did, how they were turning back from their evil ways. And God renounced the punishment that had been planned for them, and did not carry it out" (Jonah 3:10).*

*"[Job said] I spoke without understanding of things beyond me, which I did not know. Therefore, I recant and relent."*

*"Thus God blessed the latter years of Job's life more than the former. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand she-asses. He also had seven sons and three daughters" (Job 42:3,6,12,13).*

*"Though the misfortunes of the righteous be many, God will save him from them all" (Psalms 34:20)*

God removes punishment from those who repent and those without sin.

Why did God give Israel to us? Abraham's perfection of teaching monotheism earned him God's providence. God then promised Israel to his descendants as a haven to study and practice Torah:

*"God said to Abram, 'Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you'" (Gen. 12:1)*

*"I will assign this land to your offspring" (Ibid. 12:7).*

And as Shima's lessons are that when we abandon Torah, we risk losing Israel, we must view the current events as God signaling our failures. Let us all "search our ways and examine, and return to Hashem our God." Israel exists as a homeland to follow God's Torah. Leaders must ensure this is so. ■



# The Tzadik

**P**arshas Noach starts with the phrase “Aleh Toldos Noach, Noach Ish Tzadik; These are the offspring of Noach, Noach was a righteous man.”

Rashi questions why Noach’s righteousness is mentioned before his offspring. Rashi explains that since the pasuk mentions Noach, who was a tzadik, it’s proper to praise him, as it says, “The remembrance of a tzadik is one of praise” (Prov. 10 7).

Rabbi Chait questions, why does the pasuk in Mishlei say that the “remembrance” of a tzadik is one of praise? Why isn’t the tzadik praised during his lifetime? He answers that while the tzadik is alive, people are envious of the tzadik’s perfection. It makes them feel guilty about their own imperfections, so they avoid recognizing the tzadik’s perfection. However, after a tzadik has passed away, people now look at the tzadik’s actions objectively, because the tzadik’s personality is gone which disturbed others, and all that remains is the history of his good actions. People no longer feel threatened by the tzadik so they can now praise him after his death.

Rashi gives a second explanation of the phrase “Noach Ish Tzadik.” The reason Noach’s righteousness is immediately mentioned is to teach us that the main product of a tzadik are his good deeds, not his offspring. But why do good deeds surpass children and even learning Torah, as the true value of a tzadik?

A tzadik’s good deeds are an example for the whole generation and influence the masses. A tzadik’s deeds can bring more good to the world than children.

Why are a tzadik’s actions more important than his learning of Torah? This idea is supported in Pirkei Avos 3:17:

*He used to say: one whose wisdom exceeds his deeds, to what may he be compared? To a tree whose branches are numerous but whose roots are few, so that when the wind comes, it uproots it and overturns it, as it is said, “He shall be like a bush in the desert, which does not sense the coming of good. It is set in the scorched places of the wilderness, in a barren land without inhabitant” (Jeremiah 17:6). But one whose deeds exceed his wisdom, to what may he be compared? To a tree whose branches are few but roots are many, so that even if all the winds in the world come and blow upon it, they cannot move it out of its place, as it is said, “He shall be like a tree planted by waters, sending forth its roots by a stream. It does not sense the coming of heat, its leaves are ever fresh. It has no care in a year of drought; it does not cease to yield fruit” (ibid, 17:8).*

A man’s actions are a measure of his values and convictions. Someone who learns a lot about a mitzvah but does not fulfill it in action show that he does not value the mitzvah. But a person who learns less but puts all of what he learns into action shows that he clearly values the mitzvah. A tzadik’s true products, his greatest value, is not offspring, but his good actions. They are “Better than sons or daughters” (Isaiah 56:5). ■

## Dani Roth



# Can Israel Do It Alone?

**RABBI REUVEN MANN**

**I**t is difficult to calculate the ultimate cost of the current round of conflict with Israel's adversaries. The physical price of the war with Hamas/Amalek is large and still growing. The assault on the terrorists has just begun, and we have no idea what the casualty count will be after the ground invasion of Gaza. The Hamas fighters are entrenched in their home turf as they hunker down in the maze of tunnels dug deep beneath street level. We can only pray that Israel's tactics will be effective and that our troops will destroy the enemy at a relatively minimal price.

When I say that "we can only pray" I do not intend it in the rhetorical sense. Among the many lessons we need to learn from recent events is a very significant theological one. We need prayer because in spite of all of Israel's technological sophistication it cannot, by itself, defeat its enemies and attain a state of true peace and tranquility. This is not to say that Israel lacks friends and supporters. Amazingly, it is regarded as a significant ally and military partner of the mightiest nation in history, the United States

of America. Most of the important politicians who have been interviewed refer to the Jewish state as America's most significant ally. Amazingly, Nikki Haley, a significant contender for the Republican Presidential nomination, is fond of saying that the US needs Israel more than the reverse. This puts Israel in a very unique position in which she is privy to the most advanced military systems and sophisticated technologies available today.

But while US assistance is a vital benefit, it can only go so far. America strongly supports Israel and wants her to win, but there is just so much she can do. Washington diplomacy over the years has focused a great deal of attention on the imperative of establishing peace in the Mideast. But this goal has proved to be elusive. Or maybe simply unattainable. That is not to say that no progress has been made. Israel's diplomatic position has improved with time, especially as a result of peace deals that have been brokered by U.S. Presidents. Most notable were the treaties that were arranged under the auspices of Presidents Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. The most recent political breakthrough, which still holds great promise, was the "Abraham Accords" a brilliant diplomatic maneuver engineered by President Trump and his creative team.

But at the same time that some reason and goodwill began to grace the Mideast scene, the primitive forces of extreme religious zealotry have combined to produce an explosion of anti-Jewish barbarianism such as we have not witnessed since the Holocaust.

So where do we go from here? What is the teaching that we must take with us from the midst of all this suffering? The entire Torah testifies to the fact that the Jewish people consists of two components, its individual members and their Creator. In the words of our Rabbis, "Yisrael VeOraita, VeKidsha Baruch Hu, Chad Hu" ("Israel and the Torah and the Holy One blessed is He are One"). What are the Rabbis trying to tell us?

I believe what they are saying is that the Jewish People is a unique entity consisting of a partnership between the Creator and His nation. You can't have a Jewish

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People without any of its constituent elements. It is not considered the Jewish Nation if it consists only of the people without Hashem. If we remove Hashem from the picture, then we are a people like any other. [Actually inferior to any other] The Rabbis further told us that the relationship between the “partners” is achieved through the Torah. Our task is to study Hashem’s Revelation and implement its ideals in all areas of life, and as a result of that Hashem will lead and guide us. It is only through Torah that we can become G-d’s people. But when we reject or distort the Torah or accept it when it’s agreeable but reject it when it offends our sense of values and instead seek to live in accordance with our own perception of right and wrong we no longer retain our special relationship with Hashem.

And then we are vulnerable to all the destructive forces that seek to undo the Jews, and are unable to prosper. A simple review of our history amply illustrates this point. We have been victims of an endless onslaught of defamation, persecution, vilification physical torture and annihilation.

At a certain point in recent history, a movement called Zionism emerged, which claimed that what the Jews were missing to be a genuine and healthy people was independent statehood. If only we could be an “Am Chofshi BeArtzenu (free nation in our land)” then all would be well. But in spite of all the impressive achievements of modern Israel, we are unable to attain a state of peace and security. The Holocaust which we confidently asserted was part of our past and (thanks to statehood) had been relegated to the realm of “Never Again” has tragically reared its ugly head in the very land Hashem gave us.

It must be painfully clear that the fundamental principle of Zionism has been disproved. That is because political freedom and independence, however important, is not the solution to our problems. How could the horrible slaughter and degradation of women, children and the elderly take place in the land of Israel? “Is it not because my G-d is not in my midst that these evils have come upon me?” However, when we partner with Hashem, we become simply invincible. No harm can befall us when He is together with us. It is time for the Jews to realize that Hashem and only Hashem is the solution to our problems.

At this moment of great suffering and darkness, let the light of truth shine through. Let us resolve to fulfill the dictum of our Rabbis that “Yisrael and Torah and the Holy One Blessed is He are One.” And may we merit a new era of true spiritual greatness, which will illuminate the world.

Shabbat Shalom. ■

# Israel’s 3 “Crowns”

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

*Three crowns were conferred upon Israel: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty. Aaron merited the crown of priesthood, as stated in Num. 25:13: "And it will be an eternal covenant of priesthood for him and his descendants after him." David merited the crown of royalty, as stated in Psalms 89:37: "His seed will continue forever, and his throne will be as the sun before Me." The crown of Torah is set aside, waiting, and ready for each Jew, as stated in Deut. 33:4: "The Torah which Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." Whoever desires may come and take it.*

*Lest you say that the other crowns surpass the crown of Torah, Proverbs 8:15-16 states: "Through me [Torah] kings reign, princes decree justice, and nobles rule." Thus, you have learned that the crown of Torah is greater than the other two. (Maimonides, Laws of Torah Study 3:1)*

These “Crowns” refer to Israel’s perfections. We service God in Temple (priesthood), we enforce God’s laws and justice (kingship) but the greatest perfection is not one of practicality like these first two, but one of intellect, where we study and teach God’s wisdom. This third crown of Torah surpasses the 2 other crowns.

Leadership attracts egocentricity; Korach’s revolt taught this lesson. But anyone who seeks leadership is unfit, as his motives are usually self-serving, not God-serving. Just look at all the politicians who backpedal when they lose constituents.; they’re not interested in principles, but in position. In contrast, Moses rejected God’s request that he lead the people. He debated God for seven days until he had no choice but to accept.

God’s solution is that priests and kings are only from the lineage of Aaron and David, respectively. David descended from Tamar and Ruth, who both displayed great humility, and attachment to God’s will. As Howard Salamon said, their descendants would identify with them and counter all egocentricity as they value their ancestors’ humility. Identification via lineage leads to emulation. The descending kings of these great women would emulate their humility, which is needed by a person in the highest office. For this reason, to temper a king’s arrogance, God also commands of king to carry a Torah scroll with him everywhere. This keeps him mindful of God’s will and not his own ego.

To protect the institutions of priest and kings, God commanded they descend from a blood line. But Torah is unlike priests and kings, it is not a matter of leadership, but of pursuing truth. Lineage is irrelevant.

The 3 crowns of Israel are bound up with God, we don’t praise ourselves otherwise. Our honor is only due to following God in temple worship (priests), in upholding Torah (kings) and this is achieved only through Torah study, the third and greatest crown: “Through me (Torah) kings reign and rulers decree just laws; through me princes rule, great men and all the righteous judges” (Proverbs 8:15,16). ■



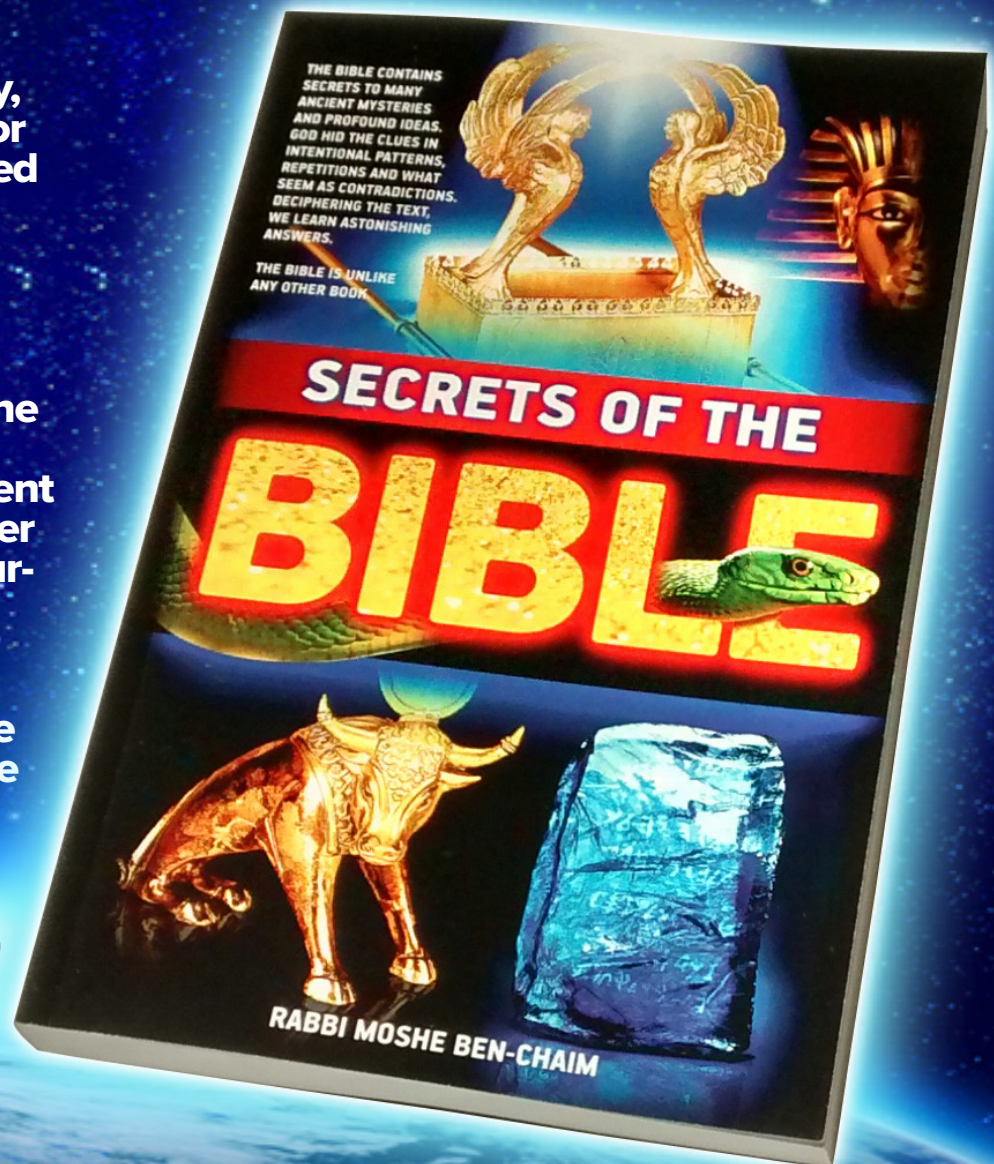
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## Profound Lessons from the Text

# God's PARSHA First Words

RABBI MOSHE BEN CHAIM

**G**enesis is God's first communications with mankind. But by no means does Genesis cite a complete history. Thus, God must deem these selected events and communications more crucial than all others. What are their vital lessons?

### 6 "Days" of Creation

As the sun was not set in place until "day" 4, we are forced to interpret the word "day" as not referring to 24-hour periods. Rather, "day" refers to this: a "significant phase or phenomenon in Creation." Significance is given to heaven and earth, land and oceans, luminaries, vegetation, animal life and finally, humans. With these, God highlights creations of utmost importance. What is the importance of each?

As God instructed man to dominate Earth (Gen. 1:28), we understand why Rashi explained (Ethics 2:8) that if mankind would abandon knowledge (Torah), God would revert the world to primordial chaos. Man is the only earthly creature that can perceive the Creator, and he is thereby the goal in the creation of Earth. Just as a rock or a plant does not exist for itself as they are inanimate, animals too which possess no soul, exist only for man, just like all else on Earth. The only earthly creation existing for itself is man. This is because the purpose in creation is the recognition of the Creator; on Earth only man can perform this. God needs nothing, so His creations must be for something outside himself. Purpose exists only in a being that can perceive God's wisdom. This expresses God's kindness in creating man (and angels).

Why is it that only that which perceives God has purpose, while inanimate and soulless creations do not have a purpose of themselves? We ask this as we already understand that God is behind all creation, and all which God does reflects great wisdom and purpose. Therefore, God intentionally embedded His wisdom into all creation, but not for naught. The wisdom permeated in all creation must be made observable with His intent for a being to observe, and appreciate it. Those beings are only man and

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angels. As we cannot conceive of any purpose in a flower's existence—if that was the only thing that God created—we would call this purposeless and not something which God would perform. Therefore a flower must exist for another creation's purpose. Even an inanimate entity like a rock must have a purpose. The wisdom embedded in minerals, botany, zoology and all sciences cannot be perceived by rocks, plants or animals. And as does God does not perform futile actions, God expressed His wisdom for intelligent beings to observe and appreciate. Earth exists for man to discover God's wisdom.

### Day & Night

In addition to the wisdom found in nature (creation), far greater wisdom is derived from God's communications, His Torah (Psalms 19:8, see Ibn Ezra). King David said Torah is greater than creation.

Genesis teaches that God changed the names of 5 phenomena. On day 1, God called light "day," and darkness He called "night." On day 2 He called the firmament "heavens" and on day 3 He called the dry Earth "land," and the collection of waters He called "seas." However, God does not rename mountains, the sun, moon, stars, animals, vegetation or any other creation.

Interestingly, these five names relate again to heaven (day, night, heavens) and Earth (land and seas): His first creations: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and Earth" (Gen. 1:1). Furthermore, these 5 are prioritized, addressed first before all other creations. Also, what is the concept of "renaming" one thing and not another: is the renamed thing thereby highlighted as more significant, and if so, in what manner?

"And it was evening and it was morning, day X," is repeated many times. Why this emphasis of night transitioning into day? Primarily, what is the purpose of day and night? What in man's path towards perfection demands this regulated transition between light and darkness? Why must night exist?

These phenomena of light and darkness and day and night are highlighted by the Shema's blessings:

*Blessed are you God, King of the world,  
forming light and creating darkness...  
Blessed are you God, King of the world,  
with His word He sunsets the  
evenings...with understanding He  
changes times, and exchanges the  
moments...creating day and night, You  
expire day and bring night, and divide  
between day and night...*

With "day," "night," "heavens," "land" and "seas" which God renamed, His purpose in renaming them is to focus man on the plan of creation, and our purpose in life. Constraining our ambitions (through darkness) and our geographical dwellings to land—not water or heaven—intends to constrain our involvement in a purely physical life—restricting our time and space—and steering us towards the higher pursuit of Torah and perfection, matters of the soul. The physical serves only to enable the perfection of our souls. "Day and night" differ from "light and dark" in that day and night are "human measurements of times of activity and passivity," not simple visual phenomena of light or dark.

On Genesis 1:8 Ibn Ezra says, "To five things God gave names because man did not yet exist." That's significant: man did not yet exist to change their names...so God renamed them. Ibn Ezra means that these new names refer only to man. Whereas animals detect light and darkness, man alone relates to "day" and "night": distinct periods of activity, and passivity. Meaning that God renames light and dark as "day and night" to assign "day" as a time for accomplishment, and "night" as a time for withdrawal. The goal is to prevent man's life spent solely on physical pursuits. Not only due to lack of light, but night also affects us psychologically, when we become more calm and can recoil from accomplishing. Maimonides says that whomever desires to attain the crown of Torah should not let his nights go without Torah study. This is because with fewer distractions at night, we have greater focus on knowledge and gain so much more wisdom during these hours.

Thus, God organized creation to restrict man from overindulging worldly pursuits and travel, thereby directing him towards greater wisdom. The core message I wish to share is worth

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repeating: With “day,” “night,” “heavens,” “land” and “seas” which God renamed, His purpose in renaming them is to focus man on the plan of creation, and our purpose in life. Constraining our ambitions (through darkness: time) and our geographical habitation to land, intends to constrain our involvement in a purely physical life—time and space—and steer us towards the higher pursuit of Torah and perfection, matters of the soul.

### Eden & Human Nature

Once we have earth, man and all creations, what need is there for the Garden of Eden? This question is compounded by the discussion of a river which exited the Garden of Eden and then separated into four streams, with great detail of their names and where they traversed. We never again hear about these rivers in the rest of Bible (Torah). Therefore they must be germane to Adam who was placed in the Garden of Eden. In a separate essay “Have We found Eden?” I suggest the meaning of these rivers and their names. But briefly, these rivers allude to the human mind, for it is only with this knowledge that we can truly understand our psyches, manage our personalities, fulfill our purpose, avoid fantasy and attain happiness. What is a marvelous parallel, we see that King Solomon too commenced his book about attaining happiness (Koheles) with the discussion of “rivers.” Man’s energies flow like rivers. King Solomon also refers to the sun shining and then setting, i.e., as Rabbi Israel Chait explained, paralleling man’s search for happiness, chasing one fantasy after the next:

*King Solomon continues his illustration of man’s psyche, now engaging metaphor. The metaphor of the sun describes man’s search for lusts. Man obtains the object of his desires, “the sun rises.” But then the experience passes, “the sun sets.” Man then chases the desire again, “and hastens to its place where it rises again.”*

### Adam, Eve, the Snake, Sword and Cherubs

God then teaches us about our subservient role to Him, expressed in his command that Adam and Eve abstain from that one tree’s fruits. We are taught that initially, Adam and Eve did not possess a conscience, explaining why nudity was not a concern. God did not wish man to be distracted by morality: thoughts only possible with a conscience. He wished that man be solely involved in higher knowledge, of truths and rejecting falsehoods (not morality: good vs. evil). God’s desire that man pursue scientific and philosophical knowledge is expressed in God bringing the animals to Adam for him to study and classify: naming the animals. It was only due to man’s inability to control his desires that the conscience was created and placed in man’s mind, generating feelings of guilt, to avert man’s self-destruction through sinning. After this we see nudity became a concern which is an expression of morality and guilt. God’s concession to man of the conscience intends to help man continue life; guilt helps one refrain from what he deems as evil. And with the punishment of mortality for man’s violation and man’s immediate desire for the Tree of Life, we see the dominant role that the

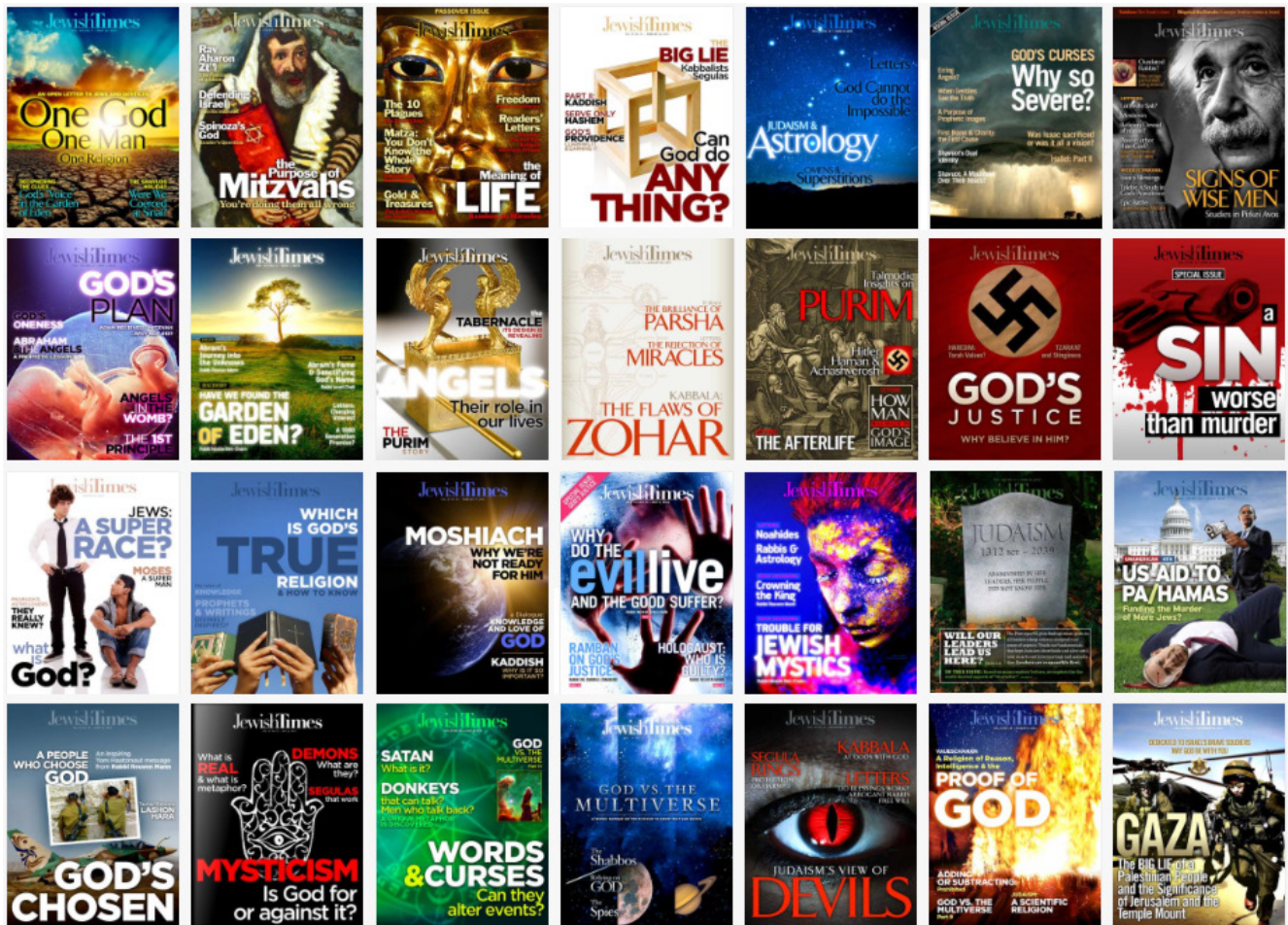
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fantasy of immortality plays. This fantasy again is addressed by King Solomon in his great work Koheles. As Rabbi Chait explained, all human fantasy is appealing only due to man feeling immortal, that his fantasies could be endless.

The story of the snake is also a metaphor. Maimonides states that the snake never spoke to Adam:

*It is especially of importance to notice that the serpent did not approach or address Adam, but all his attempts were directed against Eve (Guide, book iii, chap. xxx).*

This indicates that the snake was not a physical creature. For if it was, it could address Adam too. The snake is in fact, Eve's instincts, explaining why her "snake" cannot appeal/talk to Adam; our instincts entice only ourselves.

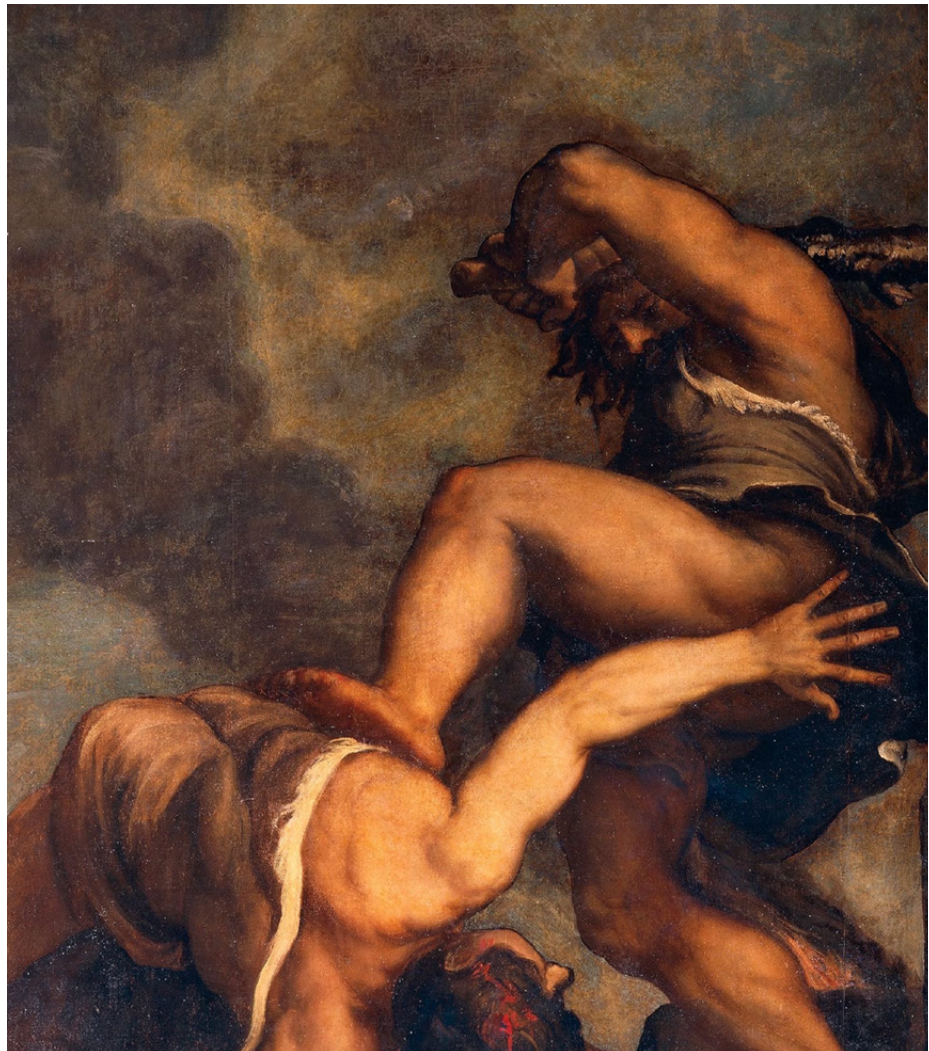
Sforno follows this metaphor explaining man's "crushing of the snake's head" to mean that man conquers his instincts at the "head" of the battle. But if man allows his instincts to go unopposed, they eventually swell and overcome man drawing him to sin, the meaning of the snake "biting man's heel" — i.e., at the "heel" of the battle, the instincts overcome man.

The spinning flaming sword is an allusion to the threat of mortality. The childlike cherubs give man a sense of immortality. This means that man senses both immortality and mortality, thereby creating a balance to keep man equidistant from both damaging poles: death threatens man's immortality fantasy, and with a sense of immortality—cherubs—man will not feel morbid that he's dying tomorrow. This balance between immortality and certain death enables some tranquility, and the ability to live normally.

### Cain and Able

Now we learn of religion and competition. Cain was jealous that God favored his brother's sacrifice. Thereby, we learn that man seeks validation for his religiosity, and that he is intolerable towards those whom God favorites; Cain murdered Abel...the seeds of anti-Semitism. From God's punishment of Cain, we derive that no prohibition against murder was needed: morality and the evil of murder can be derived from God's creation of a species. As God made many men, His will is disregarded when we treat others worse than ourselves. A species means God desires multiple beings to exist. Therefore we cannot mistreat them.

Although not commanded in sacrifice, Cain and Abel recognized man is subservient to God and that it is proper to embody this in sacrifice: the giving of



our efforts to God, who gave us the fruits of our efforts. God responding to their sacrifices teaches that it is necessary for man's dignity that God validates man's proper actions. Similarly we read "Fire came forth from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat parts on the altar. And all the people saw, and shouted, and fell on their faces" (Lev. 9:24). Here too, God endorsed man's upright acts.

Additionally God's response to Cain that he can overcome his sinful nature rides on the coattails of Adam's sin, teaching that sin is not something coerced or inevitable.

As we progress in our Torah studies, we must be sensitive that all stories and laws target vital lessons. We must not dismiss a story or a single detail. Maimonides taught that in some Torah accounts, each item teaches something new, while in other cases, many particulars may be providing context, without new lessons for each word or phrase. We must discern when to apply each rule, but recognize that all that is written in Torah is for a great purpose. ■



# Israeli woman, 25, hailed as a hero for killing terrorists, leading team that saved kibbutz from Hamas

By Yaron Steinbuch—NY Post

*Inbar Lieberman, the 25-year-old security coordinator at Kibbutz Nir Am, has been hailed as a hero for killing five Hamas terrorists as she led a team that prevented any casualties at the kibbutz.*

**T**he Hamas was no match for an intrepid 25-year-old Israeli woman — who saved an entire kibbutz from harm by leading a group of residents to kill more than two dozen advancing terrorists, including five she slaughtered herself.

Inbar Lieberman, the security coordinator of Kibbutz Nir Am since December 2022, heard explosions early Saturday, when the terrorists launched their unprecedented attack on the Jewish state, according to Walla News.

She realized that the sounds were different than those heard during the usual rocket attacks on the kibbutz — located near Sderot and a stone's throw from the Gaza Strip.

So Lieberman rushed to open the armory, distributed guns to the 12-member security team and coordinated their decisive response amid the unfolding attack.

She placed her squad of kibbutzniks in strategic positions across the settlement and set up ambushes that caught the gunmen off guard and turned the tables on them during their mission to inflict mass casualties.

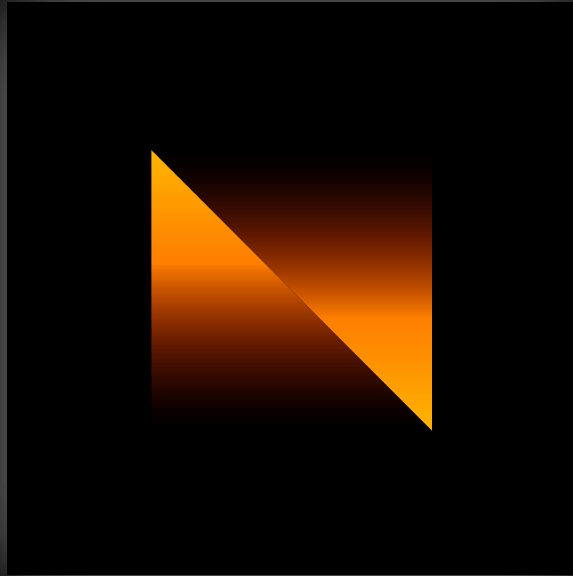
Lieberman killed five terrorists by herself, while the others gunned down 20 more over four hours as they turned Nir Am into an impenetrable fortress — while nearby kibbutzim suffered heavy losses, Walla News reported.

Ilit Paz, cultural coordinator at Nir Am, told the news outlet Israel Hayom: “It was amazing. My husband was part of the standby unit that worked to prevent more casualties. “They heard the shots and made contact on their own with other members of the standby unit and with Inbal — and they understood that they were told to be on standby. “But Inbal made a decision not to wait and be jumped operationally. In fact, the fact that they did it early prevented dozens of casualties,” she added. A social media post also lavished praise on the heroic woman, the Maariv daily reported.

“When it’s all over, this woman will receive the Israel Prize. The story of her heroism is a story that will go down in Israeli lore for generations. Inbal is the reason there is one kibbutz in the entire surrounding area that remains unharmed — Nir Am,” the post said.

At least 1200 people have died and 2,600 others have been injured in Israel, according to the most recent numbers. ■





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Rabbi Reuven Mann — *Rabbi of Young Israel of Phoenix*

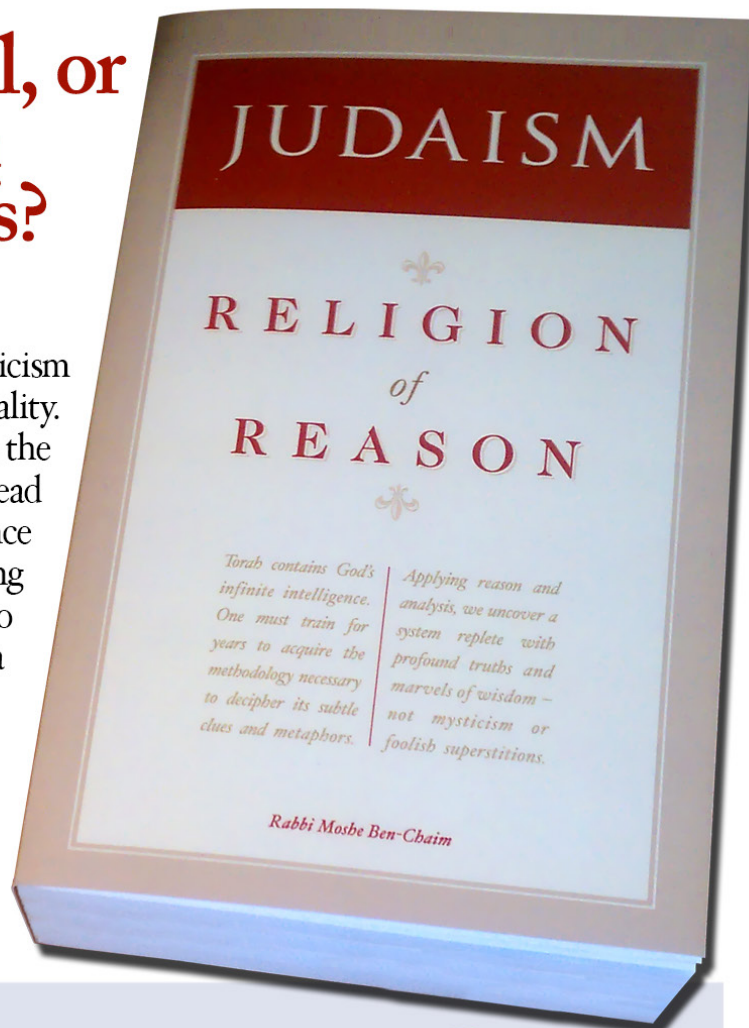
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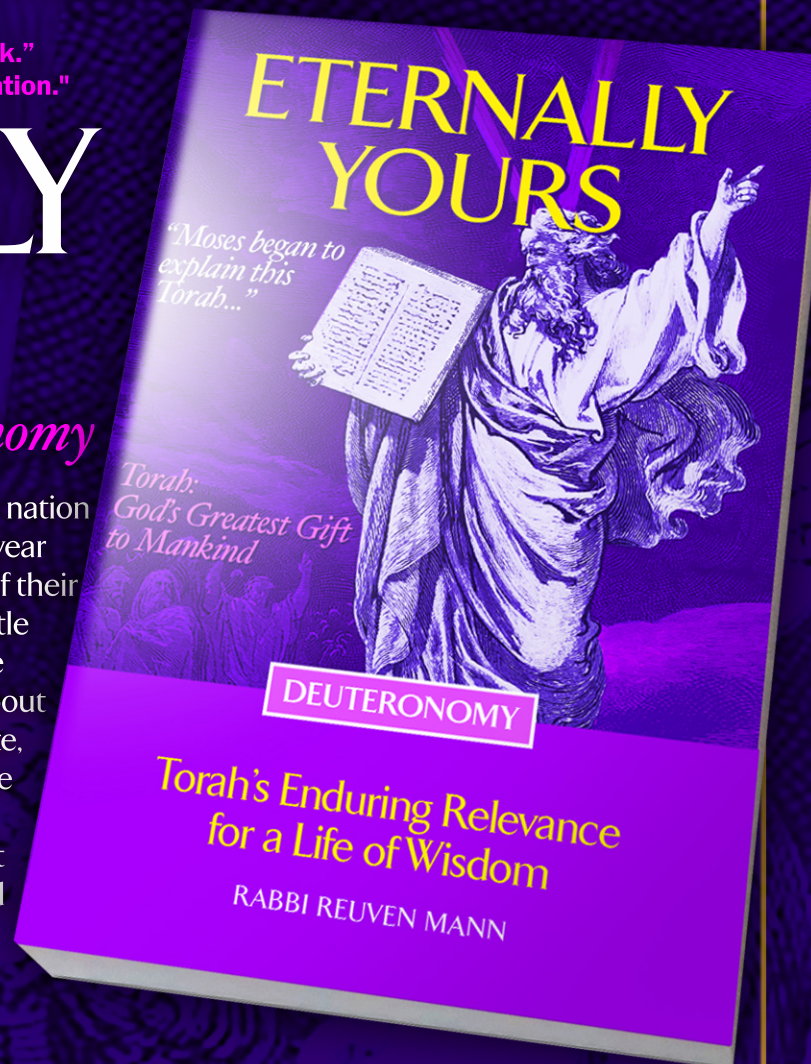
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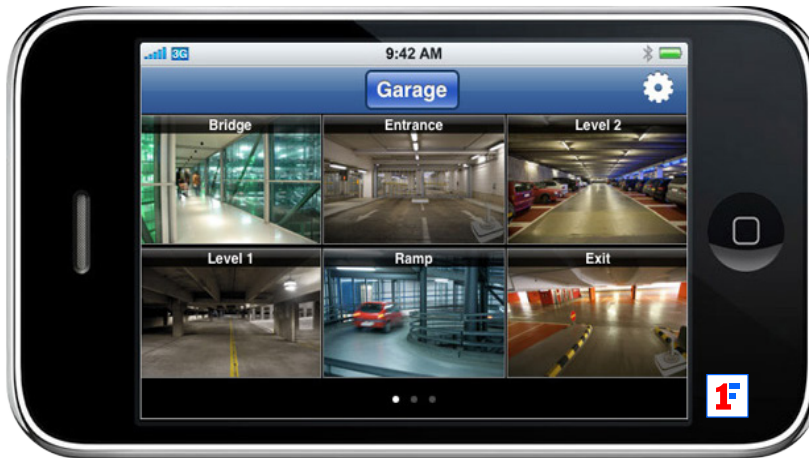
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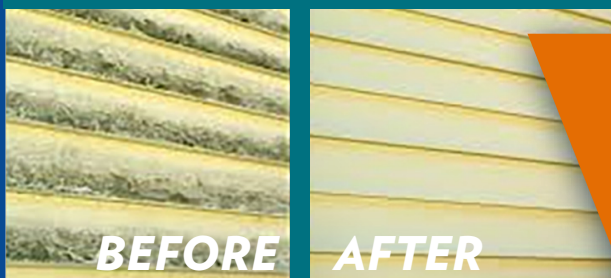
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