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| EVIL |

"Accusation derives from the unconscious yearnings of the accusers. The Rabbis famously say, 'Whoever slanders, does so from his own defect' (Kiddushin 70a)."

RABBI REUVEN MANN

LETTERS

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

Good vs. Evil

READER: Hi Rabbi, Either way you look at it, the bottom line is that Esav hates Jacob. No matter what Jacob does, Esav hates him. If Jacob appeases him, gives him gifts, acts towards him like the brother he is, Esav hates him even more. Why does Esav hate Jacob? But first we should ask: Why does Esav exist at all? Why is there evil in our world? Why is there hatred and darkness? What would be wrong

with a world consisting only of goodness, love and light?

Evil exists because it is so much more powerful than good. Is there a lover in the world who loves with the intensity that a hater hates? Is there a light as bright as darkness is black? Has there ever been an act of kindness unleashed with the force and vigor contained in an act of cruelty? Thanks! *Odupa Abram*

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RABBI: Goodness can outshine and be far greater and more powerful than evil. This is because what is rooted in truth and reality is undeniable, and gains man's 100% conviction. The mind is far stronger than the emotions. This explains why God can command man to follow his mind and control his emotions. God does not ask man for something that is impossible.

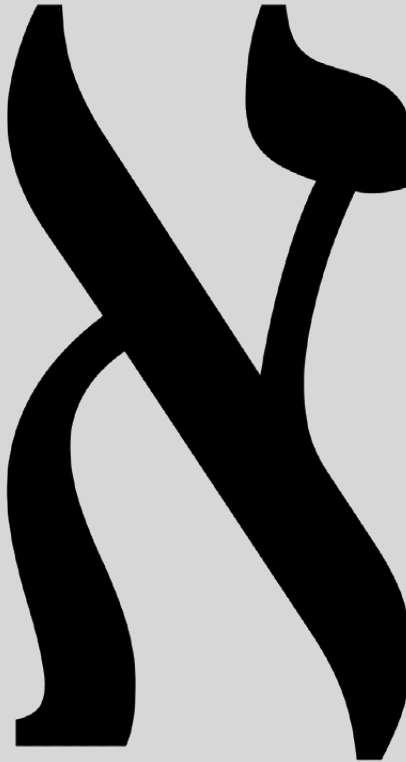
Evil is due to fluctuating emotions that have no basis in reality. Perhaps the reason there is such vigor and intensity in evil is due to man's unconscious knowledge of the fallacy of evil. As his emotions find satisfaction in hate, and his mind tells him he is wrong, he must suppress his mind with the greatest emotional intensity. This explains why when Esav sold his birthright, that he "got up and left and despised it" (Gen. 25:34). Due to Esav's recognition of the birthright's great value and his error in selling it, he could not live with himself, so he had to render the birthright something despicable as a justification for his sale. Similarly, after Amnon raped his sister Tamar, his previous infatuation with her turned into a burning hatred towards her. As Rabbi Chait explained, this was because he displaced his own intolerable self blame and projected his self-hate onto Tamar (Sam. II, 13:15).

But once that person is exposed to reality, he can no longer deny it, and he clings to it, just as he clings to the reality that the sun is shining, and cannot deny that either. Of course, this must be preempted by his ability to accept error, and then change his emotions.

Me vs. God

DANI ROTH: At the beginning of Lech Lecha, God told Avram (Abraham) to leave his country, birthplace, and the house of his father. So there must be importance to each of them as it mentioned all 3.

RABBI: I think Rabbi Chait said that each word refers to another psychological identification. A person has an identity with 1) his current country, 2) his birthplace, and 3) and his father's house. The question is how to define each



one's unique significance.

A country refers to one's specific culture; one identifies with one's family and neighbors, and lacks identification with other cultures and countries. We naturally value and like what is common; it's a natural psychological truth. God designed us this way as this fosters local peace.

We also give great importance to our birthday—our existence—and where our birth took place. People feel they're the most important person on the planet; they attribute great importance to the date and place of their birth. And finally, we identify with our parents.

God instructed Avram to detach himself from these three sources of identification, because there is no importance to the accidental place of your upbringing, what place you were born or who was your father. What was important for Abraham and God's plan, was the spread of monotheism and where Avram was living currently, was not suitable for this goal. For in all three identifications, one's focus is the self: "Where I grew up, where I was born, and my father." But God's plan for Avram was not that he remain in central focus, for one who pursues God views himself as dust: "[Avram said] I am but dust and

ashes" (Gen. 18:27). Leaving a land where one retains identification with the self, and relocating to a new unfamiliar location, allowed Avram to abandon his self-focus, to gain greater focus on God, and to teach monotheism.

Why Blessings are Needed

RABBI: We see that God desired the blessings from Isaac to Jacob, as God provided Rebecca with clues and elements to orchestrate her plan to deceive Isaac into blessing Jacob. (Esav was abnormally hairy to facilitate Rebecca's deceit of her husband Isaac, and Jacob clutched Esav's heel to facilitate Rebecca with the knowledge that Jacob can contend with his brother to steal the birthright [Gen. 25:25,26]). Because God can bless who he wants without man's blessings, the need for the blessings is for the world to learn of God's desire that Israel is the lineage of Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, and not to the other sons.

Why God is Just

RABBI: As God is the author of Justice, He cannot be unjust. Similarly, Henry Ford cannot incorrectly create the Ford. This is because there's no prior model of a Ford that Henry Ford needs to match. So too there's no prior model of justice that God would have to match. God is the author of justice.

What is God?

RABBI: Maimonides teaches that we cannot give any positive description of God; we can only remove negative connotations. Since God's righteousness is not equal to man's righteousness, all we can say is that He is not corrupt. Since God's kindness is not like human kindness, all we can say is that God is not the opposite, which means cruel. All we can say is that God is not imperfect, as any imperfection comes from ignorance, and God is omniscient.

Abraham's Trials

Rabbi Israel Chait

Transcribed by a student

Regarding the famine the Torah says as follows:

There was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land (Gen. 12:10).

Rashi comments:

Famine in the land: In that land only to test him whether he would be suspicious of God's commands in that He had bidden him to go to the land of Canaan and now forced him to leave it (Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 26).

Rashi makes the problem more difficult, saying that was the only land struck with the famine. God tells Abraham to travel to this place, and now that is the only place suffering a famine. So, what was the trial?

The idea of a trial here is the same as in all other instances. A person under a command from God [leave your home town and go to a new place] naturally feels "All will now go smoothly." People seek to feel that God is guiding their lives. This is why people tend to say, "This is min hashamayim" [God's will].

The trial for Abraham here was that, although traveling to a new place under God's command, that place suddenly suffered a famine. An ordinary person would, at that moment, lose his complete faith in God's command as the ultimate life, since things went wrong and not as anticipated. When events go against a person's emotions, one does not feel comfortable. One desires that all progresses according to his wishes. He wants to feel that he is in line with a "super force" [God]. It is every person's desire

that as he follows God's dictates, that he experience no mishaps or disturbances. This provides an egotistic satisfaction.

Maimonides alludes to Abraham's trial as he says that God told him that He would make him into a great nation, and suddenly a famine hit. Maimonides says this was a great trial for Abraham: to follow God's command when events do not unfold the way Abraham had perceived they should. People desire a sense of security that life is working out as they wish, and that God is watching over them. But this is a regression towards the infantile psychology and has nothing to do with perfection.

There are 2 types of trials here. One type is where one must act, like the war Abraham waged against the 4 kings, or circumcision, as Abraham was old and weak, and one is afraid regarding his health. Maimonides says in his Guide that this fear is great and difficult to overcome, as seen regarding Job. The pain of one's body is most intolerable.

There is also a second type of trial—a passive trial, one of suspicion—as Rashi says, "To test Abraham if he will become suspicious of God," whether one will detract from his relationship with God. And when Abraham took Hagar as a wife, the trial was not to marry her. Rather, taking her represented the final act of losing hope of having children with Sarah. The completion of losing hope was the trial. His life was not progressing as he desired. Under God's providence, one desires that all works out perfectly. But regarding the famine, Abraham thought, "Wait...what is happening?" A mystical thought entered his mind that he felt all should go well while following God's command. But Abraham conquered that thought [and passed that trial]. ■



WHY THEY HATE US

RABBI REUVEN MANN

Parshas Toldot, continues the life story of Yitzchak and Rivka and includes the birth of their twin sons, Eisav and Yaakov. They were to play a major role in shaping the destiny of mankind. Eisav is regarded as the paradigm of all the Jew haters of history. It is ironic that anti-Semitism originates within the Jewish family as Yaakov had to flee from his own home in order to escape the wrath of his brother.

With the explosion of a deadly war between the state of Israel and the ruthless gang known as Hamas, the question of Jew hatred has come to the fore. This war, which was initiated by a vicious sneak attack against Israeli civilians, was the most shocking catastrophe we have witnessed since the Holocaust. Has anyone heard of a militia attacking defenseless men women and little children in the most brutally imaginable manner? Or about separating little children from their parents and keeping them as hostages in dark and terrifying tunnels? Has anyone ever heard of such a thing?

Actually yes. The Nazis were

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every bit as cruel as the Hamas mutilators, and it's a good question who should be regarded as worse. My grandson observed that the Nazis were sophisticated barbarians, while the Hamas are primitive barbarians. The two are very closely allied, and neither should be regarded nor treated as human beings. Concerning them and their like did the Psalmist proclaim, "...Praiseworthy is he who repays you in accordance with the manner that you treated us. (Tehilim 137:8)"

But it is not just these deranged and morally crippled sadists that have a lust for the blood of Jews. The western world including the streets and campuses of the U.S. has exploded with extreme hatred of our people and the chant of, "Gas the Jews" which was anathema in the aftermath of the gas chambers is now boldly shouted in ostensibly democratic environs. Many of our brethren are reeling from the shock of discovering the extent to which they are loathed, and now question whether there is any place on this planet where their safety and well-being can be secured. In the wake of these developments, it is incumbent on us to deal with the question, why do they hate us so?

Many of history's greatest minds have addressed this issue and numerous explanations have been proffered. Some of the reasons offered can be comprehended. An example of this is the religious factor. Our great Rabbis have suggested that the Revelation at Sinai was the provocation for Jew hatred. They said that the Mt. was named Sinai which is related to the word for hatred, i.e., Sinah, because "hatred descended from there to the nations of world. (Shabbat 89b)" What does this mean? Rabbi Chait explained, that it refers to the fact that everyone was jealous that G-d chose the Jews to be His People and entrusted them with His Torah.

There is no doubt that the two major world religions constitute as it were a blatant attempt at "cultural appropriation." Christianity accepts the validity of what they call the "Old Testament" i.e., the Jewish Scriptures. Islam also recognizes the veracity of Judaism but, contrary to the Torah which they ostensibly accept, claim that Mohammed was a greater prophet than Moses. The problem for them is that the Torah itself says that there will never again arise a Prophet on the level of Moshe. Thus, all subsequent prophets, however great, did not reach the exalted

position of Moshe.

The point is that if you accept the divine origin of Torah (which both Christianity and Islam claim that they do) you must reject both of the major world religions. That is because the Torah proclaims that it is eternal, not subject to change; and that the Covenant that Hashem has made with the Jews can never be broken. Thus, if you acknowledge the truth of the Torah, then the basic claims of Islam and Christianity, that they have replaced the Jews as G-d's chosen people and that the six hundred and thirteen commandments have been supplanted by a different religious code, must be false. But why does this automatically lead to anti-Semitism?

That it does actually lead to psychotic hatred of Jews, is a fact of history. Christianity was the main source of western persecution and disparagement of Jews. And Islam, not to be outdone, has also been the cause of great suffering for Am Yisrael. The reason is, that the theology of these religions is based on the idea that though the Jews were originally favored by G-d he subsequently rejected them and selected others (either the Christians or Muslims) to be his new representatives on earth. In order to reinforce the tenuous notion that G-d "unfriended" the Hebrews, they must project every possible evil onto this despised People. And they must hate and persecute them so that they can make the case that the Jews suffer for rejecting Jesus or Mohammed.

In addition, the unfathomable survival of the Jews and their heroic adherence to Judaism is an affront to those who claim that the Jewish People have been unchosen and rejected. The very existence of the Jews confirms their claim to be an eternal People and confounds the pretensions of the religious interlopers.

However, there is another startling dimension to anti-Semitism which requires our attention, it's sheer irrationality. Let us take for example the matter of the blood libels. Jews were cruelly tortured and murdered because, according to Christians, they killed gentile children in order to use their blood in the production of Matzah for Passover. Those not familiar with this grisly piece of history will think I'm joking, for how is such a thing possible? But it is undisputed that Christians believed this and took revenge from the Jews for this imaginary crime.

Anyone with even the most tangential

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knowledge of Judaism understands that such a thing is impossible. For one, Jews are prohibited from consuming blood of animals and certainly humans. Moreover, the ingredients of Matzah are flour and water, which must be baked quickly in order to forestall the leavening of the dough. The blood libel has not the slightest basis in reality, and yet, that did not prevent Christians from slaughtering totally innocent people.

It's not just the blood libel. The Jews have been accused of the most heinous crimes, which any sane observer could easily discover were entire fabrications. The truth is that no people have contributed more to the well-being of the communities they lived in and to mankind in general. The Jewish emphasis on the importance of education, strong families and contribution to the welfare of others make them (as King Charles has observed) the most desirable citizens one could want. The charges against the Jews have been the most egregious distortions of reality conceivable.

The Christians and Muslims have invented the worst lies in order to justify their murderous treatment of the Jews. How are we to make sense out of this? Why do they do it? Since no Jew ever slayed anyone in order to obtain his blood for Passover Matzah, we must ask from whence emerges this vicious but insane slander?

I hope you are ready for the answer. It is that the accusation derives from the unconscious yearnings of the accusers. The Rabbis famously say, "Whoever slanders, does so from his own defect. (Kiddushin 70a)"

It is our enemies who long to inflict every atrocity upon innocent Jews, who harbor perverted desires which they can't admit to and can certainly not overcome. The Nazi's favorite activity was the slaughter of babies, which was done in the most merciless fashion. And we have read the reports of the hideous mutilations Hamas directed at little children.

It should be noted and emphasized that all anti-Semites are wicked people. They can't confront the perverted instincts that lie within and deal with them properly. Therefore, in order to maintain some semblance of a moral self-image, they must deny their sinful urges and project them onto the Jews. Thus, the Jews are the scapegoats upon whom the evil ones cast all of the terrible sins that lie within themselves which they simply can't face. Think

of the famous Jew haters of history such as Pharaoh, Haman, Hitler, Nasrallah and Erdogan. At bottom they are deranged people who need to whitewash their corrupt souls. They do so by fashioning the Jew into the Devil.

On the other hand, all decent and righteous people who have been exposed to Jewish life, have nothing but respect and admiration for this people, because of the great wisdom and compassion they display.

Just think of all the kind and intelligent people that we admire. Those who love truth and have genuine integrity have enormous respect for the Jews. They all regard the Jews in the most positive light.

The Rabbis say, "from the wicked does evil ensue." This is clearly the case from Pharaoh to Haman to Titus, Chmielnicki and many others too numerous to mention. Only when wickedness throughout the world will be eliminated in the era of Messiah will the animosity against the Jews be converted into friendship and brotherhood.

In the meantime, it is important for Jews not to despair. The current worldwide agitation against our People has been anticipated by King David. He said in Psalms 3, "Why do the nations clamor; why do the peoples plot matters of futility. Kings of the earth stand ready; leaders have bonded together against the Lord and His Anointed. (They say) 'Let us sever their bonds and cast away their cords'. The One who dwells in heaven shall laugh; the Lord shall mock them. Then He will speak to them in His fury; He will fill them with terror in His rage: 'I have set My king over Zion, My holy mountain.'"

King David continues to reveal what Hashem communicated to him: "Just ask of me—I shall give you nations for your inheritance, and your estate to the ends of the earth. You will crush them with an iron rod; you will shatter them like pottery. And now kings be wise; be warned, judges of the earth: Serve the Lord with reverence and tremble as you exalt. Pay homage sincerely lest He grow angry and lose your way, for His fury flares up in a moment." And King David concludes with this message; "Happy are all who seek refuge in Him."

We must stand proud and tall in the face of all the anger and hostility of the wicked souls who despise us, and we must emulate the courage of Avraham Avinu who "stood on one side while the whole world was on the other side." Am Yisrael Chai. Shabbat Shalom. ■

Profound Lessons from the Text

the Purpose of Creation

GENESIS

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

What can we derive from Genesis' depiction of God's completion of creation in Genesis 2:1-3?

The heaven and the earth were completion, and all their array.

And God concluded on the seventh day His work that He performed.

And God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He performed.

And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it—for on it He rested from all His work that God had created to do.

Let's now understand each statement...

“The heaven and the earth were completed, and all their array”

“Completion” and “all” their array depict a discreet scope, a limited plan: there was only so much that was to be created, and once created, there was “completion.” “All” their array too depicts a limited quantity that was reached, and nothing further was necessary. Completion refers to some objective...there is a plan, which now has the full set of elements (all creations) necessary for achievement of the plan. This verse points to a plan. What is this plan?

“And God completed on the seventh day His work that He performed”

We now see the first of three mentions of a “seventh day.” God says that in addition to creation, there is an additional value that completion took place on “day seven.”

“And God rested on the seventh day from all His work which he performed”

As God already completed His work, what additionally is taught with a new state of “rest?” Doesn't rest mean the same thing as completed?

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Conclusion of creation is one matter, which we refer to as completion. But as God then states there is a “rest,” this is an additional phenomenon, subsequent to “completing” creation. Typically, rest is viewed as the lack of activity, but not here. God “resting” is a positive and fundamental principle: disengagement from physical creation, but engagement in what?

Most people view creation as the focus; they think the physical entities are God’s goals. Whereas God says creation was only the first step, and not the objective. What then is the state of rest? It is the state where the mind is enabled to be active. It is the state of withdrawal from physical activity and the engagement of the mind. God teaches that the objective of creation is not what was created. But in truth, creation’s objective is man’s intellectual appreciation of God’s wisdom displayed through creation. Rest offers man the opportunity to investigate creation. This now explains the final verse...

“And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it”

“Blessing” the seventh day means this Sabbath day is more prized than the six days of creation. The goal of Sabbath is man’s disengagement from physical

activity and his use of his mind. Being restricted from all creative, physical activities allows man to withdraw from the physical and free his mind to view all the wisdom in creation.

“Sanctifying” or distinguishing the Sabbath means a second idea: the one creature that can recognize the Sabbath’s unique nature must relate to the Sabbath day differently than the other six days. Man must treat the Sabbath with honor, as it embodies man’s objective. Sabbath provides man with the freedom to indulge in wisdom and draw closer to God through understanding His will for man; to recognize and appreciate the good in this purpose. God gave only one creation an intellect, because this is the objective of that creature. Therefore man must have at least one day a week where his mind is free to reach this goal. But if man does not use his mind to pursue God’s wisdom, then creation’s purpose is not realized; Earth has no purpose. And without man pursuing Torah and wisdom, Rashi says God will return the Earth back to its pre-creation, chaotic state (Avos 2:8).

“For on the Sabbath God rested from all His work He had created to do”

God sets an example for man: we rest because He rested (although in Genesis there is not yet any command that man rests on Sabbath). By God resting, He displays to man that creation is step 1, and Sabbath is step 2 where physical activity ceases, and gives man the opportunity for pondering creation and recognizing God. As God elevates the Sabbath in sanctity over the six days of creation, He teaches man to value this sanctified day and follow God’s rest. We copy God for our own good, and also our rest is on display to the rest of the world which notices one nation not engaged in work. When they ask us why we rest, we can respond that we are following the creator’s command, thereby spreading monotheism to all people (Maimonides).

Sabbath is crucial to our lives as it reminds us why God created us. Physical activities, although necessary to sustain us physically, must be viewed as second in importance behind our primary purpose, which is to perfect our ideas and values through thought. For it is only through these that we live eternally. ■



The Jewish people
thank our American
friends' unwavering
support of Israel's
defense and complete
destruction of Hamas.

POLITICS

TIME TO BE HARSH

DANI ROTH

The backdrop of Parshas Vayigash is that Yehudah promised his father that he would bring back Binyamin from Egypt. In parshas Vayigash, Yosef has a plan that tests Yehudah's dedication to this promise. Yosef's plan was to frame Binyamin for robbery, and tell the brothers that Binyamin would have to be kept as a slave to pay for his crimes. Yosef did this in order to help the brothers do Teshuva Gemura. He did this by putting the brothers in the same situation they had been in earlier with Yosef, and seeing if they would react in the same sinful manner with Binyamin. By Yosef, the brothers had no problem abandoning him because of jealousy. But, as we see in this week's Parsha, the brothers had a change in ideology. Yehudah would not just leave Binyamin, and even offers himself as a slave so Binyamin can go home.

While Yehudah is pleading that he should be taken as a slave instead of Binyamin, he tells Yosef, "Don't be angry". We find an interesting Rashi in Gen. 44:18, "Yehuda told Yosef, 'Do not be angry' - from here we learn that Yehudah spoke harshly." How does Rashi know Yehudah spoke harshly by him saying "Don't be angry"? How does Rashi learn this from these words? In fact, in the basic reading of the Pasuk, it appears that Yehudah is speaking extra respectfully.

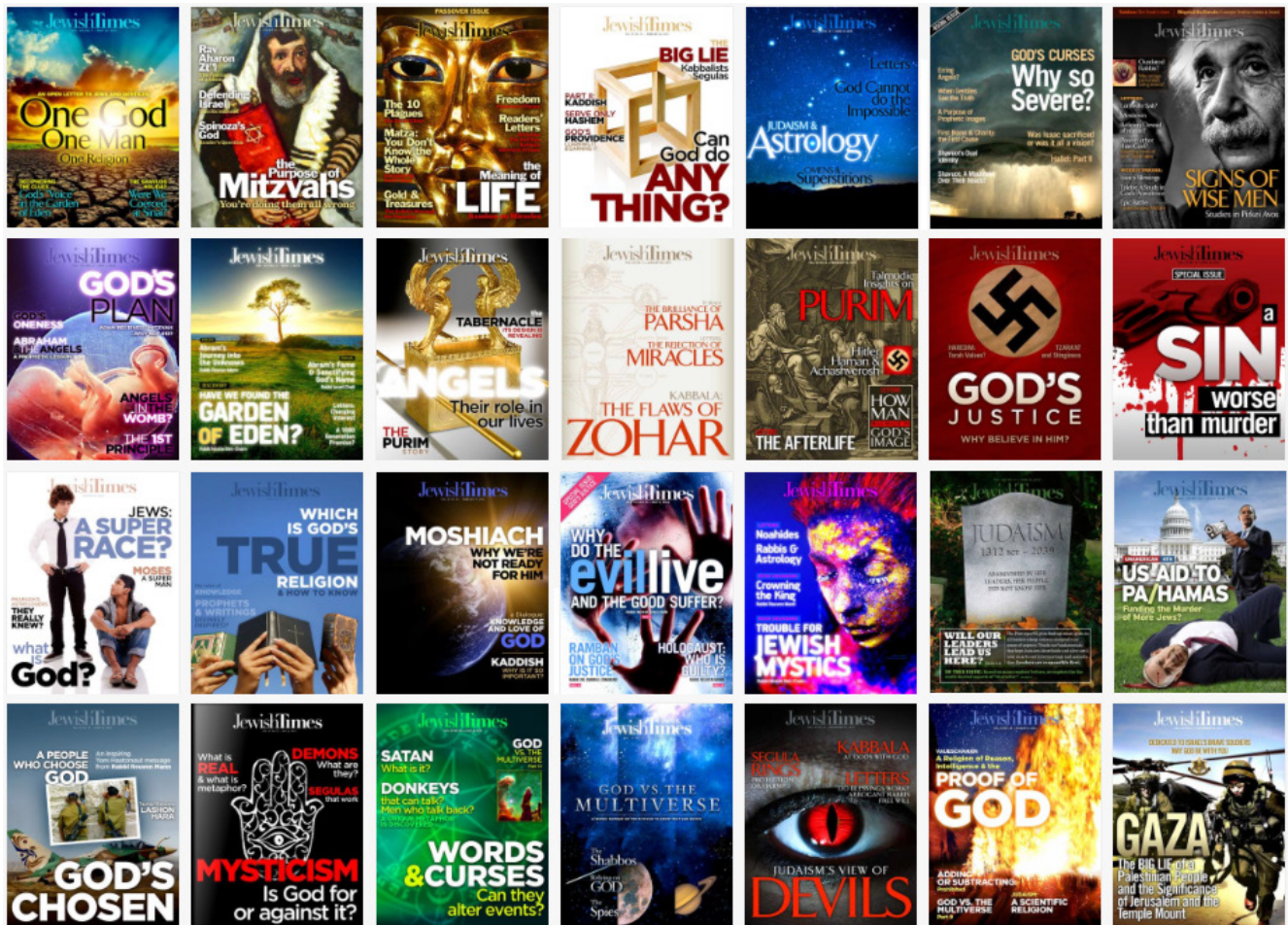
This question is only assuming that Yehudah's statement "Don't be angry" were the words that were harsh. But we can look at Rashi a different way. As Yehudah was telling Yosef not to be angry, then there must be some reason why—other than his words—that he expected Yosef to be angry. Since Yehudah's words were respectful, the only thing Yehudah could've done to aggravate Yosef was to use a harsh tone.

Now we have another question: Why would Yehudah speak harshly with Yosef if he wanted something from him? We can contrast this from a different time someone was seeking help from another. When Yosef sought release from prison, he pleaded to the butler to help him be released. When Yosef pleaded, he was not harsh, so why would Yehudah be harsh?

The answer lies in the outcome of the situation. When Yosef pleaded to the butler, the Passukim afterwards tell us that the butler forgot about Yosef. The fact that Yosef was forgotten shows us that the butler didn't respect Yosef or his pleas. This is because people distance themselves from the needy; people don't want to identify themselves with "lower" people. They feel it will cast shame onto themselves. This could be why Yehudah spoke harshly and firm. He was trying to gain the respect of Yosef, and that would help him have his requests answered. ■

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Abraham's Political Savvy

Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim

"Please say that you are my sister, that they do good to me because of you, and that I may remain alive on your account" (Gen. 12:13).

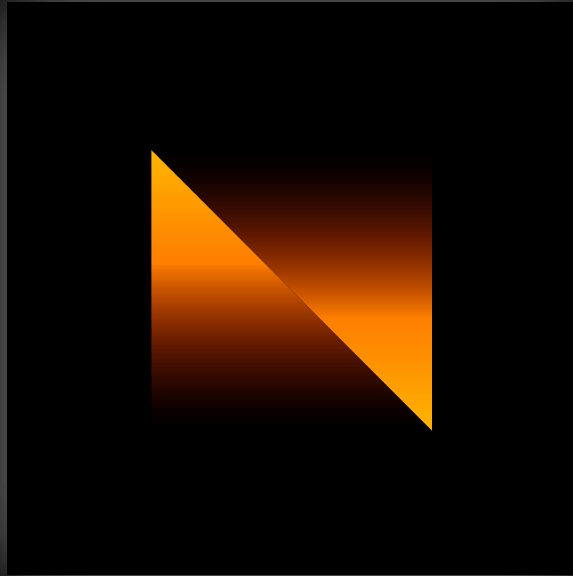
We would assume that a wise man like Abraham would reverse the order and prioritize his life over a financial benefit. But there must be greater wisdom than what meets the eye. I can't remember who I heard it from, but the brilliant answer is that Abraham understood politics. If he became an admired public figure, it would be impossible for that society to suddenly kill him to take Sarah. Abraham's plan was that by saying Sarah was his sister, they would lavish him with gifts to win over Sarah to become the king's wife. Meaning, in any culture, greater success is met through political means, then through force, also removing any threat of an uprising against the government by society members who disapprove. Now, once Abraham was favored, there's no way leaders would kill him to take Sarah. His life would thereby be saved, and this is the precise order of the verse: receiving political gifts would ensure the safety of his life. ■



The final words of Sergeant Ben Zussman from Jerusalem who fell in battle in Gaza:

“If God forbid I fall into captivity, alive or dead, I am not ready for one soldier or citizen to be harmed because of some deal for my release. I don't allow you to run a campaign or struggle or anything of the sort. I do not wish for terrorists to be released for my benefit. Please do not mince my words.

I'll say it again, I left the house without even being called to the reserves. I am full of pride and a sense of mission and I have always said that if I have to die, I wish it would be in defense of others and the country. “Yerushalayim hefkadeti shomrim,” that one day will come and I will be one of them.”



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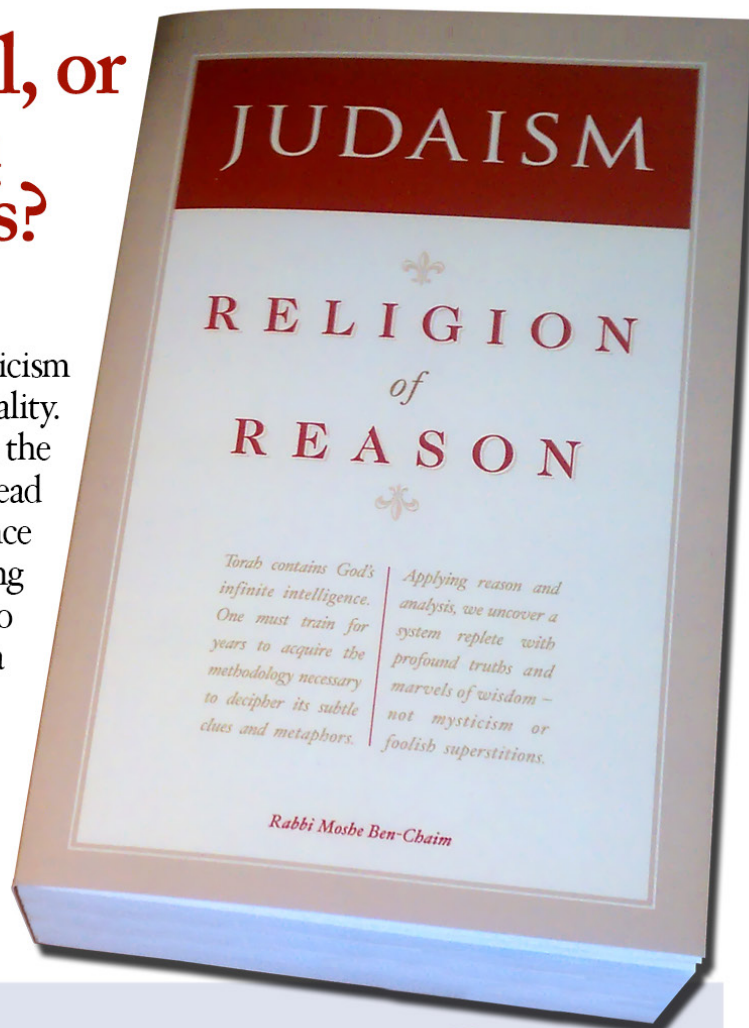
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The Meaning of Names in the BIBLE

RABBI MORTON MOSKOWITZ
TRANSCRIBED BY A STUDENT



Gen. 4:1,2:

"And man the new eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain. And she said, 'I have acquired a man child for the Lord.' Then she bore his brother Hevel (Abel)."

Eve is silent regarding Hevel's name selection. Hevel means "nothing." Ramban comments:

"She named one son in the name of acquisition and the second she named 'nothing,' because man's acquisitions are equal to nothing. And she did not want to clarify this. Therefore, the reason behind Hevel's name is not written."

The matter is that between the names of both children, Eve conveyed the futility of man's acquisitions in the physical world. Eve had a problem with her attachment to the physical world. Her eating from the tree of wisdom reveals Eve's over-attachment to the physical. A certain amount of attachment is proper according to reason. But an extreme attachment which causes sin is wrong. As Eve could have eaten from any other tree, eating from this one revealed her over-attachment. The forbidden quality drove Eve to desire the tree of wisdom.

Therefore, Eve needed a constant reminder of this flaw to help her restrict her over-attachment. [Acquisition and futility of that acquisition is what Cain and Hevel meant: "Cain" means acquisition and "Hevel" means futility.]

This question arose: "If all Torah law were suspended

for one day, what would you do?" Practically everyone said they would eat something forbidden; food was the greatest drive. Although they could have those foods within Torah guidelines, they displayed their intolerance of restrictions. It is not the object of the restriction, since the one person who wanted to eat at a non-kosher burger place could make burgers even better than those. The emotion was to be relieved of the restriction of that restaurant. So only eating there would be a release of the restriction. If it was the act per se [eating a delicious burger], if all laws were suspended, there would be no difference to what you could do now.

Today, people name children after relatives or great people. But in Torah's times, child naming, like the tribes, was based on how the mother viewed the situation and how she related to the situation through God. The lesson is to create a certain atmosphere in our homes. Some people go to Israel to learn as the atmosphere helps them. The matriarchs naming their children in this manner teaches us to create a certain home atmosphere which will better raise the children. Most people focus on the child's needs, forgetting about their own needs. Eve could not have told her children, "I do all this for you and this is how you act towards me?" This is because she did not do it for them but for herself. That atmosphere helps the child. Eve set up an atmosphere that she felt important and that she needed for herself. But if one only acts for the child, the child senses it's not vital for you.

We see that Cain was attached to the physical because he could not give the best of his crops to God, but Hevel did give his best. Cain sensed Eve's unconscious and her attachment to the physical, and he adopted her emotion, although expressed differently, while Hevel sensed the atmosphere of the ideas and a total relationship to God, and his sacrifice was accepted. Although not a perfect system because we are humans with weaknesses, however, as best we can, that which we need for ourselves we should set up as a protective shield in our own homes. That is the best we can do for our children, besides the active part of educating and raising them.

It cannot be that Eve named her children for their sake. For then, she would have named them each for a different idea. By naming one child "acquisition" and the other child "nothing," only both names together make sense. Thus, she named her children for her own benefit.

God accepted Hevel's sacrifice and not Cain's, and Cain became depressed. God said to Cain, "Why are you so angry and depressed? If you do good, you will be uplifted. And if you don't do good, to the doorway your sin will lurk; unto you it will be a desire, and you can rule over it." Ramban comments:

You have a superiority: you can be raised to a higher level than your brother because you are the eldest. And what made you angry was your embarrassment from your brother: he was successful and you were not. Therefore you are

(CONT. ON NEXT PAGE)

depressed. (And in his jealousy, Cain killed Hevel.) There is no reason for you to be angry against your brother or to be depressed. Because if you do good, you will have more benefit than your brother. And if you don't do good you won't only harm him, but in the doorway of your house your sin will lurk and it will cause you to stumble in all your ways.

Ramban means there are two reasons for depression. One is rational, a true calamity occurred. But sometimes depression is a result of an incorrect emotion, a fantasy, like in this case, namely jealousy. God tells Cain:

This depression indicates something wrong with how are you view life. You can either correct it and in your particular case you'll be in a better situation and you'll have the rights of the firstborn. Learn to deal with your jealousy and you'll do well. Or if you do not, that emotion will constantly lurk in you and cause you to do greater damage and then you will really be in trouble.

Ramban says that is why later on Cain killed Hevel. Since Cain did not deal with his jealousy, his emotion swelled and he killed his brother.

Depression is difficult to escape. If one is trained to think and his depression is generated from problems with the physical world, one can work out a plan. For example, Abraham faced a problem: remain in a famine-stricken land, or travel to a land of evil people. The famine meant certain death, whereas traveling to Egypt could be strategized to escape harm. But if depression is generated from your emotions, you must deal with them. [In external matters like Abraham, a best case strategy must be thought into and executed. In internal matters, one must examine himself and bring his emotions in line with reality. Both cases have solutions to eliminate depression.] If the depression cripples you, you must seek help from others.

The verse about Cain sites anger and depression: 2 sides of one coin. First, Cain was depressed; that's when his allergies were turned inward. And since he was in so much pain, that evoked anger against his brother, even though Cain himself was the cause of his predicament. To deny that he was the cause, Cain turned against his brother. Anger and depression are two sides of the same coin, as we said.

There are two types of anger: "Those who love God hate evil" (Psalms 97:10). Getting angry at an evil person is in line with reality. But then there is a hatred which is the result of your conflicts and your ego, which is a wrong hatred. Cain's ego was hurt and he became depressed. To escape his depression and thinking about his faults and problem, he expressed anger and killed Hevel. Cain felt, "All my problems are due to Hevel and by killing him, my problems are solved."

It is difficult to deal with one's emotions while in the

grips of the emotion. But King David was able to deal with his emotions even while under the influence. The prophet Nathan told king David the following:

And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were two men in the same city, one rich and one poor. The rich man had very large flocks and herds, but the poor man had only one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He tended it and it grew up together with him and his children: it used to share his morsel of bread, drink from his cup, and nestle in his bosom; it was like a daughter to him. One day, a traveler came to the rich man, but he was loath to take anything from his own flocks or herds to prepare a meal for the guest who had come to him; so he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." David flew into a rage against the man, and said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He shall pay for the lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and showed no pity." And Nathan said to David, "That man is you!" (Sam. II, 12:1-7)

King David admitted his sin. I think we can reach such a level or close to it, but it takes development. But when first starting out, one can't fight the emotion while in its grips. Cain too was able to overcome his emotions like King David, otherwise God would not have spoken to him.

Question: Let's say while in the grips of an emotion you harm someone. Are you responsible?

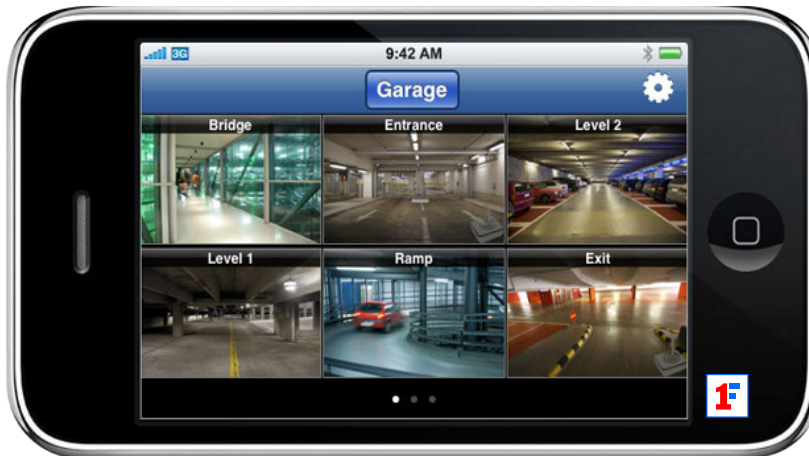
Rabbi Moskowitz: The answer is that you see Cain was held responsible. We are not responsible for our personalities or if we get depressed. But Cain should have dealt with his depression and anger and controlled himself. Furthermore, God helped him with his depression and explained matters to him. Even after he murdered his brother Hevel, God helped Cain and made him an everlasting wanderer to have time to deal with his emotions and repent.

Question: What lesson is learned from Hevel who was righteous, and yet did not get to live out his life?

Rabbi Moskowitz: We are responsible to protect ourselves, including protecting ourselves from those jealous of us. Wealthy people can choose to flaunt their wealth. But they then need to protect themselves from jealous people. Whether Hevel could have protected himself from Cain, I do not know. The best I can say is one must protect himself against other people's emotions that can harm oneself. One must be careful not to become evil, and once wise, one must protect oneself from evil people. You must know your own emotions and once you understand how they work, you must protect yourself from others.

Our sages say, one's home should be open to wise people learning there. This returns to Eve making her home a place of learning and ideas. ■

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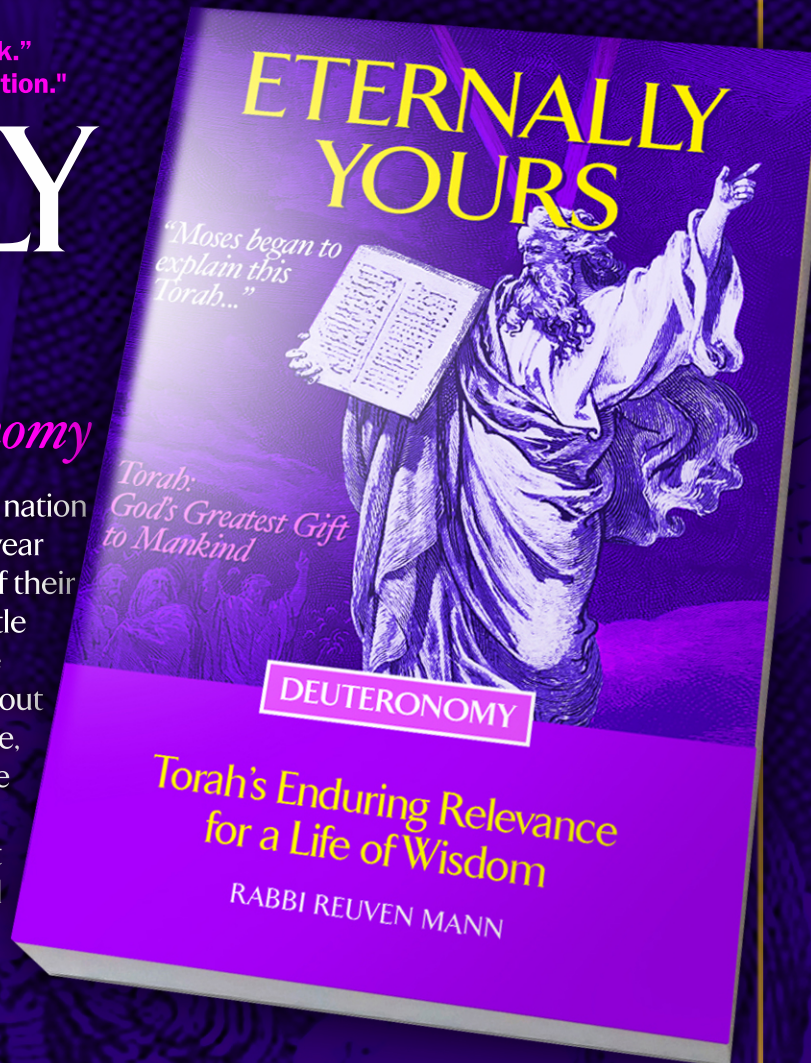
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