

Hashem's Work

By Hudi Aronovitz, 12th Grade

In this week's Parshah, Parshas Bereishis, the pasuk (2:2) says that "on the seventh day, G-d completed his work that he had made. On the seventh day, He rested from all the work that he had done." At first glance, this Pasuk is self contradictory. Did Hashem rest on Shabbos or did He do more work?

Rashi offers two explanations to resolve the apparent inconsistency in the pasuk. His first interpretation is that Hashem's work activities "entered a hairsbreadth into Shabbos," so He worked for a little and also rested, but implying that G-d did malacha for a nanoscale amount of time on Shabbos. Rashi's second possible answer is that it only appeared that Hashem completed His work on Shabbos, but in reality, He had completed it on the sixth day.

There are two questions that arise based on Rashi's answers. Rashi's first explanation suggests that Hashem worked on Shabbos. This is very difficult to accept because doing malacha on Shabbos is a Torah prohibition punishable by court-ordained death. In his second interpretation of the Pasuk, Rashi says that it only appeared as if Hashem did work on the seventh day, but He really completed his work on the sixth day. Why didn't the Pasuk say so? Why instead does the Torah tell us that "God completed His work [on the seventh day]"?

The two questions on Rashi can be resolved with the following idea: Hashem acts in such precision that he can "enter a hairsbreadth into Shabbos" con-

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From the Ground Up

By Evan Goldstein, 12th Grade

Questions about man and his purpose in life are inherent to our existence. Luckily, God gave us insight into the answers to these questions in Parshas Bereishis, which deals with creation of man and everything else. In Perek Bet Pasuk Zayin the Torah tells us that "Hashem formed Adam from the dust of the adamah and breathed into his nostrils a Nishmas Chaim (Soul of Life), and man became a Nefesh Chaya (living being)." "Nefesh Chaya" is also used when talking about the creation of animals, while "Nishmas Chaim" is only used by the Torah to describe man. Nishmas Chaim refers to the eternal soul of man; the spark that we each infused into our bodies that comes straight from Hashem. As it is a part of Hashem, it existed before us and will continue to exist after us. At birth, however, we are referred to as simply a nefesh chaya, seemingly similar to animals. The decisions that we make have the ability to elevate us from a nefesh chaya to a nishmas chaim.

The Torah clearly gives us three aspects: the adamah that we came from, the nefesh chaya (like an animal), and the eternal nishmas chaim. Seemingly nishmas chaim is the highest level of the tree. If so, why is Adam, which comes from adamah, the name chosen for the original man? Why do we focus on the lowest level possible?

The name Adam comes from an additional source. It says in Yeshayahu Perek 14 "Adameh l'elyon"-I will

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Torah Teasers*By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe***Parshas Bereshit
Questions**

1. Which person in the book of Genesis (Breishit) is actually referred to as "Reishit"?
2. Aside from the first day of creation, where else in the book of Genesis is the phrase "Yom Echad" – "one day" used? (2 answers)
3. The sun and the moon are not called by their names with regard to their creation, but are referred to as "luminaries" (Me'orot). Where in the book of Genesis are the words sun and moon found in the same verse?
4. The "great sea-creatures" (Tanin), were created on the fifth day (1:21). Where else in the Torah is a "Tanin" mentioned?
5. Which is the only letter of the alphabet that does not appear in the account of creation of the first chapter?
6. The snake tricked Eve (Chava) into eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Where else in the Torah does a snake appear? (4 answers)
7. Which adjective is used to describe Adam and Eve as well as the snake?

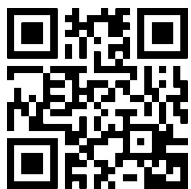
Answers

1. In Genesis 49:3, Yaakov refers to Reuven his first-born as Reishit Oni – "my initial vigor."
2. In Genesis 27:45, Rivka worries that her two sons will die on "Yom Echad" – "one day." In Genesis 33:13, Yaakov excuses himself from traveling with Esav by stating that if he does, the children and sheep will be too pressured for "one day."
3. In Genesis 37:9, the sun and the moon appear in the dream of Yosef.
4. In Exodus 7:10-11, the staff of Aaron miraculously turns into a Tanin. (There, however, Rashi translates Tanin as a snake.)
5. The letter Samech does not appear until Genesis 2:11.
6. In Genesis 49:17, in Yaakov's blessing to his son Dan, a snake is mentioned. In Exodus 4:3, at the burning bush, the staff of Moses turns into a snake. In Numbers 21:7, when the snakes bite the Jews, Moses fashions a copper snake. In Deut. 8:15, Hashem describes how He protected the Jews in the desert from snakes.
7. The adjective "arum" describes all three. Adam and Eve are described as "arumim" – "naked" (Genesis 2:25). The snake is also called "arum," although in that context it refers to slyness (Genesis 3:1).

The Haftorah Corner*Written By Adam Zahler*

This week, is the first of the Haftorot we will be reading out of all the Parshiot this year, coming from Isaiah. We find throughout this Haftarah ways in which it relates to Bereishit. At the beginning we find the pasuk: "So said the G-d Hashem, who creates the heavens and who stretches them forth, he who spreads out the earth and its produce, he who gives a soul to the people that are upon it, and a spirit to those creatures that go about onto it (Isaiah 42:5). This is a short summary of what Hashem was able to accomplish during creation. Hashem shows his love for man, who was created in bereishit, in the Haftarah: "Everyone who is called by my name and for my glory, I have created him, I have fashioned him, indeed I have perfected him (Isaiah 43:7)."

Isaiah while in the midst of reciting his prophecy states: "Sing to Hashem a new song, his praise from the end of the earth (Isaiah 42:10)." Just as the Haftorah has a musical theme, directed to G-d, we learn from this weeks Parshah that Adam, the first of all man kind, sang a song to G-d, in praise of the Shabbat day (Bereishit Rabba 22:28). Music is a device used by the first man ever to praise Hashem on the first Shabbos ever. It is a timeless tradition that has lasted us through to today. Singing allows us to connect to Hashem in ways in which words simply cannot. In times of joy throughout Jewish history singing has allowed us to express our feelings of joy towards Hashem. It all started with the first zemirot of Adam now it is our turn to honor Shabbos and express our gratitude to Hashem through song. So next time you are singing zemirot or listening to the chazzan in shul start a tune during zemirot think of where it all started from Adam to Az Yashir at the Yam suf to Isaiah in our Haftarah to us today.



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Transcribed by
Zachy Goldberg

Melacha on Chol Hamoed

Is performing melacha during Chol Hamoed an Isur Deoreisa or Isur Derabanan?

No surprise here, the answer is that there is a machlokes Rishonim if melacha performed on Chol Hamoed is an Isur Deoreisa or Isur Derabanan?

Let's discuss:

The Gemara in Makkos teaches that whoever disgraces the Moed is k'ilu oveid avoda zarah. The Mishna in Pirkei Avos warns that whoever disgraces the Moed does not earn Olam Habah. Rashi understands the Moed not to mean Yomim Tovim, but rather Chol Hamoed.

How does one avoid disgracing the Chol Hamoed?

§ A person has to honor Chol Hamoed properly by eating meat, drinking wine and dressing appropriately.

§ The Shaar Hatziyon says to dress in bigdei Shabbos.

§ The Maharil had the minhag, as many people do, to wear bigdei Shabbos on Chol Hamoed.

§ The Shaar Hatziyon has a discussion in Siman 530 Sif Katan in Hilchos Chol Hamoed, whether one's clothing should be bigdei Shabbos v'Yom Tov mamish, or just something better than one does during the weekday. The pashtus is, that it is a step down from Shabbos and Yom Tov, but a level up from a regular weekday.

§ The mitzvah of "v' samachta b'chagecha" applies on Chol Hamoed, therefore eating meat and drinking wine should apply on Chol Hamoed as well. There is no source that one would have to drink a reviis of wine, since a reviis is specifically a din in shiur. The Chiyuv is in simcha, so if an ounce of wine gives one simcha, then one would drink an ounce of wine. And if it is two cups of wine, then one has to drink two cups.

The whole reason for an issur melacha, is to free us from all distractions and allow us to focus solely on spiritual pursuits, while connecting with the Ribono Shel Olam. The Yerushalmi quotes Rav Abba Bar Mamal saying that had other people joined in with him, he would have eliminated the issur of melachos on Chol Hamoed. However, people continued to spend their time on frivolous activities during Chol Hamoed. The Kol Bo concludes from this Yerushalmi that the

severity of spending one's time frivolously on Chol Hamoed is even worse than doing melacha on Chol Hamoed.

It should be noted that Chol Hamoed is also a time to spend with family, and trips are definitely fine, but we just have to be careful that Chol Hamoed should not be totally frivolous.

What is halacha regarding actual melacha on Chol Hamoed?

§ As a general rule, all 39 melachos that are Asur on Shabbos and Yom Tov are Asur on Chol Hamoed as well. This includes prohibiting the practice of asking a goy to perform the melacha for a yid.

§ The Shulchan Aruch in Siman 543 Sif 1 very clearly states that one cannot perform melacha on Chol Hamoed.

§ The Magen Avraham there addresses the implications of l'tzorech mitzvah.

Exceptions to the "general rule":

There are certain activities that are Asur on Shabbos and Yom Tov which technically do not constitute "melachos" which one is allowed to do on Chol Hamoed. For example, one is permitted to do "dabeir davar", which is discussing business dealings. One is also allowed to measure, weigh, and count things as one would do normally during the week. Additionally, the melacha of hotzaah (carrying outdoors, even though it is Asur on Shabbos and Yom Tov) is permitted on Chol Hamoed. Usually on Yom Tov one is allowed to carry for a need, but on Chol Hamoed it is Mutar even without a need.

The five categories of melacha which are permitted on Chol Hamoed are as follows:

1. Maiseh hedyot l'tzorech hamoed is an activity that can be performed by anyone; this action does not require a specialized skill. For example, plunging a stuffed toilet.
2. Tzarich ochel nefesh is an action that is achieved to feed someone. This melacha is even Mutar on Yom Tov.

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Eitan Carroll

"Vayehi Or"

10th Grade

On the first day of creation, Hashem created light as it says, "Vayomer elokim yehi or vayehi or". In maseches megillah it states that the word "vayehi" is a language of sorrow. How is the creation of light a time of sorrow?

The answer to this can be found in maseches chagigah. Rebbe Eliezer says over there, that the light that Hashem created on the first day of creation was hidden because Hashem knew that reshaim such as the dor hama-bul and dor haflagah would end up benefiting from it. To prevent this, Hashem hid the light for the tzaddikim of future generations. Therefore, the word "vayehi", a term of sorrow, is used to show the loss of this special light that would allow a person to see from one end of the world to the other.

The Chasam Sofer used this to explain the pizmon of "or olam bi'otzar chayim oros mei'ofel amar veyehi" (the light of the world is in the treasury of life, the darkened light, He said and it was). He interposes words into the phrase to clarify it. The "Or olam" that Hashem created on the first day of creation was hidden away "bi'otzar chayim", and only the "oros miofel" remained. Therefore, "amar vayehi", Hashem used a term of sadness.

This is further shown in parshas Bo when makas choshech is taking place. The pasuk there says "ulichol bnei yisrael hayah or bimoshvosam" (and all the Jews had light in their homes). The Shach there says that Hashem used the light from the first day of creation because the only reason why Hashem had hidden it was so that the reshaim could not benefit from it. But because the reshaim had the plague of makas choshech on them, Hashem was able to use this special light. The Shach brings a proof to this from the use of the term "hayah" instead of vayehi. Since this was a time of joy because the full light was finally used, the word vayehi is not used.

(Evan Goldstein—Continued from page 1)

be like the One above. We has the unique ability to morph ourselves into a Godlike being. The specific reason for the nishmas chaim to be in the body is so we can emulate Hashem.

The broad spectrum across which man operates is inherently found in his name, Adam. Man can point himself toward the earth, becoming even lower than the animals who didn't have the potential and therefore didn't squander such an opportunity, or become Adameh, rising above the entire creation, to become Godlike through the nishmas chaim.

We start as Adamah, with nothing elevating us. As we advance in our lives, every decision that we make changes our "elevation." Following Hashem and the Torah can ultimately lead to us using the nishmas chaim in every single one of us to emulate Hashem. Conversely, however, making poor decisions and straying from Hashem can lead us back to being adamah, where we started. We must strive on a daily basis to change from adamah to adameh. Have a good Shabbos filled with good decisions and striving to be the best we can.



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Yosef Axelrod

9th Grade

What's in a Name?

The opening pasuk of Parshas Bereishis states, "In the beginning of Elokim's creation of the heavens and the earth..." The question is, why does the Torah use the name "Elokim," the name that describes His trait of judgment, and not Hashem's other name, the Shem Havaya, "Yud kay vav kay," which describes Hashem's trait of mercy and eternity, as seen in Perek Bet?

Rashi suggests that in the beginning, Hashem created the world with just the trait of judgment; however, He soon "realized" that the world needed the trait of mercy, so in Perek Bet, He used the name of Hashem which shows mercy—"yud kay vav kay."

As we know, there is an obligation to emulate Hashem's ways, therefore, just as He personifies mercy, so too we should also work to have mercy.

(Hudi Aronovitz—Continued from page 1)

tinuing to do work without actually doing malacha. Hashem worked for such an inconceivably miniscule amount of time, an amount that human beings cannot comprehend, that it did not constitute a violation of Shabbos. Therefore, Rashi says that it appeared as if Hashem completed his work on the seventh day, because in reality He completed it on the sixth day, but He did, however, do a miniscule amount of work on Shabbos, regardless of the fact that it seemed infinitesimal in comparison to the amount of work completed during the week.

(Stories of Greatness- Continued from page 8)

and friends. He also distributed the proper gifts from his sacrifices to the priests. His joy was so intense that he held back nothing. The poor man, on the other hand, had only a bunch of greens to bring home for his family. What were his few stalks compared to the fattened animal of the wealthy man?

"Nevertheless," concluded the Baal Shem Tov, "G-d desires the heart. Any mitzvah a person may do, whether great or small, simple or difficult, is judged by how it is performed. A mitzvah done for G-d's sake, with great joy and purity of heart, is very precious to the Creator. G-d cries out to the angels, 'Look at the mitzvah my son/daughter has done!' G-d, from His place in the heavens, saw that although the wealthy man had offered much, the poor man had offered much more."

Reb Eliezer Lipa's mind knew no rest. How he longed to be able to do a mitzvah like the poor man in the story, with pure intention and a joyful overflowing heart! The weeks passed and still Reb Eliezer Lipa knew no peace, as his heart ached with the desire to be able to do such a mitzvah.

One day, as Reb Eliezer Lipa was delivering water to one of his wealthy customers, he had an idea, an idea so perfect that his whole being became flushed with a great sense of pleasure and relief. Reb Eliezer Lipa's four wealthy customers provided him with half of his livelihood, since they paid him far more than the going rate for a barrel of water. On the other hand, his friend Reb Zalman Dov supplied the town's four synagogues, which paid him half-price for their water. "I can exchange four of my customers for four of his," thought Reb Eliezer Lipa. "Four wealthy homes for four synagogues." He was anxious to serve G-d by providing the water that the congregants would wash their hands with. Certainly the mitzvah was of more value than the profits he would give up.

He went home and told his wife about the story he heard from the visiting storyteller, and how doing a mitzvah with joy is like bringing a sacrifice in the Holy Temple, even though it no longer stands. His wife readily agreed to the idea, as did Reb Zalman Dov, who sorely needed the extra income. The deal was struck and the exchange of customers was made. No one but Reb Eliezer Lipa and his wife knew what had happened, and they were overjoyed at the prospects for their new "business." There were days when Reb Eliezer Lipa's wife went to

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Jacob Penstein

10th Grade

THE TRUE SIN OF ADAM

When Hashem reproaches Adam for his sin, eating from the Tree of Knowledge, He says in Bereishis 3:17, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat, the earth will be cursed on your account with toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life." Why does Hashem cite the reason for Adam's punishment as "Because you listened to your wife?" Shouldn't it have been more direct, for example, "Because you disobeyed Me?" Adam violated Hashem's commandment, regardless the of how or why he did it.

The role of man, and specifically Adam, was outlined in the beginning of Bereishis (1:27-28), "And God created man in His image...Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the sky and over all the beasts that tread upon the earth." Man was created to be the reflection of G-d on this planet. In the same way Hashem created, people create. In the same way Hashem rested, we rest. In the same way Hashem is a leader, humans are supposed to be leaders.

Keeping this in mind, it is easy to see why G-d reprimanded Adam for "listening to his wife" as opposed to "disobeying Me." By following Chava's advice to sin, Adam was compromising his capacity in this Universe. Instead of being a leader under the directives of Hashem, Adam became a follower. He had abandoned his role. For this reason, he was rebuked for "listening to your wife." Adam's sin was not only violating the commandment of eating from the Tree, it indicated a comprehensive relinquishment of his role. Listening to Chava, rather than leading the ways of Hashem represented a failure of man's purpose.

Based on this it is also easier to understand the punishments Adam received. Adam demonstrated that he was incapable of leading and as being a reflection of Hashem's image, by being a follower in sin, as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Therefore, Adam would have to struggle with Earth and live at its mercy, instead of being the master over it.

This lesson can also be applied to our lives. Like Adam, we are entrusted with the responsibility to represent Hashem in the world. When we violate Hashem's commandments, we are perverting our role. Mitzvot are not just rules; they define our position and purpose in the world. Rather than viewing ourselves as being commanded to observe the Torah because we are Jews, we need to reevaluate the situation and consider that it is the reverse. Our obligation to keep the Torah is what defines us as Jews. The Torah not only regulates our lives, it defines our lives and our purpose.

(Stories of Greatness—Continued from page 5)

the river to participate in the mitzvah of drawing the water for the synagogues. As they hauled the water, they would concentrate on the mitzvah of preparing the water for the congregants to wash their hands with before prayers, and their joy was boundless. For they understood that G-d desires the heart.

Amongst chassidim there is a tradition that it was in the merit of their mitzvah, Reb Eliezer Lipa and his wife were blessed with children, for she had formerly been barren. They gave birth to two sons, who grew to be luminaries who lit up the Jewish world and inspired tens of thousands to return to G-d and to serve Him with joy:

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(Stories of Greaness—Continued from page 6)

Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk and Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli, two of the most illustrious disciples of the Baal Shem Tov's successor, Reb Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezeritch.

Adapted from Chabad.org

(Ten Minute Halacha—Continued from page 3)

3. Davar Haavud is an act for which if delayed, there will be some sort of loss.
4. Tzarchei Rabim is an act which is executed as a major communal need.
5. Poel shein lo mah yochal is a destitute laborer who is paid for the work he performs that day. Without such compensation, he would be unable to buy essentials, such as food. (This category does not pertain to one who will lose his job should he miss work. That description is an example of davar haavud).

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STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: NETANEL YOMTOV

Reb Eliezer Lipa was a simple but devout Jew who lived in the town of Tarnow in Galicia. He was not well versed in Torah and didn't know the meaning of most of his daily prayers, but he always prayed with the minyan (prayer quorum) and was scrupulous to say all the proper responses to the prayer leader. He never conversed about worldly matters in the shul (synagogue), and he accorded the Torah scholars and rabbi their due honor.

Reb Eliezer Lipa was a laborer who knew many trades, but he was most well known as a water-carrier. He worked hard, and managed to make a decent living, as he had four steady customers who were well-to-do merchants and who paid him above the average rate for his services.

One day, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov arrived in Tarnow. This was before the chasidic master had revealed himself to the world, and he appeared as a simple itinerant, but with a gift for telling stories. He used to congregate with the other laborers and tell them stories from the Talmud. He would also speak to them about how much G-d was pleased with the sincere prayers and straightforward faith of ordinary Jews.

Reb Eliezer Lipa was guiding his wagon with its full barrel of water through the center of town, when he spotted his friend and fellow water-carrier Reb Zalman Dov along with some other men, gathered around a simply dressed itinerant and listening intently with heads inclined to catch his every

word.

His interest sparked, Reb Eliezer Lipa went over to join the circle of listeners. The Baal Shem Tov was telling the story related in the Talmud of a wealthy man who lived in the days when the Holy Temple in Jerusalem still stood.

"The wealthy man was taking a fattened ox to the Temple for a sacrifice. It was a massive beast, and when it decided, for reasons of its own, to stop still in its tracks, nobody was able to convince it to walk further towards their destination. No amount of pushing and prodding could make that animal budge.

"A poor man who was on his way home was watching the scene. In his hand was a bunch of freshly picked greens. These he now held to the muzzle of the ox, and when the animal began to nibble, he drew them away and thereby led the animal to its destination at the Holy Temple.

"That night the owner of the ox had a dream. In his dream he heard a voice which called out, 'The sacrifice of the poor man, who gave up the bundle of greens he was bringing to his impoverished family, was a more desirable sacrifice than your fattened ox.'

"The wealthy man brought a large fattened ox for a burnt-offering. He was so joyful at being able to bring such an animal that he also brought a sheep for a peace-offering and made a huge feast for his family

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