

week, and done the job on the festival.

We live, however, in an imprecise world. The exact moment when one day ends and another begins is almost impossible to define with any degree of accuracy. Halachists have responded to this concern by creating a twilight zone: a time-period known as *bein hashmashot*. Neither full day, nor complete night, it is impossible to definitively define the birthdate of a child born during this time.

We couldn't risk holding the *brit* on the day before festival, which might, after all, have been only the seventh day from birth. Conversely, to hold the *brit* on the festival ran the risk of desecrating the festival by performing an action that, by rights, should have been completed the day before. In the end, *halachah* (Torah law) dictated that we do neither and the whole ceremony was pushed off until the day after the festival.

Shabbat observers make weekly allowance for this ambiguity in ascertaining the onset of Shabbat by bringing in Shabbat slightly earlier than strictly necessary. The candle lighting times you find in your local Jewish calendar introduce Shabbat earlier than may otherwise be necessary in order to protect the sanctity of Shabbat and to protect against its inadvertent desecration.

Interestingly, however, G-d did not submit to this precaution. We read this week that "G-d finished creating on the seventh day" (Genesis 2:2), which could potentially mislead one to believe that G-d was still creating the universe into the seventh day, pausing to rest only once Shabbat had begun. However, all traditional commentators interpret the verse to mean that G-d continued creating until the precise moment when the sixth day finished and Shabbat began.

G-d creates reality. Time is a function of His will. G-d has no need to add to the holiness of Shabbat "just in case" because He invented that holiness and He knows the precise moment when He ushers it onto the world.

The remarkable lesson from the six days of creation is not only that G-d chose to create a universe, but that He continued to create up until the last possible instant.

The temptation is always there to do a lot and then stop. To satisfy oneself with one's past

achievements and to coast to the finish line. The life-lesson we learn from G-d's act of creation is that every moment is precious, every second a new opportunity to work, to strive, to produce, to achieve. We must not and we dare not miss our opportunity to partner with G-d in the act of creation.

Live & Laugh

After Adam was created, there he was in the Garden of Eden all alone. Of course it wasn't good for him to be all by himself, so G-d came down to visit. "Adam," He said, "I have a plan to make you much, much happier. I'm going to give you a companion, a help-mate for you — someone who will fulfil your every need and desire. Someone who will be faithful, loving, and obedient. Someone who will make you feel wonderful every day of your life." Adam was stunned. "That sounds incredible!" "Well, it is, replied G-d. "But it doesn't come for free. In fact, this is someone so special that it's going to cost you an arm and a leg." "That's a pretty high price to pay," said Adam. "What can I get for a rib?"

Calendar

Shabbos Mevorchim MarCheshvan
Molad: Fri 20 Oct 12:12:17

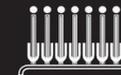
- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall.
- ◆ Mincha: 5:35 pm
- ◆ Shalosh Seudos sponsored by Rabbi Goldman in honour of his father's first yahrzeit.
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:45 pm
- ◆ **Rosh Chodesh:** Fri 20 and Sat 21 Oct
- ◆ Mincha from Sunday 6:00 pm

- ◆ The **Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
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Parshas Bereishis

24 Tishrei 5778

It's A Brand New World

by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

In the beginning G-d created heaven and earth.

For a change, let's talk a little philosophy. From the first verse of the Torah it seems that once upon a "time" there was nothing. Then the Creator brought the universe into existence. According to the Tanya, seeing as the world didn't always exist, it isn't quite "natural" for it to be. Therefore, the creative force of G-d, which brought the world into existence initially, must constantly be present to fuel its continued state of being. Remove that Divine energy from the world and it simply ceases to exist. It would be like pulling the plug on creation.

This concept is known as the law of "continuous creation." Indeed, in our daily morning prayers, we describe G-d as the One who "in His goodness renews each day the work of creation." The Tanya, then, would understand that to mean not only each day but also each moment.

I suppose we could understand this idea from the simple analogy of a cricket bowler. When he throws a ball up in the air, his strength will determine how high the ball will fly. The stronger his arm, the higher it will fly and the longer it will defy the natural law of gravity. But as soon as the power of his bowl is spent, the ball can no longer defy nature and comes hurtling down again.

Likewise, if we want the initial or "natural" state of the world – which was non-existence – to be defied, then we need to keep fueling that same initial thrust of creative energy into

the world that brought it into existence in the first place. Otherwise, the universe simply reverts to its initial state of nothingness and non-existence. Just like the ball that runs out of steam and falls back to earth.

Now let's move from the philosophical to the practical and we discover a beautiful message of hope and inspiration in this concept. We are often burdened by the past, weighed down by our personal history and experiences. Our mistakes and failures still haunt us and prevent us from moving on.

Here then is a stirring message for all who would be hampered by past disappointments. It's a brand-new world. Every day, every minute, every second G-d is recreating the world anew. Forget about the past. What was was. Today is a new world, a new present filled with exciting new opportunities. At any given moment we can begin again.

Especially in the week of B'reishis - Genesis, where we read the Torah from the very beginning, it is a most opportune time for each of us to make a fresh start and a new beginning. New beginnings aren't always easy. But this idea of "continuous creation" offers powerful inspiration to give ourselves a new chance filled with new opportunities. As we start a new Jewish year, let us embrace this promise and be encouraged to begin again.

Parsha Pointers

*Bereishis: Artscroll Chumash pg 2;
Living Torah pg 3*

G-d creates the world in six days. On the first day He makes darkness and light. On the second day

He forms the heavens, dividing the "upper waters" from the "lower waters." On the third day He sets the boundaries of land and sea and calls forth trees and greenery from the earth. On the fourth day He fixes the position of the sun, moon and stars as timekeepers and illuminators of the earth. Fish, birds and reptiles are created on the fifth day; land-animals, and then the human being, on the sixth. G-d ceases work on the seventh day, and sanctifies it as a day of rest.

Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden and commanded not to eat from the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil." The serpent persuades Eve to violate the command, and she shares the forbidden fruit with her husband. Because of their sin, it is decreed that man will experience death, returning to the soil from which he was formed, and that all gain will come only through struggle and hardship. Man is banished from the Garden.

Eve gives birth to two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain quarrels with Abel and murders him, and becomes a rootless wanderer. A third son is born to Adam, Seth, whose tenth-generation descendant, Noah, is the only righteous man in a corrupt world.

In The Beginning...

By Rabbi Mendy Herson

First there was G-d.

And nothing else.

All of reality was filled with the Divine Presence. Purely and wholly.

Then, with a burst of creative energy, everything changed.

In the beginning.....the simple Oneness, the unbroken serenity, was eclipsed by complexity, diversity and multiplicity.

Welcome to our world.

G-d is no longer the only Face of reality.

The world is a jumble of competing and seemingly disconnected forces. So many distractions, so much static.

On its face, our world shouts that global oneness can't really exist; the implied message: "Just look out for 'Number One,' and the

world will take care of itself."

Reality was turned upside down; from oneness to multiplicity, from wholeness to fracture.

But beneath the façade, the oneness reality has never changed; it has simply receded, waiting to return to prominence.

We, conscious human beings, can re-activate the oneness reality. That is our destiny. Our privilege. And our duty.

When we look to the Torah and lead meaningful lives, we bring a clear and palpable oneness to the world; we show harmony within the multiplicity.

In a way, the world and its many objects are like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The Torah is like the box top, showing us a picture of how a harmonious, connected world should look.

Every object I engage is another puzzle-piece. When I pick up that piece, I need to find its proper place in my life and in my world; I need to ascertain the meaning to be found in its existence, and give it the correct context.

That's how the world becomes one meaningful whole. Again.

'Wholeness' is a clear Torah objective; in Maimonides' words: The entire Torah was given to bring peace (wholeness) to the world.

Connectedness.

5778 Years Ago

By Rabbi Mendel Teldon

So I'm working on selling ads for our yearly calendar, and I approach a local store owner with a form and a copy of last year's edition. I show her the beautiful full-color layout and all the Jewish pictures and art spread throughout the pages. When she finishes flipping through it, she stops and asks, "What is the number 5769 on the front?"

I responded quite simply, "The amount of years since creation."

There was silence.

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"You're not serious?" she asks.

She wasn't sure if I still lived in the dark ages or was in complete denial – and I was asking her to trust me with her money?

There's no 30-second sound bite that would be able to answer a millennium-old question. I went home, put my thoughts on paper, and dropped it off at her business.

Because, really! Have you ever heard of carbon dating? Aren't there stars a millions light-years away? Have you ever heard the word "dinosaurs"?

It is kind of hard to believe in the Torah when you get stuck on the validity of the first chapter – no, the first sentence.

Well, I ask you to clear your mind and give me a second to present my case.

Let us take things at the face value. G-d created the world in six days. Adam and Eve are standing around in the Garden of Eden. Now what does that garden look like? Remember, the world is only six days old and grass was created on the third day...

Was it a garden? A field with seeds? Small little buds looking like a nursery? Doesn't seem too exotic or paradise-like!

On that train of thought, when they ate from the tree – how was there fruit if it was only a three-day-old tree? How many rings were in that tree? And wait – how did Adam and Eve reach to get it, or, for that sake, even walk, if they were two hours old? And that snake...he was two days old...boy, did they grow up quick.

We must be missing something.

When you sit down and start reading your favorite novel, the first chapter starts off with John, a young 32-year-old stock broker, and his wife Amy, an interior designer with a degree from Princeton, walking up their driveway into their two-story colonial in downtown Boston. The book continues for another 244 pages and occurs over a five month period.

But when you get to the bottom of page one – how old is the story line?

It depends. The author thinks that, for the sake of this story, it is a few seconds old. But in truth, both John and Amy have a few decades behind them. The fact that they were born, and grew up, and

went to school, and met each other, and then married, and bought a house are all relevant parts of the story, but those details are placed throughout the following pages as the author deems necessary for the narrative. Sometimes you get those details and understand how they tie into the story, and sometimes they remain a mystery.

But although the characters are 32 years old, the story is only a few seconds old at this point!

These two characters have a long and detailed history, but the book doesn't actually begin until the author chooses to lift the curtain as they walk up their driveway.

So, too, when G-d created the world, he slowly lifted the curtain over six days to reveal a rich and complete world with a long history and much planning that went into every detail.

And in that story line there were dinosaurs, and trees with rings, and animals maturing, and continents shifting, and people growing up, and light traveling great distances across the galaxies. And at the right moment – exactly 5778 years ago – He opened the book to page one.

Did G-d Work on Shabbat?

By Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum

I received a call last week from a set of new parents trying to schedule their son's *brit milah* (circumcision). The boy had been born late in the afternoon, slightly before nightfall, exactly a week before the festival of Rosh Hashanah.

Ideally a *brit* is performed on the eighth day from birth, even on Shabbat or *Yomtov* (a Jewish festival such as Rosh Hashanah or Passover). However, if for any reason the *brit* is delayed, we do not carry out the procedure on Shabbat or *Yomtov* but reschedule it for the first available weekday.

Were the baby to have been born while it was still daytime, the *brit* would have been the following week, on the day before the festival. Conversely, were the new arrival to have made his first appearance at night, then we could have safely called the *brit* for the following