

המוסד למען קדושת חיי אדם



TORAH READING:

Bereishit: Genesis 1:1 - 6:8

In this week's Torah portion, Bereishit: Genesis 1:1 - 6:8, we are challenged with the notion that G-d, the Creator of everything, is and always will be. From before time began through all eternity, G-d the Creator is the power and energy driving all mysterious and mundane happenings.

Everything that we can see, feel, hear, touch, smell and somehow intuitively know comes from this Source that is able to create all things from nothing!

The life force that animates all creation inspires awe and curiosity. Jews are taught to respect life in all its variety and forms. We were tasked with protecting and caring for G-d's precious and valuable creation out of respect and appreciation for the Divine will.

The early onset of human self will, guilt and shame as described in the story of the serpent introduced a competing agenda for the human being. No longer content with the simple tasks of daily living in the Garden, these human beings opted to pursue personal satisfaction apart from serving G-d.

The immediate consequence of this decision was a loss of peace of mind and personal integrity, followed by tragic family problems. In a fit of rage motivated by pride and envy, Cain murders his brother, Abel. The sin of murder removes Cain from G-d's protection and favor. He suffers terribly from anxiety, depression, guilt and self-pity throughout the remainder of his life.

This departure from righteousness in the first chapters of Genesis begins a downward spiral of sin and bad judgement in the first ten generations of human beings. Eventually, evil reigns supreme. Murder and mayhem define the times. The portion closes with G-d regretting the gift of life He had bestowed to human beings at the time of Creation.

Soon after Adam and Eve gain knowledge of good and evil, HaShem asks them, "Where are you?" Of course, He knew exactly where they were, both logistically and spiritually. They were hiding in shame after clearly disobeying His will. When HaShem asks them, "Did you disobey Me?" they justify their choices and blame each other. They offer no apology, show no contrition, nor do they take responsibility for their actions. As a result, they lose their heaven on earth.

We see a certain parallel of action and attitude in modern Jewish life. Everyday, HaShem asks each one of us, "Where are you?" Am I making choices that support and protect unborn Jewish children, or am I abandoning this responsibility in the search for material security and personal satisfaction? Because Jewish children in the womb are part of G-d's creation, they qualify for our protection and care no matter the cost to our personal, professional, or family position. Serving, respecting and pleasing G-d by assuming this responsibility brings deeper satisfaction and pleasure than any worldly gain or pursuit. As a result, we find our heaven on earth.