

וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים 25 And God made  
 אֶת־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ the the land animal after its kind  
 וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ and the cattle after its kind  
 וְאֶת־כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ הָאָדָמָה לְמִינָהּ and all that crawls the ground after its kind;  
 וַיֹּרֶא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: and God saw that it is good.  
 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים 26 And God said  
 נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם "Let us make man  
 בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ in our image, after our likeness;

The sixth day:  
 land animals

Fish were the first living creatures to be created, and the only animals not to be corrupted in the generation of the Flood.<sup>34</sup> This is why fish is traditionally served as the first course of the Shabbat meal.

-R. MENACHEM MENDEL OF VORKA

## 1:24

**"The earth shall  
 bring out living creatures"**

All the works of creation were created in their full stature, fully mature, fully formed.

-R. YEHOSHUA BEN LEVI IN TALMUD  
 -RASHI

God created a mature, fully developed world, with everything that man requires to begin fulfilling his mission and purpose already in place (just as Adam and Eve themselves were created not as newborn infants, but as mature adults). Hence there is no real contradiction between the Torah's account of creation and the scientific estimate that the universe is many billions of years old.

-MAAYANAH SHEL TORAH

"The earth shall bring out living creatures" also alludes to the resurrection of the dead in the World to Come, when those interred in the earth will emerge as living beings.

-BEREISHITH RABBATHI

## 1:26

**"Let us make man"**

When Moses was transcribing the Torah and he reached the verse, "Let us make man...", he said: "Master of the Universe! Why are you leaving an opening for the heretics (to claim that there is more than one god)?" Said God to him: "Write it thus, and whoever wants to err, let him err."

-R. SHMUEL BAR NACHMAN  
 IN MIDRASH RABBAH

### NOTES

#### 1:26

**LET US MAKE** (נַעֲשֶׂה ~ na'aseh) • according to *Saadia Gaon*, God is employing the royal "We"; but most commentaries follow the midrashim that explain the plural as indicating a divine "consultation," either internal or with some element of creation—see commentaries to this verse • also **man has been made** (see midrash on p. 71) -R. Huna of Ziporin in *Midrash Rabbah*  
**MAN** (אָדָם ~ adam) • i.e. **human** (as opposed to אִישׁ ~ ish, which usually means "man" in the sense of "male"—cf. verse 23) • also the proper name of the first man, **Adam**  
 Related to • **earth** (אֲדָמָה ~ adamah) -*Midrash Rabbah*; *Radak* • **blood** (דָּם ~ dam) -*Shaloh*  
 • **to resemble** (דָּמָה ~ damah), indicating the formulation of the human soul in the divine image -R. Menachem Azariah da Fano; *Shaloh* • has the same letters as the word **very** (מְאֹד ~ me'od) indicating man's norm-shattering potential -*Midrash Rabbah*; R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi  
**IMAGE** (צֶלֶם ~ tzelem) • also **mold** -*Rashi*

With whom did God consult when he said "Let us make man"?

R. Yehoshua says: He consulted with the heavens and the earth.

R. Shmuel bar Nachman says: He consulted the works of the each of the six days of creation.

R. Ami says: He consulted his own heart.

R. Chanina says: He consulted the angels.

R. Yehoshua of Sichnin says: He consulted the souls of the righteous.

-MIDRASH RABBAH

God said to the Torah, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."<sup>35</sup>

-PIRKEI D'R. ELIEZER

Since man was created in the likeness of the angels, and they would envy him, God consulted with them. From here we learn God's humility: even though it leaves an opening for heretics, the Torah did not hesitate to use the plural "us" to teach proper conduct and the trait of humility.

-RASHI

Man is unique in that he is comprised of both a mortal body, which resembles the earth from which it was made, and an immortal Godly spirit. Thus God says, "Let us make man"—I, together with the earth that I have created, for he shall resemble us both.

-R. YOSEF KIMCHI; NACHMANIDES

God invited all elements of creation to participate in the creation of man, since it is through man that all else is elevated or debased.

-R. MORDECHAI YOSEF OF IZHBITZA

The prophet Isaiah declares, "Your people are all righteous." So when the midrash states that God consulted with the souls of the righteous, this implies that God consulted with each individual soul whether it should be created!

This gives us a deeper appreciation of the principle of "free choice": it is not only that we are free to choose how we behave in any given situation, but also the question of whether or not we should be sent down to this world to be placed in that situation—that, too, is our choice.

-THE REBBE

<sup>34</sup> See commentary to 7:22.

<sup>35</sup> The human body has 248 organs and 365 veins, mirroring the Torah's 248 positive commandments and 365 prohibitions.



וַיִּרְדּוּ  
בְּדִגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם  
וּבְבִהֶמָּה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ  
וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:  
וַיְבָרֵא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ  
בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ  
זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:  
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים  
וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים  
פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבְשָׁטָה  
וַיְרְדּוּ בְּדִגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם  
וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל־הָאָרֶץ:  
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים  
הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם  
אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב | זֶרַע זֶרַע  
אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ  
וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בוֹ פְּרִי־עֵץ זֶרַע זֶרַע  
לָכֶם יְהִי לְאֹכְלָה:

and they shall dominate  
the fish of the sea and the bird of the heavens  
and the cattle and all the earth  
and every crawling thing that crawls on the earth.”

27 And God created the man in his image  
in the divine image he created him;  
male and female he created them.

*The creation  
of man*

28 And God blessed them  
and God said to them  
“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and conquer it;  
and dominate the fish of the sea and the bird of the heavens  
and every animal that crawls upon the earth.”

29 And God said  
“Here I have given to you  
every herb that seeds seed  
which is upon the face of all the earth  
and every tree in which there is a tree-fruit that seeds seed;  
for you it shall be for food.

#### “And conquer it”

The man is commanded to procreate, but the woman is not so commanded. From where is this derived? Because it says, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and conquer it.” Man, whose manner is to conquer, is subject to this commandment; whereas woman, whose manner is not to conquer, is not so obligated.

R. Yochanan ben Berokah says: The commandment is to both of them, as it says, “And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply...’”<sup>42</sup> - TALMUD

Obviously, the woman is no less integral to the mitzvah to “be fruitful and multiply” than the man. Indeed, the fact that the man is commanded to procreate and not the woman indicates that, for the woman, giving birth to life and settling the earth is in complete harmony with her natural strivings and desires, so that no commandment is required.

This is the deeper meaning of the rule, “It is the manner of the man to conquer, but it

is not the manner of the woman to conquer.” Both man and woman are charged with the mission to develop the world as a home for God. But for the male, this is an act of conquest, something he compels himself to do in obedience to a divine command; whereas for the woman it is a most natural endeavor. So, too, in regard to the manner in which they go about achieving this task. Man, by nature a “conqueror,” does so by challenging and vanquishing the prevalent reality. In contrast, the woman transforms her environment by nurturing and encouraging its development from within. - THE REBBE

#### 1:29-30

##### “I have given to you every herb...”

Here the Torah places the human being on equal footing with the animals in regard to his nourishment. Adam and Eve were not permitted to kill a creature and eat its flesh; rather man and animal both are to feed on the vegetable produce of the earth.<sup>43</sup> It was only to

Noah and his descendants that meat was permitted, as it is written (9:3), “Every crawling thing which is alive shall be for you for food; as the green herb I have given all to you”—as I permitted the green herb to Adam.

- TALMUD; RASHI

Still, man is distinguished from the animals in that the human would be sustained by grains and fruits (“herb that seeds seed... tree-fruit that seeds seed”), while the animals are to feed on “all green herbage.” After man sinned, however, he was demoted to “eat the herb of the field” (3:18).<sup>44</sup> - NACHMANIDES

These verses are not simply to inform us of Adam’s diet, but of his place in creation. After being told that man is created in the divine image and that he will conquer the earth and “dominate... every animal that crawls upon the earth,” we now discover that he is nevertheless a creature who is sustained by the same ecology as any other organism. Nor does his elevated status entail the privilege to kill animals and eat them. This is to drive home the point that man’s dominion over his fellow creatures

<sup>42</sup> In addition to the repeated “them” in this verse, the words “be fruitful and multiply” (פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ in the Hebrew) are also in the second person plural. See also Notes to this verse, s.v. “Conquer it.”

<sup>43</sup> This is why many of commentaries conclude that the “skin coats” in which Adam and Eve are clothed in 3:21 were not coats made out of animal skins killed for that purpose, and offer a variety of explanations as to how these skins were obtained, or alternate meanings for the phrase “skin coats”; see Notes to 3:21.

<sup>44</sup> See, however, commentary to 3:19.