

פרשת
בראשית
Parashat Bereshit

Bereshit / Genesis 1:1-6:8, Isaiah 4:5-45:10
John 1:1-18

The Significance of the Duality of Man as a Combination of Neshamah (נשמה) and Nefesh (נפש)

Modern theologies (i.e. Dispensationalism) creates a division between the Church and Israel. According to this view, the Church consists of those trusting Christ, while Israel consists of the physical descendants of Jacob where Israel receives the benefit of the Abrahamic covenant because she is still God's chosen people. The doctrine of dispensationalism essentially creates two separate peoples. Scofield wrote in his commentary saying *"The Jew was promised an earthly inheritance, earthly wealth, earthly honor, earthly power. The Church is promised no such thing, but is pointed always to heaven as the place where she is to receive her rest and her reward."* Scofield was a dispensationalist and his theology produces a confused and torn understanding of the bible where the Lord God in heaven loves two separate peoples with a segregation of the promises given in the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul however emphasized that both the Jew and Gentile become one family as the children of God when he said, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's,*

then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (*Galatians 3:28-29*). These theologies significantly effect our understanding of the covenants of God as it is related to understanding the place of the Jew and the Gentile in the present day and future eschatological events.

In Parashat Bereshit, we are told of the power and majesty of God in the creation account. The Lord God is all powerful, He created the heavens and the earth *tohu u'vohu* (תהו וְבוהו, from nothing). He loves His creation and desires for every man and woman and child to seek Him and His ways. This was the Lord's objective from the beginning. This understanding may be found in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7-25*.

In this week's Torah portion we will be looking at *Bereshit / Genesis 2:15-25*.

Bereshit / Genesis 2:15-25

2:15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. 2:16 The Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 2:17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.' 2:18 Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.' 2:19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 2:20 The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. 2:21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 2:22 The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 2:23 The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.'

2:24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (NASB)

טו וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחֵהוּ בְּגֶן-עֵדֶן לְעַבְדָּהּ וַיִּשְׁמְרָהּ: טז וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל-הָאָדָם לְאֹמֶר מְכַל עֵץ-הַגֵּן אָכַל תֹּאכֵל: יז וַיִּמְעַץ הַדְּעַת טוֹב וַרְע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת: יח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא-טוֹב הֵיئֶת הָאָדָם לְבִדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה-לוֹ עֵצָר כְּנָגֵדוֹ: יט וַיִּצָּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן-הָאָדָמָה כָּל-חַיֵּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת כָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם מִיָּמִים וַיָּבֵא אֶל-הָאָדָם לְרֹאוֹת מָה-יִקְרָא-לוֹ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא-לוֹ הָאָדָם נָפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ: [שְׁלִישִׁי] כ וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל-הַבְּהֵמָה וְלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְל חַיֵּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְלָאָדָם לֹא-מָצָא עֵצָר כְּנָגֵדוֹ: כא וַיִּפֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | תְּרַדְמָה עַל-הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצְלָעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֹּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתָּנָה: כב וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | אֶת-הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר-לָקַח מִן-הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיִּבְרָא אֶל-הָאָדָם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפְעַם עָצָם מֵעֲצָמֵי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחָהּ-זֹאת: כד עַל-כֵּן יַעֲזֹב אִישׁ אֶת-אָבִיו וְאֶת-אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד: כה וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עֶרְוִמִים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְׂשׂוּ:

In Bereshit chapter 2, we read of the Lord God creating man. According to the Torah, *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7*, ז וַיִּצָּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם ז "... the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (NASB) The descriptions of the Lord God in chapter 1 and 2 of the book of Genesis, provide us with the awesome power of the creator God. In these verses (2:7), Moshe speaks of two opposing forces within the human soul, the the neshamah (נשמה, divine soul) as opposed to the nefesh (נפש, the physical soul connected to the body). It is also important to note the Torah does not use the word רוּחַ here meaning "wind," "breath," or "spirit." The Scriptures speak of the Lord God of Israel making

Adam as a combination of spirit and flesh. Judaism teaches that man possesses two souls, a “*divine*” soul called the neshamah (נשמה) and the “*animal or physical*” soul called the nefesh (נפש). Both the nefesh and the neshamah are mentioned in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7* (*Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath {neshamah, נשמה} of life; and man became a living being {nefesh, נפש}.*) The rabbis interpret the word neshamah (נשמה) in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7* is a reference to the divine soul by reason that the Lord God of Israel breathed heavily into man, imparting a part of Himself, which is the part that fulfills the statement of being created after His image. The word neshamah is used here to place emphasis upon the Lord putting more effort into the creation of man as opposed to the other creatures of this earth. This is the reference to the part of man that has the desire to draw near to the Lord and to seek His ways. Note how there is no distinction that is made between men, women, or children according to these Scriptures and there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile either. All of mankind, each individual has been given this duality of creation of spirit and flesh.

In the Apostolic Writings, the neshamah (נשמה) is referred to as the “*spirit*” of a man. According to the theology of Paul, this spirit within a man is dead until it has been made alive by salvation through faith in the Messiah, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God. King Solomon said in *Ecclesiastes 12:7* “*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it,*” so the idea is that the neshamah (the divine soul) is created and leaves its abode in heaven to dwell in the human body, whereby the death of the body, the spirit will return to God. This is one of the source texts for Judaism’s interpretation that at death our spirit will return to the Lord God in heaven. Our being, who we are, it is the combination of the neshamah and the nefesh that produce the personality of each individual on this earth. David said in his Psalm, א בְּרַכֵּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת-יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֻלָּתָּהּ, *A Psalm of David 104:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty, 104:2 Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak, Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain. (NASB)* Note how David speaks to his soul telling his soul to

bless the Lord using the word נַפְשִׁי as opposed to רוּחַ meaning “wind,” “breath,” or “spirit” or as opposed to using the word neshamah (נשמה, the divine soul). The Aramaic Targum states the same thing saying, א בריכי נפשי ית שמא דיהוה יהוה אלהי איתגדלתא לחדא שבחא ושבהורא א אלבישתא: ב דמיתעטרף נהורא היך סדינא דמתח שמיא היך יריעתא: *A Psalm of David 104:1 Bless, O my soul, the name of the Lord. O Lord my God, you are greatly exalted; you have put on praise and splendor. 104:2 Who wraps himself in light like a sheet, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain. (EMC)* David used the words נַפְשִׁי (בריכי בְּרִכִּי נַפְשִׁי) making reference to the non-spiritual aspect of his soul, calling out to his “animal or physical” soul to bless the Lord God of Israel. David calls to his physical soul to magnify the Lord God in heaven, and to recognize His majesty and splendor because He is the creator of all things. The calling of this aspect of the soul to the service of worship is very significant because it should be a daily aspect of our lives to give glory to the Lord in heaven, not only in our thoughts, but also in our deeds, in our physical bodies. Notice how this is connected to the mitzvot (commandments) and God’s Torah, and there is no distinction that is made between man, woman, or child.

The psalmist states that His (God’s) ways are above our ways as the Psalmist continues saying, ג הַמְקַרֶּה בַּמַּיִם עֲלֵיוֹתָיו הַשָּׁמַיִם עֲבִיבִים וְכַוְבוֹ הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל-פְּנֵי-רוּחַ: ד עֲשָׂה מְלָאכָיו רוּחוֹת מְשַׁרְתָּיו אֵשׁ לֵהֵט: ה יָסַד הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל-פְּנֵי-רוּחַ: ד עֲשָׂה מְלָאכָיו רוּחוֹת מְשַׁרְתָּיו אֵשׁ לֵהֵט: *104:3 He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters; He makes the clouds His chariot; He walks upon the wings of the wind; 104:4 He makes the winds His messengers, Flaming fire His ministers. 104:5 He established the earth upon its foundations, So that it will not totter forever and ever. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, ג דטליל במיא היך בינינא דכשורי במיא אכסדרוי דשוי על עננין קלילין היך אר- תיכיה דאזיל על כנפי נישרא: ד דעבד אזגדוי סרהובין היך רוחא שמשוי תקיפין היך אשא מצלהבא: ה די מיסד ארעא עלוי בסיסה דלא תזוע לעלמי: *104:3 Who covers his chambers with water like a building with beams; who placed his chariot, as it were, upon swift clouds; who goes on the wings of an eagle. 104:4 Who made his messengers as swift as wind; his servants, as strong as burning fire. 104:5 Who lays the foun-*

dation of the earth upon its base, so that it will not shake for ages upon ages.(EMC) David states in the best way that he can and in the way that he understands, the Lord is the creator. In addition, He speaks of the Lord making the winds His messengers who are as flaming fire. It is interesting how he uses the word רוּחַ (ruach) in reference to God's messengers. The Hebrew word ruach means "wind," "breath," or "spirit" and "truth" and is the manner in which Job used this word saying, "As long as I have life within me, the breath (ruach) of God in my nostrils" (Job 27:3). The word rûach (רוּחַ), the traditional Jewish interpretation is "wind," as "spirit," as it is related to God's messengers of fire. If we consider the NT (Apostolic Writings) connection, ruach may also be used as a reference to the neshamah, the divine soul. This is how Job appears to be speaking of the rûach (רוּחַ) in Job 27:3. David is speaking of the Lord setting on fire this aspect of man, his Neshamah, his divine soul, that part that has come from God, as His ministers. This is related to a distinctive change at the center of a persons life that is connected to one's relationship with God. A parallel thought may be found in the act of obedience to the command as it is related to sin, Teshuvah (Repentance), and the Mikvah (baptism). The Mikvah was a physical demonstration of a believers faith to turn his life over to the Lord, of his death to sin, and his returning to the way, the commands of God, and to walk in newness of life. This is the testimony of each believer, to be changed by Lord in a unique way and to live a life that has overcome sin by the power of God. These things appear to be related to the New Covenant that we have in the Messiah, as Yohanan HaMatbil (John the Baptist) said in *Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, and Luke 3:16.*

Matthew 3:11

3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (NASB)

Mark 1:8

1:8 "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (NASB)

Luke 3:16

3:16 John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (NASB)

John speaks of a time when the Messiah will come, in which he will baptize us with the Holy Spirit of God and with fire. Note the connection to the neshamah (נשמה) the divine soul, to our relationship with God, seeking Him and His will for our lives, and our relationships with others. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, this setting on fire comes by seeking first the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness (*Matthew 6:33*). Could this be the underlying principle in regard to how the Lord will be working in our lives, reviving and raising us from the dead by the renewing of the *neshamah*, נשמה, which then causes us to have the desire to live according to God’s Word? Could the power of God be held back because of these things being lacking in the modern Church theologies of today? (ie. Faith alone doctrines) Isaiah said in *Isaiah 4:4* *When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning (NASB)* Here he mentions the pride of Israel and a day coming when the Lord will bring the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning upon the people. What is the spirit of judgment and burning? Could this be a conviction of heart and soul concerning sin as it is related to the indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit?

Rambam on the *Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1 Part 1* has the following to say concerning these things.

Rambam on Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1 Part 1

“... Rather, there are those that say that the sun will approach them and burn them, and their proof to this is from that which is stated (Malachi 3:19), “behold [the sun of] the day is coming, burning like a furnace.” And there are some that say that a strange heating up will begin in their bodies and burn them, and their proof to this is from that which it states (Isaiah 33:11), “your spirit is

fire, it shall consume you.” And the revival of the dead is from the main fundamental principles of Moshe, our teacher - peace be upon him. And there is no religion and no attachment to the Jewish religion for the one who does not believe [in] this. But it is [only] for the righteous, and so [too] is [this found in] the language of Bereishit Rabbah, “The power of rain is for the righteous and for the evildoers, but the revival of the dead is only for the righteous.” And how should the evildoers be revived - as they are dead even in their lifetime? And so [too] did they say (Berakhot 18b), “Evildoers are called dead even in their lives, righteous people are called living even in their death.” And you should know that man, per force, must die and decompose and return to what he is composed of. The days of the Messiah, however, is the time when rulership will return to Israel and that they will go back to the land of Israel and that this king will be very great, and the seat of his rulership will be in Zion (Jerusalem)...”

Note how Rambam states the resurrection (revival) of the dead is a fundamental principle of Moshe our teacher. It is interesting how the Torah is understood as producing an expectation of resurrection. Have you ever thought about that before? Where in the Torah does Moshe teach resurrection? Moshe brought the Torah to Israel, the holy Word of God, which was to produce in the people a turning from sin. This turning from sin is equated to the resurrection (revival) of the dead at the mountain of Sinai (*See the rabbinic interpretations on Midrash Tehillim 62-72 for more on Sinai and the resurrection.*). The turning from sin is equated to the revival of the dead because of the renewing of the *neshamah*, נשמה, which causes us to have the desire to live according to God’s Word. Isaiah said the Lord’s Spirit is fire, and for the one whom the Lord dwells, the Holy Spirit will set his life on fire and with power. This fire is the excitation of the faith and life of someone to live for and bring glory to God by the way one lives his or her life. This is the significance of the duality of all man as a Combination of Neshamah (נשמה) and Nefesh (נפש), where the Lord has the capability

of doing these things for all who would draw near and believe in the Lord and in His Word.

The effect of disobedience by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is the legacy that was left to all mankind. It is this duality of man that is at war within the members of the body (*Romans 7:23*). The Covenant the Lord made with Adam and Even is found in *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26-30 and 2:16-17*. The details of this covenant include the following:

- Mankind (male and female) created in God’s image.
- Mankind’s dominion (rule) over all the Earth.
- The mitzvah to procreate (to reproduce and inhabit the entire Earth).
- Eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was forbidden (with death as the stated penalty).

As the narrative proceeds, Eve was tempted to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was not wrong for Adam and Eve to want to be “*god-like*,” in the sense to mirror God’s characteristics, which is a good and worthy goal. But having the desire to become a god and take His place is rebellion against the Lord God in heaven and sin. What had happened was Adam and Eve had entered into a family relationship with God through a Covenant, as God our Father and we are His children. Having family is very important, where the Lord Recognized that being alone is not good (*Bereshit / Genesis 2:18*). It was for this reason the Lord created a woman as a wife (אִשָּׁה) for Adam.

Bereshit / Genesis 2:22-25

2:22 The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 2:23 The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ 2:24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (NASB, כב ויבן יהוה אלהים | את-הַצֵּלַע אֲשֶׁר-

לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבָאָהָ אֶל־הָאָדָם: כִּג וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם
זֹאת הַפֶּעַם עָצָם מֵעַצְמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבְּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי
מֵאִישׁ לְקָחָהּ־זֹאת: כֹּד עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ
וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד: כה וַיְהִי שָׁנִיָּהֶם עָרוּמִים
(הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשְׂשׁוּ:

Adam said she is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. There was an intimacy that was established as Adam accepted and took her to be his wife. Note how the world seeks to pervert the definition of the family that God had designed from the beginning. A family was created, which is the reason the Scriptures say, *2:24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.* (NASB, כֹּד עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק, *NASB*) When the Lord brought all the animals before Adam so he could name them, he did not find a suitable helper (*2:19*). Consider how looking to the world produced no results for companionship. Notice how unhappiness and discontentment are found in homosexual relationships. Companionship requires an act of God as a man and woman. The Lord God created a family for intimacy, support, and help. The Lord does not want you to be a loner in relationship or in doctrine. Note how this is exactly what happened with the separation of the church from Israel! The result was new doctrines being developed as opposed to the rabbinic teachings of Yeshua, the disciples, and Paul, the church looks to a more worldly interpretation. The product of this approach is what we are seeing today in the wide spread acceptance of homosexuality, living in sin, and the de-emphasis on maasim tovim (good deeds) as opposed to faith. Could a parallel of looking to the world as opposed to tradition (the rabbis), be considered from *Bereshit / Genesis 2:22-24*, where a man leaves his family to be with his wife to produce a new family? Is this what the Church did leaving the mother and the father (Israel) by the interpretation of being married to Christ in the doctrine of dispensationalism?

It is important to be in a local community of believers, for support, help, and the study of God's Word. When Adam and Eve decided to eat of the tree, they were essentially violating the covenant agreement and choosing to step outside of the family God had established, which

resulted in their realization of being naked which decreased the level of intimacy they had previously enjoyed. The effect of “*leaving family*” is significant because it was coupled to the destruction of their relationship with God and with one another.

These things relate to the splitting away from family that God has established. (Israel) The natural conclusion is that interpretation is also an act of God and shouldn't be on an individual basis. (*i.e. dispensationalism and the church as a separate entity.*) Note how the Lord recognized the need for the unification of the people as a community and family based on Sforno's interpretation of *Bereshit / Genesis 2:24*.

Sforno on Bereshit / Genesis 2:24

Part 1

על כן, *seeing that on this first occasion G'd had aimed to make Adam's wife as much part of him as possible, so that he even used Adam's personal body as Chavah's basic skeleton,* יעזוב איש את אביו ואת אמו ודבק באשׁוֹתוֹ, *it is appropriate that a man leave the home of his parents in order to acquire a wife who is compatible with him, and who is a suitable mate for him to live with on a permanent basis. The Torah teaches here also that the expression דיבוק, “cleaving,” being in a state of true union, is not possible between two people who are not alike in their common purpose in life. Parents and children do not have the same tasks and challenges. Man and his wife do have to master the same challenges, hence the word “union” can be applied to their union, whereas the same word would be inappropriate for describing the relationship between father and son, or mother and son. By living together they will become of one mind on how to deal with their lives' challenges.*

Part 2

והיו לבשר אחד, *they are to work together in such close union as if there were in fact only one of them. (This had been the idea behind creating man as both male and female in the first place.)*

Note the significance of the Lord having created man and woman to be in unity in a miraculous way. They are to work together to solve life's challenges. This is the significance of the duality of all men as a Combination of Neshamah (נשמה) and Nefesh (נפש), where the Lord is showing us that His Torah is for all peoples (Isaiah 2). And consequentially, the covenant He has made in the Messiah Yeshua, is also for all peoples. The necessity of Yeshua being centric to our faith and to the covenant is found in the words of Isaiah who spoke of the righteous one the Lord has chosen,

Isaiah 42:6-7

42:6 "I am the Lord, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, 42:7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison. (NASB)

Notice how the prophecy speaks of the Lord calling the One he had chosen in righteousness. These scripture state there will be a covenant the Lord will make with the people (Israel) and as a light to the nations (Goyim) that is *"in"* this righteous servant. As a result, in order to remain in a covenant with God today, we must remain in the Messiah Yeshua. This is alluded to in the opening chapters of the creation account in *Bereshit / Genesis 1-2*, as the Lord created man as a combination of Neshamah (נשמה) and Nefesh (נפש), stating that he will work in the lives of both the Jew and Gentile through His Messiah, Yeshua.

