

Beraishiet 5776

BS"D Parashat Beraishiet 5776

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Beraishiet 1,1:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

In the beginning Elokim created the heavens and the earth.

Yirmiyahu 16,19:

וְהָיוּ אֲמִתּוֹת מִכָּל קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ וְאָמְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר יָרְדוּ אֵלֵינוּ מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאָמְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר יָרְדוּ אֵלֵינוּ מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאָמְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר יָרְדוּ אֵלֵינוּ מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם

...the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say, "Our ancestors bequeathed us false gods, worthless idols that bring no benefit".

Who or what is "Elokim"?

Who or what is "Elokim"? What is His nature? Is He loving, caring, or is He angry, zealous, spiteful, vengeful? Is he demanding, never forgiving our iniquities? Are human beings valuable and necessary in His eyes?

There is an ongoing battle between Islam and Christianity, each of whom claims over one billion adherents, regarding the nature of God. They do not believe in the same God, to be

sure; because their Gods differ in the extreme.

The Christian god is all love. Sin as much as you wish. And when you tire of the pleasures of murdering, stealing, raping and embezzling, confess to your local priest, who has been vested by the one man on earth who is infallible – the Pope, with the authority to forgive all your sins. God, the possessor of infinite love, looks aside at the sins of lowly man, especially those who come to church to beseech God's shepherds – the priests – for forgiveness. Did J. not suffer on the cross so that in the future all believing Christians may sin and lust as much as they wish, without compromising their guaranteed place in paradise?

And in the name of this god of love, millions of Jews have been murdered. In the spirit of what a devout Christian once said, "I don't believe that J. every lived, but I believe that the Jews killed him".

The god of Islam is radically different. He is enraged, impassioned, indignant, irate, fierce and above all hates Jews; the god of Islam is the ultimate anti-Semite. He created Jews from pigs and monkeys, as stated in the "holy" Koran.

However in the name of fairness, it should be stated that in addition to hating Jews, their god hates all people who are not Islamists. However he hates Jews the most.

But after all is said and done, the god of Islam does have a warm spot of love in his heart. He loves young women who strap on stylish dynamite belts and blow themselves up in public buses and restaurants. He loves Moslem men who plunge knives into the hearts of Jewish men and women and receive extra points for every resulting orphan. For this they have been promised the gift of 72 virgins in the world to come. He is proud of his brave soldiers who have become expert at beheading without a guillotine. A simple knife does the job as well.

Are these the gods that created this world? Would any normal human being wish to be born into a world dominated by a god who condones the worst crimes and then suffocates the perpetrator with kisses of love in turn for a little confession?

Who would want to live in a world created by a god who is impelled by hatred of those who he himself created, and condones the most barbaric acts capable by human beings? Wholesale indiscriminate murder, rape, torture, slavery; all these are taught by the Imams in the mosques -- the world over, as they quote verbatim from their unholy koran.

However, as different the gods of Christendom's Aisav and Islam's Yishmael are from each other, they agree on one point: The Jewish people will never return to the Holy Land between the ocean and the river. And if in some unspeakable way they will return, it will be our never ending task as gods to uproot them from the land even if it takes many human generations.

But the Jewish God, our God, makes demands of human beings: 613 mitzvot for the Jewish nation and 7 Noachide mitzvot (and more) for humanity at large. Demands of moral and just behavior between people. Respect for the life and property of others, with society guided by just laws.

One can appreciate the essential goodness of HaShem even from the Seven Noachide laws:

1- Monotheism – the Trinity according to most rabbis is a violation of this mitzva.

Prohibitions on...

2- Incest – stressing the sanctity of marriage and the prohibition on same sex relations.

3- Stealing – including dishonesty by banks and investment houses, unfair taxation, falsifying pollution data in cars, exorbitant profit taking in the drug market, bribes, and so much more.

4- Murder – outright, including the destruction of human beings in slow and subtle ways.

5- Cursing God – for interfering with our freedom by creating within human beings a conscience.

6- Dismembering an animal before it is dead, thereby stressing the respect for life in all its forms.

And

7- Obligation to pass moral laws to govern each respective society.

Chazal teach us that initially the Creator planned to relate to humanity with the quality of harsh justice (midat hadin). However, HaShem saw that humans would not live up to the high standards of harsh heavenly justice, so He mitigated the midat hadin by merging it with the midat harachamin (the quality of mercy).

The God of Beraishiet does not act with unbridled love nor with excruciatingly harsh sharia laws. He is our Father and our King, merging the demands of a monarch over his subjects with the compassion of a father to his children.

Fear God and Keep His Commandments

As in the words of Shlomo HaMelech at the end of Kohelet:

:ִּוּרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֵת כָּל הַצִּוְּוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֵת כָּל הַצִּוְּוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֵת כָּל הַצִּוְּוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לַעֲשׂוֹת

*Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter:
Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of
all mankind.*

After all the thoughts of man and their theologies will be considered, it will be the Jewish God who will be proven to be the only God. The proof is the survival of the Jewish nation after 2000 years of exile, and our return to the Land of Israel as stated by HaShem's holy prophets.

The world will unfortunately have to go through many more bitter days before the gentiles awaken to the fact that they have been duped, as the prophet Yirmiyahu says (16,19-21):

וְיָשָׁבוּ אֲנֹכִי וְיִרְמְיָהוּ בְּעֵינֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ
:וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ
:וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ (וְ)

וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ
:וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵינוּ

*19 – Lord, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in time of
distress,*

*to You the nations will come from the ends of the earth and
say,*

*“Our ancestors bequeathed us false gods, worthless idols that
bring no benefit*

20 – How does man make his own gods, who is not a god?”

*21 – Therefore I will teach them this time, I will teach them
my power and might. Then they will know that my name is the
Lord*

Shabbat Shalom,

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