



*"Praise Him sun and moon
praise Him all bright stars
for He commanded
and they were created."*

King David: Psalm 148

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SUGGESTED READINGS:

SEE THESE AND OTHER ARTICLES AT OUR SITE

Maimonides' 13 PRINCIPLES

THE BASIC FOUNDATIONS WHICH ALL JEWS MUST KNOW AS TRUE. WE URGE YOU TO READ THEM:
www.mesora.org/13principles.html

God's Existence Belief or Proof?

www.mesora.org/belieforproof.html

God's Land Without God?

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:
www.mesora.org/openletter/openletter2.html

The Jewish New Year

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

Unlike man-made celebrations of the secular New Year, accompanied by self indulgence, drunkenness, and the inescapable self realization that the partiers celebrate nothing other than the celebration, through the laws pertaining to the Jewish New Year, God continues to direct us to absolute truths in our never ending search for reality.

Our new year, Rosh Hashanna, Judaism focuses on a singular concept that God is the King, the Ruler of the universe. We make no personal requests. Rather, we praise God, His absolute omniscience and omnipotence through precisely formulated prayers. Our prayers accompanied by the Shofar blasts, emphasizes this one theme:

"And so too Hashem our God, instill your awe upon all your works, and Your dread upon all that You have created. Let all works revere You, and all creatures prostrate themselves before You. Let them all become a single society to do Your will wholeheartedly. For as we know Hashem our God, that the dominion is Yours, might is in Your hand, strength is in Your right hand, and Your name inspires awe over all that You have created."

Regarding this idea of God's complete rulership, Talmud Rosh Hashanna 16a records a Mishna stating, "on Rosh Hashanna, all those who enter the world pass before God (in judgment) like sheep". The Mishna quotes a source, Psalms 33:16 - "Who forms at once their (man's) hearts, Who understands all their doings."

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BIRTH OF STARS

(Photo above) Hubble Provides 'One-Two Punch' to See Birth of Stars in Galactic Wreckage
Two powerful cameras aboard NASA's Hubble Space Telescope teamed up to capture the final stages in the grand assembly of galaxies.

The photograph, taken by the Advanced Camera for Surveys (ACS) and the revived Near Infrared Camera and Multi-Object Spectrometer (NICMOS), shows a tumultuous collision between four galaxies located 1 billion light-years from Earth. The galactic car wreck is creating a torrent of new stars.

The tangled up galaxies, called IRAS 19297-0406, are crammed together in the center of the picture. IRAS 19297-0406 is part of a class of galaxies known as ultraluminous infrared galaxies (ULIRGs). ULIRGs are considered the progenitors of massive elliptical galaxies.

ULIRGs glow fiercely in infrared light, appearing 100 times brighter than our Milky Way Galaxy. The large amount of dust in these galaxies produces the brilliant infrared glow. The dust is generated by a firestorm of star birth triggered by the collisions.

IRAS 19297-0406 is producing about 200 new Sun-like stars every year - about 100 times more stars than our Milky Way creates. The hotbed of this star formation is the central region [the yellow objects]. This area is swamped in the dust created by the flurry of star formation.

The bright blue material surrounding the central region corresponds to the ultraviolet glow of new stars. The ultraviolet light is not obscured by dust. Astronomers believe that this area is creating fewer new stars and therefore not as much dust.

The colliding system [yellow and blue regions] has a diameter of about 30,000 light-years, or about half the size of the Milky Way. The tail [faint blue material at left] extends out for another 20,000 light-years.

Astronomers used both cameras to witness the flocks of new stars that are forming from the galactic wreckage. NICMOS penetrated the dusty veil that masks the intense star birth in the central region. ACS captured the visible starlight of the colliding system's blue outer region.

IRAS 19297-0406 may be similar to the so-called Hickson compact groups - clusters of at least four galaxies in a tight configuration that are isolated from other galaxies. The galaxies are so close together that they lose energy from the relentless pull of gravity. Eventually, they fall into each other and form one massive galaxy.

This color-composite image was made by combining photographs taken in near-infrared light with NICMOS and ultraviolet and visible light with ACS. The pictures were taken with these filters: the H-band and J-band on NICMOS; the V-band on the ACS wide-field camera; and the U-band on the ACS high-resolution camera. The images were taken on May 13 and 14.

Credits: NASA, the NICMOS Group (STScI, ESA), and the NICMOS Science Team (University of Arizona)

Torah and Superstition

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

What does the word Torah mean? Many interpretations have been given. Most people understand it to mean teachings or learning. Accordingly, we find in Leviticus 10:11, "ulehoros" and to teach, or more accurately to interpret and legislate. There is no doubt that the word Torah has the same root as "horah" teaching, legislating. But is that all it means? Sometimes we find the word in the singular form as Deuteronomy 1:5 "...Moses began to explain this Torah," or in ibid 4:44, "and this is the Torah Moses

Forgiveness - Selichah

RIVKA OLENICK

"...nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people." Leviticus 19:18. "If your brother has wronged you in your property, forget it at once even if he has not asked you to do so; what he took was not yours, and he did not take anything from you. Where injury has been done to your person or honour, be easily appeased as soon as your brother asks for forgiveness and desires to be reconciled. He who soon forgives is soon forgiven. If you are really good, if humility is one of your qualities, you will forget hurts and insults without pardon being asked of you; like the well known chasid, you will never lie down to sleep without being reconciled with the whole world, all of which God covers with the wings of His peace."

(Samson Raphael Hirsch from Horeb.)

In order that we can to "return to God" Who covers the whole world with the wings of His peace there must first be a genuine desire for selichah, forgiveness from those we have sinned against. Asking to be forgiven by God must be rooted in love and fear of God. We have a realization that we are really one nation, designated to be His holy nation, chosen by Him. In asking for God's forgiveness we are aware that we have lost our way, and that only through the process of tshuvah can we find our way back to the Master of the World.

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