

# JewishTimes

VOL. XII NO. 1 — OCTOBER 12, 2012

BERDYCHIV  
AND OTHER  
ORGS WHO  
**ROB**  
YOU BLIND

## LETTERS

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TALKING TREES?  
DO PSALMS HEAL?  
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## GOD'S NAMES

WHAT DO  
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## SABBATH MAIMONIDES

REJECTING SCIENTISTS' "CHANCE" THEORY

# CREATION

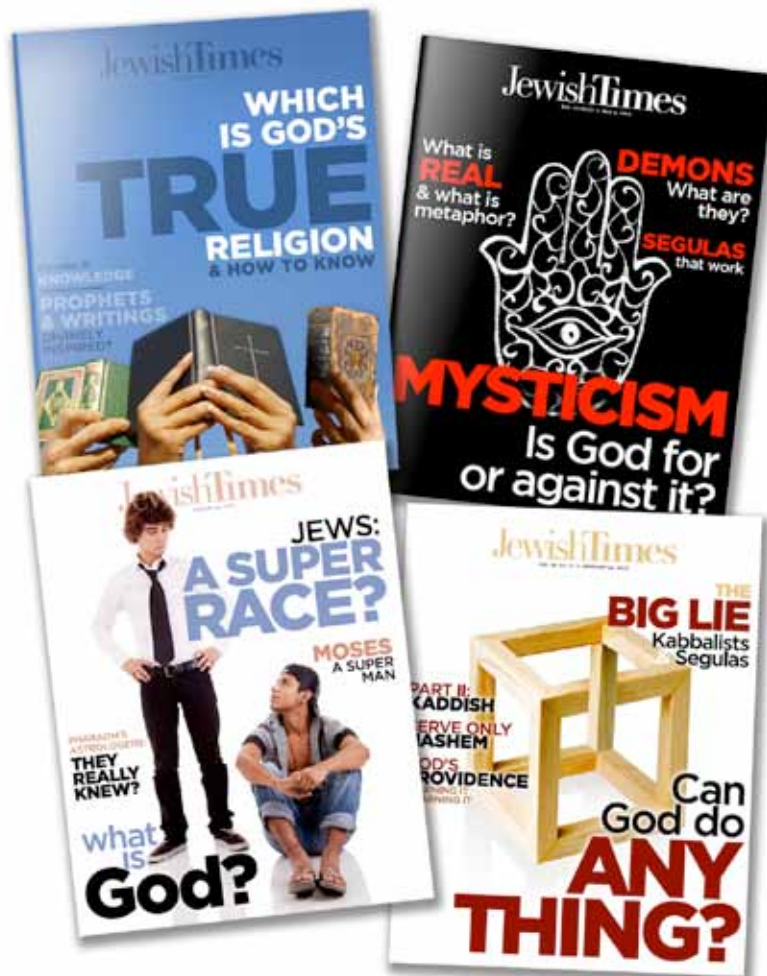
GOD & THE MULTIVERSE  
THE CONCLUSION

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## LETTERS

### The Role of Faith in Judaism

**CK:** Let your faith lead the way!

**Rabbi:** Carl, once you do that, one can veer far from the Torah.

**CK:** My faith is my guiding light for the path I must follow. Without faith, I'm lost and lose direction to where I should be going.

**Rabbi:** Carl, I appreciate the power of faith. However, am I correct to say you would not rely on faith in an employer's promise to pay you after 365 days of work? Would you not require a contract, and much sooner compensation? Meaning, fact and proof will offer you a more solid basis?

**CK:** My Faith guides me on how I treat others, help others, and live my life. We are all empowered with the choice of "Free Will" making a decision to sign a contract is a choice

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# Is Torah mystical... or rational, just like God's natural laws?

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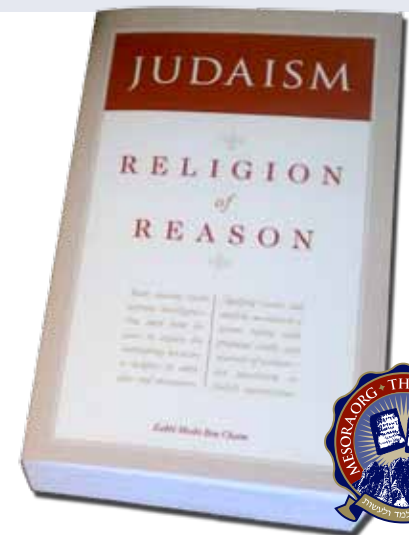
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**RABBI STEVEN WEIL** — *Executive Vice President, The Orthodox Union*

Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim asks critical, crucial and defining questions that any thinking Jew needs to ask. His method enables the reader to explore and engage our theology in a meaningful and serious way. Following the Rishonim, he forces us to define, weigh and analyze each phrase of chazal, showing there is no contradiction between an investigation of Science and an investigation of Judaism. Rabbi Ben-Chaim has written a work that addresses the thinking person of all faiths. This work speaks to the scholar and lay person alike and will help you gain insight into how the great Rishonim define how we view the world. Rabbi Ben-Chaim's website, Mesora.org is a very serious tool and resource for thinking human beings who want to engage and explore the Almighty, the Almighty's universe and do so within the realm of wisdom, rationality and intellectual honesty.



## RELIGION of REASON

by JewishTimes' publisher  
Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim



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and having the wisdom to make the right choice is a blessing.

**Rabbi:** If God told you your business decisions were wrong, how would you respond? Is His absolute knowledge less than your faith? The point is, if we can prove God gave the Bible, the Torah, it is wiser to follow what He says, than what we feel...than faith.

God didn't deceive man. He gave us 5 senses, as He wishes we rely on them, and not imaginary faith or beliefs. Maimonides and all intelligent thinkers opposed all forms of mysticism, precisely because these are unproven, what the word "mystic" means. G...See More

**CK:** i would listen to what God has to say, as any wise man would do. God's plan for our salvation is the bible.

**Becky:** ....follow what the word of G-d directs...all of our answers are held in the Torah. When we follow only what we feel, we can easily get misdirected...especially in a culture where there are so many gray areas in the matter of truth, right and wrong. But do not discount your heart - often this is G-d speaking to you. Pay attention to both. You must work hard to not confuse your own desires with the right thing to do.

**Rabbi:** Becky, God does not speak through one's heart, or emotions. This is a popular belief, but God actually admonishes man for following his heart, if it conflicts with Torah mandates (Deut. 29:18).

**CK:** Exactly! Having communication through prayer with God on a daily basis helps me feel in my heart what direction he wants me to go. Everyone has their own journey of ups & downs, but I have found more peace in my heart by listening to what God puts there.

**Rabbi:** Well, in the Bible, the Torah, God endorses many cases of men and women who did NOT rely on faith, but planned a course of action using their human capabilities; physically, psychologically,

militarily, etc. Of course they prayed, but they did not rely on their merits, the humble people they were. They did not know for sure that God would intervene at that moment. They possessed complete faith God could save. If you follow God, you must follow His instruction which is very reasonable, that as the Prophets like Jacob, they did not rely on faith alone.

What is faith? It is that if we live correctly, in line with Torah, God can save us. Even further, if we are without sin 100%, God WILL save us, as King David teaches through prophecy.

Additionally, our faith must be based on knowledge. That is, we have faith that by living in accord with Torah, we become worthy. So first, we must study Torah to know what it is that is true, then we live these truths (i.e., Torah ideals and perform all mitzvahs) and then we rightfully have faith, once we have also planned and acted using all our physical means and resources. as Jacob was hunted by his evil twin Esav, he prayed, planned a military tactic, and also a bribe. But he did not rely on faith alone, nor did he rely on any mystical belief. ■



## Is Genesis Metaphor?

**Rabbi:** It's vital to recognize that numerous Prophets, Sages and Rabbis, dwarfing us in wisdom and with collective centuries of Prophecies, and Torah and Talmudic analysis...all accepted the Torah, Prophets and Writings as literal. Before we reach their level, and as mere individuals lacking their knowledge and skills, we owe it to honesty and ourselves to explain THEIR literal view. Once we fully grasp that, we can decide if we wish to argue on all of them and suggest Torah verses are metaphor. ■



## Can Man Revive?

**Dana:** Did the ammoraim literally revive the dead? How did you learn these sugyot and what do the commentators say (sources!)?

**Rabbi:** Even Prophets didn't revive...it was God. See the Rishonim on Eliyahu and Elisha. For if one believes man revives, he thereby diminishes God as the "Sole Creator of life."

Judaism's Fundamentals are not taught. Had they been part of Yeshiva curriculum as they should be, all of us would have these answers.

**Dana:** But did the ammoraim have power to invoke god to revive the dead?

**Rabbi:** No one can invoke God. He cannot be compelled or affected by His creations. ■

*(continued on next page)*



## Trees "Disobey" God?

**Reader:** The Midrash says that originally trees were to have the same taste as the fruit, as the Chumash states "eitz pri." However, the trees deviated from G-d's original intent and the tree bark did not have the taste of the fruit, "eitz oseh pri". How is one to understand this midrash? Clearly, trees are not endowed with intelligence nor with the capacity to 'decide' to act in one particular way. The fact that fruit trees are created in a way that the bark does not taste like the fruit, must be the will of G-d. How then is one to understand this Midrash?

**Rabbi:** Trees have no consciousness. The Rabbis wrote this Medrash to teach that pursuit of perfection in the physical is impossible. God created the physical in a manner that metal rusts, things age and wear out, we get full from eating, too much sex becomes painful, and people age. The purpose? That we become frustrated with our initial, instinctual plan to satisfy temporal physical desires, and redirect our energies to timeless Torah – where man enjoys true life with no frustration. Dissatisfaction with the physical intends to redirect us towards the world of wisdom.

This midrash doesn't teach that God is incapable of creating tree bark with fruit taste. It teaches that the physical world was not created to fully satisfy man's instincts, had tree bark too been delicious. The point of the bark not "obeying" God, means to say that the physical world cannot fully cater to man, if man is to attain God's true plan that we follow wisdom. Frustration in the physical pursuits help us attain this prized goal. ■

## Do Psalms Heal?

**Reader:** Tehillim is viewed as a solution for every problem; i.e., each Psalm addresses some problem in life. Is this true? Who formulated it and should we follow this practice of reading it to solve our problems?

**Rabbi:** King David wrote Psalms. However, even when his own infant was about to die, he did not recite Psalms as a cure. He simply prayed and fasted. He sought God, and worked on self improvement through fasting. For there are no other forces in the world that could help aside from God and man.

The Talmud teaches that one who recites Torah for healing, violates idolatrous practices:

**"The prohibition against employing charms (Sefer Chinuch, Mitzva 512)**

*[That] We were restricted not to make incantations about any matter. In substance, this refers to a man who will say words, then tell people that those words helped or caused harm in any particular matter. About this it is stated, "There shall not be found among you...a charmer (Deuteronomy 18:10-11)." In the language of the Midrash Sifre: It is all the same thing, whether a person casts a charm on a snake or casts a charm on a scorpion — in other words, he says words over them so that they won't bite him, according to his opinion. So too if one says words over a wound in order to be relieved of the pain (i.e. recites a pasuk to cure a wound).*

*Now perhaps, my son, you might pose a question to me from what we read in the Talmud Shevuos 15b: The Psalm against evil occurrences is with lutes and lyres (Psalms 91), and then he says Psalm 3. In other words, the recital of these Psalms is of use to provide protection from harm. And it says in tractate Brachos 3a: R. Joshua b. Levi would say these verses and go to bed.*

*However, this matter is not similar (perish the thought) to the business of*

*a charmer that we mentioned. Long ago, the Sages of blessed memory said in this regard (Shevuos 15b): It is forbidden to heal oneself with words of Torah. Yet they mentioned to say these Psalms, since they contain words that inspire the soul that knows them, to shelter in the Eternal Lord, place all his trust in Him, establish a reverent fear of Him firmly in his heart, and rely on His kindness and goodness. As a result of his awareness about this, he will be protected, without any doubt from every harm. This is what was answered in the Talmud in this regard. For it was asked there, but how could R. Joshua do this? Here R. Joshua said it was forbidden to heal oneself with words of Torah! And the reply was given: To secure protection, it is a different matter. In other words, the Torah did not forbid a man to say words of Torah so as to arouse his soul in a good direction, so that this merit should shield him to protect him."*

Maimonides also addresses this topic:

*"One who whispers over a wound, or recites a Torah verse, and also one who reads for an infant so it should not be worried, and on who places a Sefer Torah or Tefillin on a minor so they might sleep, it is insufficient for them that they are considered enchanters (Nachashim) and diviners (Chovrim), but they are in the category of deniers of the Torah -- Kofrim -- rendering Torah as a bodily remedy, when the Torah is truly only a remedy for the soul."*

A wise Rabbi once referred to Psalms as the most proper attitude man can have towards God during various phases of his life. Psalms teaches truths. By living in accord with truth, our merits may attract God's general protection. But if already stricken with mishap or illness, we must not recite Psalms or any Torah verse, assuming it possesses some healing property for that specific problem. ■

# Hashem's Names and Their Meanings

Rabbi Bernie Fox

IN THE BEGINNING ELOKIM CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. (SEFER BERESHEIT 1:1)

*These are the produce of the heavens and the earth when they were created – on the day that Hashem Elokim created the earth and heavens. (Sefer Beresheit 2:4)*

## 1. The introduction of the name Hashem-Elokim

Parshat Beresheit describes the creation of the universe and the earliest development of humankind. The parasha begins with the initial moment of creation – creation ex nihilo. It describes humanity's first failing or sin and its consequences. It relates the tragic rivalry between humankind's first siblings, and the first instance of repentance. The parasha lists humankind's earliest pioneers. The narrative ends with a set of passages that outline the circumstances that led to the Deluge – the Mabul.

Our Sages note that in the initial section of the parasha – the description of the universe's first seven days – G-d is referred to as Elokim. In this section, the Tetragrammaton – the four-letter name of G-d to which Hashem refers – is not used. Only at the completion of this section is G-d referred to as Hashem-Elokim.

Our Sages provide an enigmatic explanation for the introduction of the reference Hashem-Elokim only after

the initial creation narrative. They remark that G-d's full name is only used after the emergence of the full universe.

*And in His goodness He renews each day, continually, the process of creation. (Morning blessings accompanying Shema)*

## 2. The meaning and message of Elokim

Many interpretations are provided for these comments. One of the most interesting is provided by Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik Zt"l. Rav Soloveitchik explains that according to the Torah, G-d is not only the creator of the universe. He is also its sustainer. As Maimonides explains in the opening chapter of his Code – Mishne Torah – the created universe is not endowed with self-sustaining existence. Its existence must be sustained and renewed every moment. This is the meaning of the above phrase. At first glance the phrase seems redundant. We praise Hashem as the G-d who renews creation each day, continually. Why is it necessary to acknowledge that this renewal is daily and continual? According to Rav Soloveitchik, the intent of the phrasing is to communicate that renewal takes place at every moment. Creation is not renewed merely at regular periods; it is renewed each and every moment of every day.

Rav Soloveitchik explains that the name Elokim and the Tetragrammaton both refer to Hashem but have very different meanings. The term Elokim refers to power or authority. This term is used to refer to Hashem but also used in the Torah to refer to angels and even to judicial authorities. The use of the term in reference to Hashem is appropriate as He is the ultimate power and authority. He is omnipotent. Creation is the most profound demonstration of G-d acting as Elokim. He conceives and fashions the universe. His omnipotence forms the galaxies and their stars. He fashions all creatures and endows them with life. He endows His creations with the capacity to thrive. The mightiest powers of the universe are merely expressions of the creative vision and will of Elokim.

## 3. The meaning of the Tetragrammaton

According to many commentators, the Tetragrammaton communicates the unique nature of Hashem's existence. His existence is not sustained by a cause external to Him. He is the cause of His own existence. Therefore, He is eternal. He has no beginning; His existence cannot end. The existence of all else in the universe is maintained through His will. He is self-sustaining and self-sufficient.

This understanding has profound implications in regard to one's understanding of the universe. The universe's existence requires continual renewal. It is only sustainable because of the existence of a sustaining cause or force that acts upon the very substance of the universe at every moment. This cause or force is Hashem.

Rav Soloveitchik explains that the Tetragrammaton – Hashem – was combined with Elokim only upon the completion of creation. With the universe's creation G-d was no longer just Elokim – the omnipotent creator. He now emerged as the self-sustaining existence that acts upon and sustains the created universe.

*(continued on next page)*



*And Moshe said to Elokim: Behold, I will come to Bnai Yisrael and I will say to them, "The G-d of your fathers sent me to you." And they will say to me, "What is his name?" What shall I say to them? (Sefer Shemot 3:13)*

#### **4. Moshe asks Hashem His name**

Rav Soloveitchik's comments explain another difficult section of the Torah. In Sefer Shemot the Torah describes Moshe's initial encounter with Hashem. Hashem reveals to Moshe that He will redeem Bnai Yisrael from the terrible oppression of Egypt. He will form a nation from these liberated slaves. This nation will conquer the mighty nation of Canaan and possess their land. Hashem assigns Moshe the tasks of securing Bnai Yisrael's freedom, preparing the people for their destiny, and leading the nation into the Land of Canaan. Moshe protests. His initial protests are easily understood. He questions his own qualifications for this assignment. He presses Hashem to explain more clearly how he will execute his assigned duties. However, these initial protests are followed by a very strange question. Moshe predicts that the people will ask Moshe to provide the name of the deity to whom he has spoken and who has made these remarkable promises. Moshe asks, "How shall I respond?" Hashem replies that Moshe should reveal to the nation a version of the name represented by the Tetragrammaton. In other words, Hashem tells Moshe to provide the nation with a lesson on the unique nature of His existence.

This entire twist in the dialogue is unfathomable. Certainly, the people can be expected to respond to Moshe's tidings with skepticism and even bewilderment. They can be expected to require proof of his agency – that he truly speaks for Hashem. They can be expected to want more information regarding the plan for their redemption. However, why would they care to know the name of the deity that Moshe professed to represent? Even if some reason can be

imagined for their inquiry, why did Hashem instruct Moshe to respond with a lesson on the metaphysics of existence?

In order to understand the question posed by Bnai Yisrael to Moshe, it is necessary to project oneself into their state of mind. Moshe was to address a group of oppressed slaves. These people were the chattel – the property – of the most powerful king of the era. They were weak, demoralized, and forlorn. Moshe was to tell them that they would cast off their yokes; they would triumph over their masters. They would travel to the Land of Canaan – a land of mythical wealth, fertility, and beauty. They would conquer the mighty nations inhabiting the land and dispossess them. This was a vision completely in discordance with the people's conception of reality. Moshe was to describe a vision that these people could only regard as a wild fantasy. Moshe was to respond that he was a messenger of G-d and G-d – not Moshe – would be their redeemer.

They would demand this deity's name. There are two types of names. Some names are merely appellations. They are an arbitrary means of identifying objects or people. Our own given names are of this type. Other names are intended to define the nature of that to which they refer. Names of chemical compounds are examples of this second type of name. In asking for the name of Moshe's deity, the people were not asking for an appellation. They asked Moshe to define this G-d – a G-d possessing the power to redeem them and lead them in the conquest of the Promised Land. Hashem instructed Moshe to respond with the equivalent of the Tetragrammaton.

#### **5. The significance of the name Moshe was to reveal**

In his description of the universe's dependence upon Hashem, Maimonides utilizes a strange phrase. He asserts that the universe derives its ongoing existence from the truth – the *emet* – of Hashem's existence. What does Maimonides mean by

this phrase? Referring to something as true is to assert that it is reality. It is true that the sun rises. A sleeper's dreams are not true; they are fantasies not reality. Maimonide's description of Hashem as *emet* is intended to communicate that His existence is more fundamentally real or absolute than any other element of reality. All else is real because He wishes it so. He is absolute reality. All else is derived from Him.

The Tetragrammaton is a description of Hashem's unique existence. Therefore, it also communicates that He is the ultimate reality. The material world is only an apparent reality. It exists as it exists only by virtue of Hashem's will. The response that Hashem instructed Moshe to deliver was an expression of sensitivity and compassion. It also communicated Hashem's irresistible power – His omnipotence.

The answer expressed compassion. Hashem told Moshe to explain that their suffering and despondency is the result of their acceptance of their condition as an absolute, unalterable reality. Their world is one of immeasurable suffering and relentless oppression. They can imagine no alternative reality. Hashem told Moshe to explain that their experience is not the true absolute reality. Their universe – every particle – is continually sustained by Hashem. Hashem is the only true and ultimate reality. His will can change their lives in a moment. His promise of redemption is more real than the lives and world that are familiar to them.

The answer expressed Hashem's omnipotence. All existence is derived from Hashem. Paroh, his taskmasters, and his armies, exist by the grace of Hashem. The mighty rulers of Canaan and their nations of warriors derive their existence from Hashem. Consequently, they cannot resist His will. Their existence and their destruction are merely expressions of the will of the omnipotent Hashem. ■



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# GOD VS THE **PART 26** Multiverse

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RABBI E. FEDER, RABBI E. ZIMMER

We would like to conclude the proof with a slightly humorous story which helps explain one of the most disturbing things about "multiverse science." Besides the fact that multiverse theory itself is intrinsically untestable, it also renders the correct alternative explanation for the fine tuning of the universe, the action of an Intelligent Agent, impossible to prove. Any proof for God, becomes a proof for the multiverse. (It's cheating.)

To illustrate this point, consider the following fictitious story. At the international physics conference Multiverse 2020, an amazing event takes place. An immense voice, apparently coming from the heavens (or some other universe in the multiverse), declares the following:

*"I am the God of the Universe. I designed the laws of nature, carefully chose exact values for the constants, and precisely arranged the initial conditions of the universe in order to bring about the structured, beautiful universe that you are fortunate to live in. In specific, I made the fine structure constant equal to 0.08542455 because if it were any larger, then... and if it were any smaller, then... Similarly, I set the cosmological constant... (continues thus for all known constants)."*

*I only created one universe. There is no multiverse. All multiverse theories are false unfounded speculations which were posited to avoid the manifest indications of My Existence. As I will not appear to every generation of physicists, make sure to tell your descendants this important message and prevent them from wasting their time and energy pursuing a nonexistent multiverse."*

At first, the physicists are awed, impressed, and stunned. After a few minutes, one multiverse theorist begins to stir. He starts scribbling some calculations. Suddenly, he leaps to his feet and exclaims:

*"How did that happen? That was one highly improbable random fluctuation! In fact, I estimate that the probability of*

*(continued on next page)*



*such a sound wave occurring by chance alone is about 1 part in 10500. Since we all know and have agreed that God cannot possibly exist, how can we explain the occurrence of such an unlikely event?*

*The necessary conclusion is that this is yet another confirmation of the existence of the multiverse. There has to be at least one universe (actually an infinite number of universes) in the great big infinite set of universes in the multiverse, in which the constants are fine tuned, the initial conditions are properly set, and the laws of nature are perfectly constructed, for the emergence of an ordered structured universe AND for that immense voice to be produced by chance.*

*By the weak anthropic principle, it is obvious that the intelligent observers who hear this voice and wonder what caused it, will be in this improbable universe. It is no evidence for the existence of God, as then we are left with the question of what caused Him? How would it help to posit God anyway, as we wouldn't know anything about Him?*

*Rather, it is the ultimate pillar of support for our well-grounded theory that we are living in just one universe out of infinitely many universes. There are probably other universes where similar voices appeared at biology conferences, or at a Rolling Stones concert, or in the desert on Mount Sinai. None of this should be a surprise, given the infinite number of universes that truly exist.*

*Wait a minute...In fact, multiverse theory predicts that there are an infinite number of multiverses that have these apparent revelations! Finally, we have empirical confirmation for predictions of our theory. A mass revelation in favor of the multiverse! It is something impossible to be faked. We could never have dreamed of better evidence. The ultimate pillar of support! We must diligently pass on this empirical confirmation of multiverse theory to all future generations, as we will probably never have any other observational evidence to support the multiverse."*

A multiverse theorist might claim that we are attacking a straw man; fine tuned constants are a necessary precondition for intelligent observers, but mass revela-

tions are not. We will quickly review their argument from the weak anthropic principle (post 5) to explain how they would try to distinguish between the two cases.

In order for us as intelligent observers to ask about the constants, the constants must already be fine tuned in our universe. Since that is the case, of course we happen to be in a universe in which they are fine tuned, as there aren't any intelligent observers in the infinity of other universes to ask the question. Someone had to "win the lottery" and we happen to have "the lucky ticket".

In fact, their argument goes further than just explaining how the constants seem so fine tuned. Since an Intelligent Designer cannot possibly exist, the only possible explanation for us having these special values is that we are part of an infinite multiverse. This then becomes one of the three pillars of support that allegedly prove that the multiverse really exists.

However, a multiverse theorist will argue, it is certainly possible to have a universe with intelligent observers, but without a mass revelation. Thus, if they were to actually witness such a revelation, they claim that they would accept the existence of an Intelligent Designer. They therefore state that the multiverse is falsifiable. (See the Weinberg video from post 20.)

Although we agree with this distinction between the constants and a mass revelation, we think that it is irrelevant in terms of the falsifiability of multiverse theory. According to multiverse theory, there are infinitely many universes of every type: some with fine tuned constants, some with constants that are not fine tuned; some with fine tuned constants and revelations, some with fine tuned constants and no revelations.

In a minority of fine tuned multiverses in the infinite multiverse, there are some universes with apparent revelations that occur through random fluctuations. Despite this, we would not predict observing such a revelation in advance. Since most universes do not have revelations, we would assume that we are in the most common universe that is consistent with all our prior observations.

However, once we observe a revelation, it becomes clear that we are in one of the

"lucky" universes which do have apparent revelations. Someone has to be in them, just like someone has to win the lottery and someone has to have fine tuned constants. In fact, since an Intelligent Designer cannot possibly exist, the only possible explanation for this apparent revelation is that we exist as part of an infinite multiverse.

The reasoning in the two cases is nearly identical. The fact that the existence of an intelligent observer is not contingent upon a revelation is irrelevant to the discussion. An honest multiverse theorist has faith that there are an infinite number of fine tuned multiverses with intelligent observers who do witness revelations. Thus, a witness of such a revelation should conclude that he is in the subset of multiverses that is still consistent with all his prior observations (that now include an apparent revelation).

The concept of this fictitious story presents a serious problem for a multiverse theorist. If he would be moved by such a revelation and accept an Intelligent Designer, he would be contradicting the very line of reasoning which led him to believe that the incredible fine tuning found in our universe is actually a pillar of support for the multiverse.

If on the other hand, he would deny God and actually respond in a similar manner as is parodied above, he is guilty of assuming his conclusion. He may as well say that God does not exist because he has faith that God does not exist. There is absolutely nothing that could ever convince him otherwise. The greater the miracle, the greater the pillar of support for the multiverse. This is an excellent example of the fallacy we called multiverse of the gaps.

There is no logical justification for assuming a priori that the ultimate cause of the universe is unintelligent randomness as opposed to an Intelligent Agent. Rather, the question is logically one of an a posteriori nature; it demands observation of the universe in order to be determined. It is hard not to draw the conclusion from some of the statements multiverse scientists make that they have already made up their minds about God, irrespective of the actual evidence. They

*(continued on next page)*

have decided as a group that God does not exist, and they have shut down their minds to honest inquiry.

It behooves you to use your own mind, and not rely on expert physicists and cosmologists to teach you philosophical truths, especially when you know how much emotional baggage is tied up with the idea of God. You need to investigate the Ultimate Cause of the universe, so that you can decide for yourself what is true.



## Conclusion

Since this is the final post of the proof, we are going to quickly summarize the first two stages of the proof and present a more elaborate summary of the third stage.

In Stage One, we established that the constants of nature and the initial conditions of the big bang were fine tuned for the purpose of producing an ordered universe, with a hierarchy of complex structures on all orders of magnitude. This is based upon the fact (that is accepted by almost every physicist and cosmologist) that if the constants or initial conditions were significantly different from their known values, our entire universe would be an unstructured, chaotic soup of elementary particles instead of the interesting complex universe that we exist in.

In Post 17, we showed that although the fine tuning naturally points to an Intelligent Designer, there are three, and only three, possible alternative explanations for this fact. Throughout Stage One we explained why almost all scientists reject two of the alternatives: the Master

Mathematical Equation, and the possibility that the constants and initial conditions are themselves Necessary Existences. The remaining alternative explanation for the fine tuning was random chance with infinite tries (the multiverse).

In Stage Two, we exposed major problems with the multiverse, and undermined the 'supports' of multiverse theory. Even though multiverse theory is embraced by most scientists (rather than an Intelligent Designer), it is a fundamentally flawed theory that upon deeper investigation, fails as an explanation. We summarized most of these difficulties and failed supports in Post 17.

It remained for us to show how it was possible to formulate the explanation of an Intelligent Designer, in a way that did not suffer from the critical flaws that scientists lodge against God.

We want to stress again that we are not simply accepting an Intelligent Designer as the explanation for the fine tuning because it is the only viable possibility remaining. Rather, in addition to being the only possible explanation left, the fine tuning in Stage One directly points to Intelligence as its natural explanation.

We began Stage Three by presenting (in Post 18) the God of Abraham, which we formulated as One Simple Necessary Existence. We showed how this ancient concept of God is free from the many questions that atheistic scientists raise against God, and is the proper explanation for the fine tuning.

Specifically, in Post 19 ([tinyurl.com/8t9s4of](http://tinyurl.com/8t9s4of)) we answered:

- 1) Who caused God?
- 2) If God has no cause, then why does He even exist?

In Post 20 ([tinyurl.com/8przshq](http://tinyurl.com/8przshq)) we answered:

- 3) Who designed the complex intelligent designer?
- 4) Why is God this way rather than some other way?
- 5) How do you know there aren't two or more Gods?

In Post 21 ([tinyurl.com/97exchq](http://tinyurl.com/97exchq)) we answered:

6) What does the word 'God' even mean? It merely signifies an empty mysterious Being, which does not explain how order, complexity, and fine tuning come from this Being!

7) How could the God of Abraham (One Simple Necessary Existence) possibly be the Intelligent Designer of the universe? Doesn't saying that God is Intelligent, necessarily imply complexity in His Absolutely Simple Essence?

In Post 22 ([tinyurl.com/9lq8r4m](http://tinyurl.com/9lq8r4m)) we explained how the God of Abraham is an intellectually satisfying idea, even though it does not cater to a person's primitive desires for gods that he can identify with. However, for an emotionally mature person, the God of Abraham is an emotionally satisfying idea.

The main idea throughout Stage Three was to differentiate between God's Essence and His actions. The separation between the Absolutely Simple Existence and the universe He created, is the critical philosophical concept from which everything else follows.

God's Essence is Absolutely Simple, and therefore, intrinsically does not lend itself to being understood in terms of anything simpler. The idea of a fundamental principle is something integral to modern science, as well as any system that follows from first principles. By definition, something fundamental can not be understood in terms of something simpler. We illustrated this key point with analogies from the fundamental particles and the fundamental interactions of modern physics (in Post 18 and 21). The only possible knowledge about the Essence of One Absolutely Simple Necessary Existence is negative knowledge. This means that we can know that He is not two; His Essence has no complexity; there is no other cause for His Existence; He Exists in Reality, and is not a figment of the imagination. However, we can have positive knowledge about God's complex actions. We developed this idea in the second part of Stage Three. We can study the laws of nature and the universe that results from those laws, and see God's infinite intelligence manifest throughout His creations. We can see the infinite power of the God of the Universe, when we realize that He created everything from absolute nothing.

*(continued on next page)*

We observe that the King of the Universe's actions result in order and stability, and we therefore say He acts harmoniously and justly. As humans are also a small part of the design, this recognition obligates us to act in line with our design and purpose. This does not mean that the laws of nature exists solely for the purpose of making human beings. On the contrary, the true anthropic principle that a person should believe is that a human being is just a small part of the vast cosmic design for the universe as a whole. Nevertheless, we are a part of the whole, and as such, we should act accordingly.

Throughout the proof, we have emphasized that we as human beings have the freedom to ascertain what we believe to be true and real. This can not be denied without skeptically denying the truth-discerning ability of the mind itself. We have the internal perception that we are free to choose to live according to the dictates of our minds, and we are also free to reject our minds and live according to our emotions and desires. This proof, as well as any other proof of anything, rests upon this assumption.

One final point. We are not missionaries, and we have no desire to intellectually or emotionally bully anyone into believing something they do not truly accept. The question of God vs the multiverse, is something that you can not rely upon authorities to decide for you. You can only rely on your own mind and choose freely for yourself. We hope that this proof has helped to give you the knowledge that is a prerequisite for an informed free choice. ■

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you to Rabbis E. Zimmer and E. Feder for your determination and meticulous and diligent presentation, educating us all with your insights into God, creation through your astute analysis of the Multiverse theory and its many flaws. We urge all readers to refer to the entire series here: [www.Blogoshiur.com](http://www.Blogoshiur.com) ([tinyurl.com/975zdt4](http://tinyurl.com/975zdt4))

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## BEREISHIS

# What's in a Name?

RABBI DR. DARRELL GINSBERG

An enigmatic figure in the Torah, Noah is chosen by God to be the survivor, along with his family, of the Flood that would soon destroy the rest of mankind. Of course, we find out about this in next week's parsha, Parshas Noach. While he is described as a tzadik, we never really come across any unique features concerning Noah until he is commanded to build the ark. However, in Parshas Bereishis, we get a glimpse into the distinctive personality of this great man.

Our first introduction to Noah, the focus in next week's parsha, takes place at the end of Parshas Bereishis (5:28-29):

“And Lamech lived a hundred and eighty two years, and he begot a son. And he named him Noah, saying, ‘This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands from the ground, which the Lord has cursed’.”

How do we understand this unique name he was given?

Rashi elaborates:

“This one will give us rest: Heb. “yinachameinu” He will give us rest (yanach memenu) from the toil of our hands. Before Noah came, they did not have plowshares, and he prepared [these tools] for them. And the land was producing thorns and thistles when they sowed wheat, because of the curse of the first man (Adam), but in Noah's time, it [the curse] subsided. This is the meaning of “yinachameinu”. If you do not explain it that way, however (but from the root (nachame), the sense of the word does not fit the name, [noach], and you would have to name him Menachem.”

Beyond the need to clarify this obscure explanation, Rashi's insistence that “if you do not explain it that way” should raise eyebrows. Why is he emphasizing this?

The source for Rashi's idea comes from a Midrash (Midrash Rabba Bereishis 25:2). We see there a debate between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish about the meaning of Noah's name (we will focus on the position of Rabbi Yochanan in this article). Rabbi Yochanan explains that “the midrash is not the name, and the name is not the midrash”. In other words, the reason offered by the Torah for Noah's name does not actually reflect the name itself.

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The name Noach carries with it the meaning “yenicheinu”, which would mean, loosely translated, bringing rest. Yet the Torah, when explaining the meaning of Noach’s name, says “yina-chameinu”, which implies bringing comfort. If indeed this is the explanation, Rabbi Yochanan states, then Noach’s name should have been Nachman (or as Rashi says Menachem). Of course, this was not the case. Thus, we are left trying to understand how the meaning of the literal translation of the name lines up with the Torah’s understanding of the name.

Rabbi Yochanan offers a strange explanation. When God created man, He created a unique relationship between man and the world. The cow would respond to the will of man, and the ground (through planting) would accede to his rule. After man’s sin, “they” rebelled against mankind. The cow no longer responded to man, and the ground refused to be plowed. When Noach came along, “they” rested. The implication here is that Noach was able to solve this conundrum.

Looking at this Midrash, we can see how Rashi is able to conclude Noach introduced agricultural tools to help solve this crisis. The notion of “resting” needs some type of context which is why there is mention of Noach’s invention of a more efficient means of plowing the land. We can also see why Rashi ends his explanation emphasizing that there is a problem with how Noach’s name corresponds with the Torah’s “meaning”. However, we still

must explain the idea that Rashi and the Midrash are attempting to convey.

The Midrash states that at first, God created the natural world in a way that it conformed to man. Man, as we know, was defined at inception as the being qualitatively differentiated from all other species on the planet. The tzelem Elokim, the soul of man, would place him in a position completely separate from any other. This reality was reflected in how the natural world conformed to his needs. The animal kingdom, as it existed to serve man, functioned accordingly. And the ground itself, from where man’s nutritional needs would emerge, would also exist in line with man’s needs. In this utopian pre-sin world, the delineation between mankind and everything else was clear.

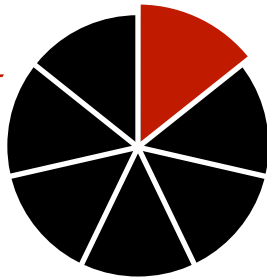
Everything changed with the sin, and this was reflected in how the natural world would relate to man. Prior to the sin, the natural world abided by man’s wishes – it was a property of the physical world. However, once man sinned, the relationship changed, the rules were altered, and the world surrounding man was no longer at his beckoning. The animal kingdom was no longer subservient. The ground gave forth nothing of benefit. Mankind was abandoned, searching for the state of existence it once had. The delineation between mankind and the surrounding world became more difficult to define. Until Noach came along, there was no advancement in this predicament.

We must look beyond the mere fact

that Noach was an inventor, as inventing alone could not be the sole reason why he stood out from the crowd. Rather, we see in Noach a unique advancement in mankind. Noach recognized the problem, one that was not just a practical one, but one that reflected a crisis in mankind’s position. He used his creative faculties--his mind--the features given exclusively to man, to solve the problem. It was not the solution of the agricultural tools that was so great; it was Noach’s use of his mind in this situation that merited a change in the natural world. True, the surroundings would never, by law, serve man. However, if man used his mind accordingly, he would demonstrate how he was different than all else.

This can help answer the tension between the name and its meaning. Noach provided two critical solutions to mankind. The first was using his mind to solve the problem of the natural world and its “resistance” to mankind – bringing about the “rest”. And the result of this development was the psychological well-being of returning to its place of supremacy – the “comfort”.

No doubt, this feature of Noach’s personality was pivotal in his future assignment. Presenting this idea in Parshas Bereishis helps establish the unique individual Noach was. As we turn to Parshas Noach, a clearer picture of whom Noach actually was beings to emerge. And we see this all through his unique name. ■



# Sabbath

MAIMONIDES

(*"Guide"*, Book II, Chap. xxxi)

It is perhaps dear why the laws concerning Sabbath are so severe, that their transgression is visited with death by stoning, and that the greatest of the prophets put a person to death for breaking the Sabbath. The commandment of the Sabbath is the third from the commandment concerning the existence and the unity of God. For the commandment not to worship any other being is merely an explanation of the first. You know already from what I have said, that no opinions retain their vitality except those which are confirmed, published, and by certain actions constantly revived among the people. Therefore we are told in the Law to honour this day; in order to confirm thereby the principle of Creation which will spread in the world, when all peoples keep Sabbath on the same day. For when the question is asked, why this is done, the answer is given: "For in six days the Lord hath made," etc. (Exod.xx. 11). Two different reasons are given for this commandment, because of two different objects. In the Decalogue in Exodus, the following reason is given for distinguishing the Sabbath: "For in six days," etc. But in Deuteronomy (chap. v. 15) the reason is given: "And thou shalt remember that thou hast been a slave in the land of Egypt, etc., therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee," etc. This difference can easily be explained. In the former, the cause of the honour and distinction of the day is given; comp. "Therefore the Lord hath blessed the day of the Sabbath and sanctified it" (Exod. xx. 10), and the cause for this is, "For in six days," etc. But the fact that God has given us the law of the Sabbath and commanded us to keep it, is the consequence of our having been slaves; for then our work did not depend on our will, nor could we choose the time for it; and we could not rest. Thus, God commanded us to abstain from work on the Sabbath, and to rest, for two purposes; namely, (1) That we might confirm the true theory, that of the Creation, which at once and clearly leads to the theory of the existence of God. (2) That we might remember how kind God has been in freeing us from the burden of the Egyptians.-- The Sabbath is therefore a double blessing: it gives us correct notions, and also promotes the well-being of our bodies.



# Idolatrous Liars

Rabbi Moshe Ben-Chaim

*Jews must protest these organizations. Advertisers and websites must not accept their ads that promote lies.*

*“Whether you need a Shiduch or a Parnassah, Nachas of the children or a Refuah, or just a Segula for Hatzlacha in all that you do, this coin is what you need, a proven Amulet that has helped many people in times of their need.”*

Berdychiv.org promotes this lie, a severe Torah violation as Maimonides states below.



## MAIMONIDES

*(Laws of Star Worship; 11:12)*

*“One who whispers over a wound, or recites a Torah verse, and also one who reads for an infant so it should not be worried, and on who places a Sefer Torah or Tefillin on a minor so they might sleep, it is insufficient for them that they are considered enchanters (Nachashim) and diviners (Chorim), but they are in the category of deniers of the Torah -- Kofrim -- rendering Torah as a bodily remedy, when the Torah is truly only a remedy for the soul.”*

Coins do nothing. Do not fall for Berdychiv's lies, and violate Torah's prohibition of idolatry. These organizations also include WesternWallPrayers.org – they steal money from deperate Jews knowing very well they cannot guarantee the promises for which they rob you. Mekubbalim are equally sinful, as we have all learned regarding Abuchatzaira.

An intelligent person knows the truth, “In all paces you call My name I will come to you and bless you.” (Exod. 20:21) God does not need coins, walls, red bendels or any object to hear our prayers. But those who believe in amulets, will not be answered since only God can assist you...not the inanimate matter He created, to which you pray. The Prophet too criticized the Jews, “Call to your gods, see if they answer you.” King David said, “They have ears but hear not, eyes but see not, noses but breathe not...”

Mesora will continue to expose such liars who defame God and His Torah. Please write us with information on similar corrupt organizations for publication in the Jewishtimes: office@Mesora.org ■



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