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Land – HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה

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[In The Beginning 2](#_Toc138803815)

[An Intimate Connection 2](#_Toc138803816)

[Adam 3](#_Toc138803817)

[The Serpent 6](#_Toc138803818)

[Chava 6](#_Toc138803819)

[Cain 6](#_Toc138803820)

[Noach 7](#_Toc138803821)

[The Tower of Babel 10](#_Toc138803822)

[Abraham 11](#_Toc138803823)

[Yitzchak 11](#_Toc138803824)

[Yaaqob 11](#_Toc138803825)

[The Tribes 12](#_Toc138803826)

[Moses 12](#_Toc138803827)

[The Golden Calf 12](#_Toc138803828)

[The Kings 12](#_Toc138803829)

[Temple Times 12](#_Toc138803830)

[Today 12](#_Toc138803831)

[Mashiach 12](#_Toc138803832)

[Contact Information 14](#_Toc138803833)

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**ha-adam (הָאָדָם)[[1]](#footnote-1)** = The man.

**ha-adamah (הָאֲדָמָה)[[2]](#footnote-2)** = The land.

There is an intimate connection between HaShem, man, and the land. One can see this intimate connection being emphasized every time that man, sins. Man’s sins distance man from HaShem and this is reflected in the distance between man and the land.

Conversely, when we move to improve our relationship with HaShem, He moves us closer to the land. The land is a litmus test of our relationship. When we are in the land. If we move closer to HaShem when we are in exile, then HaShem will take us out of exile and move us back to the land.

Here we have a formula: **man sins, then man and the land suffer**. When the land suffers, humans can see their wrongdoing and rectify their sins. What does it mean to say that “the land suffers”? When the land does not respond to us, with minimal effort, to provide our food, then we would say the land is suffering, the land has been ‘wounded’. When we have to greatly increase our efforts to get the land to reward us with food, then we see that the land has been ‘wounded’. The great effort causes us to suffer. We have to increase our efforts in the hot sun, with rocky, infertile land, just to eke out a living. This effort and difficulty is designed to make us sad when we realize that it does NOT have to be this way.

The human suffering is designed to make us sad and cause us to realize that it does not have to be this way. If we would repent and rebuild our relationship with HaShem, then He will restore our relationship with the land.

***Divrei HaYamin (2 Chronicles) 7:14*** *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin,* ***and will heal their land****.*

# In The Beginning

The Torah begins with a connection that is completely missed by most people:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:1*** *In the beginning God created the heaven and the land.*

The very first pasuk of the Torah tells us that Heaven and the land (earth) are **intimately connected**. To put it another way, Our relationship with HaShem is reflected in our relationship with the land!

The Torah then spends a lot of ink telling us about all the effort that God exerts to build the ideal, perfect land. God concludes this creation with the statement:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:31*** *And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

God created the land and he concluded His land building with the creation of man at the conclusion of the sixth day.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:26*** *And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the land, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the land.'*

Speaking of the ‘us’ in the above pasuk, Nachmanides[[3]](#footnote-3) says that God was referring to the land (adamah) from which man was actually formed. As we see in the next chapter,[[4]](#footnote-4) "And HaShem God formed man of dust from the land (adamah), and He breathed into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living soul”.

As a consequence of the first sin, three **relationships** deteriorate: that between HaShem and man, that between man and his wife (his field), and that between man and the land (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה).

# An Intimate Connection

There is an intimate connection between *the land* (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה) and progeny. There is an intimate connection between HaShem, man, and The land. One can see this intimate connection being emphasized every time that man, sins. Man’s sins distance man from HaShem and this is reflected in the distance between man and The land.

There is an intimate connection between HaShem, man and the land (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה). One can see this intimate connection being emphasized every time that man sins. Man’s sins distance man from HaShem and this is reflected in the distance between man and the land.

As an aside, if you look carefully, you will notice that progeny and the land are intimately connected in the covenants that HaShem made with the patriarchs.

When Adam and Chava sinned, HaShem God expelled them from His garden, Gan Eden. God distanced man from the ideal land. God’s garden which allowed man *maximum intimacy* with HaShem. This intimacy was facilitated by being able to eat with the *absolute minimum of effort*, and with the *absolute maximum of pleasure* from the food he ate. Expulsion from the garden also meant expulsion from the highest level of intimacy with HaShem. When man moved away from HaShem, by his sin, HaShem also distanced man from the ideal land and forced him to a poor substitute land where he had to exert the *absolute maximum amount of effort* in order to procure produce with greatly diminished taste and quality. This reduction in the produce of the land was reflected in the physicality of man. Adam’s and Chava’s sin caused them to be reduced in stature and increase in corporeality.

When Cain killed Abel,[[5]](#footnote-5) his sin caused him to distance himself from HaShem. This distance was reflected in being cursed to become a wanderer with no land that would allow him to settle. Just as his brother, Abel, no longer had a place on the land, Cain no longer had a place on the land where he could settle. Cain had distanced himself from HaShem and this was reflected in his distance from the land.[[6]](#footnote-6)

# Adam

At the creation of man that we are given his basic elements: the land-*adama*, and the breath of life. Man is both **physical** and **spiritual**, the landly and heavenly.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:7*** *The Lord formed the man* (haADAM) *from the dust of the land* (haADAMAH) *and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.*

The text reads “*Vayitser Hashem Elohim et-ha’adam afar min-ha’adamah* / HaShem, God, formed man out of the dust of the ground”. It assumes that we see the connection between the words Man (*adam*) and the *land* (*adamah*). It also assumes that we see the brilliance intertwined in the Hebrew language, with the play of words in the word Man (*adam*) and the word *red* (*adom*, same spelling but different pronunciation), which is the same color as the *land* (*adamah*) that man was formed out of. Likewise, the life force of man, his blood (*dam*: spelled Dalet, Mem) is also *red* (*adom*; spelled Alef, Dalet, Mem).

Adam’s basic elements: the land-*adama*, and the breath of God. Man is both **physical** and **spiritual**, the landly and godly.

What is established here is an interesting connection: *Adam* and *Adama* - man and the land. They are the same word, the same root. Just by virtue of his name, it would appear that of the elements that form man, it is *Adama* rather than the godly element, which would seem to be the primary ingredient.

To see the *land* and *Adam* as separate entities is to entirely miss the Torah’s linguistic sleight of hand: *Adam is the land*, and the land (*adamah*) is merely an extension of Adam. When God punishes the land for Adam’s sin, He does not deflect the punishment from Adam onto an external entity, but rather, strikes Adam at the center of his being. In this moment, humankind and the land relate to God as a single unit: they thrive together, and they suffer together.

The man-land union is *not* only restricted to the account of man's creation and destruction. It is a theme that runs like a thread through Parashat Bereshit, and beyond. We will soon see that it acts as **a barometer of human sin in the world**.

As we read through Genesis, we begin to notice that every new **sin** is accompanied by an associated blow to the land itself, or maybe more precisely, to the man-land relationship. **The man-land relationship is a reflection of the God to man relationship**.

After Adam sins, eating from the tree of knowledge, HaShem God issues a curse. The curse is directed not at Adam but at the ground, HaAdama - הָאֲדָמָה!

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17-19*** *Cursed be the ground because of you; By your toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you, but your food shall be grasses of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you get bread to eat until you return to the ground from which you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you shall return.*

What we witness here is a dual curse. Adam is now going to be forced to work the land, in sweat and difficulty. In the Garden of Eden he could simply pick fruits from the tree. Now he will have to contend with thorns, thistles, and back-breaking labor. In addition we should note that Adam's curse was accompanied by a concomitant order of exile. Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden "to till the soil (adamah) from which he was taken”.[[7]](#footnote-7) They were driven from the perfect land and forced to deal with a degraded land.

Both curses, that of agricultural hardship and that of exile, indicate a straining of relations, an estrangement, between Adam and the land that formed him. He is now in conflict with the land that gave shape to his very body. Ironically, this tension will exist in life only. After death, Adam returns to dust.

When Adam sinned, HaShem cursed the land and made it difficult for man to eat the produce of the land.[[8]](#footnote-8)

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He created Adam and Chava, gave them one mitzva (don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) and free choice. They failed and the world descended from perfection. Adam and Chava descended from perfection and became smaller, less spiritual, and ashamed of their nakedness.

In Genesis chapter 2, HaShem places man in the Garden of Eden. This garden is the absolutely ideal place. It has the perfect weather for running around naked. The only ‘work’ that needs to be done is studying Torah and maintaining the perfect relationship with HaShem.

There is no need to work the soil.

No need to plant.

No need to weed.

No need to prune.

No need to harvest.

No need to thresh.

No need to winnow.

No need to grind.

No need to knead.

No need to bake.

When you want to eat, you stretch out your hand and take whatever you desire. Like the manna, the intense flavor can be whatever you wish. We were living in perfect harmony with HaShem and His land.

This perfect harmony was shattered when Adam and Chava sinned. Immediately they were distanced from HaShem and HaShem exiled them from His Perfect garden, from His perfect land.

HaShem re-assembled the broken pieces, of His world and His people, *with lower standards*. Adam and Chava[[9]](#footnote-9) were expelled from Gan Eden[[10]](#footnote-10) and had to work for their food and struggle with childbirth. The land gave thorns and thistles when they planted wheat and barley.

When Adam sinned, HaShem cursed the land and made it difficult for man to eat the produce of the land.[[11]](#footnote-11)

When Chava sinned, God created pain for the woman in childbirth.[[12]](#footnote-12) Now, what is a child? One’s wife is a field where her husband plows, plants seed, and reaps produce. A husband’s progeny are the produce of his field (wife) that he has plowed, planted, and harvested.

Further, When Adam and Chava sinned, God expelled them from His garden, Gan Eden. God distanced man from the ideal land. God’s garden which allowed man *maximum intimacy* with HaShem. This intimacy was facilitated by being able to eat with the *absolute minimum of effort*, and with the *absolute maximum of pleasure* from the food he ate. Expulsion from the garden also meant expulsion from the highest level of intimacy with HaShem. When man moved away from HaShem, by his sin, man also distanced himself from the ideal land and forced him to a poor substitute land where he had to exert the *absolute maximum amount of effort* in order to procure produce with greatly diminished taste and quality. This reduction in the produce of the land was reflected in the physicality of man. Adam’s and Chava’s sin caused them to be reduced in stature and increased in corporeality.

After Adam and Chava sinned, God cursed them. This resulted in sadness under certain circumstances.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16-17*** *Unto the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sadness* (עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ) *and thy travail; in sadness* (בְּעֶצֶב) *thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ 17 And unto Adam He said: ‘Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sadness* (בְּעִצָּבוֹן) *shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*

Because of sin, Adam and Chava were going to be *sad* when Chava bore children, and Adam when he worked the land for his food was also going to be sad. Adam was becoming alienated from HaShem and the land because he had to toil to make it produce. This alienation was designed to produce sadness because we would then realize that it does NOT have to be this way.

After Adam ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good an Evil, HaShem God cursed the land.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17*** *And unto Adam He said: ‘Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it;* ***cursed is the ground*** *for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. 18* ***Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth*** *to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’*

The curse was such that if Adam planted barley, then thorns and thistles sprouted. Adam, and his descendants, worked hard but were unable to reap much because of this curse.

Now, the translation of Eitzev - עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ, *toil* and *pain* doesn’t mean toil and pain as we normally understand them. What it literally means is **sadness**. Eitzev - עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ in Hebrew always means **sadness**. It’s borrowed from the meaning of **sadness** to here mean toil and pain. But if you translate it literally what it means is; I will greatly increase your **sadness** in conception, to Eve. In **sadness** will you bear children. To Adam; In **sadness** will you eat from the land all the days of your life.

After our sin in the garden, HaShem changed man and changed the land. We had fallen from the height of perfection to something so low that it made us **sad**. We were feeling the alienation. The sadness had a purpose. The sadness was to provide an incentive to restore our relationship with our Creator. *The stronger the sense of alienation is from your creator, the stronger is the homing beacon that says, but I got to go back, I’ve got to reconcile, I’ve got to put this together*. This is the potential rehabilitative aspect of alienation.

What is the purpose of this sadness? It appears to be that HaShem wants us to realize what we had in Gan Eden[[13]](#footnote-13) and have a very strong desire to repair our relationship and return to HaShem.

# The Serpent

When HaShem cursed the serpent that beguiled Chava, He cursed him to be greatly reduced in stature. He lost his arms and legs and he was forced to eat *dust* instead of his normal food. The serpent became diminished and more land-like. He literally became part of the land when he ate the *dust*.

# Chava

When Adam sinned, HaShem cursed the land and made it difficult for man to eat the produce of the land.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16*** *Unto the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy travail; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'*

When Chava sinned, HaShem God created pain for the woman in childbirth. To understand the connection between the curse of the land and the curse of painful childbirth, one must understand the nature of a wife and the nature of a child

One’s wife is a field where her husband plows, plants seed, and reaps produce. A husband’s progeny are the produce of his field (wife) that he has plowed, planted, and harvested.

Thus we understand that God’s curse was directed at the land / field, at the place that brings forth produce. This was a reflection of our relationship with HaShem. HaShem cursed the land instead of Adam, because Adam was made from the land, in the same way his progeny were made from his field.

When Chava sinned, HaShem God created pain for the woman in childbirth.[[14]](#footnote-14) Now, what is a child? One’s wife is a field where her husband plows, plants seed, and reaps produce. A husband’s progeny are the *produce of his field* (wife) that he has plowed, planted, and harvested.

The *adamah*, the land, is a barometer. The greater the friction and lack of harmony between man and HaShem, the greater the difficulty will be between Adam and *the land*.

# Cain

When Cain killed Abel he again distanced himself from HaShem and was, in turn, distanced from the land. Cain became a wanderer and was sent into exile from the land. Not only has he been exiled from Gan Eden, but now even the land outside the garden does not cooperate with him to produce food.

When Cain killed Abel,[[15]](#footnote-15) his sin caused him to distance himself from HaShem. This distance was reflected in being cursed to become a wanderer with no land that would allow him to settle. Just as his brother, Abel, no longer had a place on the land, Cain no longer had a place on the land where he could settle. Cain had distanced himself from HaShem and this was reflected in his distance from the land.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The archeological record suggests that there were two types of people in the early days. There were agricultural societies and hunter-gatherer societies. Cain was the agriculturist and Abel was a herder. This changed after Cain killed Abel.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:9-12*** *And HaShem said unto Cain: ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ And he said: ‘I know not; am I my brother’s keeper?’* ***10*** *And He said: ‘What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground* (adamah)*.* ***11*** *And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand.* ***12*** *When thou tillest the ground* (adamah)*, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the land.’*

An adjunct to Adam’s curse, Cain’s curse makes working the land impossible.

**As an aside**: Why didn’t HaShem extract the death penalty from Cain? Why was *exile* the proper punishment? The answer is that the Torah says that an inadvertent murderer is to go into exile. Cain was an ‘inadvertent murderer’ because this was the first murder and because there were no witnesses. In this case, the Torah prescribes exile. In later times, the inadvertent murderer will be exiled to a city of refuge.

Here, once again, Cain’s sin results in estrangement from HaShem and is punished in a dual dimension. First, the difficulty of agricultural labor and second, exile, not being allowed to stay in the place one is in, and in Cain's case, an inability to remain in ANY place for a reasonable time period.

Each sin has been accompanied by a deterioration in the God-man and the *adam*-*adamah* connection. It would seem that there is a growing tension, an animosity between the land and man. The land will not comply with the man, and will not submit to the man’s controlling hand. It resists cultivation. Man in turn, has to work increasingly hard to grow the food he needs to live.

# Noach[[17]](#footnote-17)

When Noach was born his father Lemech saw his son as the way to mitigate the curse of the land. He did not see Noach as a way to bring himself and others closer to HaShem. The sadness of their poor relationship with HaShem was of no concern to Lemech, he just wanted to have an easier way to get food.

Because Noach’s generation had decided NOT TO HAVE ANY RELATIONSHIP WITH HASHEM, Therefore HaShem permanently distanced them from the land by destroying them. In addition, HaShem changed the universe and made it more inhospitable to man in order to encourage man to desire a relationship with HaShem. The land had been changed to tolerate man’s sin without immediate consequences. That I why HaShem promised to never again flood the earth.

This idea of ‘**sadness**’ reappears when the Torah tells us why He was bringing The Flood.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:6*** *And it repented HaShem that He had made man on the land, and it* ***saddened***(וַיִּתְעַצֵּב) *Him at His heart.*

The verbs and the adjectives, in the above pasuk, are also found when Noach is born. I would like to point out that **sadness** is a part of the prophesy of Lemech, Noach’s father.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29*** *And he called his name Noach, saying: ‘This same shall comfort us in our work and in the* ***sadness***(וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן) *of our hands, which cometh from the ground which HaShem hath cursed.’*

Why does HaShem borrow the language with which Lemech named Noach, almost mimicking the language with which Lemech named Noach in His declaration to decide to destroy the world?

Clearly, HaShem is **sad** and man *should b*e **sad**.

Lemech, Noach’s father prophesied that Noach was going to bring comfort to the world. Rashi comes to explain ‘how’ Noach will bring comfort:

**Rahi to Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29 - This one will give us rest:** Heb. יְנַחֲמֵנוּ. He will give us rest (יָנַח מִמֶּנּוּ) from the toil of our hands. Before Noach 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 Noach’s time, it [the curse] subsided. This is the meaning of יְנַחֲמֵנוּ. If you do not explain it that way, however (but from the root (נחם), the sense of the word does not fit the name, [נֹחַ], and you would have to name him Menachem.[[18]](#footnote-18) [i.e., If we explain the word according to its apparent meaning, “this one will console us,” the child should have been called Menachem, the consoler.]

Noach was a Tzadik,[[19]](#footnote-19) the creation of the plow is not evil in its own right, there is nothing about a **plow** that makes it evil, it’s how it’s used and it’s how people look upon it that makes it evil. It is Lemech and his generation’s perspective upon the **plow** that is evil, it is the notion that the plow can provide comfort for sadness that is evil, because we were given the **sadness** to encourage us to repent and return to HaShem. Yet the creation of the **plow** itself is pareve[[20]](#footnote-20) and in fact, I think it’s ironic and perhaps even fitting that Noach becomes the builder of the new world. Because the **plow,** in the same way that it was the perspective of Lemech and his generation upon the **plow** that destroyed the world, it is the creator of the **plow** that becomes the builder of man’s recreated world.

In God’s world you don’t need the plow, plows aren’t needed and as long as God’s world is a possibility, as long as you can climb back and re-create God’s world then to seek comfort in the plow is a blasphemy. But if God’s world is over, if we begin anew, if it’s man’s world and man has to take care of his world, then it’s fitting in a way that Noach, the one who finds grace in the eyes of God, and is saved, to build his ship and to take responsibility for a new world, it’s fitting that he becomes the creator of the plow, the instrument that man will use to till his world and subdue it.

Now, we would *not* have to toil so hard. The plow would relieve our toil. In this recreated world **sadness** is no longer used to encourage us to return to HaShem because we have used technology to deaden our feelings towards HaShem.

(I wonder if we use technology to deaden our feelings towards HaShem today?)

Alienation with the land is toil. Why? Because if land is really supposed to just give itself to me and give me produce naturally and now I have to farm for it, so I have to toil to work that. Now toil is not just toil, there’s an existential side to toil, there’s something sad about toil, because every time I toil I’m supposed to feel what? What does the word toil imply? How is toil different than work? Toil implies what? Futility, drudgery. What is sad about futility and drudgery? The recognition that it doesn’t need to be this way. There’s nothing wrong with working hard, if I’m working really hard but I’m getting what I need to out of that work, there’s nothing sad about that. But if I’m working hard and I know that it doesn’t have to be this way, that I could just push a button and get the same thing, then it feels like drudgery to me, then it feels like toil. Toil is not a measure of how much work I put into something, it’s how much work I need to put into something relative to how much work I am putting into something. That is what defines something as toil.

With Noach’s birth, God partially lifted the curse. Then Noach invented the plow and now everything should be good.

But, no! With the plow, *man had decided that he no longer needed a relationship with HaShem*. The ache in his heart for returning to HaShem had become anesthetized by the plow. The plow was the last straw. HaShem saw this as the point of no return. Man had decided not to rebuild his broken relationship. Man was content to be alienated from HaShem.

Once mankind has given up and has said, this is just the way it is, then there is no hope to respond and to get back. *Then the purpose of sadness doesn’t make sense.* It doesn’t make sense to curse the ground anymore, it’s a lost cause. You can’t have a technical solution to an existential problem. There’s no such thing as the plow solving the problem of sadness. You’ve missed the whole point. You’ve thrown in the towel in the relationship ever being what it is.

The purpose of sadness has now been destroyed. What is the purpose of sadness? It’s not to make you sad, it’s rehabilitative, it’s to activate the homing beacon, it’s because you’re supposed to believe and understand that that’s not the way it’s supposed to be, that it can be different. You’re supposed to imagine a different life where you don’t have to have that sadness and work to achieve it. Once you try to comfort yourself from the sadness, once you say it’s just the way it is, we just have to get used to it, the land is cursed, let’s find a technical solution to the problem, you’ve missed the boat. You are reconciling yourself to something you shouldn’t reconcile. You, mankind, are giving up on the relationship ever being what it needs to be, what it can be. You’re saying the baseline is sadness. That convinces HaShem that the relationship can’t improve with sadness.

God was going to write off the old relationship that he had with man. God needed to recreate a new world with different rules that reflected this diminished relationship. God decided to destroy *His* world and create a new world which will become “*man’s* world”. The goal of this new world was to reflect this diminished relationship and create a new environment in which man would realize his distance from HaShem through his toil and through this dramatically different world.

The baseline of our new relationship is God’s act of recognition, that man is frail. Our relationship is now built on the fact that you haven’t apologized (repented), this is what it is, I’m going to be more guarded in my relationship with you now, I’m going to be careful, I’m not going to expose myself, but we will have a relationship. And it has achieved its new equilibrium. There’s a new equilibrium, there’s nothing out of kilter now. Why? Because I kissed that old relationship goodbye.

HaShem was **sad** that the plow had brought His relationship with man to this dead end. Technology made it so that man could ignore HaShem and content himself with his technology to fill the God shaped void within his heart.[[21]](#footnote-21) Man, *in God’s world*, was never going to return to HaShem. HaShem would remain sad because He wanted a close relationship with man.

If one were to pay attention to the world of 5783 (in the year 2023), we would see that in the western world, everyone has fallen into their smart phone. They are busy texting, watching cat videos, and reading social media. Man is no longer searching for HaShem. Man is no longer seeking a relationship with HaShem. In fact, man seems to be distancing himself from all relationships. Television, computers, and smart phone “programming” fills every spare moment. Man no longer is interested in seeking HaShem. *Man’s world* is broken. Man’s world is coming to an end. Man has reached the 49th level of impurity and is about to become unredeemable.

As in Noach’s day, there is still a small remnant, like Noach and his family, that HaShem will give grace to them. This remnant will be redeemed. This should make us all very sad.

That said, there is a bright side to this recreated world:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-22*** *And Noach builded an altar unto HaShem; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. 21 And HaShem smelled the sweet savour; and HaShem said in His heart: 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. 22 While the land remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.'*

*The previous curses of the land at the time of Adam and in The Flood itself were intended for Man’s own benefit: to weaken his physical strength that had been misused, and to make it easier for him to focus on the spiritual. Man’s life span and energy had been reduced, and now HaShem saw that there was no need for further such reduction, since Noach demonstrated that it was possible to succeed spiritually with the level of strength that he had.*

*From now on, the source of Man’s temptation to sin would no longer be the raw physicality of the world, which had been tamed to a great extent. Instead, “the evil impulse of his youth” would be man’s major challenge. This refers to the fact that a person begins life in an animalistic state, devoid of intelligence; by the time his rational faculties appear (at age 13), these faculties are at a disadvantage.*

*Now there would be no more point in cursing either “the land”, the physical nature of the world, or “smiting all life”, the animals that symbolize the many character traits within a person since these were already on a level compatible with a successful struggle for good. Now each individual would be charged with working against the negative images and ideas acquired in childhood and overcoming them with the intelligence of his mature soul. [[22]](#footnote-22)*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the land is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the land.*

The generations of Noach produced 70 nations. The number seventy signifies a primary way of establishing an elevated connection, of building a community.

The number 70 forms a bookend, alluded to at the beginning and the end of the Five Books of Moses.

The first time the number 70 appears is in the lists of genealogy following the flood. Genesis chapter 10 enumerates exactly 70 descendants of Noach. According to the commentator Rabbenu Bachya, “We learn from this verse that the world comprises 70 nations, each with its own language”. The end of Genesis reveals the seventy descendants of Yaaqob who go into exile in Egypt because the ten brothers sold Joseph into slavery. Their sin caused them to be distanced from the promised land.

# The Tower of Babel

Later, most of the people failed again with their rebellion at the Tower of Bavel. Shem and his descendants were not enticed by the sin of Babel. Again HaShem re-assembled the world with yet lower standards and still free choice. He confused their language and He confused communication between folks of the same language. This confusion of languages forced the people to move apart and settle more of the land – at a greater distance from HaShem.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1*** *And the whole the land was of one language and of one speech.* ***2*** *And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*

The seventy nations that descended from Noach decided to move away to the east in order to distanced themselves from HaShem. In the east they made bricks and decided to make a world where they had a ‘name’ and HaShem had no name. They distanced themselves from HaShem.

When the seventy nations moved away from God, God confused their language and dispersed them throughout the whole world. The land had again reflected our distance from HaShem.

# Abraham

Abraham actively desired a closer relationship with HaShem, therefore, HaShem told Abraham to get up and go to the promised land.

When Abraham arrived in Canaan, HaShem appeared to him and promised to give him this land and progeny.

Whenever we have a relationship with HaShem, He gives us progeny and a place in the land. He is literally going to give us produce from our wife and produce from the land.

HaShem will make covenant with Abraham in which He promises Abraham that he will have innumerable descendants and he will inherit the land of Canaan. Abraham will have much produce.

When Sarah dies, Abraham will buy, for an exorbitant price, the cave at Machpelah for a burial place for her. This will be the first bit of Canaan that Abraham will actually own. The Sages teach us that Machpelah is the entrance to the Garden of Eden. Abraham has just begun the process of returning to the Garden of Eden. Such was Abraham’s desire for an intimate relationship with HaShem.

# Yitzchak

Yitzchak and Abraham, his father, devoted themselves to HaShem and were prepared to sacrifice their very lives for their relationship with HaShem. In return, HaShem promised Abraham and Yitzchak a copious number of descendants.

HaShem command Yitzchak to remain in Canaan and to never leave. As Yitzchak deepened his relationship with HaShem, so HaShem deepened Yitzchak’s connection to the land. In addition, HaShem promised Yitzchak that he would have seed as numerous as the stars.

Thus we see the following relationships: Closeness with HaShem brings closeness to the land and progeny to continue that relationship with HaShem.

After all, a son is the foot of his father. As feet carry man through this world, so sons carry a man through time.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 26:12*** *And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold; and HaShem blessed him.*

Finally, for the first time in the Torah, we see the land producing produce! The land is producing copious quantities of produce.

# Yaaqob

Yaaqob will buy the birthright from Esau and will use it to secure Yitzchak’s blessing for the firstborn. However, this will create great enmity between Yaaqob and his brother Esau, to the point that Esau plans to kill Yaaqob. Because of this enmity, Yaaqob is sent into exile. The exile was designed for Yaaqob to make converts and thereby acquire wives and children. Yaaqob will return to the promised land with much produce.

When Yaaqob returns to Canaan, he reconciles with his brother and is reestablished in the land.

# The Tribes

Ten of Yaaqob’s son have grown to hate Joseph. They plan to kill him, but are persuaded to send him into exile and slavery. Because of this grievous sin they damaged their relationship with HaShem and will cause all of Yaaqob’s family to go into exile in Egypt for 210 years.

They distanced themselves from HaShem which caused them to be exiled from the land.

In Egypt the brothers reconcile and HaShem blesses Yaaqob’s family with innumerable progeny while in Egypt. In Egypt, the children of Israel produce much produce from their marital ‘field’. When they finally cry out HaShem and earnestly desire to rebuild their relationship with Him, then HaShem will send Moses to lead them to the promised land.

The children of Israel drew near to HaShem, then HaShem drew them near to the land.

# Moses

After 210 years, Moses is sent by HaShem to redeem His people. They have learned how to draw near to HaShem and, in turn, HaShem will bring them back to Canaan, their land.

# The Golden Calf

Still later, the Bne Israel,[[23]](#footnote-23) by then the chosen people, failed again with the sin of the golden calf. While Moshe, Aharon, the Levites and most of the people did not sin, the mixed multitude did sin. Because the children of Israel are treated as an organic unity, they all had to remain in exile. This great sin caused the children of Israel to be distanced from the land and to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

# The Kings

When the northern kingdom betrayed HaShem through their idolatry, HaShem sent them into exile into Assyria.

Later the southern kingdom betrayed HaShem through their idolatry, HaShem sent them into exile into Babylon.

# Temple Times

Twice we lost the pristine perfection when the Temple was twice destroyed[[24]](#footnote-24) because of our sins. Instead of destroying us because of our sin, HaShem destroyed His Temple. We had badly damaged our relationship with HaShem. The land reflected this deteriorated relationship by sending us into exile, away from the promised land.

Twice HaShem sent us into exile. We’re still in this longest darkest exile yet.

# Today

Today we still are largely failing. 85% of Jews are not yet keeping the Torah. The proximate cause of this last exile, baseless hatred, still exists among Jews. It’s no wonder non-Jews still harbor antisemitism. If Jews can’t get along and sometimes despise and slander other Jews, what can be expected of a non-Jew?

# Mashiach

Each re-assembly of His world was designed to provide a better chance for us to succeed in cleaving to Him. Yet each re-creation had a lower spiritual level and was less idyllic.

The coming of Mashiach[[25]](#footnote-25) and the end of this last and final exile is just one more in a series of tests and failures and His reassembling the broken pieces. And when that happens, imminently, there will no more tests, no more failure, and the culmination of this entire project we call creation will be fulfilled. There will be some who cleave to HaShem. HaShem’s last test will test to see whether we trust HaShem and His Torah even when the circumstances seems to ‘prove’ that the Torah in not true and that HaShem cannot be trusted. Are you up to the challenge?

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 11:13-17*** *If you follow the commandments that I enjoin upon you this day ... I will give rain for your land in season...you shall gather in your new grain, wine and oil.... Take care not to be lured away to serve other gods and bow to them, for the Lord's anger will flare up ...and there will be no rain and the ground (adamah) will not yield its produce; and you will soon perish from the good land (****adamah****) that the Lord is assigning to you.*

The land, is a spiritually sensitive land, a place that connects land and spirit. It holds in store a deeper connection with HaShem and indicates to the Jewish people, through its very *adamah*, HaShem's pleasure or indignation. This connection, this barometer offers enormous blessings for good but frightening destruction for evil.

I hope by now that you can now understand why man does NOT go to heaven.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 37:29*** *The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.*

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:5*** *Blessed are the meek: for they* ***shall******inherit*** *the earth.*

Man is destined to return to the perfection he had in the beginning. Solomon said:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9****What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.*

And we see a similar sentiment in the Sefer Yetzirah:

***Sefer Yetzirah 3:1****the end is enwedged in the beginning.*

When man finally restores his relationship with HaShem, then the land of the Garden of Eden will welcome us with open arms. Then there will be NO EFFORT to secure our food. Then there will no effort or pain in childbirth. We will again be in harmony with HaShem and with His land. Then we can spend all of our time walking with HaShem in His garden.

\* \* \*

***2 Timothy 2:15***  *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 22:29-30*** *O land, land, land, hear the word of HaShem. 30 Thus saith HaShem: Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.*

# Contact Information

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1. The אדם Shoresh root is a preserved root off the Tree that largely connotes redness and blushing. For those who study in the Hebrew language we understand that words are derived from a *Shoresh*, or root word. Words are built based off of conjugations of these root words. This has a very important benefit, in that if the word in application is unknown to us the meaning of the word is hinted to by the root from which it is derived. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Hebrew word אדמה (adamah) is the feminine form of אדם meaning “land”. The word/name אדום (Edom) means “red”. Each of these words has the common meaning of “red”. Dam is the “red” blood, adamah is the “red” ground, edom is the color “red” and adam is the “red” man. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, 1195-1270 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Chava = Eve [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Gan Eden = the Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. A large portion of this section is based a series of shiurim given by Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See Genesis Rabbah 25:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Tzadik = Righteous man [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Pareve in this context means that the plow is not evil or ‘good’ by itself, it is simply technology. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. I heard this idea from Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Malbim on Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Bne Israel = Children of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The first Temple was destroyed in 3338AM. The second Temple was destroyed in 3829AM. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Mashiach = Messiah [↑](#footnote-ref-25)