

Bereishit: Amoral World

First book of the Bible. Important role in davvening

God makes an ordered world out of disorder

Controversy: contradictions in the text and within science

- Light without luminaries?
- When did humans show up?
- Two stories of Genesis to fault

Garden in art, popular imagination

'Garden' requires work. Humanity is not a passive player

Were Adam and Eve aware of life's cycle of birth and death?

Serpent/tree/woman is an allusion to pagan culture (Asherah)

Shepherd culture vs. Agricultural culture → Cain and Abel

Punishment is to be human with all its joys and sorrows

Ambiguous world:

- Laws of nature are silent to us
- Newton vs. Quantum

Heschel's take:

- *God In Search of Man*, "To the Greeks who [took] nature for granted, order is the answer. To the Biblical mind, order is not an answer but a problem" (pg. 92).
- "The sense of the ineffable, the awareness of the grandeur and mystery of living, is shared by all men and it is in the depths of such awareness that acts and thoughts are full of meaning...ye in fact shall be so sublime" (pgs. 65, 239).

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