

# On the Sixth Day He Created... Court!

PARSHA INSIGHTS - BERAISHIS (5759)

## JUST A FEW HOURS IN GAN AIDEN UNTIL THAT FIRST SIN

One of the most fascinating episodes in today's *parsha* [Torah portion] is the illegal consumption of the fruit of the *aitz hada'as* [tree of knowledge]. Let us ask a question, and this will lead to a study of the first few hours of humankind. In explaining the *Mishna Rosh Hashana* 16A, the *Ran* (Rabainu Nissim) wonders: Why are people judged on *Rosh Hashana* [the Jewish New Year] more than on any day of the year? Another way to state it is: How did the idea of *Rosh Hashana* begin?

The solution is based on a *Midrash* called the *Psikta*, section 23. This information is furnished by the sage, Rabbi Eliezer. Once we see what transpired on the first day of human life, we will comprehend the significance of *Rosh Hashana*. ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF *ELUL*, the month preceding *Tishrai*, the creation of the world started. It therefore comes out that the birthday of Adam and Chava was six days later, namely THE FIRST OF *TISHRAI*. (Adam and Chava were created on the sixth day, *erev Shabbos* [eve of the Sabbath].) Whenever *Chazal* [our Sages] say that the world was made in *Tishrai*, they are simply referring to the COMPLETION of the world, not the beginning of its formation. Its very first stages were in the end of *Elul*. Adam and Chava are considered the purpose of creation, so it is as if the world was created six days later, in *Tishrai*, the month they came into being. Incidentally, there are twenty-nine days in *Elul*. As a result, the six days of creation were:

Day 1: *Elul* 25,

Day 2: *Elul* 26,

Day 3: *Elul* 27,

Day 4: *Elul* 28,

Day 5: *Elul* 29; and

Day 6: *Tishrai* 1.

The *Midrash* quoted by the *Ran* continues: We see that Adam was created on *Tishrai* 1, otherwise known as *Rosh Hashana*. (The following "hour by hour" account of that first day is not to be taken at face value. Hashem is capable of doing everything in an instant; He does not require a step by step process to construct anything. Perhaps the reason He performed a new task each hour was to teach **people** that they should tackle major projects piece by piece, rather than hastily and carelessly. There is also a notion that these "hours" are not actually the sixty-minute intervals we know. We will not get into this matter at the present. They might very well be genuine hours.)

1. At the first hour, Hashem "brought up the idea in His mind". He conceived the plan to create Adam.
2. In the second hour, He "consulted the angels". *Chazal* are telling us that Hashem demonstrated humility by presenting the idea to His Heavenly host, to inspire human leaders to take counsel from advisors. This is indicated by the words of our *parsha* [Torah portion], 1:26: "Let US make man in OUR form, like OUR image..." *Rashi* states that since Adam was in the image of angels, they might be intolerant of him for certain reasons, so Hashem "conferred with them" before forming Adam. And in case heretics will try to argue that there is more than one deity because it says "Let US make man", the Torah refutes this in the next *pasuk* [verse] (27): "And **G-d** created man in **His** likeness..." This is in singular form; it does not say that "THEY" created Adam. We see that the angels were only consulted, but they had no part in any formation procedures. Let us continue reviewing the first day's events.
3. In the third hour, Hashem gathered the earth necessary for Adam's body construction.
4. He kneaded that dust with water in the fourth hour,
5. Began to form it in the fifth hour, and
6. Made it into a "*golem*" - a lifeless human body - in the sixth hour. (The *Da'as Zekainim* in *Parshas Balak* 22:10 mentions that during the sixth hour, Adam designated the names of the animals. He does not bring a

source for this, but **he is surely referring to the discussion in *Sanhedrin 38B***. The *Gemara Sanhedrin* apparently does not agree with the *Psikta* quoted by our *Ran*. Our *Midrash (Psikta)* states that he was still a *golem*, a body with no spirit, during the sixth hour. Adam would seemingly need a soul and intelligence to give the animals their names, which he did not have until the seventh hour.)

7. In hour number seven, the Master of the Universe breathed the breath of life into Adam.
8. In the eighth, He escorted Adam *Harishon* [Adam the first man] into *Gan Aiden* [the Garden of Eden], and
9. He commanded him not to partake of the *aitz hada'as* in the ninth hour. Now for the dramatic part - when did Adam eat from the tree of knowledge? One would hope that he withstood the temptation for at least a few hours, or more likely several days! From the verses in the Written Torah, there is no exact evidence how long the trial period lasted. This is left to the Oral Torah, which we are now studying in the form of this *Midrash*.
10. The *Psikta* states: In the tenth hour, the sin was committed. This was the hour after Adam and Chava were exhorted not to eat from the tree!
11. In hour number eleven, the judgement procedure took place.
12. In the twelfth hour, Adam went out with a pardon. We will elaborate on the terms of this verdict later.

Do you remember our original question? Why are people judged on *Rosh Hashana*? We now have the answer. Hashem told Adam, "This is a sign for your descendants. Just as you stood before Me in judgement on this *Tishrai* 1, and you came out with a sort of pardon, the same will occur with your progeny." We now comprehend why Hashem passes judgement on people on *Rosh Hashana*, more than any other day of the year. That was the time of Adam's trial.

The *Ran* points out that even in the heavens there is a hint to this concept. The *mazal* [zodiac sign] for the month of *Tishrai* symbolizes the theme of judgement. These *moznaim*, [scales] are quite appropriate for the season. Also, since we have shown that the very first day of creation was *Elul 25* (but Adam and Chava were created six days later on *Tishrai* 1), some communities begin supplicatory prayers on the 25th of *Elul* each year. The *Ran* reports that in Barcelona and its neighboring regions, the people would begin rising earlier than usual on *Elul 25*. This is in preparation for the day of judgement, *Rosh Hashana*.

We mentioned before that Adam's sentence was downgraded to some extent. This was a preview for Hashem's compassion on people as He judges them each year on *Rosh Hashana*. How did this work in Adam's circumstances? Recall that Hashem warned him, "From the tree of knowledge of good and evil, do not eat, because on the day you eat from it, you will surely die" (2:17). Did Adam die on the same day he partook of the *aitz hada'as*? Certainly not. He lived to the ripe old age of 930 (our *parsha* 5:5)! What happened to Hashem keeping His word? I saw a *Midrash Agada* quoted as follows: Adam did not die on the actual day he sinned, but close to 1,000 years later. However, Hashem really DID keep his promise that Adam would die the very "day" he ate. A "day" in Hashem's terms is like a thousand years. What is the basis for this? "For a thousand years in Your eyes are but like **yesterday** when it is past..." (*Tehillim* [Psalms] 90:4). Consequently, Hashem combined mercy with His attribute of justice. He DID judge and punish Adam with mortality, but He utilized one of HIS "days", to kill him in the "same day", meaning within a thousand years. This underscores a notion crucial to human survival, that Hashem constantly synthesizes judgement with compassion to run the world.

*Rosh Hashana* has passed this year, but these concepts give us a richer understanding of the days of judgement and the ensuing season of joy as we start the Torah from *Beraishis* [Genesis] again. The hour by hour narrative of Adam's first day is quite enlightening. It shows how frail the human spirit can be in regard to abstaining from prohibited activities. We are reminded to forever be on guard from the *yaitzer hora* [evil inclination]. Hashem's kindness in rendering judgement on Adam can boost our self-confidence when it comes to doing *teshuva* [repentance]. We must remember that repentance IS within our reach, especially since the Creator tempers the attribute of justice with His abundant mercies.

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