

Genesis 1

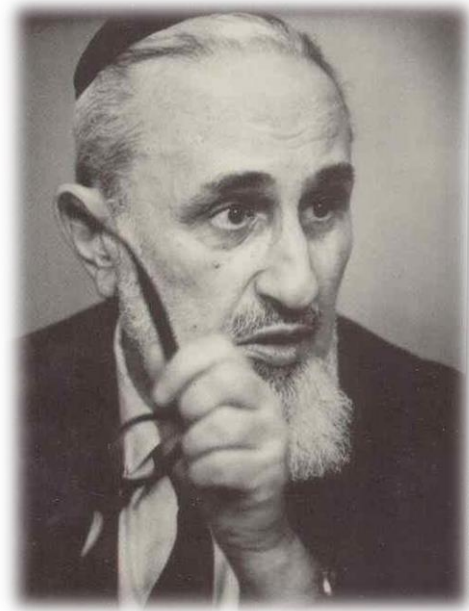
27. And God [Elokim] created man in His image; in the image of God [Elokim] He created him; male and female He created them. 28. And God [Elokim] blessed them, and God [Elokim] said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the sky and over all the beasts that tread upon the earth.

Genesis 2

7. And the Lord God [Ado-nai Elokim] formed man of dust from the ground, and He breathed into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living soul. 8. And the Lord God [Ado-nai Elokim] planted a garden in Eden from the east, and He placed there the man whom He had formed... 15. Now the Lord God [Ado-nai Elokim] took the man, and He placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to guard it ... 18. And the Lord God [Ado-nai Elokim] said,

Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Blessings and Thanksgiving* (Maggid Books, 2019 [1957]), 61-63

The first step in man's great endeavor to redeem himself from brute existence and to raise himself to an intelligent, individualistic, personalistic existence, to not be one within nature, to not be included and swallowed by nature but to play the role of the outsider who observes and watches and understands nature, and who wants to gain control over nature, the first step in knowledge, in the cognitive process of man, the first beginning is classification, descriptive understanding. Man is not an object anymore; he is a subject who studies the world of objects. This drive is responsible for the great strides man has made in harnessing various forces in nature, in mastering his environment. This mastery over nature inspires him with self-confidence and gives him assurance that his status is unique in the universe. This rise above blind obedience and total integration into nature is corroborated by the technological achievement of man; this is the drive, the quest for truth. The quest of truth is out to redeem man from his bondage, from his unity with nature, and places him outside of the universe in the role of the knower, of the viewer, of the observer.



Rabbi Soloveitchik זצ"ל
(1903-1993)

Now comes the great quest for *hesed*, for sharing his ontic experience with others, the powerful longing for love. This is due to the fear of loneliness which overcomes man as a direct result of man's triumph over the immediate, instinctive, brute existence and his rise to independence and personality. [. . .]