

Adam and Eve – The First Marriage

“And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness.....And God (Elohim) created man in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. And God blessed them and said to them, “Be fertile and increase...” (Gen. 1:26-28)

- 1) Who is “us?”
- 2) What is the image of God?
- 3) Why create only two beings and have them reproduce the entire world? Why not make many humans?
- 4) The Midrash alludes to a legend, also found in Plato’s *Symposium* and in other ancient traditions, that the first human being was actually a pair of twins attached to each other, one male and one female. God divided them and commanded them to reunite, to find the other person who make each of them complete again, in order to find wholeness.

The Lord God (Adonai Elohim) said, “It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him.” (Gen. 2:18)

- 1) Until now, everything God made was seen as good. For the first time, something is seen as “not good” – human loneliness in the absence of human association.
- 2) The Rabbis learn from Gen. 2:18: “It is not good for man to be alone” about the existential condition of every man, and not only of the situation of Adam before the creation of Eve. The midrash asserts: Any man who has no wife lives without goodness, without help, without joy, without blessing, and without atonement.
- 3) Hebrew for a “fitting helper” (*ezer k’negdo*) can be understood to mean a “helpmate equivalent to him.” It need not imply that female is to be subordinate or that her role would only be as a facilitator.

So the Lord God (Adonai Elohim) cast a deep sleep upon the man, and while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. And the Lord God fashioned the rib that He has taken from man into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

**Then the man said:
 “This one at last
 Is bone of my bones
 And flesh of my flesh.
 This one shall be called Woman (Isha)
 For from man was she taken.”**

**Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife so that they
 become one flesh. (Gen. 2:21-24)**

A marriage without holiness:

ISH Aleph Yod Shin - Man

ISHA Aleph Shin Hay - Woman

YA – Yod HAY - God

AYSH - Aleph Shin Fire

WHY ARE THERE TWO STORIES ABOUT THE CREATION OF WOMAN? MEET LILITH – ADAM’S FIRST WIFE

Lilith's name is not included in the creation story of the Torah but she appears in several *midrashic texts*. There are multiple origin stories for Lilith, but the most popular story depicts Lilith as the first wife of Adam. Lilith was created by God from dust and placed to live in the garden with Adam until problems arose between Adam and Lilith when Adam tried to exercise dominance over Lilith.

One story tells that Lilith refused to lay beneath Adam during sex. She believed they were created equal, both from the dust of the earth, thus she should not have to lay beneath him. After Adam disagreed, Lilith fled the Garden of Eden to gain her independence.

Adam told God that Lilith had left and God sent three angels to retrieve her. The angels found Lilith in a cave bearing children, but Lilith refused to come back to the garden. The angels told her they would kill 100 of her children every day for

her disobedience. In revenge, she is said to rob children of life and is responsible for the deaths of still-born infants and crib deaths (SIDS). Male children are at risk of Lilith's wrath for 8 days after birth (until circumcision) and girls are at risk for 20 days. Although Lilith stole children's lives in the night, she agreed not to kill the children who had amulets of either of the three angels.

After the angels' departure, Lilith tried to return to the garden but upon her arrival she discovered that Adam already had another mate, Eve. Out of revenge, Lilith had sex with Adam while he was sleeping and "stole his seed." With his seed she bears 'lilium,' earth-bound demons to replace her children killed by the angels. Lilith is also said to be responsible for males' erotic dreams and night emissions.

And the serpent said to the woman, “You are not going to die. But God knows that as soon as you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like divine beings who know good and bad. When the woman saw that the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a source of wisdom, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband and he ate. (Gen. 3: 4-6)

- 1) Evaluate this verse on its own. What does it say about the woman's character?
- 2) What does it say about how she feels about her husband? About the snake? About God?

The man said, “The woman You put at my side – she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done!” And the woman replied, “The serpent duped me, and I ate.” (Gen. 3:12-13)

- 1) Blaming and not taking responsibility. Now they are cursed and kicked out of the garden. He has to work; she has to suffer childbirth. Can this marriage be saved?