

Are There Two Versions of Creation?

The first Chapter of the Torah is the familiar Creation narrative in which the physical Heavens and the Earth are created in six "days." In it human beings, male and female are created simultaneously. The seventh day adds a spiritual dimension to complement the physical. It's the holistic combination of mind and body.

The second chapter of Bereishit is very different. There creation waits in limbo until the seasons, rainfall and human agriculture play a part in the process. So too with human beings, distinctions of sexual roles, dominance and authority emerge. Man is not only animal. He needs more than the physical. Woman is his partner. She comes from man's breast cage which is a metaphor for heart, emotion, the core of life. The relationship must not be just physical content.

Some argue these are two different versions. One talks about seven days and the other of one day as the creative process. I think they are complimentary. The first chapter simply gives the content, the manual of the machinery. Mineral, vegetable animal, human, male and female. Matter and Spirit. The second deals with interactions, relationships. Nature, weather, rain, agriculture the interactions necessary for humanity to thrive. So with humans. Chapter one describes their physical content. Chapter two and indeed the rest of the Torah focuses on relationships, hierarchies and ways in which they either get it right or wrong. It is a manual rather of how to behave to others.