

The tenthhour

The *entire* Big Picture in only 36 sessions? It's not possible. The *entire* Torah is the *entire* Big Picture and it's infinite, and how many people know all of *that*?
It's like the *mishnah* says:

From the book, *The Big Picture*

It is not upon you to complete the task, but you are not free to idle from it. (*Pirkei Avos* 2:21)

The main thing is that this *sefer* is an introductory look at the Big Picture. It is a step in the direction of achieving it, and that is fine, because it also says:

One who comes to purify himself, they help him. If a person sanctifies himself a little, they sanctify him a lot. (*Yoma* 38b)

If you want the Big Picture, *and everyone should*, you have to start to build it. If you want to achieve it, it will have to come from God. Success in life is only possible with Heavenly help, especially when it comes to accessing the Light of Thirty-six.¹

We are here to pursue truth. We were created to use our free will to seek out Truth, and to live consistent with it. We were given Torah to know what it is, free will to do that which gives us access to it, and Heavenly help to actually get it.

On the individual scale this results in personal *tikun*—personal rectification. On a national scale, it results in *tikun olam*—world rectification. There is no greater stamp of approval than becoming a partner of God,² and the more a person has the Big Picture, the more they can do this.

These are the people who become makers of history, *in a good way*. They are sensitive to God’s master plan for Creation and appreciate the role they can play in bringing it to fulfillment. They understand that the only alternative to being a maker is to be a pawn, an “extra” in God’s production of history. Tragically, a lot of people never make it past this level of involvement.

For the person with an eye to the Big Picture, history is not a river of time randomly meandering through generation after generation. It is a divinely designed timeline on

¹ *Brochos* 33b.

² *Drushei Olam HaTobu*, *Chelek* 1, *Drush* 6, *Siman* 4, *Os* 3.

which pre-designated historical points, *keitzin*, occur.³ These are moments which can result in opportunity or obstacle, depending upon the person's vision of the Big Picture.

The *Tenth Hour* is an example of this.

As discussed earlier,⁴ Jewish tradition states that history as we know it will only last six millennia.⁵ Physics has come a long way over the last couple of thousand years, and its understanding of the age of the universe is far more profound than ever before. Nevertheless, it is still not profound enough to understand why the apparent age of the universe does not contradict the traditional Torah calculation.⁶

Kabbalah explains that it is no coincidence that there are six millennia. Instead, each millennium corresponds to one of the six days of Creation, which in turn is the spiritual basis for all that will happen during the corresponding millennia:

Know that each day of Creation alludes to 1,000 years of history, and that every event that occurred during these days will correlate to an event that will have occurred at the corresponding time during the re-

³ *Sanbedrin* 97b.

⁴ *Session* 12.

⁵ *Sanbedrin* 97a.

⁶ One attempt to reconcile the Jewish date with the scientific calculation of the age of the universe can be found in the book, "*Genesis and the Big Bang*," by Professor Gerald Schroeder. The complete answer, however, involves *Kabbalah*.

spective millennium. (*Biur HaGR"A, Sifra D'Tzniusa*, Ch. 5)

The first chapter of the Torah is the account of God's creating over six days. Every day something new is created, all the way up to the creation of man on Day Six. Nothing was random, but came into being how it did when it did to fulfill the divine mandate for Creation.

The plan was that man obey the command not to eat from the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*—the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil— at least until *Shabbos*.⁷ Had this occurred, *Shabbos* would have begun the Messianic Era and man, who was created immortal, would have remained immortal. Time would not have mattered from that point onward.

Instead man disobeyed God and was punished with expulsion from Paradise, and eventually death. This set history on an entirely different course and gave time a whole different meaning. Bliss turned to struggle, which in turn has led to all the bad man has perpetrated throughout history. There has been a lot of good over the course of over five millennia, but a lot of evil as well.

Everything that has occurred, however, has always only been the actualization of potential built into Creation during the first six days. If the potential for an event during the following millennia was not first embedded in Creation during the first six days, it simply cannot occur.

Just as a tree does not grow if a seed is not first plant-

⁷ *Shem M'Shmuel, Bereishis 5771; Drushei Olam HaTovu, Drush Aitz HaDa'as.*

ed, events in history cannot occur if they were not first “planted,” at least in potential, some time during the six days of creating. Every event that will have occurred will have been based on some corresponding event during the respective day of Creation.

With this information a correlation emerges: if one day of Creation corresponds to one millennium, then one hour of a Creation-day corresponds to 1,000 divided by 24 hours, or 41.67 years. One hour during the six days of Creation equals 41.67 years of history.

Why does this make a difference? It allows us to better understand the events of the past and, perhaps, get an idea of what to expect in the future. In the past we had prophets to help us know the future, but they are long gone. This does not replace them, but it might allow us to better prepare for the future in any case.

How does this work?

For example, the First Temple was destroyed is 3338 from Creation. Since this event occurred during the fourth millennium, its root event has to be in the fourth day of Creation. Dividing 3338 by 41.67, the corresponding hour during Day Four would be 8.11 hours (6.6 minutes). Something happened on Day Four at this time that was the potential for the Babylonians to destroy the Temple in exactly 3338.

Well, not exactly. An important detail was overlooked, and, that is God did not create anything at night, only during the day.⁸ Since each event in history corresponds to an

⁸ *Drushei Olam HaTohu, Drush Aitz HaDa'as* 13.

act of Creation, which only have occurred during the 12 daylight hours, 1,000 years must be divided by 12, and not 24. That makes each hour in this case equal 83.33 years.

Dividing 338 years by 83.33 results instead in 4.06 hours. This means that the Day Four event that was the basis of the destruction of the First Temple occurred four hours and almost four minutes into the day, which was . . .

We don't know. Though the Torah tells what was created on each day, it doesn't tell us when on each day. We know that on Day Four, God put the sun, moon and stars in their positions, but not when exactly. But in this case, knowing the precise date of the destruction, we might be able to work backwards. . . if we only knew of an event on Day Four that can be considered related, at least conceptually, to the Temple's destruction.

Like this one, perhaps?

Rebi Shimon ben Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. One [part of the] verse says, "*And God made the two great lights*" (*Bereishis* 1:16), and immediately after the verse continues, "*The greater light. . . and the lesser light.*" (*Chullin* 60b)

Apparently both the moon and the sun had been equal at the time of their creation, but did not remain this way for the following reason:

The moon said to The Holy One, Blessed is He, "Master of the Universe! Is it possible for two kings to wear one crown?" (*Chullin* 60b)

The moon questioned why God would make two great lights, and not one bigger than the other, a very *kabbalistic* discussion. But this is the Talmud's *midrashic* on what happened:

He (God) answered, "Go then and make yourself smaller."

"Master of the Universe!" the moon cried, "Because I have suggested that which is proper I must make myself smaller?" (*Chullin* 60b)

Yes, was God's answer, and hence the moon's much smaller size.

Is the Talmud talking about the actual sun and moon?

It seems so.

Does *Kabbalah* agree?

Not at all.

The *physical* sun and moon have their own *physical* reasons for their size and nature. But they are also representative of spiritual ideas, *sefiros* specifically, and in the case of the moon, of the Jewish people as well:

Our Rabbis taught... a lunar eclipse is a bad omen for the Jewish people. (*Succah* 29a)

Just as the moon wanes but returns each new month, so too have the Jewish people come close to annihilation only to survive and flourish later on. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun to the earth, likewise the Jewish people are supposed to "reflect" the word of God to the

rest of mankind.

Thus, the reduction of the moon's light on Day Four, seemingly during the fourth daylight hour, was the basis for the reduction of the light of the Jewish people which the Temple emanated to the world.

This same thing can be done for all of history. Wars have occurred when they have because of what was created during the corresponding times during the six days of Creation. The Industrial Revolution began when it did because of its spiritual root on Day Six of Creation. It may just seem like progress to us, but it is progress that was made possible back at Creation.

There is one day of Creation however that we not only know what happened, but *when* too:

Rebi Yochanan ben Chanina said: The [sixth] day consisted of 12 hours. In the first hour, dust was gathered; in the second, it was kneaded into a shape; in the third, his (Adam's) limbs were formed; in the fourth, a soul was put into him; in the fifth, he arose and stood on his feet; in the sixth, he gave [the animals] their names; in the seventh, Chava became his partner; in the eighth, they ascended to bed as two and descended as four; in the ninth he was commanded not to eat from the tree; in the tenth, he sinned; in the eleventh, he was judged, and in the twelfth, he was expelled [from the garden] and departed. (*Sanhedrin* 38b)

This is more than just interesting. It is highly instruc-

tional, since the one event responsible for all that has gone wrong over six millennia is the eating from the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*. If something must correspond to that during this millennium, shouldn't we know what it was, or still may be? Those who forget are doomed to repeat, but those who know better can do better the second time.

The first thing to do is the math:

Hour	From	Until	From	Until
1	5000	5083.33	1240	1323.33
2	5083.33	5166.66	1323.33	1406.66
3	5166.66	5249.99	1406.66	1489.99
4	5249.99	5333.32	1489.99	1573.32
5	5333.32	5416.65	1573.32	1656.65
6	5416.65	5499.98	1656.65	1739.98
7	5499.98	5583.31	1739.98	1823.31
8	5583.31	5666.64	1823.31	1906.64
9	5666.64	5749.97	1906.64	1989.97
10	5749.97	5833.3	1989.97	2073.3
11	5833.3	5916.63	2073.3	2156.63
12	5916.63	5999.96	2156.63	2239.96

The Talmud says that Adam *HaRishon* ate from the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra* during the *tenth* hour of Day Six. This table says that the corresponding period of 83.33 years

during the sixth millennium began in 1990 and ends in 2073. We are living through the period of time that corresponds to the most destructive event in the history of mankind! That has to mean something. The question is, *what?*

To begin with, *tikun*. History is about *tikun*, rectification on a personal and world level. Man could not rectify the first time he sinned with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. What will *we* do if given a second chance? What an opportunity it is, one that did not happen even for the greatest rabbis of history.⁹ And yet we are living in the middle of it.

The middle of *what?* Did anything happen around 1990 that could be considered, in principle, an extension of the *Aitz HaDa'as tov v'Ra?*

Actually, yes. The Internet.

Research into pack switching¹⁰ started in the early 1960s and packet-switched networks were developed in

⁹ Is it a coincidence that the *gematria* of *nachash*—snake is equal to *Mosbiach*: *Mem-Shin-Yud-Cbes* = 40+300+10+8 = 358; *Nun-Cbes-Shin* = 50+300+8 = 358. It was the *nachash* that caused our exile. It will be *Mosbiach* who will finally end it.

¹⁰ Packet switching is a digital networking communications method that groups all transmitted data into suitably sized blocks, called “packets” that are transmitted via a medium that may be shared by multiple simultaneous communication sessions. Packet switching increases network efficiency, robustness and enables technological convergence of many applications operating on the same network. Packets are composed of a header and a payload. Information in the header is used by networking hardware to direct the packet to its destination where the payload is extracted and used by application software. (*Wikipedia, Packet Switching*).

the late 1960s and early 1970s using a variety of protocols. The ARPANET¹¹ in particular led to the development of protocols for internetworking, where multiple separate networks could be joined together into a network of networks.

The first two nodes of what would become the ARPANET were interconnected on October 29, 1969. In an early sign of future growth, there were already 15 sites connected to the young ARPANET by the end of 1971.

In December 1974, RFC 675, the “Specification of Internet Transmission Control Program,” used the term “Internet” as a shorthand for “internetworking.” Access to the ARPANET was expanded in 1981 when the National Science Foundation (NSF) developed the Computer Science Network (CSNET). In 1982, the Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP) was standardized and the concept of a world-wide network of fully interconnected TCP/IP networks called the “Internet” was introduced.

TCP/IP network access expanded again in 1986 when the National Science Foundation Network provided access to supercomputer sites in the United States from research and education organizations. Commercial Internet service providers (ISPs) began to emerge in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The ARPANET was decommissioned in 1990. The Internet was fully commercialized in the U.S. by 1995 when NSFNET was decommissioned, removing the last restric-

¹¹ The “Advanced Research Projects Agency Network” (ARPANET) was an early packet switching network and the first network to implement the protocol suite TCP/IP. Both technologies became the technical foundation of the Internet.

tions on the use of the Internet to carry commercial traffic.

Since the mid-1990s the Internet has had a tremendous impact on culture and commerce, including the rise of near instant communication by email, instant messaging, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) “phone calls,” two-way interactive video calls, and the World Wide Web with its discussion forums, blogs, social networking, and online shopping sites. Increasing amounts of data are transmitted at higher and higher speeds over fiber optic networks operating at 1-Gbit/s, 10-Gbit/s, or more.

The Internet continues to grow, driven by ever greater amounts of online information and knowledge, commerce, entertainment and social networking. During the late 1990s, it was estimated that traffic on the public Internet grew by 100 percent per year, while the mean annual growth in the number of Internet users was thought to be between 20 and 50 percent. As of March 31, 2011, the estimated total number of Internet users was 2.095 billion (30.2% of world population).

It is estimated that in 1993 the Internet carried only 1 percent of the information flowing through two-way telecommunication, by 2000 this figure had grown to 51%, and by 2007 more than 97% of all telecommunicated information was carried over the Internet.¹²

The future has become the present. Science fiction is now reality. Even people who do not use the Internet are greatly impacted by it, through the doctors they visit, the stores they frequent, etc. The amount of knowledge that

¹² This was excerpted from *Wikipedia, Internet: History*.

has become accessible and the speed at which it has become available is mind-boggling. It is truly the “Super-information Highway” it was promised to be, making this the “Generation of Knowledge” we were destined to become.

But is it a tree of knowledge?

Without question.

Of good?

Absolutely.

Of bad?

Most certainly.

And its timing?

Spot on.

If so, should the Internet be banned, as many demand? Would using it not be like eating from the *Aitz HaDa'as* all over again? Yes, if the sin itself was only the eating from the *Aitz HaDa'as*, as the Torah seems to say and most people seem to understand.

But it wasn't. The problem was not that Adam ate from the Tree of Knowledge, it is *when* and *how* he did, before eating from the *Aitz HaChaim*—Tree of Life, the other tree in the middle of the garden. Apparently, had Adam *HaRishon* eaten from the Tree of Life first, or at least at the same time,¹³ not only would he have been able to eat from the *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*, it would have been a *mitzvah* too.

It's like someone who decides to go to college first and *yeshivah* second. There is a very strong chance that while at college eating from the knowledge of the *Aitz*

¹³ *Zohar, Bereishis* 35b.

HaDa'as they will lose any desire they might have had to learn Torah and might even find their faith in God wearing away. As we see from Adam *HaRisbon*, eating from the *Aitz HaDa'as* can do that.

It's because this knowledge deals with the *how* of Creation, which is more technical than philosophical. Creation is so mechanical and seemingly automatic that one can get the impression it doesn't need God to exist or function. Nature is great at veiling the hand of God, so, when a person without Torah background looks at it, they only see technical realities.

But when a person looks at the same world through the eyes of Torah, they see miracle. The knowledge of the *Aitz HaChaim* is the *why* of Creation. It's not just knowledge, but *wisdom*. It is God's perspective, which enables a person to look at Creation the way God sees it, which is essential for fighting back the *yetzer bara* to fulfill the whims of the body.

The knowledge of the *Aitz HaDa'as* has proven its worth over the ages. But it has also proven its tremendous vulnerability to abuse by the godless, or even by well-meaning people who lacked the foresight and wisdom to see how their current decisions would impact future generations:

Who is the wise person? The one who can see what is being born. (*Tamid* 32a)

Over the generations, it has certainly been a big stumbling block even for people who seemed to love God

and Torah. You don't really know your *yetzer hara* until you have to fight it, and for many, that is already too late. People don't touch something hot without protection, but they approach knowledge that can "burn" them without it.

But the Torah says:

He drove the man out, and He stationed from the east of the Garden of Eden the keruvin and the blade of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the Tree of Life. (Bereishis 3:24)

According to this, we lost access to that protection, the wisdom of the *Aitz HaChaim*, back at the beginning of history. But according to this, we also got it back:

It is a tree of life for all those who grasp it. (Mishlei 3:17)

This is talking about Torah. Torah is a tree of life for those who grasp it, for those who learn it and make a point of understanding it as *well*, and *deeply*, on the levels of *Pardes*.¹⁴ Looking at Torah from a distance is tantamount to being blocked from it by *keruvin* and a flaming sword. Some books can be judged by their covers. Torah is not one of them.

It never was meant to be. Torah is not *free* wisdom. It has to be earned. It is the word of God and not to be manipulated. This requires a commitment to truth. It requires

¹⁴ See Session 7.

self-honesty. It requires humility. It requires objectivity, all of which leads to fear of God:

*Now, Israel, what does God, your God, ask of you?
Only to fear God, your God. . . (Devarim 10:12)*

All is in the hands of Heaven except fear of Heaven, as it says, “*Now, Israel, what does God, your God, ask of you? Only to fear. . .*” (*Devarim 10:12*)

Rebi Chanina said in the name of Rebi Shimon bar Yochai: The Holy One, Blessed is He, only has fear of God in His storehouse, as it says, “*Fear of God is His treasure*” (*Yeshayahu 33:6*). (*Brochos 33b*)

Rabbah *bar* Rav Huna said: Anyone who has learning without the fear of Heaven is like a treasurer who is entrusted with the inner keys but not with the outer [keys]. How can he enter? (*Shabbos 31b*)

Is the Internet truly the modern *Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra*? It certainly acts like it. And it certainly became a dominant reality at the correct corresponding time in history, making knowledge the key issue, especially how a person uses it.

The backdrop of history since 1990 only gives more credence to the idea. The Diaspora has become less hospitable to the Jewish people and especially Israel, which has become the center of attention for the world. Conservatism has given way to Liberalism, which has pushed for

changes to society that run more contrary to Torah than before. It has forced people to take stands and go either further to the right or to the left. The world just seems so much more End-of-Daysish than it was prior to 1990.¹⁵

One thing is for certain: we are well into the tenth hour of history. A person has to think about the significance of this and take to heart the opportunity. History may appear random but it is anything but. The progress may seem natural, but it is being directed by Heaven. Events may seem insignificant, but they might be the most significant of all.

The key to getting it right?

The Big Picture.

All of it?

Let's just say that the more a person has of it, the more right they will get life. And that's *before* Heaven kicks in and adds to it miraculously.

¹⁵ See my books, *"The Equation of Life," "Talking About the End-of-Days," "Survival Guide for the End-of-Days,"* and *"Preparing for Redemption,"* for more detailed discussions of current history and its relevance to redemption.

