

## Hashem said to Avram, “Go for yourself from your land, from your relatives, and from your father’s home. (12:1)

Although the Torah relates the birth of Avraham *Avinu* at the end of *Parashas Noach*, we are introduced to the Patriarch in *Parashas Lech Lecha*. In *Derech Hashem*, the **Maharal** explains that originally the plan of Creation was that all human beings would share equally in fulfilling the Divine mission and that the Torah would be given to all mankind. Twenty generations of failure from Adam to Noach to Avraham precluded this reality from occurring. Thus, the title of Hashem’s Chosen People was given to the nation that earned it: Avraham, followed by his progeny. They would receive the Torah; they would carry out its *mitzvos* and moral/ethical mandates; they would be the ones to lead the world community to perfection by serving as the example of how a human being should act; they would bring all people to accept Hashem’s sovereignty.

Avraham *Avinu* earned his position as Patriarch of our nation after passing the *Asarah Nisyonos*, Ten Trials, which not only proved his own personal greatness, but also demonstrated his unequivocal commitment and devotion to Hashem. How did Avraham achieve this status? How did he discover Hashem? *Chazal* teach that Avraham was three years old when he realized that the world had a Creator. Although he had been raised in a home steeped in idolatry, lived in an environment replete with idolaters, his own home a center for paganism, he analyzed the world and came to the realization that there had to be Someone, some entity, that not only created the world, but continues to guide every facet of it. All at the age of three, he discovered the greatest verity: the world has a Creator. All of this occurred because he delved into the world around him.

Do we delve into Creation? Do we try to understand Creation? In today’s technology-filled world there is very little room for us to see Hashem, unless we are *misbonein*, delve into wisdom, try to understand. **Horav Shraga Feivel Medlowitz, zl**, once told his *talmidim*, students, that, in the large cities that have skyscrapers, these edifices cover up Hashem. The huge building conceals His Presence. What does this mean? *Horav Moshe Aharon Stern, zl*, explains that, when one is in a city in which every building was built by man, where one hardly sees grass, trees, mountains, hills, seas or rivers, which were all created by Hashem, one loses perspective on what is taking place in the world. A person must attempt to understand Creation. This is why we were given the power of *binah*, the ability to understand.

*Rav Shraga Feivel* would quote the **Kotzker Rebbe, zl**, who said, “Hashem wrote a composition, which is the Torah. The explanation for the composition is the world. When the *Zohar* teaches that Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world, it means that the Torah is the blueprint for the creation of the world. Alternatively, since Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world, we may understand the Torah by looking at the world. Creation gives meaning to the Torah. *Rav Shraga Feivel* would recognize Hashem’s ways from His creations. He was always so impressed with the glory of Creation and the beauty of the universe which are Hashem’s handiwork. He saw Hashem’s love for His creations by delving into the glory of the universe.

*Rav Moshe Aharon* relates that a group of students of the *Chafetz Chaim* wanted to observe their revered *rebbe* on the manner in which he conducts himself. One *Rosh Hashanah* they made a point to observe him closely to see what this holy saint did on the holy day. He *davened* with the *yeshivah* and then went home to eat the meal. Following his meal, he took a walk outside. The students followed very carefully -- from a distance. He walked outside of the city and sat down to observe the scenery. At this point, the students "caught up" with him. They did not have to ask him why he was there. He was their mentor and, understandably, they wanted to learn from his every nuance. He explained that the *Rambam* says that, when one delves into Creation, he increases his love for Hashem. The *Chafetz Chaim* felt that he was deficient in this area. He could love Hashem more. Therefore, on *Rosh Hashanah*, he walked outside of the city to ponder the surrounding scenery, so that he could increase his love of Hashem.

We are neither *Rav Shraga Feivel* nor the *Chafetz Chaim*. This, however, does not preclude our ability to ponder the beauty and sheer brilliance of the world around us. We see a technological marvel, and we are amazed at the genius of the man who created it. Do we stop to give Hashem the "credit" due Him? The person's genius is a gift from Hashem. The surgeon's skill is a gift from Hashem. Everything that we mortals achieve is a gift from Hashem. Yet, we tend to applaud the agent and ignore the Benefactor.