

And the man assigned names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to every beast of the field. (2:20)

One of the seven blessings which comprise Sheva Berachos is Sameiach tesamach re'im ha'ahuvim k'sameichacha yetzircha b'Gan Eden mikedem, "Gladden the beloved companions as You gladdened Your creature in the Garden of Eden from aforetime." This brachah asks Hashem to gladden the couple who stand before us as He did for Adam and Chavah in Gan Eden. One question confronts us immediately upon grasping the scope of this request: Is it reasonable to expect that every contemporary couple experiences such a heavenly relationship on par with that of the first couple in Gan Eden? Let us face it, we are not in Gan Eden, nor are we Adam and Chavah. Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, zl, derives a powerful lesson from here concerning the power of prayer. When we entreat Hashem for something, we should not limit ourselves. Hashem can do anything and, if He desires, He will. Therefore, we should ask and hope for the ultimate response to our requests. Who knows?

Returning to the blessing, we do not find anywhere in the Torah that Hashem "gladdened" Adam and Chavah. The Midrash, however, does teach that Hashem Himself escorted Chavah and brought her to Adam. Before doing so, He adorned her with forty- four beautiful ornaments and braided her hair. The angels descended to Gan Eden and played music for them. The sun, moon and stars danced before them. Hashem prepared a banquet filled with delicacies, He made the chupah, canopy, and He served as the chazzan to bless the first couple. The Torah, however, does not indicate that any unusual form of simchah took place. In addition, the word yetzircha, creature, is singular, and is interpreted as referring to Adam, who was gladdened when Hashem created Chavah, so that he was no longer alone. This might be a reference to the singular unit of Adam and Chavah as husband and wife, who became a unified couple through the perfect harmony that existed between them.

Horav Eliyahu Schlesinger, Shlita, suggests that when Hashem created Adam and Chavah, He

gave them the entire world. They were in charge. They had all of the keys. He gave them the ability to fashion the world in their image, to leave their imprint on the future of mankind. What greater sense of joy can there be than to have the power to initiate, to guide and direct, to inspire and shape lives. This is similar to the power of Creation. This is why Chazal teach us that Adam gave the appropriate name to every creature in existence. He understood their individual characteristic traits and named them accordingly. This is the apex of simchah. Adam and Chavah enjoyed the happiness associated with chedvas ha'yetzarah, the delight in the ability to create.

This was the manner in which Hashem gladdened Adam and Chavah. He gave them the opportunity to shape the image of the world according to their wisdom, understanding and perception. This is the zenith of simchah. Every young couple has before them the same opportunity, as they begin a new chapter in their lives together as husband and wife. Together they will decide the character of their new home. Will it be a home where Torah will thrive, where tzedakah and chesed, charity and acts of lovingkindness, will reign? Will meticulous mitzvah observance be a primary component in their lives? How will they raise their future children? What will be their priorities? Yes, this is the chedvas ha'yetzarah that greets them as they enter this new phase of their lives. Just as Hashem gladdened the first couple, so, too, does He avail the same opportunity to every subsequent couple. It is up to them to make the proper decisions.