CREATION and SCIENCE: Two books by the same Author

I always felt a great interest for science, especially for everything related to Creation (BERESHIT): the origins of the universe, the origin of life and human intelligence. As an observant Jew, the theme of Creation vs. Evolution was always my passion. And it also confused me. Is it possible to find harmony between what modern science explains and what the Tora says?

Many young Jewish college students believe in our Tora, but they are challenged by the difficulty of finding intelligent answers to questions like Creation and Big Bang, the age of the earth, the theory of evolution, etc. The absence of serious explanations on this matters makes many people think that the differences between Tora and scientific theories are irreducible. And then it is the belief in our Tora that is questioned! This phenomenon is obviously very worrying. And as an educator it has motivated me to dedicate myself a little more deeply to this subject.

I think the most important thing I learned in the course of time is an idea that I should attribute to Maimonides: THE TORA AND THE UNIVERSE ARE TWO BOOKS WRITTEN BY THE SAME AUTHOR. Therefore, there can be no contradiction between these two works. And therefore, when there is a conflict between these two books, it is because we are reading one of these two books incorrectly. The problem, then, is not with the books (or the Author!) but with us, the readers. “Conflict” means that we we are reading something incorrectly, or insufficiently.

Sometimes, as I am going to explain today, it may happen that we read the Tora without the necessary precision or depth, and we do not realize that the Tora, which is not modern but eternal, anticipated some things that science discovers only nowadays . In the coming days I would like to offer the reader some examples of this type of cases. Thus, when we read superficially the Torah, we overlook some points of contact between Creation and science.

On the other hand, the readings that many scientists have of

our reality, may be an interpretation which is more ideological than empirical. We will also see some examples that show how some times scientists adapt their theories to a preconceived ideology, without admitting that theirs, is only a subjective interpretation of reality. Scientific "objectivism" has become a very controversial issue in our days (see for example this). And a respectful but critical view of this phenomenon is absolutely necessary to better understand, for example, the delicate theme "Creation Vs. Evolution".

THE COINCIDENCES THAT WE MIGHT BE OVERLOOKING

The second Pasuq of the Tora "And the land was uninhabited and barren, and darkness covered the abysses …" is absolutely revolutionary. Why? Because it is unexpected and counter-intuitive. Let us forget for a moment that we know its content, and think what we would have expected a normal book (a human book) to say after affirming that "In the beginning God created heavens and earth." I think the next most logical verse would have been something like this: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was beautiful, full of vegetation and delicious fruits, numerous animals, birds and fish. " Describing a perfect world created by the Almighty Creator would have been the most normal and predictable idea to express. An already finished and perfect creation reflects a Perfect and Omniscient Creator. If a human being had written the Tora, what sense would it has to invent a story where an Almighty God creates an incomplete world? Why describe a dark planet (according to Ramban and Eben Ezra: "toxic") or, as the Targum explains (tsadya vereqanya) without animal or human life? In the biblical story of Creation all these things are created later: light, atmosphere, rain, dry land, vegetables, animals and man.

Our Rabbis observed this phenomenon, and explained that while HaShem might have created a finished world in one single act of Creation, the Creator did it in stages. More precisely, they said, in 10 acts (or statements) of creation. And beyond the reason why the Creator decided to create His world in stages, it is very important to observe a point that is usually overlooked. The Tora presents us with a planet that is forming gradually. A planet that "evolved", by the command of the Creator, through a series of creative acts, a process that

goes from less to greater complexity. First the inorganic matter, then vegetation, then animals, and finally: intelligent life.
If we look at science's explanation about "the evolution of early earth" we will realize that on this matter science and Tora definitely coincide. Or rather, that modern science discovers today what the Tora claimed thousands of years ago.
But, we need a little patience because there is still much to explain. In the next email B'H I will present a first approximation to the theme of the age of the world and the apparent irreconcilable differences between science and Tora on this issue. Is it possible to find harmony also on this matter?
I think so.
(To be continued …)