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Ohev Yisroel
Parshas Bereishis
5770

The Apter Rov, known by the name of his unique sefer - *Ohev Yisrael*, asks a question that probably bothers many of us who study Chumash. Why does Odom give his wife the name Chava? (*The man named his wife Chava because she was the mother of all life - em kol chai. Bereishis 3:20*)

Rashi tells us that the name Chava is related to the word life (*Chai*). Therefore, asks the Apter Rov, more correctly her name should be Chaya, not Chava. Why did Odom replace the “Yud” with a “Vav”? (חַוָּה \ חַיָּה)

In the Gemora (Brochos 34b) the sages declare that even absolute Tzaddikim have no access to the domain that Ba’alei Teshuva occupy. A person who is doing Teshuva has a remarkable spiritual advantage, even greater than one who has never transgressed the Divine Will. Yet since a Ba’al Teshuva is at the same time in the world of physical reality and persistently attempting to connect with the World of Divine Will, he has no established place in that world (as does an absolute Tzaddik). In order to attach his soul and his mind to the Divine Will (this process is the active world of Teshuva) the Ba’al Teshuva must create a conduit to draw down vitality from the source of Divine Will into this lower world. That is the concept of the letter “Vav”, representing a conduit or link from the upper world to the lower.

(This is spelled out in Hashem’s name; “Yud”, “Hay”, “Vav”, “Hay”. The Yud is the source of Divine influence; “Hay” is its expansion in the upper worlds. “Vav” is the flow of the Divine influence from the upper to lower realm and the final “Hay” is our opportunity to create expansion in this world.)

The Apter Rov explains that this is the reason why Odom gave his wife the name Chava with “Vav” instead of Chaya with a “Yud”. The presence of the “Vav” points to Teshuva. Chava transgressed Hashem’s will. She descended from an existence in the upper realm into the lower realm. When Odom, whose job it was to name every living being, named her, he gave her a name that supported her Teshuva process. Therefore he changed her name from Chaya with a “Yud”, to Chava with a “Vav”.

Through her Teshuva, Chava drew down Divine vitality from the upper world into the lower and became the mother of all life. Her Teshuva created the conduit from above to below that vitalizes and sustains life in this world. Through Torah, mitzvos and a purposeful religious life we maintain the constant flow of Divine vitality through this conduit.

A Guten Shabbos

