



JUDAISM FOR LIVING SERIES

MARRIAGE: BRINGING VENUS AND MARS A LITTLE CLOSER TOGETHER:

MODULE II

SOURCE SHEET AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



As we described in module I, God created man and woman together so they would always yearn from the depths of their souls to be reunited together as one. This is their natural state; They need each other to find completion, and without one another they are existentially alone. On the surface, they may appear as if they are from two different planets, yet they have the potential to perfectly complement and complete one another.

Let's take a deeper look at the creation story to understand more about men and women from a mystical point of view.

MEN AND WOMEN: A DEEPER LOOK.

Though the Torah hints at the creation of man and woman together as one, the storyline goes on to describe first the creation of Adam and then Eve as follows:

SOURCE 1: BEREISHIS 2:7

And G-d created Man from the **"dust of the ground"**, and He blew into his nostrils the soul of life; and man became a living being.

וַיִּצְרֶה אֱלֹקִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֹפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה
וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפִּיו נֶשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ
חַיָּה:

SOURCE 2: BEREISHIS 2:18

G-d said, it is **not good for Man to be alone**; I will make him a helpmate corresponding to him.

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֱלֹקִים לֹא־טוֹב הֵיוֹת הָאָדָם לְבָדּוּ
אֶעֱשֶׂה־לוֹ עֶזְרָא כְּנֶגְדּוֹ:

SOURCE 3: BEREISHIS 2:22

(He took one of his sides) Then G-d fashioned the side/ribs that He had taken from the man into woman, bringing her to man.

וַיִּבֶן ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶת־הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח
מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבָאָהּ אֶל־הָאָדָם:

SOURCE 4: BEREISHIS 2:23

And man said, this time it is **bone of my bones** and flesh of my flesh.

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפַּעַם עֵצָם מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר
מִבָּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִשׁ לָקַחְתִּי־זֹאת:

Q: What are You Made Out of?

There is so much explicit and esoteric that we can learn from the creation of Adam and Eve, but one fundamental lesson emerges from the story.

Man was created from dirt and woman from bone. These two materials reflect their essence on a spiritual and emotional basis.

Q: What about "dirt" expresses the essence of men?

Dirt is plentiful and, in most instances, worthless. It's only valuable if you do something with it, plant it or build on it. But left fallow it's worthless.

Q: How might this reality shape man's view of himself?

Man's psyche is shaped from this duality; he constantly feels worthless; the equivalent of psychic dust incessantly trying to build and conquer to prove to everyone – and especially himself – that he is worth something. Therefore, man's ego is enormous – it can never get enough stroking – yet at the same time it is extremely fragile and easily broken.

Q: What about "bone" expresses the essence of women?

Woman, on the other hand were not created from dirt. She is created from bone - something strong, useful, and valuable.

Q: How does her creation inform her self-concept and what she may need from her partner?

She, from the depths of her soul, needs to be recognized as worthy and valuable. Unlike the man, she doesn't have an ego problem- because she knows deep down, she is valuable – yet she desires to be cherished for "who she is."

ONE MEDICINE, TWO CURES:

First, recognize that men and women are different, bring different things to the table and were meant to complement each other through the goal of completing each other as one.

There are a variety of things that both men and women need to support their emotional and spiritual health; some are exclusive to one or the other and some are required by both. However, there is one thing that men and women can give to one another which will enhance their individual health and support their growing together as one.

Q: What do you think that is and why?

Men and women both crave and need appreciation; the same remedy but for two very different reasons.

Q: Why do you think men need appreciation?

Men fear deep down that they are failures and that they are not fulfilling their potential, and no matter how accomplished or successful they may feel that they are not worthy. They vacillate consistently between feeling like princes and the next moment paupers.

Men need their wives to appreciate them to make them feel respected. When a woman really appreciates her husband and strokes his ego over the top, he feels like a hero, a knight in shining armor rescuing the damsel in distress. Really showing appreciation to a man for all that he is and does makes him feel valued, needed, and purposeful.

Q: Why do you think women need appreciation? And it's not for the same reason as men.

Women know they are valuable. They need their husbands to cherish and love them in recognition of that incredibly valuable gift that G-d has shared with them. If you go back to the creation story, didn't Adam get an amazing gift from G-d at the dawn of history, called woman (yes, it's true he has been paying for it ever since....but that's another story 😊) If you received a precious gem, you would guard, cherish and pamper it, in view of its inestimable worth. Men need to show appreciation to their wives for how important, valuable, and precious they really are to them and to their families.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Q: You might be wondering, if marriage is all about oneness, why do so many fall apart and break up? Why is divorce so prevalent in our society, and even included in the Torah as a mitzvah.

It's true that men and women have the capacity to achieve an unrivaled bond of closeness and unity through marriage. However, it takes a lot of work. Traditional Jews are more likely to put in this work because they understand that they are really not whole or complete on their own, without a spouse, who was divinely designed specifically for them.

Yet, even so, in some instances it's necessary for a man and a wife to divorce. But it should be viewed as a final option, as distasteful as amputating a gangrenous limb from one's body. Someone might have to do it to save their life, but they are losing a piece of themselves in the process! The Torah provides an escape hatch from marriage for people who need it, as an absolute last resort. Yet, for everyone else, just knowing that ultimately there is a way out if it gets too bad, allows one the psychological freedom to fight for their marriages rather than abandon them.

Even the Torah's view of divorce underscores its belief in marriage as the optimal relationship between men and women, affording them the unique opportunity to achieve wholeness in this world.

THE BOTTOM-LINE TAKEAWAYS:

1. Know that we are really one, need each other to be whole and complete and will be forever diminished standing alone.
2. Men and women are better together than we would ever be apart.
3. Our differences are good, and we complement each other perfectly.
4. Shower each other with appreciation, help one another grow, and always nurture the WE over the ME! Not because the Me is unimportant, but because the We allows you to fully express the ME in the most complete, elevated way!

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