

# SUMMARIES

Daniel Turgman

## **Genesis 1: Deciphering the Creation Story – Textual Layers and a Scientific Reading**

Chapter 1 of the Book of Genesis contains two descriptions of creation within the same text, with each layer describing a different stage of creation. The first, more explicitly revealed layer, begins after the formation of the planet Earth and focuses on the processes that occurred on its surface. At first glance some of the descriptions in this layer may seem inconsistent with current scientific theories however these inconsistencies ultimately reveal a more precise understanding of the text. Furthermore, it is shown that several elements of the text remain unclear without scientific explanations.

The second, more concealed layer, begins with the creation of the entire universe. This article suggests that the text of chapter 1 contains a literal description of the cosmological processes that created and formed our universe. Every noun, verb, and conjunction that appears in the text is of essential significance in describing the cosmological processes. This layer ends on the third day of creation, after the planet Earth was created, and as such complements the first layer.

If this presentation is correct, the descriptions of the process of creation in the text offer an answer to one of the major questions in cosmology, and should be the basis for further scientific research.

Yehuda Rock

## **The Garden of Eden Story**

The Garden of Eden narrative contains several repetitious and contradictory statements, such as the repetitions of placing Adam in the garden and of his expulsion. These are explained by the splitting of the narrative into two separate and independent narratives (aspects), which the Torah employs for the purpose of communicating complex ideas. The article also discusses the narrative's literary form, and provides explanations for the sin of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and for man's becoming as the divine.

Adina Yael Sternberg

### **The Lesson of Akeidat Yitzhak for Abraham and for Future Generations**

Of the three main explanations suggested for the term 'nisayon' (experiment, exhibit or experience), this article proposes following the third option – that the Akeida was an experience for Abraham, whose purpose was to familiarize him with a different form of divine service. Up to that point, Abraham practiced a form of spiritual worship of “calling in the name of God” (we find no indication that his altars were utilized for sacrifice) and served God by means of promoting justice (as when Abraham expresses fear of danger when he and his wife entered a place where “there is no fear of God”). The Akeida experience required that Abraham experience the idea that divine service includes concrete religious ritual sacrifice, which results in the sacrifice of the ram. This explanation connects the story of the Akeida with the previous story, which ends with Abraham calling in the name of God by the Eshel in Be'er Sheva, and with the future of Mt. Moriah as the place of sacrifice for later generations.

Eliezer Haddad

### **The law of *Piggul* in the Bible and Halachah**

The purpose of this article is to explain the disparity between Torah law and the rabbinic interpretation of the law of *Piggul* by means of Rav Breuer's 'Aspects Theory'. According to the text of the Torah, eating the sacrificial meat on the third day invalidates the sacrifice. On the other hand, according to Halacha, the sacrifice becomes *Piggul* if at the time of the sprinkling of the blood the priest intended to eat its meat on the third day. The first list of sacrifices (Leviticus 1-5) presents the sprinkling of the blood as the focus of the offering, while the second list of sacrifices (Leviticus 6-7) has eating the sacrifices as the core focus. The sages determined that the sprinkling of the blood is the key action that determines the validity of the sacrifice. This required an alternative interpretation to the verses in the second list.

Miriam (Laor) Kahana

**Habakkuk's Spiritual Struggle with the Rise of the Babylonian Empire  
and its Reflections in the Bible**

Habakkuk opens his prophecy with a fundamental question regarding the evil and injustice of the expected rise of the Babylonians. The response he offers consists of five components:

An early prediction of the end of the reign of evil, indicating divine planning,

A sense of intoxication that will prevent the ruler from perceiving the impending doom, Measure for measure punishment, A sudden collapse that will make an impression on the world, Worldwide recognition of God.

All these are also expressed in the prophecy of Jeremiah, who lives under the oppression of Babylonian rule, as well as in the description of the fall of Babylonia in the book of Daniel.

These same elements can be found when examining the way the Torah relates to the Egyptian bondage. It appears that certain basic assumptions exist with regard to God's rule throughout history, and that His just governance of the world shapes the theological response to kingdoms of evil. The basis of these responses can already be found in the Torah.