

# PARTNERS IN CREATION I

*by Rabbi Daniel Travis*

In reading your e-mail, I have one question: Can you explain what are the heavenly creatures that you refer to when you state that G-d does not make a decision without consulting them?

I thank you for any insight into this issue.

May Hashem bless you,  
Millie

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Dear Millie,

Kabalah compares this world to a shoe. Just as a shoe is merely the end of a person, who is obviously much more than his shoe, so too this world is merely the tail end of thousands of spiritual universes. There are thousands of spiritual beings around us that as physical beings we are not privileged to see.

Kabalistic sources ask who is greater; these heavenly creatures or man. The answer is that although these beings are closer to Hashem, for they are devoid of a physical existence, nonetheless man is greater. The reason for this is that man can lead a spiritual life as a physical being, and this is much harder being spiritual on a purely spiritual domain. Kabalah explains that these spiritual beings are in fact dependent on man's Divine service for their very existence.

I hope that this helps to answer your question.

All the best,  
Rabbi Daniel Yaakov Travis

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Dear Rabbi Travis:

Thank you for your prompt response to my inquiry. Your answer did clear up some of my confusion. However, I do have further questions for you.

Why is these creatures existence dependent on man's Divine service? Why, if they are not greater than man (as explained by the Kabalah) does Hashem ask advice of them?

I apologize for my incessant questioning and want to thank you for your diligence both in answering

my e-mail and in the class.

Sincerely,  
Millie

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Dear Millie,

You do not have to apologize for your questions. I enjoy them very much and encourage you and every single person to always ask questions. In fact the word Yisrael, comes from both the roots "straight with G-d (yashar) and "I have wrestled with G-d" (sar). Someone who is looking to be straight with G-d must first struggle with the ideas of Torah and come out clear. Then he can consider himself part of Yisrael.

In response to your question, on an intrinsic scale, i.e. we might call spiritual understanding, angels are far greater than man. Therefore we can hear that Hashem would consult them when creating the world (even though this was only a facade to teach us humility). However man is greater than them in the sense that even though he is physical in nature and has many drives which pull him away from the spiritual, he continues to push forward on the spiritual frontier.

My Rav, Harav Shlomo Brevid, compared this to a teacher who has strong pupils and weak pupils. The teacher is happy when the strong students understand, but when the weak ones understand he is ecstatic. Hashem is the same way. Our physical nature makes us very weak students. Therefore when we get "good grades", Hashem is ecstatic. However when you really want good advice you go to the strong students not the weak ones.

All the best,

Rabbi Daniel Yaakov Travis

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