

פרשת בראשית

Parshas B'reishis

It's Good to be the King

וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-שֵׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַמְשֵׁלֵת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשֵׁלֵת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים: (בראשית א, טז)

And God made the two great luminaries, the bigger light to rule [during] the day and the smaller light to rule [during] the night, and the stars. (Genesis 1:16)

I – Introduction: Aristotle’s Cave, the Sun, and the Moon

Imagine that you are hiking in a cave far off in a mountain range and discover a person who has spent their entire life inside, never venturing into the outside world. The person tells you that they’ve heard about these things called the sun and moon and would like for you to describe what they are and what they do.

(If anachronistic Aristotelian metaphors aren’t your cup of tea, then instead imagine a child who’s just beginning to learn about the world asking you the same question: what do the sun and moon do?)

To keep things simple, you would probably answer that the sun and moon are objects in the sky that give the Earth light; the sun shines light during the day and the moon reflects light during the night.

“Wait,” the person interrupts you. “What’s day and night?”

Again, in the interest of keeping things simple, you would probably answer that the Earth rotates. Part of the time it faces towards the sun, and part of the time it faces away from the sun. The time when the sun is visible is called day and the time when the moon is visible (when we can't see the sun) is called night.

“So if that’s the case,” the person reasons, “then the sun and moon do two things. They give light and also help us break up time into day and night.”

But is that correct? Breaking up time into day and night isn’t an *inherent function* of the celestial objects, but rather a *human innovation based on the function* of the sun and moon providing light. But before you correct the person, let’s think back to how the Torah characterizes the role of the sun and moon...

II – The Dual Nature of Light (Sources)

Let’s take a look at how the Torah describes the fourth day of creation. When Hashem says that He will create the sun and moon, he says:¹

(14) וַיִּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֶת בְּרַקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם:

(15) וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֶת בְּרַקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהיֶה־כֵן:

(14) *And God said, “Let there be luminaries in heaven” to separate day from night, and they shall serve as signs, set times, days and years.*

(15) *And they shall serve as lights in heaven to shine upon the earth.” And it was so.*

There seem to be two reasons why Hashem wanted there to be lights in the sky: 1) as celestial markers to break up time into measurable units (hours, days, years, etc.) and 2) sources of light.

So it seems that the person you met was correct after all. One of the purposes of the sun and moon are to break up time. What's odd though, is that the function of serving as dividers seems to be their *primary role*.

Aside from serving as time markers being mentioned first, the Torah's phraseology seems to indicate the primary and secondary nature of each function. The Torah introduces the creation of sun and moon with the purpose of separating day from night. *יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם* - *Let there be luminaries in heavenⁱⁱⁱ to separate day from night*. This would indicate that it's the primary reason for their creation. Then, the Torah explains in greater detail additional ways in which they will serve as measuring units: *וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וְשָׁנִים* - *and they shall serve as signs, set times, days and years*. This same language is then used in the next verse to introduce another reason for their creation: *וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֹת בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ* - *And they shall serve as lights in heaven to shine upon the earth*. But being a source of light is not an elaboration of serving as a separation. Instead, "and they shall serve" seems to imply a secondary quality (just like serving as "signs, set times..." does for the more general function of separating between day and night).

Rashi echoes this relationship in his commentary: *והיו למאורת. עוד זאת ישמשו, שיאירו לעולם* - *"In addition to [their function of separating day from night], they will also serve to illuminate the world."*^{iv} Why this counterintuitive hierarchy of functions?

The simplest answer to this question would be that being a light source wasn't the original intent because there was supposed to be an alternative source of illumination. Sound familiar?

It should. Three days earlier, on the first day of creation, the Hashem created light and darkness. Rashi quotes the midrash^v that Hashem later hid this light so that the wicked would not benefit from it. Instead, He charged the sun and moon to illuminate the world. Working under the assumption that Hashem had always wanted to create the sun and moon,^{vi} their original and thus primary function must have been something else – to serve as markers for the original light. Only later was their secondary role of being a light source^{vii} appended.

III – And Now for Something Completely Different?

This characterization, however, leads to another question. Discounting millennia of social, cultural, and biological schemas, there is no inherent reason why these two functions needed to be connected. While it seems natural, even expedient, for the entities which provide light to also serve as measuring units for it, it didn't have to be that way; Hashem could theoretically have charged a different creation to provide light just as He had originally intended to do. In other words, measurement of time and light itself are two completely different, separate entities.

Because Hashem ultimately chose to combine the two roles, they must share some fundamental quality. At the same time, however, they must not be exactly the same because they weren't originally supposed to be connected; it was only after Hashem 'foresaw' the advent of wicked people that He 'modified' His original plan. So what exactly is this amorphous common denominator that being a light source and time measuring tool share?

IV – A Celestial Sin

If we're trying to understand the weak connection between the two functions of the sun and moon, it would be prudent to introduce and examine a third element: the phenomenon that

catalyzed this connection. According the midrash, Hashem decided to conceal the light of the first day, thus necessitating the creation of alternative light sources on the fourth day, because he didn't want the wicked to benefit from such supernal illumination. Thus, the introduction of sin and, more specifically, the introduction of *sinful beings* improperly coopting resources of good appears to be the bridge that combines the two roles of the sun and moon.^{viii}

Indeed, this pattern is reflected in the actual creation of the sun and moon. If we look at the verses describing the fourth day of creation, we'll discover an ostensible contraction in the text. The verse describing the creation of the sun and moon goes as follows:^{ix} וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֶת-הַמְּאֹרֹת הַקְּטָן לְמַמְשָׁלֹת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים “*And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule [during] the day and the lesser light to rule [during] the night, and the stars.*” At the beginning of the verse, the sun and moon are referred to as אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים – two great lights. Once the institution of לְמַמְשָׁלֹת, rulership, is introduced, however, the sun retains its status as the great light, but the moon is apparently demoted to the status of a small light. What is the reason for this change in characterization?

Rashi^x once again picks up on this textual oddity and quotes a gemara^{xi} which describes a fascinating conversation between Hashem and the moon:

רבי שמעון בן פזי רמי כתיב ויעש אלהים את שני המאורות הגדולים וכתוב את המאור הגדול ואת המאור הקטן אמרה ירח לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע אפשר לשני מלכים שישתמשו בכתר אחד אמר לה לכי ומעטי את עצמך

אמרה לפניו רבש"ע הואיל ואמרתי לפניך דבר הגון אמעית את עצמי ... חזייה דלא קא מיתבא דעתה אמר הקב"ה הביאו כפרה עלי שמיעטתי את הירח והיינו דאמר ר"ש בן לקיש מה נשתנה שער של ראש חדש שנאמר בו^{xii} לה' אמר הקב"ה שער זה יהא כפרה על שמיעטתי את הירח

“Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi raises a contradiction between two verses. It is written: “And God made the two great lights”, and it is also written in the same verse: “The greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night,” indicating that only one was great. Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi explains: When God first created the sun and the moon, they were equally bright. Then, the moon said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: ‘Master of the Universe, is it possible for two kings to serve with one crown? One of us must be subservient to the other.’ God therefore said to her, i.e., the moon: ‘If so, go and diminish yourself.’

She said before Him: ‘Master of the Universe, since I said a correct observation before You, must I diminish myself?’ ... God saw that the moon was not comforted. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: ‘Bring atonement for me, since I diminished the moon.’ The Gemara notes: And this is what Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish says: ‘What is different about the goat offering of the New Moon, that it is stated with regard to it: “For the Lord” (Numbers 28:15)? The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: ‘This goat shall be an atonement for Me for having diminished the size of the moon.’”

While this exegesis may answer the overt textual question, it raises a host of new ones. Put succinctly, it seems that moon was right! Hashem Himself appears to acknowledge the validity of the moon’s argument that two kings cannot rule with one crown when he orders the moon to diminish. When the moon later asks why it should be the one to shrink just it because it voiced a sound argument, Hashem does not respond that argument was untrue. Quite the contrary, Hashem later asks the Jews to bring an *atonement* for Him in perpetuity every New Moon after He cannot *pacify* the moon!

And thus the Pandora’s Box of questions opens: If the moon seems to be right, then why was it ostensibly punished? More fundamentally, why would Hashem initially create the world “improperly?”^{xiii}

V – Chiastic Rulership

We can now begin to put the pieces together and answer all of our questions. Let’s start by taking another look at the verses describing the fourth day of creation:^{xiv}

<p>(14) And God said, “Let there be luminaries in heaven to separate day from night, and they shall serve as signs, set times, days and years.</p>	<p>(14) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וְלַיָּמִים וּשְׁנָיִם:</p>
<p>(15) And they shall serve as lights in heaven to shine upon the earth.” And it was so.</p>	<p>(15) וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן:</p>
<p>(16) And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule [during] the day and the lesser light to rule [during] the night, and the stars.</p>	<p>(16) וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמְּאֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַשְׁלַת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־הַמְּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַשְׁלַת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים:</p>
<p>(17) And God set them in the heaven to shine upon the earth.</p>	<p>(17) וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ:</p>
<p>(18) And to rule [during] the day and the night, and to separate between light and darkness. And God saw that this was good.</p>	<p>(18) וּלְמַשְׁלַת בְּיוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:</p>

Before getting into specifics, let’s break down the fourth day into groups of verses, discrete parts of the creation process. While there are probably many ways and levels to break it down, the creation process for the fourth day has three general parts:

1. Pre-Creation Speech (Verses 14-15) – Hashem declares what He wants to create and for what purpose.
2. Act of Creation (Verse 16) – Hashem creates.
3. Post-Creation Modification and Evaluation (Verses 17-18) – Hashem puts on the “finishing touches” by giving the creations their places and functions in creation and deciding that the final product is ‘good’ and worthy of permanence.^{xv}

1	(14) And God said, “Let there be luminaries in the firmament of heaven to separate day from night, and they shall serve as signs, set times, days and years.	(14) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בַּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם:
1	(15) And they shall serve as lights in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth.” And it was so.	(15) וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֹת בַּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ, וַיְהִי־כֵן:
2	(16) And God made the two great luminaries, the greater light to rule [during] the day and the lesser light to rule [during] the night, and the stars.	(16) וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹל לְמִשְׁלַת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־הַמְּאֹרֹת הַקְּטָן לְמִשְׁלַת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים:
3	(17) And God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth.	(17) וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בַּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:
3	(18) And to rule [during] the day and the night, and to separate between light and darkness. And God saw that this was good.	(18) וּלְמִשְׁלַת בְּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹרֹת וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ, וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:

If we analyze the subgroups, one of the many observations we can make is that in both sections 1 and 3, the Torah lists the two functions for the sun and moon (and stars), separating night from day and sources of light.

However, there is one critical difference between section 1 and section 3: the order is reversed. In section 1, the first verse (14) mentions separating night from day, and the second verse (15) mentions being light sources. In section 3, the first verse (17) mentions light sources and the second verse (18) mentions separating between night and day.

Such a chiastic structure is not unusual in Tanach, but it is deliberate. Indeed, the fourth day of creation is not the only day in which multiple things were created, and yet this is the only day in which a chiastic structure is utilized.^{xvi} As such, it would seem that there is a particular message or idea about the fourth day of creation that the chiastic structure wants to draw attention to.

Chiasms can serve different purposes, but put generally, a chiasm follows a circular structure (e.g. A-B-C-B-A). It is a self-contained unit that has no beginning or end,^{xvii} drawing the reader to a core message at its center.

The center of our chiasm lies in verse 16. *וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יְשֻׁבֵּי הַמָּאֲרָת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמָּאֲזוּר הַקָּטָן* - *And God made the two great luminaries, the greater light to rule [during] the day and the lesser light to rule [during] the night, and the stars.* This pasuk comprises section 2, the act of creation, and succinctly articulates what appears to be the main idea of the fourth day of creation: *rulership*.

As the verse indicates, Hashem placed the sun and moon in the sky to rule during the day and night respectively. This rulership manifests itself in two ways: by serving as a light source and by being a tool to measure the passage of time. Indeed, this dynamic is reinforced by the chiasm; the central, core idea is rulership, and its satellite actuations are separating day from night and shining upon the earth:

A	1	(14) And God said, “Let there be luminaries in the firmament of heaven to separate day from night, and they shall serve as signs, set times, days and years.	(14) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לִהְבֵּדִיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם:
B	1	(15) And they shall serve as lights in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth. ” And it was so.	(15) וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן:
C	2	(16) And God made the two great luminaries, the greater light to rule [during] the day and the lesser light to rule [during] the night, and the stars.	(16) וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמְּאֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־הַמְּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים:
B	3	(17) And God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth.	(17) וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ:
A	3	(18) And to rule [during] the day and the night, and to separate between light and darkness. And God saw that this was good.	(18) וּלְמַשֵּׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:

VI – Paradigms of Rulership

While these two manifestations of rulership are obviously quite different, there is one key aspect that can help us answer our questions. If we take those descriptions as paradigms for rulership, reduced to their fundamental dynamics, they represent two different ways in which a ruler interacts with subordinates.

Serving as a source of light for the world entails the transfer of goods. The sun and moon give light to the world. They achieve and exert their authority by controlling and bestowing

resources. Similarly, kings and other rulers achieved and exerted authority by controlling and bestowing resources upon others like food and protection.

Serving as a tool to measure time and separate day from night, however, is fundamentally different. It does not require the transfer of anything. In fact, the sun and moon are actually quite passive *visa vi* the world; they simply pass in and out of the horizon. Moreover, we now know through modern science that the Earth is doing a lot of the work in this process. It spins along its axis to create day and night, and it rotates around the sun creating years. In effect, much of the impact that these celestial bodies have upon the earth described in the Torah^{xviii} is simply their presence which the Earth responds to through the laws of gravity.

More fundamentally, the measurement of time is a human innovation. It is our response to observing natural phenomena. In a certain way, it is the method with which humanity asserts itself over nature. Defining something, naming something, is the first step to asserting control over it. The foreign entity is no longer an unknown. It assumes descriptions and laws which can be harnessed and exploited.^{xix}

The measurement of time was an incredible innovation. Humanity could learn when to sow crops. On a socio-cultural level they were able to plan for the future and concretize memories of the past. The measurement of time is so intimately connected to the power of human initiative that Hashem gave us the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh; the month is only sanctified when *we* declare it so, and by extension, the holidays follow the lunar calendar which *we* establish on a monthly basis.^{xx} In fact, the gemara says^{xxi} that Hashem abides by the Sanhedrin's decision when Rosh Chodesh would fall out! Because time is the fundamental locus between humanity and nature, the genesis of sophisticated human innovation, the first mitzvah

which Hashem gave the Jews in Egypt when they were becoming a people and developing an identity was the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh.

In this paradigm of rulership, there is no giver and receiver. The ruler is an entity of gravitas and inspiration, attracting and cultivating others. Thus, the substantive output is ultimately made by the subordinates.^{xxii}

VII – Scarcity and Competition

One crucial difference between these two paradigms is that the first model, the giving model, requires the transfer of resources which is inherently limited and thus subject to competition. One of the fundamental concepts in economics is scarcity. In a finite world with finite resource and infinite want,^{xxiii} competition is inevitable. Thus, when two beings are asserting control by giving, their respective power is measured by the resources they bestow. The more you have to give and the more time you have to give means the more power you have. As such, these beings are inherently in competition with each other.

In the second model, however, a model of inspiration, there does not have to be *inherent* competition. That's not to say that inspirational figures cannot compete for spheres of influence - they certainly can. Rather, they don't have to. Unlike tangible resources, inspiration (and knowledge) is infinite.^{xxiv} Indeed, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Isaac McPherson that there shouldn't be a patent on ideas because, "he who receives an idea from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine, receives light without darkening me."^{xxv} Two people can theoretically inspire someone and not be in competition with one another.

The same was true with the dual purposes of the sun and moon. Two celestial objects charged with giving the world light, a scarce resource, pits them against one another. They are vying for the same crown – ruling the world by controlling the light. Competition is inevitable. Thus, the moon argued that two kings cannot rule with the same crown; two beings cannot possibly achieve power under the same banner. Because that authority is limited just like the resource that creates the institution.

However, the other model, serving as a separation between night and day does not necessarily have to be one of competition. In this role, the sun and moon complement each other; each one functions at a separate time. If the sun or moon functioned at both day and night, then it wouldn't be a tool for separation!

But it's more than just that their respective roles complement each other. Day and night are intangible constructs. They are divinely ordained^{xxvi} terms and concepts that humanity generates. That is not something that demands competition; rulership created by inspiration is not inherently mutually exclusive. Not because inspiring people are altruistic and welcome intellectual or emotional competition, but because inspiration is generated from within. Thus, your sphere of influence is measured by the degree to which you cause the other person to create.

VIII – From a Certain Point of View

— We can now understand the conversation that took place between Hashem and the moon. Initially, Hashem wanted the world to utilize the light from the first day of creation, and the sun and moon would only function as tools to measure the passage of time. Because this form of rulership is not inherently competitive, it would not have been a scenario of “two kings using one crown.”

Although Hashem later appended the duty of illuminating the world to their duties, an inherently competitive form of rulership, it remained an ancillary one. Thus, in stage 1 when Hashem is talking about the creation, He characterizes the function of *havdalah* as the primary one by listing it first in the same pasuk as the *amirah* of creation, while the tertiary function of giving light is listed afterward in a second verse.

Despite the hierarchy indicated by the *pesukim*, the combination of functions invites the potential to perceive the arrangement as competitive or adversarial. This was the argument of the moon. And indeed, it's argument had validity...

But only from a certain perspective.

If you believe that the primary function of a ruler is to cultivate self-generated development, a non-adversarial, power dynamic, then the secondary components that are become eclipsed. Thus, both Hashem and the moon were correct in their assessments of the situation. The difference lay in what they believed the primary function of the celestial objects were.

Just as light itself has a dual nature (it's both a wave and particle), the purveyors of light also had a dual nature: competitive and non-competitive. And each had the potential to be true depending on the perspective taken.

When the moon complained that two kings cannot rule with same crown, it was correct. A crown is both the symbol and source of royal power and authority, and it is impossible for two rulers to concurrently rule with the same source of power without competition. But that is only because the moon saw its primary function as a source of light, a purveyor of finite resources and subject to rivalry.

But it didn't need to be that way. Hashem saw the relationship of the sun and moon as a symbiotic relationship, a rulership focused on inspiration in which competition was not a foregone conclusion. Therefore, from *His* perspective, the moon was incorrect, and that's why Hashem had no problem making the sun and moon equal sizes. Thus, Hashem responded that the moon should shrink because from *its* perspective there was an unsustainable competitive environment.

At the same time, because the moon saw it from an alternative, suboptimal, but nevertheless true perspective, Hashem responded to it in kind. Indeed, the order of the functions in the stage 3 of creation is reversed – illumination precedes *havdalah*. Just as Hashem wanted the moon to be the one to shrink since it was the one that had that perspective, Hashem also acknowledged that from the moon's perspective it had been slighted by such a demand. After all, according to the moon, it was correct so why should it be the one to shrink. Thus, Hashem acknowledged the validity of the moon's complaint and even requested that the Jews bring an 'atonement' for Him.

At the same time, Hashem also sought to educate the moon about the optimal, correct perspective. Even when Hashem attempted to placate the moon with additional sources of light, Hashem gave it the stars.^{xxvii} Stars are quite different than the moon. The moon certainly contributes a greater percentage of light to the earth than the stars do. However, it's not because it radiates more light. On the contrary, the moon itself doesn't radiate any light. Instead, it reflects the light of the sun! Its potency compared to stars stems from its proximity to the light source and the light recipient. Conversely, the stars which are exponentially brighter than the moon contribute much less light to earth because of their relative distance to the planet. Thus,

Hashem sought to teach the moon that although it was technically correct, there was a more profound, correct perspective.

XI – Conclusion: True Leadership

There is a story told^{xxviii} about a man who once visited a rabbi rumored to perform miracles for people seeking blessings. The man asked the rabbi if the rumors about him performing miracles were true, but the rabbi just shrugged. “Some people need crutches,” he replied. “But the real role of a rabbi is to be a candle. To ignite and unlock the power that already rests within a Jewish soul.”

Just as the moon and Hashem were both correct, leadership has two necessary components. At times authority must be exerted from the possession of finite resources, whether it be physical prowess, economic might, or even technical skill. At other times, authority must be cultivated by inspiration, serving as a role model for others to catalyze their own development. Both are necessary, and both are true. The essence of leadership, its core, however, is the latter. To serve as a candle to unlock the latent power of another.

ⁱ Genesis 1:14-15

ⁱⁱ בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם literally means “in the firmament called heaven.” (See Aderes Eliyahu ad loc.) In other words, this is like referring to a specific river by both its name and description (e.g. the Euphrates River). Thus, the Torah is calling הַשָּׁמַיִם the Heaven Firmament. This is an unusual way to refer to the heavens; usually it’s just called הַשָּׁמַיִם (e.g. Genesis 1:1). As such, there is probably a link between the celestial lights and the concept of a firmament, and not heaven per se. See Rabbeinu Bachya for further explanations.

ⁱⁱⁱ בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם literally means “in the firmament called heaven.” (See Aderes Eliyahu ad loc.) In other words, this is like referring to a specific river by both its name and title – the X River. Thus, in this case, the Torah is calling הַשָּׁמַיִם the Heaven Firmament. This is an unusual way to refer to the heavens; usually it’s just called הַשָּׁמַיִם (e.g.). As such, there is probably a link between the celestial lights and the concept of a firmament, and not heaven per se.

^{iv} See Rashi Genesis 30:15, Ezekiel 20:27, Hosea 14:4, and Psalms 87:4. However, see also Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh, etc.

^v Genesis Rabbah 3:6

^{vi} See Rashi and Ramban that everything was created in a preliminary form in the first instant of creation. Thus, even before Hashem decided to create the sun and moon even before He elected to conceal the light.

^{vii} See Ramban, Bachya, and Aderes Eliyahu who explain that the sun and moon are portals through which light emanates from higher dimensions and not light sources themselves. This characterization does not contradict our understanding; the term “light source” was only meant to serve as a literary foil for simply being a marker for the original, more supernal light created on the first day.

^{viii} This midrash also raises another point that will later be examined. If Hashem knew about the existence of the wicked, then why did he only realize it later and ‘modify’ the plan? Indeed, the Torah frames it as a reaction, not a forethought, as it is written in the evaluative stage of the creation process.

^{ix} Genesis 1:16

^x Genesis 1:16 s.v. *Hameoros Hagedolim*

^{xi} Chullin 60a

^{xii} Numbers 28:15

^{xiii} Other questions are but not limited to how the sacrifice actually atones for God? Who exactly is He giving the sacrifice to? Why didn't the sun complain?

^{xiv} Genesis 1:14-18

^{xv} See Ramban Genesis 1:4

^{xvi} For example, see day three (Genesis 1:9-13).

^{xvii} See Gevuros Hashem 47. This also may be the reason why a bracha's end must be like the beginning (See Brachos 49).

^{xviii} There are some exceptions in which the Sun and Moon are active participants. See Rashi to Genesis 1:14. A full discussion to explain the differences is beyond the scope of this work.

^{xix} See Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's *Lonely Man of Faith* Introduction and Chapter 1.

^{xx} This is particularly noteworthy because the moon is the most active in this process. Thus, in a certain sense, we are compensated for it.

^{xxi} See Leviticus 23:4 and Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 1:3

^{xxii} This concept is alluded to quite beautifully in Sanhedrin 42a. See also *Pachad Yitzchak: Pesach*

^{xxiii} See Kohelles Rabbah 1:34 “*Mi sheyeish lo maneh rotzeh masa'im.*”

^{xxiv} The midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 13:19) compares knowledge to the light of a candle. (“No Patents on Ideas See also *Pachad Yitzchak: Rosh Hashanah* Discourse 2.

^{xxv} “No Patents on Ideas,” August 13, 1813.

^{xxvi} Genesis 1:4

^{xxvii} Chullin 60b

^{xxviii} See Yehudah Avner's *The Prime Ministers*