

# GENESIS & LITERATURE: FINAL EXAM

PART I: 7 of 9—Organization counts, and ability to cite examples.

1. Amichai's poem on the Akeda: How does it differ from other Israeli poems about the Akeda? In what ways does it "go against the grain" of the Biblical text and/or traditional understanding. Give examples.

2. Discuss, with examples, the tension between equality and hierarchy in *Paradise Lost*. Discuss relevance of this subject to Biblical interpretation.

3. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of Radbaz's analysis of the original sin. How did we attempt to reconstruct this view? (Be sure to include Ibn Ezra's contribution.) How did our examination of the Gilgamesh Epic help?

4. Contrast depiction of snake's argument to Eve in *Breshit Rabba* and *Avot d'Rabbi Natan*. Discuss approach taken by Milton. Where was Adam during Eve's seduction according to Hazal and Milton?

5. Discuss G-d's address to Cain before the murder and Cain's reaction according to various classical commentators. Note the implications of this discussion for the interpretation of his sacrifice.

6. Discuss G-d's dialogue with Cain after the murder, noting classical commentators and Malbim's use of them and taking into account themes in European literature.

7. Discuss Netziv's analysis of Cain and compare it with R. Yosef Albo, Unamuno and Baudelaire.

8. Abraham's communication with Isaac according to R. Kook and Kierkegaard.

9. Discuss the stages in the creation of man according to Hazal ("...מַדְּבָר" as interpreted by Maharal and in light of the discussion in *Lonely Man of Faith*.

PART II: Discuss a few benefits or pitfalls of producing art on Biblical themes. Be sure to refer to specific works. (Optional: To what extent can similar arguments be made about midrashic material?)

BONUS! A) Byron, *Don Juan* 1:127 compares first love to "Adam's recollection of his fall; The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd--all's known-- And life yields nothing further to recall Worthy of this ambrosial sin, so shown, No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven Prometheus flihd for us from heaven." A scholar observed that Byron compares original sin to Prometheus, but would never make the reverse comparison of Prometheus to Adam. Comment on this! B) Who is Poochy and how did he come up in class?

You may use Biblical text without commentators and Mikraot Gedolot. Thank you for helping to make the semester enjoyable and productive. I hope you have found it equally worth your while. Indicate state of your paper. If submitted by e-mail use Word 2003 rather than most up to date version.

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