בס”ד

**Shared Purpose**

Torah recognizes that women and men are different just as the sciences of anatomy and physiology do.  Across all the non-androgynous species’ on the planet, males and females have different roles and are gifted with different virtues befitting those roles.  In fact, even among plants — most of which *are* androgynous, flowers have distinct male components called stamens, and female components called carpels.

In the colorful world of flowers, the stamen has the same purpose as the carpel and they are both indispensable, but each is unique, and they play very different roles in realizing that common purpose.  This same contrast between different roles that contribute to a shared purpose exists in the animal kingdom, and Homo sapiens is no exception.  Men and women have equally important roles to play in completing the universe, and our roles differ just like those of the flowers’ stamens and carpels do.

Where humans *do* differ from plants and the rest of the animal kingdom, is in our level of cognizance; in our ability to be more consciously aware of a purpose greater than just the continuation of our species.

Among all forms of life, humans have a unique role to play, having intellectual and academic capacities that stand us apart in our ability to achieve, and allow us a unique degree of free choice.  These same capacities also mean that making the choice to do the right thing can be uniquely difficult for us.  Where animals by nature generally just do what they are supposed to, naturally making their designated contributions to the universe, humans have an almost infinite range of self-gratifying options available, and often experience strong desires to pursue them.  In order to keep the right balance, each of us also has a conscience and a unique mind that can anticipate the outcomes of our actions.  We are able to understand that we part of an infinite cosmos, that each of us is a note in the symphony of the universe, and we can weigh up the moral values of our various options.

Like all symphonies, the totality of all existence has many parts; it is a multiverse that is part physical and part spiritual.  Our physical senses are in touch with the physical layer of reality, but they are oblivious to the majority of existence which is spiritual, existing in parallel with the physical reality we see.  It is in the intangible spiritual that our true purpose lies, and that purpose has a variety of complementary elements.

The Kabbalistic perspective looks down from above rather than up from below.  The spiritual is a cosmological precursor of the material, and precisely because of the variety of roles that are needed to achieve ‘multiversal’ completeness, and the variety of souls that are needed to fulfill those roles, there is a variety of bodies that differ from each other anatomically and physiologically in order to match their souls and their roles in cosmic purpose. Tall and short, blonde and brunette, woman and man.

With the awareness that it plays a vital role in the totality of the symphony and that its contribution is unique irreplaceable, each note can take pride in its contribution.  When all the notes are in place ringing strong and true in harmony, the perfection is exquisite.