

Introduction

Biology is the study of life. In the Garden of Eden there were two trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. A tree, with its roots, trunk, branches, foliage, and fruit, symbolizes a developmental program that starts with a germinating seed and culminates in fruits and new seeds. The Tree of Life symbolizes the creation of life, and the evolution of life from the perspective of the Torah.

“Knowledge” in Hebrew also means “consciousness.” The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil symbolizes the “tree” of conscious living forms, the pinnacle of which is man. The Torah is both the unfolding story of life and the unfolding story of human consciousness. It bestows life on those who walk in its path and corrects our state of consciousness, teaching us to know what is good and what is not, and to focus on what is good. Thus we may say that the Tree of Life is the “tree” of integrated Torah-biology and the Tree of Knowledge is the “tree” of integrated Torah-psychology and the understanding of human consciousness.

Integration of Torah and science requires a common frame of reference, a model that fits both Torah and science. The foundation of this model is the essential unity of the Creator and His creation. The language of this model is provided by Kabbalah, the most “scientific” aspect of the Torah. Kabbalah provides the language that reveals the correspondence

between key Torah concepts and their scientific counterparts. At the core of this unifying language are the *sefirot* (often referred to themselves as the Tree of Life), the lights and channels of both life and consciousness that flow from the Creator to His creation.

In contrast to the all-encompassing unity of the Creator and His creation, ordinary reality appears fragmented and devoid of purpose. Biology courses in Jewish schools often reflect this fragmentation, describing a reality in which the presence of the Creator is completely hidden.

We present here a pilot chapter of a Torah-biology textbook aimed at properly reflecting the true unity of creation. Biology, the science of life, is optimally suited for that purpose. This pilot chapter deals with nutrition, the science that describes the food the body needs and the process of its assimilation. The chapter alternates between science and Torah knowledge, always aiming at their integration. The ultimate purpose of this approach is to create a divinely oriented consciousness, which should help bring us back to the unadulterated consciousness state of the Garden of Eden.