

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

At the outset, congratulations on the excellence of your publication. The quality of content has not changed during the many years I have been a subscriber.

I wish to refer to your Verses From the Hebrew Bible section (XXIX:2, April-June 2001) where on page 124 reference is made to the well known quotation from Genesis 1:27 *And God created man in His own image.*

Now surely this statement is strange in the extreme and must have puzzled innumerable people through the centuries as it cannot possibly mean that God created us to look like Him – this is blasphemous, especially as God has no form known to man.

So what could it mean? Instead of *in His image*, I venture to suggest that it means to resemble Him. There is more than a subtle difference in the meaning. Resemble means to copy or emulate and hence the meaning could be that we must copy what we ascribe to Him and we must do our best to act as we would like Him to act toward us; i.e., be helpful, forgiving, kind, charitable, looking after the widows and orphans, and all the other positive good deeds we ourselves so dearly request.

Bernhard Lazarus
Durban, South Africa

Sir,

I read with interest "The Jewish Calendar" (XXIX:3, July-September 2001), as I always do with Jacob Chinitz's contributions.

I vividly remember, however, observing the ritual of *Kiddush Hahamah* in the fields of Kibbutz Sdei Eliyahu when I was there as a volunteer in April 1953. I believe the *Kiddush Hahamah* was again observed on March 18, 1981. Thus, the next observance will fall in the year 5769 (2009).

The error, which so often occurs with calendar calculations, arises with the first year which was 1 and not 0. Thus the 28th anniversary of the fourth day of Creation would occur in the year 29 and not 28, etc.

Henry Skirball
Jerusalem

Sir,

I recently came across a document that seems to verify some of the Ten Plagues in Egypt. My comments follow the quotations. A.H. Gardiner, "Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage from a hieratic papyrus in Leiden" (1909) quotes the Ipuwer papyrus (Leiden 344) as saying (in part):

2:5-6: "Plague is throughout the land. Blood is everywhere." First Plague – blood [*dam*] or Second Plague – frogs [*zefardeah*].

2:10: "The river is blood. Men shrink from tasting – human beings, and thirst after water; Forsooth, gates, columns and walls are consumed by fire."

2:13 "He who places his brother in the ground is everywhere." Tenth Plague – smiting of the first-born [*makkat bekhoro*].

3:10-14: "That is our water! That is our happiness! What shall we do in respect thereof? All is ruin. It is groaning throughout the land, mingled with lamentations."

4:3/5:6: "Forsooth, the children of princes are dashed against the walls."

5:5: "All animals, their hearts weep. Cattle moan . . ." Fifth Plague – pestilence [*dever*].

5:12: "Forsooth, that has perished which was yesterday seen. The land is left over to its weariness like the cutting of flax." Seventh Plague – hailstones [*barad*]. (See Exodus 9:31: *Now the flax and barley were ruined.*)

6:3: "Forsooth, grain has perished on every side. The prison is ruined." Eighth Plague – locusts [*arbeh*].

6:12: "Forsooth, the children of princes are cast out in the streets."

7:1: "Behold, the fire has mounted up on high. Its burning goes forth against the enemies of the land." See: Exodus 9:24: *The hail was very heavy; fire flashing in the midst of the hail.*

9:2-3: "Behold, cattle are left to stray, and there is none to gather them together." Fourth Plague – wild beasts [*arov*].

9:11: "The land is without light." Ninth Plague – darkness [*hoshekh*].

10:3-6: "Lower Egypt weeps . . . The entire palace is without its revenues. To it belong [by right] wheat and barley, geese and fish."

Josh Backon

Jerusalem