

THE GIANT WITHIN

Background

The *Chovos HaLevovos* teaches us that one of the wonders of Creation is that HASHEM implanted into the *nefesh* of each animal all of the instincts that it will need for its survival, as well as the survival of its species as a whole.

This entire planet is filled with a vast array of diverse animal life—at least 1.5 million species—all with the drives, instincts, tools, and aptitudes they need to earn their living, and all with the inborn desire to procreate, thereby assuring the continuation of the next generation.

And all of this is by instinct. Two bullfrogs don't sit down to analyze their compatibility and mutual interests before they decide to have a family. Impulses and drives dominate the animal kingdom. At certain times of year, the pull is stronger, and in certain situations it is weaker, but pre-programmed into every species is the inborn need to continue its kind.

Rashi tells us that in the time of the Noach, the world became so corrupt that even the animals were no longer faithful. They no longer mated only with their own kind, but began mixed-species mating.

Questions

How is it possible that the animals veered off their path? Man was given free will, the ability to follow his nature for goodness or to ignore it. But animals weren't given that capacity. How is it possible that the animals began choosing mates from other species?

ספר בראשית פרק ו

(יב) וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחָתָה כִּי הִשְׁחִית כָּל בֶּשֶׂר אֶת דְּרָכָו עַל הָאָרֶץ:

And God saw the earth, and behold it had become corrupted, for all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth.

רש"י על בראשית פרק ו פסוק יב

(יב) כי השחית כל בשר - אפי' בהמה חיה ועוף נזקקין לשאינן מינן

For all flesh had become corrupted - *Even cattle, beasts, and fowl would mate with those that were not of their own species.*