

Rabbi Adina Allen:

Creativity is not our own genius, rather it is that which flows from and connects us to the Divine. Opening to this flow is something we can practice. The more practice we get, the more easily and easefully our creativity can emerge. When we are tapped into our creativity, acting from this place of inspiration and aliveness, it is sometimes hard to tell what of what has been created was made by “us” and what of what came into being was the work of something bigger and beyond (or deep within) us coming through.

Rather than acting alone, when we create we become a vessel through which creativity flows. When we are in this place, any idea of “ownership” becomes unnecessary, and untrue. The boundaries between us and the Divine get blurry as this creative collaboration comes to the fore. In this way, creativity can be understood as an act of partnership with God. The morning prayers describe God as “*mechadesh b'chol yom tamid ma'aseh b'reshit*” - the one who continually brings forth the new works of creation. How else does God renew the world but through us and all living creatures? It is through our creativity that we partner with God in renewing the world.

This partnership is the birthright of each and every one of us. Creativity is the place where we and the Divine meet.

Joanne Fink:

Often the word *creativity* is used to refer to those who create music, art, and literature. Yet, having been created

in God’s image, each of us is inherently creative. We are each blessed with natural abilities that can manifest in myriad of ways— from a chef’s innovative recipes to a teacher’s ability to inspire a class of children with learning challenges to a teenager’s leadership in sharing her vision of protecting our planet from climate change. Mordecai Kaplan’s quote, “Every creative act... adds to the meaning of life and is a revelation of the Divine”, encourages each of us to tap into and hone our innate gifts and talents as a personal form of creative expression. Through creating, we not only reveal the Divine Spark within us, but can also kindle the latent sparks in others. Using our creative gifts to serve others imbues our lives with profound meaning and provides a path to connection with the Divine. Every act of intentional creativity offers an opportunity to dance with the Divine, which in turn allows us to add depth, richness and beauty to our lives and the world. Our innate spark of Creative Divine Light shines ever brighter when we purposefully engage in creative acts and become co-creators in the ever-unfolding tapestry of life. This creative engagement is a living testament to Kaplan’s thought-provoking assertion, illustrating that creativity is not merely a personal endeavor but a Divine Mission imbued with profound meaning.

Elizheva Hurvich:

From where does our creativity come? Perhaps as creatures “created in God’s image,” we create as God created! Looking at the ultimate creation story, I see a map for creativity. Join me! In the beginning, Elohim created Heavens and Earth. With what? Verse two reveals that the earth was “*tohu v’vohu*,” unformed and chaotic, with darkness, a surface, a depth, water and a spirit of God hovering. In the face of this darkness and chaos, Elohim says “let there be light,” separating light and darkness, creating the world.

Let’s imagine “unformed and chaotic” as materials to play with, to re-create into something else. Darkness serves as a metaphor for potential, something not yet revealed, something latent, waiting to be formed. We may recognize the chaos and darkness, the unknown. Standing at the border, spirit hovering, we look into the darkness, and metaphorically call out “let there be light!” aka: help me make sense of this. We need not turn away from the unknown, but lean in, find meaning in even the uncomfortable unknown. A spark. An idea. Let go. Hover. Reconsider the materials, the letters, the ideas, the creations. We separate. We look. We name (or don’t.) We reflect and understand creation anew.

Embracing the *tohu v’vohu* of the world, we go into our own unformed darkness, hover a bit, reform the material in a new

light and name our experience. This is not only a reflection of the Divine but is a creative act that may be a new revelation, an experience akin to Moses receiving revelation on Sinai. May these verses illuminate for us a map for our on-going human creativity.

