Betzalmo

Thanking G-d for being created in His Image

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

THE TORAH STATES that G-d made man and woman *b'tzelem elohim* - in the image of G-d (Gen 1:28), which means that every human life is holy, unique, and worthy of profound respect, compassion, and understanding.

The Jewish sages attempt to protect us from "anthropomorphism," or that tendency in each of us to create G-d in our own image. For example, Rashi said that being created in G-d's image meant that humans possess quality of understanding and discernment; Nachmonides explained it by saying that just as G-d was immortal, so was the human soul, and so on.

Granted that we are all liable to deceive ourselves into thinking we are acting in a G-dly manner, perhaps the meaning of being created *b'tzelem elohim* has to do not so much with how we see ourselves, but how we choose to see and respond to others. As Martin Buber said, G-d exists in the "space between," where two people are present for one another, in relationship *(I and Thou)*. We must apprehend the truth that not only we are created in the image of G-d, but so also is our neighbor -- despite his or her gender, race, looks, political outlook, and social standing. When we do so, we will be enabled to "imagine" as G-d Himself does, as "no respecter of persons," and thereby are made free to abide in the truth of our own identity as one of G-d's children.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשַׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

Blessed art Thou, LORD our God, Master of the universe, Who created me in His Image.

Transliterated:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

ha·'o·lam	**me**·lekh	e·lo·**he**y·nu	'Adonai	'at·tah	ba·rukh
the universe	*king (of)*	*our God*	*Lord*	*are you*	*Blessed*

שֶׁעָשַׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

b'tsalmo	she'**asa**ni
in His image.	*Who made me*

Barukh attah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam,
she'asani betzalmo.