

# Parshat Tazria: Your Creative Partnership with God

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In Parshat Tazria the Torah teaches us about the mitzvah of brit milah, circumcision. Why can't we leave the body as it is? Why does Hashem command us to change it in some ways (brit milah) but not in others (tatoos?)

The Greeks promoted the concept that the human body was perfect and beautiful, and that it shouldn't be touched but rather celebrated (and even worshipped.) The naturalists say "nature is good, natural is best" and worship something called "mother nature." They feel that humanity is destroying the natural world, and that us humans are somehow not a part of nature. Others say God created a world of perfection and we shouldn't change it.

Hashem could have created everything in a state of absolute perfection. Hashem could have created a world that didn't need our influence or input. Yet this is not the world He created, not only do we make fields of wheat, we build houses and synagogues. We plant and sow, we build and modify. Whether it is the environment or our bodies, we are intimately involved in making our presence felt.

Reb Nosson tells us that without our creative partnership with Hashem, by choosing right actions over wrong, and good actions over evil, we aren't able to grow spiritually and earn our spiritual reward. If everything in the world was already at a state of perfection, what would be our task? What would be our life mission? What would be our satisfaction?

Let's go back to the wheat fields, post-harvest. Just as we must grind wheat, turn it into flour, mix it with yeast or sourdough starter, knead it, let it rise, and bake it in order to turn the plant that is wheat into bread we must do the same with ourselves. We must work on ourselves and fix ourselves and improve the world. We must turn the raw material of ourselves into something more. The process is as important as the outcome, because it is the process of accepting and working in creative partnership with Hashem.

*May you have a day in which you make the world a better place.*

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