A Space for Relationships:

Genesis 1-2 and the Birthplace of Human Connections

Rachel Sharansky Danziger * October 5th 2021 * Bereshit: The Birthplace of Human Relationships #1

Course description:

The book of Genesis explores the most primal of human relationships even as it documents the dawn of humanity's relationship with God Himself. What can the first tell us about the latter? How do both types of relationships balance love with liberty, or being a part of something bigger than the self with being apart, unique, and therefore free?

The course will explore the complex families of Genesis and the evolution of both love and liberty in human interactions, and ask where they meet our own lived experience, and how they shape the covenant to come.

1: Whose story is it?

Genesis 1:1-5

(1) When God began to create heaven and earth— (2) the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water— (3) God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. (4) God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. (5) God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, a first day.

בראשית א׳:א׳-ה׳

(א) בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ (ב) וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃ (ג) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃ (ד) וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ׃ (ה) וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים ׀ לָאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לָיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד׃ (פ)

Peter Guber, "The Four Truths of the Storyteller", HBR:

Every storyteller is in the expectations-management business.

2. Humanity as God's object

Genesis 1:24-27

(24) God said, "Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts of every kind." And it was so. (25) God made wild beasts of every kind and cattle of every kind, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. And God saw that this was good. (26) And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on earth." (27) And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

בראשית א':כ"ד-כ"ז

(כד) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה֙ לְמִינָהּ֒ בְּהֵמָה וָרֶמֶשׂ וְחַיְתוֹ־אֶרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי־ כֵן׃ (כה) וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים֙ אֶת־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה֙ לְמִינָהּ וְאֵת כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינֵהוּ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב׃ (כו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה֙ וּבְכָל־ הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ׃ (כז) וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים ׀ אֶת־הָאָדָם֙ בְּצַלְמוֹ֙ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם׃

Genesis 1:28-2:3

(28) God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth." (29) God said, "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant that is upon all the earth, and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit; they shall be yours for food. (30) And to all the animals on land, to all the birds of the sky, and to everything that creeps on earth, in which there is the breath of life, [I give] all the green plants for food." And it was so. (31) And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (1) The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. (2) On the seventh day God finished the work that He had been doing, and He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had done. (3) And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation that He had done.

בראשית א':כ"ח-ב':ג'

(כח) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם֮ אֱלֹהִים֒ וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְכִבְשֻׁהָ וּרְדוּ בִּדְגַת הַיָּם֙ וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל־ הָאָרֶץ׃ (כט) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה֩ נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב ׀ זֹרֵעַ זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר֙ עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ פְרִי־עֵץ זֹרֵעַ זָרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאָכְלָה׃ (ל) וּלְכָל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וּלְכָל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכֹל ׀ רוֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֶת־כָּל־יֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב לְאָכְלָה וַיְהִי־כֵן׃ (לא) וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים֙ אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה־טוֹב מְאֹד וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשִּׁשִּׁי׃ (פ) (א) וַיְכֻלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָם׃ (ב) וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים֙ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת֙ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה׃ (ג) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים֙ אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בוֹ שָׁבַת֙ מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־ בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת׃ (פ)

3: the first crack

Genesis 1:11-12

(11) And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: seed-bearing plants, fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. (12) The earth brought forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that this was good.

בראשית א׳:י״א-י״ב

(יא) וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֱלֹהִ֗ים תַּֽדְשֵׁ֤א הָאָ֙רֶץ֙ דֶּ֔שֶׁא עֵ֚שֶׂב מַזְרִ֣יעַ זֶ֔רַע עֵ֣ץ פְּרִ֞י עֹ֤שֶׂה פְּרִי֙ לְמִינ֔וֹ אֲשֶׁ֥ר זַרְעוֹ־ב֖וֹ עַל־הָאָ֑רֶץ וַֽיְהִי־כֵֽן׃ (יב) וַתּוֹצֵ֨א הָאָ֜רֶץ דֶּ֠שֶׁא עֵ֣שֶׂב מַזְרִ֤יעַ זֶ֙רַע֙ לְמִינֵ֔הוּ וְעֵ֧ץ עֹֽשֶׂה־פְּרִ֛י אֲשֶׁ֥ר זַרְעוֹ־ב֖וֹ לְמִינֵ֑הוּ וַיַּ֥רְא אֱלֹהִ֖ים כִּי־טֽוֹב׃

4: Not yet

Genesis 2:4-7

(4) Such is the story of heaven and earth when they were created. When the LORD God made earth and heaven— (5) when no shrub of the field was yet on earth and no grasses of the field had yet sprouted, because the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth and there was no man to till the soil, (6) but a flow would well up from the ground and water the whole surface of the earth— (7) the LORD God formed man from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

בראשית ב׳:ד׳-ז׳

(ד) אֵ֣לֶּה תוֹלְד֧וֹת הַשָּׁמַ֛יִם וְהָאָ֖רֶץ בְּהִבָּֽרְאָ֑ם בְּי֗וֹם עֲשׂ֛וֹת יְהֹוָ֥ה אֱלֹהִ֖ים אֶ֥רֶץ וְשָׁמָֽיִם׃ (ה) וְכֹ֣ל ׀ שִׂ֣יחַ הַשָּׂדֶ֗ה טֶ֚רֶם יִֽהְיֶ֣ה בָאָ֔רֶץ וְכָל־עֵ֥שֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶ֖ה טֶ֣רֶם יִצְמָ֑ח כִּי֩ לֹ֨א הִמְטִ֜יר יְהֹוָ֤ה אֱלֹהִים֙ עַל־הָאָ֔רֶץ וְאָדָ֣ם אַ֔יִן לַֽעֲבֹ֖ד אֶת־הָֽאֲדָמָֽה׃ (ו) וְאֵ֖ד יַֽעֲלֶ֣ה מִן־הָאָ֑רֶץ וְהִשְׁקָ֖ה אֶֽת־כָּל־פְּנֵֽי־הָֽאֲדָמָֽה׃ (ז) וַיִּ֩יצֶר֩ יְהֹוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֜ים אֶת־הָֽאָדָ֗ם עָפָר֙ מִן־הָ֣אֲדָמָ֔ה וַיִּפַּ֥ח בְּאַפָּ֖יו נִשְׁמַ֣ת חַיִּ֑ים וַֽיְהִ֥י הָֽאָדָ֖ם לְנֶ֥פֶשׁ חַיָּֽה׃

Time and the Art of Living, Robert Grudin, 17:

What do I mean by "locked in time"? I mean, first of all, that we characteristically view mobile phenomena in immobile terms. We see processes like love and education as established circumstances rather than as complex temporal organisms whose lives depend on regular nourishment and renewal. Conversely, we tend to accept our own fear, weakness and ignorance as chronic disabilities rather than facing them, as we should, with the awareness that they are temporary and surmountable. Like still cameras, our minds consistently convert motion into stasis. In our language about time we resort to rocklike absolutisms – creation, completion, means, end, permanence, annihilation – terms whose static and extreme implications make them poor approximations of history and experience… We have little use at all for that most subtle and suggestive of words, renewal.

5: Interruptions as a Feature

Genesis 2:8-15

(8) The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom He had formed. (9) And from the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that was pleasing to the sight and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and bad...(15) The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it.

בראשית ב':ח'-ט"ו

(ח) וַיִּטַּ֞ע יְהוָ֧ה אֱלֹהִ֛ים גַּן־בְּעֵ֖דֶן מִקֶּ֑דֶם וַיָּ֣שֶׂם שָׁ֔ם אֶת־הָֽאָדָ֖ם אֲשֶׁ֥ר יָצָֽר׃ (ט) וַיַּצְמַ֞ח יְהוָ֤ה אֱלֹהִים֙ מִן־הָ֣אֲדָמָ֔ה כָּל־עֵ֛ץ נֶחְמָ֥ד לְמַרְאֶ֖ה וְט֣וֹב לְמַאֲכָ֑ל וְעֵ֤ץ הַֽחַיִּים֙ בְּת֣וֹךְ הַגָּ֔ן וְעֵ֕ץ הַדַּ֖עַת ט֥וֹב וָרָֽע׃...(טו) וַיִּקַּ֛ח יְהוָ֥ה אֱלֹהִ֖ים אֶת־הָֽאָדָ֑ם וַיַּנִּחֵ֣הוּ בְגַן־עֵ֔דֶן לְעָבְדָ֖הּ וּלְשָׁמְרָֽהּ׃

Genesis 2:16-17

(16) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you are free to eat; (17) but as for the tree of knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat of it; for as soon as you eat of it, you shall die."

בראשית ב':ט"ז-י"ז

(טז) וַיְצַו֙ יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהִ֔ים עַל־הָֽאָדָ֖ם לֵאמֹ֑ר מִכֹּ֥ל עֵֽץ־הַגָּ֖ן אָכֹ֥ל תֹּאכֵֽל׃ (יז) וּמֵעֵ֗ץ הַדַּ֙עַת֙ ט֣וֹב וָרָ֔ע לֹ֥א תֹאכַ֖ל מִמֶּ֑נּוּ כִּ֗י בְּי֛וֹם אֲכָלְךָ֥ מִמֶּ֖נּוּ מ֥וֹת תָּמֽוּת׃

בראשית ב':י"ח-כ'

(יח) וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהִ֔ים לֹא־ט֛וֹב הֱי֥וֹת הָֽאָדָ֖ם לְבַדּ֑וֹ אֶֽעֱשֶׂה־לּ֥וֹ עֵ֖זֶר כְּנֶגְדּֽוֹ׃ (יט) וַיִּצֶר֩ יְהוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֜ים מִן־הָֽאֲדָמָ֗ה כָּל־חַיַּ֤ת הַשָּׂדֶה֙ וְאֵת֙ כָּל־ע֣וֹף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וַיָּבֵא֙ אֶל־הָ֣אָדָ֔ם לִרְא֖וֹת מַה־יִּקְרָא־ל֑וֹ וְכֹל֩ אֲשֶׁ֨ר יִקְרָא־ל֧וֹ הָֽאָדָ֛ם נֶ֥פֶשׁ חַיָּ֖ה ה֥וּא שְׁמֽוֹ׃ (כ) וַיִּקְרָ֣א הָֽאָדָ֗ם שֵׁמ֙וֹת לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה֙ וּלְע֣וֹף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וּלְכֹ֖ל חַיַּ֣ת הַשָּׂדֶ֑ה וּלְאָדָ֕ם לֹֽא־מָצָ֥א עֵ֖זֶר כְּנֶגְדּֽוֹ׃

Genesis 2:18-20

(18) The LORD God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him." (19) And the LORD God formed out of the earth all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that would be its name. (20) And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to all the wild beasts; but for Adam no fitting helper was found.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Family Redeemed:*

It is one story. The planting of Paradise, the command, and the naming of the animals are relevant events which cast a light upon and are relevant to the creation of Eve. The Torah had to tell us the story of the creation of woman in installments, advising us about other events that happened which are **indispensable** for understanding the drama of man. (5-6)

6: The value of loneliness

Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving*, **7-9:**

ANY THEORY of love must begin with a theory of man, of human existence. While we find love, or rather, the equivalent of love, in animals, their attachments are mainly part of their instinctual equipment; only remnants of this instinctual equipment can be seen operating in man. What is essential in the existence of man is the fact that he has emerged from the animal kingdom, from instinctive adaptation, that he has transcended nature — although he never leaves it; he is a part of it — and yet once torn away from nature, he cannot return to it; once thrown out of paradise — a state of original oneness with nature — cherubim with flaming swords block his way, if he should try to return. Man can only go forward by developing his reason, by finding a new harmony, a human one, instead of the prehumen harmony which is irretrievably lost... Man is gifted with reason; he is life being aware of itself; he has awareness of
himself, of his fellow man, of his past, and of the possibilities of his future. This awareness of himself as a separate entity... is, indeed, the source of all anxiety. The deepest need of man, then, is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Family Redeemed:*

When he begins to wonder what nature is and tries to understand it, he abandons the identity and unity of man and his environment and finds himself encountering it as a stranger and outsider. At this point man discovers in himself an incommensurability with nature... he views nature not from withing but from without... When man breaks with immediacy and takes a look at nature from a distance, he encounters a reality which is not only outside of himself but also opposed to him. He is required to venture into an alien sphere. (19- 20)

7: The tree

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Family Redeemed:*

Where is the critical boundary to be found, the line which separates cosmic man from *persona*... a non-reflective life from a meditative existence? At which point did Adam make the leap into the new ontological dimension, the new dimension of being?... the Biblical story has singled out two turning points. (9-10)

The more significant turning point, however, is not **the birth of human fantasy** but **the confrontation with God's moral will**, which resulted in the birth of a moral awareness of man's own... Natural man turned into metaphysical man the very moment a heavy load was placed upon his frail shoulders... The transition from *natura* to *persona* occurs at the very instant man agrees to take defeat at the hand of God... The first law of limitation was given to Adam before the emergence of Eve, and referred to the world order. **Abiding by this law in our contact with impersonal reality qualifies and trains the self to live in accord with this principle of limitation also in dealing with the other self**. (11-15)

8: Face to face

Genesis 2:18
(18) The LORD God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him."

בראשית ב׳:י״ח
(יח) וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הֱיוֹת הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ׃

Rashi on Genesis 2:18:2
(2) עזר כנגדו A HELP MEET FOR HIM — (כנגדו literally, opposite, opposed to him) If he is worthy she shall be a help to him; if he is unworthy she shall be opposed to him, to fight him (Yevamot 63a).

רש״י על בראשית ב׳:י״ח:ב׳
(ב) **עזר כנגדו.** זָכָה – עֵזֶר; לֹא זָכָה – כְּנֶגְדּוֹ לְהִלָּחֵם:

Bereishit Rabbah 8
Said R' Yirmiyah ben Elazar: In the hour when the Holy One created the first human, He created him [as] an androgyne/androginos, as it is said, "male and female He created them". Said R' Shmuel bar Nachmani: In the hour when the Holy One created the first human, He created [for] him a double-face/di-prosopon/ du-par'tsufin, and sawed him and made him backs, a back here and a back [t]here, as it is said, "Back/achor and before/qedem You formed me" [Ps 139:5].

בראשית רבה ח׳
אָמַר רַבִּי יִרְמְיָה בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, אַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס בְּרָאוֹ, הֲדָא הוּא דִכְתִיב (בראשית ה, ב): זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאָם. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחְמָן, בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, דְּיוּ פַּרְצוּפִים בְּרָאוֹ, וְנִסְרוֹ וַעֲשָׂאוֹ גַּבִּים, גַּב לְכָאן וְגַב לְכָאן.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Family Redeemed:*
The uniqueness of man-*persona* expresses itself in the *mysterium magnum* which no one except God can penetrate. In order to escape loneliness, man-*absconditus* had to meet woman-mystery. They have a lot in common… However, they are also different… The I-awareness in Adam is totally incomprehensible to Eve, and vice-versa. Each of them has a secret which neither will ever betray. Man-*persona* and Woman-*persona* resemble each other and at the same time do not understand each other. She is *ezer ke-negdo*, his helper and his opponent at the same time. For man and woman differ not only psychologically as male and female, of whom the first account of creation tells us, but also spiritually and personality-wise… Because the woman is not the shadow of man but an independent persona, because the woman projects a totally different existential image, her companionship helps man to liberate himself from his loneliness. In the interpersonalistic existential tension both man and woman find redemption. (21-22)

9: The first couple

Genesis 2:21-25

(21) So the LORD God cast a deep sleep upon the man; and, while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. (22) And the LORD God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman; and He brought her to the man. (23) Then the man said, "This one at last Is bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh. This one shall be called Woman, For from man was she taken." (24) Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh. (25) The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, yet they felt no shame.

בראשית ב׳:כ״א-כ״ה

(כא) וַיַּפֵּל֩ יְהֹוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֧ים ׀ תַּרְדֵּמָ֛ה עַל־הָאָדָ֖ם וַיִּישָׁ֑ן וַיִּקַּ֗ח אַחַת֙ מִצַּלְעֹתָ֔יו וַיִּסְגֹּ֥ר בָּשָׂ֖ר תַּחְתֶּֽנָּה׃ (כב) וַיִּ֩בֶן֩ יְהֹוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֧ים ׀ אֶֽת־הַצֵּלָ֛ע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַ֥ח מִן־הָֽאָדָ֖ם לְאִשָּׁ֑ה וַיְבִאֶ֖הָ אֶל־הָֽאָדָֽם׃ (כג) וַיֹּאמֶר֮ הָֽאָדָם֒ זֹ֣את הַפַּ֗עַם עֶ֚צֶם מֵֽעֲצָמַ֔י וּבָשָׂ֖ר מִבְּשָׂרִ֑י לְזֹאת֙ יִקָּרֵ֣א אִשָּׁ֔ה כִּ֥י מֵאִ֖ישׁ לֻֽקְחָה־זֹּֽאת׃ (כד) עַל־כֵּן֙ יַֽעֲזׇב־אִ֔ישׁ אֶת־אָבִ֖יו וְאֶת־אִמּ֑וֹ וְדָבַ֣ק בְּאִשְׁתּ֔וֹ וְהָי֖וּ לְבָשָׂ֥ר אֶחָֽד׃ (כה) וַיִּֽהְי֤וּ שְׁנֵיהֶם֙ עֲרוּמִּ֔ים הָֽאָדָ֖ם וְאִשְׁתּ֑וֹ וְלֹ֖א יִתְבֹּשָֽׁשׁוּ׃

Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg, *The Murmuring Deep:*

Problems, crisis, conflict, instability – these are the very substance of narrative… narrative is often radically at odds with the utopian state of closure… Miller argues that "closure" and "narratability" are essentially in conflict… Such a fiction, then, is a "perverse" project, since it longs to eliminate the narratable… Since "only insufficiencies, defaults, deferrals, can be 'told'," the very idea of a narrative of happiness is put in question. For to bring the narrative to a state of fulfillment is, virtually, to end it. (354-256)

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…this world is the world of narrative, while the hereafter represents closure… Narrative and closure are incongruous worlds; but they yearn for each other. In the world of narrative, ultimate meanings are veiled; desires and fears, multiple possibilities, suspense, insufficiency keep the story going. But when the end comes, nothing further can develop; all is arrested in the condition to which its turbulent history has brought it. (357)

Mark Twain, The Diaries of Adam and Eve:

"Wherever she was, there was Eden."