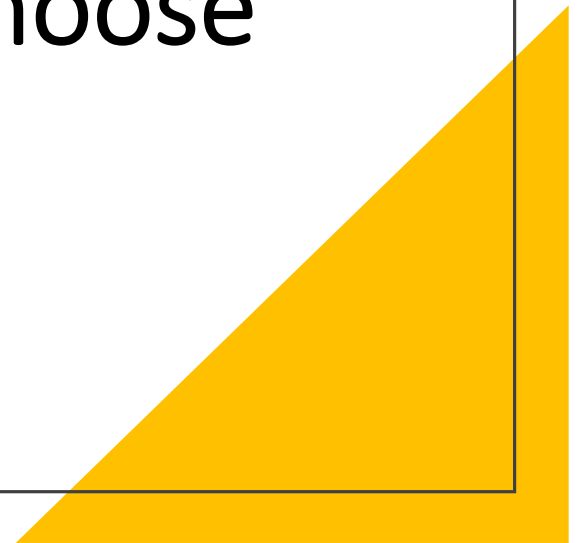


What's in a name?: Kayin, Hevel, and Freedom to Choose in the Face of Temptation

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Teshuva series with Jen Raskas



The Story

והָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: וַתֹּסֶף לָלֶדֶת אֶת־אָחִיו אֶת־הָבֶל וַיְהִי־הֶבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה: וְהֶבֶל הֵבִיא גַם־הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ וּמִחִלְבָּהּ וַיִּשַׁע יְהוָה אֶל־הֶבֶל וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ:

וְאֶל־קַיִן וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לָךְ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָּנֶיךָ:

וְהָלוֹא אִם־תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לַפֶּתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֶקְתּוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בֵּהֵימָנוּם בְּשָׂדֵה וַיִּקְּם קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן אֵי הֶבֶל אָחִיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי אָנֹכִי: וַיֹּאמֶר מַה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן־הָאֲדָמָה:

וּוַעֲתָה אָרוּר אַתָּה מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת־פִּיהָ לְקַחַת אֶת־דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ מִיָּדְךָ: וְיִי־יָיִי תַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה לֹא־תֹסֵף תֵּת־כֹּחָהּ לָךְ גַּע וְגַד תִּהְיֶה בְּאָרֶץ:

כִּנְיֹאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־יְהוָה גְּדוֹל עוֹנִי מִנְּשָׂא: הֵן גִּרְשֵׁת אֶתִּי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפְּנֵיךָ אֶסְתֵּר וְהִיְתִי גַע וְגַד בְּאָרֶץ וְהָיָה כָּל־מִצְאֵי יַהַרְגֵנִי:

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוָה לִכֵּן כָּל־הַרְגָה קַיִן שְׁבַע־עֲתִים יִקָּם וַיִּשֶׂם יְהוָה לְקַיִן אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַכּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מִצְאָו: וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאָרֶץ־נֹד קַדְמַת־עֵדֶן:

וַיָּדַע קַיִן אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־חַנוֹךְ וַיְהִי בְּנֵה עֵיר וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הָעֵיר כְּשֵׁם בְּנוֹ חַנוֹךְ: וַיִּוָּלַד לְחַנוֹךְ אֶת־עֵיֶרֶד וְעֵיֶרֶד יָלַד אֶת־מְחִיָּאֵל וַיִּלְדֵם אֶת־מְתוּשָׁאֵל וּמְתוּשָׁאֵל יָלַד אֶת־לָמָּה:

וַיִּקְחֻ־לוֹ לְמָרָה שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים שֵׁם הָאֶחָת עֵדָה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית צִלָּה: וְלָדָה עֵדָה אֶת־יִבְלָה הוּא הָיָה אָבִי יֵשֶׁב אֶהֱל וּמִקְנָה:

וַתִּנְשָׂם אָחִיו יִבְלָה הוּא הָיָה אָבִי כָּל־תַּפְּשׁ כְּנֹר וְעוֹגָב: וַצִּלָּה גַם־הִוא יָלְדָה אֶת־תּוֹבֵל קַיִן לִטָּשׁ כָּל־חֲרָשׁ נְחָשֶׁת וּבְרָזָל וְאַחֹת תּוֹבֵל־קַיִן גַּעֲמָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְמָרָה לְנִשְׂיוֹ עֵדָה וַצִּלָּה שְׂמַעַן קוֹלִי נָשִׂי לְמָרָה הֲאִזְנָה אִמְרָתִי כִּי אִישׁ הֲרַגְתִּי לִפְעֻעֵי נְיָלַד לְחִבְרָתִי: כִּי שְׁבַע־עֲתִים יִקָּם־קַיִן וְלָמָרָה שְׁבַע־עִים וְשָׁבָעָה:

וַיָּדַע אָדָם עוֹד אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת כִּי שֵׁת־לִי אֱלֹהִים זָרַע אַחֲרַי תַּחַת הֶבֶל כִּי הָרַגוּ קַיִן:

וְלִשְׁת גַם־הוּא יָלַד־בֶּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֶנֹּשׁ אִזּוֹ הוֹחֵל לְקָרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה: {o}

Chava

וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת-חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת-קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר קִנִּיתִי אִישׁ אֶת-יְהוָה: וַתִּסֹּף לֵלֶדֶת
אֶת-אָחִיו אֶת-הָבֶל וַיְהִי-הֶבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה

Now the man knew^a*Heb. yada', often in a sexual sense.* his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gained^b*Heb. qanithi, connected with "Cain."* a male child with *the help* of the LORD."

Rashi 4:1

את ה'. כמו עם ה', כְּשֶׁבָרָא אוֹתִי וְאֶת אִשְׁי, הוּא לְבַדּוֹ בְּרָאנוּ אֶבֶל בְּזָה שְׁתַּפִּים אָנוּ עִמוֹ (נדה ל"א):

וַיֵּדַע אָדָם עוֹד אֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת כִּי שָׁת-לִי אֱלֹהִים זָרַע אַחֵר תַּחַת הָבֶל כִּי הָרְגוּ קַיִן:

Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, meaning, “God has **provided me** with^g another offspring in place of Abel,” for Cain had killed him.

Breishit 4: 27

Adam & Chava

וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אַיֶּכָּה:

The LORD God called out to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגֶן וָאִירָא כִּי־עֵרָם אָנֹכִי וָאֶחְבֵּאתִי:

He replied, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.”

וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עֵרָם אָתָּה הַמֵּן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתִי אֶכְל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֶכְלֹתִי:

Then He asked, “Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat of the tree from which I had forbidden you to eat?”

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נָתַתָּה־לִּי מִן־הָעֵץ וָאֲכַלִּי:

The man said, “The woman You put at my side—she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאִשָּׁה מַה־זָּאת עָשִׂית וַתֹּאמְרִי הָאִשָּׁה הִנְחִישׁ הַשִּׂיָּאֲנִי וָאֲכַלִּי:

And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done!” The woman replied, “The serpent duped me, and I ate.”

Breishit 3: 9 – 13

איכה. יודע היה היכן הוא אלא לכנס עמו בדברים,

He knew where he was, rather he wanted to open conversation

Rashi Breishit 3:9

וַיֵּדַע אָדָם עוֹד אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁט׃ כִּי שָׁת־לִי אֱלֹהִים׃ זָרַע
אַחַר תַּחַת הַבַּל׃ כִּי הִרְגוּ קַיִן׃

Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, meaning, “God has **provided me with** another offspring in place of Abel,” for Cain had killed him.

וְלִשְׁתֵּי גַם־הוּא יֵלֵד־בֶּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֶנֶשׁ אֲז הוּחַל לְקָרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה׃ {ס}

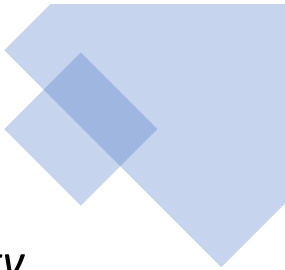
And to Seth, in turn, a son was born, and he named him Enosh. It was then that men began to invoke **the LORD by name**.



Was Kayin destined to fail?



What's in a name?



*Dubner: Let me ask you this, so when we wrote about names in Freakonomics we made it pretty clear that naming is not destiny, right? That was really one of the single biggest takeaways, in fact, we told the story of these two brothers in New York whose parents had named them **Loser and Winner**, and the fact was that Loser turned out to have a great life as an upstanding citizen. He was a police detective. And Winner had been a career criminal. And we told that story to reinforce the point that naming is not destiny.*

-Freakonomics podcast August 17, 2019



*Kayin is the first to be born from the womb of a woman, and in his mother's eyes he is fully realized or "acquired." He recognizes himself as existing in his most perfect form. [1] The whole world belongs to him. There is no room in his existence for anyone else: not for a brother, and not for the Creator. He himself is the world. Just as "Adam" is the name of mankind (adam) in the first generation of humanity, so "Kayin" is the name of mankind in the second generation. From his point of view, he is the entire world; he is the essence of the world in the second generation, and he is perfect. Hence, as he sees it, there is no need for any sort of moral exertion. He has no need to acquire or earn his life. **Someone who sees himself as "fully realized" – 'kanui' – is guilty of the sin of pride.***

Midrash HaToladot III, p151

Kayin's opportunity

והָלוֹא אִם־תִּיטֵיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטֵיב לִפְתַּח חַטָּאת רַבָּץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל־בּוֹ

Meaning of verse uncertain. Surely, if you do right,
There is uplift.

But if you do not do right
Sin couches at the door;
Its urge is toward you,
Yet you can be its master."

Radak Breishit 4:6

ויאמר ה', היה הדבור עמו כדי לייסרו ולהושיבו למוטב וללמדו דרך תשובה לו ולדורות הבאים כי החוטא יש לו כפרה אם ישוב בתשובה שלימה:

the reason that G'd addressed him was in order to discipline him and to bring him back to a lifestyle that would endear him to G'd. He wanted to teach him how to repent, something of the utmost importance for subsequent generations. He taught him that there is atonement for sinners if their repentance is sincere.

The creation of the world

שְׁבַע דְּבָרִים נִבְרְאוּ קודם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, וְאֵלוֹ הֵן: תּוֹרָה, וּתְשׁוּבָה, וְגַן עֵדֵן, וְגֵיהֶנָם, וְכִסֵּא הַכְּבוֹד, וּבֵית הַמְּקֻדָּשׁ, וּשְׁמוֹ שֶׁל מָשִׁיחַ.

Seven phenomena were created before the world was created, and they are: Torah, **and repentance**, and the Garden of Eden, and Gehenna, and the Throne of Glory, and the Temple, and the name of Messiah.

Tamud Bavli: Pesachim 54a

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה: וְהָבֵל הֵבִיא גַם־הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוּ וּמִחִלְבְּתָן וַיִּשַׁע יְהוָה אֶל־הָבֵל וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ:
וְאֶל־קַיִן וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לָךְ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָּנֶיךָ:
וְהֲלוֹא אִם־תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לִפְתַּח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־הָבֵל אַחִיו וַיְהִי בֵּהֵיוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּקֶּם קַיִן אֶל־הָבֵל אַחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ:
וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן אֵי הָבֵל אַחִיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֹׁמֵר אַחִי אָנֹכִי: וַיֹּאמֶר מָה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אַחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן־הָאֲדָמָה:
וּנְעַתָּה אַרְוֵר אֶתָּה מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת־פִּיהָ לְקַחַת אֶת־דַּמִּי אַחִיךָ מִיָּדְךָ: וְיִפְּלוּ יְדֵיךָ וְתִתְּכַחֵף לָךְ גַּע וְנָד תִּהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ:
כִּי־אָמַר קַיִן אֶל־יְהוָה גְּדוֹל עוֹנֵי מִנְשָׂא: הֲנִי גִרְשֵׁת אֶתִּי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפְּנֵיךָ אֶסְתַּר וְהָיִיתִי גַע וְנָד בָּאָרֶץ וְהָיָה כָל־מֹצְאִי יַהַרְגֵנִי:
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוָה לֹכַן כָּל־הַרְג לְקַיִן שִׁבְעָתַיִם יִקָּם וַיִּשֶׂם יְהוָה לְקַיִן אוֹת לְבָלְתִי אוֹת לְבָלְתִי הַכּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מֹצְאוֹ: וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלְּפָנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּאָרֶץ־נֹד קִדְמַת־עֵדֶן:

In the course of time, Cain brought an offering to the LORD from the fruit of the soil; and Abel, for his part, brought the choicest of the firstlings of his flock. The LORD paid heed to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed. Cain was much distressed and his face fell.

And the LORD said to Cain,
“Why are you distressed,
And why is your face fallen?”

Surely, if you do right,
There is uplift.
But if you do not do right
Sin couches at the door;
Its urge is toward you,
Yet you can be its master.”

Cain said to his brother Abel ... and when they were in the field, Cain set upon his brother Abel and killed him. The LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” Then He said, “What have you done? Hark, your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground! Therefore, you shall be more cursed than the ground,^{eSee 3.17.} which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. You shall become a ceaseless wanderer on earth.” Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is too great to bear! Since You have banished me this day from the soil, and I must avoid Your presence and become a restless wanderer on earth—anyone who meets me may kill me!” The LORD said to him, “I promise, if anyone kills Cain, sevenfold vengeance shall be taken on him.” And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest anyone who met him should kill him.

Kayin Learned Teshuva

- והנכון בפשט **שהוא וידוי** אמר אמת כי עוני גדול מלסלוח וצדיק אתה ה' וישר משפטיך אף על פי שענשת אותי הרבה מאד והנה גרשת אותי היום מעל פני האדמה
- ...The correct plain interpretation is that **it is a confession**. Cain said: "It is true that my sin is too great to be forgiven, and *Thou art righteous, O Eternal, and upright are Thy judgments*⁴⁴⁰*Psalms 119:137*. even though You have punished me exceedingly. And now *behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the land ...*
- Ramban Breishit 4:13

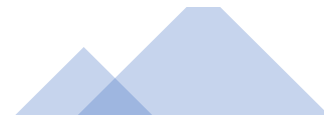
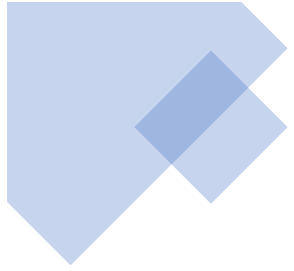
Kayin Learned Full Teshuva!

דעת מקרא ד:יד ורס"ג מצא בשלוש מלים אלה רמזים לעקרי התשובה: "גדול" - מרמז שהתחרט בחרטה גדולה, "עוני" - רמז שלא ישוב לחטוא עוד, וכאילו אמר: לא יהיה לי עוד עוון כמותו: "מנשא" רמז לבקשת סליחה, כי נשא היא מן המלות המורות על סליחה.

Kayin did not learn Teshuva

MY PUNISHMENT²³*Literally, avoni (my sin). IS GREATER THAN I CAN BEAR.] All the commentaries explain this to mean that Cain confessed his sin.* They say that the meaning of *neso* (bear) is forgiveness, as in *forgiving iniquity* (*noseh avon*) ([Ex. 34:7](#)).²⁴*These commentators translate avon literally and render our clause as: my iniquity (avon) is beyond (gadol) forgiveness (mi-neso). However, I disagree.* In Hebrew reward is called *ekev* (heel), and the harsh punishment which comes as a result of iniquity is occasionally referred to as “sin.” Similarly we find, *for the iniquity (avon) of the Amorite is not yet full*²⁵*The time of their punishment has not arrived. ([Gen. 15:16](#)); there shall no punishment (avon) happen to thee ([I Sam. 28:10](#)); For the iniquity (avon) of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom ([Lamentations 4:6](#)).*²⁶*According to I.E. avon (iniquity) should be rendered punishment. The verse thus means: the punishment of my people is severer than the punishment of Sodom (Krinsky). The meaning of our verse thus is: my punishment (avon) is greater than I can bear (mi-neso).* The next verse substantiates this interpretation.²⁷

Iben Ezra, Breishit 4:13



וְהָלֹא אִם־תִּיטֵּיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תִיטֵּיב לִפְתַּח חַטָּאת רִבֵּץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִשׁוּקוּתוֹ וְאַתָּה
תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ

Surely, if you do right,
There is uplift.
But if you do not do right
Sin couches at the door;
Its urge is toward you,
Yet you can be its master.”

Breishit 4:6

The verse in Mishlei (16:18) says, "Pride goeth before a fall," but as Augustine noted, pride is itself a fall. So, the relationship of shichecha (forgetting) and pride is dual. Pride leads to averting one's gaze from God, but is it because a person has not fully apprehended or appreciated God that he is able to be proud.

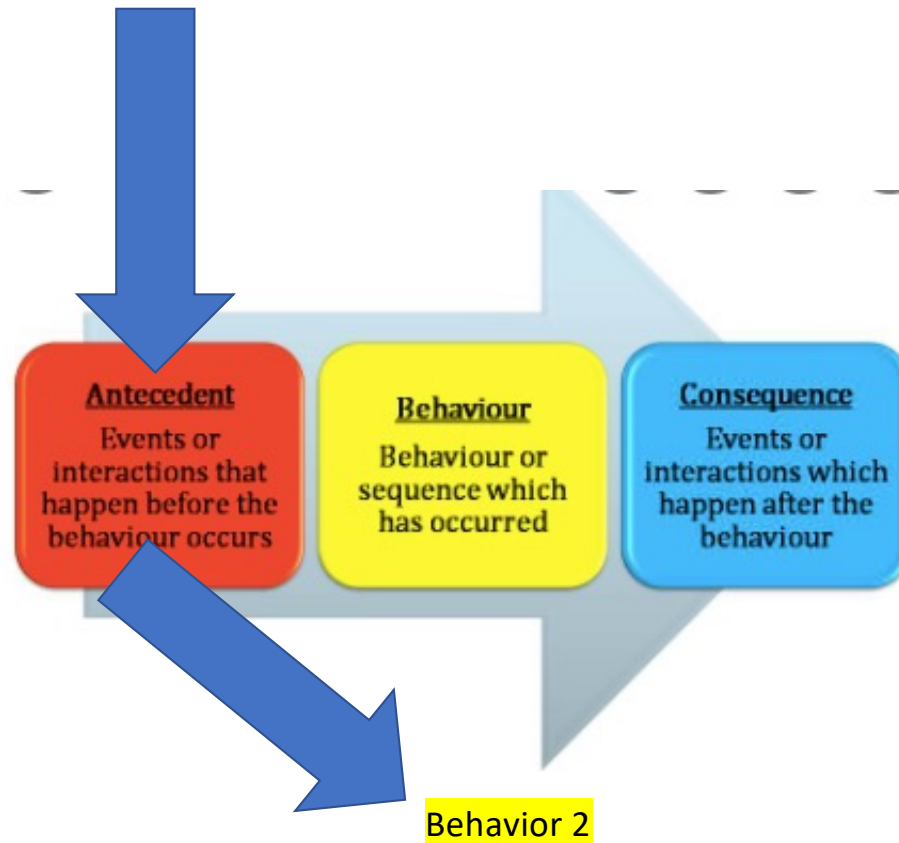
Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, 09/21/2004

‘Your outlook is naturally that of a firstborn, it is understandable that you find it difficult to acknowledge your failure; you must recognize that you erred, but you can make amends. In contrast to classical tragedy, where a single critical mistake on the part of the hero leads inevitably to downfall and disaster, God tells Kayin: **Your fate is not sealed; at every stage repair is possible.** History is not a snowball that rolls inexorably downhill, but rather a series of exit lanes along the way. You can change the future if “you do well.”

Midrash HaToladot III, p151

Here God reveals to Kayin the essence of teshuva. In the natural course of events, the future is determined by the past, but the present holds a point of free choice that can change its direction. Regret, in the Jewish worldview, is not the tragic perception that a misstep is irreversible; rather, it is an optimistic drive that leads to repair.

Rav Uriel Eitam



<https://workingwithact.com/2015/06/08/how-can-behaviour-analysis-help-in-coaching-part-1/>

וְהַיֵּאֵר הַיָּדְוּר לְאַהֲבָתוֹ וְיִרְאַתוֹ. בְּשָׁעָה שִׁיתְּבוֹן הָאָדָם בְּמַעֲשָׂיו וּבְרוֹאֵי הַנִּפְלְאִים
הַגְּדוֹלִים וְיִרְאֶה מֵהֵן חֲכָמְתוֹ שֶׁאֵין לָהּ עֶרְךָ וְלֹא קֵץ מִיַּד הוּא אוֹהֵב וּמְשַׁבֵּחַ וּמְפָאֵר
וּמְתַאֲוֶה תְּאֻהָ גְדוֹלָה לִיְדַע הַשֵּׁם הַגְּדוֹל.

But how may one discover the way to love and fear Him? When man will reflect concerning His works, and His great and wonderful creatures,¹*But he must make thorough study.* C. and will behold through them His wonderful, matchless and infinite wisdom, he will spontaneously be filled with love, praise and exaltation and become possessed of a great longing **to know the Great Name ...**

Rambam, Hilchot Yesodei Ha-Torah 2:1