A very good story – Bereshit 5780

Bereshit 1:4

וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ:

God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.

Bereshit 2:9

וַיַּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאֲדָמָה כָּל־עֵץ נֶחְמָד לְמַרְאֶה וְטוֹב לְמַאֲכָל וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַגָּן וְעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וָרָע:

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.

Ramban on Bereshot 1:4

והעניין, להורות כי עמידתם בחפצו, ואם החפץ יתפרד רגע מהם – יהיו לאין. וכאשר אמר בכל מעשה יום ויום: "וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי טוֹב", ובששי כאשר נשלם הכל: "וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה טוֹב מְאֹד" (פסוק לא), כן אמר ביום הראשון בהיות האור: וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי טוֹב, שרצה בקיומו לעד.

This is the explanation. Gd's seeing his creations as good teaches us that he desired their ongoing existence, and that if his desire should remove from them for even an instant – they would not exist. This phrase is repeated all six days, and on the sixth day when all was complete "And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good." (1:31) Thus on the first day it says when the light came into being, "And Gd saw that it was good," meaning that he desired that it should exist forever.

Seforno on Bereshot 1:4

וירא אלהים את האור כי טוב והי' כן כי ראה אלהי' ובחר במציאותו מפני התכלית אשר הוא הטוב שכגללו המציאו בידיעתו הפועלת:

"And Gd saw that the light was good" It is was so because God saw it and chose that it exist because of its purpose, that is the good for which God brought it forth through his creative consciousness.

Bereshit 6:5

וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־יֵצֶר מַחְשְׁבֹת לִבּוֹ רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם:

The LORD saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and how every plan devised by his mind was nothing but evil all the time.

Bereshit 2:15

וַיִּקַּח יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ בְגַן־עֵדֶן לְעׇבְדָהּ וּלְשׇׁמְרָהּ׃

The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it.

Rashi on Bereshit 2:15

ויקח .לְקָחוֹ בִדְבָרִים נָאִים וּפִתָּהוּ לִכָּנֵס (בראשית רבה):

God took him with pleasant words and enticed him to enter (Bereshit Rabbah)

Bereshit Rabba 9:7

רַבִּי נַחְמָן בַּר שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחְמָן בְּשֵׁם רַב שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחְמָן אָמַר, הִנֵּה טוֹב מְאֹד, זֶה יֵצֶר טוֹב. וְהִנֵּה טוֹב מְאֹד, זֶה יֵצֶר רָע.
וְכִי יֵצֶר הָרָע טוֹב מְאֹד, אֶתְמְהָא. אֶלָּא שֶׁאֵלוּלֵי יֵצֶר הָרָע לֹא בָּנָה אָדָם בַּיִת, וְלֹא נָשָׂא אִשָּׁה, וְלֹא הוֹלִיד, וְלֹא נָשָׂא וְנָתַן. וְכֵן
שְׁלֹמֹה אוֹמֵר)קהלת ד, ד: (כִּי הִיא קִנְאַת אִישׁ מֵרֵעֵהוּ .

Rabbi Nahman said in Rabbi Samuel's name: 'Behold, it was good' refers to the Good Desire; 'And behold, it was very good' refers to the Evil Desire. (It only says 'very good' after man was created with both the good and bad inclinations, in all other cases it only says 'and God saw that it was good') Can then the Evil Desire be very good? That would be extraordinary! But without the Evil Desire, however, no man would build a house, take a wife and beget children; and thus said Solomon: 'Again, I considered all labour and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbour.' (Ecclesiastes 4:4).

Bereshit 2:18

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הֱיוֹת הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ׃

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