WHO'S YOUR DADDY?
Rabbi Dan Moskovitz

God is - an empty nester. The children of Israel have all grown up, and God sits in an easy chair and wonders… what kind of parents will my children be?

I am here today with great excitement; I think I have hit upon something that is truly new and profound. After months of research I wish to present to this conference a new way of looking at our ancient text, a new way of looking at God's relationship with the Children of Israel.

In my view the Torah is at heart a story of a family, not simply the family of Abraham and Sarah and all of their descendants but the story of the family of man, and God is their loving parent.

I suggest that when we view this relationship through the lens of parenthood, we understand like never before the stages of our people's development, and bring into clear focus our people's present day struggle to understand the divine.

Consider for a moment one example of my theory. In the first books of the Torah God creates human beings in God's own image, so that they will ultimately care for the world he has worked so hard to create. But before God can entrust the family business to his children, God must teach them responsibility. So in the first books of the Torah God is ever present in their lives. Like the parent of a small child, God speaks directly to them, encourages them, and patiently teaches them. Yet like a parent, when they stray, when they might cause themselves harm, God is right there, to save them and to teach them a lesson. It's like that spanking so many of us received from our parent's when we ran out into the street. We remember the spanking, but we also remember the street. In the first books of the Torah it is as if God is saying, hold onto my hand, the path is treacherous and we'll walk it together.

Colleagues this is but the very beginning of an exciting and deeply personal way of looking at our most sacred text, there is so much more. It would be my honor to share my new approach at the upcoming conference.