Division And Love
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INTRODUCTION TO SHABBAT

In the seven days of creation, the second is distinguished by not being called "good." Why is that?

According to one commentator, it is because on the second day God separated the waters (Gen. 1:6). It is one thing to separate light from darkness, since both cannot serve together. But waters are the same substance, and to introduce division in the two things that are the same cannot be called good.

We live in a time of deep divisions between like things: between Jews, between our American neighbors south of the border, between civilizations. In the story of creation, the Oneness of God superintended the divisions and made ultimate unity possible. Now it is our human task to heal, to reach across divides, to believe in the common goodness and humanity of others.

Once the Ba'al Shem Tov was told by a father that despite all the love he had lavished on his son, his son had gone astray. How, asked the father, should he react to the division? The Ba'al Shem Tov answered: "Love him more."