

Treasures of the Torah

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, 46 and upon finding a single pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:45

Let's Begin



22 October 2022 - Tishrei 27 5783

B'resheet / 'In the Beginning'

Genesis 1:1–6:8, Haftarah (Prophets) Isaiah 42:5–43:11, RC (Renewed Covenant)

John 1:1–14, Revelation 22:6–21

1 In the beginning God (Elohim) created (by forming from nothing) the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and void or a waste and emptiness, and darkness was upon the face of the deep (primeval ocean that covered the unformed earth] The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters. AMP

Shabbat Shalom Talmidim.

Once again we return to the beginning of our Torah studies. Last week we read the final passage of the Torah which included the death of Moses. Now, in time the circle begins again and the end of the Torah enjoins with its beginning. We are thrown into the very word of God, recalling His sovereign acts and standing at the birth with the Father of His new creation. The whole of the cosmos is about to come to life as the Father declares that all is in darkness and that the light must come to illuminate that which has been hidden. The creation of man and his cohabiters populate a world void of life. The emptiness of the earth begins to be populated by divine will.

The chapter begins appropriately just like any other story. The narrator has to start somewhere and thus our point in the story takes us back to the very first act of the cosmic creation. However, we must understand that the creation of the cosmic realm is formed

from physical matter. Modern Science informs us that matter, can in fact, be formed from light - given the right circumstances. Furthermore, the divine utterance to create a physical cosmos comes from a spiritual source.

We are told that YHVH through a sovereign act of thought and speech, created something beyond the realms of heaven. The realm of heaven and creation were separated by a veil — on one side the spiritual realm, on the other the physical realm.

We have come to learn that the narrative in Genesis reveals something more than just a creative process but the need to establish a process or a foundation upon which YHVH can dwell with His created world. Symbolically the physical realm reflects its spiritual counterpart, and serves as the first page, you could say, of an architect's plan, to build something on which the new heaven and new earth will eventually rest.

The world YHVH creates is the environment for His created image. Scripture gives us insight into events that precede Genesis. Yeshua in Luke 10:18, and in Isaiah 14:12, tells us that He saw Satan fall from heaven. In Revelation 12:9, we see again the same reference — that Satan is hurled down to earth. This tells us that something significant happened in heaven before the creation of the universe.

In this wonderful passage in Proverbs 8:22-31, we read how Wisdom was at work with YHVH to create the universe.

“In the beginning I was there, for God possessed me even before he created the universe. From eternity past I was set in place, before the world began. I was anointed from the beginning. Before the oceans depths were poured out, and before there were any glorious fountains overflowing with water, I was there, dancing! Even before one mountain had been sculpted or one hill raised up, I was already there, dancing! When he created the earth, the fields, even the first atom of dust, I was already there. When he hung the tapestry of the heavens and stretched out the horizon of the earth, when the clouds and skies were set in place and the subterranean fountains began to flow strong, I was already there. When he set in place the pillars of the earth and spoke the decrees of the seas, commanding the waves so that they wouldn't overstep their boundaries, I was there, close to the Creator's side as his master artist. Daily he was filled with delight in me as I playfully rejoiced before him. I laughed and played, so happy with what he had made, while finding my delight in the children of men.”

The reading of this passage may suggest that YHVH had to work with someone who had an attribute that He did not possess. In fact, what is revealed is the personification of a facet of YHVH, just as the Holy Spirit, which hovered over the waters was also the personification of a facet of God.

The opening passage of Genesis in the Orthodox Jewish Bible reads:

1 In the beginning Elohim created hashomayim (the heavens, Himel) and haaretz (the earth).

2 And the earth was **tohu vavohu** (without form, and void); and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Ruach Elohim was hovering upon the face of the waters.

The word Shamayim, refers to the heavens as being made of water and thus the name of the Father in the Lord's prayers, in Hebrew 'Avinu Shebashamayim' refers to YHVH as the

'Father of the waters'. This is significant because we are told that water was witness to the process. What a strange concept. However I hope all will be revealed.

As God separated the waters or firmaments to create the land and sea for the various creatures, He will bring them together again to destroy the Earth as in the account of Noah.

Water is the substance that sustains life, without it, life ceases. The word for water in Hebrew is 'Mayim'. The word for life 'Chayim'. Chayim can also mean soul. Genesis on day five tells us that YHVH made 'Nephesh Chayim', animal souls and 'Nishmat chayim', Human souls on day 6.

Unlike the animals, man had placed within him, the breath of God -the 'ruach'. We see then that the breath of God now becomes the oxygen of man, a life giving force, and man is endowed with a spirit and a soul.

This is what separates us from the animals.

One a side note, man has a spirit which places him on a higher level and allows the soul to transcend the base animal instinct. We can say that the soul animates the body as the body is attached to the natural. In essence the soul is separated but attached to the body. The soul can represent the mind. In some arguments the soul is also referred to as the spirit. This is a dichotomous relationship however, another argument is that man exists in three parts: Spirit, soul and body — a trichotomous relationship. However, I would argue that the spirit of man is regenerated at conversion and the mind or soul of man goes through a process of transformation.

Hebrew 4:12

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Romans 12:2

2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Surmise to say, the creation of man sees the breath of God placed inside the soul of the man. However, we must understand that this is not the Holy Spirit, the Ruach Hakodesh.

So far, Genesis reveals two elements that are the basis of all created things —the water and the light.

John1 tells us:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.** **5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

1 John 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 **This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.**

7 **For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.**

Man is born of water and blood and creation bears witness. All three are in agreement. The earth was born through water and spirit. The spirit of God is life and life is the light of mankind, that came into the world to illuminate the darkness.

Man was taken from the red soil of the earth, and he was called after the red ground, Adamah. The word 'dam' is Hebrew for 'blood'. When the aleph, which is the beginning of the alphabet and the symbol of YHVH and His authority is placed in front of 'dam', we get the word 'Adam'.

Perhaps we can see that the waters that permeated through the soil of the red earth became the very blood that flowed through the veins of man.

Scripture tells us that life is in the blood, and that the blood of an animal must be returned or poured out onto the earth when it is killed.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'NKJ

Deuteronomy 12:15 "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike.

16 Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water. NKJ

John 6:52-54

52 The Jews therefore quarrelled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?"

53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. NKJ

Genesis 1 tells us that the earth was formed as a dark world. It existed without light and that YHVH illuminated the darkness. We may also surmise that the universe also existed in this state and thus would have been made at an earlier stage and that its state of existence was one of disorder and chaos. YHVH places everything in position and places order into the universe with a unique set of laws and rules to govern it.

V2 reads.

2 And the earth was **tohu vavohu** (without form, and void); and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Ruach Elohim was hovering upon the face of the waters. OJB.

In the AMP version we read:

2 The earth was **formless and void or a waste and emptiness**, and darkness was upon the face of the deep [primeval ocean that covered the unformed earth]. The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters.

The idea 'tohu and vohu', relate the idea of a formless space, but the concept lends itself to a barren and lifeless place. We see this in Jeremiah 4:23 I saw the earth, and lo, it was **tohu and vohu** ; and to the skies, and they had no lights. 4:24 I saw the mountains, and lo, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. 4:25 I saw, and lo, there was no one at all, and all the birds of the air had fled. 4:26 I saw, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before YHWH, before his fierce anger.

Thus having made the elements within the earth, the sky, land and sea, they still remain lifeless until YHVH creates life itself.

Can you imagine seeing all this taking place? We may have missed all of this the first time but I am sure we will witness the creation of the new heaven and earth to come.

Looking a little closer into the process, we are actually witnessing the process of creating order from chaos. Order comes from the separation of many parts for distinct purposes and thus even the creatures of land and sea have their own domains.

The very concept of creation reveals to us the chaos that ensued through a heavenly battle and rebellion and that YHVH will bring peace and order once again. The separation of a kingdom will be restored through a separating process. Thus we see the idea of good and evil and several processes of separation built into the thread of the restoration process.

The initial separation begins with the man and the woman being thrown out of the garden because of their disloyalty or distrusting of God. We see the serpent instigate the rebellion.

Ephesians 6:10 reveals to us the battle we fight in the unseen realm.

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

As each day of creation progresses we begin each new day with a little summary of what YHVH did the day before and also witness the aspect of time — the evening and the morning', being added to each day.

Having created the environment and order of life and the governing planetary aspects, YHVH creates man in His image. Nishmat Chayim, is the man soul. The Nishmat Chayim is in fact the man soul with the breath of life.

Having created the Genesis homestead for him, the man is given authority over it and thus is distinguished above all creation and indeed even over the angels.

Animals will maintain the ecosystem of the world. At this time there are no carnivores. Plants will be there for consumption. All life will coexist in peaceful co-habitation.

This peaceful edenic world finds YHVH walking in the midst it. YHVH enjoys the world He has created. Man is in no need for the knowledge we have come to discover and possess over millennia. Man possessed the ability to commune with animals and had the ability to oversee order over creation.

He and YHVH communed daily. He was unaware of good and evil, a concept hither to known only by God and the great assembly of gods. The serpent, a created being, had no authority over the man but he could only plant the idea of rebellion in the minds of them. They would have to make the choice.

Loyalty to God will diminish and the humans would soon defect and become toxic to the abode created for them. They themselves would become defective, bearing the sin within their bodies.

The only option of YHVH was to expunge them from His presence and protect the world. He placed a cherubim with a spinning sword at the entrance to the abode of God, forbidding the man and women to re-enter. They would become strangers to the animals and communication with the earth will be lost. The humans would have to hunt for food and in turn become the hunted.

The fall of man, or the glorious physical covering that emulated the image of God, will bring corruption to his soul and he will begin to die. His mind would become debased and his authority will diminish. Today several millennia after the fall, we see laws being passed that give animals human rights, making man and animal equal. Life will become disordered and chaotic. But God's plan of redemption will place in the heart of man the longing to return back to the garden. Man will seek to find a way and he will endeavour to find the path to eternal life. YHVH will provide the only pathway through His son, Yeshua, who will return to earth to show us that way.

In this study, I have tried to turn our minds to the idea of creation itself as opposed to the many wonderful aspects found within its chapters. The study of Genesis is voluminous and the idea of creation by an independent creator continues to harbour ill feeling and discord among many today. It is also sad that many among believers including the clergy are disputing the creation account and erring on the side of evolution, despite many proponents now jumping ship and recognising that intelligent design had a hand in it. It is clear that life on our world did not transpire through a series of accidents, but through divine, intelligent and ordered means.

As we begin again in the reading of the book of Genesis, and having read the end of the Torah, only a few days ago, the outline of the plan of YHVH will be revealed again. Genesis is the story of a continuing battle, the rebellion of angels, the separation of kingdoms and dominions and the resumption of peace from chaos. We will see the creation of a separate people in which YHVH will instil a covenant of peace and the return to the promised land, reflecting the edenic world of creation. The story of Genesis is not the beginning; it is an ongoing story with many beginnings but only one end.

Shalom.

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Numbers 6:22 Adonai said to Moshe, 23
 “Speak to Aharon and his sons, and tell
 them that this is how you are to bless the
 people of Isra’el: you are to say to them,

24 *‘Y’varekh’kha Adonai v’yishmerekha.*

[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]

25 *Ya’er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.*

*[May Adonai make his face shine on you
 and show you his favour.]*

26 *Yissa Adonai*

panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom
*[May Adonai lift up his face toward you and
 give you peace.]*

Glossary

Midrash: In Judaism, the Midrash is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (Aggadah) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (halakha), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (Tanakh)

Targum: Targum Onkelos (or Onqelos), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: Targum Jonathan), otherwise referred to as Targum Yonasan/Yonatan, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10- 220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The Talmud means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the Babylonian Talmud (Talmud Bavli), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (Talmud Yerushalmi) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;
2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible .

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided .

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.