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Torah Reading for Bereishit

SELECT A PORTION:

Parshat Bereishit

Shabbat, 27 Tishrei, 5777

29 October, 2016

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1st Portion: (Genesis 1:1 - 2:3)

Genesis Chapter 1

[Hide Rashi's Commentary](#)

1. In the beginning of God's creation of the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning: Said Rabbi Isaac: It was not necessary to begin the Torah except from "This month is to you," (Exod. 12:2) which is the first commandment that the Israelites were commanded, (for the main purpose of the Torah is its commandments, and although several commandments are found in Genesis, e.g., circumcision and the prohibition of eating the thigh sinew, they could have been included together with the other commandments). Now for what reason did He commence with "In the beginning?" Because of [the verse] "The strength of His works He related to His people, to give them the inheritance of the nations" (Ps. 111:6). For if the nations of the world should say to Israel, "You are robbers, for you conquered by force the lands of the seven nations [of Canaan]," they will reply, "The entire earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it (this we learn from the story of the Creation) and gave it to whomever He deemed proper. When He wished, He gave it to them, and when He wished, He took it away from them and gave it to us."

In the beginning of God's creation of: Heb. בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא. This verse calls for a midrashic interpretation [because according to its simple interpretation, the vowelization of the word בְּרָא, should be different, as Rashi explains further]. It teaches us that the sequence of the Creation as written is impossible, as is written immediately below] as our Rabbis stated (Letters of R. Akiva, letter "beth"; Gen. Rabbah 1:6; Lev. Rabbah 36:4): [God created the world] for the sake of the Torah, which is called (Prov. 8:22): "the beginning of His way," and for the sake of Israel, who are called (Jer. 2:3) "the first of His grain." But if you wish to explain it according to its simple meaning, explain it thus: "At the beginning of the creation of heaven

א בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

בראשית: אמר רבי יצחק לא היה צריך להתחיל [את] התורה אלא (שמות יב ב) מהחודש הזה לכם, שהיא מצוה ראשונה שנצטוו [בה] ישראל, ומה טעם פתח בבראשית, משום (תהלים קיא ו) כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים, שאם יאמרו אומות העולם לישראל לסטים אתם, שכבשתם ארצות שבעה גוים, הם אומרים להם כל הארץ של הקב"ה היא, הוא בראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, ברצונו נתנה להם וברצונו נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו:

בראשית ברא: אין המקרא הזה אומר אלא דרשני, כמו שדרשוהו רבותינו ז"ל בשביל התורה שנקראת (משלי ח כב) ראשית דרכו, ובשביל ישראל שנקראו (ירמיה ב ג) ראשית תבואתו. ואם באת לפרשו כפשוטו כך פרשהו בראשית בריאת שמים וארץ והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך ויאמר א-להים יהי אור. ולא בא המקרא להורות סדר הבריאה לומר שאלו קדמו, שאם בא להורות כך, היה לו לכתוב בראשונה ברא את השמים וגו', שאין לך

and earth, the earth was astonishing with emptiness, and darkness...and God said, 'Let there be light.'" But Scripture did not come to teach the sequence of the Creation, to say that these came first, for if it came to teach this, it should have written: "At first (בְּרֵאשִׁית) He created the heavens and the earth," for there is no ראשית in Scripture that is not connected to the following word, [i.e., in the construct state] like (ibid. 27:1): "In the beginning of (בְּרֵאשִׁית) the reign of Jehoiakim" ; (below 10:10) "the beginning of (רֵאשִׁית) his reign" ; (Deut. 18:4) "the first (רֵאשִׁית) of your corn." Here too, you say בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא, like בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא, in the beginning of creating. And similar to this is, "At the beginning of the Lord's speaking (דְּבַר) to Hosea," (Hos. 1:2), i.e., at the beginning of the speaking (דְּבִירוֹ) of the Holy One, Blessed be He, to Hosea, "the Lord said to Hosea, etc." Now if you say that it came to teach that these (i.e., heaven and earth) were created first, and that its meaning is: In the beginning of all, He created these-and that there are elliptical verses that omit one word, like (Job 3:10): "For [He] did not shut the doors of my [mother's] womb," and it does not explain who it was who shut [the womb]; and like (Isa. 8:4): "he will carry off the wealth of Damascus," and it does not explain who will carry it off; and like (Amos 6:12): "or will one plow with cattle," and it does not explain: "if a man will plow with cattle" ; and like (Isa. 46: 10): "telling the end from the beginning," and it does not explain that [it means] telling the end of a matter from the beginning of a matter-if so, [if you say that Scripture indicates the order of creation] be astounded at yourself, for the water preceded, as it is written: "and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the water," and Scripture did not yet disclose when the creation of water took place! From this you learn that the water preceded the earth. Moreover, the heavens were created from fire and water. Perforce, you must admit that Scripture did not teach us anything about the sequence of the earlier and the later [acts of creation].

God's creation of the heavens and the earth: But it does not say "of the Lord's creation of" (i.e., it should say "of the Lord God's creation of" as below 2:4 "on the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven") for in the beginning it was His intention to create it with the Divine Standard of Justice, but he perceived that the world would not endure; so He preceded it with the Divine Standard of Mercy, allying it with the Divine Standard of Justice, and that is the reason it is written: "on the day the Lord God made earth and heaven."

2. Now the earth was astonishingly empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water.

ראשית במקרא שאינו דבוק לתיבה של אחריו, כמו (שם כו א) בראשית ממלכות יהויקים, (בראשית י י) ראשית ממלכתו, (דברים יח ד) ראשית דגן, אף כאן אתה אומר בראשית ברא א-להים וגו', כמו בראשית ברוא. ודומה לו (הושע א ב) תחלת דבר ה' בהושע, כלומר תחלת דבורו של הקב"ה בהושע, ויאמר ה' אל הושע וגו'. ואם תאמר להורות בא שאלו תחלה נבראו, ופירושו בראשית הכל ברא אלו, ויש לך מקראות שמקצרים לשונם וממעטים תיבה אחת, כמו (איוב ג י) כי לא סגר דלתי בטני, ולא פירש מי הסוגר, וכמו (ישעיה ח ד) ישא את חיל דמשק, ולא פירש מי ישאנו, וכמו (עמוס ו יב) אם יחרוש בבקרים, ולא פירש אם יחרוש אדם בבקרים, וכמו (ישעיה מו י) מגיד מראשית אחרית, ולא פירש מגיד מראשית דבר אחרית דבר. אם כן תמה על עצמך, שהרי המים קדמו, שהרי כתיב ורוח א-להים מרחפת על פני המים, ועדיין לא גלה המקרא בריית המים מתי היתה, הא למדת שקדמו המים לארץ. ועוד שהשמים מאש ומים נבראו, על כרחך לא לימד המקרא סדר המוקדמים והמאוחרים כלום:

ברא א-להים: ולא אמר ברא ה', שבתחלה עלה במחשבה לבראתו במדת הדין, ראה שאין העולם מתקיים, הקדים מדת רחמים ושתפה למדת הדין, היינו דכתיב (להלן ב ד) ביום עשות ה' א-להים ארץ ושמים:

ב וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תְהוֹמָה וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹמֹת וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם:

astonishingly empty: Heb. תהו ובהו. The word תהו is an expression of astonishment and desolation, that a person wonders and is astonished at the emptiness therein.

astonishingly empty: Astordison in Old French; [étourdissement in modern French], astonishment. בהו an expression of emptiness and desolation. (This does not appear in all editions.)

בהו: an expression of emptiness and desolation. (This does not appear in all editions.)

on the face of the deep: on the face of the waters which were on the earth.

and the spirit of God was hovering: The Throne of Glory was suspended in the air and hovered over the face of the water with the breath of the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He and with His word, like a dove, which hovers over the nest, acoveter in Old French, to cover, hover over.

3. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

4. And God saw the light that it was good, and God separated between the light and between the darkness.

And God saw the light that it was good, and God separated: Here too, we need the words of the Aggadah: He saw it that it was not proper for the wicked to use it; so He separated it for the righteous in the future. According to its simple meaning, explain it as follows: He saw it that it was good, and it was unseemly that it [light] and darkness should serve in confusion; so He established for this one its boundary by day, and for that one its boundary by night.

5. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night, and it was evening and it was morning, one day.

one day: According to the sequence of the language of the chapter, it should have been written, "the first day," as it is written regarding the other days, "second, third, fourth." Why did Scripture write "one" ? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, was the only one in His world, for the angels were not created until the second day. [i.e., יום אֶחָד is understood as 'the day of the only One'] So is it explained in Genesis Rabbah (3:8).

תהו ובהו: תהו לשון תמה ושממון שאדם תוהא ומשתומם על בהו שבה:

תהו: אישטורדישו"ן בלע"ז [מבוכה]:

בהו: לשון רקות וצדו:

על פני תהום: על פני המים שעל הארץ:

רוח א-להים מרחפת: כסא הכבוד עומד באויר ומרחף על פני המים ברוח פיו של הקב"ה ובמאמרו, כיונה המרחפת על הקן אקוביטי"ר בלע"ז [לכסות]:

ג וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי־אֹר וַיְהִי־אֹר:

ד וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ:

וירא א-להים את האור כי טוב ויבדל: אף בזה אנו צריכים לדברי אגדה ראהו שאינו כדאי להשתמש בו רשעים והבדילו לצדיקים לעתיד לבא. ולפי פשוטו כך פרשהו ראהו כי טוב ואין נאה לו ולחשך שיהיו משתמשין בערבוביא, וקבע לזה תחומו ביום ולזה תחומו בלילה:

ה וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לְאֹר לְיוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

יום אחד: לפי סדר [לשון] הפרשה היה לו לכתוב יום ראשון, כמו שכתוב בשאר הימים שני, שלישי, רביעי. למה כתב אחד, לפי שהיה הקב"ה יחיד בעולמו שלא נבראו המלאכים עד יום שני, כך מפורש בבראשית רבה (ג ח):

6. And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water, and let it be a separation between water and water."

Let there be an expanse: Let the expanse be strengthened, for, although the heavens were created on the first day, they were still moist, and they solidified on the second [day] from the rebuke of the Holy One, blessed be He, when He said, "Let there be an expanse." This is what Scripture says (Job 26:11): "The pillars of the heavens trembled" the entire first day, and on the second day: "They were astonished by His rebuke," like a person who stands in astonishment because of the rebuke of the one who frightens him. [Genesis Rabbah 12:10]

in the midst of the water: In the middle of the water (Targum), for there is a separation between the upper waters and the expanse, as there is between the expanse and the waters that are on the earth. Behold you have learned that they are suspended by the word of the King. — [Gen. Rabbah 4:3]

7. And God made the expanse and it separated between the water that was below the expanse and the water that was above the expanse, and it was so.

And God made the expanse: He fixed it upon its base, which is [what is meant by] "making" it; as [in the verse] (Deut. 21:12): "and she shall 'do' her nails," וְעָשְׂתָּהּ.

above the expanse: It does not say, "on the expanse," but "above the expanse," because they [the waters] are suspended in the air (Mid. Ps. 19:4). Now why does it not say, "that it was good" on the second day? Because the work involving the water was not completed until the third day, although He commenced it on the second day, and an unfinished thing is not in its fullness and its goodness; and on the third day, when He completed the work involving the water and He commenced and completed another work, He repeated therein "that it was good" twice (sic): once for the completion of the work of the second day and once for the completion of the work of that [third] day. — [Gen. Rabbah 4:6]

8. And God called the expanse Heaven, and it was evening, and it was morning, a second day.

And God called the expanse heaven: Heb. שָׁמַיִם [This is a

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רָקִיעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וְיִהְיֶה מַבְדִּיל בֵּין מַיִם לְמַיִם:

יהי רקיע: יחזק הרקיע. שאף על פי שנבראו שמים ביום ראשון, עדיין לחים היו, וקראו בשני מגערת הקב"ה באומרו יהי רקיע, וזהו שכתוב (איוב כו יא) עמודי שמים ירופפו כל יום ראשון. ובשני יתמהו מגערתו, כאדם שמשותמום ועומד מגערת המאיים עליו:

בתוך המים: באמצע המים, שיש הפרש בין מים העליונים לרקיע כמו בין הרקיע למים שעל הארץ, הא למדת שהם תלויים במאמרו של מלך:

ז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָרָקִיעַ וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת לָרָקִיעַ בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל לָרָקִיעַ וַיְהִי־כֵן:

ויעש א-להים את הרקיע: תקנו על עמדו והיא עשייתו, כמו (דברים כא יב) ועשתה את צפרניה:

מעל לרקיע: על הרקיע לא נאמר אלא מעל לרקיע, לפי שהן תלויים באויר. ומפני מה לא נאמר כי טוב ביום שני, לפי שלא נגמרה מלאכת המים עד יום שלישי, והרי התחיל בה בשני, ודבר שלא נגמר אינו במילואו ובטובו, ובשלישי שנגמרה מלאכת המים והתחיל מלאכה אחרת ונגמרה, כפל בו כי טוב שני פעמים, אחד לגמר מלאכת השני ואחד לגמר מלאכת היום:

ח וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לָרָקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁנִי:

ויקרא א-להים לרקיע שמים: שא מים, שם

combination of the words מַיִם וַאֲשַׁר, bear water (Gen. Rabbah 4:7); מַיִם וַאֲשַׁר, there is water; אֵשׁ וַמַּיִם, fire and water. He mingled them with one another and made the heavens from them (Chag. 12a).

מים, אש ומים, שערבן זה בזה ועשה מהם
שמים:

9. And God said, "Let the water that is beneath the heavens gather into one place, and let the dry land appear," and it was so.

ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם
אֶל־מְקוֹם אֶחָד וַתֵּרָא הַיַּבְשָׁה וַיְהִי־כֵן:

Let the water...gather: They were spread out over the surface of the entire earth, and He gathered them in the ocean, [the Mediterranean], which is the largest of all the seas. — [from Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 5; Gen. Rabbah 5:2]

יקוו המים: [שהיו] שטוחין על פני כל הארץ
והקוים באוקיינוס, הוא הים הגדול שבכל הימים:

10. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas, and God saw that it was good.

י וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לַיַּבְשָׁה אֶרֶץ וְלַמְקוֹה הַמַּיִם
קָרָא יַמִּים וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:

He called seas: But is it not one sea? However, the flavor of a fish that comes up from the sea in Acre differs from the flavor of a fish that comes up from the sea in Spain. — [from Ekev 39]

קרא ימים: והלא ים אחד הוא, אלא אינו
דומה טעם דג העולה [מן הים] בעכו לטעם דג
העולה [מן הים] באספמיה:

11. And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, seed yielding herbs and fruit trees producing fruit according to its kind in which its seed is found, on the earth," and it was so.

יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תִּדְשָׂא הָאָרֶץ דְּשֵׂא עֵשֶׂב
מִזְרִיעֵרֶע עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשֶׂה פְּרִילְמִנּוֹ אֲשֶׁר זֶרְעוֹ־בּוֹ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן:

Let the earth sprout vegetation, seed yielding herbs: דְּשֵׂא does not have the same meaning as עֵשֶׂב, and עֵשֶׂב does not have the same meaning as דְּשֵׂא. And it would have been inappropriate for the Scriptural text to use the expression, תַּעֲשִׂיב הָאָרֶץ (let the earth bring forth herbs), for there are various species of דְּשֵׂא, each one by itself which is called a particular עֵשֶׂב. And it would not be the correct term for the speaker to say, "such-and-such a דְּשֵׂא," because the term דְּשֵׂא applies to the earth's covering, when it is filled with vegetation.

תדשא הארץ דשא עשב: לא דשא לשון
עשב ולא עשב לשון דשא, ולא היה לשון
המקרא לומר תעשיב הארץ, שמיני דשאים
מחולקין, כל אחד לעצמו נקרא עשב פלוני, ואין
לשון למדבר לומר דשא פלוני, שלשון דשא הוא
לבישת הארץ כשהיא מתמלאת בדשאים:

Let the earth sprout: Let it be filled and covered with a mantle of herbs. In Old French, דְּשֵׂא is called erbediz, herbage, all in a mixture, whereas each root individually is called עֵשֶׂב.

תדשא הארץ: תתמלא ותתכסה לבוש
עשבים. בלשון לעז נקרא דשא אירבידי"ץ
[מכלול העשבים] כולן בערבוביא, וכל שורש
לעצמו נקרא עשב:

seed-yielding: That its seeds should grow in it from which to sow elsewhere.

מזריע זרע: שיגדל בו זרעו לזרוע ממנו במקום
אחר:

fruit trees: That the taste of the tree should be like the taste of the

עץ פרי: שיהא טעם העץ כטעם הפרי, והיא

seven (another reading: during the three) days of Creation, the primordial light and darkness served together, both by day and by night. — [Medrah Yelammedenu , as quoted in Yalkut Shim'oni] According to the Ramban and early editions of Rashi , it appears that the reading, "during the seven days of Creation," is the authentic reading. Ramban , however quotes the Genesis Rabbah , which states that the original primordial light served only during the first three days, until the sun and the moon were suspended in the sky. After that, the primordial light was hidden away, as in Rashi to verse 4. Note also that several early manuscripts and printed editions of Rashi read: "but in the seven days of Creation, the primordial light and darkness served, this one by day and this one by night." This is also the reading of Mizrachi , and it appears more accurate than our reading, because, in fact, the light and the darkness did not serve together, as Rashi explains in verse 4.]

and they shall be for signs: When the luminaries are eclipsed, it is an unfavorable omen for the world, as it is said (Jer. 10:2): "and from the signs of the heaven be not dismayed, etc." When you perform the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, you need not fear retribution. — [from Succah 29a]

and for appointed seasons: This refers to the future, when the Israelites are destined to be commanded concerning the festivals and they [the festivals] are reckoned from the first phase of the moon. — [from Gen. Rabbah 6:1].

and for days: The sun serves for half a day, and the moon for half of it, so that you have a full day.

and years: At the end of 365 days (other editions: and a 1/4 of a day) they complete their revolution through the twelve constellations of the zodiac, which serve them, and that constitutes a year. (Other editions read: and that is 365 and 1/4 days), and they return and start a second time to revolve on the sphere like their first revolution.

15. And they shall be for luminaries in the expanse of the heavens to shed light upon the earth." And it was so.

And they shall be for luminaries: In addition, they will serve in this function, viz. to shed light upon the world.

16. And God made the two great luminaries: the great luminary to rule the day and the lesser luminary to rule the

שמשו האור והחושך הראשונים יחד בין ביום
ובין בלילה:

והיו לאותות: כשהמאורות לוקין סימן רע הוא לעולם, שנאמר (ירמיה י ב) מאותות השמים אל תחתו, בעשותכם רצון הקב"ה אין אתם צריכין לדאג מן הפורענות:

ולמועדים: על שם העתיד, שעתידים ישראל להצטוות על המועדות והם נמנים למולד הלבנה:

ולימים: שמוש החמה חצי יום ושמוש הלבנה חציו, הרי יום שלם:

ושנים: לסוף שלש מאות ששים וחמשה ימים יגמרו מהלכת בשנים עשר מזלות המשרתים אותם והיא שנה. (וחוזרים ומתחילים פעם שניה לסבב בגלגל כמהלכן הראשון):

טו וְהָיוּ לְמֵאוֹרוֹת בְּרִקְיעַת הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאֵר
עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְיִהְיֶה־כֵן:

והיו למאורות: עוד זאת ישמשו שיאירו לעולם:

טז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים
אֶת־הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־הַמְּאֹרֹת

night, and the stars.

הַקֵּטָן לְמִמְשָׁלַת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים:

the two great luminaries: They were created equal, but the moon was made smaller because it brought charges and said, "It is impossible for two kings to use the same crown." - [from Chullin 60b] Rashi (ad loc.) explains that this derash is based on the discrepancy of the two expressions, "the two great luminaries," which intimates that the moon was a great luminary, and "the lesser luminary," which intimates that the moon was smaller than the sun. To reconcile this difference, the Rabbis asserted that the moon was originally created equal to the sun, but, because of its complaint that the sun wielded the same power that it wielded, it was forced to relinquish that power.

and the stars: Because He diminished the moon, He increased its hosts, to appease it. - [from Gen. Rabbah 46:4 and Chullin 60b] i.e., The stars serve as the entourage of the moon. When it comes out, they accompany it, and when it sets, they too set. [Gen. Rabbah ad loc.]

17. And God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to shed light upon the earth.

18. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate between the light and between the darkness, and God saw that it was good.

19. And it was evening, and it was morning, a fourth day.

20. And God said, "Let the waters swarm a swarming of living creatures, and let fowl fly over the earth, across the expanse of the heavens."

living creatures: That there should be life in them.

a swarming: Heb. שָׂרָץ. Every living thing that is not much higher than the earth is שָׂרָץ; among the winged creatures, such as flies; among the insects, such as ants, beetles, and worms; and among the [larger] creatures, such as the weasel, the mouse, the lizard, and their like, and so [among] the fishes. [Note that in most early editions and mss., the reading is וְכָל הַדְּגָיִם, and all the fishes (and not וְכָל הַדְּגָיִם).]

המאורות הגדולים וגו': שוים נבראו, ונתמעטה הלבנה על שקטרגה ואמרה אי אפשר לשני מלכים שישתמשו בכתר אחד:

ואת הכוכבים: על ידי שמיעט את הלבנה, הרבה צבאיה להפיס דעתה:

יז וַיִּתֵּן אֱתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרִקיעַ שָׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

יח וְלִמְשַׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי-טוֹב:

יט וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם רְבִיעִי:

כ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִשְׂרָצוּ הַמַּיִם שָׂרָץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף-עוֹפֵף עַל-הָאָרֶץ עַל-פְּנֵי רִקיעַ שָׁמַיִם:

נפש חיה: שיש בה חיות:

שרץ: כל דבר חי שאינו גבוה מן הארץ קרוי שרץ, בעוף כגון זבובים, בשקצים כגון נמלים וחיפושין ותולעים, ובבריות כגון חולד ועכבר וחומט וכיוצא בהם, וכל הדגים:

21. And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that crawls, with which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged fowl, according to its kind, and God saw that it was good.

the...sea monsters: The great fish in the sea, and in the words of the Aggadah (B.B. 74b), this refers to the Leviathan and its mate, for He created them male and female, and He slew the female and salted her away for the righteous in the future, for if they would propagate, the world could not exist because of them. הַתַּיִנִּים is written. [I.e., the final “yud,” which denotes the plural, is missing, hence the implication that the Leviathan did not remain two, but that its number was reduced to one.]- [from Gen. Rabbah 7:4, Midrash Chaseroth V'Yetheroth, Batei Midrashoth, vol 2, p. 225].

living creature: a creature in which there is life.

22. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the fowl multiply upon the earth."

And...blessed them: Because [people] decimate them and hunt them and eat them, they required a blessing; and the beasts also required a blessing, but because the serpent was destined to be cursed, He did not bless them, lest he [the serpent] be included. — [from Gen. Rabbah 11:3, Midrash Tadshe 1]

Be fruitful: [The word פָּרוּ is derived from פָּרָי, fruit, meaning produce fruits.

and multiply: If He had said only, “Be fruitful,” one would beget one and no more. “And multiply” was therefore said so that one could beget many.

23. And it was evening, and it was morning, a fifth day.

24. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kind, cattle and creeping things and the beasts of the earth according to their kind," and it was so.

Let the earth bring forth: That is what I explained [verse 14] that everything was created on the first [day], and they required only to be brought forth. — [from Tanchuma Buber, Bereishith 1]

כא וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַתַּיִנִּים הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֵת כָּל־נֹפֵשׁ הַחַיָּה | הָרֹמֶשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר־שָׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵיהֶם וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף כַּנְּףִלְמִינָהוּ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:

הַתַּיִנִּים: דגים גדולים שבים. ובדברי אגדה הוא לויתן ובן זוגו שבראם זכר ונקבה והרג את הנקבה ומלחה לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, שאם יפרו וירבו לא יתקיים העולם בפניהם:

נפש החיה: שיש בה חיות:

כב וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הַמַּיִם־בַּיַּמִּים וְהָעוֹף יִרְבֶּה בָאָרֶץ:

ויברך אותם: לפי שמחסרים אותן וצדין מהם ואוכלין אותם הוצרכו לברכה. ואף החיות הוצרכו לברכה, אלא מפני הנחש שעתיד לקללה, לכך לא ברכו, שלא יהא הוא בכלל:

פרו: לשון פרי, כלומר עשו פירות:

ורבו: אם לא אמר אלא פרו היה אחד מוליד אחד ולא יותר, ובא ורבו שאחד מוליד הרבה:

כג וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם חַמִּישִׁי:

כד וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ בַּהֵמָה וְרֶמֶשׂ וְחַיֵּי־אָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי־כֵן:

תוצא הארץ: הוא שפירשתי (פסוק יד) שהכל נברא מיום ראשון ולא הוצרכו אלא להוציאם:

living creatures: which have life. (See above, verse 20.)

נפש חיה: שיש בה חיות:

and creeping things: These are the creeping things, which are low and crawl upon the earth and appear as if they are dragging along, because their movement is not discernible. Every expression of שָׂרָץ or רָמַשׁ [is translated] in our language [Old French] as conmovres, crawling creatures.

ורמש: הם שרצים שהם נמוכים ורומשים על הארץ, נראים כאלו נגררים, שאין הלוכן ניכר. כל לשון רמש ושרץ בלשוננו קונמובר"יש בלע"ז [רוחשים]:

25. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kind and the cattle according to their kind, and all the creeping things of the ground according to their kind, and God saw that it was good.

כה ויעש אלהים את חית הארץ למינה ואת הבהמה למינה ואת כל רמש האדמה למינה וירא אלהים כי טוב:

And... made: He fixed them in their complete form, and in their full stature. — [from Rosh Hashanah 11a, Chullin 60a]

ויעש: תקנם בצביונם ובקומתם:

26. And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and they shall rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the heaven and over the animals and over all the earth and over all the creeping things that creep upon the earth."

כו ויאמר אלהים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו וירדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובהמה ובכל הארץ ובכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ:

Let us make man: From here we learn the humility of the Holy One, blessed be He. Since man was created in the likeness of the angels, and they would envy him, He consulted them. And when He judges kings, He consults with His Heavenly household, for so we find regarding Ahab, that Micah said to him, (I Kings 22:19): "I saw the Lord seated on His throne, and all the host of heaven were standing by Him, on His right and on His left." Now do "left" or "right" apply to Him?! But rather, [the passage means that] these [angels] were standing on the right to defend, and these [angels] were standing on the left to prosecute. Likewise, (Dan. 4:14): "By the decree of the destructive angels is the matter, and by the word of the holy ones is the edict." Here too, He took counsel with His heavenly household. He said to them, "Among the heavenly beings, there are some in My likeness. If there are none in My likeness among the earthly beings, there will be envy among the creatures of the Creation." - [from Tanchuma, Shemoth 18; Gen. Rabbah 8:11, 14:13]

נעשה אדם: ענותנותו של הקב"ה למדנו מכאן, לפי שהאדם בדמות המלאכים ויתקנאו בו לפיכך נמלך בהם, וכשהוא דן את המלכים הוא נמלך בפמליא שלו, שכן מצינו באחאב שאמר לו מיכה (מלכים א' כב יט) ראיתי את ה' יושב על כסאו וכל צבא השמים עומד עליו מימינו ומשמאלו, וכי יש ימין ושמאל לפניו, אלא אלו מימינים לזכות ואלו משמאלין לחובה. וכן (דניאל ד יד) בגזרת עירין פתגמא ובמאמר קדישין שאלתא, אף כאן בפמליא שלו נמלך ונטל רשות, אמר להם יש בעליונים כדמותי, אם אין בתחתונים כדמותי, הרי יש קנאה במעשה בראשית:

Let us make man: Even though they [the angels] did not assist Him in His creation, and there is an opportunity for the heretics to rebel (to misconstrue the plural as a basis for their heresies),

נעשה אדם: אף על פי שלא סייעוהו ביצירתו ויש מקום למינים לרדות, לא נמנע הכתוב מללמד דרך ארץ ומדת ענוה שיהא הגדול נמלך

Scripture did not hesitate to teach proper conduct and the trait of humility, that a great person should consult with and receive permission from a smaller one. Had it been written: "I shall make man," we would not have learned that He was speaking with His tribunal, but to Himself. And the refutation to the heretics is written alongside it [i. e., in the following verse:] "And God created (וַיִּבְרָא) ," and it does not say, "and they created (וַיִּבְרְאוּ)." - [from Gen. Rabbah 8:9]

in our image: in our form.

after our likeness: to understand and to discern.

and they shall rule over the fish: Heb. וַיִּרְדּוּ This expression contains both the meaning of ruling and the meaning of subservience. If he merits, he rules over the beasts and over the cattle. If he does not merit, he becomes subservient to them, and the beast rules over him. — [from Gen. Rabbah 8:12]

27. And God created man in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And God created man in His image: In the form that was made for him, for everything [else] was created with a command, whereas he [man] was created with the hands (of God), as it is written (Ps. 139:5): "and You placed Your hand upon me." Man was made with a die, like a coin, which is made by means of a die, which is called coin in Old French. And so Scripture states (Job 38:14): "The die changes like clay." - [from Letters of Rabbi Akiva, second version; Mid. Ps. 139:5; Sanh. 38a]

in the image of God He created him: It explains to you that the image that was prepared for him was the image of the likeness of his Creator. — [from B.B. 58a]

male and female He created them: Yet further (2:21) Scripture states: "And He took one of his ribs, etc." The Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 8:1, Ber. 61a, Eruvin 18a) explains that He originally created him with two faces, and afterwards, He divided him. The simple meaning of the verse is that here Scripture informs you that they were both created on the sixth [day], but it does not explain to you how they were created, and it explains [that] to you elsewhere. — [from Baraitha of the Thirty Two Methods, Method 13]

28. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule

ונוטל רשות מן הקטן. ואם כתב אעשה אדם לא למדנו שיהא מדבר עם בית דינו אלא עם עצמו, ותשובת המינים כתב בצדו ויברא א-להים את האדם, ולא כתב ויבראו:

בצלמנו: בדפוס שלנו:

כדמותנו: להבין ולהשכיל:

וירדו בדגת הים: יש בלשון הזה לשון ירידו ובלשון ירידה, זכה רודה בחיות ובהמות, לא זכה נעשה ירוד לפנייהם והחיה מושלת בו:

כז וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:

ויברא א-להים את האדם בצלמו: בדפוס העשוי לו, שהכל נברא במאמר והוא נברא בידים, שנאמר (תהלים קלט ה) ותשת עלי כפכה, נעשה בחותם כמטבע העשויה על ידי רושם שקורין קו"ן בלע"ז [מטבע] וכן הוא אומר (איוב לח יד) תתהפך כחומר חותם:

בצלם א-להים ברא אותם: פירש לך שאותו צלם המתוקן לו צלם דיוקן יצורו הוא:

זכר ונקבה ברא אותם: ולהלן הוא אומר (בראשית ב כא) ויקח אחת מצלעותיו וגו', מדרש אגדה שבראו שני פרצופין בבריאה ראשונה ואחר כך חלקו. ופשוטו של מקרא, כאן הודיעך שנבראו שניהם בששי ולא פירש לך כיצד ברייתן ופירש לך במקום אחר:

כח וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבַשְׁתֶּם־אֹתָהּ וְרָדוּ בָּדָגַת

over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the sky and over all the beasts that tread upon the earth. "

הַיּוֹבְעֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל-חַיַּיָּה הַרְמֵשֶׁת
עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

and subdue it: The "vav" [in וּבְכָשָׁה is missing, [allowing the word to be read וּבְכָשָׁה, the masculine singular imperative] to teach you that the male subdues the female that she should not be a gadabout (Gen. Rabbah 8:12), and it is also meant to teach you that the man, whose way it is to subdue, is commanded to propagate, but not the woman (Yev. Yev. 65b).

וכבשה: חסר וי"ו, ללמדך שהזכר כובש את הנקבה שלא תהא יצאנית, ועוד ללמדך שהאיש שדרכו לכבוש מצווה על פריה ורביה ולא האשה:

29. And God said, "Behold, I have given you every seed bearing herb, which is upon the surface of the entire earth, and every tree that has seed bearing fruit; it will be yours for food.

כס וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה-נָתַתִּי לָכֶם
אֶת-כָּל-עֵשֶׂב | זֶרְעָרֵעַ אֲשֶׁר-עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ
וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ פְרִי-עֵץ זֶרְעָרֵעַ לָכֶם
יְהִי לְאֹכְלָהּ:

30. And to all the beasts of the earth and to all the fowl of the heavens, and to everything that moves upon the earth, in which there is a living spirit, every green herb to eat," and it was so.

ל וְלִכְלַח-חַיַּיָּה הָאָרֶץ וְלִכְלַע-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְלַל |
רוֹמֵשׁ עַל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-בוֹנֵפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֶת-כָּל-יֵרֶק
עֵשֶׂב לְאֹכְלָהּ וַיְהִי-כֵן:

it will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth: He equated cattle and the beasts to them [to man] regarding the food [that they were permitted to eat]. He did not permit Adam and his wife to kill a creature and to eat its flesh; only every green herb they were all permitted to eat equally. When the sons of Noah came, He permitted them to eat flesh, as it is said (below 9:3): "Every creeping thing that is alive, etc." Like the green herbs, which I permitted to the first man, I have given you everything. — [from Sanh. 59b]

לכם יהיה לאכלה. ולכל חית הארץ:
השוה להם הכתוב בהמות וחיות למאכל, ולא הרשה לאדם ולאשתו להמית בריה ולאכול בשר, אך כל ירק עשב יאכלו יחד כלם, וכשבאו בני נח התיר להם בשר, שנאמר (להלן ט ג) כל רמש אשר הוא חי וגו' כירק עשב שהתרתיו לאדם הראשון, נתתי לכם את כל:

31. And God saw all that He had made, and behold it was very good, and it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day.

לא וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה-טוֹב
מְאֹד וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשֵּׁשִׁי:

the sixth day: Scripture added a "hey" on the sixth [day], at the completion of the Creation, to tell us that He stipulated with them, ["you were created] on the condition that Israel accept the Five Books of the Torah." [The numerical value of the "hey" is five.] (Tanchuma Bereishith 1). Another explanation for "the sixth day" : They [the works of creation] were all suspended until the "sixth day," referring to the sixth day of Sivan, which was prepared for the giving of the Torah (Shab. 88a). [The "hey" is the definite article,

יום הששי: הוסיף ה' בששי בגמר מעשה בראשית, לומר שהתנה עמהם על מנת שיקבלו עליהם ישראל חמשה חומשי תורה. דבר אחר יום הששי כולם תלויים ועומדים עד יום הששי, הוא ששי בסיון המוכן למתן תורה:

alluding to the well-known sixth day, the sixth day of Sivan, when the Torah was given (ad loc.)]

Genesis Chapter 2

1. Now the heavens and the earth were completed and all their host.

א וַיִּכְלֹוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל-צְבָאָם:

2. And God completed on the seventh day His work that He did, and He abstained on the seventh day from all His work that He did.

ב וַיִּכַּל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבַּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְכַל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

And God completed on the seventh day: Rabbi Shimon said: [A human being of] flesh and blood, who cannot [exactly] know his times and his moments, must add from the profane to the holy [i.e., he must add some time to the Sabbath.] The Holy One, blessed be He, Who knows His times and His moments [exactly], entered it [the Sabbath] within a hairbreadth, and it therefore appeared as if He completed it [His work] on that day. Another explanation: What was the world lacking? Rest. The Sabbath came, and so came rest. The work was completed and finished. — [from Gen. Rabbah 10:9]

ויכל א-להים ביום השביעי: רבי שמעון אומר בשר ודם שאינו יודע עתיו ורגעיו צריך להוסיף מחול על הקודש, הקב"ה שיודע עתיו ורגעיו נכנס בו כחוט השערה ונראה כאלו כלה בו ביום. דבר אחר מה היה העולם חסר, מנוחה, באת שבת באת מנוחה, כלתה ונגמרה המלאכה:

3. And God blessed the seventh day and He hallowed it, for thereon He abstained from all His work that God created to do.

ג וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכַל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת:

And...blessed...and hallowed: He blessed it with manna, for on all the days of the week, it descended for them [in the amount of] an omer per person, whereas on the sixth day,[each one received] a double portion. And He hallowed it with manna, that it did not descend at all on the Sabbath. This verse is written with reference to the future. — [from Gen. Rabbah 11:2]

ויברך ויקדש: ברכו במן שכל ימות השבת היה יורד להם עומר לגלגלת ובששי לחם משנה, וקדשו במן שלא ירד בו מן כלל והמקרא כתוב על שם העתיד:

that God created to do: The work that was fit to be done on the Sabbath, He doubled up and did it on the sixth [day], as is explained in Genesis Rabbah (11:9).

אשר ברא א-להים לעשות: המלאכה שהיתה ראויה לעשות בשבת כפל ועשאה בששי, כמו שמפורש בבראשית רבה (יא ט):

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