

בראשית Bereishis

(5776)

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Why Does the Torah start with the Letter ב?

בראשית, ברא אלהים, את השמים, ואת הארץ
Bereishis Bara Elohim, Es Hashamayim, v'es Ha'aretz

In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1)

The א wanted to be the first letter of the Torah. The case the א made to Hashem was that it was the beginning of the word אמת (Emet). The ת made the same case because it was the last letter of the word אמת. Which seals the door and establishing truth. And that אמת is one of the 72 names for G-d. In Jeremiah 10:10 it calls him Emet Elohim. The case that the ב made was that it beginning the word "Baruch" meaning "blessed" and the ב said in the word Bereishis we bless G-d's name twice in heaven and earth Intheway words Baruch and Brochah. Hashem then said to the ב, "through you I will make all things."

The Torah begins with the letter ב and ends with the letter ל of Yisrael (Deuteronomy 34:12). Together these letters spell Lev לב. Man's spirit resides in his heart, always motivating him to greater heights (Likutei Moharan I, 10:7)

Why does the Torah begin with the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet ב and not the first letter א? The Jerusalem Talmud suggests that the א would be an inappropriate beginning, since it is the first letter of the word arirah, meaning "cursing". ב on the other hand, begins the word bracha, meaning "blessing". (Chagigah 2:1)

The reason for this (according to Rebbe Nachman) is because of preparation. Before opening the book, a person should take a few moments to reflect that he is about to study G-d's wisdom that has been condensed into a humanly intelligible form. He is about to bind his mind into a total union with G-d. Of course, when he actually studies Torah, he will not be able to meditate on this fact, since he will be concentrating on the text. Therefore, it is crucial that a person has the correct intentions before he begins. That is why the Torah begins with a ב, to hint to its reader that study is only the second phase of the mitzvah.
(Likutei Sichos vol. 15 p 1)

The word Bereishis (בראשית), may be written as Beit Reishit (בית ראשית). The word Bayit (בית), and the word reishit (beginning) can be understood as referring to the Torah. Thus the word Bereishis - Bayit

reishit - teaches us that a person who builds a life on Torah principles brings benefit into his home. This is reflected in the fact that when we return to our jokes following the holiday of Sukkos, we begin reading the Torah again from Bereishis. (Likutei Moharan I, 266)

Mashich Mashiach Mashich.....

"Rav said, 'the world was created only for the sake of David.' Shum'el said 'only for the sake of Moses. Rabbi Yochanan said, 'only for the sake of Messiah.' (b. Sanhedrin 98b)

G-d created seven things before he created the world. They are the Torah; repentance; the Garden of Eden; Gehenna; the Throne of Glory; the Temple; and the name of the Messiah....The name of the Messiah, as it is written [in Psalm 72:17], 'May His name endure forever; before the sun His name endures.' (Pesachim 54a)

"What is the name of the Messiah? The school of Rabbi Yannai said 'His name is Yinnon, for it is written [in Psalm 72:17]. 'May his name endure forever; before the sun His name is Yinnon.' (Sanhedrin 98a)

A parallel verse from the psalm contains another cryptic reference to the Messiah: "Let them fear You while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all your generations" (Psalm 72:5) these words (im shemesh velifnel yareach) bring about the acronym "Mashiach" משיח.

MASHIACH ENCODED IN PSALM 72:5		
עם	While	מ
שמש	The sun endures	ש
ולפני	And as long as	י
ירח	The moon	ח

The first letters of the same phrase contain all the letters for the name of the Messiah as well ישוע.

YESHUA ENCODED IN PSALM 72:5		
עם	While	
שמש	The sun endures	
ולפני	And as long as	
ירח	The moon	

וְהָאָרֶץ, הִיְתָה תֶהוֹ וָבֶהוּ, וְחֹשֶׁךְ, עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם; וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, מְרַחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם.

**Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.
(Genesis 1:2)**

"Water is a reference to Torah (Isaiah 55:1) and the 'Spirit of G-d' alludes to the spirit of Mashiach (Zohar I, 192b), who will ultimately counter the confusions of this world. We arouse the spirit of Mashiach when we translate the Torah that we are learning into our own words - particularly into our mother tongue. By restating the Torah in our own idiom, we draw it's holiness into the mundane world and bring it closer to the Messianic era" (Likutei Moharan I, 118)

"The spirit of G-d was moving over the surface of the waters'. This was the spirit of Messiah as it is written 'The spirit of the L-rd will rest upon him' (Genesis Rabbah 1:2)

"The Messiah has superiority even higher than that of Moses our teacher. On the phrase at the beginning of the Torah. 'And the spirit of G-d hovered,' the sages teach, 'This alludes to the spirit of the King Messiah.' That verse continues 'over the surface of the waters.' This initiates a level higher than that of Moses, who is called Moses [in Exodus 2:10] 'because from the water I drew him' (The Maamarim of the Alter Rebbe on the Parshiyos)

In particular, the spirit of Mashiach refers to Mashiach's deep sense of morality. We attach ourselves to that spirit when we ourselves attain a pure and moral attitude - that makes it possible for us to 'hover over the surface of the waters' - ie, to learn Torah in depth (Likutei Moharan II, 32)

The earth that is without form, and desolate, represents the evil that can overcome a person. To rectify this evil, one must find it's counterpart of good. This ability is found in the 'spirit of G-d' - namely the spirit of Mashiach, who always finds the good in everything. Thus, the Torah immediately states: 'G-d said, 'Let there be light' - which corresponds to the good - 'and G-d separated between light and darkness' - since by searching for the good, one can separate good from evil." (Likutei Halakhot I, p. 3a)

וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאוֹר, כִּי-טוֹב

**G-d saw that the light was good.
(Genesis 1:4)**

"This is the light of Messiah, as it is said, 'G-d saw the light, that it was good.' This teaches that before the world was created, the Holy One, blessed is he, looked forward to the generation of Messiah and it's deeds. He hid the primordial light for Messiah and his generations beneath his throne of glory."
(Yalkut Shim'oni 11.499)

"At that time, the Holy One, blessed is he, will make the light of the King Messiah and of Israel gleam, and everyone will walk by the light of the King Messiah and of Israel, as it is said, 'Nations will walk by your light and kings by your shining brilliance.'" (Yalkut Shim'oni 11.499)

"At the time that the King Messiah comes, he will stand on the roof of the Holy Temple and proclaim to Israel, 'Humble ones, the time of your redemption has come! And if you do not believe me, see my light that is shining upon you! As it is said, 'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the L-rd has risen upon you.' And it has shone only upon you, and not on the idolaters, as it is said in Isaiah 60:2, 'For behold, darkness will cover the earth.'" (Yalkut Shim'oni (11.499)

"G-d called the firmament 'sky'. It became evening and it became morning - a second day"
Genesis 1:8 (the Gutnick Chumash)

The Hebrew word for 'skies' שָׁמַיִם, is a combination of different words: שָׂא מַיִם (bear water), שָׁם מַיִם (there is water), אֵשׁ וּמַיִם (fire and water). He mixed them together and made the skies from them.
(Rashi)

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, לֹא-טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ; אֶעֱשֶׂה-לּוֹ עֵזֶר, כְּנֶגְדּוֹ

**"Hashem, Almighty G-d, said 'It is not good that man is alone. I will make him a
helpmate opposite him"
Genesis 2:18 (the Gutnick Chumash)**

"If he is worthy, she will be a helpmate. If he is not worthy, she will be against him and fight him.' I.e. Man will always be dependent upon the support of woman to the extent that (if he is not worthy) they will fight with each other. Since he will constantly feel dependent on another, and he will be aware of the potential conflict that could arise with his partner at any moment, it will surely be fixed in man's mind that he is not a self-sufficient being"
(Likutei Sichos vol 5 p. 20)