

The Secrets of Creation

בראשית א:א-ב:ז

בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ
והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על-פני תהום ורוח אלקים מרחפת על-פני המים
ויאמר אלקים יהי אור ויהי-אור
וירא אלקים את-האור כי-טוב ויבדל אלקים בין האור ובין החשך
ויקרא אלקים לאור יום ולחשך קרא לילה ויהי-ערב ויהי-בקר יום אחד

In the beginning, God created heaven and earth—

And the earth was unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water—

And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night.

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

ויאמר אלקים יהי רקיע בתוך המים ויהי מבדיל בין מים למים
ויעש אלקים את-הרקיע ויבדל בין המים אשר מתחת לרקיע ובין המים אשר מעל לרקיע ויהי-כן
ויקרא אלקים לרקיע שמים ויהי-ערב ויהי-בקר יום שני

And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water, that it may separate water from water.”

And God made the expanse, and it separated the water which was below the expanse from the water which was above the expanse. And it was so.

And God called the expanse Sky.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

ויאמר אלקים יקוו המים מתחת השמים אל-מקום אחד ותראה היבשה ויהי-כן
ויקרא אלקים ליבשה ארץ ולמקוה המים קרא ימים וירא אלקים כי-טוב
ויאמר אלקים תדשא הארץ דשא עשב מזריע זרע עץ פרי עשה פרי למינו אשר זרעו-בו על-הארץ ויהי-כן
ותוצא הארץ דשא עשב מזריע זרע למינהו ועץ עשה-פרי אשר זרעו-בו למינהו וירא אלקים כי-טוב
ויהי-ערב ויהי-בקר יום שלישי

And God said, “Let the water below the sky be gathered into one area, that the dry land may appear.” And it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth and called the gathering of waters Seas. And God saw that this was good.

And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation: seed-bearing plants, fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so.

The earth brought forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that this was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים יְהִי מֵאֵרֶת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם
וְהָיוּ לְמֵאוֹרֹת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן
וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹקִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמֵּאוֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמֵּאוֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־הַמֵּאוֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת
הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים
וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹקִים בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ
וּלְמַשֵּׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים כִּי־טוֹב
וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם רִבְעִי

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; they shall serve as signs for the set times—the days and the years; and they shall serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to dominate the day and the lesser light to dominate the night, and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth, to dominate the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that this was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים יִשְׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם שְׂרָץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף יַעֲוֹף עַל־הָאָרֶץ עַל־פְּנֵי רִקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם
וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת־הַתַּיִנִּים הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֵת כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה הַרְמֵשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵהֶם וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף
כָּנָף לְמִינֵהוּ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים כִּי־טוֹב
וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹקִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הַמַּיִם בַּיָּמִים וְהָעוֹף יִרְבַּ בָּאָרֶץ
וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם חַמִּישִׁי

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and birds that fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” And God created the great sea monsters, and all the living creatures of every kind that creep, which the waters brought forth in swarms, and all the winged birds of every kind. And God saw that this was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fertile and increase, fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ בַּהֵמָה וְרֵמֶשׂ וְחַיֵּת־אָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי־כֵן
וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹקִים אֶת־חַיֵּת הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְאֵת כָּל־רֵמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינֵהוּ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים כִּי־טוֹב
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים נַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ בְּדַגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־
הָרֵמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ
וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹקִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם
וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹקִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְכַבְּשֶׁה וְרִדוּ בְּדַגַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הַרְמֵשֶׁת עַל־הָאָרֶץ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב זֶרַע זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ פְּרִי־עֵץ
זֶרַע זֶרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ

ולכל־חית הארץ ולכל־עוף השמים ולכל רומש על־הארץ אשר־בו נפש חיה את־כל־ירק עשב לאכלה ויהי־
 כן

וירא אלקים את־כל־אשר עשה והנה־טוב מאד
ויהי־ערב ויהי־בקר יום הששי

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts of every kind." And it was so.

And God made wild beasts of every kind and cattle of every kind, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. And God saw that this was good.

And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on earth." And God created humankind in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them.

And God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth."

And God said, "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant that is upon all the earth, and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit; they shall be yours for food.

And to all the animals on land, to all the birds of the sky, and to everything that creeps on earth, in which there is the breath of life, [I give] all the green plants for food." And it was so.

And God saw all that had been made, and behold: it was very good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

ב'

ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל־צבאם

ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה וישבת ביום השביעי מכל־מלאכתו אשר עשה
ויברך אלקים את־יום השביעי ויקדש אתו כי בו שבת מכל־מלאכתו אשר־ברא אלקים לעשות

And The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array.

And on the seventh day God completed the work that had done: And He abstained on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He abstained from all His work which God created to make.

A Careful Reading of the Text: Issues for Consideration

- The verbs employed by in HaShem's creation: Distinguishing between עשה and ברא
- Discuss וירא אלקים כי טוב; meaning, when it appears, when it doesn't, final variation, etc.
- Other phenomena: "And there was evening and there was morning...;" *Havdala*; *Birkat Pru U'rvu*; work's completion on the seventh day; man's creation, etc.
- Discuss Shabbat...What else does HaShem introduce with its creation? Why does this mitzva alone emerge during creation? When does Shabbat appear again, and why? Other questions...

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OU Bereishit B'Iyun 2023-2024

Shiur 2

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