

# בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ

The seven words above “*Barasheet bara Elohim et hashamaim v’et haeretz*”<sup>1</sup> provide the foundation for the entire Bible. And the first of these seven words – בראשית (*barasheet*, “In the beginning”) – is like a seed which contains within itself all the genetic information necessary for a perfectly complete tree – the Tree of Life itself. Let’s take a closer look.

The first word of the Bible, בראשית (*barasheet*, “In the beginning”) can be separated to form two words: בר (*bar*) and אשית (*asheet*). The word בר (*bar*) means “son” or “a son”; thus the term *bar mitzvah* (son of the commandment), or *Simon bar Jonah* (Simon son of Jonah). This word first appears in the Bible in Psalms 2:12 “Do homage to [or ‘kiss’] the **Son**...” The word אשית (*asheet*) is a verb which means “I shall put/place/appoint”, and first appears in Genesis 3:15 where God pronounced a curse upon the serpent: “And **I will put** enmity between you and the woman...” Now if we recombine the definitions of these two Hebrew words, we arrive at the phrase “A Son I shall put/place/appoint”. A better rendering might be, “A Son I shall establish.”

I am awestruck at the unfathomable riches of our God and Creator that “in the beginning” (*barasheet*) God had already planned to “establish” His “Son” (*bar asheet*). The introduction of only a slight separation between the second and third letters of the Bible provides us with this insight. Maybe Paul had this in mind when he encouraged Timothy in “correctly cutting the word”.<sup>2</sup>

The Talmud also suggests allusions to Messiah in the opening words of Genesis. The Talmud (b.Avodah Zarah 9a) states the following:

*The world is to exist for six thousand years; the first two thousand years are to be void; the next two thousand years are the period of the Torah, and the following two thousand years are the period of the Messiah. Through our many sins some of these have already passed [and the Messiah has not yet come].*<sup>3</sup>

Upon what is this astounding claim based? A 14<sup>th</sup> century rabbi, familiarly known as R’ Yaakov Baal HaTurim, made it his life’s work to study the words, spellings, and linguistic structure of the Torah in order to uncover and explain its underlying allusions.<sup>4</sup> He explained that the name of the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *aleph* (א), can also be pronounced *eleph*, meaning “thousand”. Thus the first sentence of the Bible, which contains six *alephs*, could also be said to contain six *elephs* (“thousands”).

Therefore, according to the logic of the Talmud, since the letter א (*aleph*) appears exactly six times in the phrase “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*”, and the name of

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:1

<sup>2</sup> II Timothy 2:15, *Concordant Literal New Testament*

<sup>3</sup> The words that appear in brackets were added by Rashi (R’ Shlomo ben Yitzchak, 1040-1105 C.E.)

<sup>4</sup> Available from Mesorah Publications, Ltd. as the *Baal HaTurim Chumash*.

this letter can also mean “thousand”, God is hinting to us that the present heavens and earth are destined for 6,000 years of existence.

Assuming that the message concerning the 6,000 years is actually contained in the first sentence of Scripture, upon what basis did the Talmud define these six millennia as two thousand years of void, two thousand years of Torah, and two thousand years of Messiah? The answer is found in the subsequent appearances of the letter א (aleph), for in the second verse of Genesis we discover two occurrences of א (aleph) as follows:

והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על-פני תהום ורוח אלהים מרחפת על-פני המים:  
*"The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep,  
and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters."*

The Baal HaTurim explains that since א (aleph) appears twice in this passage describing earth's utter emptiness and darkness, likewise the first 2,000 years of history were a time of spiritual emptiness and darkness. This would have covered the period roughly from the creation of Adam until the birth of Abraham – a time of spiritual darkness indeed. But this changes abruptly with the next two instances of א (aleph), which appear in the opening words of verse 3:

ויאמר אלהים  
*"Then God said ..."*

The Baal HaTurim claims that this hints at the two millennia in which God would reveal His Torah – a period which began with the birth of Abraham and continued until near the time of Yeshua's birth. Now observe the next two occurrences of א (aleph):

יהי-אור ויהי-אור  
*" 'Let there be light'; and there was light."*

If the Talmud and the Baal HaTurim are correct, this alludes to the 2,000 years of Messiah – the Light of the World – which indeed would have begun at the time of Yeshua's birth and continue to the present day. How incredible that the same minds that derived these fascinating insights concluded with the heartbreaking words, "... some of these have already passed [and the Messiah has not yet come]." But the Messiah, the Son Whom God established in the beginning, has indeed come. Even so, "Come, Lord Yeshua."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Revelation 22:20