

Bereishis Musings:

There is a tradition to read Parshas Bereishis in the week preceding Rosh Hashana. This is because, according to the chronology of the creation of the world, Rosh Hashana being the first day of the world would mean the preceding 6 days before hand leading up to Aleph Tishrei sequence the events at Mayseh Bereishis (i.e. beginning with 25 Elul). Obviously, the days preceding the first of Tishrei weren't days, otherwise Rosh Hashana would have to be on the 25th of Elul. Our Chassidic masters, such as the Lubavitcher Rebbe as this question in a discourse he said where He asks the simple question about the chronology of Mayseh Bereishis. Through lengthy and deep explanations, the Rebbe culminates his answering the question by stating that the whole purpose of the creation of the physical world was to put people here who serve Hashem and perform His commandments. More importantly the entirety of the potential of the Earth is revealed through the creation of humans who are there to perform His mitzvos. As the entirety of the purpose of creation is so that human beings can coronate Hashem and His eternal kingship over the universe.

The earth prior to the creation of Humans was metaphorically like a dissembled grandfather clock. All the parts and gears and casing could be lying on a table, and slowly the clock maker assembles all the parts, and finally once all the gears, from the tiniest to the largest and springs are all correctly in place, the clock needs to be wound up in order to realize its full potential. Otherwise disassembled gears and springs are waiting in flux without a maker and without being properly assembled to become its purpose. Human creation is the final piece to realizing the completion of creation, without man, the Earth remains gears and springs, with no purpose. Through the Torah which Humans use to live on Earth (the root of the word Torah being Hora'ah which means teaching) we realize the full potential of the physical elements of the Earth, specifically through learning Torah and performing Mitzvos.

The Rebbes explanation is based on a question he has on the phrase said in Rosh Hashana davening, that is "Zeh Hayom Techilas Ma'asecha, Zicaron L'yom Rishon"- this phrase translates as "this is the day of the beginning of your work, a memory for the first day". Both the first part of the statement "Zeh Hayom Techilas Ma'asech", is one time period, and "Zicaron

L'yom Rishon" is a seemingly conflicting time period. Are they the same date or not? Therefore the Rebbe's exegesis on the matter, is to explain that "Zeh Hayom Techilas Ma'asecha" refers to Rosh Hashana, the day Humans were created, whereas "Zicaron L'yom Rishon" is reference to the first actual spark of creation 6 days earlier...when only the full potential of the physical Earth was created, to make way for the completion of the creation, which was the creation of humans to perform Mitzvos.

The Rebbe goes onto explain further, that this is said specifically on Rosh Hashana, where the Musaf service is categorized into three sections, Malchiyot, Zichronot, and Shofarot. These three pair with the three levels in the above phrase "Zeh Hayom...".

Malchiyot- "Kingship" that is declaring Gd's sovereignty over us, derives from the level of "fills up the world with Godliness" (Mimaleh Kol Almin) that is presided over by an awakening from below, that is the realization of Gd kingship over us, is as a result of our arousal to His kingship. We endow ourselves with the Yoke of Heaven, that happens as a result of our own impetus. Next, Zichronos "memories" (also another name for Rosh Hashana "Yom HaZikaron" reference to the fact that Hashem remembers our good deeds, among other reasons). A memory is "pie in the sky" it is encompassing, which is from the level of "Surrounds all worlds" (So'vev Kol Amin" – the level of Gd that may seem distant from us, as it is encompasses all levels externally). And finally, Shofaros, the level of the Shofar blowing, the primary Mitzvah of the day of Rosh Hashana, which is meant as a tool to awaken from the depths of our souls an arousal toward serving Hashem. The sound, nee "call" of the Shofar is meant to cause an internal reaction that arouses the desire to do Hashem's will, which is a far higher level than all rational thinking, in that it is from an emotional level that we serve Hashem, as the Rambam explains, serving Hashem out of love not fear. Some, and Rambam himself explains, that the difference between serving Hashem out of love vs fear, although it would seem rational to serve Hashem for fear of punishment. But this type of service is transactional and reliant on a transaction to take place, and in the absence of this, it is possible for the Jew to stray from serving Hashem (as the Talmud in Berachot explains one cannot pray to Hashem for a direct calculated result, as it may not occur that way, for example to pray for \$100, rather than praying for money in general, may cause a person to stray because the transaction didn't take place exactly as desired.)

Whereas service out of love is incalculable and for no reason other than to serve the entity itself, and in the service of Hashem, that means cleaving to Gd for no reason other than to serve Him and perform His Mitzvos and learn Torah.

Therefore, all three levels of cleaving to Hashem (the surrounds all, fills all, and tapping into the essence of our being) is done by Humans, as they were intended in creation, through the use of his body, and limbs. It is incumbent on us to carry the message of Rosh Hashana, specifically that completion of the creation of the Earth is fully realized by human capacity, in order to give pleasure to Hashem through serving Him and learning Torah.

We know that Adam was the final creation according to the Talmud in Eruvin explaining the verse "Achor V'Kedem Tzar'Tani" (from the back and the front you have formed me). R'Ami explains this means "the last in creation and the first in misfortune...". The Talmud continues its discussion in detail about the meaning of the pesukim in Bereishis, of how Adam and Eve were created and whether Eve was formed from Adam.

Relating to creation the Talmud in Eruvin (13b) explains why Bais Hillel merited to be followed in practical Halacha for generations, because of Bais Hillel's humility. This leads the Talmud to elucidate an amazing conversation on whether it is better to be born. There was a vote, and the conclusion was that it is better to not have been created than to have been created, and now that he was created let him 'search' his deeds so he can do teshuva, and another version, let him examine his deeds as to their outcome in the future. (The Talmud uses the word Yemashesh, vs. Yepash'pesh.) Rashi explains Yepashpesh means to look at his deeds to repent, whereas Yemashesh means to weigh what benefit will be derived for performing mitzvos versus calculating against the option to do a sin.

It is obvious that we were created, we are here, and Chassidus explains "Tachlis Habrea La'Asos Lo Dira B'Tachtonim" that is the purpose of creating, is to make a dwelling place for Hashem below (here in our world). Even though the above conversation about whether it is better to be created or not would seem inconclusive, or not that grand an answer. Well, in my opinion the Talmudists perspective is to serve Hashem and learn Torah and to repent. SO much that the gemara elsewhere in Berachot (153a) tells us to repent one day before you die, but since we don't know when

we will die, we ought to live righteous lives- optimally devoid of sin, and engrossed in learning Torah, and doing Mitzvos. Since this is the purpose, as agreed, even by those reluctant to acknowledge whether it was better or not to have been created, doing mitzvos becomes the purpose. And this further the point made by the Rebbe (who in his exegesis quotes the Talmud in Berachos (58a) where an Amora- R'Sheishes went out to observe a king's procession. The Amora after watching the procession correctly called out when the King was arriving to which a Sadducee asked how he knew that. The Amora answered "D'Malchusa D'Ara, K'ein Malchusa D'Rakia", for the royalty of Earth is a reflection of the royalty of Heaven...How does one proclaim the kingship of Gd? By being His nation and following his rules- as explained by the gemara. Furthermore, Chassidus and other rabbinic explanations tell us that we know that everything Hashem created above he created below and vice versa, so much so, that when we do a Mitzvah below, it causes for the Mitzvah to be performed above (as is explained in the Medrish in Tehillim brought down by the 5th Lubavitcher Rebbe about the Mitzvah of Tefillin).

The Gemara in Shabbos 86b begins to explain the days of the giving of the Torah, and it is inexplicably connected to the beginning of creation. The parallels are uncanny, and further support the notion that purpose, and completion of the creation is so Humans can learn Torah and perform Mitzvos.

First and foremost, on the words "Bereish Bara Elokim" Rashi explains that the Torah ought to have started with "Hachodesh Hazeh Lochem" i.e. from Shemos (12:2), when the nation of the Jews was borne, and we were given the first Mitzvah, yet, Hashem started with creation, as Rabbi Yitzchak explains so that should there be a claim against the Jews for conquering the 7 nations of the land, we can answer that Hashem created the whole world, and chooses to do with it what He wants, which included giving it to us. (Rashi even has a second explanation on Bereishis Bara and its complex understanding). By Rashi giving is his opening statement with R'Yitzchak's question, in my mind it links Bereishis with Matan Torah. (Rashi even makes this connection for us, "Because the Torah is called the beginning of his way, and Israel are called the first of his crop- quoting Yirmiah). (Just a side note, Rashi's explanation seems to connect to Shmuel's (Berachos 34b; Shabbos 151b; Sanhedrin 99a) position that Mashiach will be a time when the Jews will not serve the foreign powers. Perhaps we can

posit that along the way we will be challenged, but we must know that it is all in Hashem's power; and then we will know how to conquer the foreign power and put the dominion of the earth in our (Hashem's) hands).

The Torah is the blueprint for the universe, as it says in the Medrish (Tanchuma, and Tehillim) that "the Torah precedes the Earth by 2000 years" (Rashi Shabbos 88b title: '974 generations')— and since time is a novel creation of along with the creation of the Earth, we must understand that this means in levels.

Because creation and the Torah are so linked, and so paramount to our service as Jews, it make sense that R'Yirmiyah, (among many other Tanaim and Amorim throughout Talmud) in Eruvin 18b states that "any house in which the words of Torah are heard at night will never be destroyed..." We know from R'Yirmiyah and Rava Eruvin (21b) that listening to the words of the Rabbanan and Halacha is incomprehensibly important and prevents death (That is not listening to the Rabbis words results in death). Learning and upholding the Torah through Mitzvos keeps the law and order that is as a result of the creation of the natural world that arose from the moment of creation.

Connection between Matan Torah and Ma'aseh Bereishis:

- 1) The chronology of the first 6 days of Sivan and the Torah being given on the 6th/7th day.
 - a. This relates to the culmination of Ma'she bereishis being the creation of humans on the 6th, and the establishment of Shabbos and the declaration of Hashem's power. (There is an opinion in the Talmud that the Torah was given on the 7th, regardless, it still parallels with the first 6 days of creation.
- 2) According to R' Yose (Shabbas 87a) the first of Sivan was on Sunday, as the first day of creation is also "Sunday" and therefore the giving was on the 6th or 7th, i.e. the culmination of creation, through human, and or Shabbos.
- 3) According to the chronology of the pesukim of Shmos 19:1-16 there are clear developments preparing the Jews (an evolution of sorts) until the Jews are able to

receive the Torah, much like there is a clear chronology beginning on "Day 1" of creation and continuing until Humans were created.

- 4) On the 4th day of creation Hashem created "time" and separated night from day. This follows the 4th day chronology according to the Gemara on the word "Hayom U'Machar" (Shmos 19:10) The Gemara states (regarding abstinence) that tomorrow includes the nighttime. The fact that that there is a debate in time, specifically on day 4 is connected to when time (as a day vs night distinction) was created on day 4 of creation.
- 5) There's another proof on Shabbos 87b- Rav Chavivi from Choznaah said to Rav Ashi an explanation of the posuk Shmos 40:17...That day took 10 crowns (i.e. happened on that day)
 - a. It was the first day of creation¹
- 6) According to the Galilean who lectured in front of Rav Chisda, he said the Torah is the Torah of thirds, (given to people of thirds – kohen levi ysrael- by a third born – moshe, on the 3rd day of abstinence, on the third month of the year .) This falls in line with the Zohar explanation that the word Bereishis can be split into Bara Shis, that with six Hashem created the earth- and the Posuk says "Sheishes Yomim Asah" (Shmos 19:21) Hashem not b'sheishes (i.e. in 6 days) because Hashem used 6 midos to create the world (that come in sets of 3, -Chesed Gevura Tiferes- Netzach Hod Yesod- i.e. the Midos of creation, are also in sets of 3.
- 7) Chizkiah asked a question (Shabbos 88a) on the posuk in Tehillim (76:9) From Shamayim you made din heard, and the earth became afraid and grew calm..." Reish Lakish explains a direction connection to Bereishis 1:31 "Vayehi Erev Veyehi Boker Yom Shishi..." why is there an extra "hay"? to teach us that Hashem stipulated that if the Jewish people accept the Torah, the earth will continue, if not, it will be turned to "tohu vovohu" – again further connection to the fact that Humans were also created on the 6th day. It specifically had to have a "hay" missing on the 6th day as this would be the only appropriate day that the Shleimus of Briah is realized, a, with the creation of humans, and b. the later accepting of the Torah.
- 8) Connecting the first Rashi, the time of Mashiach, and the fact that the Jews are called "Mamleches Kohanim" we know from the Gemara Shabbos (88a) that the Jews were coronate with crowns (that were

¹ It was the first day of the princes ;It was the first day of the Kehuna;It was the first day of the service (korbanos);It was the first day the fire came down on the Mizbeach;It was the first day of eating korbanos;It was the first day of the Shechina in the Beis Hamikdash;It was the first day of

the birkas kohanim;It was the first day of prohibiting bamos (foreign altars);It was the first day of the months of the year.

removed when they sinned) nonetheless connecting the idea of a truly messianic time will be when the Jews are re-coronated with their own dominion in a time when Torah will rule their lives, as set out in the purpose of the creation. The crowns will be returned (according to Reish Lakish) when Mashiach comes (according to Maharsha) – although according to the Gemara in Berachos (17a) it “reference to the world to come” i.e. as a merit for learning Torah. But there are other who explain Olam Habah to mean Olam Ha'Techia, that is resurrection at the time of Mashiach, that all Jews will be Zocheh to, as explained by the Lubavitcher Rebbe in his discourse on “Kol Yisrael Yesh Lohem Chelek Lilolam Haba” (Sanhedrin 10:1)² (R'Ovadia Bartenura on this phrase)

- 9) The Gemara Shabbos (88a) compares the Jews to an apple tree- just as an apple precedes the leaves, so too the Jews accepted the Torah before hearing it. I think there is a connection to the first sin being the eating of an apple from an apple tree. Although that critical moment meant the banning of Adam from Gan Eden, it also meant there was good and bad, choice, and pleasure that Hashem derives from our performance of Mitzvos. (I didn't know this before but Arstroll note 57 on Shabbos 88a references Avos 1:17 that states that actions are greater than study- the above reference to the Maamer “Kol Yisroel” given by the Rebbe in Iyar 1973 the Rebbe explains there how Mitzvos being they are tanug of Hashem they derive from a higher source than chochma which is Torah- (learning Torah is one of the mitzvos but actions are important) which can also be corroborated with the Gemara in Sanhedrin that teaching Torah (i.e. performing the Mitzvah and sharing it with others) is as if (says R'Abahu) he did the Mitzvah himself- meaning doing a mitzvah has a greater reach than sitting solely as a Yoshev Ohel.)
- 10) Hashem was already contemplating the destruction the earth (that up until Noach was devoid of goodness it seems) until Noach found favour in Hashem's eyes. This supports the Rabbi's notion that righteousness begot through Torah keeps the world from being destroyed. (Similarly R'Channanel says this about his explanation of prince's power to kill, and Torah's power to prevent death – Shabbos 88b). Rashi similarly states this in title “974 generations” (Shabbos 88b) that Hashem saw the world wouldn't endure without the Torah Hashem accelerated the timeline by 26 generations (i.e. from Adam to Moshe).

- 11) When the world was filled with Torah of Hashem's speech, and the world was filled with the smell of spices, each utterance brought a new smell that Rashi explains, the prior smells went to Gan Eden.
- 12) The Jew's neshamos were expelled from them when hearing Hashem's voice, and thus they were reborn, as Hashem breathed life into Adam.

In conclusion, the tachlis of Briah was the creation of Humans, to learn and study and practice the Mitzvos of Torah.

There are many other colloquial references that are not brought here, these are just a collection of thoughts and connections of recently learned Talmud.

² There are a lot of references in Maseches Sanhedrin and Mashiach which also corroborate the opinions brought by the Tanaim and Amoraim in Berachos and Shabbos.