

Ki Heim CHAYEINU



Issue 8 • Shabbos Bereishis

The Avoidah of Shabbos Breishis

Preface

With the approach of Shabbos Bereishis, we remind ourselves of the famous pispam - “the way one sets himself up on Shabbos Bereishis, is the way things will go throughout the entire year” - Yagdil Torah is releasing a small selection of material related to the Avoidah of Shabbos Breishis, including the Rebbe’s words regarding Shabbos Bereishis, as well as a section of selected related Meforshim from our Parsha.

In the selection that follows, the implication to increase in set times for Torah study is clearly highlighted. The Rebbe emphasizes his deep satisfaction that he has when this done, and the resulting effects and brachos which continue throughout the entire year. This selection includes many ideas describing the importance of Torah learning as fulfillment of the purpose of creation; the tool to help Man succeed in his Avoidah in this world; as well as Torah being the catalyst for the coming of Moshiach, may it be speedily in our days.

Publishing Department,
Yagdil Torah

“The Torah study commitment made on Shabbos Bereishis has a positive effect on one’s physical/material existence—granting him abundance with regard to his children, health, and livelihood.”

About Torah Study - From the Commentaries On Bereishis

DEEP SATISFACTION FROM THE RESOLUTION

I was pleased to receive your letter regarding the farbrengen, along with your good resolution concerning public Torah learning, especially in light of my sainted father-in-law’s, the Rebbe’s, adage about Shabbos Bereishis: “In accordance with one’s resolve, so the matter proceeds. “ This [teaching] conveys a [sense of] hope and assurance that you will conduct yourselves in accordance with this positive trait throughout the entire upcoming year, in an appropriate spirit of joy and cheerfulness....

(Likkutei Sichos, vol. 10, p. 190)

REDEMPTION: IN THE MERIT OF THE TORAH

It says, “And the spirit of HaShem [was hovering on the surface of the waters].” The Midrash says¹, “This [i.e. the spirit of HaShem] is the spirit of Moshiach.” As for, “was hovering on the surface of the waters”—water refers to nothing but Torah.² This echoes the Zohar’s teaching³ that “[the Children of] Israel will be redeemed only in the merit of the Torah, which is likened to water.”

(Ohr HaChaim, Bereishis, 1b, sif “chaf-beis”)

THE CATALYST

Upon seeing this [there takes place], “And the HaShem said, ‘Let there be light’”—i.e. [HaShem] sends Man a helpmate against his Yetzer Horah. This takes place when a man reaches the age of fourteen; from HaShem’s holy abode there alights upon him a G-dly, holy spirit—a holy and pure Neshama. Alternatively, this could be alluding to the Torah, for the Torah is a pleasant light. Indeed, [it is the Torah] to which applies the term “light,” as it says⁴, “And the Torah is light.” [Either way, both interpretations] articulate the

1. Bereishis Rabba 2:4
2. Bava Kamma 17a.
3. Hashmatos to chelek alef.
4. Mishlei 6:23.

Success Is Commensurate With Resolve

The Rebbe's "Shabbos Bereishis" Directive

ADDITIONAL LEARNING

...The same applies to establishing fixed times for Torah study: On Shabbos Bereishis one can take advantage—one can take upon himself an increase in his Torah study—both his study of *nigleh* and his study of *chassidus*. This means that in addition to the commitment that every Jew made during *Tishrei* to fill a certain quota of Torah learning throughout the year, one should, on Shabbos Bereishis, take upon himself an additional increase. This increase should take the form of a daily commitment—both with regard to the study of *nigleh* and with regard to the study of *chassidus*. The *chassidus* commitment should include part of the weekly portion of *Torah Ohr* and *Likkutei Torah*.

May *HaShem* see to it that every individual's commitment should be truly in accordance with his capacity—in accordance with his true capability and in accordance with the root of his *Neshama*.

same point: the holy *Neshamas* are the light of the Torah, and the pious person is the *Baal Torah*. Thus, "And *HaShem* said 'Let there be light' refers to the holy *Neshama*, which, due to its having been carved from under the *Kisai Hakavod*—it is "a part of *HaShem* from Above"—possesses great light. *HaShem* sends [this *Neshama*] to shine upon the person so that he not sink in the quagmire of his *Yetzer Horah*. Alternatively, in accordance with what we stated [earlier], it is the Torah which illuminates a person's *Neshama*. After [*HaShem* said, "Let there be light," we read], "And there was light. And *HaShem* saw that the light"—now embodied in Man—"was good"—i.e. by means of the light, Man would proceed in the proper and good path.

(*Ohr HaChaim, Bereishis, chapter 1, sif chaf s.v.5 Ubir'oissoi*)

TRUE EXISTENCE

When a person comes to a deep recognition that the Torah is the world's [true] existence, he will recite a Talmudic teaching, a chapter of *Tehillim*, *Mishnayos* or *Tanya*, even when he makes his way down the street or is involved in his [worldly] affairs.

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, Bereishis, sif "gimmel"*)

PURPOSE OF CREATION

Bereishis bara — In the beginning of [*HaShem's*] creating. This verse says nothing but "Expound me!" Indeed the Sages⁶ expounded these words in the following manner: [The world was created—*bara*—] for the Torah and for [the Children of] Israel, who are called,⁷ "The first of His crop."

(*Rashi, Bereishis, s.v. Bereshis Bara*)

TORAH BEGINS WITH LETTER BAI

The Midrash says that the Torah [and thus the *Asarah Maamaros*] opens with the letter "*beis*" rather than with the letter "*alef*" because the *beis* is [the first and main letter] of the word, "*bracha*" [blessing], while *alef* is [the first and main letter] of the word, "*arira*" [cursed]. *HaShem* was [in effect] saying, "I will begin with a *beis*—with an expression of blessing; hopefully, the world will endure." Alternatively, [*HaShem* began with a *beis*] because He created two worlds—this [physical] world, and the world to come. Yet another explanation is that the letter *beis* represents the two Torahs—Torah Shebichsav and the Torah Shebaal Peh,⁸ thus teaching us that the world was created on account of the Torah⁹ and on account of those who study¹⁰ the Torah.

(*Baal HaTurim, chapter 1*).

5. Means, "under the word"

6. Bereishis Rabba

7. Mishlei 8:22

8. Midrash Mei Hashiloach

9. Bereishis Rabba; see also Shabbos, chapter 8

10. Tanchuma 58:3

.....
"The Torah is a pleasant light.
Indeed, [it is the Torah] to which
applies the term 'light,' as it says,
'And the Torah is light.'"
.....

A commitment made on Shabbos Bereishis—in this case to add an additional quota of Torah study—gives one the power to carry through on the commitment throughout the [entire] year. One thus spares himself the great effort [involved in following through on a commitment made at a time other than Shabbos Bereishis]. In addition, the Torah study commitment made on Shabbos Bereishis has a positive effect on one's physical/material existence—granting him abundance with regard to his children, health, and livelihood.

We spoke about the virtue of summarization. Hence, the following summary of our present discussion:

Each individual should establish for himself an additional Torah study session—one for *nigleh*, and one for *chassidus*.

(*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 1, Bereishis, sif "vav"*)

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