

For By Him All Things Were Created

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The video version is available at: <https://youtu.be/VAIhTPRpnQY>

The Torah Portion is B'reshet – Genesis 1:1-6:8

This week marks the end of the biblical feast cycle and the beginning of the new feast cycle. Starting this week and continuing through the year, the Torah, the first five books of the Bible will be read once again. This week, also, begins our new series entitled the “The Mysteries of Messiah.” As we read through the books of the Torah written by Moses as given to him by God, we will explore the hidden mysteries of Messiah concealed in the text.

These opening chapters of Genesis are often taken as strictly symbolic or as a metaphor. Indeed, it seems to be impossible to take them any other way. The narrative appears to go against the observation of our eyes as we examine the world around us. However, deeper investigation into our cosmological past reveals patterns of which our modern scientific theories have no explanation. The question of how our universe began still cannot be answered from a universally accepted scientific viewpoint. However, it can be answered from a faith viewpoint. God determined to create a physical universe and it came into being. What is this creation that God imagined? Even deeper questions are why did He create it and why did He create man?

As we open the Bible, Moses begins with a statement of fact—God created the universe.

Genesis 1:1 NKJV 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In Hebrew this sentence consists of seven words. “B'reshet bara Elohim et ha-sh'mayim v'et ha-eretz.” The number seven appears frequently throughout the scripture and whenever we encounter it, we need to take a deeper look at the circumstances around the number seven. The fact that the number seven occurs in the opening words of the Bible alerts us to its importance. So, let's look at a few of the details in this verse. The opening word, “b'reshet,” translated as “in the beginning,” is a compound word. The first part, an enlarged Hebrew letter beyt, is a prefix meaning in, through, because of, or with the thought of. The fact that the letter is enlarged calls attention to the letter itself. The letter beyt, in its original pictograph form, is that of a house or a dwelling. The second part is the word “reshet,” number 7225 in Strong's Concordance meaning the first in place, time, order, rank, beginning, chief, or firstfruits. In Hebrew thought, each of these translations adds to the meaning and understanding of the word. So, we can translate the first verse of Genesis as “In the beginning, with the thought of, through and because of the Firstfruits, the chief one, God created a house, the heavens and the earth. The rabbis expand on this thought in the writings of the Talmud.

Rav said, “The world was created only for the sake of David,” Shmuel said, “Only for the sake of Moses,” Rabbi Yochanan said, “Only for the sake of Messiah.”ⁱ

Paul, trained by the first century rabbi, Gamaliel, picked up on this thought as well and wrote that God created all things through and because of Yeshua the Messiah.

Colossians 1:16-17 NKJV 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

The apostle John states the same thing in the opening verses of his gospel.

John 1:1-3 NKJV 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Both Paul and John assert that Yeshua was with God from before creation and that creation came into being through Him and for Him!

The thought of the Rabbis that the world was created for David, Moses and the Messiah is supported throughout the scriptures. Moses, the one who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, declared that there would be a prophet like him to whom all the children of Israel needed to hear and obey.

Deuteronomy 18:15-16 NKJV 15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 "according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.'

The author of Hebrews also makes a comparison between Moses and Yeshua the Messiah declaring that His house is the house that God established at creation!

Hebrews 3:5-6 NKJV 5 And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, 6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

This, of course, takes us to David! God told David that He would build a house for him!

2 Samuel 7:27 NKJV 27 "For You, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You.

David wrote a psalm, probably his last one, asking for God's blessing on the house that God would build for him through his son Solomon.

Psalms 72:1 KJV 1 <<A Psalm for Solomon.>> Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

The name Solomon is the Hebrew "Sh'lomo," number 8010 in Strong's Concordance meaning peaceful. It comes from the word "Shaw-lome," number 7965 meaning safe, well, welfare, health, prosperity, peace, and rest.

Inserting the meaning of Solomon's name into David's dedication, shows us that this psalm is not just for Solomon, but for the peace, wellness, and safety of the kingdom of the son! The psalm is prophetic of the reign of Messiah. The Jewish sages say that it contains a name of Messiah as "Yinnon" the "continuing one."

Psalms 72:17 KJV 17 His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued, *Yinnon*, as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

God created the heavens and the earth to be a house for His son who was with Him from the beginning and through whom He created all things.

What did creation look like and how was it created? Let's continue to the second verse of Genesis.

Genesis 1:2 KJV 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

The earth was without form and void. The phrase “without form and void” comes from two Hebrew words. The first, “to-hoo,” is number 8414 meaning to lie waste, a desolation, desert or worthless thing. The second is “bo-hoo,” number 922 meaning empty, a vacuity. The earth was a desolation and empty. The pairing of these two Hebrew words is found in only two other places both in connection with the wrath of God on Israel. Jeremiah describes the land after God brings destruction.

Jeremiah 4:23 NAS95 23 I looked on the earth, and behold, it was formless and void; And to the heavens, and they had no light.

Like the earth at creation, Jeremiah describes the earth as having no light. Why creation had no light to begin with is a popular question to speculate on. One such explanation is that the desolation and emptiness was caused by the war in heaven during which Satan and the other angels that rebelled against God were cast down.

Isaiah 14:12-15 NAS95 12 "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! 13 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' 15 "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.

Isaiah states that God did not originally create the universe empty and desolate,

Isaiah 45:18 NAS95 18 For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, But formed it to be inhabited), "I am the LORD, and there is none else.

In support of this, the word create in verse one is the Hebrew word “bara.” The NKJV Study Bible comments that this word bara:

“...means “to fashion anew.” Here it means that God renewed what was in a chaotic state. God changed chaos into cosmos, disorder into order, emptiness into fullness.”ⁱⁱ

Into this chaos and darkness at creation, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. The Jewish sages recognized this Spirit of God as the Spirit of Messiah. First Fruits of Zion in their work Shadows of the Messiah quote the *Midrash Rabbah*.

“The Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.” This was the Spirit of Messiah as it is written, “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The sages are connecting the spirit of God in Isaiah chapter eleven with the Spirit of God at creation.

Isaiah 11:1-2 NKJV 1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

This is the same Spirit that the gospels describe falling on Yeshua as He rises out of the water of the Jordan at His baptism.

Matthew 3:16-17 NKJV 16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The imagery of Yeshua rising out of the water reminds us once again of Moses. Moses was placed in an "ark" in the Nile River. Pharaoh's daughter pulled him out of the water and gave him a name connected to this event.

Exodus 2:10b NKJV 10b So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

Matthew, Mark and John all record Yeshua walking on the sea in the midst of a storm. As He walked, the sea became calm.

John 6:17-20 NKJV 17 (His disciples) got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. 18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. 19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. 20 But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."

The ability to walk on the water is a trait that Job describes as being exclusive to God.

Job 9:8 NKJV 8 He alone spreads out the heavens, And treads on the waves of the sea;

As the Spirit of God hovers over the water, God spoke light into creation.

Genesis 1:3-4 NKJV 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

Into the desolation and emptiness God spoke. By the power of God's spoken word, light shone in the darkness. Isaiah tells us that God created both the light and the darkness.

Isaiah 45:7 NKJV 7 I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.'

The Jewish sages, like many philosophers through the ages, pondered how an infinite God could interact with a finite creation. They decided that God did so through His spoken word which they called the "memra." Memra is an Aramaic word related to the Hebrew word "aw-mar'," meaning to speak or say. The Hebrew word "em-raw'," number 561, is a form of this word meaning the spoken word or speech. When we add the prefix "ma" meaning "from," we get "Memra" which literally means "from speech."

After the Babylonian captivity, the Torah was translated into Aramaic for the use of the common people. These translations were more of a paraphrase called a Targum. In these translations, whenever God directly interacted with His creation, the Targum used the word "Memra." For example in Genesis 3:8 when God walked in the garden and Adam and Eve heard the voice of the LORD God, the Targum renders the phrase, "They heard the voice of the memra."^{iv} In Jewish thought, God interacted with His creation through this abstract concept of "Memra."

This concept of the voice of God as being the Memra was well-known at the time of Yeshua and has its basis in scripture. God said that His speech, "imrah," fell like the dew from the sky.

Deuteronomy 32:2 NKJV 2 Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass.

David referred to the power of God's word, His "imrah," nineteen times in Psalm 119 including this often quoted verse.

Psalms 119:11 NKJV 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

The Jewish Encyclopedia equates the Memra with the Hebrew words "Ma-amar" meaning "from speech" and "Dibbur" meaning "word" as well as the Greek "Logos" meaning "word." It describes the use of the term "Memra" in the Targumim:

Like the Shekinah, the Memra is accordingly the manifestation of God. The Memra brings Israel nigh unto God and sits on His throne receiving the prayers of Israel. ...As in ruling over the destiny of man the Memra is the agent of God, so also is it in the creation of the earth and in the execution of justice.^v

The Apostle John's words in his gospel declare that Yeshua is the physical manifestation of the Memra! Imagine how John's words were received among the Jewish sages who were so uncomfortable with God's interactions with His creation that in many places in the scripture, they used the euphemism of the Memra in place of His name! John declares that not only does God interact in His creation; He had sent the manifestation of Himself which they called the Memra to become flesh and blood!

John 1:14 NKJV 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

At creation, God spoke and light came into being. This light was not the light from the sun or the stars. The sun and stars were not created until the fourth day of creation! First Fruits of Zion in Shadows of the Messiah state:

In the days of the apostles, Rabbi Eleazar taught that the light of the first day of creation was a miraculous wondrous light, independent of a luminary. It enabled a person to see "from one end of the world to the other," and some say, from one end of time to the other.^{vi}

After God created the light, He filled His creation with land, seas, and life to behave according to the order He set up in the heavens with the sun and stars. His last act of creation was to create man.

Genesis 2:7-8 NKJV 7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. 8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

Because of the sin of Adam, the Jewish sages concluded that this divine light of creation was hidden. God refers to the time of creation in Job and declares in Job 38:15 that:

Job 38:15a NKJV 15 From the wicked their light is withheld,

The sages say that this light will be revealed in the Messianic era and in the world to come. First Fruits of Zion quotes the Jewish sages recorded in Yalkut Shim-oni:

This is the light of Messiah, as it is said, "God 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 its deeds. He hid (the primordial light) for Messiah and his generations beneath his throne of glory.^{vii}

The coming of the light, then, is considered a signal for the coming of Messiah and the world to come. The prophet Isaiah frequently referred to the light coming into the darkness.

Isaiah 60:1-2 NKJV 1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.
2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.

John declared that Yeshua was this light coming into the darkness.

John 3:19 NKJV 19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

When Yeshua comes and reigns with His Father in the heavenly Jerusalem that comes down from heaven to Earth, Yeshua is the light that the LORD God gives them!

Revelation 22:5 NKJV 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

God created this universe to be filled with life. This life was to be tended and guarded by mankind. It was created to be a house for His Son, a place where God could dwell with His creation! The purpose and existence of Yeshua our Messiah is revealed in the first words of God as He brings the universe into being.

Study Questions:

1. How is creation the "House of the Firstfruits?" How does Psalm 72 support this conclusion?
2. Discuss the thought of the rabbis that the world was created for David, Moses or the Messiah. Does scripture support these views?
3. The Hebrew words "to-hoo and bo-hoo" are translated as "formless and void." The only other place this phrase is used, and, thus linking these events, is in Jeremiah 4:23. How are these events similar? How are they different? Why do you think Jeremiah used this phrase?
4. The Hebrew word "em-raw," number 561 in Strong's Concordance means speech. Where and in what context is it used in the Bible to refer to God's speech? Is it biblical to refer to this concept of the Memra as the means that God interacts with His creation?
5. What is the light of creation? Do we see it anywhere else in the Bible?
6. What new insight did you gain from this teaching? How do you respond to this new insight? How will you realign your life based on this new understanding?

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ⁱ Torah Club. Shadows of the Messiah: Book 1. D. Thomas Lancaster. First Fruits of Zion. 800.775.4807. www.ffoz.org. Page 1.

ⁱⁱ NKJV Study Bible. Earl D. Radmacher, Th.D. Thomas Nelson. Nashville TN. ©2007. Page 4.

ⁱⁱⁱ Torah Club. Shadows of the Messiah: Book 1. D. Thomas Lancaster. First Fruits of Zion. 800.775.4807. www.ffoz.org. Page 1.

^{iv} <https://www.bibleword.org/wp/the-memra-the-word/2132>

^v Jewish Encyclopedia. Kaufmann Kohler. MEMRA. ©1906. Online version. <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10618-memra>

^{vi} Torah Club. Shadows of the Messiah: Book 1. D. Thomas Lancaster. First Fruits of Zion. 800.775.4807. www.ffoz.org. Page 8.

