PARASHAH 1 BERESHIT - בְּרֵאשִׁית

"In the Beginning"

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Torah: Bereshit (Genesis) 1:1-6:8

Aliyah 1 - 1:1 - 2:3	The six days of The Creation culmination with man, a seventh day of rest
Aliyah 2 - 2:4 - 19	The six days in greater detail, the Garden, two trees, Adam needs a "helpmeet"
Aliyah 3 - 2:20 -3:21	The creation of Chava, the serpent's deception and the fall of man
Aliyah 4 - 3:22 - 4:18	Man expelled from the Garden; Kayin and Havel; murder and punishment
Aliyah 5 - 4:19 - 26	Lemekh took two wives; fathered several children,
Aliyah 6 - 5:1 – 24	Lemekh avenges blood of Havel, Seth born; 7 generations from Adam to Enoch
Aliyah 7 - 5:25 - 6:8	3 generations, 10 in all, to Noach; wickedness grows; Noach finds favor with God

Haftarah: Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 42:5-43:10 (A); 42:5-21 (S)

Torah Haftarah: Ge: Yesha'yahu
(Isaiah Nesis 1:1 – 6:8 "In the beginning")
42:5-43:10 (A)

	year 1 1:1-2:3	year 2 2:4 – 4:26	year 3 5:1 – 6:8
1	1:1 – 5	2:4 – 9	5:1 – 5
2	1:6 – 8	2:10 – 19	5:6 – 8
3	1:9 – 13	2:20 – 25	5:9 – 14
4	1:14 – 19	3:1 – 21	5:15 – 20
5	1:20 – 23	3:22 – 24	5:21 – 24
6	1:24 – 31	4:1 – 18	5:25 – 31
7	2:1 – 3	4:19 – 26	5:32 – 6:8

in beginning God created the heavens and the earth	***b'reshit bara Elohíym et ha'shamáyim ve'et ha'áretz***	בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָאֱ֫-הִים֫אֵת הַשָּׁ֫מַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃

1. God (Elohim) and Creation: The universe is the purposeful creation of the sovereign, self-sufficient, self-existing, and transcendent Being outside of nature who is unknowable and beyond words, This narrative symbolizes reality with words of faith that form the foundation of the Bible. It describes the orderly progression from chaos to cosmos in six units of time (days), divided into two parallel groups moving from heaven, to water, to dry land. Each creation in the first group becomes resource for the second:

Day	Resource (Ge. 1:3-13)	Day	User (Ge. 1:14-31)
1	Light	4	Luminaries
2	Waters (Sky separating waters)	5	Fish / Fowl
3	Dry land (vegetation-the lowest life)	6	Land Creatures – (humans-the highest life)

2. The "Shabbat" Principle: The heptad is symbolic of design, completion, and perfection. Ge. 1:1 contains seven words; chaos is described in 14 (7x2) words; seven creative units are declared "good" by God; the seventh day uniquely contains no creative activity; the first of the biblical concept of "holiness" is used regarding the seventh day, uniquely sanctifying time.

Gen. 1:1-5 Day One: God, having no origin, creates time, space, matter; breath of God turns chaos into order (Ge. 8:1, Ex. 14:21); divides light/darkness, day/night (Is. 45:7); calendar begins with evening (erev – עֶרֶב – Le. 23:32). Gen. 1:6-8 Day Two: Waters above separated from waters below (Eze. 1:22).

Gen. 1:9-13 Day Three: Two acts: terrestrial waters and dry land are divided; earth is empowered to produce green vegetation and fruit bearing trees with seed.

Gen. 1:14-19 Day Four: Sun / stars, planets, moon to separate day from night, and appointed times.

Gen. 1:20-23 Day Five: Marine life, living creatures (nefesh ha'yah – נֶפֶשַׁ֫ הַיה), sea monsters (not "gods"), birds; unlike plants, require mating to reproduce, a divine blessing.

Gen. 1:24-31 "The" Sixth Day: Cattle, creeping things, wild beasts; human beings (Ps. 8:4-7). First person plural ("let us make…" – see also Ge. 3:22, 11:7); in the image of God, to rule over nature. Male and female (Ge. 5:1-2); God speaks blessing directly to man and woman in unmediated communion. God provides vegetarian sustenance, inferring dependence on him (Isa 11:7, 65:25)

Gen. 2:1-3 "The" Seventh Day: The Creation account opened with God and now closes with God. Contrast of no activity vs. activity on each previous day establishes the foundation for the future institution of Shabbat. (Ex. 20:8-11, 31:13, 16-17) with no link to celestial events. Unparalleled in the ancient world.

Note: God is the focus and primary subject of B'resheet Chapter 1. He is referred to only with the term, Elohim / אֱלֹהִים (el-oh-heem) – the common Hebrew term for "God."

Devotional questions for reflection and application:

1. Have you acknowledged God as The Creator of the universe? If so, is He the authority in your life? Has He given you a new "beginning?"

2. The story of the heavens and the earth is described in these scriptures. What story does your life tell? What message do you want to send to those who are watching you?

3. God cared for and provided a helper for Adam. How has He cared for and provided for you?

4. Eve said, "With the help of Adonai I have brought forth a son." What is He helping to bring forth in your life? How are you working with Him to accomplish His purpose in your life today?

5. Are there things in your life that compete with God for your devotion?

6. Are you in a situation where you wish God would just take you away? Resist in the evil day and stand firm: we are more than conquerors!