



***Authentic Kabbalah - Sephardic Studies
Benei Noah Studies - Anti-Missionary/Anti-Cult Materials***

Bereshit, the Beginning The Most Mysterious Of Times

*by Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok
Copyright © 1993 – 2003 by Ariel Bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.*

Bereshit, the beginning – is always the most mysterious of times. We need but read this one parasha of the Torah to realize how little we truly understand its mysteries. So much information is packed into such a small number of words. There are secret codes, mathematical computations, holy Names and so much more that even the seventy chapters of the Tikunei Zohar, which only comment on the first verse of Bereshit, cannot do justice to Parashat Bereshit.

Bereshit begins with the beginning, the beginning of creation and what we know as the beginning of time. We begin to measure time from the creation of Adam some 5761 years ago. As the text teaches us, Adam was created on Day Six of creation.

Creation thus began five days prior. Yet, as we know from modern science, our universe is approximately 16 billion years old, our planet Earth (Tevel) is over four billion years old by itself. How can it be that this fantastic amount of years be our true age when the universe is only 5761 years old, plus six days?

The answer to this question might not please the fundamentalists who have not the insight to understand the Torah correctly, but there is no contradiction whatsoever between scientific discovery and Torah truth. Indeed the two are the same and always have been.

The Six Days of creation have always been viewed by our holy Rabbanim, especially the Mekubalim as being a metaphor of time instead of being an exact representation. Indeed, as the Torah says, the universe was created in just “six days” each of only twenty-four hours. This is what the Torah says, therefore, it is the absolute truth. Yet, a point made by Albert Einstein is that time is relative. It does not always travel at the

same speed. In other words, we judge the speed of time by our present standards of measurement. Einstein has shown that these standards are not universal.

Time has been seen to fluctuate. Thus, what might be six days of twenty-four hours from one point of perception could be 16 billion years from another point of perception. Both points of perception would experience the passage of time from their own individual context. 16 billion years could thus be equal to a time period of a mere six days.

There are two great reference materials that discuss this matter in detail. Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan (obm) wrote on this topic in his "Immortality, Resurrection, and the Age of the Universe" (Ktav, Hoboken NJ, 1993). In this classic work Rabbi Kaplan documents and translates original Hebrew material from impeccably authoritative sources that I am sure will do more than raise an eyebrow in surprise.

A second work written by noted Israeli physicist Gerald L. Schroeder entitled, "The Science of G-d – The Convergence of Scientific and Biblical Wisdom" (Broadway Book, NYC, NY, 1997) discusses the Torah view of creation from a scientific point of view. Dr. Schroeder, who is also well-versed in Torah mysticism, provides a very convincing argument how six days expand into 16 billion years. His book is must reading for anyone truly wishing to understand and integrate Torah wisdom with scientific discovery.

Another one of the great secrets discussed by many of the holy Mekubalim (with the interesting exception of the Ari'zal) is that our creation was not HaShem's first creation, nor was Adam (the one spoken of in this parasha) the first created man. (Reference Rabbi Kaplan's translation of Derush Or ha-Hayyim by Rabbi Yisrael Lipschitz, the author of the Tiferet Yisrael, in the text cited above) Very well concealed, but nonetheless present within mystical texts is a teaching about the cosmic cycles of previous and future creations, the universal Shemitot.

This teaching reveals to us that there are epochs of creation, which are separate and different from one another. Each epoch or Shemita manifests the spiritual influence of one of the seven lower sefirot.

According to many Mekubalim (Sefer Magen David, Yalkhut Reuveni and others) we are presently in the Shemita of Gevurah (severity), which explains why our present epoch of human history has been so marred by violence and bloodshed.

The previous Shemita was that of Hesed (mercy), which explains why the ancients of prehistoric, pre Adamic times were supposed to have had an advanced civilization, built upon peace, a true Paradise on Earth (or Garden of Eden). Once this was lost (or concluded), a new phase of creation began (i.e., our epoch of history).

After our epoch is complete, the Shemita of Tiferet begins. This is the time after Mashiah, what we refer to as Olam HaBa.

The teachings of the mystical Shemitot explain the tides of history and the influences predominate in individual centuries and millennia. Some have suggested that its secrets are still closely guarded by the Mekubalim and this is why the Ari'zal and others did not mention them. Some teachings are still closely guarded secrets. It is even permitted to lie and to deny their existence rather than to admit that they exist or that they have any legitimacy.

When we read about the creation and the generations prior to the flood we must remember, we are talking about a world far different from our own. The creation story in and of itself is a metaphor and code that contains within it all the secrets of science and technology. Anything discovered, or to be discovered by science is concealed in code form within the first two chapters of Bereshit. While the holy Mekubalim are aware of a great number of these secret teachings, even they do not know them all.

One of these secrets discussed in the holy Zohar (1, 254a, in the hashmutot) is that our planet Earth is actually hollow and that it has seven layers to it, one inside the other. This view was even postulated by Sir Edmund Haley (discoverer of Haley's Comet) without him having any knowledge of the Zohar.

According to the Zohar, each layer is separated by a 100-mile high sky; each inner layer of the earth is illuminated by the Earth's core, which serves as an inner sun. All different types of creatures are said to live in inner Earth, some more human than others, including giants, centaurs and (according to Rabbi Avraham Azulai's Sefer Hesed L'Avraham) over 300 other species. Indeed, the Zohar teaches that when Adam first came to Earth, he did not inhabit the surface realm but the inner realm. Herein is said to lie the true Garden of Eden.

It is said that there are passages from these inner worlds that go to our surface world; their openings being associated with holy places. The most famous of these is the cave of the Patriarchs at Makhpelah in Hevron. Deep within the recesses of the cave there is said to be a passageway that descends down into bowels of the Earth leading to the Garden of Eden. This is where Adam and Eve were buried, just outside their old home. This is why Avraham Avinu chose this place and why the Arabs wish to block a Jewish presence here. For whoever controls the cave in Hevron controls to doorway to paradise. Woe to us that it should fall into the hands of an evil enemy.

Another mystery of Bereshit is that our holy Rabbis teach that Adam prior to the Fall was not a human being by our present standards of understanding. (Reference Sefer Ben Ish Hai, Hakdama to Parashat Bereshit S.R. in the name of the Ari'zal).

Adam was originally created with a body of light instead of one of flesh and blood. His intellect was said to surpass that of the highest angels. Our Rabbis have taught us that Adam was able to see from one end of the universe to the other. In other words, Adam's mind was large enough to comprehend all the knowledge in the universe simultaneously. Unlike mankind today that uses only a minor portion of our brainpower,

Adam used his full mind. It would be equivalent to say that Adam, before the Fall, had an I.Q. of over 2,000. With our greatest geniuses today having an I.Q. of only 200, we cannot imagine what ten times that intellect could possibly be. Woe to us for what we have lost due to the Fall.

The metaphoric manner in which the story of the Fall is presented also conceals a great deal about the true nature of man and the universe. One should not concern oneself with the question as to what type of fruit was taken from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, because it was no mere physical piece of fruit. The story of the fall relates to us Adam's descent into the dimensions of physical reality from his original home in the spiritual planes.

After the Fall, the first generations were not like the people who live today. According to our Rabbis when Adam became a physical being, his stature was not like ours. Adam and his immediate offspring were supposed to have been giants standing over 150 feet tall.

Indeed Rabbi Yosef Shani in his Sefer Sha'ar Yosef compiles numerous Midrashim and correlates them to some of the world's mysteries. He concludes that ancient cities, long ago forgotten in the jungles of South America, were originally built by the children of Cain. Among these ancient cities appear to be seats carved into the sides of mountains big enough to sit someone 150 feet tall. The existence of these ancient carvings is documented fact as are ancient ground drawings hundreds of yards across that only become visible to someone flying overhead.

There are many mysteries about the ancient, pre-flood generations. Our Rabbis have taught that those generations knew the secret wisdom of the angels (Reference Sefer Hanokh, quoted by Rabbi Haim Vital in his commentary to the Zohar). Today this wisdom we call technology.

Our Sages are suggesting to us that the pre-flood era was as advanced technologically, if not more so, that we are today. As Shlomo HaMelekh so rightly said, "there is nothing new under the sun" (Kol. 1:9). It is possible that the technological advancement of the pre-flood generation contributed to their destruction.

Ancient Gentile legends tell of a great continent empire known as Atlantis that was destroyed by a great flood. Rabbi Shani concludes from Midrashim that Atlantis was the home of the children of Cain. Their warlike ways brought destruction upon all. The Zohar teaches that the surviving technologies of the pre-flood era have become the source of every practice of unclean idolatry and magic ever since.

In pre-flood times, numerous things existed that are long lost today; among them are the animals known as dragons, unicorns and the phoenix. All three of these animals are mentioned directly in the TaNaKh. Dragons are the Tanin mentioned in Job 7:12 and the Phoenix is the Hol mentioned in Job 29:18 (see Rashi). Unicorns are

considered by many to be the Biblical animal known as the Tahash, whose skins were used to cover the Ark of the Covenant.

Another mystery of Bereshit revolves around the person of Hanokh Ben Yared. All we read about him in the Torah can be found in Bereshit 5:16-24. Of all the pre-flood era ancients, he lived the shortest, only 365 years. Is it a coincidence that he lived the same number of years as there are days in the solar year, or is the Torah sending us another subtle message?

Pasuk 24 tells us that Hanokh, unlike any other biblical figure except Eliyahu, never died. He simply “was not” for G-d had taken him. While the Torah narrative about Hanokh stops here with eight short pasukim (verses), the Midrash expands on the topic of Hanokh and opens us to us a wealth of information about angelology and other mystical secrets.

The famous “Hozeh” of Lublin writes in his Sefer Kehilat Ya’aqob (vol. 1, 26c, item Hanokh) that Hanokh is the only soul that achieved a higher level (Haya) than Moshe Rabbeynu himself (Neshama).

The “Hozeh” writes that when Hanokh ascended into Heaven he was transformed into the angel ... (sorry, can’t reveal that name because it is the real name of Matat) and that this angel was the angelic teacher who taught Moshe the Torah.

Apparantly, the written Torah has left out some very important information. Yet, everything is there concealed within the Torah codes. Where else do you think the Midrashim came from?

There is so much more than needs to be expounded upon. Yet, there is no end to the commentary on parashat Bereshit. I have recorded a six hour lecture series on the first three chapters of this parasha and I have not even scratched the surface of all the material that there is to learn.

Let this small essay thus serve as our introduction into the Torah. Know that whatever it is you will ever learn, no matter how much, you will have only scratched the surface garments of our holy Torah.

Be in awe of Torah.

Respect it and honor it.

Afterall, it is the word of our Creator.

**When we examine it and explore it,
we will find out everything it is that we need and want to know.**

