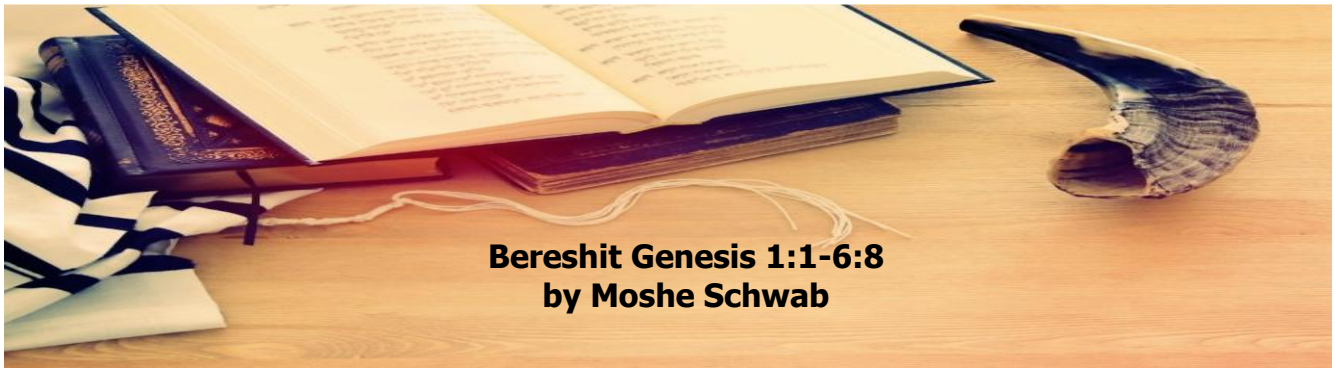


Bereshit Genesis 1:1-6:8
by Moshe Schwab

Names
Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed.
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Yeshua – Jesus' real name
Yĕhōváh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms
#1 *Bereshit* – (bear-eh-shéet), first Torah portion
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

The Torah portion for this week is Bereshit, the first portion in the Bible. Bereshit means, "in the beginning." I would like to begin today by talking about how God knows what is best and knows how we best should live since He is the creator.

God supplies the means for a better way to live.
It should make sense to us that God's ways are best because He is the creator of all that exists. And since God's ways are best, not following His commandments then resembles being abusive to ourselves. For example, when you lie to another person, you break their trust, and they often feel bad. Lying breaks the commandment to not bear false witness in Exodus 20:15 which can be applied to many forms of deception.

Some lies can be extremely difficult to get over. The person lying suffers from distrust because they perhaps also think that others are lying to them. The person being lied may not only feel bad or even be devastated by the lie, but also may think that it is possible that others may be lying to them. Any sin can bring negative consequences. Most people consider any form of abuse to others wrong. Yet, they often do not make the corresponding connection to sin, causing hurt and problems for themselves and others. Why not keep God's good commandments?

> Psalms 19:8-11 NKJV says,
> The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

It says that God's commandments are right. Don't we want to do what is right? Even when playing a fun game and making the wrong move, it can cost you to lose the game. In real life, doing something that is wrong can cause a person any number of consequences. Real life is not

a game. Another example, in the natural world, if we put up a building, we make sure that it will stand up to the elements or our work will be for nothing. God's commandments are pure from defect so that they cause us to see life in a better light and do what is right. Therefore, when we give God the respect He deserves by listening to Him, we can have a better life.

The commandments of the Creator are truth because they are completely right for life. It makes sense then that the beginning of a good and satisfying life comes by keeping them. No amount of wealth or the things that we could desire is more valuable than what God has given us through His commandments. God's word can warn us and help us in all of life and by logical implication, God's commandments bring with them blessings.

If someone gave you a generous gift that was worth more than money could buy, you would be thankful and extremely appreciative. God gave us His words and commandments in the Bible because He cares about mankind and has our best interests at heart. Those that reject God's good commandments in the Bible are essentially rejecting, dismissing, and denying the goodness of God. God allows them to live in their squalor, their messed-up life. Hosea 4:6 NKJV says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you." God is not talking about natural knowledge, but knowledge of God's good commandments in the Bible that give us wisdom and understanding and are right and good. (Deuteronomy 4:6 and Deuteronomy 6:17-18). There are many scriptures that attest to the goodness of God's commandments.

The people who do not keep God's commandments have rejected the good commandments of God and have brought their own consequences on themselves when they could have had a better life. God does not have to impose anything on them because they bring their own problems on themselves. But the Bible does say that God will at times impose judgment on the those who are disobedient to Him. He will also try to help people be obedient to Him for their own good. Proverbs 3:11-12 NKJV says, "Do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights."

<u>God still speaks today. As we grow in the truths of the Bible, God's ways give us understanding and they can speak more and more into our life.</u>
When I first began applying the 10 Commandments, and there are more than 10 commandments in the Bible, I realized that these are things I wanted in my life. No one, either in times past or the present, wants to live in fear of harm or of having things stolen from them. You shall not steal is a commandment. It is interesting to note that if nations followed just 2 of God's commandments, do not murder and do not covet what others have, we would have very few wars. That is a testimony to the wisdom of God's commandments. Instead of war, people would be free to take care of themselves and work for what they want instead of causing destruction.

You would think that people would figure this out, but nations have to build up their military in order to deter ungodly nations that start wars. Germany was one of the most advanced countries in Europe in the middle 1900s intellectually, yet they bought into a false political and ethical system that caused millions of people to die. That is what is at stake. We either follow

truth or we follow false ideals and philosophies or a false religion that brings pain into this world instead of truths from the Bible that bring good things.

We can develop our ability to keep God's commandments when we are committed to keeping them. Then, as we go about life, we automatically apply ourselves to doing what is right. I had an atheist friend years ago who told me that he would sooner trust people who believed in God and had good values than an atheist. Those who do not have anything to hold them to their beliefs can change their beliefs at any time. I have witnessed unbelievers in God who care about their own safety but turn on others and threaten them. I too have found that those with godly values and those who want to keep God's commandments are more trustworthy. We have better relationships with those whom we can trust.

I should also mention that God gives those who believe on the Messiah Yeshua the Holy Spirit to help us. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever the Spirit of truth." First and foremost, we are to keep God's commandments. Those who dismiss the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua are also spurning the goodness of God. Luke 11:13 NKJV says, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

<u>God's ways give us the fast track to getting where we need to be in life.</u>
Many years ago, I was struggling because I had forgotten the good values I learned while growing up. Shortly after I committed my life again to keeping God's commandments, my life changed for the better. Then, as I continued to learn and make commitments to follow God's commandments, my life continued to change for the better. Psalms 119:9-11 NKJV says, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart."

We cleanse our life of the false ideas we have made up for life and begin doing things God's way again. We need to decide that we are fed up with doing what is wrong. In other words, get angry with yourself for giving into sin, and decide to do what is right. Because we know God's commandments are the best way to engage with life, we have hope that things will get better, and they can often turn around quickly. Psalms 119:49-50 NKJV says, "You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life." Math and science may give you information, Germany was well versed in science and look at the destruction they caused their own people and the world in the 1900s. We need more than facts for life. God's ways give us understanding for the proper way to live as well as hope in life.

<u>With God's help we can get rid of false ideas even if they have taken over our thinking.</u>
Allow the truth of God's word to lead you in life. We have the ability to get rid of the false ideas that cause us to stumble from God's truths. It is important what we think. I was watching a football game this one time and the announcers said that the recent success of the quarterback in the game he was playing will help him tremendously in future games. They were not talking about his physical ability, but about his confidence, about his thinking. Get rid of the false ideas and doctrines that are not biblical. You can do it. Control your thoughts. Start following all of

God’s commandments and be committed to God and His commandments. Seek truth and make the true God, the God of the Bible your God.

I am challenged over and over by people who do not believe in God's commandments. They will twist the scriptures to mean that we do not have to keep God's commandments in the Old Testament portion. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "Our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." There was no New Testament at the time this was written, so the scriptures that are being talked about are the Old Testament portion scriptures. They were twisting the Old Testament scriptures to their own destruction.

I believe the destruction it is talking about is more than the consequences of sin but of eternity in the lake of fire (see Revelation 21:8). We need the whole message and not just a positive message. God in His wisdom warns us of impending doom so that we do not fail at life. He would not be a good God if He did not warn us. Consider these scriptures in the Old Testament portion about the goodness of God.

> God’s word gives us understanding for life. Psalms 119:130 NKJV says, "Your words gives light; it gives understanding."
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> God’s words and His commandments will direct our life so that we do better in life. Psalms 119:105-106 NKJV says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments."
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> God does what is right and that will not change. Therefore, His laws give us truth for life. Psalms 119:142 NKJV says, "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth."
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> God did not leave us to our own devices but gave us His commandments, they are truth. They were good in ancient times, and they will always be true. Psalms 119:151-152 NKJV says, "You are near, O LORD, and all Your commandments are truth. Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever."
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> All of God’s commandments are true, they are the right way to live, and they will always be right. Psalms 119:160 NKJV says, "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever."
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> Desire God’s commandments and learn to walk them out in life. Psalms 86:11 NKJV says, "Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth."
>
> Want how God wants you to live life. God’s truths will help you. God is a loving God who will forgive those who want to follow His commandments. Psalms 25:5-6 NKJV says, "Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day. Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, for they

> are from of old." Also, Psalms 25:10 NKJV says, "All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, to such as keep His covenant and His testimonies."
>
> God's word was good, is good, and will always be good. Numbers 23:19 NKJV says, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

As a concerned believer, I want to warn you about some churches and congregations that do not do a good job leading people to keep God's commandments. The Bible holds us to a high standard, a high bar. God forgives us for our sin when we change and confess our sins to God, but God requires a sincere repentance. Last week, I talked about how I once heard a story of a person who felt lied to after going to a church that held to a belief in a low bar, a low standard.

She never heard the truth at her seeker friendly congregation. After reading the Bible, she realized she was being lied to and decided to no longer be a believer. Perhaps she felt that churches could not be trusted. These seeker friendly congregations seem to only appeal to obtaining numbers and donations. While they may not hold to this concept, they certainly are not leading people to follow God the way they should. They will say people are growing spiritually, but how can that be true if their congregants are not being taught what they should be taught.

Please bear with my analogy. Perhaps we could liken these kinds of churches to someone standing in a long line while everyone waits their turn to hear something they can relate to or like. They are not being led to do what is right but are only there to hear something that appeals to them and not something that will help them spiritually. In this long line, the people assume that they know each other perhaps only because they are there together, but there is no relational contact. They do not know one another and the leadership of the church has minimal contact with the people, so they do not know the people who attend very well either. The leadership is mostly concerned with the production of the church show and not with the spiritual needs of the people. Perhaps you have contributed by your presence or by doing something for the church, but the church is mostly concerned with their building and looking good and not so much with you. They are looking out for their own interests and not for your best spiritual interests.

Remember, Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. '" Be a wise and understanding person who trusts in God's word and His commandments. Do not be led by an entertainment style church that does not care enough about you to tell you the truth and does not know you.

Torah Study

The Torah portion for this week is *Bereshīt* and it means, "in the beginning." In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth that existed was without form. The following is then God creating the earth, light, and life.

Moshe wrote the Torah as He was inspired by God.
There are actually two creation stories; the second one begins in Genesis 2:4. This form of added information by repetition was the style of writing back in the time the first 5 books of the Bible were written. God told Moshe what to write and He put it down in his own words.

From this style of writing, we know that Moshe wrote the Torah because that style of writing changed shortly after Israel entered Canaan. This is important because some people who study the Bible do not believe the words that Moshe got came from God, but that it was modified and adapted. The Israelites and the Jews have taken great care of the scriptures to make sure they are copied correctly. They will even copy what some consider mistakes, and they even copy deviations in how the letters are written.

So, it is not true what some people think. Some think the Torah was written at different times. Any prophecy they see that matches what happened, they explain away and say the prophecy must have been written after it happened. Simply put, they do not believe in the Bible. Watch out that you do not get fooled by their made-up theology of the Bible. They are not seekers of truth.

Also, recent archaeology has found Hebrew in Egypt that has been dated to around 1650 BC. Israel left Egypt and crossed the Sea of Aqaba around 1447 BC and not in 1305 BC. They have found Hebrew at the real Mount Sinai in Midian, and also in Canaan at a dig from the time Israel first entered Canaan. The Hebrew alphabet was spread and adapted to the Aramaic language and all the area including the Phoenicians and then eventually Europe. Therefore, our English alphabet was adapted from what was originally the Hebrew alphabet and not Phoenicia.

Back to the idea of needing to seek truth. We must come to the scriptures with open minds in order to find truth. When we learn a truth from the Bible that contradicts our belief system, we change in order to apply the truth instead of continuing on in error. For example, archeologists at one time could not find much proof for what happened in the Bible. There is a belief system that still exists today that casts doubt on the validity of the Bible because of this. Archeology has since found many of the names and places mentioned in the Bible, and there are even things written about in the Bible that can be specifically dated because of the information on some archeological finds.

This demonstrates that the stories and people of the Bible really occurred. If you run into people who do not believe in what the Bible says, they may have learned outdated information that has been passed on to them or they do not believe there is a God. For example, outdated information also occurs in medicine. People will sometimes apply an incorrect treatment based on something that was copied from an outdated book. People also have outdated information about the Bible.

The question of creation.
The first sentence in the Bible tells us what this first section of the Bible is about. Genesis 1:1 NKJV says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The first word in Hebrew is the word Bereshīt with a large Hebrew letter *bet*. This probably calls attention to the

importance of the story – the heavens and earth were created by God. Since the Bible starts out with this large "b" sound perhaps it is telling us that it was some kind of extreme explosion; it is just a thought. It does not validate the made-up story of science's version of creation. Their version of creation is called a theory, in other words, it is just made-up.

Science bases itself on evaluation. Science was not at the beginning to witness what happened, so they really do not know the events and the environment surrounding the beginning at all. They simply made up a story that they insist is true. It is interesting that science tells us that if a small particle called the Higgs Boson did not exist there would be no universe. Could this be the particle that God chose to bring matter into existence? We do not know for sure. Also, science does not like the idea of a big bang starting creation because it points to the idea that there was a beginning of creation.

Some people think the story of creation in the Bible sounds a little made up because Eve talks to a snake. There is also a story in the Bible of God making a donkey talk to someone. God can do that because He is God. The devil could have made a serpent to speak. The Bible sometimes refers to the devil as the god of this world because of its influence on the world. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NKJV says, "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded." The false god of this age is the devil.

If the devil is at work blinding peoples' minds, then it is possible the devil did the same with Eve. 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV says, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted." Do not let your mind be corrupted with lies. Ephesians 6:11 NKJV says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We are to stand against demonic powers that are against God. God wants what is good for us. The devil has rebelled against God and wants to disrupt what God wants for us.

The Bible does not necessarily disagree with science. It is not a book of facts, but it is from a loving God who wants to help us have a better life through His commandments. They are good commandments because they are from an all-knowing creator God who knows what is best for us and has our best interests at heart. Anyways, I find several things interesting in the creation narrative. It says that God made the land appear above the water. Science says that if the land masses were not raised above the water that water would cover the whole earth. This agrees with the creation narrative. Because we have deep trenches in the oceans, land appears above the water.

I also find it interesting that science looks for planets that are not too hot or too cold and are much like our earth. They say these planets are more likely to have life on them. It just so happens that our earth somehow ended up in a place where life could exist. Then there is our Sun and the Moon. The Bible talks about the Sun being for the day and the Moon being for the night. It just so happens that the Moon and the Sun are about the same size in our sky. That seems to be remarkable. The Sun's diameter is 400 times the size of the Moon's diameter but is 400 times farther away as measured by parallax. This makes them appear the same size. I find that amazing. Many people I have questioned believe that God had to create the earth simply because of the complexity of life.

Science tends to produce theories about some things that are inconclusive. For example, science says that the dating of organisms is based on the strata or layer of rock their fossils are found. They then also say that the dating of rock is based on what organisms can be found in them. That is circular reasoning. We could say the rock was 6,000 years old and then the fossil in it would also be 6,000 years old. Based on their science, the world could have begun just a few thousand years ago. They decided to make up a sequence of possible strata to try to explain their theory, namely, their theoretical teaching based on circular reasoning. They say the people who believe in God are not reasoning correctly. What about their reasoning?

They also say that dinosaurs existed millions of years ago. I know someone personally who saw an alive dinosaur. He is a respected businessman who does not believe in God. I also saw a television report from his area of the United States that interviewed someone else who saw the same thing. I have heard of some missionaries who saw a dinosaur in Africa. It was lying in the road, and they stopped their car until it went away.

Science also bases their theories on what they say are ancient, petrified rocks. I know of someone who has a petrified pickle in its original jar. Science will not admit their made-up theory of evolution is just a made-up theory. They insist that it is not made-up and criticize people who do not take their made-up theory as being real. They may have a lot of good science, but their creation story and evolution are just made-up. I have a picture of petrified trees going through different layers of strata. Science says that each layer of strata represents millions of years. So much for each layer of strata being millions of years as science tells us. Also, petrified human footprints have been found within petrified dinosaur footprints.

The Bible is not a book of science, but a book that details God's love for His creation and mankind. Since God knows each of the billions of people on our planet, doesn't it make sense that God can make billions of stars. Is not one life more spectacular than a piece of rock or a star? Yeshua said that God knows every sparrow. I have seen perhaps some 50 sparrows in just one bush. Yeshua tells us in Matthew 10:29-31 NKJV, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." God knows how many hairs are on your head. There are roughly 100,000 hairs on a human head and there are billions of people. I think God can make billions of stars.

Those who are critical of the creation narrative often just make up something to be critical of. For example, light was created in verse 3 so there must have been enough light for plants to grow. The critics say that light was not created until verse 14, but they are wrong. What else do they have wrong? They are just looking for anything to object to. Like I said, the creation narrative was not intended to be a scientific narrative, but it actually does point to the real existence of God in its narrative.

God has continually reached out to mankind to help us since the beginning. Even to this day, mankind resists God's kindness through His commandments and word, and people do things their own way. This often results in added pain and suffering for mankind.

In this first chapter, we find out that God planned a perfect world for mankind, but in Chapter 3, mankind did what they pleased instead of following how God intended for mankind to live. The first people, Adam and Eve, realized their error so God gave those who would come after them the choice to follow God or do things their own way. We could call our era a time of testing to see if a person wants to follow what God says or do things their own way (for example, see Deuteronomy 8:2 NKJV where it says God tested the people, "To know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.")

God gives us each a chance to change and do what is right. 2 Peter 3:9 NKJV says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." God continues to reach out to mankind even in an effort to help us, and God will someday in the future raise from the dead everyone and judge them. Yeshua said in John 5:28-29 NKJV, "For the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."

In Genesis 1:2-5, it tells us that the Earth lacked form, and the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Then in verse 3, the first thing God does is to bring light on the Earth, and this caused a distinction between light and darkness. Perhaps this included the forming of the atmosphere. The atmosphere causes light to be dispersed. The astronauts who landed on the moon had trouble seeing detail from the blinding light of the Sun because the Moon has very little atmosphere. For each day, it says that what God did was good, and this is repeated after each day. In the Hebrew, it says, "the evening and the morning were the first day." In God's record, the day begins in the evening, at sunset. So biblical days begin at sunset, in our evenings. In our era, we observe the change of day in the middle of the night.

We see that God's entire creation is referred to as a day in Genesis 2:4 NKJV, "This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens." So, the Hebrew word "day" in this verse refers to an era. Therefore, the word "day" in Hebrew can also refer to a period of time and not just a 24-hour period. For example, Psalms 90:4 NKJV says, "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past."

The creation account in Genesis Chapter 1 suggests an exact day between events and the entire creation is referred to as a day. On the third day, plants are created, and it takes time for them to grow so that the cattle which were created on the 6th day can eat. The ancient people were farmers so they would have understood this and also could have understood the days referred to in Genesis 1 as eras as well. Yet, God can create a fully functioning earth in just 6 days because He is God. God made our night and day on the first day.

In Genesis 1:6-31 the Bible tells us beginning on the second day, the waters were divided; the third day, water was separated from the land and God created vegetation; the fourth day, light was created to define time and Genesis 1:14 says time was created so we know when to meet with God. Night and day had already been established on day 1 so this must be referring to the timing of God's feasts. *Moedim* in Genesis 1:14 means meetings and is translated seasons in my Bible. Genesis 1:14 NKJV says, "And let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years."

Moshe went to the Tent of Meeting, the *ohel moed*. *Ohel* is tent, *moed* means meet. *Moedim* is used in Genesis 1:14 and is the plural of *Moed*. We are to meet with God on His feasts. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." We also can also meet with God any day and at any time if we want to, but God's feasts are His appointed times and that was apparently set up on fourth day. Perhaps God set the regular patterns of the Moon at that time. The first of biblical months occur when the first crescent of the Moon reappears, and we keep some feasts on certain days of the biblical month.

In biblical reckoning, the months occurred regularly through the reappearance of the moon which is called a new moon. Do not confuse this with the modern new moon which begins when the moon is dark all night. Also, do not confuse this with the set dates of the Israeli calendar. Their calendar is close to the biblical calendar but does not follow the true biblical calendar. People did not need a contrived calendar system in ancient times but could simply look at when the moon reappeared and know a new month had started. The present Israeli calendar is a set system of dating much like our present Gregorian calendar is a set system of dating.

On the fifth day, birds and sea creatures were created; and the sixth day, animals were created, and mankind was created. Each day God says that what He created was good. When man was created it does not repeat this phrase. Perhaps this points to God knowing beforehand that mankind would have a choice whether to do good or evil. We are good if we choose to do what is "right and good" and keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). Mankind is created in God's image and likeness in verse 26 and in verse 31 it says that everything God created was very good.

Understanding that we are made in God's image is important. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." It says in His "likeness," so we have been given some special characteristics like the ability to decide, to learn, to do good and many other things. What are some of the things that we can understand from this?

* We are not God, we were created and are not all-powerful, and not all-knowing.
* We are important to God; He values us.
* We should take proper care of ourselves, emotionally, spiritually, and physically.
* We should recognize that we are not created in the same way as the animals and we should act differently.
* We should treat others with respect and dignity even if we do not like them.
* We have the ability to treat God's creation with respect and take care of it.
* We can do harm or good in how we behave in life.
* The Bible says His creation is very good and we are part of His creation. Genesis 1:31 NKJV says, "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." We are good if we do what is "right and good," see Deuteronomy 6:17-18.

God's people Israel are especially wonderful. Isaiah 61:3 NKJV says, "To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; **that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified**." Believers in the Messiah are also to be a people who do what is right. Righteousness means to do what is right and therefore we can also glorify

God. Some Christians say we cannot do what is right, but that is not what the Bible teaches.

Adam and Eve were given some purposes in the Garden of Eden. One of those things commanded is to have children as man and wife, male and female. The Bible says children are a blessing and a godly relationship between a man and a woman can result in a satisfying and good relationship. A good relationship requires patience, effort, respect for one another, and sacrifice for both the man and the woman. Notice that the Bible teaches monogamy at the beginning. All those in the Bible who had multiple spouses had troubles. Take for example Joseph's half-brothers who sold him into slavery. Adam and Eve were also commanded to work on the land. They were to, "cultivate and care for it;" see Genesis 2:15 CJB. So, they were to work; work can be very satisfying. Years ago, most people were farmers, but in these times, we can find work providing for ourselves in many good and honest ways.

Imagine being created without a purpose. Are human beings not more valuable than an ant or a rock? We need to work at taking care of ourselves and to work at providing for ourselves. But we also have a spiritual purpose. I found a quote by Theodore Roosevelt that I think you would enjoy. He said, "Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." After Adam and Eve sinned, some of the things of life became difficult. That is the result of sin and evil. It brings pain and difficulties into life. Mankind brought this on themselves.

God saw all that He made, and it was "very good," and God rested on the seventh day and **made that day holy**. Some people say that it does not matter when we keep the day of rest, namely, Shabbat. God made the 7th day holy at creation, not the other days. Evening and morning were the first day (see Genesis 1:5) so Shabbat begins at sunset and goes from our Friday evening until Saturday at sunset. God deemed it holy since the time of creation and so it is not correct to think that has changed. It was Constantine who made Sunday the day of rest to the pagan sun god Mithras. That was passed down into Christianity. By observing Shabbat on the correct day, we proclaim God to be the creator of the heavens and the earth.

God created the animals and mankind. When God created the animals the word for created is *Vayītzer*. When God created man the Hebrew word for created is spelled with a double yud in the middle. There is no extra sound except that the extra letter is present. This perhaps signifies again that we are made in the image of God because it is said that the letter yud represents God. It could imply that we should endeavor to be God's created heavenly people just as Adam and Eve were in the garden, and so implies that we can be God's special people.

Of course, we can only be God's special people if we live as His people and follow His commandments. Deuteronomy 26:18 NKJV says, "Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that you should keep all His commandments." Those who decide not to follow God's commandments reject God and the good ways He has given us.

Perhaps an atheist would deceitfully say, "You mean that I am not special?" They say it deceitfully because they do not believe in God, so why should it matter to them? They are created in God's image, but they are choosing to bring pain and hurt into this world by what

they believe. That is their choice, but their atheistic beliefs could be leading some away from God, so they will be judged for their lies. Do not listen to them. Revelation 21:6 says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

Temptation.

God put Adam in the Garden of Eden and commanded him in Genesis 2:17 NKJV: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." God gives us commandments because He cares about us; there are consequences to sin. When Adam and Eve sin, they not only die spiritually, but they eventually end up dying physically because they had to leave the Garden of Eden. They enter a day or era where they end up dying. Adam names the animals and God saw that it wasn't good for man to be alone and so He created woman. Eve is originally called woman and then her name is changed to Eve. Adam changed her name to Eve which means life because she is the mother of the living, see Genesis 3:20. Eve is tempted and tricked into disobeying God, and both Adam and Eve sin.

The devil made a serpent to speak, and the serpent speaks to Eve and questions what God said. The devil still does that to people in our era to try to get people to question the existence of God and His word. Shaul warns us in 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV, "I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted." The Bible says the devil has rebelled and is against God's good purposes. Isaiah 14:12, 14 NKJV says, " How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, **you who weakened the nations!** And in verse 14, "**I will be like the Most High**." These fallen evil spirit beings were once beautiful beings (as suggested by its Hebrew name) but sinned by wanting to be God.

The devil is real because God revealed that to us. The Bible talks about different beings, some that are hidden to us but can still influence us like good angels or evil devil spirits. It also talks about giant beings that came to earth called Nephilim, and strange creatures called Cherubim. Some Nephilim survived the flood according to the Bible and some think they are still around. Deuteronomy 3:11 NKJV says that the Nephilim Og's bed was, "Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit" (13.5' x 6').

God is over all the host of all His creatures. Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV says, "You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. **The host of heaven worships You**." All the creatures of the heavens are subject to God. It should be noted that not everything is revealed to mankind but those things that pertain to our interests. Deuteronomy 29:29 NKJV says, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever."

The story in Genesis is thought by many to be a fairy tale by some, but it is at the very least symbolic. I believe it really happened. People use stories to make points all the time but for some reason, most people do not understand the lesson that the story in Genesis chapter 3 is teaching us! Even a child can understand a fable or a story that is intended to make a point. As we saw, devil spirits say they want to be like God. Eve is tempted to do the same by a devil

spirit though a snake! Genesis 3:4-5 NKJV says, "The serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God**, knowing good and evil.'" That is the same lie that is presented in Isaiah.

Devil spirits want to be God and they want others to rebel against our good God and will speak to our mind to try to mess up our life and live in sin. God gave us His good commandments to help us. Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV says, "**Keep the commandments of the LORD** and His statutes which I command you today **for your good**." God has good intentions for us so we need to resist these evil spiritual beings. James 4:7-8 NKJV says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

The rabbis teach that Eve omits the word "freely," adds the command not to touch, and changes the consequences from a certainty to a perhaps and so changes God's word. This is a lesson. We are to treat God's commandments with care (also see Deuteronomy 4:2). The serpent then says she will not die, and she will become wise. Adam and Eve both end up disobeying God because they no longer had the truth of what God said. They had been manipulated into believing a lie by a demonic being. Often, it doesn't take a demonic being to trick us into sinning but a friendly person who is trying to get us to sin.

God gives mankind grace from the very beginning.

Adam and Eve were hiding from God, but God pursues them, and they tell God they were tricked. So, God must have considered what they said, and He gives them and mankind another chance. God makes them coverings from skins. God had to kill the animals that he took the skins from so this is the first sacrifice for sin. God then must remove them from the Garden and from their privileged life as a consequence for their sin. The text implies there is now a difference to how they experience work and childbearing, and those things would be difficult, but God gives them grace.

God has given mankind His grace since creation.

The rabbis teach that Adam and Eve repented so God made a way for them to come back to Him by promising them a future messiah in Genesis 3:15. I will explain this later. Therefore, God's grace has been given to mankind since the garden, before that actually. God creating mankind was an act of grace. God did not have to create mankind, but He did. Also, God did not have to give Adam and Eve grace after they sinned, but He did.

Some say that God's favor only came after the Messiah came and we see that is not true. God also gave Noah grace and Israel grace. Genesis 6:8 NKJV says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." Grace of course also came with the coming of the Messiah Yeshua who came as the final sacrifice for sin and gives us the Holy Spirit as our helper to keep God's commandments and with life. Yeshua said in John 14:15-17 NKJV, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit."

God says to the serpent that was taken over by the devil, Genesis 3:14-15 NKJV says, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field;

on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." God promises Adam and Eve a messiah in Genesis 3:15. Rabbi Shaul says the devil would not have crucified Yeshua the Messiah had the devil known what Yeshua did for us (see 1 Corinthians 2:7).

God does not place all the blame on mankind for their sin but offers Adam and Eve as well as mankind a way back to God. The serpent that allowed the devil access to the temptation is cursed. It says God will put a hostility between the devil and woman and her offspring. In the future, this offspring (seed) will destroy the works of the devil, "He shall bruise your head." The devil will "bruise His heel," which implies that the devil will hurt this promised seed. This promised seed is the Messiah Yeshua who died for our sins and revealed more extensively the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8 NKJV is talking about Yeshua and it says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." This scripture refers to the promise made to Adam and the woman.

Since Adam changes the woman's name to *Chavah* in Hebrew (which means life) after the promise of the Messiah, Adam understood that God was offering Adam and Eve an eternal life sometime in the future through a Messiah. So, through woman, mankind would continue to exist, and mankind could believe on a Messiah that was to come. And the Messiah has come in the name of Yeshua. We are now commanded to believe in this Messiah Yeshua just as all of ancient mankind believed in the coming of a future Messiah. Adam and Eve were told they would die. They did die, but not right away. The believing line from Adam and Eve ended up being passed on through Seth. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters so early man married their brothers and sisters.

<u>Cain and Abel.</u>
Adam and Eve have Cain and Abel. The Hebrew text implies that Eve thinks Cain is the Messiah. It does not say "help" in the manuscript. Instead, we know that Cain ended up being a sinner. Cain grows vegetables and Abel raises sheep. When Cain's sacrifice is not accepted, he kills Abel out of jealousy. God warns Cain not to do this. So, we see God is still communicating with mankind.

Also, Cain and Able were giving sacrifices, so they had a sacrificial system. In the book of Job, Job is seen making sacrifices for sin and some think the book of Job predates the Torah. Seth is then born, and he restores the believing line of Adam and Eve, and it says that his descendants called on the name of Yĕhōváh (yud-hey-vav-hey). Early believers in God believed in and followed the true God and they knew God’s commandments. God’s commandments were passed down verbally through the early believers like Abraham. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." It says Abraham kept the law, the Torah it says in the Hebrew.

<u>In Conclusion.</u>
Genealogies are then given and as the portion ends, Noah is introduced. Noah was in the believing line of Seth. God saw that man had become wicked and He would have destroyed mankind, but God showed grace to Noah, he was a person who did what was right, he was

righteous. Genesis 6:8 says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

The beginning of Genesis is a heart-breaking story. God creates mankind and fellowships with him, but Adam and Eve don't listen, Cain doesn't listen either, and also mankind becomes wicked. Thankfully, there was Noah. This should remind us that doing what God says is "right and good" and is worthwhile; Noah saved the world by doing what is right. So, following God's commandments can in fact save the world even if our minds tell us otherwise. Evil people often kill good people so it would seem that evil will always win out, but good still exists.

Noah is one man who saved the world, and so we see in Noah a picture of the future Messiah Yeshua who helped us to understand more about the workings of the devil (see Isaiah 14:12 and Ephesians 6:10-12) and Yeshua also gives believers in the Messiah the gift of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:38-39). This portion also mentions the Nephilim and that man's days would be limited to 120 years.

Interesting Points.

Here are some interesting points from the Hebrew manuscripts. The Rabbis have seen some interesting things about the manuscripts. We sometimes will notice these coincidences, but there are too many of them for them to just be coincidences. If we read the first two words of Genesis in Hebrew leaving off the aleph from "*bara*," we get "*Bereshīt bar*" which means "in the beginning son." This reminds us of where Yochanan said in John 1:1 in the Hebrew manuscripts that Yeshua is the Son and *Eloah*. *Eloah* is the singular for God.

In John 1:14 CJB it says, "The Word became a human being and lived with us, and we saw his Sh'khinah, the Sh'khinah of the Father's only Son full of grace and truth." The Sh'khinah refers to the light of the presence of God. The Israelites saw the *Sh'khinah* light at the Tent of Meeting in the desert and they considered it to be the light of God's presence. Some rabbis even considered the Sh'khinah to be a manifested presence of God. Yeshua was the presence of God on Earth.

The Hebrew contains some fun and interesting insights.

Here is something else that is interesting. The Bible begins with a large letter bet and the bet in Hebrew means "house." The bet is constructed with 3 vavs. Vav is the number six and 3x6=18. The word chai adds up to 18 (Hebrew letters are also numbers) and chai means life. We could possibly interpret this to mean that the Bible is the story of the house of life.

Also, the first letter of the Bible is the Hebrew letter bet in the word *Bereshīt* and is a large letter in the Hebrew text with a "b" sound. Perhaps we have God's big "b" instead of the big bang. The first letter in the Torah is bet, and last letter of the Torah is a lamed. This forms the word "lev." Lev means love in Hebrew. The bet has a "v" sound when it is not the first letter of a word. Perhaps we could say that the Bible is God's love story with man, and Yeshua is the final piece of the puzzle that sends home God's message of love for all of man. There are a lot of suppositions we can make with the scriptures, but most of all, it is the scriptures we are to learn and keep. People also make up ideas from the meaning of the letters. They are just made-up ideas.

These extra ideas can be fun, but they can diminish the scriptures if we focus all our attention on them. Yeshua said in John 5:39 NKJV, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." Putting a lot of attention on these extra interpretations is wrong. Yeshua points out that they keep people from studying and knowing the scriptures the way we should know them.

They are just made-up ideas. For example, some of the Rabbis say that the change of year comes on the 7th month because you can make the Hebrew word *Rosh* which means head from the first word in the Bible, *Bereshīt.* We can also do things like that in English. Take the word apple for instance. You can make the word pal from the word apple and so we could say the apple is our friend. As you can see, their contrivances are just made-up, they are not God's word. Some Rabbis disagree with the 7th month being the change of the year and say the change in the year is the month of Nisan also called Aviv. The month of Nisan is actually called the first month in the Bible. That makes more sense to me.

> *Even Shaul said in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 NKJV, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth."*

I share this because we are to do what God tells us and not just find hidden meanings. Some people get very involved in these extra meanings and lose their way spiritually; do not listen to the people who are always doing this. In this Torah portion Eve is deceived. Rabbi Shaul warns us not to let the devil deceive us; 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 NKJV says, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from **the simplicity** that is in Christ." Sadly, some people have gone so far as to say they do not read the Bible anymore; they just look for meanings in the letters. They are, "Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;" see 2 Timothy 3:7 NKJV. Stay bolted to the scriptures.

<u>The Haftarah.</u>
The Haftarah for *Bereshīt* is Isaiah 42:5-43:10. We see somewhat of a same theme in these scriptures in Isaiah as in the Torah portion for *Bereshīt*. Man has again failed, but the good news is that God will not fail Israel. In the Haftarah portion of Isaiah, he talks about the Creator God and says that He took Israel by the hand and made a covenant with them so they could be a light to the Gentiles and open their blind eyes to deliver them. This may sound familiar to some of you, see Acts 26:12-18.

Isaiah then talks about the whole earth praising God. God will go to battle and win. Those who trust in idols (or for that matter, in any ideal instead of God) will be shamed. Isaiah says that Israel is a blind servant and will be destroyed for their sin. It continues to say that God will redeem Israel though, He loves them, and He will bring them back to their land for He is God. It is not true that God is done with Israel as some incorrectly teach.

Also, we should note, many believers in the Messiah are blind too and don't understand the scriptures in their proper biblical context. The original context of the Bible was given to an Israelite and Jewish people and that is where we should be getting our understanding. Bible teachers often teach their own doctrine or just good advice instead of the truth. Theology has taken over Christianity, and they explain away the scriptures and act as gods to those who seek the true God.

Often, they do not teach people the whole truth because they do not want to offend anyone. They want to keep up their attendance. They end up being like businesspeople who are running a business to keep their customers. They say they believe, but do they really believe? If you believe in God, you also must believe He exists and **do what God says**. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." They will avoid truths like this. And holding back the truth is lying. We need all the truths of God's word. Also, it is not true there is no hell. If someone told you there is no hell, they are lying. That is where liars are going; do not go there with them.

Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts. (We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)

Marriage between a man and woman and having a family is commanded in the Garden of Eden. In our present day, not everyone has the opportunity to marry and not everyone can have children, but that is something we are to seek.

The woman is to be a helper for her husband, and it is not good for people to live out their lives alone. Genesis 1:18,20, 27-28; 2:24.

We are to keep the 7th day holy because God blesses the 7th day and makes it holy. Namely, our Friday at sunset to Saturday at sunset. Genesis 2:3. The Hebrew word *moedim* in Genesis 1:14 implies we have special days we meet with God.

We are to work. Work is implied for mankind in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15.

Adam named the animals. It implies we are to learn about our environment, plants, and animals. Genesis 2:19.

When the woman is tempted, the devil uses different tactics to confuse her. So, God's words are changed, added, and taken away, and the devil then refutes God's word. It is implied that we are not to subtract, add, change God's word, or contradict God's word. Genesis 3:1-5; Deuteronomy 4:2.

Women are to have children even though it will be painful; they are to desire their husband, and her husband will lead her. Genesis 3:16.

After Adam and Eve sin, men will have to work to provide food, and it will be more difficult.

Genesis 3:17-19.

After Adam and Eve sin, God says mankind will now experience death, so they must have had eternal life in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:19.

Confession of sin to God is implied. Genesis 3:12-13.

Genesis 3:15 implies they are to look forward to the coming of a Messiah. Adam changes the woman's name to Eve because women will give birth to mankind and also, a woman will give birth to a Messiah who will defeat the devil and not only bring life, but eventually eternal life to true believers through a Messiah.

Mankind is still in communication with God. For example, Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:9), Cain (Genesis 4:6-7, 13-15), Noah (Genesis 6:13-22). This also implies we can talk with God.

The sin of Adam and Eve brings with it curses and the murder of Abel also brings a curse, so sin brings curses. Genesis 3:16-19, 4:11-12.

God gives grace to those who do what is right. Doing what is "right" or "good" is to keep God's commandments. Genesis 6:8-9; Deuteronomy 4:16-17.

In closing, let us say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:
ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God, which is pronounced, Yĕ-hō-váh. Yĕ-hō-váh is used 6,521 times in the Old Testament portion according to Strong's Dictionary. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name. So, why not use God's real name? According to Exodus 3:15, Yĕ-hō-váh is God's true name forever. In that verse and everywhere we see a name for God in all capitals (in some of our Bibles) it is this exclusive name for God, Yĕ-hō-váh. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yĕ-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah which means to exist. Yĕ-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. He is our eternal God and creator. I want to honor God's name. Will you also honor God's name?

Some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name (see Deuteronomy 29:20). When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Christians for the most part do not use the true name of God. Why not begin using His true name and honor Him? Do not be afraid to use God's real name with respect. I say this in order to encourage you to use God's real name because it points to God being our eternal creator.

The ancient rabbis say that is God's name. The church Fathers said God's name is Yĕ-hō-váh. I have seen God's name pointed as Yĕ-hō-váh in the Aleppo Codex. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yĕ-hō-váh (יְהוָֹה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people. So, let's put God's name on His people.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:
יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וִיחֻנֶּךָּ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם

Yĕ-hō-váh bless you and keep you.
Yĕ-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
Yĕ-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.