



**Bereshit Torah Study 2021 and  
Have Joy and Be Satisfied in Him**  
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  
Yĕhōvāh – 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

In this portion, God creates the heavens and the earth and mankind in His image. We are not God, but have special qualities that God has given us. The devil tempts Eve by changing what God said and both Adam and Eve are tricked and sin. Cain is jealous of Abel and kills Abel. Mankind becomes very sinful, but Noah saves mankind because he listens to God. We need more people who are willing to listen to God and also bring the blessings and goodness of God into this world.

Sometimes we make lots of effort, but forget to let go of things and let God help us out. Sometimes even in the process of doing this, we must simply ask for supernatural help and then let things play out. I'm not saying we make no effort at all, but include God and trust in Him.

And Asa cried out to the LORD his God, and said, "LORD, it is nothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power; help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on You, and in Your name we go against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; do not let man prevail against You!" So the LORD struck the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah, and the Ethiopians fled;" 2 Chronicles 14:11-12 NKJV.

Also Psalms 18:2-3 NKJV says,

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.

Doing things our own way can bring pain and sometimes even letting go can be painful for a person who is used to working things out on their own without asking God for help. With God's help we press on. Philippians 3:13-14 NKJV, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV tells us what we are to do, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Through God we can be at peace and even conquer those things that are testing us. Shaul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13 NKJV.

God wants to break into our lives supernaturally – so ask Him to help you. Take a step back and keep moving forward in your process without worry and fears. We can miss amazing opportunities by not going to God. 2 Chronicles 16:7 NKJV shows us an example of this. "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: "Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand."

Do what you know is the right things to do and also follow God's leading through the Holy Spirit. God gives us clear signposts and directions besides what our own heart is telling us. God gave King Hezekiah a physical sign: "And this is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has spoken: 'Behold, I will bring the shadow on the sundial, which has gone down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.' So the sun returned ten degrees on the dial by which it had gone down." Isaiah 38:7-8 NKJV. Pay attention to the supernatural and pay attention to how God is leading you. And as we go forth: "For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Isaiah 55:12 NKJV.

### **Torah Study**

The Torah portion for this week is Bereshit 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 the creation of the earth and how God created light and life. There are actually two creation stories; the second one begins in Genesis 2:4. **That was the style of writing** back in the time the Bible was written. That's how we know that **Moshe actually wrote the Torah** because the style of writing changed shortly after Israel entered Canaan. God gave Moshe the words of the Torah and it has proven to be amazingly interesting in many different ways.

Some so called theologians just hack up the Bible into sections. They 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 don't believe in the Bible. Watch out for these unbelievers. They are just suits that make a business out of the Bible.

On the first day, God created light and the first day **began in the evening** (evening and the morning were the first day; Genesis 1:5 NKJV); 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 they were created so we know when to meet with God (*moedim* in that verse means meetings); the fifth day, birds and sea creatures

were created; and the sixth day, animals were created and man was created in God's image.

Understanding that we are made in God's image is important. What are some of the things that we can understand from that?

- \* 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 different.
- \* We should treat others with respect and dignity even if we don't 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."

As God's people we 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.**"

Adam and Eve were given a purpose in the Garden of Eden – they were to "cultivate and care for it;" Genesis 2:15 CJB. They were to work; work can be a very satisfying thing. Imagine being created without a purpose. We need to take care of ourselves, but we also have a spiritual purpose. What do you think of that? 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."

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 doesn't matter when we keep Shabbat. God made the 7<sup>th</sup> day holy at creation; not the other days. Evening and morning were the first day (Genesis 1:5) so Shabbat begins on Friday at sunset and goes until Saturday at sunset. God deemed it holy since the time of creation and so it is not correct to think that has changed. By observing Shabbat on the correct day, we proclaim God to be the creator of the heavens and the earth.

God put Adam in the Garden of Eden and commanded him: "You may freely eat from every tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You are not to eat from it, because on the day that you eat from it, it will become certain that you will die." Genesis 2:17 NKJV. Adam probably dies spiritually. Adam names the animals and God saw that it wasn't good for man to be alone and so He created woman, Eve. 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 rabbis teach that Eve omits the word "freely" adds the command not to touch, and changes the consequences from a certainty to a perhaps. The serpent then says she won't 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 were hiding from God, but God pursues them and they tell God they were tricked. God makes them coverings from skins, and removes them from the Garden and from their privileges, but He gives them grace (favor).

*God has given mankind His grace since creation*

God promises them a messiah in Genesis 3:15. 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. God's favor or grace has been with mankind since the garden. Before that actually. God creating mankind was an act of grace. God didn't have to do that, 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.

Adam and Eve have Cain and Abel. Cain grows vegetables and Abel raises sheep. When Cain's sacrifice is not accepted he kills Abel. Seth is then born and it says that his descendants called on the name of Yehovah (yud-hey-vav-hey). 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, a person who did what was right.

The beginning of Genesis is a heart-breaking story. God creates man and fellowships with him, but Adam and Eve don't listen, Cain doesn't listen either, and mankind becomes wicked. Thankfully there was Noah. This should remind us that doing what is right and good is worthwhile; Noah saved the world by doing what is right. So following God's ways can in fact save the world even if our minds tell us that what we do is inconsequential (not important or insignificant). Noah, one man saved the world, and so we see in Noah a picture of the future Messiah Yeshua. This portion also mentions the Nephilim and that man's days would be limited to 120 years.

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 "bereshit bar" which means in the beginning son. This reminds us of where Yochanan said in John 1:1-3 CJB where he says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things came to be through him." And of course, we know that Yochanan is talking about Yeshua. In verse 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 Hebrew manuscripts contain  
some fun and interesting insights*

Here is something else that is interesting. The Bible begins with a large letter bet and bet in

Hebrew means "house." The bet is constructed with 3 vavs. Vav is the number six and  $3 \times 6 = 18$ . 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.

You can rearrange the letters of the first word Bereshit to point to creation taking place on Rosh Hashanah. Also, bet is a large letter in the Hebrew text with a "b" sound and it is the first letter of the Bible. Perhaps we have God's big "b" instead of the big bang. The first letter of the Torah is bet and last letter of the Torah is a lamed. This forms the word "lev." Lev means love in Hebrew. 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.

These extra ideas can be fun, but they can diminish the scriptures if we focus all our attention on them. Yeshua said, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me;" John 5:39 NKJV. 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.

*Even Shaul said, "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;"  
2 Timothy 4:3-4 NKJV.*

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 the 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 don't read the Bible any more; they just look for meanings in the letters. They are, "Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;" 2 Timothy 3:7 NKJV. Stay bolted to the scriptures.

The Haftarah for Bereshit is Isaiah 42:5-43:10. We see somewhat of a same theme here in Isaiah as in the Torah portion for Bereshit. 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.

Isaiah then talks about the whole earth praising God. God will go to battle and win, and lead the blind. Those who trust in idols 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 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 Jewish or Israelite context. Bible teachers 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 God. They don't want to offend anyone so they don't lose money. It's not really their money. They are just suits who are running a business. They say they believe, but do they really believe? If you believe in God, you also must believe He exists and do what he says. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." This sounds awful, but if no one ever tells you that they are watering down God's word, you will end up in the lake of fire with them. It is not true there is no hell. If someone told you there is no hell, they are lying. That's where they are going; don't go there with them.

Take one step at a time; don't make things too hard.

Genesis is the first book in the Bible and it begins our journey of faith; a pilgrimage of sorts. In Genesis we begin learning about mankind's beginnings and from there, the Bible takes us on a journey of learning and spiritual growth.

When I was a little, my dad worked in an old office building in the city that was so old, it didn't have elevators. That building is no longer there. The windows were huge and amazing, and they actually opened. I remember asking my dad how he managed to go up those stairs every day. He said he enjoyed the exercise. I made it up those stairs by taking one step at a time. It seemed like a daunting task at the time, but I did it; that is like life; we all have to go through it one step at a time.

Sometimes looking at a task can keep us from accomplishing what we want to do. A lot of times, we must build on our abilities to do things to achieve greater tasks. Hillel told the man who wanted to become Jewish that first of all he should learn to treat others the way he would like to be treated and then learn and keep the Torah. Hillel lived at the same time as Yeshua.

Perhaps we think, how am I going to learn how to do what the Bible says? Hillel had some good advice. The early leaders did something similar for the people who were becoming believers in the Messiah. They said, "But that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood." Acts 15:20 NKJV. And just like Hillel, after that they said they were to learn the Torah: "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath;" Acts 15:21 NKJV. Anything that we do requires we start somewhere and then keep at it.

God wants to energize us; take the steps to accomplish that.

What steps can we take to ensure our spiritual growth?

- \* Read, study, pray, and apply the scriptures.
- \* Receive teaching in how to understand the scriptures in their proper context. How

they were originally meant to be understood.

- \* Fellowship and be encouraged by other believers.
- \* Receive the Holy Spirit and begin growing in hearing from God.

Hebrews 5:14 NKJV teaches us that we need to work at understanding how to know what is right and wrong, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

What does Genesis chapters 1-5 teach us?

- \*God is the creator and we should fear and respect Him.
- \*We are made in God's image so we are special and are not to behave like animals.
- \*We don't let our lives get out of control and allow our worldly desires to dictate how we act.
- \*We shouldn't allow ourselves to be tricked by the lies of the world or the devil, but trust in God.
- \*We shouldn't allow our thoughts to get out of control and hurt others.
- \*We can choose what is good or bad. What we choose determines whether we make this world a better place or not.
- \*We can choose to do good and be part of saving the world like Noah did.
- \*God promised a messiah and He has come; He is Yeshua Hamashiach, Yeshua the Messiah. We live in a special time!

Some people think the Torah doesn't have anything to teach us, but that couldn't be further from the truth. And this is only the first 5 chapters.

Stay in alignment with God; that will keep you in Him; don't be worldly.

Alignment in a car keeps the tires going straight. In the same way, we need to think about what we are doing so we keep moving towards God. Proverbs 4:25-27 NKJV says, "Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil." This is talking about making the decision to do what God tells us to do and not to let ourselves wander off from doing what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:18); keep God's commandments; don't do evil.

When we wander off, we can get ourselves into trouble spiritually and even sometimes personally. We don't want to have a worldly mindset, but a spiritual mind set. Shaul said, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:2 NKJV. Perhaps not looking where you are going is kind of like walking along and only looking at your phone. People actually walk out into traffic doing this or walk into things; yikes huh. In all you do, think about doing what is right.

Be energized by a powerful God; He wants to be with you; He wants you to live in joy and peace; He wants you to be satisfied in life.

Isaiah tells us that trusting in God will give us peace; He can keep us strong. So why not do things His way? Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength."

*Psalms 62:5-7 NKJV:*

*My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God.*

God can give us peace and strength; He is the creator God. 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." It says that God preserves them. That means He has not left His creation to itself; He keeps His creation going and existing. Genesis 1:1 NKJV says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." That is a very awesome statement when we consider all that He created and made. He is able to do what He says He will do.

*We have a witness in us, the Holy Spirit*

God is able to work in our lives and in the present, He has given us the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua to help us and it is good. 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!" God wants us to accept His Messiah Yeshua and give us His good gift of the Holy Spirit. We have a witness to the fact that the Messiah rose from the dead and that we can have eternal life. "He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself;" 1 John 5:10 NKJV. He is talking about our helper, the Holy Spirit. Yeshua said, "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send;" John 15:26 NKJV. Shaul knew what He believed and was assured that by being faithful, he would be in God's future kingdom. God is able to do that; He is the creator. 2 Timothy 1:12 NKJV says, "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day." Jude said, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy;" Jude 1:24 NKJV. What wonderful joy we can have. I know God will help me and I trust in Him and in His power. If we do our part, God will do His. Stay faithful and know that He is God.

### **Finally**

God created the heavens and the earth. The Torah portions have a lot to teach us. Just understanding we are created in God's image teaches us many things. Stay bolted to the scriptures and not a lot of fluff. Don't make your pilgrimage with God hard; take it a step at a time. Growth takes time. Take steps to accomplish your spiritual growth. Make the decision to follow God always. God wants to walk with us and for us to have a joy filled life, and be satisfied in Him.