

RaYBaSH's The Weekly Way
Parashah #1, B'reshit: "In the Beginning"
B'reshit/Genesis: 1:1-6:8
Haftarah: Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 42:5-43:11
Brit Chadasha: Yochannon/John 1:1-14
By: Yehudah ben Shomeyr

The First Parashah is so extensive and deep that it would take volumes to discuss and cover it all, so inevitably one must choose to hone in on a theme or two and cover it in a reasonable amount of time. I am sure due to the nature of the parashah I will raise more questions than I answer.

I will focus attention upon the age of the earth and the creation of man.

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

These verses allude that there was an end of a previous era of time a previous earth, and thus the beginning of another for the LORD God was already working with a globulous sphere of water indicating that another earth existed prior to this one and was perhaps destroyed by a previous deluge which quite possibly could be the reason for such controversy of conflicting scientific dates for the earth seeing as this one according to Scriptural accounts is only 6000 some years old. If this be true, no wonder scientists come up with dates of billions of years. Not only that, but this Parashah, coupled with John chapter 1 could also mean that since the emanation of Yeshua, the Word, spoke all that we see and know into existence, could it be, since science has determined physical objects absorb sound, science could be attempting to date the very words of God which are eternal and thus each new generation of scientific text book pushes the date of the earth further and further back in to the double digits of billions of years? Our Haftarah says:

Isa. 42:5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

This verse hints that God's Words are eternal and thus we can see no limit to the expanding universe.

Perhaps the earth before this one was destroyed on account of an attempted fallen angelic coup as apparently this one was, based upon Gen. 6:1-4:

Genesis 6:1-4 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

Now I realize many people may disagree with me. As a matter of fact my former Rabbi and I disagree on this matter, and some may even deem me as, "crazy". But I believe the "Giants" these Nephilim which means "fallen ones" are the offspring of the fallen angelic race and mankind. This was Satan's first attempt to try to thwart the Gen. 3:15 prophecy of the redeeming Messiah to come that was to bruise his head! If Satan through his fallen angels could pollute the human seed, then there would be no pure untainted human seed for the Messiah to come through. Thus is another reason for the flood and for Noach (Noah) and his family being spared. This is where the legends of the giants, and mythological type beings came from that Rome is so famous for speaking of. I believe this to be the modern explanation of the UFO and Alien phenomenon. Think about it, same ol' plan, different package. Human women are abducted; they are impregnated and then re-abducted to extract the hybrid child, and many of them are shown their prodigy. There is no proof that these beings come from another planet, But the there is evidence leaning toward them coming from another dimension. Plus, if these "alien" give a message for mankind, it is usually a humanistic or new age message that belittles Messiah and His word and puts Him on the level of other world religions. Also the same paranormal activity that takes place during a poltergeist is the same type of things that happen when "aliens" and their craft are present. This sounds like Nephilim to me. Granted I cannot prove this, however, my interpretation of the "sons of God" being the angelic race, not the children of Seth as Christians say, and the "daughters of men" human women, not the children of

Kayin (Cain) as Christians say, is backed up over and over in Talmudic and other Rabbinic literature.

Giants; the word conjures up fantastical, mythological and fairy tale like images of beings that have long passed and are but dust beneath the earth. Today we see basketball players or professional wrestlers of unusual height, or we thumb through the Guinness Book of World Records and see photos of people of staggering stature, making anyone alongside them look like an action figure! Honestly, even seeing all the “giants” photographed throughout history, and using my imagination to envision giants decked out for mortal combat, I don’t really think I’d be to afraid. Their super tall, so what!? Sound to me like they would be slow, clumsy, and maybe even stupid too! Actually, being small and agile, Israel would have an upper hand. So why was Israel so afraid of these giants?

Moses here recaps the story of their parents who had the opportunity to take the land the first time but chickened out:

Deuteronomy 1:21-45 Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come. And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe: And they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out. And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the LORD our God doth give us. Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God: And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there. Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God, Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers. Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD. Also the LORD was

angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither. But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it. But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea. Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill. And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them. Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies. So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah. And ye returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.

Here Moses uses examples of their cousins, who did not have the favor of God as they did, took on these giants and took their land to boot!

Deuteronomy 2:10-22 The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites called them Emims. The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them. And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession. (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims; A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead: As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horims from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day:

Moses describes for us the impressive height of Og King of Bashan, and hints at his massive weight that required an iron bed to hold him:

Deuteronomy 3:11 For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

So why did Moses use examples of their rebellious cousins; the children of Esau, Moab and Ammon, who conquered some of these giants to occupy the land they have now, as a pep talk to encourage the Israelis to take the land? Sounds to me like these giants were more than just tall. And indeed according to Scripture, tradition and legend they were. These giants were the stuff that legends and myths are made of.

Here is our first encounter with these giants:

Genesis 6:1-4 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

The word “Giant” Nephilim in Hebrew carries a double meaning. It means, Giant, yes, but it also means, “Fallen Ones”.

Most Christians in this enlightened age of today would scoff at even the suggestion that fallen angels could possibly have cohabitated with the daughters of men. Yet this was the original meaning and intent of this very passage. Only in the modern centuries have man tried to explain this away as the wicked daughters of Cain seducing and marrying the righteous sons of Seth. Horse Pucky! Every instance in the Tanak when the phrase “sons of God” is used it is used in direct reference to the angelic race, and it is obvious that the daughters of men is mortal women.

Indeed, this is one of the reasons why God deemed the flood necessary, not just because of the wicked ways of mankind, but because the fallen angels were impregnating the human women in an effort to thwart the prophecy of the Messiah coming:

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

This fact is backed up again and again in Midrashic, Talmudic, Kabbalistic, and Rabbinical literature.

Deuteronomy 1:28 Whither shall we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.

The descendents of Shamchazi and Azael, who fell from heaven in the generation of Enosh. – Rashi

The Chassidic masters explain that the generation of the Spies was loath to enter the Land because they feared the transition from the spiritual life they led in the desert (where they were sustained by "bread from heaven" and all their physical needs were provided by miraculous means, and their sole occupation was the study of Torah and the service of God) to a life on the land and all the material entanglements this brings.

This explains the Spies' mention of the "sons of the giants" they encountered in the Land. The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishit 44) relates the story of these "fallen angels": In the years before the Flood, when violence and promiscuity pervaded the earth, two angels, Shamchazi and Azael, pleaded before the Almighty: Allow us to dwell among the humans, and we shall sanctify your name! But no sooner had the two heavenly beings come in contact with the material world, they, too, were corrupted.

If these heavenly beings -- the Spies were saying -- could not survive the plunge to materiality, what could be expected of us, mortal and fragile men? - From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

If Satan through his fallen angels could pollute the human seed, then there would be no pure untainted human seed for the Messiah to come through. Thus is another reason for the flood and for Noach (Noah) and his family being spared. This is where the legends of the giants, and mythological type beings came from that Rome is so famous for speaking of. I believe this to be the modern explanation of the UFO and Alien phenomenon. Think about it, same ol' plan, different package. Human women are abducted; they are impregnated and then re-abducted to extract

the hybrid child, and many of them are shown their prodigy. There is no proof that these beings come from another planet, But there is evidence leaning toward them coming from another dimension. Plus, if these “alien” give a message for mankind, it is usually a humanistic or new age message that belittles Messiah and His word and puts Him on the level of other world religions and leaders. Also the same paranormal activity that takes place during a poltergeist is the same type of things that happen when “aliens” and their craft are present. This sounds like Nephilim to me.

So no doubt this is why Israel was scared. They were going up against a race not only physically intimidating, but mystically and spiritually intimidating as well. Who knows what type of powers these beings had! And who knows how embellished these stories of their powers were, which made them that much more ominous in their eyes.

But come Hell, the demons of them, or High Water, with God on our side we have nothing to fear.

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God [be] for us, who [can be] against us?

1Sa 17:47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle [is] the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

2Ch 20:15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle[is] not yours, but God's.

2Ch 20:17 Ye shall not [need] to fight in this [battle]: set yourselves, stand ye [still], and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD [will be] with you.

Psa 24:8 Who [is] this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Psa 140:7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

Pro 21:31 The horse [is] prepared against the day of battle: but safety [is] of the LORD.

Zec 14:3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

Isa 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This [is] the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness [is] of me, saith the LORD.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places].

I can go on and on! Is there no doubt that we may not know what we are up against, but God does, and he has our back covered. We needn't be fearful of the supernatural, or the unknown. Just do as God commands and He will take care of the rest. How many times does God tell us in His Word to "Fear Not"? To use a tired cliché, we do our best and God will do the rest. If He says, "Take the Land." Trust that God has got the battle in the bag and just do it! That is what Trust and Faith is all about!

On a spiritual level the modern view of the godly line of Seth married the ungodly line of Cain giving way to paganism, can be applied. But let us not dismiss the mingling of the fallen angelic race with that of man simply because it seems to be sensational in this age of enlightenment.

The following is my personal statement of faith regarding creation:

Creation

I believe in a literal 24 hour, 6 day creation. I believe the Biblical records indicate an approximately 6000 year old earth. Failing to recognize this compromises the whole foundation and integrity of ADONAI, and the Scriptures. It opens the door for evolution, which in turn is used to give justification for moral relativism and the like as seen in our society today.

Gen. 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Though the Scriptures are not necessarily written as a scientific text book and even though it implores anthropomorphic and metaphorical language it does not contradict true scientific fact. Science is based on things recordable and perceivable to the five senses. This light of verse three may have scientific foundations, in which I am not qualified to speak on, but we do know that this initial light did not come from the sun; it wasn't created or at least permitted to shine through until the fourth day. It is speculated that this light was of a supernatural origin; from God Himself.

Vv.4-27 We see that everything that came from God, that emanated from Him, that come to be by His Words was good, and the pinnacle of His creation, man, was called very good.

The brother of the Living Word said:

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

David, the Kingly ancestor of Yeshua the Messiah said:

Psalm 8:3-6 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

Seeing as God is pure Spirit (John 4:24) our physical bodies do not necessarily display ADONAI's image as our inner being does. We resemble God in our spirit through our reason and intellect.

There are three arenas of the Soul are:

The Nefesh which is the lowest, basest realm of being that is said to reside in the blood, so in a way this includes the body “For the life is in the blood (Deut. 12:23).” This part of the Soul is sometimes called the Animal Soul and is mainly concerned with survival, eating, sleeping, procreating etc. This part of the Soul deals with instinctual things. This is the part of the Soul which is capable of sin.

A second component to the Soul is called, “Ruach,” in the Hebrew and is usually translated as Spirit. The Ruach is the second level of the Soul and duels with the Nefesh for moral and rational dominance and are the mediators between the Neshamah and the Body. The Neshamah should rule our being and communicate to the Nefesh and Ruach what the Body should do. This realm of the Soul mainly deals with our mental functions and emotions. It is said in Jewish mystical literature that the Nefesh should be the throne upon which the Ruach sits.

To use an analogy from cartoons, the Ruach can be seen as the angel upon the right shoulder and the Nefesh can be seen as the devil upon the left shoulder, both whispering in ones ear to trying to get the person to do what it suggests. You can also view the Ruach as the Good Dog and the Nefesh as the Bad Dog and which ever one you feed the most will be the strongest and when they get loose and fight one another, who wins our determines on which one received the most attention and care. It doesn't necessarily mean that the Nefesh is all bad, for it is the part of us that “Fights or Flees” when we are confronted with danger, but it is also the part that tries to make us grumpy because we are hungry or tired, or selfish when we don't get our own way. Ruach tries to reason with the Animal Soul (Nefesh) and say, “Hey, calm down dinner is at six, you can wait till then, in the mean time you have no excuse for being nasty!”

The third and highest realm of the soul in the Hebrew is called the Neshamah which is considered the Divine Spark, the part of the Soul that was made in the Image and Likeness of God. This part of the Soul is pure, untainted and untouched by sin. This is the part of the Soul referred to in the Prayer Siddur when we Jews recite upon waking:

“I gratefully thank you oh Living and Eternal King for You have returned my soul (Neshamah) within me with compassion, abundant is your faithfulness.”

And later it says: “My God the soul (Neshamah) you placed within me is pure. You created it, You fashioned it, You breathed it into me, You safeguard it within

me, and eventually You will take it from me, and restore it to me in the Time to Come...”

It is said that the Neshamah leaves the body during sleep, because the Sages say sleep is 1/60th of death, and resides in the realm of angels and demons and that a righteous Soul who follows Torah will be with the angels and those who are unrighteous are assailed and troubled by demons. The only way one can protect their Soul is by walking in the Torah during ones waking hours. This is why the above prayers are said upon waking. It is during this time of sleep it is prophecy can come through dreams.

Because English doesn't have a designation between Nefesh and Neshamah and translates both of them as “Soul” it is hard to know in the English translation of Scripture which one is being discussed unless you know Hebrew or understand well the context of the passage dealing with the word “Soul”. Sometimes the word “Ruach” translated as “Spirit” is also sometimes translated as “Soul” in the English.

In Genesis 2:7 Tells us that God breathed life into us. God breathed all Three parts of the soul within us and it was the Nefesh that fell during the Fall. The Neshamah was the Divine spark of God that was made in the image of God that was left untainted by the Fall in the Garden of Eden. The Ruach tries to bring rationale to the primal instincts of the Nefesh.

This is where I differ slightly from what has been described above. I believe that the word Ruach and Neshamah are essentially the same because Ruach and Neshamah in Hebrew have similar meanings, Ruach is Wind, Breath and Spirit and Neshamah is Wind, Breath and Divine Inspiration. In making distinctions I would say that the Ruach is what the Neshamah is called before it is regenerated and the Nefesh is “saved” redeemed by the blood of Yeshua Ha Moshiach (The Messiah) and the infilling of the Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit), that the Ruach is actually latent within an individual until the regeneration occurs via the Holy Spirit (Ruach Ha Kodesh) and the Nefesh is transformed.

Gen. 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

As my former Rabbi put it, Gof (Body) or as he actually said, “mud hut” plus the Ruach (Spirit) together equals a Soul.

Our Physical being was originally meant to last forever and be one and work with our spiritual beings as is displayed in Messiah's glorified resurrected body which could teleport (appear out of nowhere and disappear into thin air) ascend to the Father and walk through walls of the upper room; we too will one day receive such bodies (I Cor. 15; Rom. 6:5; Rev. 20:6). But due to our disobedience by mode of free will corruption and death infected our physical bodies and until that future time we possess a type of dual nature and thus being a little lower than the angels. We may think and reason similar to angels but we eat, sleep, defecate and procreate like animals.

In Gen. 2:20 Notice that this is when it really hit Adam that all of creation was paired male and female, except for him. Adam therefore had a "feminine side". Because the word "rib" in verse 21 can also mean "half" as in your "better half". So ADONAI didn't just take a "rib" he literally split Adam in half! Some speculate that Adam was bi-sexual like a worm thus David's reference to it in Psalm 22:6.

Prior to the fall we were all, human and animal alike were vegans (Gen. 1:29-30) and perhaps if the fall never occurred there would be no such thing as waste, perhaps every part of our vegan diet would be converted into energy and no byproduct of waste would have been produced. But this is intellectual speculation on my part.

In light of this subject of being vegans and in reference to the Tree of Knowledge breeches the subject of the fall.

In Gen. 3:22 let us take note that ADONAI kicking Adam and Chavah out of Gan Eden was the most merciful and loving thing He could do. "Unless they eat from the Tree of Life and live forever in a fallen state of sin, eternally separated from ADONAI with no chance of redemption, which would in essence be an eternal living HELL! Since we contain the breath of ADONAI our souls ultimately want to reunite with ADONAI and never being able to do this would be hell.

Regardless of questions which may never be answered until we are in our new bodies upon the New Earth (Rev. 21:1) it is clear that we were the focus and reason for the creation we see around us.

As our Haftarah states:

Isa. 43:7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Thus we are the center of God's redemptive energies. The First Adam brought death and Messiah constitutes the Second Adam whose ultimate purpose is to restore everything to an Edenic state prior to the fall (I Cor. 15).

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!
-- Yehudah ben Shomeyr