



Parshas Bereishis 2019, a fighter's mindset

I hope all of you had an incredible Sukkos and took advantage of the tremendous spirituality that surrounded us during the past few weeks.

As we enter the new year with a clean slate, we also restart the cycle of reading the Torah, starting again from Parshas Bereishis. However, not only is this a physical cycle but a spiritual one as well. We have the opportunity to gain a more profound understanding of the Torah – and its lessons – for each year. A unique level of spirituality is given to the world every solar cycle which is relevant to its day and age.

The Torah begins with the words *“Bereshis bara Elokim es hashamayim ve’ es ha’arets–In the beginning, G-d created the heaven and the earth.”* The Parsha then goes through what was created each day.

G-d created darkness and light on the first day.

On the second day, He created the heavens and separated them from the earth.

He created land & sea boundaries on the third day & planted trees & greenery.

The sun, moon, and stars were created and positioned on the fourth day.

He created fish, birds, reptiles, and land animals on the fifth day.

He created the first human being, Adam, on the sixth day,

On the seventh day, G-d stopped working and sanctified it as a day of rest.

A question comes to mind: The Torah begins the word **“Bereishis,”** which starts with the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Beis, instead of the first letter, Aleph. Why does the Torah not begin with Aleph, the first letter?

There is a custom that when Simchas Torah is completed, we declare, **“V’Yaakov Halach L’darko–And Yaakov went on his way.”** It comes from Parshas Vayishlach

(32:2), when Yaakov left his father-in-law's house with his new family to start his own life.

This practice is because, as we conclude the holidays and leave the aura of spirituality, we must remember to pack all the past holy month's experiences so we can use them as inspiration for the coming year.

Furthermore, Yaakov Avinu represents a fighter. A person is who is willing to fight for what he believes in. Yaakov started fighting even at his birth; he fought his older brother, Esav, to leave his mother's womb. Later, he won the battle against an angel of G-d. Yaakov Avinu embodies the fighter's mentality, which is why he was able to institute Ma'ariv, the evening prayer. He taught us how to seek G-d when surrounded by darkness and that even in total despair, we can cry out to G-d.

Now, it is understandable why the Torah begins with the letter Beis. The letter Aleph represents G-d, who is wholesome and complete, but humans are finite and constantly need development. The letter Beis represents the perpetual growth and advancement that we can accomplish through continuous hard work.

In our daily life, it is imperative we understand that to live a fulfilled and meaningful life, you must strive for constant growth, development, and improvement. So even if you stumble and fall, you don't lose sight of goals and stay on track to accomplish your dreams and potential.

I hope that each of you took advantage of the incredible spiritual journey that began in the month of Elul and culminated at Simchas Torah. This spiritual awakening gives us the necessary motivation to keep fighting for another year!

*“Nothing can resist a human will that
will stake its very existence on its purpose.”*

Benjamin Disraeli, Jewish Prime Minister of the UK in 1874

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*