בראשית ברא אלקים

In the Beginning: Heaven First, Earth First

ד"ה בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ · Shabbos Parshas Bereishis, Shabbos Mevarchim MarCheshvan 5726

Maamar of the Lubavitcher Rebbe · an unedited record written down by listeners

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Student Edition

RESHIMU

The map of the maamar

Five sections, one question: why does a book of instruction from Hashem begin with the world below?

1. **Creation is Torah** §א
2. **Two knowings** §ב
3. **Two openings** §ג
4. **Two orders** §ד
5. **Below first, crowned** §ה

The question (§א)

Rashi says the Torah begins with creation so that Jews can answer the nations who call them robbers. But Torah is instruction, and nothing is in it only to win an argument. So what does creation teach, and what do "the inheritance of the nations" and "upright in His eyes" mean?

→

The answer (§ב–ה)

There are two true knowings, an upper and a lower. Torah comes from above, so it "should" open with the miracle of Nissan. It opens with nature because the main work is refining the world from below, and Torah gives the strength for that work. Heaven comes first to give strength; earth comes first in purpose, and in the end the earth is the crown.

The hinge moves

1. **Torah means instruction.** הרי תורה היא לשון הוראה והיא ספר דינים (§א). So the story of creation cannot be in the Torah only as a debating point.
2. **Two kinds of nothing.** אלא שהם בב' בחינות של האין (§ב). Both knowings are true, because each one means something different by "nothing."
3. **Which Name is outside.** שכאשר השילוב הוא אד' בהוי' הרי זו התגברות הוי' על אד' (§ב). The weaving of the Names shows which unity leads.
4. **The power over nature.** כח מעשיו היינו הכח והשליטה על הטבע (§ג). This is the answer to Rashi's question: Torah opens with the work of refining nature.
5. **Two orders.** שארץ קדמה לשמים ... ששמים קדמו לארץ (§ד). Heaven first in revelation, earth first in purpose.
6. **The beginning and the main thing.** התחלת ועקר העבודה (§ה) is the lower knowing, and its imprint stays even after a person rises higher.
7. **Strength from above, crown from below.** יש צרך בנתינת כח (§ה) from the upper knowing; and in the end נקבה תסובב גבר, the earth crowns the heaven.

1 · Creation is Torah (§א)

Rashi says the Torah could have started with the first mitzvah, "This month is for you." It starts with creation to answer the nations. But Torah means instruction, so the story of creation must itself teach something.

2 · Two knowings (§ב)

The upper knowing says only Hashem is real; the lower knowing says the world is real and Hashem is hidden. Both are true. They are in Hashem, in every person as two unities, and in Torah as bread from heaven and bread from the earth.

3 · Two openings (§ג)

Nissan is miracles, the upper knowing; Tishrei is nature, the lower knowing. Torah could open with Nissan. It opens with Bereishis, because “the power of His works” is the power to refine nature, and Torah gives the strength for it all year.

4 · Two orders (§ד)

One pasuk says “the heavens and the earth,” another says “earth and heaven.” Heaven comes first in the order of revelation. Earth comes first in the purpose of creation: the work from below.

5 · Below first, crowned (§ה)

The work starts below, with nature, the body and iskafya. It needs strength from above to succeed, but the main drawing down of light comes through the earth. In the end the earth becomes the crown, with Moshiach.

> **How to read the pages. Bold** = the words of the maamar, translated. *Lighter italic* = our explanation, woven in. The numbers on the left match the numbers on the Hebrew. ראשי תיבות are spelled out in a box at the start of each section and in the key at the back. The boxes are optional; the text is not.

Words you need

Ten words that carry this maamar. Each is explained again the first time it appears in the text.

דעת עליון / דעת תחתון
Daas Elyon / Daas Tachton

the upper knowing / the lower knowing. Daas Elyon, the upper knowing, says: above is real, and the world below is nothing next to it. Daas Tachton, the lower knowing, says: the world below is real, and what is above is "nothing" to us, because we cannot grasp it. The maamar says both are true. Both are Hashem's own knowing.

יש / אין
yesh / ayin

something / nothing. Yesh is something that exists as a thing. Ayin is "nothing." In chassidus ayin does not always mean empty. Something can be called ayin because it is too high to be a thing, or because we cannot grasp it.

יחודא עילאה / יחודא תתאה
Yichuda Ila'ah / Yichuda Tata'ah

the upper unity / the lower unity. Two ways of knowing that Hashem is One. In the lower unity, the world is real, and it is nullified to Hashem, the way a servant gives himself over to his master. In the upper unity, only Hashem is real, and the world is not even a separate thing to give itself over. The maamar ties the upper unity to Daas Elyon and the lower unity to Daas Tachton.

הוי׳ / אד׳ (אלקים)
Havayah / Adnus (Elokim)

the Name of being / the Name of mastery. Havayah is the four-letter Name. It speaks of Hashem who brings everything into being, beyond nature. Adnus (the Name that means Master) and Elokim speak of Hashem dressed inside nature, running the world through it. Kabbalah writes the letters of two Names woven together, one inside the other. This weaving is called shiluv. Which Name is on the outside shows which one leads.

הנהגה טבעית / הנהגה נסית
hanhagah tivis / hanhagah nisis

natural conduct / miraculous conduct. Two ways Hashem runs the world. Through nature, where everything follows its rules. And above nature, through miracles, where the rules are broken, like the plagues in Egypt. Both show how great the Creator is.

בירורים
birurim

refining, sorting. Sparks of holiness are hidden inside the physical world, mixed with what covers them. Birurim is the work of sorting them out and raising them, by using the world for a mitzvah or for Hashem's sake. It goes from below upward: it starts with the world as it is.

שם מ״ה / שם ב״ן
Shem Mah / Shem Ban

the Name of 45 / the Name of 52. Two ways of spelling out the letters of Havayah. Spelled with alefs it adds up to 45, Mah; spelled with heys it adds up to 52, Ban. Mah is the light that comes down and fixes. Ban is the side that receives and needs to be refined. The maamar says Torah is Mah.

אתכפיא
iskafya

forcing, subduing. Serving Hashem by holding back the animal soul when it pulls the other way. Iskafya does not wait to feel like it. Because it goes against nature, it is new, and something new gives Hashem pleasure.

נתינת כח
nesinas koach

giving strength. Strength given from above so that a person can do his work below. The maamar says the work of refining the world needs nesinas koach from the upper knowing, and that reading Bereishis on Shabbos Bereishis gives it for the whole year.

רשימו
reshimu

an imprint. An imprint: what stays with a person from a level even after he has gone higher. The maamar says that even when someone rises to the upper knowing, an imprint of the lower knowing has to stay with him.

Other terms are explained in the text, in a short note in brackets, the first time they come up.

Section א

1 Creation is Torah

בראשית ברא אלקים

The big idea

Rashi asks why the Torah opens with creation and not with the first mitzvah. His answer: so that Jews can answer the nations who call them robbers.

The Rebbe Rashab pushes further. Torah means instruction, a book of laws. What does the story of creation instruct?

The Rebbe closes the easy way out: nothing is in the Torah only to win an argument. So creation itself must be Torah.

The section ends with three open questions. The maamar answers them later.

Before you learn

- **The first Rashi.** On the first pasuk of the Torah, Rashi quotes Rabbi Yitzchak: the Torah could have started with "This month is for you" (Shemos 12:2), the first mitzvah. It starts with creation so that Jews can answer anyone who says the Land of Israel was stolen.
- **Two Rebbeim.** The Rebbe is quoting a maamar of the Rebbe Rashab, said on Shabbos Bereishis 5676, and adding to it. Watch for "he continues": that is the Rebbe Rashab speaking.
- **The word Torah.** Torah comes from the root of hora'ah, teaching someone what to do. Keep that in mind; the whole question rests on it.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

כ״ק	כבוד קדושת	his holiness
אדמו״ר	אדוננו מורנו ורבנו	our master, teacher and Rebbe
מהורש״ב	מורנו הרב רבי שלום דובער	the Rebbe Rashab
רש״י	רבי שלמה יצחקי	Rashi
ז״ל	זכרונו לברכה	of blessed memory
וכו׳	וכולי	etc.; and so on
הקב״ה	הקדוש ברוך הוא	the Holy One, blessed be He
וכו׳	וכולי	and so on

1 **"In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth."** *The first pasuk of the Torah, and the heading of the maamar.* **And his holiness, our master (the Rebbe Rashab), whose soul is in Eden,** — *the Rebbe's father-in-law's father, in his maamar on this same pasuk on Shabbos Bereishis 5676, fifty years before this one* — **brings the commentary of Rashi, of blessed memory,** *the very first Rashi on the Torah, the one every child learns.*

1 בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ[1]. ומביא כ"ק אדמו"ר (מהורש"ב) נשמתו־עדן[2] פירוש רש"י ז"ל,

2 **"Rabbi Yitzchak said: the Torah did not need to begin** — *Rabbi Yitzchak is looking at the Torah as a book of mitzvos* — **except from 'This month is for you,'** *the pasuk in Shemos 12:2 that tells the Jews to set up the calendar by the new moon, starting with Nissan,* **and so on."** *That is the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people as a nation. If the Torah is a book of mitzvos, that is the natural first page.*

2 אמר רבי יצחק לא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחודש[3] הזה לכם כו',

3 **"And what is the reason it opened with Bereishis?** *Why all the chapters about creation, the Flood and the Avos before the first mitzvah? Rashi answers with a pasuk, Tehillim 111:6:* **Because 'The power of His works** — *the power Hashem showed in making the world* — **He told to His people,** *in the Torah,* **to give them the inheritance of the nations,'"** *the land that the seven nations of Canaan once held.*

3 ומה טעם פתח בבראשית, משום כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים[4],

4 **"So that if the nations of the world say to Israel, 'You are robbers,' and so on,** — *you took a land that belonged to other peoples* — **they can say to them: the whole earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He.** *He is its owner, not any nation.* **He created it, and He gave it to whoever was upright in His eyes,"** — *and when He wished, He took it and gave it to us* — **"and so on."** *That is Rashi's answer, and the quote from Rashi ends here.*

4 שאם יאמרו אומות העולם לישראל לסטים אתם כו', הם אומרים להם, כל הארץ של הקב"ה היא, הוא בראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו וכו'.

5 **And he,** *the Rebbe Rashab,* **continues: "And truly the thing is a wonder,** *hard to understand,* **that the creation of heaven and earth is said in the Torah. After all, Torah is a word meaning instruction** (**Torah, hora'ah** (תורה לשון הוראה Torah means instruction, not just information)) — *the footnote sends us to the Radak, who connects the word Torah with "hora'ah," teaching someone what to do* — **and it is a book of laws,**

5 וממשיך: ובאמת נפלא הדבר מה שנאמר בריאת שמים וארץ בתורה, הרי תורה היא לשון הוראה[5], והיא ספר דינים,

6 **so what does the creation of the world,** — *heaven, earth, light, the seas, the animals* — **which is said in the Torah, have to do with it,** *with a book of instruction,* **"and so on."** *A book of laws tells you how to live. A report of how the world began does not seem to tell you anything to do. That is the Rebbe Rashab's question.*

6 ומה שייך ענין בריאת העולם שנאמר בתורה כו'

7 **(That is to say:** — *and this bracket is the Rebbe's own, closing the easy way out* — **it cannot be said that because the claim of the nations needed an answer, therefore something that does not belong to Torah was written in the Torah.** *Torah does not carry a page just to win an argument.* **So you are forced to say that this matter too belongs to Torah.)** *The story of creation must itself be instruction. What it teaches, the maamar has not said yet.*

7 (והיינו, שלא יתכן לומר שבגלל שצריך לתרץ טענת אומות העולם, לכן נכתב בתורה ענין שלא שייך לתורה[6], ועל־כרחך צריך לומר, שגם ענין זה שייך לתורה).

8 **And we also need to understand** *two more things in Rashi's words. First,* **what is meant by "to give them the inheritance of the nations"?** *Second,* **what is meant by "He gave it to whoever was upright in His eyes," and so on?** *So three questions now stand, and the rest of the maamar answers all three.*

8 וגם צריך להבין מהו ענין לתת להם נחלת גוים, ומהו ענין שנתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו כו'.

Deep dive — Torah means instruction

Most books are named for what they contain: a history book holds history, a law book holds laws. The Torah is named for what it does. The word comes from hora'ah, showing someone the way. The Radak, cited in the footnote, makes this connection.

That changes how every line of it has to be read. If Torah is instruction, then a story in the Torah is not there only to tell you what happened. It is there to tell you what to do. A list of names, a journey in the desert, the order in which the world was made: each one is teaching.

Now look at Rashi's answer with that in mind. Rashi says creation is in the Torah so that the Jews can answer the nations. That is true, and the maamar does not argue with Rashi. But the Rebbe adds that it cannot be the whole story. If the only reason were to win a debate, the Torah would be carrying a page that is not really Torah, a page that teaches nothing. The Rebbe says that cannot be.

So the question becomes sharper, not softer. The creation story must be instruction for a Jew, here and now. What exactly it instructs, the maamar has not said yet. It first builds the tools it needs, starting in Section 2.

Review

1. What question does Rabbi Yitzchak ask in Rashi, and what is the first mitzvah he mentions?
2. According to Rashi, why does the Torah open with creation?
3. Why does the Rebbe Rashab call it a wonder that creation is written in the Torah?
4. What does the Rebbe add in the bracket, and what two further questions close the section?

Talking points

- Rashi's answer about the nations sounds practical and complete. Why is the Rebbe not satisfied with it?
- If every story in the Torah is instruction, what changes in the way you read a parsha that is "only" a story?
- Is there a difference between a reason something is written and what that thing teaches? Can both be true at once?

Take it with you. Torah means instruction, so even the story of how the world began must teach a Jew something to do.

Section ב

2 Two knowings

ב) וממשיך במאמר,

The big idea

"Havayah is a G-d of knowings": there are two knowings, an upper and a lower, and both are true.

The upper knowing says only Hashem is real and the world is nothing. The lower knowing says the world is real and Hashem is "nothing" to us, because we cannot grasp Him.

They do not contradict, because each means something different by "nothing."

The same pair appears in a person as two unities, in the Names as two weavings, and in Torah as bread from heaven and bread from the earth.

Before you learn

- **Where we are.** Section 1 left three questions open: why creation is Torah, what "the inheritance of the nations" means, and what "upright in His eyes" means. The maamar now builds tools before it answers.
- **The pasuk.** Shmuel I 2:3, from Chana's prayer: "For Havayah is a G-d of knowings." "Knowings" is plural. The maamar reads that plural closely.
- **Something and nothing.** In chassidus, yesh is "something," a thing that exists; ayin is "nothing." Watch the word ayin: in this section it has two different meanings, and everything depends on telling them apart.
- **Two Names.** Havayah is the four-letter Name, Hashem above nature. Adnus, the Name meaning Master, and Elokim are Hashem dressed in nature.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

הוי׳	הוי״ה (שם המפורש)	Havayah; the Tetragrammaton
ב׳	שני / שתי / שניים (לפי ההקשר)	two / second (by context)
בב׳	בשני / בשתי (לפי ההקשר)	in two
דהוי׳	דהוי״ה (שם הוי״ה)	of Havayah (the Name)
אד׳	אדני (שם אדנות)	the Name A-donai
בהוי׳	בהוי״ה (שם הוי״ה)	in Havayah (the Name)
באד׳	באדנ״י (שם אדנ״י)	in Adnus (the Name Ado-nai)

1 **And he continues in the maamar that, to understand this,** *all three questions from Section 1,* **one must first bring in the idea of "Havayah is a G-d of knowings"** (**Kel De'os Havayah** (אל דעות הוי' Hashem knows the world in two true ways)) — *Chana's words in her prayer, Shmuel I 2:3, where "knowings" is plural* — **which are two knowings,** — *the footnote points to the Tikkunei Zohar* — **the upper knowing and the lower knowing** (**Daas Elyon / Daas Tachton** (דעת עליון / דעת תחתון the upper knowing (only Hashem is real) and the lower knowing (the world is real, Hashem is hidden))).

1 ב) וממשיך במאמר, שלהבין זה יש להקדים תחלה הענין דאל דעות הוי'[7], שהן ב' דעות[8], דעת עליון ודעת תחתון[9],

2 **The upper knowing: that above is "something" and below is "nothing"** (**yesh / ayin** (יש / אין something / nothing; in chassidus, "nothing" can mean too high to grasp)). *Seen from Hashem's side, only He is real, and the world does not count.* **And the lower knowing:** — *the other way around* — **that below is "something"** — *the world is plainly there* — **and above is "nothing,"** *because Hashem is the one we cannot see. The two sound like exact opposites.*

2 דעת עליון, שלמעלה יש ולמטה אין. ודעת תחתון, שלמטה יש ולמעלה אין.

3 **And even so, there is no contradiction between them, because both of them are in the Divine light itself** — *neither one is a mistake that the other one corrects* — **(which is what is written, "a G-d of knowings":** *both knowings belong to Hashem*), **only they are in two kinds of "nothing."** *The word "nothing" means something different in each. The next three phrases show how.*

3 ומכל־מקום אין סתירה ביניהם, כי שניהם הם באור האלקי גופא (שזהו מה שכתוב אל דעות הוי'), אלא שהם בב' בחינות של האין.

4 **The upper knowing is in the "nothing"** — *here comes the first kind* — **of the true Something: the light as it is drawn from His Essence** (**Atzmus** (עצמות אוא"ס G-d's very Self)), **blessed be He,** *from Hashem's very Self,* **which is "nothing" in its very being.** *This "nothing" is not empty. It is so completely real that it cannot be counted as one more thing among things. Next to it, the world is what counts as nothing.*

4 דעת עליון הוא בהאין של היש האמתי, בחינת האור כפי שנמשך מעצמותו יתברך, שהוא אין בעצם מהותו.

5 ודעת תחתון הוא בהאין של היש הנמצא, בחינת הארה דהארה שנעשית מקור ליש,

5 **And the lower knowing is in the "nothing" of the something that exists,** *the created world:* **the level of a glimmer of a glimmer** (ha'arah d'ha'arah (הארה דהארה the faintest ray of Hashem's light, which the world comes from)), *the faintest and most distant ray of Hashem's light,* **which becomes the source of the something.** *That faint ray is what the world comes from. From the world's side, it is the "nothing" above.*

6 ומה שנקרא אין הרי זה על שם שאינו מושג, ועל שם שהוא בבחינת לא דבר, ולא כמו היש שהוא בבחינת מציאות דבר ממש.

6 **And why it is called "nothing":** — *the maamar gives two reasons* — **because it is not grasped,** *a created mind cannot hold it,* **and because it is in the state of "not a thing,"** *not something you can point to,* **unlike the something, which is in the state of the existence of an actual thing.** *So this "nothing" is nothing only to us (our reading). It is not missing; it is beyond our reach.*

7 וממשיך במאמר, דכשם שיש ב' דעות למעלה, בחינת דעת עליון ודעת תחתון, כמו כן צריכות להיות באדם גם כן ב' הדעות

7 **And he continues in the maamar:** — *the Rebbe is still following the Rebbe Rashab* — **just as there are two knowings above,** *in Hashem's own light,* **the level of the upper knowing and the lower knowing, so too the two knowings must also be in a person,** — *not only as ideas he learns, but in how he himself serves Hashem* —

8 [והיינו, לפי שהאדם כלול מכל העניינים שבסדר השתלשלות[10], מלמעלה מעלה עד למטה מטה[11],

8 **[that is, because a person includes all the things** — *every level, every world* — **in the order of the chain of worlds** (seder hishtalshelus (סדר השתלשלות chain of worlds)), **from the highest heights to the lowest depths].** *The square brackets are part of the printed text. The footnote, "as some of the listeners remembered," brings the saying in Chagigah 13a that the feet of the Chayos, the angels of the Merkavah, correspond to all of them. A person is the whole structure in small.*

(9) **And they are the upper unity (the upper knowing) and the lower unity (the lower knowing)** (**Yichuda Ila'ah / Yichuda Tata'ah** (יחודא עילאה / יחודא תתאה two ways Hashem is One: the world gives itself over to Him, or the world is not even there next to Him)) — *two ways a Jew knows that Hashem is One.* **And this is the unity of Havayah and Elokim** (**Havayah / Adnus (Elokim)** (הוי' / אד' (אלקים) Havayah, Hashem above nature; Adnus and Elokim, Hashem hidden inside nature)), — *Hashem above nature and Hashem hidden inside it, joined as one* — **for the unity comes in two ways,** *depending on which side leads:* **the upper unity and the lower unity.**

(9) והן יחודא עילאה (דעת עליון) ויחודא תתאה (דעת תחתון), והוא ענין היחוד דהוי' אלקים, שהיחוד הוא בב' האופנים דיחודא עילאה ויחודא תתאה.

(10) **And this is the weaving of Adnus into Havayah and the weaving of Havayah into Adnus** (**shiluv** (שילוב two Names of Hashem woven letter by letter)): *the letters of the two Names written one inside the other.* **When the weaving is Adnus inside Havayah,** *so that Havayah is the frame,* **that is Havayah prevailing over Adnus,** *the Name above nature leading,* **and that is the level of the upper unity.**

(10) והוא ענין שילוב אד' בהוי' ושילוב הוי' באד', שכאשר השילוב הוא אד' בהוי', הרי זו התגברות הוי' על אד', וזהו בחינת יחודא עילאה.

(11) **And when the weaving is Havayah inside Adnus,** *the other way around,* **that is Adnus prevailing over Havayah,** *the Name of nature leading and Havayah hidden inside it,* **and that is the level of the lower unity.** *Same two Names, same letters. What changes is which one leads.*

(11) וכאשר השילוב הוא הוי' באד', הרי זו התגברות אד' על הוי', וזהו בחינת יחודא תתאה.

(12) **And so too these two knowings are in Torah: this is "bread from the earth"** (**lechem min ha'aretz / lechem min hashamayim** (לחם מן הארץ / לחם מן השמים Torah you work for from below, and Torah that comes down from above)) **— the revealed part of Torah** (**galya d'Torah** (גליא דתורה the revealed Torah: halachah, Gemara, plain meaning)), **and "bread from heaven" — the inner part of Torah** (**pnimiyus haTorah** (פנימיות התורה Chassidus and Kabbalah)). *Bread from the earth has to be plowed, planted and baked; bread from heaven, the manna, came down ready (our reading of the picture).*

(12) וכמו כן ישנן ב' דעות אלו בתורה, והוא ענין לחם מן הארץ - גליא דתורה, ולחם מן השמים - פנימיות התורה.

13 **Speaking more generally,** — *now the maamar widens the picture from two parts of Torah to two times* — **"bread from the earth"** — *the Torah that is worked for, from below* — **is what was given right after the Exodus from Egypt,** *the Torah the Jews received on the way, before Sinai. The maamar does not say which teachings these are; some mitzvos were given at Marah (our suggestion).*

13 ובכללות יותר, הנה לחם מן הארץ הוא מה שנתן מיד לאחר יציאת מצרים,

14 **and "bread from heaven" is the whole Giving of the Torah** (**matan Torah** (מ״ת the Sinai event)) *at Sinai,* **including also the revealed part of Torah,** *the laws and not only the secrets,* **since that too is on the level of the upper knowing.** *At Sinai even the plain laws came down from above, so they too are bread from heaven.*

14 ולחם מן השמים הוא כללות הענין דמתן־תורה, כולל גם גליא דתורה, שגם זה בחינת דעת עליון.

15 **That is: bread from the earth is the knowing of the lower knowing, which belongs to the work of refining** (**birurim** (בירורים sorting out and raising the holiness hidden in the world)) **from below upward,** *starting with the world as it is,* **through which the unity of Havayah and Elokim is made in the form of Havayah woven inside Adnus,** *the world leading and Hashem found inside it.*

15 והיינו, שלחם מן הארץ היא הידיעה דדעת תחתון ששייכת לענין הבירורים מלמטה למעלה, שעל־ידי־זה נעשה היחוד דהוי׳ ואלקים בבחינת שילוב הוי׳ באד׳.

16 **And bread from heaven is the unity of Havayah and Elokim** — *the same unity, from the other side* — **in the form of Adnus woven inside Havayah,** *Hashem leading and the world held inside Him,* **on the level of the upper knowing.** *Now the tools are on the table. How they answer Rashi's question is the work of Section 3.*

16 ולחם מן השמים הוא היחוד דהוי׳ ואלקים בבחינת שילוב אד׳ בהוי׳, בבחינת דעת עליון.

Deep dive — Daas Elyon and Daas Tachton: two kinds of nothing

Stand at the shore and look at the ocean. A cup of water from it is real. Now ask how much that cup is, next to the whole ocean. Almost nothing. Both answers are true, and they do not argue. They are measured from two places.

The two knowings work like that. The upper knowing measures from Hashem's side. There, only He is real, and the whole world is "nothing" next to Him. The lower knowing measures from our side. Here, the world is solid and plain, and Hashem is the "nothing": not absent, but beyond anything we can see or hold.

The maamar adds a precise point. The two "nothings" are different. In the upper knowing, the light of the Essence is called nothing because it is too real to be one more thing in a list of things. In the lower knowing, the source of the world, a glimmer of a glimmer of Hashem's light, is called nothing only because we cannot grasp it.

That is why the maamar says both knowings are "of Havayah." Neither is a mistake. The lower knowing is not a weak version of the truth for people who cannot do better. It is how Hashem Himself knows the world from the world's side. Why that matters for the opening of the Torah is the next step of the maamar.

Deep dive — Yichuda Ila'ah and Yichuda Tata'ah: which Name leads

Every Jew says twice a day that Hashem is One. The maamar says there are two ways to mean it, and a person needs both, because a person is a small copy of all the worlds.

In the lower unity, the world is real, and it gives itself over to Hashem, the way a loyal servant is fully there and fully devoted to his master. In the upper unity, only Hashem is real, and the world is not even a separate thing that could give itself over (our explanation, following the standard chassidic reading of the two unities).

Kabbalah shows this with two Names written letter inside letter, a weaving called shiluv. When Havayah, the Name above nature, is the frame, it leads: that is the upper unity. When Adnus, the Name of mastery inside nature, is the frame, nature leads and Havayah is hidden inside it: that is the lower unity. The letters are the same. What changes is which one sets the terms.

The maamar then finds the pair in Torah. Bread from heaven is Torah as it came down at Sinai. Bread from the earth is the knowing that goes with refining the world from below. Notice that the lower one is tied to a job, the birurim. Where that job stands in the opening of the Torah, the maamar has not said yet.

Review

1. Which pasuk does the maamar bring, and which word in it shows there are two knowings?
2. What does each knowing call "something" and "nothing," and why is there no contradiction between them?
3. Why must a person also have both knowings, and which weaving of the Names belongs to each unity?
4. What are bread from the earth and bread from heaven, in the narrow sense and in the wider sense?

Talking points

- Both knowings are true: the world is real, and the world is nothing before Hashem. Which one is easier to live with day to day? Which one do you need more?
- The maamar says even the revealed laws given at Sinai are bread from heaven. Does that change how you think about learning halachah?
- Bread from the earth takes work; bread from heaven comes ready. Which is more precious to you: what you earn or what you are given?

Take it with you. Both are true: from Hashem's side only He is real, and from ours the world is real and Hashem is hidden.

Section ג

3 Two openings

ג) ומסיים במאמר

The big idea

"Bereishis" and "This month" are the two ways Hashem runs the world: through nature, the month of Tishrei, and through miracles, the month of Nissan. They match the lower and the upper knowing.

The Torah comes from above, so it "should" open with Nissan. That is the deeper side of Rashi's question.

It opens with nature because "the power of His works" is the power over nature that Hashem gives His people: the work of refining the world from below.

That work belongs in the Torah because the world cannot refine itself. It needs the light of Mah from above, and the Torah is that light. So reading Bereishis on Shabbos Bereishis gives strength for the whole year.

Before you learn

- **Where we are.** Section 1 asked why the Torah, a book of instruction, opens with creation, and what "He gave it" and "upright in His eyes" mean. Section 2 showed two true knowings, upper and lower. Now the Rebbe Rashab brings them back to Rashi.
- **Two months.** Tishrei is the month the world was created; Rosh Hashanah is its birthday. Nissan is the month of the Exodus, and the first month in the Torah's count of months (Shemos 12:2).
- **Rashi's line.** "The Torah need not have begun except from 'This month is for you.' Why did it open with Bereishis? Because 'He told His people the power of His works.' The whole earth belongs to Hashem; He gave it to whomever was upright in His eyes." The section reads these words one by one.
- **Watch the structure.** Phrases 2 to 9 build the question: the Torah "should" open with Nissan. Phrase 10 gives the answer. Phrases 12 and 13 explain why it is Torah, with "even though … nevertheless."

ראשי תיבות new in this section

מ״ה	מה	'what' (בלי מה, Sefer Yetzirah)	גו׳	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
מו״ח	מורי וחמי	my teacher and father-in-law	כנ״ל	כנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above
			ב״ן	שם ב״ן (הוי״ה במילוי ההי״ן, 52)	the Name Ban (52)

1 **And he concludes in the maamar** — *the Rebbe Rashab, still in his maamar of fifty years earlier from Section 1* — **that according to this,** *the two true knowings of Section 2,* **we will understand what Rashi wrote: "The Torah need not have begun except from 'This month is for you,'" and so on.** *That was the question the maamar opened with. Now it comes back to it with new tools.*

1 ג) ומסיים במאמר[12], שעל־פי־זה יובן מה שכתב רש"י לא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחדש הזה לכם וכו'.

2 **For "Bereishis..." and "This month..."** — *the first words of the Torah, and the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people as a people* — **are the two ways Hashem runs the world from above** (**hanhagah tivis / hanhagah nisis** הנהגה טבעית / הנהגה נסית Hashem running the world through nature, or through miracles)**, through which one can know the greatness of the Creator:** *each one is a window onto Him.* **Natural conduct and miraculous conduct** — *the steady order of the world, and the times Hashem breaks that order* — **(as brought in the Akeidah),** *the sefer Akeidas Yitzchak, in its chapter on "This month is for you."*

2 דהנה, בראשית גו' והחדש גו' הם ב' אופני ההנהגה שלמעלה, שמהם יכולים לידע גדלות הבורא, הנהגה טבעית והנהגה נסית (כדאיתא בעקידה[13]),

3 **These are like the two things** *we met in Section 2:* **the upper knowing and the lower knowing** (**Daas Elyon / Daas Tachton**)**,** *which a person carries inside him as* **the upper unity and the lower unity** (**Yichuda Ila'ah / Yichuda Tata'ah**)**.** *Two ways Hashem runs the world, two ways of knowing Him: the maamar lines them up one to one.*

3 שהם על־דרך ב' הענינים דדעת־עליון ודעת־תחתון, יחודא־עילאה ויחודא־ תתאה.

4 **"Bereishis..." is the matter of Hashem running the world through nature,** *where everything follows its rules,* **the level of the lower knowing, the lower unity:** *the world looks real, and Hashem is found hidden inside it.* **That is the theme of the month of Tishrei,** *the month of Rosh Hashanah, the world's birthday.* **It is the time the world was created, to be run by nature.**

4 בראשית גו' הוא ענין הנהגת הטבע, בחינת דעת תחתון — יחודא תתאה, שזהו ענינו של חדש תשרי, שהוא זמן בריאת העולם להיות בבחינת הנהגת הטבע.

(5) **And "This month...", the month of Nissan,** *the month of the Exodus,* **is the matter of Hashem running the world above nature,** *where its rules give way,* **the level of the upper knowing, the upper unity:** *Hashem is what is plainly real, and the world steps aside,*

(5) והחדש הזה גו', חדש ניסן, הוא ענין הנהגה שלמעלה מהטבע, בחינת דעת עליון — יחודא עילאה,

(6) **as brought in the Midrash:** *Shemos Rabbah, in the footnote.* **"When (the Holy One, blessed be He) chose Yaakov and his sons (as it is written, 'He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Yaakov whom He loves, Selah') —** *Tehillim 47:5, the chapter we say before blowing the shofar —* **He set in it (in His world) a Rosh Chodesh of redemption,"** *a new month that is not just a new moon but the start of geulah,*

(6) כדאיתא במדרש[14] כשבחר (הקב"ה) ביעקב ובניו (כמו שכתוב[15] יבחר לנו את נחלתנו את גאון יעקב אשר אהב סלה) קבע בו (בעולמו) ראש־חדש של גאולה,

(7) **which is the matter of overturning the order of nature** (**shidud hamaarachos** (שידוד המערכות nature's rules set aside by an open miracle)) **and cancelling nature,** *when the rules simply stop holding,* **like the signs and wonders of the Exodus, and so on:** *the plagues, the splitting of the sea. That is Nissan: Hashem showing that nature answers to Him.*

(7) שהוא ענין שידוד המערכות וביטול הטבע, כמו האותות ומופתים דיציאת מצרים כו'.

(8) **And this is why —** *now the maamar ties it back to Rashi —* **"the Torah need not have begun —** *Rashi's own words —* **except from 'This month is for you'":** *Rashi's "need not" is not only about law coming before stories. There is a deeper reason the Torah "should" have opened with Nissan, and here it is.*

(8) וזהו שלא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחדש הזה לכם,

(9) **since the Torah as a whole is on the level of the upper knowing —** *Section 2 said this: all of Matan Torah, even the plain revealed halachos, is "bread from heaven" —* **therefore the Torah ought to begin from 'This month is for you,' which is the matter of the upper knowing,** *Nissan and its miracles,* **as explained above.** *A book that comes from above should open with what is above. So the question is now sharper: why does it in fact open with nature? Hold it; the next phrase gives the answer.*

(9) דכיון שהתורה בכלל היא בחינת דעת עליון, לכן צריכה להיות התחלת התורה מהחדש הזה לכם, שהוא ענין דעת עליון, כנ"ל.

10 **And what is the reason it opened with Bereishis?** *Here is Rashi's own answer:* **because "He told His people the power of His works," and so on** *(Tehillim 111:6). Now the maamar reads those words anew.* **"The power of His works" means the power and the mastery over nature:** *not only that Hashem has power over nature, but (our reading) a power He tells, that is, gives, to His people, the strength to rule over nature and not be ruled by it.*

10 ומה טעם פתח בבראשית, משום כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו גו', כח מעשיו היינו הכח והשליטה על הטבע[16],

11 **And that is the matter of the refining** (birurim) **from below upward,** *starting with the world as it is and lifting it,* **in the mode of the lower knowing:** *the world is real, and the work happens inside it. Mastery over nature does not mean running away from nature. It means refining it.*

11 והוא ענין הבירורים מלמטה למעלה בבחינת דעת תחתון.

12 **And the reason this too was written in the Torah** — *this is the Rebbe Rashab's first question from Section 1: why is a story about the world in a book of instruction?* — **is that, even though the refining of the lower knowing is the refining of the Name Ban** (**Shem Mah / Shem Ban** (שם מ"ה / שם ב"ן Mah, the light that gives and fixes; Ban, the world that receives and is refined))**,** *the side of the world that receives and needs fixing — so far this sounds like a reason it should not be in the Torah. Wait for the "nevertheless."*

12 והטעם שגם ענין זה נכתב בתורה, כי, אף־על־פי שהבירורים דדעת תחתון הם הבירורים דשם ב"ן,

13 **nevertheless,** — *here is the turn* — **this too comes about through the light of the Name Mah,** *the light from above that comes down and fixes; Ban cannot refine itself by its own power.* **And so this was said in the Torah, which is on the level of the Name Mah.** *The story of nature belongs in the Torah because the Torah is exactly the light that makes refining nature possible.*

13 מכל־מקום, גם ענין זה הוא על־ידי הארת שם מ"ה, ולכן נאמר ענין זה בתורה, שהיא בחינת שם מ"ה.

(14) **And this is "the entire earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He, and He gave it to whomever was upright in His eyes":** *Rashi's words, which the Rebbe Rashab asked about in Section 1.* **For giving comes from the Name Mah,** *since a gift always moves from the one who has to the one who receives,* **in the mode of drawing down from above to below** (**hamshachah** (המשכה bringing Hashem's light down into the world)**).** *So "He gave" is itself the light of Mah coming down into the earth.*

(14) וזהו כל הארץ של הקב"ה היא ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, דבחינת נתינה היא משם מ"ה, בבחינת המשכה מלמעלה למטה.

(15) **And this is also** — *now the last words of Rashi's line* — **"to whomever was upright,"** *the word Section 1 asked about,* **as in "the upright shall see His face"** *(Tehillim 11:7). The "upright" are the ones who see Hashem's face, the light from above, even here in the world below (our reading, following the pasuk).*

(15) וזהו גם כן לאשר ישר, כמו ישר יחזו פנימו[17].

(16) **And one may say** — *offered gently, as a suggestion* — **that this is why at the beginning of the year** — *right after the Yomim Tovim of Tishrei* — **we read Parshas Bereishis,** *the first parsha of the Torah,* **which speaks about the order of Hashem running the world through nature,**

(16) ויש לומר שזהו שבתחלת השנה קורין פרשת בראשית שבה מדבר אודות סדר ההנהגה על־פי טבע,

(17) **because that is when the order of the work** *(avodah)* **in the world begins,** *after the Yomim Tovim, when ordinary life starts again,* **in the refining from below upward:** *taking real days, school and work and meals, and lifting them.*

(17) לפי שאז מתחיל סדר העבודה בעולם בענין הבירורים מלמטה למעלה,

(18) **And the strength for this comes through reading this matter in the Torah,** *because,* **as explained above,** *in phrases 12 and 13,* **even the refining of the Name Ban comes through the light of the Name Mah, which is the matter of Torah.** *Reading about nature in the Torah is not only learning about it. It brings down the light that lets us refine it.*

(18) והכח לזה הוא על־ידי־זה שקורין ענין זה בתורה, כנ"ל שגם ענין הבירורים דשם ב"ן הוא על־ידי הארת שם מ"ה, שזהו ענין התורה,

19 **And this is the strength given** (**nesinas koach** (נתינת כח the strength Hashem gives from above to do the work below)) **for the work of refining through the whole year,** *every week from now until next Tishrei,* **which is drawn down through the Torah reading on Shabbos Bereishis, which is an all-inclusive Shabbos** (**Shabbos klalis** (שבת כללית one Shabbos that holds the whole year))**:** *one Shabbos that holds the whole year inside it, the way a seed holds the tree (editorial),*

19 וזוהי הנתינת כח לעבודת הבירורים במשך כל השנה כולה שנמשכת על־ידי הקריאה בתורה בשבת בראשית, שהיא שבת כללית,

20 **as in the saying of my father-in-law, the Rebbe,** *the Rebbe Rayatz,* **that according to how one stands (vi m'shtelt zich)** — *Yiddish for how a person sets himself up* — **on Shabbos Bereishis, so it is drawn down over the whole year.** *The way you begin sets the tone for everything after it.*

20 כפתגם כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר[18] שלפי אופן העמידה (ווי מ'שטעלט זיך) בשבת בראשית כך נמשך על כל השנה כולה.

Deep dive — Nature and miracle: two ways Hashem runs the world

Most people think a miracle shows Hashem and nature hides Him. The maamar, following the Akeidah, says something more careful. Both are ways Hashem runs the world, and through both a person can come to know how great the Creator is.

Nature is Hashem's conduct in the mode of the lower knowing. The world stands in front of you, solid and orderly. The sun rises every morning, seeds grow, water flows downhill. Hashem is real here too, but He is hidden inside the order, and you find Him by looking: in the wisdom of how things work, in the fact that it all holds together. That is Tishrei, the month the world was made.

Miracle is Hashem's conduct in the mode of the upper knowing. At the Exodus, water turned to blood and the sea split. The order of nature was overturned. For a moment the world stepped aside, and it was plain that Hashem is what is real. That is Nissan.

Notice what the maamar does not say. It does not say nature is less G-dly. Both are Hashem's own conduct. The difference is which side shows. In a miracle, Hashem shows and the world hides. In nature, the world shows and Hashem hides. Which of the two comes first, and in what sense, is what the next sections take up.

Deep dive — Mah and Ban: why refining needs light from above

Kabbalah teaches that the four-letter Name, Havayah, can be spelled out letter by letter in different ways, and each way adds up to a different number. Spelled out with the letter alef, it adds up to 45, written מ"ה, Mah. Spelled out with heh, it adds up to 52, written ב"ן, Ban.

The two stand for two sides. Mah is the light that comes down from above and fixes. Ban is the side that receives: the world as it is, with holiness mixed into it, waiting to be sorted out. Refining the world, birurim, is the work of Ban. It starts below, with real things.

Here is the mechanism the maamar turns on. Nothing can lift itself by its own strength. A person stuck in deep mud cannot pull himself out by his own hair; he needs a hand from above (our picture). In the same way, the world cannot refine itself with the world's own light. Every refining, even the lowest, happens through the light of Mah shining into it.

The Torah is that light. That is why the story of nature is written in the Torah, and why reading it gives strength. The work is below. The power for it comes from above.

Review

1. Which two ways does Hashem run the world, according to the Akeidah, and which month goes with each?
2. Why does the maamar say the Torah "should" have opened with "This month is for you"?
3. What does "the power of His works" mean in this section, and what work does it lead to?
4. Why is the refining of the world written in the Torah, even though it is the refining of Ban? How does that explain "He gave it" and the Torah reading of Shabbos Bereishis?

Talking points

- Is a miracle a clearer sign of Hashem than nature, or only a louder one? What would this section say?
- The section says the world cannot refine itself; it needs light from above. Does that make a person's own work less important, or more?
- The Rebbe Rayatz said that how you stand on Shabbos Bereishis is drawn over the whole year. Can one Shabbos really set a year? What would standing well look like?

Take it with you. The Torah opens with nature because our job is to refine it, and the strength for that job comes from the Torah itself.

Section ד

4 Two orders

ד) ויש להוסיף

The big idea

The two knowings are not only in the question of where the Torah begins. They are in its first pasuk: heaven stands for the upper knowing, earth for the lower.

The Torah writes the two in two orders. Bereishis 1:1 says "heaven and earth." Bereishis 2:4 says "earth and heaven."

Heaven first is the order of revelation: light comes down from above, and the upper knowing has the edge.

Earth first is the order of purpose: the world was made to be refined from below, and the lower knowing has the edge.

Before you learn

- **Two pesukim.** Bereishis 1:1: "In the beginning Elokim created the heavens and the earth." Bereishis 2:4: "on the day Hashem Elokim made earth and heaven." Look at the order of the words in each.
- **Rashi's two options.** From Section 1: the Torah "should" have started with "This month is for you" (Nissan, miracles). It started with Bereishis (creation, nature).
- **The two knowings.** From Section 2: the upper knowing sees only Hashem as real; the lower knowing sees the world as real and Hashem as hidden. Both are true.
- **The question to carry.** If both are true, which one comes first? This section says: it depends on what you are asking.

ראשי תיבות new in this section

שב׳	ששני / ששתי	that (the) two

1 **And one may add to this in more detail:** *take what Sections 2 and 3 said and find it inside one pasuk.* **The two matters of the upper knowing and the lower knowing** (**Daas Elyon / Daas Tachton**), **the upper unity and the lower unity** (**Yichuda Ila'ah / Yichuda Tata'ah**) — *the two true ways of seeing Hashem and the world* — **are found within the matter of Bereishis itself,** *in the very words the Torah opens with, and not only in the question of where the Torah should have started,*

1 ד) ויש להוסיף בזה בפרטיות יותר, שב' הענינים דדעת עליון ודעת תחתון, יחודא־עילאה ויחודא־תתאה, ישנם בענין דבראשית גופא,

2 **which is what is written,** *in the first pasuk of the Torah,* **"In the beginning Elokim created** — *Elokim, the Name of Hashem hidden in nature* — **the heavens and the earth."** *The pasuk names two things, heaven and earth. Each one, the maamar is about to say, stands for one of the two knowings,*

2 שזהו מה שכתוב בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ,

3 **for the difference between heaven and earth** — *the place where Hashem is plain to see, and the place where the world is plain to see and Hashem has to be found* — **is like the difference between the upper knowing and the upper unity,** *on one side,* **and the lower knowing and the lower unity** *on the other. Heaven goes with the upper pair, earth with the lower pair. The Rebbe's note points to* **Likkutei Torah** (לק"ת the Alter Rebbe's maamarim) *(Parshas Eikev, as cited) for this match.*

3 שהרי החלוק בין שמים לארץ הוא על־דרך החלוק שבין דעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה, לדעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה[19].

4 **And within this itself there is the order of "Bereishis... the heavens and the earth,"** *the first pasuk,* **in which heaven came before earth. This is like** *Rabbi Yitzchak's words in Rashi from Section 1,* **"the Torah need not have begun except from 'This month is for you'"** — *the first mitzvah, Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the month of the miracles of Egypt* — **(the upper knowing and the upper unity),** *because opening with a miracle means opening from above, where the rules of nature do not count,*

4 ובזה גופא ישנו הסדר דבראשית גו' את השמים ואת הארץ, ששמים קדמו לארץ, שזהו על־דרך שלא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחדש הזה לכם (דעת־עליון ויחודא־עילאה),

(5) **and there is** *also* **the order of "on the day Hashem Elokim made earth and heaven"** — *a pasuk near the end of the story of creation (Bereishis 2:4)* — **in which earth came before heaven.** *The same two words, the other way round.* **This is like "it opened with Bereishis"** — *the Torah's actual choice, to begin with the world and its nature* — **(the lower knowing and the lower unity).** *So one parsha holds both sides of Rashi's question. Which order is the true one? The maamar answers next.*

(5) וישנו הסדר דביום עשות הוי' אלקים ארץ ושמים[20], שארץ קדמה לשמים, שזהו על־דרך פתח בבראשית (דעת־ תחתון ויחודא־תתאה).

(6) **And the general point of this:** *both orders are true, each from its own side.* **Heaven's coming before earth is in the order of creation, from the side of the revelations** (**giluyim** (גלויים the light that shows itself, coming down level by level)) — *the order in which Hashem's light comes down, from higher to lower* — **etc., and from that side there is an advantage to the upper knowing and the upper unity.** *Light is brightest close to its source, and heaven is closer.*

(6) וכללות הענין בזה, שקדימת שמים לארץ היא בסדר הבריאה מצד בחינת הגלויים כו', שמצד זה יש מעלה בדעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה.

(7) **But from the side of the purpose of creation** (**kavanas haberiah** (כוונת הבריאה why the world was made: so it can be refined from below)) — *not how the world was made, but what it was made for* — **whose whole point is that there be the work of refining** (**birurim**) **from below upward specifically,** *starting with the world as it is and lifting it,* **then earth comes before heaven,** *because the goal comes first in the plan,* **and from that side there is an advantage specifically to the service in the mode of the lower knowing and the lower unity.** *In the order of light, heaven leads. In the order of purpose, earth leads.*

(7) אבל מצד כונת הבריאה, שכללותה הוא כדי שתהיה עבודת הבירורים מלמטה למעלה דוקא, אזי ארץ קדמה לשמים, ומצד זה יש מעלה בעבודה שבבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה דוקא.

Deep dive — Two orders: how the last thing can be first

Think of a family building a house. In the order of building, the foundation goes in first and the roof last. But in the order of the plan, the first thing anyone thinks about is the people who will live there: the table where they will eat, the rooms where the children will sleep. Nobody builds a house for the sake of the roof (our example). What comes last in the doing came first in the thinking.

The maamar finds both orders in creation. In the order of revelation, Hashem's light comes down step by step: first the higher worlds, where He is open and obvious, then lower and lower, until it reaches our world, where He is hidden. In that order heaven is first, and it is greater, because it is closer to the source. The upper knowing, which sees only Hashem, lives there.

But why did the light come down at all? Not so that there would be heavens. The heavens already know Hashem. The purpose was the earth: a place where Hashem is hidden, and where people work to refine the world from below until it, too, becomes a home for Him. In that order earth is first, and the lower knowing, which starts from the world as it is, has an advantage of its own.

Neither order cancels the other. The Torah writes both, in the same parsha, a few pesukim apart.

Review

1. Where does the maamar find the two knowings inside the story of creation itself?
2. Which pasuk puts heaven before earth, and which puts earth before heaven?
3. Which side of Rashi's question goes with each order?
4. From which side does the upper knowing have the advantage, and from which side does the lower knowing?

Talking points

- Is it possible for two opposite orders to both be true? Can you think of something in your own life that is first in one way and last in another?
- Heaven is "closer to the source." Earth is "what it was all for." If you had to choose one to be, which would you choose, and why?
- The maamar finds a deep idea in the order of two words in a pasuk. Does that make you read the Torah differently?

Take it with you. Heaven comes first in how the light comes down; earth comes first in what the light is for.

Section ה

5 Below first, crowned

ה) והענין בזה,

The big idea

The service of Hashem starts below and is centered below: in nature, in the body, in iskafya, in doing more than your habit.

The soul did not come down to fix itself. It is already whole. It came to fix the body and the animal soul, and that hard work brings Hashem a delight that easy service cannot.

Even after a person rises higher, an imprint of where he started has to stay with him.

The work below needs strength from above, which is why heaven comes first in the first pasuk. But the main light is drawn through the earth, and in the end, with Moshiach, the earth becomes the crown.

Before you learn

- **What Section 4 set up.** Heaven comes first in the order of revelation; earth comes first in the order of purpose. Now the maamar turns that into a person's service.
- **The question from Section 1.** Rashi's pasuk says Hashem gave Israel "the inheritance of the nations." What does giving it mean? This section answers.
- **A mashal you will meet.** A king is given a bird that has learned to talk. Hold on to it; the deep dive opens it.
- **Three pesukim at the end.** "A woman shall go around a man" (Yirmiyahu 31:21); "A woman of valor is the crown of her husband" (Mishlei 12:4); "These are the generations of Peretz" (Rus 4:18), the family of Dovid and Moshiach.

English | לשון המאמר

1 **And the explanation of this:** *why earth leads in purpose, and what that means for a person's own service.* **For the beginning and the main part of the service** *of Hashem* **is specifically in the mode of the lower knowing** (**Daas Elyon / Daas Tachton**) **and the lower unity** (**Yichuda Ila'ah / Yichuda Tata'ah**) — *starting from the world as a person actually sees it, solid and real,*

1 ה) והענין בזה, דהנה התחלת ועקר העבודה היא בבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה דוקא,

(2) **which is the meaning of "it opened with Bereishis,"** *the Torah's choice from Section 1,* **the matter of refining** (birurim) **from below upward. This service is in the manner of "He told His people the power of His works, to give them the inheritance of the nations"** — *the pasuk in Tehillim (111:6) that Rashi brought, whose second half Section 1 asked about. How does the inheritance of the nations fit the work below? The next words explain,*

(2) שזהו ענין דפתח בבראשית, ענין הבירורים מלמטה למעלה, שעבודה זו היא באופן דכח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים,

(3) **that is: first it was given to them,** *the nations who lived in the Land of Israel,* **and afterward it was taken from them** — *not by force alone* — **and given to us, through our deeds and our service in refining the world.** *The land does not change hands only by decree. It changes because our work in the world turns it into a holy inheritance. This answers the question Section 1 left open.*

(3) והיינו, שתחלה נתנה להם, ואחר־כך נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו, על־ידי מעשינו ועבודתנו בבירור העולם.

(4) **Therefore even the keeping of Torah and mitzvos** — *not only the business of daily life* — **must specifically be clothed in the way of nature,** *through ordinary means, not by stepping outside the world,* **(as is known from the story about the Alter Rebbe concerning Kiddush Levanah).** *The Rebbe's note points to the Frierdiker Rebbe's sicha of 19 Kislev 5692 (as cited), where the story is told. The lesson taken here: even a mitzvah goes through nature, because nature is where the work is.*

(4) שלכן, הנה גם קיום התורה ומצות צריך להיות בהתלבשות בדרך הטבע דוקא (וכידוע הספור אודות אדמו"ר הזקן בנוגע לקדוש לבנה[21]).

(5) **And the same is true of refining the body** — *what it eats, how it rests* — **and the animal soul** (**nefesh hababamis** (נפש הבהמית the part of you that wants things for yourself)) — *the part of a person that wants food, comfort and honor for itself* — **which is the whole point of the soul's coming down into a body.** *Why did the soul come down? First, what it did not come for,*

(5) ועל־דרך־זה בנוגע לבירור הגוף ונפש הבהמית, שזהו כללות ענין ירידת הנשמה בגוף,

6 שלא ירדה כדי לתקן את עצמה, כי הנשמה עצמה אינה צריכה תקון כלל[22], שכבר נתקנה, לפי ששרשה משם מ"ה (בגימטריא אדם[23]) שבבחינת התקון[24],

6 **it did not come down in order to fix itself, for the soul itself needs no fixing at all,** *as Tanya chapter 37 says,* **since it is already fixed, because its root is from the Name Mah** (**Shem Mah / Shem Ban**)*, the spelling of Hashem's Name that adds up to 45,* **(which in gematria equals "adam,"** *man: alef 1, dalet 4, mem 40),* **which is in the realm of Tikkun** (**Tikkun** (תקון the world of order, where things are already set right))*, the world of order where everything is already set right,*

7 אלא ירידתה למטה היא כדי לתקן את הגוף ונפש הבהמית כו'.

7 **rather, its coming down below** — *into a world of bodies and needs* — **is in order to fix the body and the animal soul,** *to refine them and raise them,* **etc.** *The soul is not being tested or punished. It has been sent with a job, and the job is the body.*

8 ובשביל זה צריכה להיות העבודה באופן דכח מעשיו, שהוא ענין המעשה (גם) מלשון כפיה[25], שזוהי העבודה דאתכפיא

8 **And for this the service must be in the manner of "the power of His works"** — *koach ma'asav* — **which is the matter of "deed"** *(ma'aseh) read* **(also) in the sense of "compelling,"** *the way the Sages use the word me'asin to mean "they compel,"* **which is the service of iskafya** (**iskafya** (אתכפיא doing what is right even when you do not feel like it))*: making the animal soul do what it does not want to do*

9 (ועד שגם למוד התורה צריך להיות באופן של שנוי הרגילות דוקא, כידוע[26] בענין המעלה דשונה פרקו מאה פעמים ואחד, לפי שזהו יותר מרגילותו).

9 **(and even the study of Torah must specifically be in a way that changes one's habit,** *not only what one is used to,* **as is known** *from the Gemara (Chagigah 9b) and Tanya chapter 15* **about the advantage of one who reviews his chapter a hundred and one times,** *in an age when a hundred reviews was the usual,* **because this is more than his habit).** *The hundred-and-first is the one that costs something.*

10 וזוהי גם כללות המעלה של עובדי הוי' בגופם לגבי עובדי הוי' בנשמתם[27],

10 **And this is also the general advantage** — *the reason they stand higher* — **of those who serve Hashem with their bodies,** *with the struggle a body brings,* **over those who serve Hashem with their souls,** *whose service comes naturally and needs no pushing. The Rebbe's note points to the Rebbe Rashab's Hemshech 5666 (as cited),*

(11) **which comes from the advantage of the service of iskafya: because of the newness in it,** *since it goes against nature,* **it brings about delight above,** *a pleasure for Hashem,* **like the well-known parable of the talking bird** *(Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar, as cited). The deep dive opens the parable.*

(11) שזהו מצד מעלת העבודה דאתכפיא, שמצד החדוש שבה הרי היא פועלת תענוג למעלה, כמשל הידוע מצפור המדברת[28].

(12) **And this is "it opened with Bereishis":** *the order of the Torah is the order of a person's life.* **This is the beginning and the main part of the service,** *the ground floor,* **and only after this does one come to the service in the mode of the upper knowing and the upper unity,** *which sees only Hashem,* **which is the matter of "This month is for you."** *First the earth, then heaven. Nissan comes, but it comes second.*

(12) וזהו פתח בבראשית, שזוהי התחלת ועקר העבודה, ורק לאחרי־זה באים לעבודה שבבחינת דעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה, שזהו ענין דהחדש הזה לכם.

(13) **And even more than this:** *the lower knowing is not a first stage you leave behind.* **Even after a person rises in his service and reaches the level of the upper knowing and the upper unity,** *where only Hashem seems real,* **there must remain with him an imprint** (**reshimu** (רשימו an imprint that stays after you move on)) **from the level of the lower knowing and the lower unity**, *a trace of where he started*

(13) ויתרה מזה, שגם לאחרי שהאדם מתעלה בעבודתו ומגיע לבחינת דעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה, צריך שישאר אצלו רשם ממדרגת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה

(14) **(as the Alter Rebbe explains briefly and by hint in the introduction to Shaar HaYichud VehaEmunah,** *the second part of Tanya,* **called "Chinuch Katan,"** *"small education,"* **explaining the verse "Train a youth according to his way; even when he grows old he will not turn from it"** *(Mishlei 22:6) — what a person starts with stays with him all his life —*

(14) (ועל־דרך שמבאר אדמו"ר הזקן בקצור וברמז בהקדמה לשער היחוד והאמונה, חנוך קטן, בפרוש הפסוק[29] חנוך לנער על פי דרכו גם כי יזקין לא יסור ממנה,

(15) **that at the time of rising from level to level, when he is in a state of falling from his first level** *— to reach a new level he has to let go of the old one, and for a moment he has neither —* **which is what is written, "Seven times a tzaddik falls and rises"** *(Mishlei 24:16),* **there remains in him the imprint of his first level).** *That imprint is what carries him across the gap.*

(15) שבעת העליה ממדרגה למדרגה שאז הוא בבחינת נפילה ממדרגתו הראשונה, שזהו מה שכתוב[30] שבע יפל צדיק וקם, נשאר בו הרשימו ממדרגתו הראשונה).

16 **However, although the main part of the service is in the mode of the lower knowing and the lower unity,** *something more is needed.* **Nevertheless, so that the service of the lower knowing and the lower unity will be as it should** — *so that it does not sink into the world it came to refine* — **(and even to the point that through it they will also reach the service of the upper knowing and the upper unity),** *the maamar now names what it lacks:*

16 אמנם אף שעקר העבודה היא בבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה, מכל־מקום, כדי שהעבודה שבבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה תהיה כדבעי (ועד שעל־ידה יגיעו גם לעבודה שבבחינת דעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה),

17 **there is a need** — *not a nice extra, a need* — **for a giving of strength** (**nesinas koach**), *power a person does not make on his own,* **from the matter of the upper knowing and the upper unity.** *The Rebbe's note points to the Rebbe Rashab's Kuntres Eitz HaChayim, chapters 7–9 (as cited).*

17 יש צרך בנתינת כח מהענין דדעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה[31].

18 **And this is why, even when it opened with Bereishis,** *with the world and its nature,* **it says "the heavens and the earth":** *look at the order:* **heaven first and afterward earth.** *Why put heaven first in a story that is about the earth? The next words answer,*

18 וזהו שגם כאשר פתח בבראשית נאמר את השמים ואת הארץ, שמים תחלה ואחר־כך ארץ,

19 **this is the giving of strength from the side of the upper knowing and the upper unity (the level of heaven),** *which is why heaven is named first,* **so that there can be the work of refining in the mode of the lower knowing and the lower unity** *down on earth,* **(just as the whole matter of Bereishis was written in the Torah, as explained above in Section 3)**: *the story of nature is told inside the Torah, the light from above, so that it gives strength for the whole year's work.*

19 שזוהי הנתינת כח שמצד בחינת דעת עליון ויחודא־עילאה (בחינת שמים) כדי שתוכל להיות עבודת הבירורים בבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה (על־דרך שכללות הענין דבראשית נכתב בתורה, כנ"ל סעיף ג).

(20) **And nevertheless** — *the Rebbe's note adds the Rebbe Rashab's maamar Ko Amar Hashem HaShamayim Kis'i, 5676 (as cited)* — **the main part of the service is the refining in the mode of the lower knowing and the lower unity (the level of earth) specifically,** *even though the strength came from heaven,* **and specifically through this comes the main drawing down** (**hamshachah**) *of Hashem's light. Some listeners recalled that the Rebbe compared this to the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which flow to one who makes himself small, through iskafya,*

(20) ומכל־מקום[32], עקר העבודה היא בענין הבירורים בבחינת דעת תחתון ויחודא־תתאה (בחינת ארץ) דוקא, ועל־ידי־זה דוקא נעשה עקר ההמשכה[33],

(21) **and therefore it says at the end of the parsha,** *where the Torah sums up creation,* **"These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, on the day Hashem Elokim made earth and heaven"** *(Bereishis 2:4):* **earth first.** *Heaven gave the strength, and the earth comes out in front.*

(21) ולכן נאמר בסיום הפרשה אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם, ביום עשות הוי' אלקים ארץ ושמים, ארץ תחלה.

(22) **And this is also the meaning of "a woman shall go around a man"** (**nekevah tesovev gever** נקבה תסובב גבר in the end the one who receives will rise above the one who gives)) *(Yirmiyahu 31:21) and* **"a woman of valor is the crown of her husband"** *(Mishlei 12:4): the one who receives becomes the crown of the one who gives. The earth, which receives from heaven, will crown it.* **This will be at the completion of the service;** *some listeners recalled that then a level higher than heaven and earth together will be revealed in the earth specifically,*

(22) וזהו גם הענין דנקבה תסובב גבר[34], אשת חיל עטרת בעלה[35], שיהיה בגמר העבודה[36],

(23) **when the promise is fulfilled, "These are the generations** — **(toldos** *in the Hebrew,* **written full,** *with both letters vav, as the Midrash notes, Bereishis Rabbah 12:6, as cited)* — **of Peretz," etc.** *(Rus 4:18), the family line that leads to Dovid HaMelech,* **with the coming of Moshiach our righteous one: "Dovid My servant will be their prince forever"** *(Yechezkel 37:25). The pasuk that put earth first has the same full spelling as the line of Moshiach. The Torah began with the earth because the earth is where the Geulah is made.*

(23) כאשר יקים היעוד[37] אלה תולדות (תולדות מלא[38]) פרץ גו', בביאת משיח צדקנו, דוד עבדי נשיא להם לעולם[39].

Deep dive — Iskafya and the talking bird: why the hard way gives Hashem pleasure

Here is the parable the Rebbe calls well known (Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar, as cited). A king has wise ministers who speak to him every day with deep understanding. One day he is given a bird that has been taught to say a few words. The king is delighted, more than by all his ministers. The bird's words are not wiser. But speech is not the bird's nature, and something done against nature is new.

The animal soul is the bird. By nature it wants things for itself. A soul in heaven, or an angel, praises Hashem easily, the way the ministers speak; it is what they are. When the animal soul is pushed to want what Hashem wants, that is iskafya, and it is new. Newness is what gives Hashem the special delight the maamar calls "delight above."

This explains the hundred-and-first review (Chagigah 9b, and Tanya chapter 15). When a hundred reviews is normal, the hundredth is habit, and habit is just nature again. The one after it is the bird speaking. It is also why the maamar can say that the lower knowing is not only the first stage of the service but its main part. The work that goes against the grain of the world is exactly the work only the world can offer.

Deep dive — Nesinas koach and the crown: strength from above, glory from below

A young person sets out to do something hard: keep a seder of learning every night, or change a habit that has a grip on him. He can do the work himself, and the work is his. But he cannot do it with no strength at all. Something has to light him up first: a teacher, a farbrengen, a parent who believes in him (our example).

The maamar says the same about the whole world. The work is below, in the lower knowing. But a lower knowing cut off from what is above can sink into the very world it came to refine. So it needs nesinas koach, strength given from the upper knowing. That is why the first pasuk puts heaven first, and why the story of nature is written inside the Torah: the light from above is there to power the work below.

Then the maamar tips the scales. The strength comes from heaven, but the main drawing down of light comes through the earth. And at the end, the order turns over completely: "a woman of valor is the crown of her husband." The one who receives becomes the crown of the one who gives. When the work is finished, with Moshiach, the earth, which only received, will stand above heaven. That is the answer to Rashi's question, carried all the way to the end.

Review

1. What does "to give them the inheritance of the nations" mean, according to this section?
2. Why did the soul come down into a body, if it does not need fixing? What does the word "Mah" add?
3. What is iskafya, and what do Torah study a hundred and one times and the talking bird teach about it?
4. Why does the first pasuk put heaven first, and why does Bereishis 2:4 put earth first? What happens at the end of the service?

Talking points

- The soul is already whole and came down only to fix the body. Does that make the body a burden, or the whole point?
- Is something you do out of habit worth less than something you push yourself to do? What about a good habit you worked hard to build?
- When you grow, should you keep something of where you started, even if it looks small now? What is your "first level"?

Take it with you. Heaven gives the strength, but the work is done on the earth, and in the end the earth wears the crown.

Bringing it together

The whole argument in three paragraphs, and three questions to argue about.

The whole maamar in one page

Rashi asks why the Torah begins with creation and not with the first mitzvah, "This month is for you." His answer: so that when the nations call the Jews robbers for taking the Land, the Jews can say that Hashem made the world and gives it to whomever He wants. The Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe after him, push further. Torah means instruction. Nothing is in it only to win an argument. So the story of creation must itself be Torah.

To explain, the maamar brings two knowings. The upper knowing says only Hashem is real and the world is nothing. The lower knowing says the world is real and Hashem is hidden, "nothing" to us because we cannot grasp Him. Both are true. They show up in a person as two ways Hashem is One, and in Torah as bread from heaven and bread from the earth. Nissan, the month of miracles, belongs to the upper knowing. Tishrei, the month of creation and nature, belongs to the lower one. A Torah from above "should" open with Nissan. It opens with Bereishis because the work of refining nature from below needs the strength of Torah, and reading Bereishis on Shabbos Bereishis gives that strength for the whole year.

The two orders are inside the pasuk itself. "The heavens and the earth" puts heaven first: that is the order in which light is revealed. "Earth and heaven" puts earth first: that is the purpose of creation. The work starts below, with mitzvos done through nature, with the body and with iskafya, and only then rises to the upper knowing, keeping an imprint of where it began. Heaven gives the strength, but the main drawing down of light comes through the earth. In the end the earth will be the crown, as "a woman of valor is her husband's crown," with the coming of Moshiach.

Talk it over

- Rashi's answer about the nations sounds practical. The Rebbe says Torah cannot contain anything only to win an argument. Is there anything in your own learning that you treat as background? What would it mean to read it as instruction?
- The maamar says both knowings are true: the world is real, and the world is nothing before Hashem. Can a person really live with both at once? When does each one help, and when could each one mislead?
- Heaven gives the strength, but the main drawing down of light comes through the earth. Why would Hashem make the lower work the main thing, and not the higher one?

ראשי תיבות · Abbreviations key

Every abbreviation printed in this maamar, as printed, with its expansion. Prefix letters are part of the printed form.

אדמו״ר	אדוננו מורנו ורבנו	our master, teacher and Rebbe
אד׳	אדני (שם אדנות)	the Name A-donai
באד׳	באדנ״י (שם אדנ״י)	in Adnus (the Name Ado-nai)
בב׳	בשני / בשתי (לפי ההקשר)	in two
בהוי׳	בהוי״ה (שם הוי״ה)	in Havayah (the Name)
ב׳	שני / שתי / שניים (לפי ההקשר)	two / second (by context)
ב״ן	שם ב״ן (הוי״ה במילוי ההי״ן, 52)	the Name Ban (52)
גו׳	וגומר	and so on (the verse continues)
דהוי׳	דהוי״ה (שם הוי״ה)	of Havayah (the Name)
הוי׳	הוי״ה (שם המפורש)	Havayah; the Tetragrammaton
הקב״ה	הקדוש ברוך הוא	the Holy One, blessed be He
וכו׳	וכולי	and so on
ז״ל	זכרונו לברכה	of blessed memory
כו׳	וכולי	etc.; and so on
כנ״ל	כנזכר לעיל	as mentioned above
כ״ק	כבוד קדושת	his holiness
מהורש״ב	מורנו הרב רבי שלום דובער	the Rebbe Rashab
מו״ח	מורי וחמי	my teacher and father-in-law
מ״ה	מה	'what' (בלי מה, Sefer Yetzirah)
רש״י	רבי שלמה יצחקי	Rashi
שב׳	ששני / ששתי	that (the) two

Marei mekomos

Every footnote of the printed maamar, by its printed number, with what it points to.

1	פרשתנו א, א.	Bereishis 1:1, the pasuk the maamar opens with.	VERIFIED
2	רד"ה בראשית ברא תרע"ו (המשך תער"ב ח"ב ע' א'קעה). וראה גם ד"ה זה תשט"ו. תשט"ז (סה"מ תשט"ו ע' יט ואילך. תשט"ז ע' מא ואילך).	The Rebbe Rashab's maamar Bereishis Bara, 5676 (Hemshech Ayin-Beis vol. 2, p. 1175). See also the maamarim with this opening, 5715 and 5716 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5715 p. 19 ff.; 5716 p. 41 ff.).	AS CITED
3	בא יב, ב.	Shemos 12:2, "This month shall be for you."	VERIFIED
4	תהלים קיא, ו.	Tehillim 111:6, "He told His people the power of His works."	VERIFIED
5	ראה רד"ק לתהלים יט, ח. ספר השרשים להרד"ק ערך ירה.	Radak on Tehillim 19:8, and Radak's Sefer HaShorashim under the root ירה: Torah means instruction.	AS CITED
6	ראה גם תו"מ סה"מ אדר ע' קז.	See also Toras Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Adar, p. 107.	AS CITED
7	שמואל-א ב, ג.	Shmuel I 2:3, "Hashem is a G-d of knowings," from Chana's prayer.	VERIFIED
8	ראה תקו"ז תס"ט בתחילתו.	Tikkunei Zohar, the beginning of Tikkun 69: the two knowings.	AS CITED
9	ראה תו"א יתרו סח, א. לקו"ת פ' ראה כג, ד. שמע"צ פג, א. ובכ"מ.	Torah Ohr, Yisro 68a; Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 23d and Shemini Atzeres 83a; and elsewhere.	AS CITED
10	בזכרון אחדים: ע"ד מארז"ל רגלי החיות כנגד כולן (חגיגה יג, א. וראה תניא ספי"ג).	As some of the listeners remembered: like the Sages' saying that "the feet of the Chayos correspond to all of them" (Chagigah 13a; see Tanya, end of ch. 13).	AS CITED
11	ראה לקו"ת שמע"צ פט, ב. מאמרי אדה"ז תקס"ה ח"ב ע' תתקלה ואילך. סה"מ תרכ"ו ע' רמב ואילך.	Likkutei Torah, Shemini Atzeres 89b; Maamarei Admur HaZaken 5565 vol. 2 p. 935 ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5626 p. 242 ff.	AS CITED
12	שם ע' א'קפא.	The Rebbe Rashab's maamar again (Hemshech Ayin-Beis vol. 2), p. 1181.	AS CITED
13	שער לח – עה"פ (בא יב, ב) החודש הזה לכם. הובא ונתבאר באוה"ת פרשתנו יח, ב ואילך. סה"מ תרנ"ד ע' קלא ואילך. המשך תרס"ו ע' קנו. סה"מ תרע"ח ע' רכה. וראה לקו"ש חי"ז ע' 152 ואילך.	Akeidas Yitzchak, gate 38, on "This month is for you" (Shemos 12:2). Brought and explained in Ohr HaTorah, Bereishis 18b ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 131 ff.; Hemshech 5666 p. 156; Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 225; see Likkutei Sichos vol. 17 p. 152 ff.	AS CITED
14	שמו"ר פט"ו, יא.	Shemos Rabbah 15:11: when Hashem chose Yaakov, He set a Rosh Chodesh of redemption.	AS CITED

15	תהלים מז, ה.	Tehillim 47:5, "He chooses our inheritance for us."	VERIFIED
16	ראה גם המשך תער"ב שם ע' א'קנג.	See also Hemshech Ayin-Beis, there, p. 1153.	AS CITED
17	תהלים יא, ז.	Tehillim 11:7, "the upright shall see His face."	VERIFIED
18	ראה לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 556 בהערה (ד"ה דעם באַוואוסטן וואָרט). וש"נ.	Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 p. 556, in the note beginning "dem bavustn vort" (the well-known saying), and the sources cited there: how one stands on Shabbos Bereishis sets the whole year.	AS CITED
19	לקו"ת עקב טו, ב.	Likkutei Torah, Eikev 15b.	AS CITED
20	פרשתנו ב, ד.	Bereishis 2:4, "on the day Hashem Elokim made earth and heaven."	VERIFIED
21	שיחת י"ט כסלו תרצ"ב (לקו"ד ח"ד תשנב, ב ואילך). וראה גם לקו"ש ח"ה ע' 80.	The sicha of 19 Kislev 5692 (Likkutei Dibburim vol. 4, 752b ff.), the story of the Alter Rebbe and Kiddush Levanah; see also Likkutei Sichos vol. 5 p. 80.	AS CITED
22	תניא פל"ז (מח, ב) מעץ חיים שער כו (שער הצלם) פ"א.	Tanya ch. 37 (48b), from Eitz Chaim, Shaar 26 (Shaar HaTzelem) ch. 1: the soul itself needs no repair.	VERIFIED
23	ראה עץ חיים שער י (שער התיקון) פ"ג.	Eitz Chaim, Shaar 10 (Shaar HaTikkun) ch. 3.	AS CITED
24	ראה שערי תשובה לאדמו"ר האמצעי פ, סע"ד. קמא, ב.	Shaarei Teshuvah of the Mitteler Rebbe, 80d and 141b.	AS CITED
25	ראה סה"מ תרע"ח ע' קכא. ע' קכד ואילך. ע' קצב. תרצ"ט ע' 191.	Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 pp. 121, 124 ff., 192; Sefer HaMaamarim 5699 p. 191: ma'aseh as kefiyah, forcing.	AS CITED
26	חגיגה ט, ב. תניא פט"ו.	Chagigah 9b and Tanya ch. 15: reviewing a chapter a hundred and one times.	VERIFIED
27	ראה המשך תרס"ו ע' קנז ואילך. סה"מ תרח"ץ ע' רנב ואילך. תש"ח ע' 210 ואילך.	Hemshech 5666 p. 157 ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5698 p. 252 ff.; 5708 p. 210 ff.: those who serve Hashem with the body.	AS CITED
28	ראה לקו"ת במדבר כ, א. ובכ"מ.	Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 20a, and elsewhere: the mashal of the talking bird.	AS CITED
29	משלי כב, ו.	Mishlei 22:6, "Train a child in the way he should go."	VERIFIED
30	שם כד, טז.	Mishlei 24:16, "A tzaddik falls seven times and rises."	VERIFIED
31	ראה קונטרס עץ החיים פ"ז-ט.	Kuntres Eitz HaChayim chs. 7–9.	AS CITED
32	ראה גם סד"ה כה אמר ה' השמים כסאי תרע"ו (המשך תער"ב שם ע' א'קפח).	See also the maamar Ko Amar Hashem HaShamayim Kis'i, 5676 (Hemshech Ayin-Beis, there, p. 1188).	AS CITED

33	בזכרון אחדים: וע"ד משנת"ל (ד"ה שובה דש"פ וילך פ"ב (לעיל ע' יד)) בענין המשכת י"ג מדות הרחמים שאינן חוזרות ריקם, שנמשכים לשארית נחלתו, למי שמשים עצמו כשיריים (שזהו"ע דאתכפיא), שעי"ז מכשירים את הכלי לקבל את הגילויים העליונים, וגם, שיומשך האור למקום הראוי, ולא תהי' יניקה לחיצונים.	As some of the listeners remembered: like the maamar Shuvah of Shabbos Vayeilech, ch. 2. The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are drawn to one who makes himself like leftovers, which is iskafya. This makes the vessel ready for the higher revelations, and keeps the light where it belongs.	AS CITED
34	ירמי' לא, כא.	Yirmiyahu 31:21, "the woman shall go around the man."	VERIFIED
35	משלי יב, ד.	Mishlei 12:4, "a woman of valor is her husband's crown."	VERIFIED
36	בזכרון אחדים: שאז יתגלה בארץ דוקא בחי' שלמעלה משמים וארץ גם יחד.	As some of the listeners remembered: then a level higher than heaven and earth together will be revealed in the earth specifically.	AS CITED
37	רות ד, יח.	Rus 4:18, "These are the generations of Peretz."	VERIFIED
38	ב"ר פי"ב, ו. שמו"ר פ"ל, ג.	Bereishis Rabbah 12:6; Shemos Rabbah 30:3: toldos is written full only twice.	AS CITED
39	יחזקאל לז, כה.	Yechezkel 37:25, "David My servant shall be their prince forever."	VERIFIED

VERIFIED means we opened the source and found what the footnote says; AS CITED means we copied the footnote as printed but did not open that page ourselves; UNVERIFIED means we could not confirm it, and we say so.

About this edition

How it was made, and how far to trust each part

This is the Reshimu Student Edition of the Rebbe's maamar ד"ה בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ, said on Shabbos Parshas Bereishis, Shabbos Mevarchim MarCheshvan 5726. It is an unedited record: listeners wrote it down, and the Rebbe did not review it. Several footnotes begin "as some of the listeners remembered," where the writers were not all sure. It gives the whole maamar, Hebrew and English side by side, cut into short numbered phrases, for a reader who has not yet learned a maamar on his own.

Bold type is the translation: the maamar's own words, in English. Lighter italic is our explanation, woven into the sentence where you need it. Read only the bold and you have the maamar. Read both and you have it taught. The explanation has no authority of its own. Where it seems to differ from the Hebrew, the Hebrew wins.

The Hebrew comes, letter for letter, from the verified text of the published Full Elucidated Edition, which follows the vocalized Dvar Malchus printing for Parshas Bereishis. A second printing, Toras Menachem 5726 vol. 1 (pages 152–156), was compared with it word by word. Most differences are abbreviations and spelling: Dvar Malchus spells words out where Toras Menachem abbreviates. There are ten small real differences. Where our text has ולא כמו היש, מעצמותו יתברך, באור האלקי, וממשיך במאמר (twice), ישנן, דהוי' ואלקים (twice), לכן צריכה, וזוהי הנתינת כח בענין דבראשית and נעשה עקר ההמשכה, Toras Menachem reads כמו היש, מן העצמות, בהאור, בהמאמר, ישנם, דהוי' אלקים, צריך (without לכן), וזהו בהענין and נעשית עיקר. None changes the meaning. We kept the text as our source has it.

The five sections follow the five printed letters of the maamar. The five ideas, their colors, the section labels, the boxes and the notes on the footnotes are ours (editorial), not part of the maamar.

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