



Bereishis: Becoming the Creator

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Why? It is a simple question with which Rashi begins his expansive commentary on the Torah. “*Why must the Torah start with the story of creation?*” The Torah is a book of laws given to us to teach us important and informative life-lessons. The Torah guides us on how to interact with one another and how to draw closer to God and ourselves. As such, why the need for the entire elaborate story? Why not just write, “*And God created the world*” – done. Rashi and many of the commentaries provide a number of meaningful and thought-provoking answers and approaches. But I would like to share with you a personally meaningful approach that not only answers this question but provides an important approach to life.

Now no tree of the field was yet on the earth, neither did any herb of the field yet grow, because the Lord God had not brought rain upon the earth, and there was no man to work the soil (Bereishis 2:5).

Rashi explains: “*The plants had not yet emerged, but they stood at the entrance of the ground until the sixth day. And why? Because there was no man to work the soil, and no one recognized the benefit of rain, but when man came and understood that they were essential to the world, he prayed for them, and they fell, and the trees and the herbs sprouted.*”

God wanted man to pray. He wanted man to appreciate the beautiful world God had created. God wanted man to comprehend that all was created for him.

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov advances a beautiful insight. “*V’Al Keyn Nivra’u Kol HaDevorim Mechusar Tikkun, U’Gmar Tikkunam Al Yidey HaAdam, the entire world was created in an incomplete state and the completion of the World can only occur through man.*” God intentionally created the world in a “deficient, imperfect” state. Why? Because He wanted man to partner with Him in the process of creation. Hashem could have created a finished product, a perfect world with no deficiencies. But He didn’t – because there would be nothing left for us to do. Hashem intentionally left pieces of creation in an unfinished state so that we can have the privilege of partnering with God in the creation of this beautiful world. God could have caused the trees, plants and vegetation to sprout forth immediately. Instead He waited, not simply because He wanted us to pray; He was inviting us to be part of the process of creating beauty and completion in this world.

Perhaps, this is why the Torah goes into such details with the creation story. God is telling us, “*I have done my part. I created the heavens and the earth, the light and the dark and the sun and the moon. I have formed the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea. I willed the trees into existence, and fashioned the beautiful flowers and lush vegetation. I blew life into you, my children, my most beautiful creation. I have done my part in creation and now you must do yours.*”

As we begin this beautiful and exciting new year of 5777 let us partner with God in advancing the cause of creation. If we see something that is deficient, if we see something that is broken, know that God is allowing us to see this because He knows that we have the creative ability to fix it.

May we be privileged to appreciate God’s magnificent creation and may He derive much pleasure and pride from ours.