

The Supreme Law of Miracles

Thoughts on the Beginning of the Torah

The Midrash Rabbah Bereishis asks why the Torah begins with the Creation story. The Jewish sages answer that the story proves G-d's ownership of the World and sets the stage for later Torah narratives. This essay examines another reason: the story of Creation raises the three intertwined concepts of *law*, *miracle*, and *knowledge*, which underpin man's grasp of the entire Torah and the whole Universe from the dawn of time.

Once created, the light had not scattered in the void but kept shining. The separated earth and waters did not revert to primordial chaos but coexisted. Upon forming each part of the World (except man), G-d left that creation and moved on to build the next one. Every element worked on its own because He called it 'good' as in 'good to go.' Together, they functioned in concert since He called the complete Creation 'very good.' *Thus, the Creation story affirms an intrinsic G-d-made World order!*

Yet that order is enormously complex. The Torah cannot fully clarify it via Newton's force of gravity, Mendeleev's table of elements, or just a few scientific laws. Instead, it says that G-d made man in His image and likeness. Thus, G-d endowed man with free will and an inventive mind to unravel nature's secrets. These gifts are the cornerstones of the 'scientific method.' Adam used them in naming each kind of animal by its traits.

With startling ingenuity, scientific inquiries provide glimpses inside the World order encoded in the hidden laws of the Universe. Today, we know that electrons hop between atomic quantum orbits, cells inherit genes from their parents, and Fermat's Last Theorem is true. Undoubtedly, more of nature's laws will be revealed tomorrow.

What about the laws concerning man? Unlike the laws of nature, they are not concealed. The Torah explicitly lays out the moral canon, and rabbinic wisdom has instructed it for thousands of years. However, humans often fail to follow even the simplest of G-d's directions. Adam and Hava ate from the Tree of Knowledge despite His warning. Why? Unlike the laws that always guide an atom, free will can mislead those moved by feelings and circumstances.

Believing G-d and comprehending the Torah helps to choose rightly. Like any learning, an in-depth study of moral rules is done best by analyzing their context. For example, each of the Ten Commandments is tied to an event from Bereishis revealing the commandment's cause or showing the effect of its violation. *Preparing this knowledge foundation is an excellent reason for all of Bereishis, not just its Creation story, to begin Torah!*

- **You shall have no other gods.** *No other god created the World, and G-d created no gods.*
- **Do not make a carved image.** *No creation has divine powers -- each one runs by free will, the laws of nature, or G-d's fiat.*
- **Do not swear falsely by the name of your G-d.** *In talking to the snake, Hava distorted G-d's order not to eat from the Tree.*
- **Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.** *G-d rested on the first Shabbat.*
- **Honor your father and mother.** *Adam and Hava broke their creator's trust. G-d punished and expelled them from Paradise.*
- **Do not murder.** *Cain murdered his brother Havel. G-d banished Cain from His presence to become a vagabond.*
- **Do not commit adultery.** *Hava succumbed to the snake's verbal seduction and ate the forbidden fruit.*
- **Do not steal.** *The fruit Adam and Hava took without permission grew on G-d's Tree, not on their tree.*
- **Do not bear false witness.** *Cain lied to G-d about Havel -- "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"*
- **Do not covet.** *Cain murdered Havel, jealous of his success and craving G-d's attention.*

Finally, the Creation story opens Torah to assert the World's miraculous essence from its inception. The story gives no clues about how G-d instantly created things in ten utterances. None of nature's laws implies Creation ex nihilo, and even the very actions of the laws can only be justified by G-d's heavenly care. Therefore, the World and its order, the Torah, each of G-d's deeds, and every creation is a divine mystery beyond human understanding!

Myriads of G-d's miracles roll through the Torah, starting from the Creation story. The families of our forefathers, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, thrived only due to G-d's covenant with the patriarchs. In Egypt, He elevated Joseph and formed the Jewish nation. With wonders, G-d delivered Jews from slavery, bestowed on them Torah, sustained 12 tribes in the desert, and brought them to the Promised Land.

G-d's guidance did not end with Torah. Prophets and Tzadiks taught the Israelites. Divine presence rested in the First Temple. The Jews saw the ruin of their kingdoms and dispersed in the Diaspora; they weathered centuries of persecution and met the horrors of the Shoah. Still, the Jews rose to rebuild the state of Israel. Throughout it all, they transferred the Torah and oral tradition across generations word by word, as G-d had handed it to Moses.

One supreme law combines laws, miracles, and knowledge. It says that arising from Creation, the network of divine events flows as a steady stream that powers, carries, and supports every Jewish soul. To discard it is to end up stranded on its desolate shores, cut off from the destiny G-d assigned for His chosen people. Faithfully embracing this current and knowing its source is a godsent blessing.