Description: hline

Creation - Bara

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)

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The story of creation is a marvelous description of how HaShem created the world and how we react to the world. To understand this, we first need to really understand the narrative itself. The following charts, and questions, are meant to help us appreciate the subtleties of the narrative itself.

By studying this chart you will learn something about the way the Torah is written. If you print out the color coded chart and tape them together with each day side-by-side with the following day, you will see the patterns more clearly. Observe the following color code:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COLOR CODE** | **MEANING** |
| **RED** | Each time God creates something by “saying”. |
| YELLOW | Each time God saw that things were good or very good. |
| **PURPLE** | Each time the thing which God creates comes into being. |
| **LIGHT BLUE** | Each time God calls something by name. |
| GREEN | Each evening and morning. |
| **BLACK** | Each time God blesses. |
| **BLUE** | Each of the six days of creation. |

As you begin studying, see what patterns you can find.

**A.** **Red** begins most days.

**B.** **Purple** usually follows **red**.

**C.** Days end with **green**.

**D.** The 3rd and 6th days both have two acts of creation.

**E.** **Yellow** - **green** - **blue** is a common pattern.

**DEBRIEFING BARA**

The first chapter of Bereshit (Genesis) is a highly structured text. It is a poem with patterns and exceptions. Both are ongoing and planned. The writer of this story carefully uses both the patterns and the breaks in those patterns to communicate the story’s messages. This exercise will help us decode some of these patterns and exceptions.

Look at the way most of the days of creation are described:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **COLOR** | **ACTION / CONCEPT** |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BEGINNING** |  |  | What [two](two.html) squares come at the beginning of each day? |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ENDING** |  |  | What two squares come at the end of each day? |
|  |  |  |  |

1. What day does not fit the pattern?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which days have two **red** squares?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which three days have the usual format naming (numbering) the day changed?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. How many yellow squares are there?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which days have two **yellow** squares?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. How many **red** squares are there?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. How many **black** squares are there?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. Which days have **red** squares?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. Which days have **black** squares?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. What other patterns do you see?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

11. From the things you’ve found so far; what days seem like they might be paired?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Let’s use what was created on each of the days (red squares) to look at the pattern of this story:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What does God create on the first day? | What does God create on the fourth day? |
|  |  |
| What two things does God create the second day? | What two kinds of life does God create on the fifth day? |
|  |  |
| What two things does God make on the third day? | What two kinds of life are created on the sixth day? |
|  |  |
|  | Is anything created on the [seventh day](sabbath.html)? |

12. What is the connection between what was created on the first [three](three.html) days and what was created on the next three days?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

13. How does the distribution of **black** and **red** squares (namings and blessings) relate to this?

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Creation statistics

7 days of Creation.

7 God (*Elohim*) *saw*. (ELOHIM ET HA'OR)- First time God is described as *seeing*. In the creation story *God saw* is repeated seven times. Sefer Yetzira explains that these seven repetitions parallel the [seven double letters](letters.html) letters which can be pronounced hard or soft, and the seven days of the week.

This first mention of *Saw* (and fourth mention of *Elohim*) is therefore the root of the first double letter which is *Bet*. It is according to Luria, the path between Chochma and Chesed.

35 God (*Elohim*).

7 On the Earth ([Hebrew](hebrew.html) only).

21 Earth, earth, land.

7 heaven(s), sky (excluding “heavenly sky”).

7 Good.

7 Water(s) (beneath the heavens).

7 flying, fly, birds.

7 crawls, walks, land animals.

14 day, days.

**BARA**

In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of **God** was moving over the surface of the waters.

**ONE DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let there be light";

and there was light.

And **God** saw that the light was *good*;

and **God** separated the light from the darkness.

And **God** called the light day, and the darkness He called night.

And there was evening and there was morning,

one day.

**A SECOND DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."

And **God** made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse;

and it was so.

And **God** called the expanse heaven.

And there was evening and there was morning,

a second day.

**A THIRD DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear";

and it was so.

And **God** called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the

waters He called seas;

and **God** saw that it was *good*.

**A THIRD DAY continued**

Then **God** said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, {and} fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth"; and it was so.

And the earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, with seed in them, after their kind;

and **God** saw that it was *good*.

And there was evening and there was morning,

a third day.

**A FOURTH DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth ";

and it was so.

And **God** made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; the stars also.

And **God** placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness;

and **God** saw that it was *good*

And there was evening and there was morning,

a fourth day.

**A FIFTH DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens."

And **God** created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind;

and **God** saw that it was *good*.

And **God** blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

And there was evening and there was morning,

a fifth day.

**THE SIXTH DAY**

Then **God** said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.

And **God** made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind;

and **God** saw that it was *good*.

**THE SIXTH DAY continued**

Then **God** said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

And **God** created man in His own image, in the image of **God** He created him; male and female He created them.

And **God** blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Then **God** said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, {I have given} every green plant for food "; and it was so.

And **God** saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very *good*.

And there was evening and there was morning,

the sixth day.

**THE SEVENTH DAY**

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. And by the seventh day **God** completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

Then **God** blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which **God** had created and made.

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the \Lord\ **God** made earth and heaven.

In all of the Torah, it is never written that HaShem made the earth in 6 days. The exact phrasing in Hebrew is:

כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ

To translate literally:

*For six days G-d created the heavens and the earth.*

Inserting the preposition "in" is definitely the easy way to read this. However, the necessary letter ב is simply not there. One of the implications is that the purpose of creation is the 6 "days", or 6000 years. The neat thing is that it goes beyond this. Consider the following:

When we wake up, and we we lay down, we experience creation anew. To understand this, lets ask a question: How do you know it's morning? How do you know when it's morning? It turns out that we know it is dawn from six things, the same sixth things we see being created in Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 1.

At what time to we say the morning shema?

**One day:** When light comes into the world, the first dawn. But how much light comes into the world?

**A second day:** Enough light that you would look at the sky and what would you see? You wouldn't see blackness, but you would see **the sky** as it actually **is**; **blue**. On the second day, God separated the lower waters from the upper water creating the sky. So when is the moment that you would say that you actually know that the dawn is there? When you could tell the difference between t'cheilet and its next color that's similar to it. What is t'cheilet? It's the color of the dome of the sky. So we understand why that's true. It's because when do you say Shema? When you're inspired by what's happening with nature to understand that it's all coming together and when you see it's all coming together -- oh my gosh, I woke up and I didn't just wake up at any random time. I woke up in time when there's light and that wasn't any random. That was the time when there was the blue dawn was there. This is all coming together. When you're struck with that every morning that is actually when you should Kri'at Shema. It’s the second dawn.

**A third day:** The plant world wakes up. What happens with the plant world when it's dawn? The flowers wake up. Anybody who's observant would observe that when flowers wake up they open themselves to the sun because the whole plant world is based on photosynthesis so literally nature opens itself up to the sun. The classic flower to display this is the ‘morning glory’. On the third day God created the dry land and plants. You can see dawn in the plant world. It’s the third dawn.

**A fourth day:** We know it is dawn when the sun comes up. On the fourth day God created the sun, moon, and stars. It’s the fourth dawn.

**A fifth day:** We know it is dawn when the rooster crows. On the fifth day God created the birds. It’s the fifth dawn.

**The sixth day:** So what does the Mishnah say, when do you say Shema? When you wake up, when the animals wake up. God created people and animals on the sixth day. When you wake up it's your circadian rhythm coming to be. It's the sixth dawn.

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