

Reading the First Rashi

Source Sheet by Elli Fischer

Rashi on Genesis 1:1

(1) IN THE BEGINNING — Rabbi Isaac said: The Torah which is the Law book of Israel should have commenced with the verse (Exodus 12:2) “This month shall be unto you the first of the months” which is the first commandment given to Israel. What is the reason, then, that it commences with the account of the Creation? Because of the thought expressed in the text (Psalms 111:6) “He declared to His people the strength of His works (i.e. He gave an account of the work of Creation), in order that He might give them the heritage of the nations.” For should the peoples of the world say to Israel, “You are robbers, because you took by force the lands of the seven nations of Canaan”, Israel may reply to them, “All the earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it and gave it to whom He pleased. When He willed He gave it to them, and when He willed He took it from them and gave it to us” (Yalkut Shimoni on Torah 187).

Psalms 111

6) He revealed to His people His powerful works, in giving them the heritage of nations.

(7) His handiwork is truth and justice; all His precepts are enduring,

(8) well-founded for all eternity, wrought of truth and equity.

(9) He sent redemption to His people; He ordained His covenant for all time; His name is holy and awesome.

(10) The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the LORD; all who practice it gain sound understanding. Praise of Him is everlasting.

רש"י על בראשית א':א'

(א) בראשית אמר רבי יצחק לא הנה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחודש הזה לכם, ושהיא מצנה ראשונה שנוצטוו בה ישראל, ומה טעם פתח בבראשית? מ'שום פח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים (תהילים קי"א), שאם יאמרו אומות העולם ל'ישראל לסטים אתם, שכבשתם ארצות שב'עה גוים, הם אומרים להם כל הארץ של הקב"ה היא, הוא בראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, ברצונו נתנה להם, וברצונו נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו:

תהילים קי"א

(ו) פח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים:

(ז) מעשיו ידיו אמת ומשפט נאמנים כל-פקודיו:

(ח) סמוכים לעד לעולם עשויים באמת וישר:

(ט) פדות | ש'לח לעמו צנה-לעולם ברייתו קדוש ונורא שמו:

(י) ר'אשית חכמה | יראת יהוה שכל טוב כל-עשיהם תהלתו עמדת לעד:

Deuteronomy 6:18

(18) Do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may go well with you and that you may be able to possess the good land that the LORD your God promised on oath to your fathers,

דברים ו':י"ח

(יח) וַעֲשִׂיתָ הַיָּשָׁר וְהַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ וְיָבֹאֲתָ וְיִרְשָׁתָּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם:

Now this is a great principle, for it is impossible to mention in the Torah all aspects of man's conduct with his neighbors and friends, and all his various transactions, and the ordinances of all societies and countries. But since He mentioned many of them...he reverted to state in a general way that, in all matters, one should do what is good and upright; including even compromise and going beyond the requirements of the law. (Nachmanides ad loc., Chavel translation)

Jeremiah 27:5-6

(5) "It is I who made the earth, and the men and beasts who are on the earth, by My great might and My outstretched arm; and I give it to whomever I deem proper.

(6) I herewith deliver all these lands to My servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; I even give him the wild beasts to serve him.

ירמיהו כ"ז:ה'-ו'

(ה) אֲנֹכִי עָשִׂיתִי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֶת־הָאָדָם וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ בְּכַחַי הַגָּדוֹל וּבְזְרוֹעֵי הַנְּטוּיָה וְנָתַתִּיהָ לְאִשָּׁר יִשָּׂר בְּעֵינָי:

(ו) וְעַתָּה אֲנֹכִי נֹתֵן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵלֶּה בְּיַד נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל עַבְדִּי וְגַם אֶת־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה נֹתֵן לוֹ לְעַבְדּוֹ:



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