

Genesis a Different Approach

Genesis 1:1 part 2






By

Former Pastor Dr. Joel Minto *

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Last time I wrote: "Genesis 1:1 "When God began to create" A thought to ponder since that translation is direct from the Hebrew. If you remember or need to refresh your memory re-read Genesis 1:1 Part 1. There we looked at the ancient Hebrew pictographs that presented a very unique translation:



- ר – this is the letter 'resh'- which in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is the head of a man and carries the meaning of '**top, beginning, first**' as in being the top of the body or the head of a tribe and the one who rules; and also speaks of possession or inheritance that is decided by the chief.
- א – this is first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and is called '**aleph**' and in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is '**the head of an ox**' and represents '**strength**', meaning 'muscle' as the ox is the strongest of the livestock animals. This also carries the meaning of '**yoke**' as an ox is placed in a yoke in order to plough or pull a heavy load in the right direction.
- ש – this is the letter '**shin**' which in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is the picture of '**two front teeth**' and carries the meaning of '**sharp or press**' which is what the teeth do and also speaks of the sharpened word that comes forth from the mouth as the teeth '**chew**' or '**meditate on the Truth**', making what comes forth pure and sharp!
- י – this is the letter '**yad or yod**' which in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is the picture of '**an arm and hand**' and carries the meaning of '**work, make, throw**' from the primary functions of the arm and hand and also represents worship or giving thanks in the extending of hands as a gesture of this.
- ת – this is the letter '**taw or tav**' which in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is the picture of '**two crossed sticks**', and can represent for us '**seal, covenant, mark or sign**'; as this once again points to the complete work of Messiah in the renewal of the Covenant in His Blood that brings the two Houses of Yisra'el and Yehudah together in Him, as One, for He is not only the '**aleph**', but is also the '**taw**' – the beginning and the end of all creation!
Each letter here, in itself, pictures for us, and points to Jesus; and we can certainly understand how He was in the beginning and He has worked out His perfect salvation plan for His creation, right from the beginning!

Thus, "In the beginning...", God reveals that the SON (the Hebrew letters BET and RESH form the Hebrew/Aramaic word "bar", or Son) of GOD will be DESTROYED with his HANDS on a CROSS. What a wonderful beginning of the book of Genesis, in it God reveals even before the fall the redemptive plan He already has in mind. Next time we will examine a little farther this very first word.

Before the Creation even began, God was already planning His redemptive act of bringing all of us back to Him. If that doesn't floor you then let's move on and see what other things this first verse can show us.

So back to the word "bereshith" If you remember the early rabbis were very concerned that the first word of the bible given to the Hebrews begins with the second letter of the Jewish alphabet. Why is that God reveals himself through His holy alphabet to His anointed people you would expect the first word to

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begin with the first letter of that alphabet yet it starts with the second letter of the alphabet.....do we care? No because our alphabet and letters are unimportant to us but that wasn't the case for the Hebrews. So let's examine this word more closely it is a preposition with a very unusual adverb. We translate this In the beginning but in Hebrew there is no preposition "the" that would be an entirely different word in fact it would be berhareshith "in the beginning". The transliteration with out the definite article "har" is "in a beginning", or more accurately "when it began". So the question before us is why do we translate that word "In the beginning" when the text clearly says "when it began"? So as with most translations there is a theological reason why we would translate this as "in the beginning". That translation represents the argument for creation ex nihilo, which is a latin phrase meaning "out of nothing". So we have represented in the translation the theological argument for creation out of nothing. Follow along with me now on the argument that the Church had to have that the Hebrews did not have to have. This stems from St Thomas Aquinas's 5 proofs for the existence of God. Now those of you who are students of systematic theology remember that the reason Bereshith is translated "in the beginning" is a direct influence of St Thomas Aquinas's 2nd proof.....Argument from efficient causes. We might call it today the cause and effect argument. For any effect to happen there must be a cause.....here is Aquinas's argument:

The Second Way: Argument from Efficient Causes

1. We perceive a series of efficient causes of things in the world.
2. Nothing exists prior to itself.
3. Therefore nothing [in the world of things we perceive] is the efficient cause of itself.
4. If a previous efficient cause does not exist, neither does the thing that results (the effect).
5. Therefore if the first thing in a series does not exist, nothing in the series exists.
6. If the series of efficient causes extends ad infinitum into the past, for then there would be no things existing now.
7. That is plainly false (i.e., there are things existing now that came about through efficient causes).
8. Therefore efficient causes do not extend ad infinitum into the past.
9. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

Therefore, if everything has a cause then we have an infinite reductive causality. This does not allow for a beginning. Every effect has a cause and that cause is an effect of a preceding cause on and on. So there is by this reasoning no beginning. So the translators needed a specific beginning and that was the addition of the definite article "the". So the theology of ex nihilo creation could not stand the test of Aquinas's cosmological argument so God had to exist outside of time and there had to be a specific period in time that God created thus "in the beginning"

Now I know your minds are all hurting at this time so I will end here on that note. I know this because when I think about it it makes my mind hurt but nevertheless we must make sure when we translate the Bible that our translation is apart from our theological beliefs. Next time further into the first word we go.