

Bereshit – Shabbat 10 October 2015

There is a story told of the famous Talmudic sage Rabbi Meir who was asked by a philosopher proof to the existence of G-d. He asked the philosopher to exit the room. Once he was out, Rabbi Meir began to draw a breathtaking picture of a landscape with hills and valleys, with animals, vegetation and trees and all wonders of nature. When he came back, the philosopher encountered this magnificent work of art, and impressed, he said to Rabbi Meir - “who was the great artist who sketched this beautiful picture?”

Rabbi Meir responded “There was never an artist- a bottle of ink was located next to this piece of paper on the table, a cat came along and knocked over the bottle and this picture emerged by itself.”

Said the philosopher “That is impossible- such a lovely picture could never have come about by itself- there must have been an artist, there must have been somebody who produced this picture”

Rabbi Meir retorted; “You yourself have said it, the picture could not have been created by itself- The picture was in fact drawn by me, how much more so when speaking of the marvels of creation there must have been a Creator- a master designer who brought this world into existence.”

The first verse that we read from the Torah is “In the beginning G-d created the Heavens and the earth” This is the statement that we Jews believe that the world, the universe didn’t just happen unstructured- of its own accord, but the world has a Creator who brought everything into being. However far one might revert in time and suggest that the world came into existence through a big bang or similar, nevertheless, the bottom line is that we Jews believe – we know that the world has a Creator, a Divine architect who brought, and continually sustains everything in existence. These are the first words of the Torah because they are the quintessential springboard from which everything flows. Without this elementary belief there is no point to our being here- to our existence. The Almighty chose these words with which to begin His Torah because these words are the basis to reality.

Consider the words of Maimonides from his magnum opus Mishne Torah which deal with all the laws with which a Jew serves his Creator.

“The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to **know** that there is a first cause that has brought into existence all created beings”. The belief in G-d is the mountain from which everything else stems. Take that away and it all becomes pointless.

I am reminded of that delightful song that we sing with our children; Hashem is here, Hashem is there, Hashem is truly everywhere, Here there everywhere, that’s where He can be found. A wonderful little ditty- but full of meaning- From a very early age we imbue our children with the essential belief of His Omnipresence.

After the High Holydays we begin the New Year with ... In the beginning G-d created ... to acknowledge that the Divine authorship of the Universe is the catalyst from which everything flows.