

Nature Blessing

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

Baruch atah Yah, Eloheinu ruach haolam, oseh maasei v'reishit.

This is the blessing we say upon seeing the large-scale wonders of Nature, such as mountains, hills, deserts, seas, long rivers, lightning, and the sky in its purity. It's usually translated: We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who makes the works of Creation. But I believe there is a secret hidden in these words. B'reshit is often translated as "Creation," but it is much more of a mystery and points us towards an encounter that has the potential to be life-changing. B'reshit means "in the Beginning."

When we see something of Nature that is wondrous and majestic, it is possible for the veil that covers our eyes and the eyes of our hearts to drop away, so that we might see for the first time that a miracle is emerging, that something is arising out of nothing before our very eyes. That mountain looms above me in all its majesty, opening my eyes to its being that is just now revealing itself to me. I witness that river flowing down from the heights, taking on its new form, emerging as a fresh beginning. That wide sky, with clouds swirling is becoming itself and initiating me into its mystery in this moment of wonder.