

## In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and the earth. (1:1)

We can translate the first *pasuk* of the *Torah* in a number of ways. Homiletically, the word "*bereishis*" can be translated as "*bishvil reishis*," "because of the beginning." This implies that the world was created as a result of things that are called "*reishis*," things that are of such prime significance that the *Torah* refers to them as *reishis*. *Chazal* accord two entities this distinction: the *Torah* and *Klal Yisrael*. Using this hypothesis, Hashem created the world so that *Klal Yisrael* would accept and observe the *Torah*. The *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh* adds by inference that one who studies *Torah*, making it an integral part of his life, merits the entire world. Everything in the world exists to serve this individual. Conversely, one who does not have such an association with the *Torah* is not permitted to have any benefit whatsoever from the world - unless he serves or sustains those who do study *Torah*.

Indeed, everything in this world exists for the purpose of serving the *Torah* and the *ben Torah*. After the completion of the railroad from St. Petersburg to Berlin, *Horav Chaim Brisker, zl*, remarked, "This was made for one purpose - to afford the *yeshivah* students easy access to get to the famous *yeshivah* in Volozhin. Everything in this world is for the *Torah* and those that study it."

Likewise, when the Trans-Siberian railroad was built after many years of torturous labor, costing significant sums of money and involving thousands of workers, everyone wondered why it had been constructed. What reason could there have been for creating a railroad through Siberia that would go as far east as Vlodivostak which bordered Japan? No logical reason justified this "waste" of human and natural resources.

The answer became apparent when the students and *Roshei Yeshivah* of the *Mirrer Yeshivah* in Poland fled from the European Holocaust to Shanghai, Japan, using this same railroad as their route of escape. A project was once again justified, as a result of its service to *Torah* and its devotees. If we keep this idea in mind, we might accord greater respect to those for whom *Torah* study is their life's ideal.