



**3RD OF MARHESHVAN 5782
OCTOBER 9TH, 2021
CANDLE LIGHTING 6:41PM
SHABBAT ENDS 7:41PM**



**NOAH &
ABRAHAM**

**THE PATH TO DECADENCE
BEGINS VERY SUBTLY**

**NOAH INVENTS
RETIREMENT**

PARASHAT NOAH

Synagogue: 310 - 95th Street, Surfside, FL 33154 **Website:** www.hechalshalom.org **Tel:** (305) 867-6024
Mailing Address: Ness 26 Inc P.O. Box 546632 Surfside, FL 33154 **E-mail:** info@hechalshalom.org | oroziel.bookkeeper@gmail.com

THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN HAS BEEN KINDLY SPONSORED LEILUY NISHMAT
שלמה בן יעקב ז"ל, BY HIS DEAR FAMILY.



Daily zmanim - October to November 2021 / תשפ"ב חשוון
myzmanim.com™ USA > Florida > Miami Dade > Miami Beach > 33154 (MyZmanim location ID: US33154)



חשוון תשפ"ב																											
דף היומי Daf Yomi		עלות השחר 72 דקות Dawn 72 Minutes		זמן ציצית ותפילין Earliest Tallis		הנץ החמה Sun rise		סוף זמן קריאת שמע Latest Shema		סוף זמן תפילה הנפילה Latest Shachris		חצות Mid day		מנחה גדולה Earliest Mincha		מנחה קטנה Mincha Ketana		המנחה Plag Mincha		הדלקת נרות Candle Lighting		שקיעת החמה Sun set		ליילה לרבינו תם R' Tam's Nightfall		October / November 2021	
בינה ראש השנה		במסעות 16.1°		10.2 מסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות		במסעות	
א	חמישי	לו	6:07	6:03	6:34	7:16	9:37	9:35	10:11	11:10	1:08	1:39	4:33	5:46	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:45	4:32	5:46	6:41	7:00	7:35	8:09	8:13	7	Thu
ב	ששי	לח	6:08	6:04	6:35	7:17	9:37	9:35	10:11	11:10	1:07	1:38	4:32	5:46	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:45	4:32	5:46	6:41	7:00	7:34	8:08	8:12	8	Fri
ג	שבת	לט	6:08	6:04	6:35	7:17	9:37	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:07	1:38	4:32	5:45	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:45	4:32	5:45	6:41	7:00	7:33	8:07	8:11	9	Sha
ד	ראשון	מ	6:08	6:05	6:36	7:18	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:07	1:38	4:31	5:44	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:44	4:31	5:44	6:41	7:00	7:32	8:06	8:10	10	Sun
ה	שני	ב	6:09	6:05	6:36	7:18	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:06	1:37	4:30	5:43	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:43	4:30	5:43	6:41	7:00	7:31	8:05	8:09	11	Mon
ו	שלישי	ג	6:09	6:06	6:37	7:19	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:06	1:37	4:30	5:42	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:42	4:30	5:42	6:41	7:00	7:30	8:04	8:08	12	Tue
ז	רביעי	ד	6:10	6:06	6:37	7:19	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:06	1:37	4:29	5:41	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:41	4:29	5:41	6:41	7:00	7:29	8:03	8:07	13	Wed
ח	חמישי	ה	6:10	6:07	6:38	7:20	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:06	1:37	4:28	5:41	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:41	4:28	5:41	6:41	7:00	7:28	8:02	8:06	14	Thu
ט	ששי	ו	6:11	6:07	6:38	7:20	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:06	1:37	4:28	5:40	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:40	4:28	5:40	6:41	7:00	7:27	8:01	8:05	15	Fri
י	שבת	ז	6:11	6:08	6:38	7:21	9:38	9:36	10:12	11:10	1:05	1:36	4:27	5:39	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:39	4:27	5:39	6:41	7:00	7:27	8:00	8:04	16	Sha
יא	ראשון	ח	6:12	6:08	6:39	7:21	9:38	9:37	10:13	11:10	1:05	1:36	4:26	5:38	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:38	4:26	5:38	6:41	7:00	7:26	8:00	8:03	17	Sun
יב	שני	ט	6:12	6:09	6:39	7:22	9:38	9:37	10:13	11:10	1:05	1:36	4:26	5:37	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:37	4:26	5:37	6:41	7:00	7:25	7:59	8:02	18	Mon
יג	שלישי	י	6:13	6:09	6:40	7:22	9:39	9:37	10:13	11:10	1:05	1:36	4:25	5:37	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:37	4:25	5:37	6:41	7:00	7:24	7:58	8:01	19	Tue
יד	רביעי	יא	6:13	6:10	6:40	7:23	9:39	9:37	10:13	11:10	1:05	1:36	4:25	5:36	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:36	4:25	5:36	6:41	7:00	7:23	7:57	8:00	20	Wed
טו	חמישי	יב	6:14	6:10	6:41	7:23	9:39	9:37	10:13	11:10	1:04	1:35	4:24	5:35	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:35	4:24	5:35	6:41	7:00	7:22	7:56	8:00	21	Thu
טז	ששי	יג	6:14	6:11	6:41	7:24	9:39	9:38	10:14	11:10	1:04	1:35	4:23	5:35	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:35	4:23	5:35	6:41	7:00	7:21	7:55	7:59	22	Fri
יז	שבת	יד	6:15	6:11	6:42	7:24	9:39	9:38	10:14	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:23	5:34	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:34	4:23	5:34	6:41	7:00	7:21	7:55	7:58	23	Sha
יח	ראשון	טו	6:15	6:12	6:42	7:25	9:39	9:38	10:14	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:22	5:33	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:33	4:22	5:33	6:41	7:00	7:20	7:54	7:57	24	Sun
יט	שני	טז	6:16	6:12	6:43	7:25	9:40	9:38	10:14	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:22	5:33	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:33	4:22	5:33	6:41	7:00	7:19	7:53	7:56	25	Mon
כ	שלישי	יז	6:16	6:13	6:44	7:26	9:40	9:38	10:14	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:21	5:32	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:32	4:21	5:32	6:41	7:00	7:18	7:52	7:55	26	Tue
כא	רביעי	יח	6:17	6:14	6:44	7:27	9:40	9:39	10:15	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:21	5:31	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:31	4:21	5:31	6:41	7:00	7:17	7:51	7:55	27	Wed
כב	חמישי	יט	6:17	6:14	6:45	7:27	9:40	9:39	10:15	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:20	5:31	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:31	4:20	5:31	6:41	7:00	7:16	7:50	7:54	28	Thu
כג	ששי	כ	6:18	6:15	6:45	7:28	9:41	9:39	10:15	11:11	1:04	1:35	4:20	5:30	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:30	4:20	5:30	6:41	7:00	7:16	7:50	7:53	29	Fri
כד	שבת	כא	6:18	6:15	6:46	7:28	9:41	9:39	10:15	11:11	1:03	1:34	4:19	5:29	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:29	4:19	5:29	6:41	7:00	7:16	7:50	7:52	30	Sha
כה	ראשון	כב	6:19	6:16	6:46	7:29	9:41	9:40	10:16	11:12	1:03	1:34	4:19	5:29	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:29	4:19	5:29	6:41	7:00	7:15	7:49	7:52	31	Sun
כו	שני	כג	6:19	6:17	6:47	7:30	9:41	9:40	10:16	11:12	1:03	1:34	4:19	5:28	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:28	4:19	5:28	6:41	7:00	7:14	7:49	7:51	1	Mon
כז	שלישי	כד	6:20	6:17	6:47	7:30	9:42	9:40	10:16	11:12	1:03	1:34	4:18	5:28	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:28	4:18	5:28	6:41	7:00	7:14	7:48	7:50	2	Tue
כח	רביעי	כה	6:20	6:18	6:48	7:31	9:42	9:41	10:17	11:12	1:03	1:34	4:18	5:27	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:27	4:18	5:27	6:41	7:00	7:13	7:47	7:50	3	Wed
כט	חמישי	כו	6:21	6:19	6:49	7:32	9:42	9:41	10:17	11:13	1:03	1:34	4:18	5:27	התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	גר"א ובעל התניא	5:27	4:18	5:27	6:41	7:00	7:13	7:47	7:49	4	Thu

Friday (Nov 5) 12:55 AM + 13 חלקים כסליו: מולד חודש כסליו

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SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Mincha 6:40pm
Shir Hashirim: 6:55pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat & Arvit
Candle Lighting: 6:41pm
Shaharit Netz Minyan: 6:15am
Shaharit: 8:45am
Zeman Keriat Shema 9:37am
2nd Zeman Keriat Shema 10:12am
Shiur 5:40pm
Minha: 6:20pm
Followed by Seudat Shelishit & Arvit
Shabbat Ends: 7:41pm
Rabbenu Tam 8:11pm

We would like to wish a Hearty Mazal Tov to Mr. & Mrs. Amichai Shoshan on the Birth of a Granddaughter Adina Sara in Israel to R. Abraham & Olivia Benguigui. They should see her grow Latorah, Uthupa, Ulmaasim Tovim Amen!

We would like to wish a Hearty Mazal Tov to all those who finished Masechet Betzah in Daf Yomi! We are starting BH Sunday Masechet Taanit. Anyone wishing to join the Daf please ask the Rabbi for more info!

BH Birkat Halebana next Mosae Shabbat!

WEEKLY SCHEDULE SUNDAY

Shaharit: 6:35am
Shaharit #2 Hodu 8:30am
Minha 6:45pm
Followed by Arvit

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

Shaharit 6:35am
Daf Yomi 7:40am
Shaharit #2 Hodu 8:00am
Minha 6:40pm
Followed by Arvit
Shiurim 6:00pm

We would like to remind our Kahal Kadosh to please Donate wholeheartedly towards our Beautiful Kehila. Please contact us if you're interested in donating for any occasion, Avot Ubanim \$120, Kiddush \$350, Seudat Shelishit \$275, Weekly Bulletin \$150, Weekly Daf Yomi \$180, Daf Yomi Masechet \$2500, Yearly Daf Yomi \$5000, Weekly Breakfast \$150, Daily Learning \$180, Weekly Learning \$613, Monthly Rent \$3500, Monthly Learning \$2000, Children's Shabbat Program \$500 & Weekly program \$613. Thanking you in advance for your generous support. Tizke Lemitzvot!

Donors Column

בס"ד

We Sincerely Thank you for your generous contributions this Week! We truly appreciate it! Hashem should Bless you all with Health, Happiness, Parnasah Tova, Success, & All the Berachot of the Torah Amen!

- **Mr. Akiva Mendoza**
- **Mr. Sady Cohen**
- **Mr. Emile Knafo**
- **Mr. Alberto Belecen**
- **Dr. Jean Jacques Edderai**
- **Mr. Gaston Benzaquen**
- **Mr. Alain Albergel**
- **Mr. Ronen Michael**
- **Mr. Haim Lahmi**
- **Mr. Daniel Suissa**
- **Ms. Lea Guigui**
- **Mr. Simon Chocron**
- **Mr. Yaakov Shemesh**
- **Mr. Jacky Benoudiz**
- **Mr. Habib Mamane**

If anyone would like to contact our Synagogue, please feel free to email info@hechalshalom.org

Torah Teasers (AISH)

1. Which parashiyot are named for people? (6 answers)
2. Aside from the 40 days of rain, where else is the number 40 mentioned in this parsha?
3. Where else is 40 days mentioned in the Torah? (5 answers)
4. Where does the number seven appear in this parsha? (4 answers)
5. Where else in the Torah was someone saved from harm by being situated in a taiva?
6. Where else in the Torah is a raven referred to?
7. Which mitzvah is given personally to both Adam and Noah?
8. A rainbow is called a keshet. Where else in the book of Genesis does the Torah speak about a keshet in reference to a regular bow? (5 answers)
9. Which grandfather and grandson had the same name?
10. When do we say Kaddish after a non-Jew dies?

Answers

- 1) The six parashiyot named for a person: Noah, Chaye Sarah, Yitro, Korach, Balak, Pinchas.
- 2) Noah waits 40 days from seeing the tops of the mountains, to opening up the window to send out the raven (Genesis 8:6, with Rashi)
- 3) Yaakov is mummified for 40 days before the ascension to and burial in Hebron (Genesis 50:3). Moshe ascends Mount Sinai three times for 40 days each: Exodus 24:18, Deut. 9:18, and Exodus 34:28. Finally, the 12 Spies tour the land of Israel for 40 days (Numbers 13:25).
- 4) Seven pairs of kosher animals are brought into the ark (Genesis 7:2). There is an additional seven-day waiting period before the Flood begins (Genesis 7:4, with Rashi). On the seventh month, the ark rests on the mountains of Ararat (Genesis 8:4). Before sending the dove on each mission, Noah waits seven days (Genesis 8:10, 12).
- 5) Baby Moshe is placed into a teva by his mother to save him from being drowned in the Nile river by the Egyptians (Exodus 2:3).
- 6) The raven is found in Leviticus 11:15 and Deut. 14:14 in the list of non-kosher birds.
- 7) Adam and Noah are both given the mitzvah "to be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28, 9:1).
- 8) When Hagar and Yishmael are in the desert, the verse states that he was a "bow's distance" away (Genesis 21:16). A few verses later, the Torah refers to Yishmael as "an archer" (Genesis 21:20). Before giving the blessing, Yitzhak instructs Esav to take his bow and prepare a meal (Genesis 27:3). Yaakov gives the city of Shchem to Yosef, which he captured "with [his] sword and bow" (Genesis 28:22) The bow is also mentioned later on in the blessing that Yaakov gave Yosef (Genesis 49:24).
- 9) Nachor has a son Terach who has a son also named Nachor (Genesis 11:24, 26).
- 10) In the last verse of the parsha, Terach dies (Genesis 11:32). When completing the reading of the parsha, the one who reads the Torah, recites Kaddish.

Community Announcements

(It is YOUR Community, make the most of it!)

Miscellaneous Announcements:

- **This Week's Congregational Kiddush** has been **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Arnaud Sitbon** in honor of their **Dear Son David Yosef** reading **Haftarat Noah Hazak Ubaruch!**
- **This Week's Seudat Shelishit** has been **Kindly Sponsored by Dr. & Mrs. Mario Berkowitz** in memory of his **Dear Mother Miriam Bat Raquel z"l** the **5th of Heshvan**. Tihye Nishmata Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!
- **Last Week's Breakfast** was **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Ronen Michael** in Honor of his **Birthday!**
- **This Week's Breakfast** is still available for Sponsorship!
- **Last Week's Daf Yomi** was **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Amichai Shoshan** for the **Success of his family!**
- **This Week's Daf Yomi** is still available for Sponsorship!
- **This Week's Learning** has been **Generously Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Gaston Benzaquen** in memory of his **Dear Grandfather Isaac Bitan Ben Fortuna z"l** the **9th of Heshvan**. Tihye Nishmato Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!
- We are trying to update our **Congregant's contact information**. We would like to start sending texts about different Events and Shiurim. We would also like to start emailing the weekly bulletin. **We would like to start a list of Nahalot/Azkarot/Yahrzeits**. We would also like to make a **Refuah Shelema list**. Please send your contact information to the Board at info@hechalshalom.org

Important Message!!!

Eruv Update: Surfside: The Eruv in Surfside now includes the walking paths along the beach. Pushing strollers and carrying is permitted on the paths, but not beyond the path or onto the beach.

Bal Harbour: The Eruv in Bal Harbour included the inner (western) walking path only. The pier at Haulover Cut is not included.

- Before hanging up anything anywhere in the Bet Hakenesset, please seek authorization from the Board. This includes flyers etc.
- Please be advised that prior to bringing any food or drinks for any occasion, you must first seek the authorization from the Board.

Special Announcements

- We are pleased to announce that Ness 26 is part of the **Amazon Charity Program**, which would allow our community to collect 0.5% of all the orders made by any of you on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). In order to register you need to log on smile.amazon.com and select Ness 26, Inc as the Charitable Organization you want to support, and from then shop on smile.amazon.com instead of www.amazon.com. It won't cost anything more, and is an easy way to contribute to our budget needs.
- Anyone wishing to receive the **Daily Halacha** please send a whatsapp message to Simon Chocron 786-351-1573

Community Calendar:

- **The program for Teenaged Boys** ages 13-18 Started again with Great Succes with Shiur & Supper every **Evening After Mincha** at around at **7:30 pm With Supper**. New Participants Welcome! Anyone wishing to sponsor this Shiur Please contact the Board. Tizke Lemitzvot!
- We have started the **Mishmar Program** Every Thursday evening at 7:30 pm **with Chulent, Beer, & Snacks. Everyone is welcome!**

Refuah Shelema List

<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yosef Zvi Ben Sara Yosefia, • Mordechai Ben Brucha Malka Shmalo • Yizhak Abraham Ben Sheli, • Yosef Yizhak Ben Sara Hana, • Mordechai Ben Miriam, • Meir Raymond Ben Mathilde • Aviv Ben Luba Miriam • Mordechai Ben Mercedes • Yaacov Refael Ben Alegria • Shalom Gibly Ben Fortuna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaac Ben Mesoda, • Haim Ben Marcelle, • Yizhak Ben Simja • Michael Ben Aliza, • Avraham Ben Leah • Menahem Ben Shira • Moshe Ben Rahel • David Ben Freha Rina • Netanel Sayegh Bar Rosa
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simja Bat Esther, • Rachel Bat Sarah, • Nina Bat Rachel, • Gitel Rina Bat Yael, • Miriam Bat Sofy, • Rahma Bat Simha • Esther Bat Fortuna • Malka Bat Dina • Raizel Bat Miriam • Leah Bat Rivka • Sol Bat Perla • Chana Bat Bilha • Yael Bat Rut
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Leticia Bat Mesoda, • Alegria Simha Bat Esther, • Naomie Bat Rarel Adda, • Malka Bat Joyce Simja, • Sivan Simha Bat Yehudit, • Natalie Rachel Bat Nancy, • Abigael Haya Bat Esther • Madeleine Bat Esther • Nurit Jacqueline Bat Rahel • Marcelle Mesoda Bat Alegria • Eva Bat Yael Khayat • Camouna Bat Fortuna

Hechal Shalom / Or Oziel

We Would like to Wholeheartedly
Thank our Dear Friends

Mr. & Mrs.
Akiva Mendoza

For generously Donating
the Rent of

MarHeshvan 5782

In Honor of Rabbi Elmaleh & his family
& for Hakarat Hatov to everyone
in our Dear Community!

We truly appreciate it.

In this Merit,

May Hashem Bless you & your
Wonderful Family with all
the Berachot of the Torah



DAF YOMI SPONSORS



THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF THE DAF YOMI

IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE KAMHAZI FAMILY

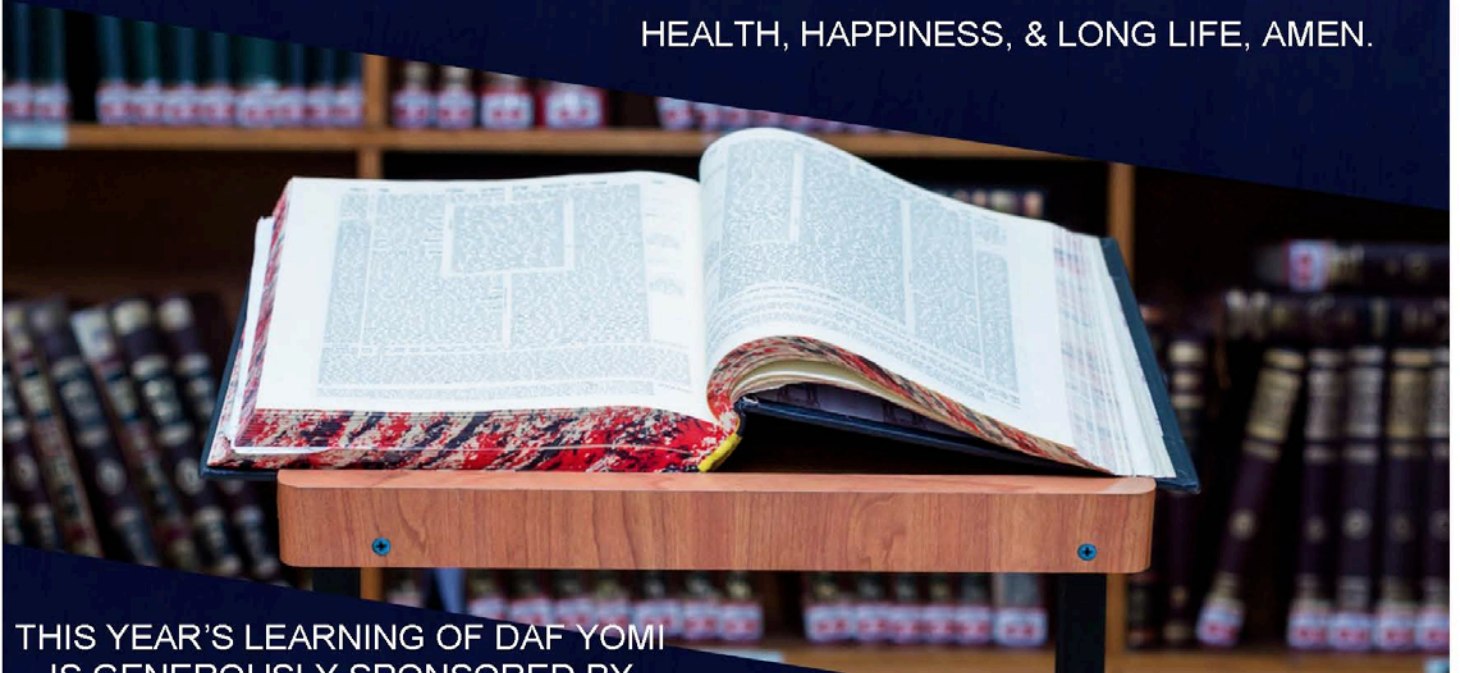
IN MEMORY OF THEIR DEAR FATHER

SHELOMO BEN YAAKOV Z"L

& FOR HATZLACHA OF THE WHOLE FAMILY.

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH

HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE, AMEN.



THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF DAF YOMI
IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE AKKAD FAMILY

LEILUY NISHMAT

אברהם בן גרסי-ה ז"ל, שלמה בן תמם ז"ל,
אליהו בן רחל ז"ל, ותמם בת אורו ז"ל
תנצב"ה

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE,
AMEN.

THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF DAF YOMI
IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE BITTON FAMILY

LEILUY NISHMAT

OF THEIR DEAR FATHER
DAVID BEN MESSODA Z"L

& FOR HATZLACHAT AM YISRAEL.

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE, AMEN.



We would like to Wholeheartedly Thank our Dear Friends,

Dr. & Mrs. Meir Berkowitz

for generously Donating the TORAH LEARNING of

Heshvan 5782

Leiluy Nishmat his Dear Mother Miriam Bat Raquel z'l, & their Dear Grandparents Jacobo & Lea Burdeinick z'l & Elimelech & Yoli Blotki z'l

Tihye Nishmatam Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!

& Beracha & Hatzlacha of our Kehila Hechal Shalom!

We truly appreciate it. In this merit may Hashem Bless you & your wonderful family with all the Berachot of the Torah. Amen.

Happy Birthday To

- Jonathan Werta – Sun. Oct 10th,
- Binyamin Perez – Thurs. Oct 14th,
- Abraham Israel Allouche – Fri. Oct 15th,
- Candice Levine – Shabb. Oct 16th,
- Lindsay Hooze – Sun. Oct 17th,
- Sigal Bendahan – Mon. Oct 18th,
- Gabrielle Shalom Cohen Scali – Mon. Oct 18th,
- Rivka Benmergui – Fri. Oct 22nd,
- Saadia Aquinin – Sun. Oct 24th,
- Lea Guigui – Wed. Oct 27th,
- Mrs. Esther Sitbon – Wed. Oct 27th,
- Yosef Avraham Becker – Fri. Oct 29th,
- Mrs. Estrella Bendahan – Fri. Oct 29th,
- Saadia Aquinin – Shabb. Oct 30th,
- Mr. Meir Benhayoun – Shabb. Oct 30th,
- Shimon Shoshan – Shabb. Oct 30th,
- Mr. Remy Allouche – Sun. Oct 31st,

Happy Anniversary To

- Netanel Yizhak & Etti Perez Oct 11th.
- Meyer & Luna Benhayoun Oct 17th

Nahalot

- Chouchan Mamou Bar Mimoun z'l the 3rd of Heshvan (Father of Mr. Mamou)(Shabbat)
- Miriam Berkowitz Bat Rahel z'l the 5th of Heshvan (Mother of Dr. Meir Berkowitz)
- Daniel Ben Ita Moore z'l the 6th of Heshvan (Brother of Mr. Richard Moore)
- Yosef Sayegh z'l the 9th of Heshvan (Father of Mr. Charles Sayegh)
- Isaac Bitan Ben Fortuna z'l the 9th of Heshvan (Grandfather of Mr. Gaston Benzaquen)

Next Shabbat:

- Yitzchak Vaturi Ben Reuven z'l the 13th of Heshvan (Grandfather of Mr. Mark, Ronny, & Max Aquinin)
- Shelomo Belecen Bar Clara z'l the 15th of Heshvan (Father of Mr. Abraham Belecen)

WEEKLY INSPIRATION

Noah and Abraham

(Rabbi Eli Mansour from Daily Halacha)

The Torah in the opening verse of Parashat Noah describes Noah's piety with two adjectives: "Sadik" and "Tamim." Later (7:1), however, just before the flood, G-d instructed Noah to enter the ark "because I have seen that you are a 'Sadik' before Me in this generation." Whereas initially Noah is described as both a "Sadik" and a "Tamim," he is now described as only a "Sadik." Why?

The Bet Yosef (Rav Yosef Karo, author of the Shulhan Aruch, 1488-1575) explains that "Sadik" and "Tamim" refer to Noah's resistance to the evil that characterized two different ages. Noah lived both during the generation of the flood, whose sinfulness involved mainly the area of Arayot (forbidden intimate relationships), and during the generation of the Tower of Babel, who sinned by lacking faith in G-d. The Torah therefore says that Noah was a "Sadik" – referring to his avoiding sins of Arayot – and a "Tamim" – referring to his unwavering belief and faith in G-d. When the Torah first introduces Noah, it praises him for being a "Sadik" even in a time of widespread promiscuity, and for later being a "Tamim" during a time of widespread heresy. But when G-d spoke to Noah right before the flood, He told Noah that he would be saved "because I have seen that you are a 'Sadik' before Me in this generation." The relevant point at this time was his being a "Sadik" in contrast to the people of that generation, not the fact that he would later prove to be "Tamim."

The Kerem Shelomo (Rav Shelomo Halberstam of Bobov, 1908-2000) offers a different explanation. He suggests that a "Sadik" is a person who builds himself into a righteous individual, whereas a "Tamim" – "complete person" – is someone who also seeks to teach, inspire and influence others. The Kerem Shelomo proves this meaning of the word "Tamim" from the famous verse in

Tehillim (19:8), "Torat Hashem Temima Meshibat Nafesh" (literally, "G-d's Torah is complete, restoring the soul"). The Torah is called "Temima" (the feminine form of "Tamim") when it succeeds in "Meshibat Nafesh" – returning souls, inspiring people to repent and grow. One's Torah becomes "complete" when it impacts others. The description "Tamim," then refers to a pious person's efforts to teach and inspire the people around him.

Initially, the Kerem Shelomo writes, Noah was both a "Sadik" and a "Tamim." He was personally righteous, and he also invested effort to try to have an impact upon the sinful people of time. However, these efforts did not meet with success. His contemporaries ridiculed and scorned him. And so Noah despaired, and withdrew. He stopped trying to have a positive influence on the people around him, and so he remained just a "Sadik," no longer being a "Tamim."

Rashi, commenting to the opening verse to Parashat Noah, cites those who comment that had Noah lived in the time of Abraham Abinu, he would not have been considered especially righteous. Although he was considered pious in his generation, he would not have been regarded as such in Abraham's generation. The reason, the Kerem Shelomo explains, is because Abraham persisted in his efforts to influence his contemporaries. He suffered no less hostility than Noah did. In fact, the Midrash relates that Abraham's own father turned him over to the authorities and had him sentenced to execution for destroying idols. Unlike Noah, however, Abraham did not despair. He persisted, determined to do everything he could to spread the belief in G-d and influence the people of his time. This is why Noah was considered lesser than Abraham. Although they both made heroic efforts to influence the people of their respective generations, Noah stopped when these efforts did not succeed, whereas Abraham kept trying.

The Mishna in Pirkeh Avot (2:8) teaches, "Im Lamadeta Torah Harbeh, Al Tahazik Toba Le'asmecha, Ki Lechach Nosarta," which is commonly understood to mean, "If you

learned lots of Torah, do not take pride in yourself, because for this you were created." In other words, one should not feel excessively proud over his accomplishments in Torah learning, because he has simply fulfilled the purpose for which he was created. However, Hacham Baruch Ben-Haim explained that this Mishna could be read to mean that an accomplished Torah scholar must not hold ("Tahazik") the "goodness" ("Toba") – the precious Torah he studied – to himself ("Le'asmecha"). Rather, he should use his knowledge and insight to try to influence others, "because for this you were created" – we are here to make a positive impact upon the world.

The difference between Noah and Abraham teaches us that we must remain committed to this goal even if our efforts do not at first appear fruitful. Even if we encounter hardship and resistance in our efforts to spread Torah and inspire people, we must not despair. We must always remember that "because for this you were created," we are here to help improve the world, and so even when this proves difficult, we must follow the example of Abraham Abinu and persist, continuing to expend whatever efforts we can to have a positive influence upon the people around us.

A True Sadik

(Rabbi Eli Mansour)

The Torah describes Noah as having been righteous "Be'dorotav" – "in his generation." Rashi cites two views in explaining this term. One opinion explains that Noah was righteous despite the fact that he lived among corrupt, sinful people, and if he had lived among righteous people, he would have achieved a far higher level of piety. Others, however, explained that to the contrary, Noah was righteous only in relation to the wicked people among whom he lived. If he had lived in the times of Abraham Abinu, he would not have been regarded as a righteous man.

What was Noah's flaw? Why would he have not been considered righteous in Abraham's time?

Several commentators explain that Noah's failure lay in his inability to inspire his contemporaries to change. He spent 120 years constructing an ark, and yet, throughout that period, he did not convince even one person to repent; not a single person was moved to undergo Teshuba by the knowledge that G-d would be bringing a flood because of the people's sins. This failure compromised Noah's stature, such that in the generation of Abraham, he would not have stood out as a righteous figure.

The question, however, remains, why did Noah fail in this regard? Why was he unable to inspire and lead people away from sin?

Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky (1891-1986) suggested that Noah did not properly understand the people. He criticized them for worshipping idols, without recognizing the root cause of the problem. The people worshipped idols not out of strong ideological conviction, but rather because idol worship allows engaging in immorality. In order to avoid the need for restraint, the people worshipped idols which, they claimed, allowed unrestrained indulgence. Noah failed to understand this, and thus his efforts to teach the people were ineffective.

It was because of this failure, Rav Yaakov notes, that one view cited by Rashi considers Noah less of a Sadik. A true Sadik is somebody who deeply cares about and loves others, to the point where he keenly understands them and why they act as they do. The fact that Noah failed to effectively criticize the people demonstrates that he did not sufficiently understand them, a result of his inadequate concern. And thus while he was certainly a Sadik, he would not have stood out in the times of Abraham Abinu, who truly cared about and understood the people around him, such that he was able to effect real and meaningful change.

The Path to Decadence Begins Very Subtly

(Rabbi Frand from Torah.org)

Parashat Noah describes in detail the decadence of the Generation of the Flood. They were corrupt and amoral, engaging in forbidden relationships, in theft, and in such degenerate practices that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* eventually had to destroy the entire society with the exception of Noah and his family.

In light of this, it is difficult to understand the following Midrash Tanhuma. The Midrash writes: How far did the sin of the *Dor HaMabul* extend? Their problem was that they used to say "We don't want to know the opinion of the Torah (*Da'at Torah ayn anu mevakshim*)". At face value, this is a very difficult Midrash to understand. The *pasuk* states the extent of their decadence. So what does the Midrash mean that they were destroyed because "they did not seek out *Da'at Torah*"?

I saw in a *sefer* that the Midrash is not trying to understand "how bad it became." The Midrash is trying to understand "How did it all begin?" It did not start with extreme decadence. It started out far more subtly. Slowly but surely, things have a tendency to unravel. They throw this away, they throw that away, until they arrive at a terribly low spiritual level. But that is not where it all starts. So, when this Midrash asks about the nature of the corruption of the *Dor HaMabul*, the question is not about the end result. The Midrash inquires: How did it all begin? Where did they go wrong that an entire generation could sink so low?

On this the Midrash answers – because they were not interested in learning "the Torah's opinions about matters." This means that they did not try to understand what the Torah really asks of human beings. There is an expression, "There are the lines, and then there are the 'between the lines.'" The *Dor HaMabul* did not want to know what the 'between the lines' were. They asked, "Does it say you cannot do this?" It was because that attitude was so pervasive that eventually they sank to the level spelled out in the Torah.

For instance, the Midrash says on the *pasuk*, "For the earth was filled with *chamas* (robbery) because of them." [Bereshit 6:13]: This is what the people of that generation often did: They would walk by a fellow who sold pickles (the

Midrash actually gives the example of selling lupines, but since no one here has ever seen a lupine, we will speak about pickles). The seller had a barrel of pickles. Someone passes by and takes a pickle without paying for it. The seller yells "thief!" The customer argues "I am not a thief. The value of a single pickle is not even worth a *perutah*!" A second customer walks by, sees what the first customer got away with, and he also takes a pickle. "It's worth less than a *shaveh perutah*; this is not *gezel*; you cannot take me to court!" And so, it went the entire day until by evening the seller had no pickles left and no income.

What was this attitude? How did they come to this state of corruption? It was because they felt "You cannot take me to court for less than a *perutah* value of merchandise!" That was their attitude.

Now, when the Torah says, "Don't steal!" we understand that a person will not be brought to court for stealing less than a *perutah* in value, but what is "*Da'ata shel Torah*?" What is the Torah's intent when formulating this commandment? The Torah's intent is "You do not do that!!!" It is not right! Do not tell me "You can't sue me! You can't take me to court!" That may be the letter of the law, but that is not the spirit of the law.

When the Midrash Tanchuma places the expression "*Da'ata shel Torah ayn anu mevakshim*" (we do not seek the Torah's opinion on the matter) in the mouths of the pre-*Mabul* populace, they are expressing the sentiment of people who ignore the Torah's intent in formulating a legal system. The Torah's intent is that this pickle guy should not be left with no pickles and no income. This is not right! The Torah does not want that. This too is *chamas* (robbery).

Later on, when Sarah is angry with Avraham for not sticking up for her in her argument with Hagar, she uses the expression "*Chamasi alecha*" [Bereshit 16:5]. This is the same root as the word *Chamas* here by the *Dor HaMabul*. The Midrash there comments that the word *Chamas* in the expression *Chamasi alecha* means "failure to speak up." "I am your wife; she is your handmaiden. You see how she is talking to me, and you did not say

anything to object! You withheld your words!" The commentaries explain – Avraham withheld the words that he should have used to speak up in protest to Hagar. He withheld them, thereby "stealing them" from Sarah, so to speak.

This is a far finer spiritual shortcoming than the incident with the pickles, but it can sometimes be *chamas* **not** to say anything! The Gemara says [Berachot 6b] there is something called *Gezel ha'Ani*. Rashi explains that when a pauper says 'Good morning' to you and you do not respond, that is considered *Gezel* and *Chamas*! (You withhold an item from him – your 'Good morning' – that he rightfully has coming to him).

From where does this idea come? It is *Da'ata shel Torah* – it is the "spirit of the law." This is what is "between the lines" of the Torah's instruction to us.

The Ramban on Parashat Va'Etchanan contains an idea which, in my humble opinion, is one of the most important teachings of the Ramban in his entire Chumash commentary. On the pasuk "You should do that which is right and good (*yashar v'tov*) in the Eyes of G-d..." [Devarim 6:18], the Ramban explains that this *pasuk* comes to include a command to also do that which is **not** spelled out in the Torah. Even if the Torah does not say it black on white, a person is nevertheless supposed to understand and try to define "What does Hashem want from me?"

The Torah cannot legislate every single thing that might happen in the world. How is a person supposed to know? The answer is the Torah tells us to "Do the right thing". Whatever is "*yashar*" (straight, with integrity) is the "opinion of Torah." The sin of the *Dor HaMabul* was that they refused to see the implications of the Torah, what the spirit of the law was, and what G-d wants from human beings. If that is a person's starting point, eventually he winds up at the level of "The land became corrupted before the L-rd and the land was filled with robbery." [Bereshit 6:11].

The Talmud [Baba Kamma 102a] states "All of Nezikin is a single tractate." The Ramban writes that this means that the tractates of

Baba Kamma, Baba Metzia, and Baba Batra constitute a single Talmudic entity." What does this mean?

It means the following: Baba Kamma is about damaging one's neighbor. The *Achronim* say that *Nezek* (damage) is a form of *Gezel* (theft). Later chapters in Baba Kamma are all about theft – *Merubeh*, *haGozel Etzim*. *Nezek*, *Gezel*, *HaChovel* – these are serious matters!

Baba Metzia is not about such blatant and overt things. Baba Metzia involves arguments between neighbors – I found this *Talit* first, no I found the *Talit* first; questions about how to pay workers and when to pay workers. In Baba Metzia we are not talking about crude theft and damages, we are speaking about refined monetary questions. Responsibilities regarding the returning of lost items – this is Baba Metzia.

What is Baba Batra? Baba Batra is about my own property I am not allowed to do things that may disturb my neighbor. The smell may bother him, the sight may bother him, he does not like that I can see into his window. That is Baba Batra. By strict Torah law, there are no such restrictions. If I want to have a pig farm that is piled high with manure in my back yard – where does the Torah specifically prohibit such practice? It does not! If the neighbor has a problem with the smell – let him move somewhere else! From the strict Torah law, this might be permitted, but that is not what the Torah is about.

All of Nezikin is one tractate – Baba Kamma, Baba Metzia, and Baba Batra. It starts out in Baba Kamma with crude theft and damage. It ends with Baba Basra which is "polite theft" (*Eidele Gezelah*). It is not even about *Gezelah*. It is about being a good neighbor. Where does it say in the Torah to be a good neighbor? That is, in fact, exactly what the Torah is all about. That is what the *Dor HaMabul* failed to see.

The Lesson of a Zeida's Influence and Imprint

(Rabbi Frand from Torah.org)

Toward the end of the parasha, there is a list of generations following Noah, which include the following information: "And Cush gave birth to Nimrod. He was the first to be a mighty man on earth. He was a mighty hunter before *Hashem*; therefore, it is said: 'Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before *Hashem*'. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar. From this land, Ashur went forth and built Nineveh, Rehovoth-ir, Clalah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah, that is the great city." [Bereshit 10:8-12].

What is the purpose of these *pesukim*? Who pays attention to this? Rashi explains what it means that Nimrod was "a mighty man." Rashi says the name Nimrod comes from the fact that this individual instigated a *mered* (rebellion), in which he aroused the entire world to rebel against the Almighty, in what became known as the *Dor Hahaflaga* (Generation of the Dispersion). Nimrod was the instigator of the project to build the Tower of Babel, which was a symbol of mankind's rebellion against Heaven. Rashi interprets the words *Gibor Tzayid* (mighty hunter) to mean that he entrapped the people with the arguments of his mouth, convincing them to rebel against *Hashem*. He talked a sweet game, and he used his powers of persuasion for distancing the population of the world from their Creator. Any person who has the audacity to be disrespectful of the *Ribono shel Olam* is called a "Nimrod" (rebel). He knows there is a G-d, and he willingly chooses to rebel against Him.

Then the *pasuk* says "from this land Ashur went forth." Rashi comments: When Ashur saw his children becoming ensnared and entrapped in the persuasive powers of Nimrod leading them to rebel against G-d, and participate in the building of the Tower, he left them! Ashur said, "I have had it! I am leaving. I am not going to be part of this. My children are already ensnared by Nimrod, but I am out of here." What did he do? He built the great city – Nineveh.

Nineveh? Does that ring a bell? Of course, it rings a bell! "...For Nineveh was a great city to the L-rd..." [Yonah 3:3] (I am told that the city of

Mosul which is in Iraq is the ancient city of Nineveh.) Nineveh did *Teshuvah*. This is the story of Sefer Yonah. The whole city – all the *Goyim* – everybody did *Teshuvah*. Where did this come from? It came from the fact that Nineveh had a founder – a great-great-grandfather – Ashur, who proclaimed, "I am not going to be part of Nimrod!" He left. He built a city called Nineveh.

There is quite a bit of time between the times of Noah and the times of Yonah ben Amitai. This is a lesson to us of the imprint and influence a *Zeida* (Grandfather) can have. Because he did not want to have any part of Nimrod's project and heresies – I am going to build my own city! – that city turned out to be "the shining city on the hill" called Nineveh. Such is the power of an ancestor.

Many times in life there are people who are *Tzadikim*, who are *moser nefesh for Torah* and *mitzvot* – and we look at their parents and we even look at their grandparents and we say: From where did they get this inspiration? The parents and grandparents are very simple individuals. We ask – what is the source of such spiritual greatness? The answer is that this person could have had a great-great-grandfather who is long gone and buried. The great-great-grandfather was a *Yare Shamayim*, a *Talmid Hacham*, a holy Jew! Those seeds lie deep in the recesses of this person's DNA. This is the story of Ashur and Nineveh. Ashur walked away from Nimrod's rebellion and started a city of his own, which generations later became an *Ir Gedolah L'Elokim*.

Noah Invents Retirement

(Rabbi Frand)

Retirement: A Concept Introduced by Noah for Noachides

The Medrash Shohar Tov in Tehillim says that three righteous individuals were the foundation of the earth. Adam, Noah, and Avraham. There is an expression that is used all too commonly. We refer to a person as a "*Tzadik Yesod Olam*" [A righteous person, foundation of the world]. There are plenty of

righteous people, but the accolade "*Tzadik Yesod Olam*" is a very specific title referring to a very special type of righteous person: A *Tzadik* who is literally "the foundation of the world."

The world rests, so to speak, on the shoulders of such a *Tzadik*. Today there has been inflation in many areas. There is "grade inflation" in schools. Everything is inflated. Today, coming three times a day to daven with a minyan already seems to qualify a person as a "*Tzadik Yesod Olam*." This is an overstated exaggeration that cheapens a title that should be reserved for truly unique individuals. The Medrash says only the three aforementioned people deserve this title: Adam, Noah, and Avraham.

The Almighty created the world. He had envisioned that the world would come to perfection through the First Man. Adam was a "*Tzadik Yesod Olam*." Unfortunately, as we all know, within the first day of his creation, Adam sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge and the potential that was within him for the perfection of the universe went by the wayside.

The Almighty waited ten generations. There is a connection between the "Ten Generations" and the "Ten Utterances" with which the world was created. He waited ten generations to come up with another individual who had the potential to be the "*Tzadik Yesod Olam*" — the righteous individual upon whom the world would rest. That person was Noah. But unfortunately, in the interval of the ten generations that came into existence from Adam to Noah, the world had "gone down the tube." The Almighty did find Noah to be a *Tzadik*, and despite the fact that He decided to destroy the entire world, "Noah found favor in the Eyes of the L-rd" and Noah became the next person upon whom the Almighty wished to base the world. The *Ribono shel Olam*, as it were, started over with Noah — a new world.

Noah was to be the *Tzadik Yesod Olam*. Noah was saved. He saved the world. He repopulated the world. Those who came after him are not called "Children of Adam," they are called "Children of Noah". We are direct descendants of Noah because all other

descendants of Adam were destroyed. Noah, after saving the world, emerged from the Teba and "And Noah, the man of the earth, debased himself (*vaYachel Noah*) by planting a vineyard." [Bereshit 9:20]. Rashi quotes Chazal that the word *vaYachel* implies debasement. Rashi points out that out of all the things that someone could plant, Noah should not have planted a vineyard.

Noah did plant a vineyard, he drank the wine, he became drunk, and Noah also failed in his mission to be the *Tzadik Yesod Olam*. Once again, it was not destined that the whole world should come to perfection during the days of Noah.

The *Ribono shel Olam* waited another ten generations — the "Ten Generations from Noah until Avraham." Finally, the Almighty found in the patriarch Avraham the *Tzadik Yesod Olam* for whom He had been waiting for twenty generations! Avraham Avinu had Yitzchak. Yitzchak had Yaakov. And Yaakov had the Tribes of G-d (*Shivte K-ah*). We, *Klal Yisrael*, are the descendants of Yaakov and we are supposed to carry on this mission of bringing the world to perfection.

That which Noah failed to do; Avraham Avinu accomplished. The question is — this Noah, with which we begin the parasha — "Noah, was a completely righteous man in his generation" (This is not a paid announcement in a newspaper where you find all kinds of titles used; this is the *Ribono shel Olam* talking! He does not use such terminologies carelessly) — does appear to have the makings of a *Tzadik Yesod Olam*. And yet he went from being "*Tzadik Tamim*" [completely righteous] [Bereshit 6:9] to be coming an "*Ish Adamah*" [man of the earth] [Bereshit 9:20].

Chazal point out that Moshe began as a shepherd and he ended his life as an *Ish haElokim* [a man of G-d]. Noah, somehow, went in the other direction. How did this happen to Noah? How did this person who had such potential, and in whom the Almighty saw such potential — how did it happen to him that the first thing he did after leaving the Teba was planting a vineyard and getting drunk?

There is a Sefer on Chumash called *Hikre Lev* from a Rabbi Leibel Hyman Z"l (an old-time Baltimorean who was a Rosh Yeshiva in America, and who later moved to *Eretz Yisrael* where he was a Rav). He suggests a theory as to what happened to Noah:

During the whole period of the Flood, Noah had a horrible time. He was not enjoying life on a cruise ship. Besides the fact that the whole world was destroyed, and he was aware of that, Noah literally could not sleep. There are animals that eat during the day and there are nocturnal animals that eat during the night. Just feeding the animals – every single species that was in the world – by the time Noah came out of the Teba, he was a broken man to say the least. He was, however, a man who felt that he accomplished his mission. He literally saved the world. From now on, everyone is going to be a *Ben Noah* – one of his descendants! What more can people accomplish in this world than what Noah accomplished? He saved the world and he saved it at great personal stress and pain. The experience was horrible!

When a person feels “I have done my job in this world” certain emotions go with that feeling: It is time for me to relax, to take off my shoes, put my feet up on the table, lean back, and enjoy myself. It is time for me to call it a career, call it a lifetime. The way Noah envisioned doing that was to plant a vineyard and drink the produce thereof and enjoy life. His attitude was: I have it coming! I earned it! I did what I was supposed to do! What else do You want from me?

Herein lies Noah's tragic mistake. There is no such thing as “I did my job. Now I can go and retire.” One can retire when he is in the grave. Until that time, we have a mission to complete. No matter how great the accomplishment that we have had in this world thus far, this world is “today to do it; and tomorrow to receive reward.” [Eruvin 22a]

The *Hikre Lev* makes a very interesting sociological observation. There is a common —almost universal — opinion in the world that after a person completes his job he retires. That, he says, is a concept for Children of Noah. It started with Noah. This was Noah's

gift to the world — the idea of retirement. Therefore, his descendants — Bne Noah — follow in his footsteps. If you are lucky, you can do it at 62, if you retire on full Social Security, you can do it at 66, if you become a millionaire, you can do it at 54, and so forth. But at some point, you retire. And then what do you do? I don't know. You can travel the country, you can read the paper, you can take up bridge.

That is not what the *Ribono shel Olam* expected from human beings. Retirement is something a Jew should never think about. That does not mean that a person can never stop working a job. But no one should have the attitude “I am finished. I can sit back and relax now.”

I recently met someone who had a heart attack at a young age. I had lunch with him, I was sitting and talking with him, and I asked, “How is your health?” He told me, “Baruch Hashem, I can take care of myself now.” Then he told me, “My doctor is retiring.” This can be a traumatic event. Someone may have been with a doctor for thirty, forty, or fifty years. Now that he knows my conditions and my medical history so well, he is retiring. Who am I going to start with now?

His doctor — who was a religious Jew — retired on August 31st. My friend, who had been this doctor's patient, davens in a Kollel in a certain city. On September 1, who should walk into the Kollel? It was his former doctor, with an Artscroll Gemara Berachot under his arm. He is retired. A person does not need to practice medicine — or accounting or law or computers or whatever it is — for his entire life. People should live and be well! But a person must do something. A person needs to do something worthwhile and fulfilling.

That was Noah's mistake. “I already did what I was supposed to do. What else do You want from me? Now I am going to sit back and enjoy myself.” That is a *Bne Noah* attitude — not a *Bne Yisrael* type of attitude.

Avraham Avinu came. He was the third *Tzadik Yesod Olam*. That which Adam could not accomplish, and Noah could not accomplish, Avraham was able to accomplish. Not only did

he accomplish, but he fixed this false ideology of Noah. How is that?

The Ramban says that the tenth of the Ten Tests with which Avraham Avinu was tested was the burial of Sara. After the *Akeda* [Binding of Yitzchak], Avraham Avinu needed to go and bargain on the price of a plot for Sara, even though the *Ribono shel Olam* had already promised him all of *Eretz Yisrael*. This is the tenth test. Everyone asks the question: Okay, it was a hassle. It was unpleasant. He might be distressed. However, if test number nine was *Akedat Yitzchak* and Avraham passed the test successfully, is test number ten not somewhat anticlimactic? It does not seem to be on the same scale at all! Why is that the ultimate test?

The answer is that this does not suggest that burying Sara was more difficult than the *Akeda*. The *Akeda* was the most difficult test — to be asked to slaughter one's beloved son. Nothing surpasses the difficulty of that! But after the *Akeda* and eight prior tests, Avraham could well have thought "I reached the pinnacle." I passed the ultimate test. He could have had the thought "I have been to the mountain! What more do You want from me? Enough already! What do You want from me, Master of the Universe?" No! That was not his attitude.

Avraham had no complaints. He had no questions. He went from the *Akeda* to dealing with the hassle of negotiation with Ephron and paying an exorbitant price for a burial plot for his wife, Sara. That is why it is the tenth test. It is the test of how a person deals with life after he figures and feels that he is entitled to the easy life now. He rejects the tendency to claim, "I did what I had to do, now give me a break!"

By passing the tenth test, Avraham Avinu corrected the sin of Noah, beginning the legacy of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov — the legacy that no matter what we have done in our lives, it is not over until literally the *Chevra Kadisha* comes or until we are physically unable to continue.

Again, this is not suggesting that we need to die in our offices. No one in the history of

mankind ever said on his death bed in regret, "I wish I spent more time in the office." However, we must remain productive. When we reach the "Golden Years," while we can perhaps "sit back" and take it easy from our work, we must remember that the Jewish approach remains, "It is today when it must be done; and tomorrow when the reward will be received."

Parashat Noah

(Rabbi Zev Leff)

"And as for Me - Behold I am about to bring the Flood-waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which there is a breath of life under the heavens; everything that is in the earth shall expire" (Bereshit 6 17).

The prophet Yeshayahu (54 9) refers to the Flood as "me Noah"- the waters of Noah- thereby implying that Noah bears at least partial responsibility for the Flood. Sforno suggests that Noah's failure lay in failing to teach his generation to know Hashem and to walk in His ways. Had he taught them to know Hashem, they would surely have repented.

We can explain this Sforno as follows. The Midrash comments on the phrase, "the path (derech erez) to the Tree of Life," that derech erez is middot, proper character traits. Middot are the paths that lead to the Tree of Life, the Torah. Hence, "Derech erez precedes Torah." First one refines his middot, and only then can the Torah dwell within him. The Torah cannot reside in one who does not possess good middot "where there is no derech erez there is no Torah" (see Rabbenu Yonah to Pirke Avot 3:22). Even though only Torah can bring one's middot to ultimate perfection, where there is no foundation of proper middot, the acquisition of Torah is impossible.

Rabbenu Yonah's categorical negation of the possibility of Torah residing in one who lacks good middot can be understood in two ways, both true. The first is that a person's lack of good middot make ultimate retention of his Torah knowledge-no matter how great-impossible, because his lack of middot

prevents the Torah from fully meshing with the essence of his soul. Hence, when he leaves this world, the Torah will not accompany him but be left behind with his other external physical components.

An alternative explanation is that even in this world the Torah will not remain with him. This idea can be illustrated with the following anecdote. Rambam had a dispute with a philosopher whether instinct or training is the decisive factor in animal behavior. To prove the efficacy of training, the philosopher taught cats to stand erect, balance trays and serve as waiters. He dressed them for the part and conducted a banquet with the cats as the waiters. Rambam countered his proof by releasing some mice at the banquet. The cats, forgetting all their training, let the trays and dishes crash to the ground as they rushed about on all fours in pursuit of the mice.

Human beings also have their baser instincts and desires that, without training, drag them onto all fours. A human being is distinct from the animals, however, by virtue of his ability to perfect his middot so that they control his baser instincts. One who has not worked on perfecting his middot will, like the trained cat, be able to put on a show of Torah discipline for a time, but only so long as no "mice" are released in his path.

A talmid chacham, says Rambam, is one who has mastered good character traits. Since he has perfected his character, his sins are by their very nature incidental, not symptomatic of basic character flaws. Therefore, we are told that if we see a righteous person sin at night we should assume that by the next day he has repented. Because the sin did not flow from an intrinsic character flaw, he certainly recognized the need to repent in the interim.

Rabbi Chaim Vital explains that middot were not enumerated in the Torah among the Mitzvot because they are the very foundation of all Mitzvot and the Torah itself. It is in his ability to emulate the perfect character traits attributed to Hashem that man is in the image of G-d. One who lacks proper character is therefore deficient in the very essence of humanity.

The Alter from Kelm once remarked that Darwin was able to formulate his theory of evolution only because he had never seen a real human being. Thus, he could view men as no more than smarter monkeys. "Had he seen my rebbe, Reb Yisrael Salanter, who developed his character traits to a degree of perfection that fully expressed the essence of the Divine Image, he never could have entertained the possibility that human beings evolved from monkeys," said the Alter.

Darwin's peers were surely socially respectable people, but with regard to true character development, they remained mere trained cats, whose instinctive desires could at any moment bring them down on all fours.

The sins of immorality and robbery of the generation of the Flood were merely symptoms of the underlying disease of deficient character development. Noah attacked the symptom, but failed to cure the disease. He did not teach them to know Hashem through contemplation of His middot and to walk in His ways by correcting and developing their own character traits. Hence, he was unsuccessful. His rebuke may occasionally have suppressed the symptoms, but they soon reappeared, since the underlying cause had not been treated. Without changing their underlying character, no true repentance was possible.

The Torah describes the generation of the Flood as "rabbas ro'as ha'adam." This can be translated to mean the evil they perpetrated was beyond the boundaries of Adam -of human beings. They corrupted the very essence of their humanity, their middot. Hence, the Midrash says, they were punished measure for measure with the overflowing of the great deep. They destroyed their natural humanity, and therefore the natural order was abrogated and the waters of the deep breached their boundaries and inundated the world. Likewise, the result of the Flood was literally to dissolve their human forms-an external manifestation of their inner spiritual decay.

The mystical works explain that the colors of the rainbow are representations of G-d's middot (attributes). Thus, the rainbow is the

symbol of G-d's promise not to bring another Flood, for by reflecting on and emulating G-d's middot we ensure that another Flood will not be necessary.

Only after the Flood did G-d permit the consumption of meat. Sefer Halkrim explains that mankind prior to the flood equated animal life with human life; man was, in their eyes, reduced to but a glorified and more developed animal. To counter this tragic mistake, Hashem permitted mankind to eat meat. He thereby demonstrated that there is an essential qualitative difference between men and animals that gives us the right to kill them for food. That essential difference is inherent in man's ability to develop and emulate the middot of his Creator.

Unlike Noah, Avraham was able to influence the people of his generation precisely because he concentrated on teaching middot. He was thus able to remedy the disease and not just the symptoms. At the age of three, Avraham knew that there was a G-d, but not until forty, says Rambam, could he be described as "knowing his Creator," i.e., as recognizing Hashem through the comprehension of His middot and their emulation. Only then did Avraham begin to teach his generation. By teaching middot, he succeeded in breaking the idols. He convinced his contemporaries to abandon G-ds made in their image for the service of the true G-d.

Hashem explains His choice of Avraham as the progenitor of the Jewish people: "For I know that he will command his children and household after him that they will keep G-d's way, doing charity and justice" (Bereshit 18:19). Hashem knew that Avraham would direct his descendants in derech Hashem - the path of middot that leads to the Tree of Life, Torah. That is why we, Avraham's descendants, were worthy of eventually receiving the Torah.

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We All Want to Fly: Two Short Messages for My Kids

G-d is speaking to us all the time, if we just look for His messages.

(By Rabbi Nechemia Coopersmith)

My kids and I were outside building our sukkah, surrounded by a bunch of kids from the neighborhood, everyone excited to take part in what seemed to be one of the biggest building projects of the decade.

Two small incidents happened that gave me the opportunity to show my children how G-d speaks to us all the time, if we just look for His messages.

A boy came by with a small blue and white bird perched on his shoulder. We all gathered around mesmerized, taking turns holding the cute bird. It crawled on top of my head and I asked the boy, "Why doesn't the bird fly away?" (I never had a bird growing up and know nothing about birds as pets.)

He answered me in Hebrew, "Because his wings were clipped, and he can't fly."

I was stunned.

"That's terrible! All this bird wants to do is fly, and someone came and brutally disfigured him, robbing him from fulfilling his potential. I could never have a pet like that. It's cruel."

My kids thought I was overdoing it (maybe they had a point), and then I seized the obvious teachable moment. "This is what some parents -- and others -- do to their kids. They clip their wings by holding back their encouragement and telling them that they can't reach their dreams. G-d created them with enormous potential -- they want to fly -- and others prevent them from spreading their wings. Isn't that cruel?"

My 10-year-old son Noah rolled his eyes, but later that day he showed me he got the message. He wanted to borrow my married daughter's sukkah that wasn't being used this year. He promised he'd take full responsibility for it, and get all the additional building materials he'd need. I was skeptical.

With a glint in his eye, he said, “Abba, don’t clip my wings.”

Checkmate.

The boy with the bird left, just as a two-year-old girl started yelling, “Everyone look at me! Everyone look at me!” We all turned. She was hanging on to a short slanted ledge on the side of the building less than a meter off the ground, and wasn’t going to stop screaming until all attention was diverted to her.

My boys laughed at her desperate need for attention.

“Don’t laugh,” I said, “we’re just like her. She’s just more honest and transparent.”

“What do you mean?” Noah asked.

“Well, why do you want your hair to go up in the front? That’s your way of saying, ‘Everyone look at me! Aren’t I cool!’ And why does Meshulam care so much about being in good shape? That’s his way of his saying, ‘Everyone look at me!’ We all crave attention. Let’s make sure we get it for doing meaningful things.”

As we sit in our sukkah under G-d’s sheltering sky, may we be open to seeing His messages and taking them to heart, and may we spread our wings and fly, true to our soul’s mission.

Strike While the Iron is Cold: Don't Argue When You're Angry

Go to bed angry, because the worst time to deal with an issue is when you're mad and upset. (By Rabbi Raffi Bilek)

A wise rabbi taught me, “You can get angry, or you can solve the problem, but you can’t do both.”

If you want to resolve a problem in your relationship and make your relationship better, don’t tackle an emotional problem in the heat of the emotions. The worst time to deal with an issue is while you’re angry.

The Ramifications of Anger

Many couples I’ve worked with have done serious damage to their relationships with things they’ve said in the heat of the moment. Maybe they didn’t mean it; they were fuming at the moment and threw out the first thing that came to their mind – but they can’t un-say it.

When things get hot, you need to get out. Strike while the iron is cold.

The functioning of your brain is impacted by the state of your body. When your heart rate hits about 99 beats per minute, the mature frontal part of your brain shuts down and the lower, reptilian brain takes over. This is the part of the brain that does fight-or-flight, that launches the nastiest comments it can think of, even if the recipient is the person you love most in the world. This is the part of the brain that lives only in the moment and does not plan for the future.

When you’re emotionally ramped up, you can’t make good decisions in that moment. You can’t assess the situation appropriately and come up with a good response.

When you're emotionally ramped up, you can't assess the situation appropriately and come up with a good response.

So when your partner says or does something that really bothers you, that is not the time to talk about it. Bite your tongue (hard, if necessary) and hold yourself back from saying that caustic putdown or sarcastic remark. It’s not worth it. The satisfaction of a secure and loving relationship far outstrips the satisfaction of a good dig.

Leave the room if you have to. Do something else. Distract yourself, calm yourself down. You can write down what’s bothering you if you’re concerned, you’ll forget. A day later you’ll be in a much better position to discuss it in a way that builds rather than breaks the relationship.

When you notice a conversation starting to go sour, it’s time to say, “This conversation isn’t going very well. Let’s take a break and we’ll come back in half hour”, and withdraw, even if your partner insists, “Oh no, we’re going to solve this *right now!*”

It's also helpful to state when you'll come back and resume the conversation – whether it's in half an hour or tomorrow at breakfast, or at 7 PM tonight. Then make sure you come back at that time and show your partner that you're not blowing off an issue that is important to them.

When you're away, don't stew on the problem. Think of something else. Get involved in an activity you like, whether it's yoga or a video game or walking the dog. Clear out our mind and calm down.

The common adage, "Never go to bed angry" is terrible advice. If you're angry, you're not in a position to resolve the issue. Don't bother trying. Take a breather and then work it out, calmly, with rational minds.

It's normal to get angry from time to time. Remember to strike when the iron is cold. You will save innumerable hurts, small and large, to your most important relationship.

Today's Goal Is Patience; **Repeat as Many Times as** **Necessary**

How to deal with people's total lack of consideration. (By Emuna Braverman)

We took one of our grandchildren on trip to New York recently (which now means we have to take all of our grandchildren, but that's another story!). We played tourist and did all those things you secretly want to do but are too embarrassed to acknowledge, including a ride on a horse and carriage in Central Park. We had a great time and so did she.

At many of the tourist sites, there is someone stationed at the entrance offering to take your picture – and someone at the exit trying to sell it to you for an exorbitant price. In most cases we just refused the initial offer. But at one particular spot (which shall remain nameless for reasons that follow) we decided to horse around and take a sort of goofy picture. So we were open to seeing it and even possibly purchasing it. We couldn't figure out how to view the picture, so we waited at the check-out while the cashier was on the phone.

We waited and we waited and we waited. The employee kept her head down so it was impossible to even ask her a quick question or make any hand motions. The conversation droned on as she continued to ignore us and we continued to wait, thoughts of a really cute souvenir of our trip dominating our minds. She finally put down the phone and looked up.

"How do we view our photo?" we asked.

"Oh, the machine's broken," she replied. "You'll have to look it up online when you get home."

I was really frustrated. Not because I didn't get the picture. Not even because of the time spent standing in line. But because of her rudeness. She could have lifted her head up for two seconds and told us it was broken. She could have asked the person she was speaking with to hold for a minute while she explained the situation. She could have even written it down on a piece of paper as she talked and, without even missing a beat, she could have shown it to us, and we would have been on our way.

I was upset by the lack of consideration. It's very easy to go on a rant about the lack of customer service these days (how many sales help are on their phones and resent the interruption?) but I actually think it's deeper than that. It really reflects a complete indifference to other people, a complete lack of concern for them and their time and/or needs.

It's more frustrating when it's a situation where we are a paying customer but the lack of good character is troubling, job or not. To make us stand and wait (or perhaps she hoped we'd just give up and go away) while she carried on her (most likely personal) conversation was thoughtless and inconsiderate (besides being bad business).

The temptation in these circumstances is to respond out of frustration, anger or resentment. But I know it's not who I want to be.

And I believe that the way most of us behave in these situations, jobs or not, is probably similar to the way we act in our more personal

and important relationships. If you're rude at work, it's unlikely you're all smiles and thoughtfulness at home. And the converse is probably true as well. This makes the trend more disturbing because it seems to reflect a breakdown in character across society. And that should give us all pause.

The temptation in these circumstances is to respond out of frustration, anger or resentment. The challenge, as in all similar scenarios, is not to stoop to their level. In fact the ideal would be to use it as an opportunity for growth. In our case, I had my granddaughter looking on and I knew she was watching (and that my behavior would be reported to her mother) so I had extra incentive to control myself.

But even without her there, even without the heavier reminder that the Almighty is always watching, I know it's not who I want to be. I know that I just want to find a way to take advantage of the situation, no matter how unlikely the possibility seems.

In this and in many of the other times when we are in public forums – at the grocery store, the department store, on a crowded street – I like to tell myself what personality trait I'm working on. Today's goal is "patience" I will repeat. Over and over and over if necessary. Until it sinks in. Until I can wait calmly. Until a smile returns to my face.

With that reframe, frustrating encounters become opportunities for growth. I still think the tourist site alluded to above should up their game, fix their photo machine (it was probably such a cute picture!) and hire better help. But we still had a good time and I got to become a more patient human being as well. Win-win from my perspective.

DAILY HALACHA

Halachot of Shabbat

(Daily Halacha)

Folding a Tallit and other Garments on Shabbat

The Shulhan Aruch (302:3) presents restrictions regarding folding clothes on Shabbat. It should be noted that there was the opinion of the Kol Bo, one of the Rishonim (Early Authorities) that the prohibition of folding mentioned in the Talmud does not apply nowadays, as our clothing and folding are different. Clearly, Maran did not accept that opinion.

The Shulhan Aruch does permit folding only against the crease, as this has less of an effect on the garment. The Poskim disagree as to whether the leniency of folding against the crease is only if it is done L'Sorech Shabbat. This is the position of the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909). However, the Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, 1839-1933), based on the Elyah Rabba, understands that the leniency applies in all circumstances.

According to many opinions, including the Ben Ish Hai and Hacham Ovadia, one should not fold his Tallit on the crease. Other Poskim, including the Eres Haim, Poal Eliyahu and Shemesh U'Magen, state that the Minhag was to fold the Tallit on the crease. This was also the Minhag of Haleb. If someone has that custom, there is room to be lenient.

Hacham Ovadia rules that according to the stricter opinion, one may continue to fold against the crease, and not be concerned that he is forming a new crease, as long as the original crease is still recognizable. However, Shemirat Shabbat K'hilhata cites Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Aurbach (Jerusalem, 1910-1995) that in order to avoid this problem, one should re-fold his Tallit on Mosa'eh Shabbat according to the original crease. However, Hacham Ovadia rejected this stringency.

SUMMARY: One should not fold his Tallit along the original crease on Shabbat, but against it. It is not necessary to re-fold the Tallit on the crease on Mosa'eh Shabbat. Those who have the custom to fold the Tallit on the crease have what to rely on & This is the Moroccan Custom.

KIDZ CORNER

INTERESTING MIDRASH

(from Torah Tots)

Miscellaneous Mabul Survivors

The Torah teaches us that Noah, his family, two of each non-kosher animal and seven pairs of each kosher animal boarded the Teyva (ark) to wait out the flood.

But they weren't the only survivors.

Og, the giant, was given permission to board the Teyva, since he would later become a servant to Avrohom. Not able to fit inside, he held onto the side of the Teyva and received food rations through a hole that Noah drilled through the wall of the Teyva.

The fish, too, survived. Since the rain was made of boiling sulfur, the fish took shelter at the bottom of the sea.

Kid'z Korner (Revach)

Rav Elyashiv - Would Noah Travel First Class in Peace Time?

When you see someone traveling first class during normal times you know that he is a wealthy person. However, if it is war time and the world is in chaos with people doing whatever they need to do to get to where they think they need to be, the cabin they sit in is no indication. Even a poor man will spend all his money to get to his destination in whatever seat is available.

With this Mashal, Rav Elyashiv explains the enigmatic Chazal that debates if Noah was a great tzaddik. "How could Chazal debate this point," asks Rav Elyashiv, "if Hashem himself declared that Noah was a Tzaddik Tamim?"

Rav Elyashiv explains that Chazal are debating the underlying reason of Noah's great tzidkus. He could have been a tzaddik because he saw the light, and he strived to do Hashem's will. In that case he was great despite the fact that he had no guidance, as the whole generation was totally corrupt. He got to where he got without any help. Had he been privileged to be with Avrohom he would have reached far greater heights.

Alternatively, maybe Noah only chose the path of good because he was repulsed by the corruption and the total breakdown of society all around him. He strove to pull himself above the fray and salvage himself from eternal damnation. Like the pasuk says that he went into the teivah, his spiritual fortress, "Mipnei Mei HaMabul," because of the raging sea of evil all around him. In that case had he lived in a time where evil was not rampant, he may not have reached for greatness.

Noah: Time for Straight Talk

When describing the animals that entered Noah's ark, the Torah refers to those animals which were ritually impure (טמא) as beasts "that are **not pure**." The Sages noted that the Torah intentionally speaks in a refined manner; therefore, it avoided calling them "impure" outright.

Yet, this conclusion does not seem to hold water. When the Torah discusses which animals may be eaten and which may not be eaten (in parashat *Shemini* and *Re'eih*), the Torah does not use euphemisms. Instead, the Torah labels these animals as טמאים - impure beasts. Why does the Torah not use a more refined language when setting down the dietary laws?

Reb Yossi the Scholar, and Yossi the Boor

In a certain town two wealthy men resided - both named Yossi. One was Reb Yossi, a wise and learned scholar, while the second Yossi was an ignoramus. This second Yossi was commonly referred to as "Yossi the *am ha'aretz*" (Yossi the boor), to distinguish him from the scholarly Reb Yossi.

One day a visitor came to the door of Reb Yossi. It turned out, however, that he was looking for the unlearned Yossi. The butler who greeted him at the door, responded, "Oh, you need to go to the house of Yossi the *am ha'aretz*. He lives two streets over."

Reb Yossi, who overheard the butler, was not pleased hearing him speak like this. "You should not refer to someone as a boor. Other people may call him 'Yossi the *am ha'aretz*' to distinguish him from me. But in my house,

this kind of talk is not acceptable. I don't want people to think I look down on my neighbors."

Soon after this, a matchmaker came to the scholar and proposed a match between his daughter and the son of Yossi the boor. The scholar was appalled that the shadchan should even suggest such a match. "My daughter should marry the son of Yossi the *am ha'aretz*?!" he cried out. "Never! Not while I am alive!"

After the shadchan left, the butler approached his boss. "I don't understand. Why is it, when I called him 'Yossi the *am ha'aretz*,' you reprimanded me; but now you used that very phrase?"

The scholar gave his butler a stern look. "Don't you understand the difference? If someone asks you information where someone lives, he is not asking for an account of his character and scholarship. All you need to do is provide his address. Anything more, if it is uncomplimentary, is simply *lashon hara* – uncalled – for gossip.

POUR LES FRANCOPHONES

Afin de Rentrer dans l'arche de Noah

(Rav Itshak Nabet)

" Or la Terre s'était corrompue devant Di-u, elle s'était remplie de violence... Di-u dit à Noah : le terme de toutes les créatures est arrivé devant Moi, parce que le vol a envahi le monde...Fais-toi une arche de bois de gôfer que tu diviseras en cellules...Et Moi, j'amènerai sur la terre un Déluge d'eaux pour détruire toute chair animée d'un souffle de vie sous les cieux. Tout ce qui habite sur terre périra." Béréchit (6, 11-17)

Si nous analysons la façon dont Hachem sauva Noah du déluge, nous pouvons soulever quelques questions : tout d'abord, pourquoi l'ordre de fabriquer l'arche fut-il donné avant même qu'Hachem annonçât Sa volonté d'annihiler les êtres vivants ? Puisque la construction du bateau fut entraînée par la tombée des pluies, n'aurait-il pas été plus logique de faire précéder la punition par la

"But when I received a proposal for my daughter's marriage, I needed to be blunt in explaining why I object to such a match. It was my duty as the father to clarify in no uncertain terms that I will not have my daughter marry the unlearned son of an ignoramus."

A Time for Niceties and a Time for Straight Talk

When the Torah describes the animals entering Noah's ark, the classifications of "pure" and "not pure" are only in order to identify the animals. Therefore, the Torah uses a euphemism -- "not pure."

But when discussing the dietary laws, the Torah wants to make it clear which animals we are allowed to eat and which we may not. These rules are meant to protect the purity of our souls. Here the Torah cannot afford to mince words, but clearly states, "*These animals are impure to you*" (Lev. 11:8, Deut 14:7). (Adapted from *The Maggid and his Parables*, pp. 125-127.)

fabrication de l'arche ? De plus, il est écrit dans le Midrach Raba que les eaux du Maboul inondèrent la surface de la planète pendant douze mois. Pourquoi Hachem ne rasa-t-Il pas le mal en quelques instants comme Il le fit à Sodom ou contre les premiers nés égyptiens ? Enfin, pourquoi le Créateur eut-Il besoin d'une arche pour sauver Noah ? Ne pouvait-il pas lui éviter, à lui et sa famille, de ne pas mourir sans résider dans un bateau pendant un an ?

Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, la génération du Maboul s'était débauchée de toutes les façons. A tel point, nous enseignent nos sages, que même les animaux, dépourvus pourtant de libre arbitre, se dégradaient à son contact. Les bêtes se volaient entre elles et se dépravaient avec des espèces animales différentes. Malgré cette perversion, Noah resta intègre. Il n'imita pas ses congénères ni dans leurs fautes envers Di-u ni vis-à-vis de leurs frères. Ainsi, ses bonnes actions et sa fidélité envers Hachem le sauvèrent-elles, lui et sa famille, de la perte. Cependant, le Zohar Akadoch (Helek 1, 67, 2) commente le verset de la Haftara de Noah " Car de même que J'ai juré de ne plus désoler la Terre avec les eaux de Noah, ainsi Je jure de

ne plus M'irriter contre toi." Les eaux du Maboul portent le nom de Noah car c'est à cause de lui qu'elles sont venues. Il aurait dû prier pour sa génération comme le fit Avraham avinou pour les habitants de Sodom.

De cette explication très dure du Zohar, nous pouvons apprendre que même si Noah s'était protégé de son entourage et qu'il ne suivait pas leurs mauvaises mœurs, la Torah lui reproche un petit manque de bonté envers son prochain. Car celui qui désire le bien de son ami doit faire tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour l'aider. Et même lorsqu'il ne reste que la prière, nous avons une obligation d'épancher nos cœurs face au Maître du monde pour intercéder en faveur de nos prochains. Ainsi, même si cette génération fautait contre Di-u et les hommes, Hachem reprocha à Noah de ne pas avoir assez prié pour elle.

Et c'est donc pour parfaire ce Tsadik, ce nouveau père de l'humanité, qu'Hachem lui ordonna de construire cette arche. Dans ce gigantesque bateau entrèrent sept couples de chaque espèce pure et un couple de chaque espèce impure. Pendant une année complète, Noah et sa famille durent s'occuper de ces millions d'animaux, oiseaux et insectes, et, tout d'abord, les nourrir. Or comme le dit le Midrach Tanhouma, durant ces douze mois, il ne goûta pas la saveur du sommeil afin de s'occuper des bêtes qui mangent la nuit et de celles qui se nourrissent le jour. Ainsi, l'arche de Noah était un camp d'entraînement pour apprendre et ancrer au plus profond de cette famille l'amour de donner à tous, même aux animaux.

Désormais nous pouvons comprendre pourquoi l'ordre de fabriquer le déluge précéda l'annonce de l'épreuve. Car l'arche ne devait pas servir à le protéger des eaux, car même sans cela Hachem aurait pu le sauver. Ce bateau devait essentiellement permettre à Noah et sa famille d'enraciner en eux la bonté, pour que le monde redémarre sur des bases solides. Et c'est aussi pour cela que la punition dura un an, afin que le don devienne une seconde nature chez eux.

A travers l'histoire de Noah, la Torah nous dévoile l'importance de la Mitva de Hessed : être bon envers son prochain. Nous pouvons constater à quel point celle-ci est nécessaire pour le maintien de l'humanité. C'est pourquoi

nous devons, nous aussi, essayer d'ancrer ce trait de caractère en nous. Pour cela, il nous faut imiter Noah et sa famille, et apprendre à donner aux autres sans compter. En outre, comme nous l'avons vu, il ne s'agit pas uniquement d'une aide financière. La Torah exige que nous nous préoccupions du sort de chacun, de nos proches comme des plus lointains : une parole, un sourire, une prière ...nul ne connaît la portée de nos actes. Alors, grâce à cette paracha de Noah, renforçons-nous sur ce point et forçons-nous à offrir à nos familles l'aide et l'affection qu'elles nécessitent. Afin que cet amour déborde vers notre entourage, notre peuple et toutes les créatures que le Maître du monde créa. Nous vous souhaitons un très bon Chabat, et vous disons à très bientôt.

Apprendre à être là

De nombreux commentateurs s'interrogent face à cette contradiction. Dans le premier verset, Noah est appelé juste et intègre dans sa génération. Or lorsque Hachem lui ordonne de monter, il Lui dit car « tu es juste dans cette génération ». Pourquoi l'intégrité de Noah ne fut-elle pas mentionnée par Hachem la seconde fois ? Rachi zal explique au nom du Midrach, dont nous tirons l'enseignement, qu'il ne faut pas dire toutes les louanges de quelqu'un devant lui. Mais nous allons nous intéresser à l'explication que donne le Hatam Sofer zal. Pour cela, nous devons comprendre un verset de la paracha de Béréchit.

Lorsque la Torah décrit les descendance d'Adam Arichone, elle nous raconte la vie d'un juste qui se nommait Hanokh. « Tous les jours de Hanokh furent de 365 ans. Hanokh marcha avec Elokim. Mais il n'était pas là car Elokim le prit. » De nombreuses questions se posent à la lecture de ces versets. Premièrement, pourquoi, s'il était juste, mourut-il si jeune ? En effet, la majorité des hommes étaient des pêcheurs et vivaient jusqu'à 800 ans... Est-ce cela la récompense de celui qui fait la volonté d'Hachem ? Enfin que veut dire « Il n'était pas là car Hachem l'a pris. » ? Il est évident que lorsqu'une personne meurt, elle n'est plus là. Alors que veut nous dire la Torah avec ce pléonasme ?

Le Hatam Sofer zal explique que Hanokh fut un Tsadik, mais il n'était pas là. Pour se préserver du mal ou pour se rapprocher un maximum d'Hachem, il se coupa entièrement du monde qui l'entourait. Grâce à cet isolement, il atteignit des niveaux de perfection très élevés. Cependant, cette recherche de plénitude lui fit oublier l'essentiel. L'homme s'appelle Adam, car il a la faculté de ressembler à Son créateur, nous dit Rabenou Béhayé z'l, (Edmé veut dire ressembler). Or nos sages expliquent que l'homme, en se comportant à l'image d'Hachem, peut Lui ressembler : à Son image, il peut être

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miséricordieux, et comme Lui, il pardonne, passe l'éponge... Nous savons par ailleurs qu'Hachem ne créa ce Monde-ci et le monde futur que pour nous donner. Ainsi le but de l'homme, du fils d'Adam, est de faire du bien autour de lui. Avec son conjoint et ses enfants dans un premier temps. Puis avec son entourage et avec chaque être vivant. En outre, il existe de très nombreuses façons de faire du bien. Celui qui peut aider ses proches à se rapprocher d'Hachem représente le Bien suprême car il donne à l'autre la possibilité de mériter de ce Monde-ci et du Monde futur. Mais en donnant une aide financière, morale, physique... un homme justifie évidemment sa venue sur Terre.

Désormais, nous pouvons répondre aux différentes questions que nous avons posees. Hanokh était un grand Tsadik et Hassid ... Cependant Hachem n'a pas besoin d'ange supplémentaire. Le Tsadik doit avant tout servir à aider son entourage à se rapprocher d'Hachem. Puisqu'il n'était pas là, alors Hachem l'enleva de ce monde. De même, Noah était Tsadik et intègre. Le mot intègre, Tam en hébreu, signifie aussi « simple » comme dans la Haggadah de Pesah. Ainsi le Hatam Sofer explique que lorsque Hachem se dévoila à Noah la première fois, il lui dit qu'il était simple, qu'il ne se souciait pas assez de sa génération. Et qu'il était en quelque sorte responsable du déluge. Après avoir entendu cette réprimande, Noah changea son rapport avec le monde. Il construisit son arche en 120

ans, le plus lentement possible afin de faire Téhouva à son entourage. Chaque jour, il prenait son marteau et travaillait doucement, pour que les gens lui demandent ce qu'il faisait depuis tant de temps. Alors il leur répondait : qu'Hachem lui avait annoncé qu'Il allait détruire le monde... Hélas, les gens ne l'écoutèrent pas et se moquèrent de lui. Mais grâce à cette volonté de rapprocher sa génération, il mérita la vie. C'est pourquoi la deuxième fois, lorsque Hachem parla, Il l'appela simplement Tsadik. Nous apprenons de cette paracha combien nous avons un devoir d'aider les autres, de faire le bien autour de nous, car voilà notre unique raison d'être. Nous vous

souhaitons un très bon Chabat et vous disons à très bientôt.

(Rav Yonatan Gefen)

Profundidad y Superficialidad

La parashá de esta semana concluye con un breve relato de los inicios de la vida de Abraham. En este se describe a su familia, incluyendo a su hermano Harán, quien murió de forma prematura.

La Torá nos relata solamente que Harán murió frente a su padre. El *midrash* nos brinda los detalles del contexto de esta tragedia, detallando cómo Abraham rechazó la rampante idolatría de su época y llegó a creer en un solo Di-s. Destruyó los ídolos de la tienda de su padre y como resultado este lo entregó al Rey Nimrod. Nimrod intentó obligarlo a adorar ídolos, pero cuando Abraham se negó, hizo que fuera arrojado al fuego.

Harán estaba observando todo esto, y sabía que sería forzado a parcializar con Abraham o con Nimrod. Antes de que Abraham fuera arrojado al fuego, Harán tuvo una idea muy práctica: si Abraham sobrevivía, entonces se le uniría, pero si moría, entonces parcializaría con Nimrod. Cuando Abraham salió ileso del fuego, Harán declaró su apoyo a Abraham. Como resultado, él también fue arrojado al fuego, donde finalmente murió ⁽¹⁾.

El midrash señala que su muerte fue un hecho inusual, ya que sólo sus órganos internos fueron destruidos, dejando intacto el exterior de su cuerpo. ¿Qué significa esta muerte inusual?

La respuesta es que en un nivel exterior Harán era recto porque declaró ser similar a Abraham; sin embargo internamente no lo creía con absoluta sinceridad⁽²⁾. Consecuentemente, su interior fue destruido por falta de mérito, mientras que su exterior permaneció intacto porque aparentaba ser recto.⁽³⁾

Esta explicación nos brinda un ejemplo del principio de que es posible observar la Torá en dos niveles diferentes: interna o externamente. La observancia desde el interior implica que una persona absorbe las actitudes adoptadas por la Torá (su punto de vista y sus objetivos son definidos solamente por la Torá). La observancia exterior implica que incluso si la persona observa todas las mitzvot, sus deseos y aspiraciones no están en sintonía con la voluntad de Di-s, sino que es motivado por otros factores.

Harán demostró ser una persona cuyo apego a la creencia en un solo Di-s era algo meramente superficial; consecuentemente, fue protegido sólo en un nivel superficial. Abraham, por otro lado, tenía un profundo compromiso con cumplir la voluntad de Di-s en todos los niveles de su ser, y como resultado fue completamente protegido del fuego de Nimrod.

El rasgo de externalidad de Harán fue emulado por su hijo, Lot. A nivel superficial, Lot observaba la Torá. Sin embargo, muchas de sus ambiciones demostraron que en su interior carecía de un deseo real de seguir el camino de Abraham. Estaba más interesado en satisfacer su deseo de éxito económico e inmortalidad⁽⁴⁾.

El grado en que Lot representa una dicotomía entre su naturaleza interior y la exterior es corroborado por las fuentes rabínicas en la porción de Torá Lej Lejá. Habiéndose asentado en la tierra de Israel, los pastores de Lot comenzaron a justificar pastorear sus animales en las tierras particulares de los habitantes⁽⁵⁾. Los pastores de Abraham se quejaron, argumentando correctamente que eso era robar y, como resultado, comenzó una disputa. En ese punto, Abraham pidió que se separaran, argumentando que eran “hermanos”.

Las palabras de Abraham presentan un problema obvio: él y Lot no eran hermanos, sino que Abraham era el tío de Lot. ¿Por qué

Abraham dijo que eran hermanos? El midrash explica que su intención era indicar que eran *como* hermanos, ya que su apariencia era extremadamente similar. Por esta razón, a Abraham le preocupaba que la gente viera a Lot pastoreando sus animales en tierras privadas y pensara que era él mismo⁽⁷⁾. Vemos de aquí que, en un nivel superficial, Lot era muy similar a Abraham, y probablemente también aparentaba ser una persona sumamente recta. Sin embargo, en su interior, se parecía a su padre, Harán.

Harán también tuvo una hija, Sará⁽⁸⁾. Aparentemente ella logró exitosamente evitar tener las limitaciones de su padre y de su hermano, convirtiéndose en una persona cuya apariencia externa coincidía con su rectitud interior. En la parashá de esta semana, Sará es llamada por un segundo nombre: Iská⁽⁹⁾. La Guemará ofrece dos razones para este nombre. Una es que ella **veía** con *rúaj hakódesh*⁽¹⁰⁾, y la otra es que todos **observaban** su belleza⁽¹¹⁾. Estas dos explicaciones se complementan: la belleza que poseía no era meramente una naturaleza física, sino que era una belleza que emanaba de su elevado nivel espiritual, demostrado por el hecho de que poseía *rúaj hakódesh*. Por lo tanto, su belleza exterior era resultado de su rectitud interior. Vemos por lo tanto que logró emular a Abraham equiparando su apariencia exterior con sinceridad interna.

Pueden derivarse muchas enseñanzas de las limitaciones de Harán y Lot, así como de la grandeza de Abraham y Sará. Como demostró Harán, es muy fácil ser una persona *superficialmente recta*: no es difícil vestirse de una cierta forma y realizar ciertas acciones que hacen a la persona parecer *recta*. Sin embargo, esa externalidad es muy peligrosa porque, puede generar que la persona sea solamente una costra de alguien que le sirve a Di-s, mientras que en su interior es todo lo contrario. El profeta Isaías nos informa la gravedad de este defecto, describiendo la manera en que Di-s castigará al pueblo judío “*porque se acercaron [a Mí] con la boca y Me honraron con sus labios, pero su corazón estaba lejos de Mí...*”⁽¹²⁾.

Más aún, el énfasis en lo externo puede dificultar el crecimiento interior. Uno de los métodos del *iétzer hará* (la inclinación negativa)

es hacer que una persona que quiere crecer se enfoque en los cambios externos, distrayéndose del crecimiento interior. Esta trampa puede afectar a todo el que intente mejorar su servicio a Di-s, y consiste en enfatizar en demasía los cambios externos en desmedro del crecimiento verdadero ⁽¹³⁾. Es esencial que una persona haga un *jeshvón hanéfesh* ⁽¹⁴⁾ del balance entre su servicio a Di-s externo y su servicio interno. Que todos ameritemos emular a Abraham y Sará e internalicemos aquello en lo cual creemos.

NOTAS: 1) Bereshit Rabá 38:13. 2) El *Maharzav* comenta sobre el *midrash* que el error de Harán fue no tener un *lev shalem*, es decir, que no ser totalmente sincero. Ver otros comentaristas al *midrash* para hallar otras explicaciones del error de Harán en esta área. 3) Oído de Rav Moshé David Cohen *shlita*, en nombre de Rav Ósher Zelig Rubenstein *shlita*, Rosh Yeshivá de Yeshivas Torah Simcha. 4) Ver Lej Lejá 13:10, Rashi, dh: *Boaja soar*. Ver mi ensayo en Vayeira, *Entendiendo a Lot*, para un análisis profundo del carácter de Lot. 5) Lej Lejá 13:7, Rashi dh: *Vayehí riv*, para una explicación de la naturaleza de esta disputa. 6) Lej Lejá 13:8. 7) Bereshit Rabá 41:6, Rashi, Lej Lejá 13:8, Sifsei Jajamim, dh: *velajén*. 8) Lo que significa que Sará y Lot eran hermanos. 9) Nóaj 11:29, Rashi, dh: *Iská*. La palabra viene de la raíz *sajá*, que significa ver o contemplar. 10) Traducido literalmente como el *espíritu sagrado*. Es un tipo de profecía. 11) Megilá 14a, citado por Rashi en Lej Lejá 11:29, dh: *Iská*. 12) Yeshaiá 29:13. 13) Esto no significa que nunca haya que hacer cambios externos. Algunas cosas externas se relacionan directamente con la ley judía y, por lo tanto, tienen una obvia importancia. No sólo eso, sino que incluso más allá del límite de la halajá, el código de vestimenta de la persona y su apariencia tienen una importancia considerable. Lo que se quiere transmitir aquí es que no se debe cambiar por fuera a costa del cambio interior. Uno debería consultar a su rav para recibir guía en los detalles de estos temas. 14) Literalmente, *recuento del alma*. Se refiere a reflexionar sobre uno mismo.

Noaj y Abraham

"Estas son las crónicas de Noaj; Noaj era un hombre recto, perfecto entre los de su generación. Noaj caminó con Di-s"¹. Noaj era la persona más granDi-sa de su época, la única que merecía ser salvada del diluvio. Sin embargo, nuestros sabios comparan desfavorablemente a Noaj con Abraham Avinu en muchos lugares². ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre estos dos granDi-sos hombres?

Rashi trae un Midrash que contrasta a Abraham con Noaj. Respecto a Noaj, la Torá dice: "Noaj caminó con Di-s", lo cual significa que él necesitaba ayuda en su servicio divino. Pero respecto a Abraham, Di-s dijo: "Camina ante Mí", lo cual significa que Abraham podía fortalecerse a sí mismo mediante sus propios meDi-s. Los comentaristas explican que

Abraham era proactivo y que tenía motivación propia; no necesitaba cosas externas que lo estimulasen a servir a Di-s o a ser bondadoso. Noaj necesitaba circunstancias externas que lo empujasen hacia adelante en su rectitud³.

Rav Eliahu Dessler zt"l se explaya en esta idea. Escribe que Noaj es llamado "*ish tzadik*" (hombre recto), mientras que Abraham es "*ish jésed*" (hombre de bondad). Noaj realizó increíbles actos de bondad en el arca, como por ejemplo el alimentar a cientos de animales durante muchos meses. Sin embargo, Rav Dessler dice que eso sólo era *tzédek*, era lo correcto de hacer; es decir, él había cumplido con su obligación; su actitud no provenía de un incontenible deseo de dar, sino que había sido una reacción ante las necesidades de otros. Su bondad era reactiva en el sentido que sólo ayudaba a las personas cuando acudían a él o cuando sentía la obligación de hacerlo.

Abraham, por otro lado, no realizaba sus actos de bondad por obligación, sino que los hacía porque sentía un incontenible deseo de dar⁴. Su bondad era proactiva.

Esta diferencia entre Abraham y Noaj no se restringe sólo a la bondad en el ámbito físico, sino que también se extiende al ámbito espiritual. Sforno escribe que Noaj criticó a la gente de su generación, pero no hizo nada al respecto. "No les enseñó a otros a conocer a Di-s ni a conducirse en sus caminos". Consecuentemente, no tuvo suficiente mérito como para salvar a toda la generación⁵. Abraham, por otro lado, fue mucho más allá del llamado del deber y le enseñó al mundo a conocer a Hashem⁶. La bondad de Noaj era reactiva.

¿Cómo una persona que llega al nivel de bondad reactiva no es capaz de avanzar para alcanzar el nivel superior de dar proactivamente? La respuesta a esto se encuentra en el nombre de Noaj. Sabemos que el nombre de una persona nos enseña sobre su esencia; la palabra "*Noaj*" significa "cómodo". No es fácil tomar responsabilidad por algo sin que te hayan llamado a hacerlo. La inclinación negativa encontrará muchas excusas para impedir que asumas una misión desafiante, pese a que la verdadera razón para evitarlo es el deseo de comodidad.

Rabeinu Behaye, el granDi-so autor de *Jovot Halevavot* (*Los deberes del corazón*)⁷, cuenta que él se vio enfrentado al mismo desafío. En la introducción, dice que después de planear escribir dicha obra cambió de opinión, citando una gran cantidad de razones: "Pensé que mis poderes eran demasiado limitados para entender correctamente las ideas. Además, yo no poseo un estilo elegante en árabe, que es el idioma en que sería escrito el libro... Temí estar embarcándome en una tarea en la que sólo lograría el éxito exponiendo mis defectos... Por lo tanto, decidí abandonar mis planes y revertir mi decisión". Sin embargo, reconoció que quizás sus motivos no eran absolutamente puros: "Comencé a sospechar que había elegido la opción cómoda, buscando paz y tranquilidad. Temí que quizás lo que había motivado la cancelación del proyecto había sido realmente el deseo de la auto gratificación, el cual me había llevado a buscar reposo y tranquilidad, a optar por la inactividad y a quedarme de brazos cruzados".

Para el eterno beneficio del pueblo judío, finalmente decidió escribir el libro. Las razones que citó en un principio para justificar su decisión de no escribir el libro parecen ser justas y lógicas. Pero él fue capaz de reconocer que, en su nivel, estaban manchadas por un deseo de comodidad. Nosotros también tenemos buenas razones por las que elegimos ignorar oportunidades para ayudar al pueblo judío, pero debemos ser extremadamente cuidadosos para asegurarnos que no estamos siendo perezosos. Imagina cuántos excelentes trabajos o grandes iniciativas nunca se materializaron debido a la pereza.

Otra cosa que obstaculiza nuestra proactividad es una equivocada confianza en Di-s. Muchas veces uno espera que Di-s le entregue en bandeja el propósito de su vida; sin embargo, la historia nos demuestra que los grandes pilares del mundo de la Torá no tuvieron esta actitud, sino que vieron los problemas que había en el mundo y decidieron moverse para rectificarlos sin esperar que les comandaran hacerlo. Gente como Rav Aharon Kotler⁸, el Ponevitcher Rav⁹ y la Rebetzin Sarah Shenirer¹⁰ emularon a Abraham Avinu y tomaron la iniciativa de construir instituciones de Torá. Estas instituciones reforzaron la Torá y le permitieron

al pueblo judío sobrevivir la embestida espiritual del Iluminismo y la embestida física del Holocausto.

En nuestra generación, no hace falta buscar muy lejos para encontrar oportunidades para mejorar el mundo de alguna manera. Pero no debemos esperar que nos pidan hacerlo; si esperamos, es posible que la oportunidad nunca se materialice. Di-s quiere que abramos los ojos y que actuemos antes de que nos pidan.

Noaj fue un gran hombre, pero no se transformó en el progenitor del pueblo elegido. Fue bondadoso, pero sólo después de que le pidieron que lo fuera. Criticó al pueblo, pero sólo después de que Hashem le dijo que lo hiciera. Se comportó como una persona reactiva, quien necesita que las circunstancias externas lo empujen hacia la acción.

Abraham Avinu en cambio, no necesitaba que lo motivaran para servir a Hashem. No esperó que las personas acudieran a él para enseñarles Torá. Alcanzó el nivel de bondad verdadera gracias a un gran esfuerzo. Por lo tanto, nos corresponde a nosotros, sus descendientes, emularlo y buscar oportunidades para hacer una diferencia para el pueblo judío.

Notas: 1) Bereshit 6:9. 2) Por ejemplo, Rashi declara en ese pasuk que si Noaj hubiese estado vivo en la generación de Abraham, no hubiese sido considerado un tzadik. Ver también el Rashi siguiente en el mismo versículo. 3) Ver Gur Arié sobre el pasuk; Mijtav MeEliahu, Segunda Parte, p.168; Shlá HaKadosh, Parashat Noaj, Torá Or, 2. Tiferet Shlomó. 4) Mijtav MeEliahu, Segunda Parte, p.178. 5) Sforno, Bereshit, 6:8. 6) Ver Meiri, Avot, 5:2. Leshem Shamáim (por Rav Yaakov Emden zt"l), 5:2. Sforno, Toldot, 26:5. Jatam Sofer, Hakdamá a loré Deá titulada 'Pisujey Josam'. Jafetz Jaim en muchos lugares; ver Jomas Hadas, primeros capítulos. 7) Una obra clásica de pensamiento judío que describe la forma para desarrollar una relación con Hashem. 8) Uno de los principales rabinos de la primera mitad del siglo 20. Tuvo un papel muy importante salvando judíos del Holocausto y fundó la gran Ieshivá de Lakewood, en Nueva Jersey. 9) El fundador de la granDi-sa Ieshivat Ponevitch, ubicada en Bnei Brak. 10) Fundadora del movimiento Beit Yaakov, que proveyó una estructura educacional para las jóvenes judías. También se le acredita haber detenido la secularización de muchas mujeres a principios del siglo 20.

NAHALOT

Nahala of R' Ovadia Yosef
Sunday the 4th of Mar Heshvan

(By Rabbi Chaim Levy)

Born in 1920 in Baghdad, Iraq to Rabbi Yaakov and G'orgia Ovadia, Hacham Ovadia Yosef emigrated with his family to Jerusalem at age four. As a teenager he attended Porat Yosef Yeshiva. He was ordained by his 21st birthday and married Margalit Fattal when he was 24. (She passed in 1994 after raising 11 children together.)

In 1947 Hacham Ovadia was asked to come to Cairo, Egypt to serve as a teacher and on the Beit Din (religious court). In 1949, he moved back to what had by then become the current State of Israel and continued his studies while serving in the Beit Din of Petah Tikva. He also published the first of his set of books *Chazon Ovadia* and *Yabia Omer* during this time.

Between 1958 and 1965 he served on the Jerusalem Bet Din, until he moved to the Supreme Religious Court where he served until 1968, when he was chosen as the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Tel Aviv.

This continued until 1973, when Hacham Ovadia was selected as the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel. In 1984, Hacham Ovadia started the Shas political party, currently the fourth largest party in the Knesset.

Destined for Greatness

In the Porat Yosef Yeshiva, a young student suddenly went missing. The staff was clueless as to this student's whereabouts. After several days, the famed Rosh Yeshiva, Hacham Ezra Attiya (1885-1970) one of the greatest Torah scholars in the 20th century in the Sephardic world (his students included Hacham Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, Rav Kaduri, and more) became very concerned and decided to pay a visit to the student's home.

When Hacham Attiya spoke to the father, the father explained that the family business was a small grocery store and he needed the help of his son as a delivery boy. The Hacham attempted to convince the father of the importance of Torah study, and tried to find a solution to the manpower issue, but it was to no avail. The father would not budge.

The next morning when the father went to the store, he was shocked to find Hacham Attiya,

the Rosh Yeshiva himself, standing outside the store in work clothes. When questioned by the father he replied, "Your son's learning is unquestionably more important than mine and you are murdering the *Gadol* (great rabbi) of the next generation. So I will be your delivery boy in his place. Just send your son back to yeshiva!" The father understood the seriousness of the Rabbi and sent his son back to the study halls. This boy turned out to be Hacham Ovadia Yosef z"l.

Torah Prodigy

Hacham Ovadia is perhaps most known for his scope of knowledge, as can be seen by his responsa in Jewish Law. In a typical responsa, he may quote over 50 sources on a given topic. I merited to frequent his home and pray with him. There were no walls or wallpaper, but only thousands of *sefarim* (Torah books) organized in a specific order. Every so often I would pick up one and look inside, only to find that on any given book you could not go three pages or so without his handwritten commentary on the topic.

Once a guest walked in and asked, "Rabbi I heard that you have a photographic memory. Is that true? Do you know all of these books by heart?"

Those around in the room challenged him to try to stump the Rabbi. "Pick anyone of the thousands of books, start a line, and Hacham Ovadia will finish it," they said.

As the man reached towards the set of *Shas* (Talmud), everyone around started to smile. "You might want to try something not so easy," they said.

His son, Hacham David Yosef shlit"a, once told me in the name of his father, "He wishes that everyone would know that his mastery of Torah is not only due to being a prodigy but also to his tireless effort and toiling in Torah. One morning his kids noticed a very peculiar action: Hacham Ovadia woke up in a blaze, ran towards the sink to wash his hands, recited *Birkat HaTorah* (blessings recited before learning Torah) and rushed to look at a responsa of the Rivash. The children were very curious for an explanation. "We know that you have a love of Torah," they said, "but what is the urgency?"

He replied that the night before he was toiling to understand two seemingly contradictory statements by the Rivash that seemed unresolvable. After thinking about the issue for a while, he resolved the contradiction. "In my sleep," continued Hacham Ovadia, "the Rivash appeared to me in a dream and stated, 'You have indeed understood my intentions, there is no contradiction in my two statements. It is all clarified in another source that I have written.' Upon waking up I went to check the source he mentioned and indeed it was there."

Unquenchable Thirst

Hacham Ovadia Yosef had a thirst for Torah that is an example to all of us. Early one morning, his son woke up to finding his father lying on the floor studying. Alarmed, he asked his father, "Why is the Rav on the floor?"

Hacham Ovadia replied, "I woke up early to learn, climbed on a ladder to get a book and fell on the ground. I tried calling for help, but it was too painful and no one heeded my call, so instead of lying on the floor and simply writhing in pain and wasting time, I grabbed the *sefer* I could reach and decided to learn." It was later discovered that he had broken a bone in his back that required surgery.

His Heart was with the People

Around ten years ago, Hacham Ovadia suffered his first heart attack and he was rushed to the hospital. The doctors decided that they needed to perform surgery immediately. Hacham Ovadia pleaded to postpone the surgery for three hours and be taken home. Rabbi Aryeh Deri was caught off-guard by the request and tried to convince the Rabbi not to wait. After the postponed surgery, Hacham Ovadia revealed his reasoning: While at home he had been in the middle of writing a responsa for an *aguna* (a woman where it is not clear if she is still considered married according to Jewish Law) and due to the heart attack, he could not finish it. "I might not come out alive from this surgery and then what will be of this poor woman? She will be stuck for the rest of her life, unable to remarry. I had to finish the responsa before the surgery."

Yet the uniqueness of Hacham Ovadia goes beyond his brilliance and compassion. There

was something else that he possessed that made him truly irreplaceable; he was the Commander-in-Chief of the Worldwide Torah Community. No matter what facet of Jewish Life was concerned, he was the one everyone went to.

Hacham Ovadia had the unique ability of not only being able to speak on the level of the wisest of the generation, but he could also reach out to the common folk. He made time for everyone, and everyone relied upon him for Torah wisdom. From Menachem Begin, who sought his counsel before returning the Sinai Desert to Egypt, to the Prime Ministers and Presidents of current day that sought his counsel before making major decisions, it was common sight to see the street being blocked off because a high ranking official has come to seek advice and blessing from the Rabbi.

As a resident of Har Nof, I merited to live on the same block as the Torah Sage, and was accustomed to this, as well as seeing many non-religious Israelis blocking the street because they had come to have Hacham Ovadia be the *sandak* of their son's brit mila.

It is not a wonder that an estimated 850,000 to 1 million people attended his funeral, with another 200,000 stuck outside the city of Jerusalem that had been shutdown due to all traffic (the largest funeral in Israel's history). From Jews with no background that attended his thousands of classes, to Judges of the Jewish Supreme Court that brought before him cases that they could not resolve, nearly 15% of the population of the State of Israel came to pay their respects.

The greatness of Hacham Ovadia was not only his Torah knowledge and pristine character, but also that he was able to show the world from whichever place they were standing that the Torah has the answers to everything. This fact was clearly reflected in his funeral – by the sheer numbers of attendees and the incredible diversity of those that were in attendance. Every type of Jew from every walk of life was standing in solidarity with one another, mourning over the loss of such a great man.

At a shiva of a great Torah Sage in Jerusalem I once heard Hacham Ovadia Yosef state the

following: "We say ' *HaMakom Yinchemchem b'toch Shaar Avley Tsion v' Yerushalayim* ' " – May the Place (the Almighty) comfort you among those who mourn for Zion and Jerusalem. *HaMakom* " is most commonly understood to be referring to the Almighty who is 'the Place' of the universe. But Hacham Ovadia explained that it can also mean "the place" of the person in the Next World should comfort you, meaning his eternal place that he has attained through his Torah and mitzvot.

May the place that the Hacham Ovadia brought World Jewry to and specifically the Sephardic world of today, a level that could not even be fathomed years ago, be of some comfort to us in order to continue his legacy.

Nahala of Rabbi Meir Shapiro **Wednesday 7th of Mar Heshvan**

"The Rav of Lublin and Creator of Daf Yomi"

It was the 3rd of Elul, 5683 (1923). Participating in the first general assembly of Agudath Israel was Rabbi Meir Shapira, who arose and proposed the idea of studying "one page per day of Talmud." Beginning on Rosh Hashanah 5684, Jews around the world would begin studying one page of the Gemara each day following the order of the tractates, starting from Berachot and ending at Niddah.

Rabbi Meir Shapira, who was a tremendous orator, described to his eminent audience – which included all the Torah greats of the world – the goal of studying by page. He put it in these terms: "How great it is! A Jew travels by boat and takes a tractate of Berachot in his arm. He travels for 15 days from Eretz Israel to America, and each day towards evening he opens the Gemara and studies the daf. When he arrives in America, he enters a Beit Midrash in New York and finds Jews studying the very same page that he studied that day, which allows him to happily join their study group. He discusses matters with them and they answer his questions, and the Name of Heaven is glorified and sanctified. Another Jew leaves the United States and travels to Brazil. He returns to the Beit Midrash and finds people immersed in the very page that he studied that day. Can there be a greater unity of hearts than this? What's more, until the present time there are many tractates that

people do not study, tractates that are 'orphans' and which only exceptional people concern themselves with. Now the daf will rectify this situation. The idea of Daf Yomi rests on the teachings of the Sages: Rabban Gamliel said, 'I was once traveling on a boat when I saw another boat that had broken apart. I was distressed over the fate of a Talmid Chacham, Rabbi Akiva, who had been aboard. When I reached dry land, he came and debated before me in Halachah. I said to him, "My son, who pulled you up?" He said, "I came across a board [daf] from the boat and I grabbed it. I bowed my head towards every wave that went over me" ' [Yebamot 121]. The era in which Rabbi Akiva lived is considered to have been one of the most difficult in the history of the Jewish people. Yet despite this, Rabbi Gamliel saw that Rabbi Akiva succeeded in making 24,000 disciples and gave the Torah back its crown. This is why Rabbi Gamliel phrased his question as 'My son, who pulled you up?' meaning: 'Reveal to me the secret of your success.' To that, Rabbi Akiva replied, 'I came across a board [daf] from the boat' – I found a simple solution, a daf from the boat, and that daf saved me. The word daf has two meanings: A board, and a page of Gemara. I came across a page of Gemara and I grabbed it; I assembled listeners and taught Torah in public. The Torah is our life and saves us from all troubles." (Heard from Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, the Rav of Boston, who said on that occasion: "It seems to me that as far as this metaphorical explanation goes, I see it as he does").

All the eminent listeners who had gathered to hear Rabbi Shapira's speech accepted his proposal with great enthusiasm, and Rabbi Shapira was applauded. A proclamation was issued by the Assembly: "Orthodox Jewry throughout the world takes upon itself to study exactly one page each day, beginning with tractate Berachot on Rosh Hashanah 5684 (1923)."

After the evening prayer on Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe of Ger said to his chassidim, "I am now beginning to study the Daf Yomi." These few words from the mouth of the Rebbe caused great excitement in the hearts of tens of thousands of Ger chassidim, and everyone wanted to study tractate Berachot. Thus Rabbi Meir Shapira became known as the father of Daf Yomi.

When Rabbi Shapira paid a visit to the Chafetz Chaim in Radin, the Chafetz Chaim crowned him with the title of "the inventor of Daf Yomi." The

Chafetz Chaim said to him, "I love you enormously. Do you know why?"

"Probably because of Daf Yomi," Rabbi Shapira responded.

"You have done a tremendous thing, and in Heaven they are greatly rejoicing because of your initiative. You should know that there, in the World of Truth, it is the study of Torah that is most respected. Every Jew merits being honored in relation to the amount of Torah that he studied in this world. In the World to Come, we do not say, 'Welcome Rabbi Yaakov,' or 'Welcome Rabbi Chaim.' Rather, it is 'Welcome to the one who studied tractate Berachot,' or 'Welcome to the one who studied tractate Shabbat.' There in Heaven, there are thrones of glory for those who have studied Torah, and engraved on each throne is the name of a tractate, such as Berachot, Shabbat, Eruvin, and so on. In the World to Come, each person is seated on the throne of the tractate that he studied. Consequently, not long ago there were many empty thrones there, for those who studied Torah only studied the tractates that they came across in their younger years, leaving the others for exceptional individuals to study. Yet now because of your proposal, the thrones of all the tractates will be filled, and the joy in Heaven will be beyond measure! That is why you deserve the greatest congratulations!" (From Rabbi Moses M. Yoshor in his book *The Chafetz Chaim*).

As the Chafetz Chaim and other Tzaddikim and Gaonim said of him, "How great is the merit of Rabbi Meir because of Daf Yomi!"

When he left this world, one of the Tzaddikim of the generation exclaimed: "All the Tannaim and Amoraim went to meet him to bring him into Gan Eden, for there is no Rav in Israel who taught as much Torah to the public as Rabbi Meir through his Daf Yomi, and there is no other Rav who revived several tractates of the Talmud. This is why the reward that awaits him is without equal."

Rabbi Meir Shapira was born on Adar 7, 5647 (1887) in the city of Schatz, Romania. His father, Rabbi Yaakov Shimshon, was a descendant of Rabbi Nathan Shapira of Krakow, the author of *Megalleh Amukot*.

From his childhood, Rabbi Meir stood out for his diligence and exceptional gifts. He studied Torah with his maternal grandfather from Manestritch, the *Minchat Shai*, and by the age of nine he already knew *Yore Deah* along with its commentators by heart. His grandfather cried like

a child when his friend and Gaon of the generation, the Maharsham of Brezhan, wrote concerning his 15 year old grandson: "I saw Rabbi Meir uproot mountains and grind them together in Halachah, and over him I recited the blessing, 'Blessed are You, Who created lights.' " Rabbi Meir Shapira's name as the Genius of Schatz became known far and wide.

Still quite young, Rabbi Meir Shapira became the Rav of the community of Glina, where he stayed for 10 years before becoming the Rav of Sanok. From there he was offered a position in the great and ancient city of Pioterkov, and finally he became the Rav of Lublin. He founded educational institutions and yeshivot in many places, for he was greatly concerned with everything that dealt with the young.

Rabbi Meir also concerned himself with community affairs. He was a marvelous orator, and he sanctified the Name of G-d in public wherever he spoke. Rabbi Meir was also chosen as the Jewish deputy to the Polish parliament. A book containing his Halachic responsa, entitled *Ohr Meir*, was published in Pioterkov and made a great impression on the rabbinic and yeshiva world. Of all the accomplishments in his short life (he died at the age of 47), he is primarily known for his two great endeavors: *Daf Yomi*, which was accepted by all Jewry, and the magnificent *Chachmei Lublin* yeshiva.

Rabbi Meir still had many plans before dying, but Heaven had decided otherwise and so his fate was sealed. He suddenly caught diphtheria and the doctors were incapable of healing him. Before rendering his soul to his Creator on Heshvan 7, 5694 (1933), he ordered that some cognac and cake be brought to him. He then told his students to drink to his health and dance around his bed while singing the verse, "In You our fathers placed their trust," to the tune that he had composed. The students danced, tears flowed down their cheeks, and at that point his holy soul departed.

The impure hands of the Nazis desecrated all the Jewish graves in Lublin except for one. One tombstone remained intact, that of Rabbi Meir Shapira, which was nothing short of miraculous. Near the end of 5718 (1958), his remains were transported to Eretz Israel and buried in the Har Hamenuhot cemetery in Jerusalem.

In Eretz Israel, Rabbi Yaakov Halpern established the orthodox neighborhood of *Zichron Meir* (which carries the name of the Gaon of Lublin), and within

that neighborhood the Chachmei Lublin yeshiva was rebuilt. Rabbi Shemuel Halevi Wozner, one of the most prominent disciples of Rabbi Meir Shapira, is the Rav and Rosh Yeshiva of Zichron Meir.

The Dove and Repentance

(Rabbi Mansour Daily Halacha)

After the flood, the world remained uninhabitable for many months, as it was covered by water. The floodwaters gradually subsided, and eventually Noah decided it was time to determine whether or not the world was again ready for human habitation. He sent a dove from the ark, and the dove returned to him, having found no dry land on which to rest. A week later, Noah sent the dove again, and this time the dove returned in the evening with an olive branch which it had ripped off a tree. Noah then realized that the waters had receded enough for vegetation to be available.

The current Bobover Rebbe offers a beautiful insight into the deeper message of this story of Noah and the dove. In many sources, the Jewish Nation is compared to the dove. Our Sages teach us that a dove mates with only one fellow dove, unlike other birds and animals, and thus we, who remain steadfastly loyal to G-d, and refuse to worship or serve any other being, are likened to the dove. And the olive, the Rebbe suggests, is symbolic of repentance. Just as an olive initially tastes bitter but its taste gradually sweetens, similarly, the process of repentance is at first very difficult and grueling, but becomes easier with time and offers great rewards. Moreover, our Sages teach that just as an olive must be crushed to produce oil, G-d must similarly subject us at times to harsh conditions and difficulties in order for us to grow and improve. The process of Teshuba resembles that of producing oil, as we grow by overcoming difficult challenges and withstanding adversity.

Accordingly, the Rebbe explains, the dove's return to Noah with an olive branch in its mouth symbolizes our return to the Almighty with words of Teshuba on our lips. Just as the dove arrived at the ark in the evening, we, too, must return to G-d in repentance each night. Our Rabbis teach

that each night, just before we go to sleep, we are to recite Vidui (confession) and ask G-d for forgiveness. Just as marriage counselors advise married couples never to go to sleep after an argument without first resolving it, similarly, we should not go to sleep in a state of "conflict" with G-d, and must ask forgiveness each night before we retire.

The Torah says that when Noah saw the dove with the olive branch in its mouth, he knew that the floodwaters had subsided. Similarly, the Rebbe explains, if we return to G-d each night with words of Teshuba, we can rest assured that any potential calamity will be averted. By repenting each night, rather than waiting and delaying the process, we help ensure our protection from the consequences of sin. Sins leave a stain on our beings much like a stain on a garment. When we stain our clothes, our best chance of completely removing it is to wash it off immediately. Likewise, if we want to permanently and completely remove the spiritual stain of sin, we are best advised to start "washing it" immediately, and for this reason it is customary to recite "Vidui" each night before we go to sleep.

This is a very relevant message for us specifically during this period, having just concluded the month of Tishri and the holidays. Many people mistakenly assume that we can now leave our thoughts of Teshuba aside for a while, and "take it easy" until next Elul. This is incorrect. Teshuba is something we must do each day. Of course, the period of Elul and the High Holidays is a time for special focus and heightened awareness, but this does not mean that we can ignore repentance and self-improvement the rest of the year. Our best chance of keeping ourselves spiritually "clean" is to work regularly to remove the "stain" of our sins, each and every day of our lives.