

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON NOACH - 5758

B'S'D'

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"RavFrاند" - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Noach

First A Mensch, Then a Tzadik Tamim This week's parsha begins with the words "These are the chronicles of Noach. Noach was a righteous faultless man (Ish Tzadik Tamim) in his generations" [Bereshis 6:9]. Rav Gifter once visited Ner Israel for Parshas Noach and made the following observation: We see from this pasuk [verse] that Noach possessed three qualities. He was a Tzadik (righteous person). He was a Tamim (a completely faultless person). And he was an Ish (a 'person'). However, notice that the sequence of the adjectives is Ish, Tzadik, Tamim. We thus see, said Rav Gifter, that before a person can be a Tzadik or a Tamim, he first has to be an Ish -- a Mensch (one who acts like a proper and dignified man). Rav Gifter told an interesting story. Rav Yisrael Salanter had a son-in-law who was about to take for himself, his own son-in-law. The future son-in-law was a tremendous scholar and Rav Yisrael's son-in-law was so impressed with him that he sent a notebook of the young man's Torah insights to Rav Yisrael Salanter, so that Rav Yisrael could see who his granddaughter was marrying. Rav Yisrael read the Torah insights and he sent back to his son-in-law, "Yes. You've showed me that this son-in-law that you are considering is in fact a Gaon, but the verse does not say 'I gave my daughter to this Gaon'; it does not say 'I gave my daughter to this illui'; it says 'I gave my daughter to this MAN' [Devorim 22:16]. It is nice to be a Gaon and a Talmud Chacham, but first you must impress me that he is a Mensch." (This future grandson-in-law whose chiddushei Torah impressed Rav Yisrael Salanter was none other than Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski).

"In His Generation" -- Rash"i is Misunderstood A famous Rash"i on the words quoted earlier "...in his generations" quotes two opinions. "There are those of our Rabbis who interpret favorably -- certainly if he had been in Abraham's generation he would have been more righteous (he would have had Abraham as a role model). And there are those who interpret unfavorably -- had he been in Abraham's generation he would not have been considered anything special." The common understanding of this Rash"i is that there is a disagreement between the two opinions. According to the first opinion if Noach lived in the time of Avraham he would have been more righteous, according to the second opinion he would have been less righteous. Rav Yakov Kaminetsky, z"tl, says the common understanding of Rash"i is erroneous. Rav Yakov claims there is no dispute between the two quoted opinions. Everyone agrees that if Noach lived in the generation of Avraham he would have been a Tzadik -- just as righteous as he was in his own generation. The second opinion just adds that this righteousness of Noach would not have been considered anything special had he lived in Avraham's generation. The reason is that Avraham worked on the wicked of his generation, to make them better and Noach did not work on the wicked of his generation to make them better. However, this seems to contradict the Medrash that Noach did go around and try to convince people. He would tell them -- "You abandon the One Whose voice breaks the Cedars and you worship wood and stone! How can you be so foolish?" The Medrash however goes on to say that while Noach did in fact chastise his generation and did care about the spiritual fate of these people, he made a mistake. He thought people were 'in to' Idolatry and consequently he would argue with them about that. In fact the people knew that Idolatry was meaningless. They actually lusted for sexual immorality. They needed a 'heter', so they started worshipping these things, so they could then feel justified in adopting a looser moral code. Noach chastised them about the wrong thing. By putting the Medrashim together, we see that if Noach were in the

generation of Avraham, he would not have been considered such a Tzadik because he chastised the people about the wrong things. However, Rav Yakov asks, maybe Noach would not have been a Chochom (wise person), but he would still have been a Tzadik (Righteous person). Was his mistake one of piety or was it one of astuteness? He was a Tzadik! He tried, but he made a mistake. That is not a lack of righteousness. That is a lack of understanding one's generation. Rav Yakov points out that we see an unbelievable thing from this Chaza"l: A lack of wisdom is a lack in righteousness. Wisdom is seeking the Truth. If a person wants to know the Truth and he seeks the Truth with his entire heart and soul, he will merit achieving the Truth. If he does not reach the Truth, it reflects not a lack of IQ; it reflects a lack of motivation. Chaza"l are telling us is that if Noach was fully motivated he would have achieved the Truth. He was not lacking in intelligence. He was lacking in achieving the Truth, which stemmed from a lack of motivation and ultimately from a lack of total Righteousness.

The Flood Comes When the Illegitimate Becomes Legitimate There is a uniquely insightful Medrash relating to a verse in this week's Parsha. On the verse "...for all flesh has corrupted their way on the land" [Bereshis 6:12] the Medrash [Vayikra Rabba 23:9] elaborates: "Everyone and everything became amoral. Even animals became so morally corrupt and decadent that one species mated with another species -- dogs with wolves, horses with donkeys, snakes with birds. The Generation of the Flood was finally wiped away when they started writing songs [according to one interpretation of the expression in the Medrash "...ad shekasvu Gumasiyos"] extolling cohabitation of males with males and males with animals." For years and years immorality was rampant, but the final straw in G-d's eyes was when songs praising homosexuality and bestiality made the "Top 40 Countdown." When the rock artists of Noach's time started writing songs about male with male and male with animal -- then the generation was eradicated. What does this mean? Until that point, although people were immoral, and animals were immoral, there was still at least a semblance of feeling that "what we are doing is illegitimate". "Sure, it's wrong, but we'll do it anyhow... behind closed doors. Sure, it's corrupt, but I don't go around bragging about it." Society legitimizes something when art imitates life. When art can extol the merit of immorality, then it goes from illegitimate to legitimate. That's when G-d says, "Enough!". As long as there is a "Victorian Age" where everyone is immoral -- male with female and male with male -- but people know it is not right, that can still be temporarily "tolerated" by G-d. But when it becomes an "alternative life-style," a different form of normal life, when it becomes a subject for music and poetry, that's when G-d can "take it" no longer. Another interpretation of the expression in the Medrash "...ad shekasvu Gumasiyos" is that they wrote marriage contracts between males. When they went down to City Hall and started taking out Marriage Licenses between two men, when they starting debating about making City Ordinances legalizing marriage between two males with all the rights of fully married couples, that's when Chaza"l say the fate of the Generation of the Flood was finally sealed. Up until that point, it was at least looked down upon; people knew that it was wrong. But when they went ahead and proclaimed that it was an acceptable alternative life-style, then unfortunately the Flood came.

Sources and Personalities Rav Mordechai Gifter -- Rosh Yeshiva of Telshe Yeshiva, Cleveland. Rav Yisroel Salanter -- (1809-1883), founder of the Mussar Movement. Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski (1863-1939) -- World-renowned Torah scholar and community leader; Vilna. Rash"i -- Rav Shlmoel Yitzchaki (1040-1105); France. Foremost Bible and Talmud commentator. Rav Yakov Kaminetsky (1891-1986) -- Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Torah Vodaath, New York. Chumash commentary contained in Emes L'Yaakov.

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TORAH WEEKLY Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Noach
Ohr Somayach

World View "...let Canaan be a slave to them" (9:25) Why did Canaan, offspring of Cham, have to be a slave to the descendants of both Shem and Yafes? The name Yafes connotes beauty and aesthetic appreciation. Greek civilization and its emphasis on beauty is a product of Yafes. Cham means 'hot.' It implies wild, unbridled animal energy. The civilizing effects of aesthetics (Yafes) can raise us above domination of our desires (Cham) to a level where we can make the leap from the world of the sensual -- "The world is what I can feel" -- to the level of aesthetics -- "The world is what I can think." Only then can we ascend to the level of "The world is beyond what I can think." That's the level of Shem. The Jewish People are descended from Shem. It is our job to proclaim that faith is not contradictory to intellect and that Man can aspire to that which is beyond intellect. As Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch put it: "An essential component of wisdom is the knowledge that man's failure to comprehend truth does not make it untrue."

Dove-Ka Even though Noach sent a dove to check whether it was possible to come out of the ark, he waited for Hashem's command before he actually emerged. If Noach was going to wait for Hashem's command before leaving the ark, what was the purpose of sending the dove? Many years before Hashem brought the flood to the world, Hashem told Noach about it. Noach had Hashem's word that the flood was coming, but his faith was meager: It was not until the water actually started to rise around him that he went into the ark. By sending out the dove, even though he had no intention of going out of the ark until Hashem commanded him, Noach was doing teshuva. He was returning to Hashem, fixing his previous lack of faith. He was demonstrating that even though he knew it was safe to leave the ark, he would only act when Hashem told him to. This is what our sages call "teshuva gamura" -- complete repentance -- being in the exact same circumstances as those of the initial sin (with full ability and desire to perform the forbidden action) and not repeating it. By sending out the dove, Noach was demonstrating that even though he had the possibility to rely on natural indications, he would act only on the word of Hashem.

The Lion's Roar The Midrash tells us that when Noach was late in bringing the lion's food one day, it turned around and bit him. Nothing happens by coincidence. If it was the lion that bit Noach, it must be that Noach had transgressed and that the lion was the fitting agent of Noach's punishment. But what was Noach being punished for and why was the lion the agent of his chastisement? The Zohar says that the First Beis Hamikdash is compared to a lion, and the second to a dog: A lion will actively protect its progeny, it will attack and bite, but a dog will usually only bark. The first Beis Hamikdash actively protected the Jewish People, whereas the second Beis Hamikdash awakened people to repentance, but didn't actively protect them. When the Jewish People were threatened either physically or spiritually, the Avos -- Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov -- would pray for us. They would actively protect us. They wouldn't just "bark," they would come out and "bite." Noach, however, was criticized for not praying on behalf of his generation. He built the ark. When people asked him what he was doing, he replied that a flood was coming and that they should repent. But he didn't actually pray for them. That's why of all the animals it was the lion that bit Noach. It was as if he was telling Noach: "Barking" -- telling people to repent -- is not enough. You have to "bite" as well. You have to actively protect them. You have to pray for them.

Sources: o World View - Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, as heard from Rabbi Avraham Edelstein o Dove-Ka - Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, as heard from Rabbi C. Z. Senter in the name of Rabbi Ariel Feldhammer o The Lion's Roar - The Ostrovzer Gaon, as heard from Rabbi C. Z. Senter o Haftorah - Adapted from Rabbi S. R. Hirsch

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WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5758 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING
TO PARSHAS NOACH By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

"But flesh; with its soul its blood you shall not eat (9:4)"

BLOOD IN HALACHA

In several places the Torah warns against the ancient practice of eating the blood of animals, which was an integral part of demonolatry and other forms of idolatry(1). Today, when meat and poultry are already koshered before they arrive in our kitchens, most of us have virtually no contact with animal blood. There does exist, however, the possibility of transgressing the prohibition of eating blood even in this day and age. The following are cases in point:

BLOOD IN EGGS: A blood spot in an egg is not kosher and could possibly render the entire egg not kosher. In fact, blood in an egg is not forbidden because of the prohibition against blood; rather, it is forbidden because it indicates the beginning of the formation of an embryo inside the egg(2). The majority of eggs, however, do not contain blood. Accordingly, one is not required to inspect an egg to see if there is blood in it, since we can assume that this egg is like the majority of eggs which are blood-free(3). Since, however, it is an age-old custom(4) - practiced throughout the entire Diaspora(5) - to inspect raw eggs before using them, we do inspect them(6). [It is permitted to eat hard-boiled eggs which were not checked before cooking and cannot be checked once they are cooked, since in this case we rely on the fact that the majority of eggs are blood-free(7).] B'dieved, if the eggs were not inspected, the food may be eaten(8). Nowadays, there is an additional factor to consider. In the United States, Israel and other countries, the vast majority of eggs are "battery eggs" from which chicks are not hatched. Thus any blood found in them does not prohibit their use. All that is required is to throw away the blood spot and the rest of the egg is permitted. Several contemporary poskim hold, therefore, that today we may be lenient with a blood spots in eggs and permit eating the egg, the food with which it was mixed, and the utensils in which it was cooked(9). Harav M. Feinstein takes a stricter approach(10). Although he, too, agrees that according to the basic halachah battery eggs are permitted, he still advises that it is proper to be stringent and throw away the entire egg, since there is a minority of eggs on the market which are not battery eggs(11). Harav Feinstein reasons that the centuries old custom of inspecting eggs and throwing out the bloody ones should not be abandoned(12), particularly since eggs are relatively cheap and people do not consider throwing away a bloody egg an unjustifiable sacrifice(13). Based on this view, the following rules apply: All eggs should be checked for a red or dark black spot. A brown spot is not a problem(14). If a spot is found, the egg should preferably be thrown out. If a lot of blood is found [especially if it is found in different parts of the egg], it is strongly recommended that the entire egg be thrown out, since this is a marked indication that this may not be a battery egg(15). If the egg was not checked and blood was found later when the egg was mixed together with other eggs or other food, the mixture does not have to be thrown out. The blood itself must be removed and discarded. Once the blood is mixed into the food and cannot be removed, the food is permissible to eat. The dishes do not become non-kosher nor do they have to undergo a koshering process, although it is proper to wait twenty four hours before using them again(16).

HUMAN BLOOD: Although human blood is Biblically permitted(17), our Sages forbade it because it looks just like animal blood and it may seem to an onlooker that animal blood is being eaten(18). But the Rabbis only forbade human blood which is detached completely from the body, not blood which is still "within" the body. Therefore: If one is eating a slice of bread and blood from his gums stains it, the blood - along with a sliver of bread(19) - should be removed from the bread(20). The bread may then be eaten. If the same happens when one is eating fruit, the fruit must be washed off well and then it may be eaten. Bleeding gums may be sucked and the blood swallowed, since this blood is considered as if it has not become detached from the body(21). A bleeding finger may be sucked with one's

mouth but it is questionable if the blood may be swallowed(22). Once the bleeding ceases, it is prohibited to stick the blood-stained finger in one's mouth, since it appears as if one is sucking the blood(23). Human blood which inadvertently got mixed with food (such as blood from a cut that dripped into food) may be consumed as long as no bloody redness is visible. This is true even if there is more blood than food in the mixture. If redness is visible, then the food may not be eaten, even if the volume of the food is sixty times greater than that of the blood(24). If blood gets mixed into food, additional food may be added into the mixture in order to make the blood invisible(25).

BLOOD ON SHABBOS On Shabbos or Yom Tov, it is forbidden to suck or squeeze out blood from a wound(26). On Shabbos or Yom Tov, it is forbidden to suck blood from one's gums(27). It is permitted to peel off a scab on Shabbos(28) if it will not result in blood oozing from the wound(29). To stop a minor bleed [e.g., a nose bleed], it is preferable to use a paper napkin or tissue(30). If none is available, a cloth [preferably white or a light colored] may be used(31). To stop a major bleed, use whatever is at hand.

FOOTNOTES: 1 Explanation of Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim 3:46. See also Ramban, Kedoshim 19:26. 2 Talmud, Chullin 64b. 3 Rama Y.D. 66:8. 4 Ibid. 5 Aruch ha-Shulchan 66:32; Kaf ha-Chayim 66:41. 6 Igros Moshe. It is clearly forbidden to close one's eyes so as not to see if there is any blood in the egg. Ma'adanie ha-Shulchan 66:68. 7 Y.D. 66:8. 8 Aruch ha-Shulchan 66:32, who adds that if the blood is visible [as it is sometimes when egg yolk is smeared over challah] it should be removed. 9 Minchas Yitzchak 1:106; Yechaveh Da'as 3:57. 10 See also Responsa Kinyan Torah 2:7 who takes a more stringent approach, but for different reasons which do not apply on today farms. 11 Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:36. 12 Harav Feinstein points out that even "normal" eggs do not have to be checked according to the basic halachah, yet the long-standing custom contradicts that. We, too, should honor the custom. 13 It seems clear, though, that in a place where eggs are expensive, one may rely on the basic halachah and permit the egg, see Yechaveh Da'as, ibid. who makes this point. 14 Darkei Teshuvah 66:23 quoting several poskim. 15 Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:36. 16 Igros Moshe Y.D. 3:61. This stringency applies only if the bloody eggs were cooked or fried in a pot or pan; not if they merely came into cold contact. 17 Talmud, Kerisus 20b. 18 Rashi, Kesuvos 60a. 19 Based on Yad Yehudah Y.D. 96:5. 20 Y.D. 66:10. 21 Y.D. 66:10. 22 See Darkei Teshuvah 66:68 who quotes a dispute among the poskim as to whether this blood may be swallowed or not. Darkei Teshuvah does not decide the issue. 23 Kaf ha-Chayim 66:48 quoting Ben Ish Chai. 24 Yad Avraham, Y.D. 66:10; Darkei Teshuvah 66:71. 25 Darkei Teshuvah 66:72. 26 O.C. 328:48. 27 Mishnah Berurah 328:147. See Magen Avraham 53 that this may be Biblically prohibited. 28 O.C. 328:22. 29 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 328:67. 30 See Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 14:19. 31 Mishnah Berurah 328:146.

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Sichot of the Roshei Yeshiva summarized by students NOACH SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A Summarized by Jeremy Spierer

"These are the generations of Noach. Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generation (be-dorotav); Noach walked with God ... God said to Noach, 'Come into the ark, you and your family, for I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.'" (Bereishit 6:9, 7:1) Rashi (6:9), citing the midrash, addresses the Torah's emphasis on Noach's generation: "Some Rabbis interpret [the word 'be-dorotav'] to Noach's credit: had Noach lived in a generation of tzadikim (righteous people), he would certainly have been more righteous. Other Rabbis interpret it to Noach's detriment: by the standards of his generation, Noach was righteous. However, had he lived in Abraham's generation, he would not have been considered [anything]."

In explaining the second part of the verse - "Noach walked with God" - Rashi elaborates on this comparison between Noach and Abraham: "...Noach required God's assistance for support, but Abraham strengthened himself, maintaining his righteousness by himself."

The comparison between Noach and Abraham is a natural one. Both Noach and Abraham merited a special relationship with God after a "break" of ten generations. Yet, if we analyze their lives - especially as recorded by the midrash and the Zohar - we uncover stark differences. We can isolate two main differences. 1) Noach was a product of his generation. He grew up in the same environment as his neighbors. Abraham, on the other hand, simply arrived in Canaan, a stranger. 2) At the same time, Noach and Abraham developed the opposite relationship with their neighbors. While Noach isolated himself from the masses, Abraham sought them out, proclaiming the message of God.

This last difference is highlighted by comparing parallel episodes in their lives: "God said to Noach, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me. The world is filled with crime. I will therefore destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood...' Noach did all that God had commanded him..." (6:13, 14, 22) "God said, 'The cry of Sodom and Amora is great, and their sin is very grave. I will descend and see: have they done everything implied by the outcry that is coming before Me? If not, I will know...' Abraham came forth and said, 'Will you actually wipe out the innocent together with the guilty? Suppose there are fifty innocent people in the city...'" (18:20,23,24)

God approached both Noach and Abraham with a message of destruction for the wicked of their generations. While Abraham pleaded and prayed, Noach remained silent, complying with God's wishes. The Zohar explains Noach's behavior: Noach was afraid that if he prayed for his generation, he himself would not be spared. How can we understand this Zohar? Hadn't Noach received God's personal assurance of safety? Instead, we have to understand the nature of prayer. To pray for someone, you have to understand him; you have to identify with his struggles. Noach was afraid his prayer would draw him closer to his generation. Perhaps he would then be influenced by his generation. In contrast, Abraham understood the people of Sodom, realizing what they stood for. Yet, he prayed for them nevertheless.

Interestingly, the Zohar relates that Noach did eventually question God's harsh decree. Upon exiting the ark, Noach surveyed the destruction around him, crying, "God, this is your mercy?" God then rebuked Noach, "For 120 years [the time it took to build the ark] I waited for your prayers..." This Zohar accents the tragedy of Noach's character. Noach had the potential to save his generation, for he spoke their language. He was one of them. However, instead of reaching out, he simply gave up on them.

What did Noach see in his generation to evoke such a response? The Talmud (Sanhedrin 108a) describes the source of their wickedness: "They became conceited as a result of the goodness God bestowed upon them." Their high quality of life, the Talmud records, caused them to reject God, "Therefore they say to God, 'Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Your ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him and what profit should we have if we pray to Him?' (Job 21:14,15)."

The midrash, as well, comments on the people's lifestyle. Their technology was advanced to such an extent, the midrash relates, that they rarely had to work. Rav Tzadok Ha-kohen of Lublin writes that the members of Noach's generation enjoyed too much free time. What could Noach accomplish in such a culture with an abundance of leisure but no spiritual aspirations? Perhaps Noach reasoned, "I cannot reach people in such a world. God Himself has to change the nature of the world." "Too much free time." If Rav Tzadok were alive today, he would make a similar statement about our own culture. We pray for free time, so we can learn Torah. But what about those still unfamiliar with the Torah, or those who reject the Torah? How do they use their free time? They cultivate another hobby and another hobby...

Noach isolated himself from his generation, and found himself isolated in the ark. Abraham, on the other hand, taught us a different approach. Yes, God will help man improve his world, but only at man's initiative. (Originally delivered on Leil Shabbat, Parashat Noach 5757.)

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The Weekly Daf #194 Berachos 30-36 Week of 26 Tishrei - 2 Cheshvan 5758 / 27 Oct. - 2 Nov. 1997 (Parshas Noach) By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

In the Mood for Prayer "One should not enter into prayer from amidst sorrow, nor indolence, nor laughter, nor idle talk, nor frivolity, nor nonsense - only from amidst the joy of a mitzvah." This is the Talmudic formula for preparing to stand before Hashem in the prayer of Shmoneh Esrei three times daily. What produces this mood of joy which must serve as the preface to prayer? We subsequently learn that there is an equation between "words of praise and comfort" and "joy of a mitzvah." Rashi spells out how we recite such words of praise and comfort to achieve this joy in each of our

three daily services. In the morning we precede our Shmone Esrei with a recounting of the Exodus from Egypt. At Mincha we say "Ashrei" which contains the passage "Hashem protects all that love Him." In the evening we again have the Exodus theme, and even outside of Eretz Yisrael where a long blessing separates it from the Shmone Esrei, that blessing contains such words of praise and comfort as the passage "For Hashem will not abandon His people." In order for a person to be capable of coming before Hashem and sincerely petition Him for all his personal and national, material and spiritual needs, he must be filled with confidence that his Creator both cares about his creations and that He is absolutely capable of providing their needs. Only by recalling the Exodus in which Hashem so powerfully demonstrated both His profound concern and His unlimited ability, or in reciting Biblical passages which echo this comforting message in their praise of Hashem, can one achieve that "joy of a mitzva" which puts him into the proper mood for prayer. Berachos 31a

Woe to the Serpent A dangerous serpent threatened the residents of a certain community. When a number of people had been stricken by this creature it was brought to the attention of Rabbi Chanina ben Dossa. There are different versions in our Babylonian Talmud and in the Jerusalem Talmud as to how the sage eliminated this menace. In the version before us Rabbi Chanina asked to be shown the hole in the ground which served as the serpent's lair. He then placed his heel upon the opening of the hole and the serpent bit his heel. Rabbi Chanina remained unaffected but the serpent died. He then carried the dead serpent on his shoulder to the Beis Midrash where he declared: "See, my sons, it is not the serpent which kills. It is sin that kills." The reaction of people who learned of this incident was to exclaim: "Woe to the man who encounters a serpent and woe to the serpent which encounters Rabbi Chanina ben Dossa." The Jerusalem Talmud version is that Rabbi Chanina was standing in prayer in his regular spot when he was struck by the serpent. He did not interrupt his prayers and when he had completed them he discovered the body of the dead serpent next to him. Maharsha points out that the first version is problematic because a person is not permitted to put himself into a dangerous situation and to rely upon a Heavenly miracle to save him. The resolution proposed by Iyun Yaakov is that the sage felt that the security of the community was dependent on his utilizing his exalted standing which had already been acclaimed in a Heavenly echo which declared "The entire world is nourished in the merit of My son Chanina." (Berachos 17b) He decided that the communal need justified risking his own safety, and it was the merit of the community and his own merit which made the miracle possible. Berachos 33a

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BERACHOS 35 - has been dedicated to the memory of Rivkah bas Yisrael Yakov (Ruth Glaser) who passed away on 27 Iyar 5750 -- by her children and grandchildren, Eli and Yitty Glaser and family of Kew Gardens Hills N.Y. ...

Berachos 32b- 2) FASTING IS GREATER THAN GIVING TZEDAKAH QUESTION: Rebbi Elazar asserts that fasting is greater than giving Tzedakah, because fasting is done with one's body, while giving Tzedakah is done only with one's money. The Gemara earlier (6b) said that the reward for a day of fasting comes from the Tzedakah that one gives at the end of his fast. This implies that *Tzedakah* is greater, for without it, fasting alone is not worthy of its own reward. How are the two Gemaras to be reconciled?

ANSWERS: (a) The AHAVAS EISAN (in the Ein Yakov) answers that Rebbi Elazar is consistent with another opinion of his. Rebbi Elazar maintains that one who fasts is considered holy, since he separates himself from indulging in worldly pleasures (Ta'anis 11a). Others argue with Rebbi Elazar and maintain that one who fasts is considered a sinner, since he refrained from benefiting from the things that G-d created for his benefit

(ibid.). Mar Zutra, who said that the reward for fasting is the Tzedakah that one gives, may agree to the second opinion. (b) The IYUN YAKOV explains that the Gemara on 6b is discussing the reward that a person receives *in this world*. Since the act of giving Tzedakah is a Mitzvah between man and his fellow man, he receives reward for it in this world (Rambam, Perush ha'Mishnah Pe'ah 1:1). Fasting, though, which is a Mitzvah between man and G-d, is rewarded in the World to Come. Regarding the reward that comes in the World to Come, fasting is much greater than Tzedakah. (c) The Gemara in Chulin (91a) says that the money of the righteous is more precious to them than their bodies (i.e., than physical effort -- see Insights to Chulin 91). They will subject themselves to strenuous physical labor in order to avoid parting with their money. The Gemara on 6b is referring to such Tzadikim, for whom giving money is more difficult than physical pain. For them, giving Tzedakah is indeed greater than fasting. Our Gemara is referring to regular people, for whom afflicting their bodies by fasting is very difficult, while giving away money is easier. (LIKUTEI CHAVER BEN CHAYIM, Berachos 6b) (d) A simple answer may be suggested as follows. The Gemara on 6b does not say that the *primary* reward for fasting comes from the Tzedakah that one gives at the end of the fast. Rather, it means that the only *certain* reward that one receives from fasting is from the Tzedakah that he gives afterward. When one fasts, it is not definite that he will be rewarded for fasting, because his intentions may not be sincere (for example, he is fasting because he is not hungry, or because he wants to save himself money). However, it *is* definite that he will be rewarded for the Tzedakah that he gives after his fast. No matter what his intentions are, his Tzedakah helps a poor person. Certainly, though, if a person's intentions are genuine and pure, fasting is much greater than giving Tzedakah, like our Gemara says. This is clear from the context of the Sugya on 6b. Every action and reward mentioned there refers to an action whose reward is not certain, but the one who performs that action receives definite reward from a secondary action (for example, "the reward for going to hear the Torah lecture is [from] the running [that one does to get there]." Rashi explains that although one might not understand the lecture and therefore not receive reward for it, he nevertheless receives definite reward for running to the lecture). (M. Kornfeld)

Berachos 33b 3) PITY ON THE MOTHER BIRD: ARE THERE REASONS FOR THE MITZVOS? QUESTION: The Mishnah states that one who says, "Hashem's mercy reaches the mother bird," must be silenced. The Gemara explains (in the second reason) that this is because the Mitzvos are purely Gezeiros, "heavenly decrees upon us to fulfill," and no mercy is involved. How can it be that there are no reasons behind the Mitzvos? Rebbi Shimon explicitly states (see Yevamos 23a, and other places) that all of the Mitzvos have reasons behind them! ANSWERS: (a) The RAMBAM, in Moreh Nevuchim (3:26,48), explains that this opinion in our Gemara indeed argues with Rebbi Shimon, and maintains that there are no reasons for the Mitzvos. (b) The RAMBAN (Devarim 22:6) explains that the Mitzvos certainly have reasons. Our Gemara means that the reason behind the Mitzvah of sending away the mother bird is not in order to have mercy *on the bird*. Rather, it is a "Gezeirah" (= decree upon *us* and for our benefit), in order to accustom us to be merciful and inculcate in us that trait. One who is accustomed to being cruel to beasts, becomes cruel by nature in general.

hamaayan@torah.org Hamaayan / The Torah Spring: Parashat Noach Edited by Shlomo Katz Sponsored by: Mrs. Esther Liberman and family, in memory of husband and father Yaakov Azriel ben Aharon David a"h. The Saltzman family in honor of Josh's Bar Mitzvah. Zev Kipperman, in appreciation of the expressions of sympathy and support shown by the community during the shiva for his mother, Kate Kipperman, a"h

Rashi, commenting on the verse, "Noach was perfect in his generations," cites a famous dispute among the Sages: "Some interpret this verse favorably -- how much more so would Noach have been righteous had

he been in Avraham's generation! Others interpret this unfavorably -- had he been in Avraham's generation, he would have been nothing." R' Yosef Yoizel Horowitz z"l (the "Alter of Novardok") writes that the Sages do not disagree regarding the fact that Noah was righteous, nor is it their intention to compare Noah's righteousness quantitatively with Avraham's righteousness. Rather, Chazal's disagreement is regarding what motivated Noah. One view says that Noah searched for the truth, and therefore he was righteous. And, if he found the truth while living among the degenerate people of his time, how much more certain it is that he would have found the truth in Avraham's generation! The other view contends that Noah was motivated to be righteous only because he was repulsed by his contemporaries' immorality. Their degeneration forced Noah to take a stand, so-to-speak. Not so, had he lived in Avraham's time, when immorality was not so prevalent. In that generation, Noah would have remained indifferent. The Alter explains further: A passenger may ride in the first class compartment of a train, but that alone does not tell us whether he is a wealthy person. In wartime, one may ride first class simply to avoid the soldiers and refugees who are packed into the train's coaches. On the other hand, if one rides first class in peace-time, when there are plenty of seats in the cheaper coaches, that is an indication that one has money to spend. Similarly, it is undisputed that Noah was objectively righteous. He "rode first class." What the sages question, however, is whether he rode first class to avoid the other passengers or because that is where he truly wanted to sit. (Madregat Ha'adam p.7)

An Astonishing Midrash "Two-by-two they came to Noah" (7:9) these are the days when the complete Hallel is recited. The days when the complete Hallel is recited outside of Eretz Yisrael are the first two days of Pesach, the two days of Shavuot, the nine days of Sukkot and the eight days of Chanukah. These days are alluded to in the above verse as follows: "Two-by-two" alludes to the two days each of Pesach and Shvuot. "They came" has a gematria of nine, and alludes to the nine days of Sukkot. Finally, "to Noah" has the same gematria as "Chanukah." (Binat Nevonim)

"Noah walked with G-d." (6:9) Rashi comments: Noah walked with G-d because he needed G-d to support him. R' Yosef Yoizel Horowitz z"l (the "Alter of Novardok") explains in what way this is a praise of Noah. Noah used all of his abilities to serve G-d, until he had nothing left to give. The rest was up to G-d. Chazal say that a person could never defeat his yetzer hara without Hashem's help. First, however, one must use all of his own forces to fight the yetzer hara. Chazal say that Noah was a believer and a non-believer, and the waters of the flood had to push him into the ark. This means that he believed in his ability to use his own strength against the yetzer hara, but was not confident in receiving Hashem's assistance. His contemporaries, on the other hand, would have been content to accept Hashem's help, but they were not interested in using their own efforts. This is why the same flood-waters which pushed Noah into the ark pushed his undeserving contemporaries away from the ark. In fact, concludes the Alter, this is true of every test from Hashem. Precisely the same test which elevates the worthy person puts down the unworthy person. (Madregat Ha'adam p.6) ...

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The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg
Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion Noah

Praying for Others --- Our Sages relate that Noah did not pray for the welfare of humanity before the Flood, unlike Moshe who prayed for the welfare of those who made the Golden Calf. There is a dispute among the rabbis with regard to Noah's lack of prayer: R. Yehuda concedes that Noah failed to pray like Moshe did, but points out that Moshe beseeched G-d in the merit of the Patriarchs. Since Noah could not have done so, he cannot be blamed for his failure to pray on behalf of others. R. Yitzchak,

however, maintains that even though he was unable to invoke the merit of the Patriarchs, Noah should nonetheless have beseeched G-d's mercy on behalf of the world's population. The Torah commands us to judge every person favorably, to give every individual the benefit of the doubt. Why then does R. Yitzchak seem to condemn Noah's behavior, rather than recognizing that Noah lacked people in whose merit he could plead for Divine mercy? In fact, we can argue that R. Yitzchak agrees that Noah was unable to pray for his generation, because he was lacking individuals on whose merit he could rely. R. Yitzchak is not seeking to indict Noah, however, but rather wanted to be sure that his failure to pray for the welfare of others would not set a precedent for future generations. R. Yitzchak therefore concludes that it is necessary to portray Noah's lack of prayer as a flaw -- although, in his case, there was nothing else he could have done -- for it teaches later generations that all possible means must be used in order to obtain mercy and compassion for one's fellows. The statement of R. Yitzchak thus in no way contradicts the command to judge every person favorably, for he too judges Noah favorably, and agrees that he would have had to rely on the merit of others in order to succeed in his prayers. R. Yitzchak merely intended to encourage other individuals always to intercede on behalf of their fellows, although the chances of success may seem remote. Moreover, if Noah's failure to pray for the welfare of others had not been discussed, then this itself could have a detrimental effect on Noah, for his behavior, innocent though it was, may have led to the misconduct of others. There is a lesson here for us all. A person may well do all he can in order to have a beneficial effect on his environment, but fail due to circumstances beyond his control. Such an individual might well think that, since he did all he could, he has no further moral obligation to himself or to others, and can now rest comfortably; the fact that he didn't succeed is not his fault. R. Yitzchak therefore teaches us that a person may very well have done as much as he was capable of doing, and is not merely fooling himself into thinking so. Nevertheless, says R. Yitzchak, one cannot make peace with such a situation. He must continue to "beseech mercy for his generation"; failure to do so can well be considered a fault. Such relentless concern for the welfare of others may well bring G-d to negate those factors that are causing the untoward situation, for He provides every Jew with the opportunity to successfully seek Divine mercy on behalf of his generation. Especially so, since the Rambam rules that the "Torah guarantees that the Jewish people will ultimately repent at the conclusion of their exile, and will immediately be redeemed." Based on Likutei Sichos, Vol. XXV, pp. 19-22

Transforming Justice into Mercy --- In commenting on the verse "G-d (Elokim) remembered Noah...", Rashi notes: "This Name (Elokim) is the Name of the Attribute of Justice. It was transformed to Mercy through the prayers of the righteous." Why did this remembrance have to come from the Attribute of Justice and be transformed into Mercy? Why could it not have originated from G-d's Attribute of Mercy? Later in the Torah portion of Noah, the verse goes on to state, "G-d smelled the pleasing fragrance, and said to Himself: 'Never again will I curse the soil because of man....'" The Midrash notes that the "pleasing fragrance" alludes to the "fragrance of our father Avraham that rose from the fiery furnace... the fragrance of Chananya, Mishoel and Azaryah that rose from the fiery furnace... the fragrance of the Jewish generations that were subject to horrible decrees on account of their religion." The Midrash thus informs us that the self-sacrifice of Avraham, Chananya, Mishoel and Azaryah, and of all the Jews who lived in times of harsh decrees, were instrumental in persuading G-d to say: "Never again will I curse the soil because of man." Our Sages ask: "Why wasn't the pleasing fragrance of Noah's offering sufficient? Why was it necessary to include the 'fragrance' that rose from the self-sacrifice of all these righteous individuals?" G-d's pact with Noah to never destroy the world finds expression in His promise that "As long as the earth lasts, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall never cease." The fact that nature now conducts itself entirely without change indicates that it has been vested with an infinite level of holiness, for nature itself, like all things physical, does not in and of itself possess the ability to endure without change. It is only because a degree of G-dliness -- "I am G-d; I have not changed" -- is vested within nature that it is immutable. Since this constancy derives from G-d's infinite power and is revealed specifically in and through nature, it follows that, in order to elicit such a force, a commensurate level of spiritual service within nature is necessary. This spiritual service is self-sacrifice, mesirus nefesh, a service that contains two key elements: Mesirus nefesh points to a level of service that is not subject to change -- when a person serves G-d with mesirus nefesh, then the strongest forces in the world will not keep him from serving in his accustomed manner. On the other hand, it is specifically through these very hindrances and obstacles that an individual's power of mesirus nefesh is revealed. This is why the power of mesirus nefesh is more prominent during exile than it was while the Holy Temples existed. For the very concealment and difficulty of exile arouses the power of mesirus nefesh. Accordingly, the very concealment that ostensibly hinders spiritual service actually strengthens it, up to and including the level of mesirus nefesh. As lofty as was Noah's spiritual service, it could in no way compare to mesirus nefesh -- the strength within every Jew that reveals G-d's infinite force within the world, and which enables nature to endure without change. It was thus necessary to include the "fragrance" of those who displayed mesirus nefesh. This also explains why G-d's "remembrance" had to come from the Attribute of Justice

and be transformed to Mercy, rather than from the Attribute of Mercy itself. In order for material nature itself to reveal G-dliness, it is necessary that the Divine Name Elokim, which enables nature to exist, be transformed into the Attribute of Mercy, by which G-dliness is revealed. Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XX, pp. 30-36

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mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Shiur HaRav Soloveichik on Parshas Noach noach97 (Shiur date: 10/14/75)

The Torah tells us that Shem and Yefes took an article of clothing and placed it on their shoulders and covered their father. The Torah uses the singular, Vayikach, and he took, referring to Shem who took the initiative to act. Yefes merely followed Shem. The Midrash Rabbah (36:9) says that Rabbi Yochanan said that because Shem took the initiative in this Mitzvah and [this led] Yefes to join with him, Shem was rewarded with Talis [and Tcheles] while Yefes was rewarded with the Toga.

The Rav explained that Noach's sons each displayed a different attitude towards their elders. Cham was always looking for the shortcomings of his father, Ervas Aviv. Cham disdained his father for drinking wine. He did not allow his father the benefit of relaxing a bit after all he had been through in saving them and all that was in the ark with them. He never saw eye to eye with his father.

Yefes was not concerned with what was right or wrong. He was more interested in what the current convention was. His motivation to act was not borne out of an internal desire to perform acts of Chesed. Rather it was because at that moment it appeared to be the proper thing to do. [He might have acted differently if the situation arose at another time.]

Shem on the other hand an ingrained sense of Chesed and Ahava. Shem realized that everything he is and has, is because of his father. The Gemara uses Dama Ben Nesina as the example of extreme Kibbud Av, when he refused to wake his father to get the key that was hidden under his father's pillow. Why did the Gemara have to harp on the aspect of the key that was under his father's pillow? Why didn't the Gemara simply say that the key was unavailable? Dama Ben Nesina rose up the ladder to become a member of the Roman Senate. Yet he realized that whatever he became was because of his father. The "key" to his own success was under his father's pillow, by respecting and honoring his father. True Kibbud Av is when a son respects his father and always realizes that all he has is because of his father, now matter how great the son becomes.

Shem realized that he owed his existence to his father who brought him into the world. He realized that he now had an even greater debt towards his father, who saved him from the Mabul because he was a Tzaddik Tamim.

One must realize that he stands on the shoulders of his parents. The Ramban says that even though he argues with the Baal Halachos Gedolos, he does not claim to know more than the Behag. He compares himself to a midjet who stands on the shoulders of a giant and who thus has a slightly better view than that which the giant himself enjoys. This is made possible because of the foundation that the giant has provided him. One must feel the same towards his father. This is also the concept of Talmid Chaver. The Talmid knows more because he has also benefited from the foundation his teacher [and all the previous generations of teachers] provided for him.

Shem was rewarded with the Talis and Tzitzis. The Midrash says that Tcheles is similar to the sea and to the heavens and to the Kisei Hakavod. Tcheles tells the Jew that he does not know it all and that he is dependent on Hashem. The sea and the sky represent that beyond the seemingly graspable surface there is an unfathomable and unreachable depth. Ultimately no matter how much man may believe he has accomplished and attained it is still insignificant relative to the true depth Hashem. Fear of father [Mora Av] is equated with fear of heaven [Mora Shamayim] because the Jew must understand that just as he is dependent on Hashem, he must also recognize that he owes everything to his father as well.

Yefes was rewarded with the toga. Yefes was the father of Greece and Greek Culture [which was one that valued action based on the expedience of the moment] and its high regard for superficial beauty. It was willing to

accept abominable actions in the name of culture. [The Rav compared this to modern times acceptance of illicit sexual activity and homosexuality and the scorn that modern youth have for the older generation].

Yefes was rewarded with the external trappings, Klapay Chutz. Shem was rewarded with the inner beauty as symbolized by the Talis and Tcheles.

[In another Shiur the Rav added another dimension to the difference between Shem and Yefes. Both Shem and Yefes had Kavod, respect, for their father. However only Shem displayed Yirah, fear, for his father.

The Rav explained these terms. Kavod is simple respect that one shows externally towards his father. This respect may come about only because the son would be ashamed of the scorn from others that he would receive if he did not care for his father. Yirah on the other hand means listening to the advice of his father, looking up to him, overlooking his mistakes and holding him in the highest esteem. As the Torah tells us "Sheal Avicha Vyagedcha, Zkaynecha Vyomru Lach", seek counsel from your father and consult with your grandparents.

Shem displayed Yirah for his father. He was able to overlook the acts of his father by viewing them in the context of what he went through and the enormous responsibility he had in preserving the world. He could not stand to see his father degraded. Yefes showed only Kavod for his father. He was afraid that others might accuse him of being a lesser son than Shem. So when Shem showed the initiative to act, Yefes was quick to participate in this good deed. Cham on the other hand showed scorn and disdain for his father and was always pointing out his father's shortcomings and those of the previous generations.]

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