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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON NOACH - 5763

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To: daf-hashavua@shamash.org Subject: daf-hashavua Noach 5763/2002

Noach-5763 UNITED SYNAGOGUE -LONDON (O) Noach Vol 15 No 2 6 Cheshvan 5763 Shabbat ends in London at 7:01pm
SIDRA INSIGHTS EVOLUTION OR ELEVATION?

The following article, reproduced from the 1989 edition of the Daf, was written by

RABBI ISAAC BERNSTEIN zl, (first editor of the Daf Hashavua) Rabbi Ovadia Sforno (16th century commentator), in his Torah commentary, offers a unique insight into the changes wrought in the world by the Flood. Whilst all agree that the Flood destroyed "every living thing" (with the exception of those in Noah's Ark), Sforno, on the basis of his analysis of the text, suggests that another development took place as a result of this event.

And G-d said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me since the earth is filled with robbery through them and behold I am about to destroy them with the earth' (Bereishit 6:13). On the latter part of that verse, Sforno comments as follows: "I will destroy them with the earth. I will destroy (alter) the climate of the earth and air .. As a result immediately after the Flood, the span of human life was shortened, since weather conditions and fruits were no longer perfect (complete) as before. It is for this reason that man was permitted to eat the meat of living creatures after the Flood."

Sforno sees confirmation for this thesis in another verse in our Sidra: "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease" (Bereishit 8:22). He comments as follows: "Before the Flood the angle of the earth and sun was such that the equinox was constant and therefore it was always springtime which was a general betterment for the elements and the span of life of living creatures. Now, the Torah tells us that this new altered condition will endure 'while the earth remains, meaning until such time that G-d will ameliorate the damage caused by the Flood."

For Sforno, mention of seasons is made only after the Flood since it was the Flood that brought them into being.

Having noted Sforno's opinion regarding the origins of aspects of the earth as we know it today, it is in place to quote his comments to last week's Sidra regarding the creation of man.

The usual translation of these words is "And G-d said 'Let us make man in Our image and as Our likeness'" (Bereishit 1:26). Sforno explains as follows: "He then endowed His heavenly host with the power to impart the heavenly image to the subject which was prepared for it (i.e. man)".

According to Sforno, there was no new creation on that sixth day, only the 'elevation' of one of the species created at an earlier stage. This is confirmed by Sforno's next comment: "Man is a species .. which I already created (Verse 24) whose name is ADAM, as it says 'And man became a living creature'" (Bereishit 2:7). In other words, Man started his existence as a member of the animal kingdom. At a later stage, G-d endowed the animal – Man with intellect and free-will.

Discovery of man's 'ancestors' for Sforno is confirmation that man originally was created as animal. Where Darwin speaks of evolution, Sforno speaks of elevation. Where science seeks the 'missing link', Sforno has already supplied it in G-d's pronouncement "Let us perfect man".

Note that this thesis of man, that suggests the possibility of discovering remains of "mananimal" was advanced, on the basis of the Torah text by a commentator who was born in 1475 and died in 1550!

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http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2002/parsha/rros_noach.html

RABBI MICHAEL ROSENSWEIG
PARSHAS NOACH: A NEW CREATION?

In the aftermath of the mabul that refashioned the world, the Torah (Bereshis 9:1) records that Hashem blessed Noah and his children in a manner that is reminiscent of his original charge to man: "peru u-revu u-milu et ha-aretz". In fact, the Radak (9:1) is troubled by the apparent repetition, and is forced to conclude that the mabul was not merely a catastrophic historical event, but constituted a second act of creation, as it left the world again in a state of "tohu va-vohu". Hence, the need to reiterate the initial berakhah. Notwithstanding this radical conclusion, Radak (9:2) views this berakhah and the pesukim that follow it as a reaffirmation of the basic principles established at the time of the original creation that govern man's conduct, regulate his interaction with the world around him, and define his very purpose. Even the most salient change brought about by the mabul, the license for man to eat meat (9:3), is not perceived by the Radak as a fundamental shift in the natural order. He (9:4) asserts that while man was prevented from consuming meat until Noah invested effort in securing the future of animal life, the original scheme of creation already incorporated the notion that animals would serve man both in his work and as a source of food.

An examination of these pesukim, however, reveals that another perspective is possible. The strong parallels between the aftermath of the mabul and the creation of the world also serve to accent the subtle differences in the Torah's formulation of the new series of berakhot and commandments.

In Bereshis (1:26), when man's creation is contemplated, he is presented with a challenge and charge not only to procreate and populate the world, but to master his environment and assert his authority in the hierarchy of living things- "ve-yirdu be-degat ha-yam u-beof ha-shamayim u-bekol remes haromes al ha-aretz". Upon man's actual creation, Hashem bestows a berakhah upon him which again emphasizes his intended mastery(1:28):"peru u-revu u-milu et ha-aretz ve-kivshuhah, u-redu be-degat ha-yam u-beof hashamayim u-bekol hayah ha-romeset al ha-aretz". This berakah contrasts sharply with that given to the birds and fish (1:22)- "peru u-revu u-milu et ha-mayim bayamim ve-haof yirev ba-aretz"- which focuses exclusively on populating their respective environments. It is noteworthy, that the pesukim that immediately follow the articulation of man's destiny (1:29-30) are devoted to man's and animals' diet. Perhaps this indicates that the different roles and respective destinies in the creation hierarchy are reflected in this issue. The Ramban and other mefarshim (1:29. see, also, Rashi, Ibn Ezra etc.) conclude from a close reading of the text that not only could man not eat meat, but that the Torah also intended to differentiate between the vegetarian diets of man and animal. Man was to consume "esev zorea zera" and "eitz asher bo peri eitz zorea zera" products, while animals were restricted to "kol yerev esev". After the mabul, man's aspirations appear to have been significantly scaled back. Here, too, his destiny is twice addressed. While the first formulation is certainly just a berakah, it is possible that the second

expression is intended as a command. [Rashi and Ramban (9:7) briefly address the issue of the relationship between these two pesukim and the pesukim in Bereishis.] In any event, even if both components register in the post-mabul era, the change in order relative to the Bereishis account is intriguing. Of greater significance is the nature and scope of the berakhah/challenge/zivui. Man's post-mabul agenda does not include any reference to mastery of his environment or the hierarchy of created beings. Indeed, Noah's berakhah/zivui really parallels the initial berakhah to the birds and fish, articulated in Bereishis! Noah is given instructions regarding man's interaction with other species, but these, too, reflect a change at least in tone. The focus is no longer on the ambition of conquest and domination, but on a mechanism for survival and self-defense- " u-morakhem ve-hitkhem yihiyeh al kol hayat ha-aretz ve'al kol of ha-shamayim..." Perhaps for this reason, the initial focus is on wild animals, as they pose the greatest security threat. The world of the sea, which constitutes a completely distinct domain and poses no real hazard if man remains in his own environment is treated differently in this context- "u-bekol degai ha-yam be-yedkhem nitanu." This order and emphasis contrasts sharply with the Bereishis parallel (1:26,28) in which the more distant and challenging domains- the sea and air- are underscored first. Moreover, the Ramban(9:5) and others perceive that the post-mabul allowance to consume meat constitutes a fundamental change in man's very nature, and perhaps in the whole dynamic of creature interaction. The Ramban argues that it was necessary to reiterate the prohibition against murder in this context precisely because significant changes had occurred. The Abudraham explains that the proper berakah for eating meat is birkhat she-hakol and not "boreih hayat ha-aretz" precisely because the original creation scheme did not entail the consumption of animals. Evidently, a significant transformation took place in Noah's time. The link between destiny and diet in both contexts certainly points to a broad refashioning of the world order in the aftermath of the mabul.

While some mefarshim (Akedat Yitzhak) see this watershed transition as an evolution in man's status, a symbol of his progress in distancing himself from the animal kingdom, justifying the eating of meat, the cumulative evidence makes a compelling case for the view that this second creation reflects man's limitations and Hashem's disappointment. Coming on the heels of the need for such a radical restructuring and the Divine assessment- (8:21) " ki yezer lev ha-adam ra mi-neurav"-, it is likely that the new world order constituted a concession to man's inability to sufficiently distinguish himself from the rest of creation. According to Abarbanel, he was permitted meat as a concession to ensure his survival. According to other perspectives, man's lower ambitions and aspirations no longer justified such dietary restrictions. The world was, indeed, reconstituted, but on a different basis. The need to reiterate the theme of zelel elokim and the prohibitions against murder in this context of lowered expectations is paramount.

This perspective is consistent with the view that we have developed elsewhere (TorahWeb, parshas Noah, 5760, 5761) according to which Noah, himself, especially in contrast to both Avraham and Moshe, personifies the values of compromise and survival, not those of spiritual excellence and idealism. His association with the 7 Noachide commands, and especially his personal link with every min hachai, which simultaneously accents the allowance of meat and its restriction, contrast dramatically with the loftier spiritual idealism embodied by taryag mizvot and the total corpus of Torah and halakhah.

The impact of the mabul on human nature and world order may have been profound. However, the ideal challenges presented to Adam continue to inspire mankind in general, and especially Am Yisrael. Notwithstanding the second act of creation following the "tohu vavohoo" after the mabul, it is the initial creation of Bereishis that we continue to commemorate on Rosh Hashanah ("hayom harat olam") and every Shabbat. As the Ramban notes the fact that we designate days of the week by their distance from Shabbat conveys a powerful message that the entire week revolves around Shabbat. In this way, Jews continue to underscore their ideal commitment to Hashem in the post-mabul world.

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"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Noach -

Eliyahu Was Taught A Lesson By The Ravens

The rains finally stopped and the waters began to recede. Noah wanted to assess the situation so he sent out the raven to seek out dry land. The Medrash states that the reason why Noah chose the raven was because the raven seemed to be a species of minimal value: "What does the world need you for? You are not fit either for eating or for a sacrificial offering."

In fact, the Medrash indicates that Noah was angry at the raven and sending him on this mission was somewhat of a "punishment". The raven was the only occupant of the Teyva [Ark] to mate during the flood. Both humans and animals were warned not to have relations with their mates during the time in the Teyva. The raven violated this prohibition. In fact, the raven's mate was now pregnant, so Noah felt that he would not be violating his mandate of saving all species by risking the life of the 'father' raven at this juncture.

However, the Medrash says that G-d told Noah to accept the raven back into the Teyva because in the future the world would need his services. There would come a time when a righteous person would make the land dry (Eliyahu the prophet). There would be a tremendous famine in the land and the ravens would bring him food and meat (from the house of Ahab, King of Israel).

There is a fascinating Baal HaTurim that reads an allusion to this Medrash into a pasuk in our Parsha [8:7] "And he sent out the raven and it went back and forth until the water dried up [ad yevoshes hamayim] from upon the land". The Baal HaTurim points out that the word yevoshes [dried up] has the same letters as the word 'Tishbi' which refers to Eliyahu who was known as the 'Tishbi'. This allusion hints at G-d's admonition to Noah not to be so hard on the raven, since the raven will be needed when there is a drought in the time of Eliyahu the Tishbi.

However, the question needs to be asked -- why did G-d chose the ravens from among all other birds or creatures to sustain Eliyahu? If, in fact, ravens have a reputation of being cruel creatures, and if, in fact, the raven was the only creature to violate the rule of no relations during the time in the Teyva, why were the ravens specifically chosen to be the 'angels of mercy' for Eliyahu?

The Succas Dovid answers that G-d was trying to teach a lesson to Eliyahu by specifically using this 'delivery service'. The lesson was that good things can even come out of ravens, and so too good things may even emerge out of wicked people. Eliyahu the prophet was the penultimate zealot (kanai). He railed against the Jewish people and declared them to be worthless "for they have nullified Thy Covenant" [Melachim I 19:10]. Eliyahu said that they were beyond redemption and they should all die. G-d is hinting to Eliyahu that it this not true. They are not that bad. Even from the wicked amongst them, good things happen.

We know that at every Bris (Circumcision) there is an area set aside as the "Chair of Eliyahu". Eliyahu is, as it were, the honored guest who appears at every Bris Milah. The Shalo"h sees this symbolism as a form of "punishment" for Eliyahu. Since he uttered the words "they have abandoned Thy Covenant (azvu Bris-cha), he is summoned to appear at every Bris in the future to witness the fact that he was wrong -- that Jews are still keeping the Covenant! His stinging and ringing indictment that the Jews nullified the Covenant was uncalled for! This was the message of the ravens delivering Eliyahu his food. No wicked individual is beyond hope. He can always come back and prove himself a worthwhile member of society -- even the raven! This especially applies to the Jewish people. They may have done terrible things, they may have worshipped idolatry in the time of Ahab, but do not write them off.

Where Does It Say I Must Arrive On Time?

Upon emerging from the Teyva after the flood, Noah planted a vineyard. The Torah uses the words "VaYachel Noah" [9:20], which is commonly translated as "Noah began". However, Rashi comments that the word VaYachel alludes to the fact that Noah debased himself -- he made himself profane (chullin) -- by planting the vineyard immediately upon leaving the Teyva. This very same Noah, who at the beginning of the parsha is described as righteous and perfect (Tzadik, Tamim), experienced a spiritual descent and is described as "a man of the earth". Wine should not have been the first crop that he planted. It marked an inauspicious beginning to life back on dry land. The Seforno explains that there was no crime in planting a vineyard; it just was not the most appropriate thing for a person such as Noah to do. The descent, from the spiritual heights of a "Tzadik, Tamim", to the mundane level of a common man, often starts just this way. It does not begin with a dramatic action that throws away every value he has ever stood for. It begins with an act which is merely not esthetically appealing ('nisch shein' in Yiddish) for a person of his caliber. Rav Henoch Leibowitz references a famous comment of the Maggid Mishneh. The Maggid Mishneh comments that the mitzvah "You shall do that which is right and proper (haYashar v'haTov)" [Devorim 6:18] is a mandate to act 'properly'.

Sometimes, when a person is told that the Torah requires him to act in a certain fashion, his response is "Where does it say so?" Where does the Torah say that one is not allowed to do such and such? Where is it recorded in Shulchan Aruch that this is forbidden? The answer to that question is this very pasuk [verse]: "You shall do that which is right and proper". The Maggid Mishneh explains that the Torah can not explain the details, says. The definition of what is correct and proper can change. The Torah was given for all times and all places. The details of "haYashar v'HaTov" can change from time to time and from place to place. There is no one finite way of being a 'mensch' (a person who behaves morally and ethically), but the obligation to be a 'mensch' is constant. It is a positive Biblical command.

Planting a vineyard at this particular point in history was not specifically a crime, but it was certainly not the right and proper activity for Noah to begin with immediately upon descending from the Teyva.

A dental hygienist recently told me: "I have many religious patients. They make appointments and then they just stroll in here whenever they want. Fifteen minutes late, twenty minutes late. I only allot a half-hour per patient. If a patient comes in twenty minutes late, it ruins the entire day's schedule and I suffer for it the whole day."

Where does it state in Shulchan Aruch that one must be on time to his appointment with the dental hygienist? It is not mentioned in Shulchan Aruch. Why is it not mentioned in Shulchan Aruch? It is not mentioned because it is an explicit Biblical command! There are many things not mentioned in Shulchan Aruch because they are explicitly mentioned in the Torah. The mitzvah is "You shall do that which is right and proper". The mitzvah is colloquially called "Be a mensch!" A mensch does not come 20 minutes late to an appointment, without apologizing, as if nothing happened!

This is the meaning of the Maggid Mishneh's comment. People did not go to dental hygienists in the time of the Maggid Mishneh. Therefore the Torah could not say and the Shulchan Aruch could not legislate that there is a positive command to appear promptly for your appointment with the dental hygienist. The details of the mitzvah change. But one thing does not change -- one needs to be a mensch! This is constant.

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dhoffman@torah.org These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 345, Milah For Non-Jew: Is it permitted? Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. RavFrاند, Copyright © 2002 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc.

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THE PRACTICAL TORAH

BY RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES

Parshas Noah: LEARNING AND SPEAKING HEBREW

No definitive Halacha LeMa'aseh conclusions should be applied to practical situations based on any of these Shiurim.

The Torah tells us that prior to the deeds perpetrated by the people of the Dor Haflagah who tried to build a giant tower in order to fight against Hashem, all the people on earth spoke one language (Bereishis 11:1). Rashi, in his commentary on this Posuk (Ibid. s.v. Safah), indicates that this one language was Lashon HaKodesh, which we call Hebrew. This opinion is found as well in the Yerushalmi in Megillah (Perek 1 Halachah 9, Daf 10a) where this universally spoken language is also identified as Lashon HaKodesh and as the language spoken by Hashem Himself. This latter point is a reference to the fact that Hashem created the world by speaking in Hebrew, as noted by the Pnei Moshe (Ibid. in s.v. V'Acharina) and mentioned as well by Rashi earlier in the Torah (Bereishis 2; 23, in s.v. L'Zot), citing the Midrash in Bereishis Rabbah (Parshas 18 Siman 6). It also refers to the fact that Hashem spoke to Bnai Yisrael in Hebrew when giving them the Torah, as noted by the Korban HaEidah (Ibid. in s.v. B'Lashon), and stated as well by the Midrash (Ibid.) and by the Gemara in Berachos (13a) and in Sanhedrin (21b). The Gemara in Chagigah (16a) adds that Hebrew is the language spoken by the Malachei HaShareis, the ministering angels, in Heaven.

Given this unique significance and status of the Hebrew language, is there any Mitzvah to study and master or speak Hebrew? The Yerushalmi in Shabbos (Perek 1 Halacha 3, 9a) lists among the attributes which describe one who is guaranteed to be worthy of Olam HaBo the fact that he speaks Lashon HaKodesh; the Korban HaEidah (Ibid. in s.v. U'Midbar) notes that speaking this language leads to spiritual purity. This does not, however, mean that there is a Mitzvah to speak Hebrew. It is also obvious that knowledge of Hebrew and its grammatical and linguistic rules is sometimes necessary for proper understanding of an expression in the Torah which has Halachic ramifications, as is made clear, for example, in the Gemara in Yevamos (13b and see Ibid. Tosafot s.v. Kaivan) as well as in the Gemara in Rosh HaShanah (3a), and as is elaborated upon by Rashi (Ibid. in s.v. K'DRaish Lakish). This too, however, does not necessarily mean that there is a specific Mitzvah to speak Hebrew or that the study of Hebrew is even considered to be a fulfillment of the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah.

It would appear, however, that according to at least some authorities, there is some kind of Mitzvah associated with speaking and learning Hebrew. The Sifrei in Parshas Eikev (Piska 10, Devarim, Piska 46) states that when a child first begins to talk, his father should speak to him in Hebrew and teach him Torah, implying that this will guarantee the child a long life, and that failure to do so will unfortunately assure the opposite. The same idea is found in Tosefta in Chagigah (Perek 1 Halacha 3), though with a slight variation: this source states that when a child knows how to talk, his father should teach him Hebrew. It could be argued that according to the latter source, it is insufficient to simply speak to the child in Hebrew, thereby familiarizing him with the language in a general sense; rather, it is necessary to teach the child Hebrew so that he becomes fluent in it. In either case, it is clear that Chazal considered it important for children to be exposed to Hebrew at some level starting at a very young age; apparently, there is value in knowing the language and, presumably, in being able to use it as an adult.

The clearest formulation which identifies learning Hebrew as a Mitzvah is found in the Peirush HaMishnayos of the Rambam, commenting on the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos (Perek 2 Mishnah 1) which says that one must be as scrupulous regarding a "Mitzvah Kallah"-a minor Mitzvah-as one is with a "Mitzvah Chamurah"-a major Mitzvah. As an example of a Mitzvah Kallah, the Rambam (Ibid.) cites studying-or teaching-

Hebrew, along with rejoicing on Yom Tov (which is clearly a Mitzvah from the Torah), adding, as the Mishnah itself (Ibid.) seems to suggest, that these "minor" Mitzvos are in fact more important than people tend to think. The Rambam (Ibid.) here clearly considers studying Hebrew to be a Mitzvah, one which is perhaps more significant than one may think.

The difficulty is that although the Rambam's view is clear in the Peirush HaMishnayos (Ibid.), he does not codify this Mitzvah to learn or teach Hebrew in his Mishneh Torah, nor does such a requirement appear in the Shulchan Aruch. The Torah Temimah in Parshas Eikev (Devarim 11; 19, Ot 52) refers to a separate essay which he wrote about the obligation and the importance of learning Hebrew, and questions why the Poskim omitted any reference to the requirement to learn Hebrew. Although he suggests a possible answer, he concludes that the difficulty remains. It is worth noting, however, that among others, the Chavos Yair (Chavos Yair Siman 124) writes that it is important and indeed necessary to study Hebrew grammar, and the Vilna Gaon as well spoke of the need to be thoroughly familiar with grammar, as reported by his sons in their introduction to his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch (Introduction of Bnei HaGra to Shulchan Oruch Orach Chaim). Moreover, Rav Moshe Feinstein (Igros Moshe Even HaEzer Chelek 3 Siman 35) actually states clearly that there is a Mitzvah to speak in Hebrew, although he asserts that there is certainly and obviously no prohibition to speak in any other language.

The Pardes Yosef in Parshas Ki Sissa (Shemos 30; 13) quotes an interesting suggestion as to the source of this Mitzvah to study and know Hebrew, linking it with the Mitzvah of "Hakhel," a Mitzvah which obligated every Jew to assemble in Yerushalayim once every seven years (on the Sukkos following the Shemittah year) to hear the king publicly read certain sections of the Torah (See Devarim 31; 10-13). The Mishnah in Sotah (32a) says clearly that these sections had to be read by the king in Hebrew, a ruling codified by the Rambam (Perek 3 Hilchos Chagigah Halacha 5). The Gemara in Chagigah (3a) implies that it was necessary for the people to understand what the king was reading; there may therefore be a Mitzvah to learn Hebrew in order to properly fulfill the Mitzvah of Hakhel. One could suggest by extension that since the Torah and most other major Jewish works are written in Hebrew, there may be a Mitzvah to learn Hebrew in order to more thoroughly master these works, especially in view of the fact that the Rambam in Parshas Ki Sissa (Ibid.) writes that Hebrew is in fact called Lashon HaKodesh precisely because it is the language used in the Torah and other holy works.

It is interesting to note that in the Shulchan Aruch, the Ramo (Orach Chaim Siman 307 Sif 16) rules that whereas it is inappropriate to read certain types of stories, books and literature on Shabbos, if they are written in Hebrew, they may be read on Shabbos. The Magen Avraham (Ibid Sif Katan 24) explains that this is because the language itself has Kedushah and one can learn Divrei Torah simply by reading books and even letters written in Hebrew. The Taz (Ibid. Sif Katan 13) disagrees with this last point, citing the fact that the Shulchan Aruch rules elsewhere (Orach Chaim Siman 85 Sif 2) that one may speak in Hebrew about ordinary topics even in a place like a bathroom where Torah learning would be forbidden, but it should be noted that the Magen Avraham (Ibid. Sif Katan 2) quotes from the Sefer Chassidim (Siman 994) that it is indeed a sign of piety to avoid speaking Hebrew in such places. The above, of course, should not be understood as an all-encompassing permit to read on Shabbos any kind of literature which may happen to be written Hebrew. Certain literature ought to be avoided, both on Shabbos and during the week, regardless of the language in which it is written, because the content is inappropriate, both for Shabbos and in general. Moreover, it must be stressed that there may be important distinctions which have to be drawn between modern, spoken Hebrew and the Lashon HaKodesh referred to by the above sources.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the Midrash in VaYikra Rabbah (Parsha 32 Siman 5), among other places, states that one of the meritorious deeds of our ancestors in Mitzrayim was that they maintained their own language-Hebrew. Although this may not mean that they spoke exclusively in Hebrew, it is clear that they considered it

important to know Hebrew fluently, and this was one of the things which made them worthy of redemption.

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2001/parsha/rsob_noach.html
[TorahWeb from last year]

RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY
GIVING VS. TAKING

Parshas Noach begins with a description of the decadent and corrupt society that was ultimately destroyed by the flood. The sins of theft, and illicit relations, are singled out as the primary cause of the world's destruction. It is not coincidental that these two transgressions were simultaneously prevalent in society at the time. The underlying cause of each of these sins is identical.

The sin of theft stems from a basic flaw in our relationships with one another. Individuals can be giving, seeking out opportunities to perform acts of chessed; conversely, one can become dependant on others, seeking out opportunities to take. Those who are accustomed to taking, may eventually become the ultimate takers, "thieves", whose need to take knows no bounds. The ultimate protection against sinking to the level of actual robbery is to perfect the attribute of "giving" as opposed to "taking".

The family setting provides the perfect opportunity to become a giving person. Marriage can only flourish if both partners constantly give to one another. Raising children is a lifetime opportunity to give. One who only takes cannot fathom the prospect of marriage and child-rearing. Sometimes healthy, loving relationships of giving between husband and wife, are abandoned and self-centered acts of passion are performed. Rather than bringing children into the world, abominable acts are propagated for the sake of personal pleasure.

The generation of Noach had sunk to the depths of immorality and corruption. The source of all evil engulfing the society in which Noach found himself was the inability to give to others. One who takes, but does not give becomes so self-centered that the needs of others are completely excluded. The sins of theft and moral depravity are the eventual outgrowth of such a character flaw.

Hashem singles Noach out to survive the flood and begin civilization again. The most critical lesson Noach and his children must impart to all future generations is the significance of giving to others.

To reinforce this lesson among Noach and his family, Hashem devised a plan in which the animal world would be saved. Noach and his family members would be responsible for caring for all of the animals in the teivah for almost an entire year. Hashem could have saved the animals through many means, yet this method was chosen in order to grant Noach the opportunity to perfect the trait of giving, preparing him to instill this most critical trait in his descendants.

The story of Noach ends on a tragic note. After Noach became drunk, his son Cham committed a terrible sin. There are two opinions in Chazal as to Cham's exact actions. According to one opinion, Cham had relations with his father; according to another he maimed his father so that he could no longer have children. Both interpretations indicate that Cham had not learned the lesson of giving. Whether he was involved in an immoral physical relationship reminiscent of pre-delugian society or whether he prevented his father from bringing more children into the world, Cham had sunk to the depths of sin which emanate from a lack of giving.

The lesson of giving would be transmitted through the descendants of Shem, and ultimately be exemplified in the personality of the "the man of giving", Avraham Avinu.

From: Ohr Somayach [ohr@ohr.edu] weekly@ohr.edu Subject: Torah Weekly - Parshat Noach

* TORAH WEEKLY * from Ohr Somayach | www.ohr.edu

Highlights of the weekly Torah portion Parshat Noach For the week ending 12 October 2002 / 6 Heshvan 5763 Sponsored by the Kof-K Kosher Supervision www.kof-k.org | info@kof-k.org ** Support Needy Families in Jerusalem ** <http://kerenyehoshuavyisroel.com/>

Strictly For The Birds

"From each bird according to its kind, and from each animal according to its kind..." (6:2)

Recent world events have shown that anti-Semitism is alive and well and living in all those centers of civilization in which it was considered extinct half a century ago.

The existence of a Jewish state, the 19th century Jewish intelligentsia's ultimate panacea against anti-Semitism, has failed to prevent the emergence of an anti-Semitism as potentially virulent as any strain to date - with the ultimate irony that we are now dubbed the new "Nazis"! What is all this supposed to teach us?

The existence of the Jewish People in an other-worldly phenomenon. The "unhistory" of the Jewish People has perplexed historians and left them either wanting to change their professions or fudging the facts. Logically, they say, we shouldn't be here at all. And in a sense, they're right. We don't belong here. We occupy this world as a piece of rented real estate. This is not our place. We are an other-worldly people. The Jewish People is likened to a bird. In its natural element, the bird can soar to the heights, leaving its earth-bound cousins far below. However, when you enclose a bird in a cage, not only does it no longer soar, but its very advantages become its weaknesses. Its feet are not suited to walking around. Its wings atrophy. Its plumage wilts.

In this week's Torah portion, when the animals entered the ark, the Torah lists the birds before the land animals: "From each bird according to its kind, and from each animal according to its kind...." However, after the entry to the ark it mentions the land animals before the birds: "And the animal that is not kosher, or the birds...." And when about to leave the ark, the order reverts to the birds being mentioned before the land animals: "Every living thing that is with you of all flesh, of birds, of animals...."

Why did the Torah change the order?

The ark was a microcosm of the world. Just as the world has three levels of holiness, so too the ark had three levels. Just as the world has a sun that radiates light to it, so too the ark had a precious jewel fixed in the ceiling that radiated light to it.

Outside the ark, the birds can fly. They are pre-eminent. However, when they are cooped up in an ark, they become the least of the animals.

We are a nation that has been designed to soar to the skies, but if we choose to lock ourselves into an ark of physicality we will find ourselves as sprightly as a Dodo.

Sources:

Midrash, Maharal, Table Talk, Rabbi Chaim Zvi Senter, Ariel Hershkowitz

Written and compiled by RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR

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From 2 years ago

From Parshat Noach Vol.10 No.7 Date of issue: 6 Cheshvan 5761 -- November 4, 2000

INTRODUCTION TO BISHUL

BY RABBI HOWARD JACHTER

Introduction This week we begin a series of essays that will discuss the topic of Bishul, the prohibition to cook on Shabbat. In this essay, we will outline some of the basic concepts regarding Bishul, which are essential for comprehending this vitally important topic. One should note that a comprehensive treatment of this topic appears in the second volume of Rav Shimon Eider's Halachos of Shabbos. It is an excellent resource for one who wishes to delve deeply into this subject. Torah Prohibited Activities In general, it is essential to distinguish between activities that are prohibited on a Torah level and those only prohibited on a rabbinical level. This is especially true in the context of the laws of Bishul. We will begin our review of basic concepts by outlining those principles that are directly relevant to prohibited activities on a Torah level.

Yad Soledet Bo One does not violate the prohibition of cooking a liquid unless one heats the liquid to the point that it is hot to the touch (Yad Soledet Bo, see Shabbat 40b). The Talmudic term Yad Soledet Bo may be translated as "the hand recoils from it." Rabbis for the past century have debated over the exact temperature at which we consider an item to be Yad Soledet Bo. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrat Moshe Orach Chaim 4:74:Bishul:3) writes that the minimum temperature of Yad Soledet Bo is 110°F. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:91:8) seeks to demonstrate in a very creative way that it cannot be less than 113°. Rav Aharon Kotler (cited by Rav Shimon Eider, Halachos of Shabbos 2:243 note 19) asserts that Yad Soledet Bo is not less than 120°. Interestingly, the Darkei Teshuva (105:51) cites that the traditional practice of Halachic authorities to determine if something is Yad Soledet Bo is simply to put a finger in it and see if your hand recoils.

This author's experience at Yeshiva University might shed light on the divergence of opinions regarding the exact temperature of Yad Soledet Bo. One of the YU Rabbeim brought a group of students to one of the college's laboratories and displayed cups filled with water. The cups were heated to a variety of temperatures ranging from 110° to 120°. Some of the students felt that 110° was hot to the touch and others felt that only 120° was hot to the touch.

Maachal Ben Drosai A bandit known as Ben Drosai, who lived during the time of the Gemara, was constantly fleeing from the authorities and had limited opportunities to cook his food. He therefore cooked his food only to the point that it was barely edible. Chazal, in turn, refer to food cooked to the point that it is marginally edible as Maachal Ben Drosai (the food of Ben Drosai). One who cooks solid food to the point of Maachal Ben Drosai violates the biblical prohibition of cooking on Shabbat.

The Rishonim debate at what point solid food is defined as Maachal Ben Drosai. The Rambam (Hilchot Shabbat 9:5) believes that it refers to food that is half cooked. Rashi (Shabbat 20a s.v. Ben Drosai), on the other hand, believes that it is one-third cooked. The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 254:2) follows the Rambam's opinion, but the Mishna Berura (introduction to chapter 253 and 253:38) also cites Rashi's view as authoritative. The Mishna Berura writes that one may rely on Rashi's lenient view in case of pressing need.

Ein Bishul Achar Bishul One does not violate a Torah prohibition if he reheats a food item that was cooked completely, even if the food has completely cooled down. This rule is referred to as Ein Bishul Achar Bishul.

There are many disputes regarding the parameters of this rule.

Rishonim debate whether it applies only to solid food items or even to liquids. Rishonim also debate whether it applies to cooking an item that was baked, or roasting an item that was cooked. We will, Iy"h, discuss this topic at length in a subsequent issue.

Kli Rishon, Irui Kli Rishon, Kli Sheni, and Kli Shlishi A utensil that was heated by fire, even if it is not currently on the fire, is called a Kli Rishon. It is biblically prohibited to cook in a Kli Rishon. Pouring food from a Kli Rishon is referred to as Irui Kli Rishon. One pours from a Kli Rishon into a Kli Sheni. If one pours from a Kli Sheni into another utensil, the latter utensil is referred to as a Kli Shlishi.

The Gemara teaches that, generally speaking, Bishul does not occur in a Kli Sheni. The Rishonim debate the status of Irui Kli Rishon. The Ri (cited in Tosafot 42b s.v. Aval) asserts that Irui Kli Rishon has the status of a Kli Rishon. Rashbam (cited by the aforementioned Tosafot) believes that it has the status of a Kli Sheni. Tosafot (ibid.) adopts a compromise approach - it is neither like a Kli Rishon nor like a Kli Sheni. Rather, Irui Kli Rishon cooks only the thin outer layer of the food (K'dei Klipah) onto which it is poured. The opinion of Tosafot is accepted as normative (Mishna Berura 318:35).

There is substantial debate about the parameters of the rules pertaining to Bishul in a Kli Sheni. Many argue that items that are easily cooked (Kalei Habishul) can cook in a Kli Sheni as well as a Kli Rishon. Furthermore, Acharonim vigorously debate whether the rule that Bishul does not occur in a Kli Sheni applies only to liquids or even to solid foods (Davar Gush). Finally, there is considerable debate if

even Kalei Habishul may be cooked in a Kli Shlishi. We plan to discuss these issues in much greater detail in a later issue.

Hagasah Stirring food in a Kli Sheni (Hagasah) makes food cook faster and violates the biblical prohibition of cooking on Shabbat (Mishna Berura 318:114). The Kol Bo adopts the startling opinion that Hagasah is forbidden even if the food is fully cooked. Some Acharonim understand the Kol Bo as teaching that Hagasa of even a fully cooked item constitutes a Torah level prohibition. Halachic authorities seriously consider this surprising opinion of the Kol Bo (see Shulchan Aruch 318:18 and commentaries ad. loc.).

Rabbinical Prohibitions Chazal added numerous prohibitions to the Halachot concerning Bishul. In later issues, we hope to examine at some length the issues of Shehiya, Hachazarah, and Hatmana. We will now briefly define these terms.

Shehiya Chazal forbade us to leave food cooking on the fire as Shabbat is about to begin (Shehiya). Chazal were concerned lest the individual stir the coals in order to hasten the cooking process (Shema Yechateh Bagechalim, see Shabbat 18b). The Chachamim and Chanania (ibid.) vigorously debate whether this prohibition applies to food until the point that it is fully cooked and its taste cannot be improved (Mitztamek V'rah Lo) or only until it reaches Maachal Ben Drosai. In addition, we should note that Chazal made an exception to the prohibition of Shehiya when one adds a piece of completely raw meat to the cooking pot of food at the beginning of Shabbat (Kedeira Chaita, Shabbat 18b).

Hachazarah Chazal forbade us from returning even fully cooked food to the fire on Shabbat (Hachazara). Rishonim debate whether Chazal forbade Hachazara due to concern lest one come to stir the coals or because Hachazara has the appearance of cooking (Meichzi K'mevashel). Rishonim and Acharonim debate about permissible ways to reheat food on Shabbat, such as placing the food on top of a pot on the fire that contains food (Kedeira Al Gabei Kedeira).

Hatmana Chazal forbade enveloping food on Shabbat due to concern that one might come to stir the coals (Hatmana). Chazal even forbade Hatmana before Shabbat if one envelops the food in a material that adds heat to the food (Davar Hamosif Hevel). Today, a major controversy rages whether the use of a two-piece crock-pot constitutes Hatmana.

Conclusion There are numerous disputed areas regarding the laws of Bishul. In the next few issues, we will explore these areas in more depth, and we will begin to understand the variety of practices in this area of Halacha.

Hyperlink to parts: II - III - IV - V

From: Yated USA [yated-usa@ttec.com] Yated USA, 10-11-2002
GETTING SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

RAV NOCHUM EISENSTEIN, Lakewood, NJ

Kaitz kol basar ba lifanai ki mal'ah ha'aretz chamas, "The end of mankind is before Me because the entire world is engaged in stealing" (Bereishis 6:13). Hashem informed Noach of His plan to destroy the world because the crime of chamas had reached its peak. Rashi comments that although the world's denizens were guilty of other crimes including immorality and idol worship, nevertheless the main cause of the generation's eradication was for stealing. The mefarshim observe that idol worship and crimes of immorality are far more severe than stealing. So why should chamas, the "lesser" of the evils, be the cause of the destruction?

Some explain that the more severe ones are personal and don't directly interfere with other people. Gezel, however, is an interpersonal crime affecting others. Society can only function when there is social justice; otherwise there is chaos. One of the resulting mandates is that stealing cannot exist. Those aveiros that do not affect society can be tolerated and dealt with accordingly. Those that disrupt the makeup of society are intolerable. Hence, when chamas reached its peak, society could no longer exist. Although chamas is less severe than the others, it is more disruptive and brought about the mabul, which destroyed society.

Another possible explanation can be rendered according to the Ramchal. In Daas Tevunos, he discusses in great detail, and clearly defines, the purpose of Creation, which is for Creation's creatures to bask in Hashem's radiance. This, he explains, is the greatest possible enjoyment for the human being. Absolutely nothing can compare to this enjoyment. The place for this encounter, however, is Olam Habah. Indeed, Rav Dessler points out that if we could compile all conceivable pleasures and compact them into a whole lifetime, even that would not equal a split second of Olam Habah. The question therefore arises as to why was it necessary for us to be placed in this world where we encounter so many difficulties; we could just as well have been initially placed in Olam Habah, thereby avoiding all of this world's hardships. To understand the depth of the Ramchal's answer, we draw from everyday life experiences. Why is welfare degrading to most people? Is it because it suggests that a person is unworthy and must rely on others? This cannot be the case with a believing Jew because we understand that our parnassa comes from Hashem. He generously grants some people wealth and yet deprives others. It is neither to a person's credit that he is rich nor to his discredit that he is poor. Wealth may result from his zechus or from that of an ancestor, or it might be a nisayon (test) to see whether he can accept Hashem's allotment to him. The same can be said of a lack of material assets. A person's assets cannot, therefore, be the cause of feeling dejected. As we have previously noted, "thank you" is a much-abused expression. It is, unfortunately, often merely lip service or a mechanical politeness, void of any real essence. The Hebrew word *hodaah*, "thanks," also constitutes an expression of acknowledgment. Rav Hutner zt"l's interpretation of this phenomenon is well known. A person cannot say meaningfully say thank you if he does not recognize that he a recipient. For why would someone be thankful if he has received nothing? If you feel that the other person owes it to you, why should you thank him? Even if he does owe you but you feel that it is nevertheless coming to you, or if it the other person's job is to do what he did, why does he deserve to be thanked?

It is so difficult to say thank you because it denotes dependency, which counters the person's very essence. The fabric of the human being is self-sufficiency; any other condition stains that very delicate fabric.

"Thank you," by definition, concedes a weakness in that I needed your help for something; I am not self-sufficient.

Inherent in saying thank you is indebtedness; the recipient must return something to the provider. Until then, he is in debt. This adds another layer of difficulty to saying thank you-no one wants to be indebted to someone else. Indebtedness contradicts independence.

The Ramchal explains that we all are recipients of Hashem's chesed; He created us and supplies us with all of our needs, physical and spiritual. Thus, were we placed directly in Olam Habah, we would harbor those feelings of resentment of the person accepting welfare.

This naturally would interfere with our enjoyment of basking in His radiance. Hashem therefore placed us in this world where we are engaged in battle with the yetzer hara. We face the many difficult challenges with which the yetzer hara presents us. If we are successful and take charge in overpowering the yetzer hara and holding it under control, to some degree we can feel that we indeed earned our share in Olam Habah. The fight is difficult and trying, yet the reward is waiting for us in Olam Habah. Our enjoyment will be joyful and completely uninterrupted. We will not feel the humility of a welfare recipient, but rather of a person reaping the fragrant fruit of his labor.

Many yeshivos maintain a policy of expelling students who cheat although tolerating other infractions. Talmidim who conduct themselves properly in *limudei kodesh* and "limit" their cheating to secular studies are affected by this policy. The policy's understood rationale is that cheating becomes ultimately ingrained in the students' character. It will inevitably spill over into *limudei kodesh* and, ultimately, into all areas of life. Such students learn to cheat in business and other personal matters, often creating havoc and the ultimate aveira, *chillul Hashem*. In one of the major scandals that made the newspaper headlines and caused an enormous chillul Hashem, Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky zt"l placed the blame squarely on

one of the yeshivos-the one that readily accepted the student after he had been expelled from another yesivha for cheating. Had the young man been treated harshly and not accepted so readily, the message that cheating is intolerable would have come across. Instead, the young adult learned that cheating has apparent benefits and is tolerable. The upshot was that in his adult life he continued in that pattern with its gravely unfortunate results. Such a result runs counter to the education that the yeshivos are trying to, and must, inculcate into their pupils. There can be no allowance for such behavior in any area of life.

Stealing and cheating defy our existence. Because the purpose of Creation is for us to "earn our keep" so that we do not harbor feelings of humility in Olam Habah, how, logically, can we steal or cheat? By definition, we are getting something for nothing. When society engages in the practice of stealing and cheating, it challenges Creation's very purpose. Such a world can hardly justify its continued existence. Thus, chamas, stealing, although being the lesser of the aveiros that the people were committing, brought the mabul because it contradicted the very purpose of their existence. We must "earn our keep" to Olam Habah. We cannot do so by stealing from others.

From: RABBI BEREL WEIN [rbwein@torah.org]
Weekly Parsha Noach
by Rabbi Berel Wein

Noach is a very difficult person to assess. The Rabbis of the Midrash themselves were of different minds regarding Noach. The truth is that the righteous, perfect, G-d-pursuing Noach is a very complicated person. Therefore, tragedy comes forth from his behavior after the flood, just as his behavior and influence before the flood apparently was unable to arrest the world's dive into disaster. Noach certainly had the opportunity to fashion the world in his image, so to speak, after the flood. But it was not to be. The majority of Noach's descendants reverted back to the evil behavior of society before the flood. It is almost as though the flood and all of its tragedy was a waste. And I cannot think of a greater waste than a wasted tragedy. And this is perhaps the greatest point of criticism that the Rabbis leveled at Noach - that the flood and its lessons were never exploited to improve human society afterward. And this is the strongest point of comparison and difference between Noach and Avraham. Avraham also lived in a generation of tragedy and disaster. Believers were thrown into the furnace, morality was scoffed at, the project of the great Tower of Babel was abandoned after countless lives were lost in the attempt and Avraham was an isolated figure of G-dliness in a world of paganism and evil. Yet, Avraham himself had assimilated the lessons of his generation within his being. He saw the emptiness and lawlessness that surrounded him and resolved to create a counter-force of goodness and faith that would eventually (according to the opinion of Rabbi Menachem HaMeiri in the introduction of his commentary to the book of Avot) win over half of his generation to the concepts of human goodness and monotheism.

Avraham, who always lived with danger and on the brink of tragedy and disaster, never flinched nor fled, He did not withdraw into himself and abandon his role of human leadership. He learned the lessons of the generations that preceded him and did not allow himself to be traumatized and to waste the experience of those terrible events. The Jewish people, the children of Avraham, have reeled from tragedy to greater tragedy in our long and difficult history and exile. In our time, the Holocaust and the vicious pogroms of the first third (pre-Holocaust) of the century have decimated our people. They have not only destroyed us physically but they have also crippled us emotionally and spiritually. It would have been perfectly understandable had the Jewish people just curled up and withered away, turning the experience of the Holocaust into a wasted historical event.

The grandeur of our times is that even though many Jews have given up on themselves, have intermarried, assimilated, secularized, and disappeared, the Jewish people as an entity has followed the path of Avraham and not Noach. Not only is the State of Israel an example of Jewish determination and constancy, but the strong development of a

Torah life-style amongst large numbers of Jewish communities the world over, is a testimony to dealing with and defeating tragedy. Our Rabbis said that Avraham reaped the rewards of all of the ten generations after the flood. He saw their disasters, experienced the flames of his own potential destruction, and yet rose to proclaim a G-dly world of human good and compassion. He reaped the reward of those previous generations. He learned their lessons, corrected their shortcomings, and moved on to create a new world that would justify his faith. Our generation is faced with this very same challenge. Let us build Avraham's world and reap the rewards of the countless generations of human failure and misery that have preceded us. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein
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From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List
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Subject: Shabbat Shalom: PARSHAT NOACH BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Noach (Genesis 6:9-11:32)
By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - A seminal act of Noah, specifically after he leaves the ark once the deluge has abated provides a startling insight into how we must relate and react to the tides of war which have engulfed us for the past two years and which are now threatening to engulf the entire Middle East and perhaps the entire world. "And Noah the man of the earth became profaned (or merely "began" to work), and he planted a vineyard" (Genesis 9:20). Rashi, (1040-1105) the most classical of the Biblical commentaries, explains that "when Noah entered the ark, he brought with him branches (of the vine) and shoots of fig-trees" (Rashi ad loc, Midrash Rabbah ad loc).

Apparently, Rashi is perplexed as to the genesis of the grape-seeds; after all, all of animal and plant life had been destroyed in the flood - except of course for whatever had been preserved in the ark. Rashi is therefore telling us that Noah brought branches of the vine into the ark. But why must this great commentary add "shoots of fig-trees" which seems superfluous to our question at hand? And if Rashi is merely quoting what the Talmudic sages taught in Midrash Rabbah, why did he not include "young olive saplings," which the midrash also suggests in the same source? Why does Rashi select these two fruits for inclusion in the ark - the fruit of the vine and the fig - when our textual problem could have been resolved with the vine branches alone and faithfulness to the midrashic source would have demanded including the olive sapling!

A careful analysis of the ambivalence of our Talmudic sages concerning the personality of Noah will provide the key to understanding - not only with regard to Noah's maturation for preserving what he preserved but also with regard to our difficult situation today. The story of Noah opens with what appears to be a rather complimentary character description: "...Noah was a righteous man, wholehearted in his generations; Noah walked with G-d" (Genesis 6:9). Nevertheless, Rashi immediately notifies us: "there are among our Sages those who expound these words ("in his generations") as giving praise (to Noah) ... and there are those who expound these words as denigrating (to Noah).

Why denigrating? Why give such a praiseworthy description a negative spin, suggesting that Noah's wholeheartedness was only in comparison to his contemporaries, and that had he lived in the generation of Abraham, he would have not been considered at all noteworthy?

The Maharal of Prague explains that, whereas Abraham argued with G-d on behalf of the preservation of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Noah appears to remain silent when informed that the entire world is about to be destroyed by a flood. He seems satisfied to rescue himself and his immediate family via the ark; in light of the fact that "the earth has been corrupted before G-d and the earth is filled

with violent terror" (Genesis 6:12, hamas being the Biblical Hebrew for violent terror, ironically enough), he decides to remain a self-satisfied isolationist only interested in self-preservation. The light in his ark was provided by a brilliant diamond, a magnificent chandelier - which only served to insulate the occupants of the ark even more from the world outside.

There is however a second way of interpreting Noah's character, insisting that had he been a contemporary of Abraham's, he would have been even more righteous! According to this view, Noah took 120 years to construct his ark, spending all the extra time in convincing the citizens of the world to forsake their violence, to accept the basic laws of morality expressed by ethical monotheism, to establish democratic, freedom-loving anti-terror governments whose greatest value was the pursuit of peace. He built his ark with a window to provide the light, because for him it was cardinal that the righteous never stop looking out and attempting to persuade the others to adopt codes of proper ethical behavior.

The deluge recedes, and Noah leaves the ark. He plants a vineyard. Where did he get the grape-seeds? Here again there are two disparate views in the midrash, each reflecting another view as to Noah's basic personality. One midrashic opinion has it that he made a pact with Satan, he brought him the requisite seed to plant his vines and ultimately produce wine. This is Noah the isolationist, who allows evil to remain in power, who turns a blind eye to the Satanic totalitarian governments who enslave their citizenry and use terror tactics to control the weaker vessels. In return for wine (or drugs or oil) it may be worth Noah's while to come to a "business agreement" with Satan. The second midrashic opinion sees Noah as a righteous proselytizer, who never gives up on humanity. Even after 120 years of fruitless preaching about the importance of the seven Noahide laws of morality, the principle of "Thou shalt not murder" which fell on deaf ears, Noah still doesn't give up. Yes, G-d commands him to enter the ark, literally forces him to do so as the waters of the deluge begin to engulf him (Genesis 7:7, Rashi ad loc), but Noah feels the necessity to take with him the seeds of two fruits, the grape and the fig, wine being a symbol of freedom (remember the Passover cups of wine harking back to the Biblical expression of redemption) and both fruits indigenous to the Land of Israel.

Nachmanides insists that the Land of Israel was the one place in the world where ethical monotheism, G-d's creation of human being in His image, was never forgotten - and so he maintains that the flood never engulfed Israel. Remember that it was Malki Zedek, the King of Jerusalem - identified as Noah's son Shem - who gave Abraham bread and wine in the name of the G-d of the world when the patriarch returned from saving Lot and all of free civilization from the hands of the terroristic four nations (Genesis 14:18-21). Noah brings the seeds of these two fruits to remind future generations never to stop fighting against injustice and violence, never to forget the message of the people of Israel which will emanate from the land of Israel and its capital Jerusalem, never to give up the battle for a humanity accepting of a G-d of justice and peace, a world where "nation will not lift up sword against nation and humanity will not learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2, Micah 4). And why does Rashi insist on specifically these two fruits, the vine and the fig? Micah prophesies that, at the end of the days, when the world will accept G-d's morality emanating from Zion and Jerusalem, then "everyone will sit under his vine and fig-tree and will not fear, for the word of G-d will have been spoken (and accepted)" (Micah 4).

Shabbat Shalom.

You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot on the web at:

<http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm>

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[Note to readers - I included most of Rabbi Leibtag's shiurim 7 years ago. It's been a while, so I'm going to try to include them again this

year. When there are multiple shiurim on one parsha, I'll include the first one. Chaim]

From: RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG [tsc@bezeqint.net] Subject: [Par-reg]PARSHAT NOACH - shiur #1

Dedicated by David and Rachel Kirshenbaum and Family in loving memory of Helen Kirshenbaum - Yahrzeit 4 Cheshvan. THE TANACH STUDY CENTER [<http://www.tanach.org>] In Memory of Rabbi Abraham Leibtag Shiurim in Chumash & Navi by Menachem Leibtag

PARSHAT NOACH

The MABUL (the Flood) and MIGDAL BAVEL (the Tower of Babel) are undoubtedly the two primary stories in this week's Parsha. However, each of these two stories is preceded by a list of genealogies that appear to be rather irrelevant. Furthermore, at the conclusion of Parshat Noach (see 11:10-25) we find yet another set of genealogies (that introduces the story of Avraham Avinu). In this week's shiur, we explain how these "sifrei tolidot" (lists of genealogies) create a 'framework' for Sefer Breishit and can help us better understand how these stories (i.e the Flood and Migdal Bavel) contribute to its overall theme.

INTRODUCTION In our introductory shiur on Sefer Breishit, we discussed the methodology that we employ to uncover the primary theme of each sefer. We begin our shiur with a quick review of those basic steps: 1)To group its "parshiot" together into units that share the most common topic. [Each of these units could be considered as 'chapter' like division.] 2)To group these 'chapter' divisions into larger units that share a common topic or theme. 3)To determine the overall theme of the "sefer" by studying the progression of theme from 'unit' to 'unit'.

In our shiur, we will show how the "toladot" in Sefer Breishit can help us apply this methodology to uncover its underlying theme.

FROM A LIST TO AN OUTLINE In the following table, we list all of the 'parshiot' in the first seventeen chapters of Sefer Breishit, joining together only the most obvious groups of "parshiot" by noting their specific and then more general topics. Study this list carefully, noting how the specific topic group into more general topics:

PSUKIM	SPECIFIC TOPIC	GENERAL TOPIC
=====	=====	=====
1:1-2:3	7 days of Creation	Creation of nature
2:4-3:15	the Gan Eden story	Gan Eden
3:16	women's punishment	"
3:17-21	man's punishment	"
3:22-24	expulsion from Gan Eden	"
4:1-26	Cain & Hevel	(outside Gan Eden)
5:1-31	TOLADOT from Adam->>Noach	DOR HA'MABUL
5:32-6:4	man's downfall	"
6:5-8	reason for Mabul (Hashem)	"
6:9-12	reason for Mabul (Elokim)	"
6:13-8:14	story of the Mabul	"
8:15-9:7	man post-Mabul	"
9:8-17	"brit ha'keshet"	"
9:18-29	Cham's sin, Shem's blessing	"
10:1-32	TOLADOT "bnei Noach"	The 70 Nations
11:1-9	Migdal Bavel	(Their dispersion)
11:10-32	TOLADOT Shem->Terach	Avraham Avinu
12:1-9	Avraham's ALIYAH	"
12:10-13:18	Lot & Avraham	"
14:1-24	War of 4 & 5 kings	"
15:1-21	Brit bein ha'tarim	"
chap. 16	Hagar & Sarah	"
chap. 17	Brit Milah	"

[To verify this, I recommend that you review this table (and its conclusions) using a Tanach Koren.]

As you review this chart, note how the first set of major topics all relate in one form or other to G-d's "hashgacha" [providence], i.e. His intervention in the history of mankind as He punishes man (or mankind) for wayward behavior. In fact, just about all of the stories in Chumash (prior to the arrival of Avraham Avinu) relate in some

manner to the general topic of 'sin & punishment' ["schar v'onesh"]. For example, after Creation we find the following stories: * Adam & Eve are expelled from Gan Eden * Cain is punished for the murder of Hevel * "Dor ha'Mabul" is punished for its corruption * "Dor ha'Plaga" is punished for building the Tower Afterward, the focus of Sefer Breishit shifts from stories of 'sin & punishment' to G-d's choice of Avraham Avinu - and the story of his offspring. ENTER - "TOLADOT" However, within this progression we find yet another interesting phenomena: Return to the table (above) and note how each of these topics are first introduced by a set of "toladot" [genealogies]. For example: * The TOLADOT from Adam to Noach (chapter 5) introduce the story of the MABUL (chapters 6->9). * The TOLADOT or Noach's children (chapter 10) introduces the story of MIGDAL BAVEL (11:1-9 / the Tower of Babel). * The TOLADOT from Shem to Terach (chapter 11) introduce the story of Avraham Avinu (chapters 12->...)

In fact, as surprising as it may sound, even the story of Gan Eden (chapters 2->3) is first introduced by "toladot"! "These are the TOLADOT of the heavens & earth..." (see 2:4!)

Furthermore, later on in Sefer Breishit, we continue to find "toladot". Note how we later find TOLADOT of: Yishmael (25:12); Yitzchak (25:19); Esav (36:1); & Yaakov (37:2). The following table summarizes this pattern, and illustrates how some sort of "toladot" introduces each of the main topics in Sefer Breishit. s you review this table note how the first several topics all relate to "chet v'onesh", i.e. G-d's punishment of man (or mankind) for his sins, while the remaining topics relate to the Avot!

CHAPTER TOPIC

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- 2 TOLDOT SHAMAYIM V'ARETZ
- 2->4 -> Man in (and out of) Gan Eden
- 5 TOLDOT ADAM to NOACH
- 6->9 -> ha'MABUL - The story of the Flood
- 10 TOLDOT BNEI NOACH - Shem, Cham & Yefet
- 11:1-9 -> MIGDAL BAVEL - The Tower of Babel
- 11 TOLDOT SHEM until TERACH
- 12->25 -> God's choice of AVRAHAM AVINU
- 25 -35 Toldot Yitzchak - story of Yaakov & Esav
- 36 Toldot Esav - story Esav's children
- 37- 50 Toldot Yaakov - story of Yosef & his brothers

Although this is rarely noticed, the SIFREI TOLDOT actually create a framework for Sefer Breishit!

In this manner, the TOLADOT introduce each and every story in Sefer Breishit. To explain why, we must first take a minute to explain what the word TOLADOT means:

WHAT'S A TOLADA? The word "toladot" is derived from the Hebrew word "vlad", a child or offspring. Therefore, "ayleh toldot" should be translated "these are the children of...". For example: "eyleh toldot ADAM" (5:1) means - "these are the CHILDREN of Adam" - and thus introduces the story of Adam's children, i.e. Shet, Enosh, Keinan, etc. Similarly, "eyleh toldot Noach" introduces the story of Noach's CHILDREN - Shem, Cham, and Yefet. [See Rashbam on 37:2 for a more complete explanation.] Some of these "toldot" in Sefer Breishit are very short; they simply state that the person lived, married, had children and died (e.g. the generations from Adam to Noach). Other "toldot" are very detailed, e.g. those of Noach, Terach, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. Nonetheless, EVERY story in Sefer Breishit is introduced as part of someone's "toladot".

This explanation raises a question concerning the first instance where we find "toldot" - i.e. TOLDOT SHAMAYIM V'ARETZ (see 2:4). How do the heavens and earth have 'children'?! [Note how various english translations attempt to solve this problem.]

The answer to this question may be quite meaningful. Recall that the first chapter of Breishit explains how G-d created SHAMAYIM v'ARETZ (heavens and earth) from 'nothing' (ex-nihilo). Then, immediately afterward in the next chapter, we encounter the first use of "toldot": "eyleh TOLDOT ha'SHAMAYIM v'ha'ARETZ b'hibaram..." (2:4) What are the TOLADOT of "SHAMAYIM v'ARETZ", i.e.

what are the CHILDREN of heaven and earth? If we follow the progressive pattern of Sefer Breishit (as illustrated by the above table) then "toldot shamayim v'aretz" must refer to ADAM ha'RISHON. In other words, Adam ha'Rishon is considered the 'offspring' of "shamayim v'aretz". This interpretation could help explain the significance of the pasuk that describes how G-d created man in PEREK BET (the first topic of this unit): "And Hashem Elokim formed man from the dust of the EARTH and blew into his nostrils NISHMAT CHAYIM - the breath of life." (see 2:7 / This second ingredient may reflect the aspect of man which comes from (or at least returns to) heaven.)

In contrast to the story of Creation in PEREK ALEPH, which features a clear division between SHAMAYIM [note the purpose of the "rakiya" in 1:6], the special manner of G-d's creation of man in PEREK BET may reflect his unique ability to connect between heaven and earth. [See Rashi on 2:5, where he explains how man is needed to pray for rain in order for vegetation to grow. See also last week's shiur on Parshat Breishit.] The next set of TOLADOT - from Adam to Noach (see chapter 5) - introduce the story of the Flood. Note how 9:28-29 - the psukim that conclude the Noach story, are clearly part of the same literary unit that began with the "toladot" in chapter 5 (i.e. they follow the same 'template'). This pattern of - "toladot" introducing stories - continues all the way until the very end of Sefer Breishit. Therefore, we conclude that these "sifrei toladot" do more than 'keep the sefer together'; they also help develop the theme of Sefer Breishit.

In this manner, the "toladot" create a framework for Sefer Breishit; however, they also help us identify its two distinct sections that create its primary theme. Let's explain:

THE TWO SECTIONS OF SEFER BREISHIT Despite this successive nature of the TOLADOT in Sefer Breishit, they clearly divide into TWO distinct sections. 1) G-d's creation of mankind (chapters 1->11) w/ stories relating to "schar v'onesh" 2) The story of the Avot (chapters 12->50) G-d's choice of Avraham's family to become His nation

Even though the majority of Sefer Breishit focuses on the family of Avraham Avinu (Section Two), in the first eleven chapters (Section ONE), the Torah's focus is on mankind as a whole. Even though we find special details in Section One about Noach, it is NOT because he is designated to become a special nation. Rather, it is because through Noach mankind will be preserved. After the flood, the Torah tells us how the Noach's offspring evolve into nations, and their dispersing (see chapter 10). Even though we find that Noach blesses Shem and Yefet (see 9:25-27), the concept of a SPECIAL nation with a special covenant does not begin until the story of Avraham Avinu.]

In contrast, Section TWO (chapters 11->50) focusses on the story of AM YISRAEL - G-d's special nation. In this section, Sefer Breishit is no longer UNIVERSALISTIC, rather it becomes PARTICULARISTIC. Therefore, this section begins with TOLDOT SHEM till TERACH (see 11:10-24) that introduce the story of Avraham Avinu, whom G-d chooses in chapter 12 to become the forefather of His special nation. The remainder of Sefer Breishit explains which of Avraham's offspring are CHOSEN [= "bechira"], e.g. Yitzchak and Yaakov, and which are REJECTED [= "dechiya"], e.g. Yishmael and Esav]. This explains why Sefer Breishit concludes when this BECHIRA process is finally completed, i.e. when ALL twelve sons of Yaakov are chosen, and no one is ever again rejected. This may explain the significance of Yaakov's name change to Yisrael [see TSC shiur on Parshat Va'yishlach.]

Our final table summarizes how the "toladot" help define these two sections of Sefer Breishit:

I. UNIVERSALISTIC (chapters 1->11) - Creation of mankind
PEREK TOLDOT the STORY OF...

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1-4	"shamayim v'aretz"	Man in (and out of) Gan Eden
5-9	Adam to Noach	Dor ha'Mabul" - the Flood

10-11	Bnei Noach to 70 nations	Dor ha'plaga /Migdal Bavel
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II. PARTICULARISTIC (11->50) - God's choice of Am Yisrael
PEREK TOLDOT the STORY OF...

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11	Shem to Terach	leads up to Avraham Avinu
11-25	Terach	God's choice of Avraham
25	Yishmael	his 'rejection' ("d'chiya")
25-35	Yitzchak	Yaakov and Esav (their rivalry)
36	Esav	his 'rejection'
37-50	Yaakov	The 12 tribes/ Yosef and his brothers 70 "n'fesh" go down to Egypt

If our original assumption that each sefer in Chumash carries a unique prophetic theme is correct, then there should be a thematic reason for the progression of events from Section One to Section Two. To uncover that theme, we must take a closer look at the structure created by these "toladot".

SHEM & SHEM HASHEM Note once again from the above table how each general topic in the first section of Sefer Breishit was first introduced by a set of "toladot". In a similar manner, each of these units concludes with an event which in some way relates to the concept of "shem Hashem". Let's explain how. Our first unit, the story of Adam ha'rishon, concludes at the end of chapter four with a very intriguing pasuk: "And also Shet gave birth to a son and called him Enosh, then he 'began' to call out in the Name of G-d ["az huchal likro b'shem Hashem"] (see 4:26) [Most commentators explain that "huchal" implies that man began to 'defile' G-d's Name (shoresh "chilul"), i.e. they didn't call in His Name properly - see also Rambam Hilchot Avodah Zara 1:1]

No matter how we explain the word "huchal" in this pasuk, all the commentators agree that G-d's intention was for man to 'call out in His Name'. Note however how this pasuk concludes the section that began in 2:4 with the story of Gan Eden. Even though man was banished from Gan Eden and Cain was punished for murder, G-d still has expectations from mankind - man is expected to search for G-d, to 'call out in His Name'. Despite this high expectation, the next unit of "toladot", which leads into the story of the MABUL, shows that man's behavior fell far short of G-d's hopes. G-d becomes so angered that He decides to destroy His creation and begin over again with Noach. This unit which begins in 5:1 concludes in chapter 9 with a special set of mitzvot for Bnei Noach (9:1- 7), a covenant ("brit ha'keshet" (9:8-17), and ends with the story of Noach becoming drunk (9:18-29). However, in this final story of this unit we find once again a reference to shem Hashem: After cursing Canaan for his actions, Noach then blesses his son Shem: "Blessed be G-d, the Lord of SHEM..." (see 9:26-27)

Now it is not by chance that Noach named his son - SHEM. Most likely, Noach's decision to name his son Shem was based on his hope that his son would fulfill G-d's hope that man call out b'shem Hashem, as explained in 4:26! [It is not by chance that Chazal consider Shem the founder of the first Yeshiva, the house of learning where Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov studied, i.e. "yeshivat shem v'ever".]

Noach blesses Shem in the hope that he and his decedents will indeed fulfill this goal. However, once again, we find that the next generation fails. In chapter 10, again we find a unit that begins with "toladot" - this time the development of the seventy nations from the children of Shem, Cham, and Yefet - and again, just like the two units that preceded it, this unit also concludes with a story about SHEM - the story of Migdal Bavel. However, this time they do not call out in G-d's Name, instead their goal is to make a "SHEM" for themselves!

MIGDAL BAVEL When reading the first four psukim of the story of "migdal Bavel", it is hard to pinpoint one specific sin: [Note, however, the significant usage of the first person plural.] "Everyone on earth had the same language and the same words. And as they traveled from the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another: Come, LET US make bricks and burn them hard... And they said, Come LET US build US a city and a tower with its top in the sky, AND WE WILL MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES - v'naaseh lanu SHEM - lest WE shall be scattered all over the world. Then G-d came down to see..." (see 11:1-7)

From a cursory reading, it is not clear exactly what was so terrible about this generation. After all, is not achieving "achdut" [unity] a positive goal? Likewise, the use of human ingenuity to initiate an industrial revolution, developing man-made building materials, i.e.

bricks from clay etc., seems to be a positive advancement of society. Furthermore, there appears to be nothing wrong with simply building a city and a tower. Why was G-d so angered that He decided to stop this construction and disperse mankind? Chazal focus their criticism of this generation on their antagonistic attitude towards G-d (see Rashi 11:1). One key phrase in the Torah's explanation of the purpose for the tower reflects the egocentric nature of this generation: "v'naaseh LANU SHEM" [WE shall make a NAME for OURSELVES] (11:4) [see Sanhedrin 109a]

Instead of devoting themselves to the NAME OF GOD, this generation removes Him from the picture altogether. The builders of the tower united for the sake of an unholy end. Their undertaking emphasized man's dominion and strength. Although this generation's behavior is far better than the generation of the Flood, G-d was still disappointed, for they established an anthropocentric society (i.e. man in the center) instead of a theocentric one (i.e. G-d in the center). Their primary aim was only to 'make a name' for themselves, but NOT for G-d. Once again, G-d's hope that man would "korey b'shem Hashem" never materialized. G-d found it necessary to 'scatter' mankind, most probably in the hope that the next time that the nations may gather together, it would be for a more ideal purpose.

FROM "BRIYAH" TO "BECHIRA" The Migdal Bavel incident forms the conclusion of Section One of Sefer Breishit, for the story of Avraham Avinu now begins, as it is introduced by "toldot SHEM"! Hence, Migdal Bavel should not be viewed as just another story about mankind, nor simply as the history of the development of language. This key story sets the stage for G-d's choice of Avraham Avinu, for it becomes the destiny of Avraham, the primary descendent of "toldot SHEM", to bring G-d's Name back into the history of civilization; to fix the error of mankind at Migdal Bavel! Therefore, it should come as no surprise to us that when Avraham Avinu arrives in Eretz Canaan, he ascends to Bet-El and builds a mizbayach and then 'calls out in G-d's Name' (see 12:8). Similarly, it should not surprise us when the prophet Isaiah speaks of 'messianic time' when all mankind will unite once again, to climb the mountain of G-d at the Bet Ha'Mikdash in Yerushalayim - the "tikun" of Migdal Bavel (see Isaiah 2:1- 5). However, as this week's shiur is only on Parshat Noach, we will wait for next week's shiur on Parshat Lech L'cha to continue this idea, in order to appreciate the fuller meaning of G-d's choice of Avraham Avinu. Till then,

shabbat shalom menachem

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