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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON NOACH - 5781

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RABBI DAVID SILVERBERG

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PARASHAT NOACH

Parshat Noach recounts the deluge and its aftermath. Recall that after the flood, Noach became intoxicated and exposed himself, at which point two of his three sons, Shem and Yefet, respectfully clothed their father to save him from further embarrassment. Rashi (9:23) writes that Shem "exhibited particular zeal for the mitzva," and therefore his descendants earned a special mitzva related to clothing - tzitzit.

The use of the word "mitzva" in this context suggests that the formal mitzva of "kibbud av v'em" - honoring one's parents - applied to Shem and Yefet, despite their not having been considered Jews. A similar implication arises from the story in Masekhet Kiddushin (31a) of the gentile Dama Ben Netina, who received immense reward for his diligent observance of this mitzva. Furthermore, the Rambam (Hilkhos Mamrim 5:11) writes that although a convert to Judaism loses all former familial relationships, he may nevertheless not smite, curse, or insult his parents. Such conduct would lead outsiders to scorn Judaism, observing that this individual previously afforded honor to his parents and suddenly, upon his acceptance of Judaism, does not. Clearly, this reasoning assumes that gentiles must honor their parents.

The obvious question, of course, is why this obligation did not make its way into the list of "mitzvot bnei Noach" ("Noachide Laws"), those mitzvot applicable to Jews and non-Jews alike.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe 2:130) answers that, in fact, gentiles are not obligated in the formal mitzva of honoring parents that applies to the Jewish people. They are, however, obligated in the fundamental precept of "hakarot hatov" - showing gratitude, a universal value. Needless to say,

anyone with a sense of appreciation for kindness bestowed upon him would display a considerable level of respect towards his parents, who gave him his life and went through the trouble of rearing him. Therefore, although the specific laws of "kibbud av v'em" do not apply to non-Jews, they must nevertheless honor their parents whereas they are included in the universal obligation of showing gratitude.

(Taken from Rav Binyamin Tabory's column, "Hamitzva Baparasha" in Shabbat B'Shabbato, Parashat Noach 5760.)

mjravtorah@shamash.org Shiur **HaRav Soloveichik** on Parshas Noach noach97 (Shiur date: 10/14/75)

Date: October 1997

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 midget 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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From: Rabbi Nisson E. Shulman <neshulman@aol.com>

Date: Oct. 21, 2020

[Seeing the Good]

Rabbi Nisson E. Shulman

We live in critical times, our cities and communities even countries are being threatened with this terrible virus. In some ways it reminds us of the story of the universal destruction of everything in the world which we read about in the portion of Noah.

Noah is the story of the universal destruction of everything in the world and all that was saved was one family and livestock. Apparently the destruction of all humanity was a serious possibility even at the beginning of mankind's story. In our time we are in the midst of a pandemic in such a way that we feel the threat keenly. The promise of the rainbow notwithstanding, the threat still hangs over some communities.

There was a time when I served in the Navy and was assigned to the editorial board of the Chaplain resource department. One of my tasks was to read manuscripts submitted for publication for in-service training of chaplains. I will not easily forget the title of one manuscript "this is a heck of a world in which we live". I will remember it not because it was good or bad but because of the pessimistic attitude it expressed, that the world is basically evil and man is essentially corrupt. I will not forget it because of how diametrically opposed Judaism is to this view. Judaism stresses that the world is basically good and that man can overcome corruption and evil. And he is basically good. The story of Noah notwithstanding, man can conquer evil.

Last week we read Hashem's words to Cain, "sin crouches at the door but you must rule over it." Adversity can overcome you and even seem to

conquer you. But you were given the choice and you can and must rule over adversity.

In a prominent medical school a professor greeted the freshman class with the following words , "before we begin our course I want to test your power of observation . I have hung a painting on the blackboard. Take five minutes, concentrate, and then tell me what you see". The painting consisted of a large white canvas and right in the middle was a black dot. Every student when asked what he or she saw replied "a black dot", not one of them commented on the white background. "There you are ladies and gentlemen , there is your power of observation . Beware of seeing only the black dot."

The results of this test did not indicate a weakness in the students vision. There was nothing wrong with their eyesight. It did indicate a willful closing of the eyes to the large white background. It has been said, " there is none so blind as he who would not see". Taken on the broader canvas of life itself, the truth of this observation becomes obvious. We are so willing to see the black dot - the evil - on the canvas of life , that we close our eyes to the white- the great mass of good and hope in the future.

On Rosh Hashanah we recited "Avinu malkeinu zochreinu bezikaron tov lefanecha ," remember us for good. , and in the same way God wants us to remember the good and not to stress the bad and the discordant. He wants us to see the white background and not to forget it.

There are many miracles associated with the exodus: the well of water that followed us wherever we went, the manna that came down from heaven every day. Yet for all generations we remember through the Sukkah one miracle above all, the clouds of God's glory . Why?

The Talmud suggests a partial answer. The clouds of God's glory disappeared with the death of Aaron. Therefore we make a Sukkah in order not to forget them. But I would like to suggest another answer. we complained about the manna, we complained about the well of water, we never complained about the clouds of God's glory , but instead showed only appreciation, gratitude for His shelter and God's providence. So the Torah wanted us to celebrate particularly that miracle about which all our memories are good. That is our ideal . וירא אלקים כי טוב. Look for the white background. Our rabbis did not imply that we are to go through life wearing rose-colored glasses and seeing only the good. They considered that kind of vision just as faulty as seeing only the bad. What they stress is the universal tendency to magnify the black dot out of all proportion to the white. The ability to perceive good even when it is hard to find , is based on our faith in God and trust that He will lead us through the most trying and testing times .

Let us join in the prayer inspired by the words of Isaiah the prophet, "How good to hear on the hills the footsteps of the messenger , telling that peace will one day come , saying to Zion , 'thy King doth reign.'"

Date: 30 Oct 2003 From: "Rabbi Benjamin G. Kelsen, Esq." <bgkelsen@beisdin.org>

HaGaon **HaRav Shlomo Elimelech Drillman**, zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon

Editor's Note: The following is based upon HaRav Drillman's 5757 shiur on Parshas Noach which was delivered on 27 Tishrei 5757 (October 10, 1996).

....

"V'ach es dimchem..." According to the Kli Yakar this passuk is the source of the prohibition against suicide. Yet if this so then how is it possible that Chanania, Azaryah and Mishael would voluntarily step into the burning furnace? Because the word "ach" acts as an exclusionary clause which in certain cases, such as that of Kiddush Hashem, permits a person not to have to struggle against his persecutors. An example of this can be seen in the story of Avraham ben Avraham, the Ger Tzeddek, born Count Valentin Potocki and descended from a long line of noble Christian rulers, who sacrificed wealth and power in order to convert from Christianity to Judaism after taking an interest in Yehadus while studying at the University of Paris. His family had conducted a massive search for him and when he was found

he was turned over to the inquisitorial board of the church. Though his family and former colleagues begged him to renounce Yehadus and save his life, he refused. He was sentenced to the auto-de-fé death by fire. As a result of Christian "love," this Polish nobleman was forced to sacrifice his life in order to avoid converting back to Christianity. The Ger Tzedek chose to die as a martyr, with the Ribbono Shel Olam's name on his lips. In recognition of his great sacrifice he was buried in the Jewish cemetery of Vilna.

The preceding story was told by Reb Elchonon to those students who were hiding with him in 1941 at the home of Rab Chaim Ozer Grodzenski in Vilna as they were led to their deaths. When the Nazis finally found the Reb Elchonon after much searching, he put on his Shabbos bekeshes and streimel and calmly exited the house where he and the children with him were loaded into a cart or truck and driven into the forest and forced to disembark near a large empty pit. The Germans' intentions became clear as a group of SS troops stood behind their prisoners and prepared their weapons. One of the boys, understandably frightened, began to cry.

"Do not be afraid, my son," said Reb Elchonon gently "we are about to take our place in the history of Klal Yisroel with Rabbi Akiva and the other harugei malchus and fulfill the mitzvah of dying "al kiddush Hashem". And when we reach the gates of Gan Eden the Avos themselves will hold open the gates for us and the Shivtei Koh will lead us to our seats in the Beis Medresh Shel Maloh where we will take our place among the gedolim of past generations and hear words of Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu himself. So fear not, mein kinder, this is not the end. Rather, it is just the beginning."

When the Nazis began to fire Reb Elchonon grabbed one of the boys next to him and threw him into the pit and landed on top of him. Later, when the Nazis had left, this boy was able to climb, unhurt, from the carnage around him and escape. He later became one of the great talmidei chachomim of the post war era.

"RavFrاند" **Rabbi Frاند** on Parshas Noach 5758 1997

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).

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 Noah'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 started 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. Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Balt, MD dhoffman@clark.net RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc.

Parshas Noach 5763 2002

Rabbi Eli Baruch Shulman

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Noach first had children when he was 500 years old. That was pretty old even in those days. And Rashi feels the need to explain that: Said R' Yudin, why did all these generations give birth at the age of one hundred, while [Noach] did so at 500? Because hakadosh baruch hu said [if he will have many children] I will have to trouble him to build many arks. And so he withheld his wellsprings until he was 500 years old.

This raises an obvious question. What would have been so difficult about building several arks? Noach could have hired contractors, he had 120 years, contractors we know are slow but in 120 years a lot can be done, and he could have built as many arks as he wanted!

It seems that the ark had to be built by Noach himself; no one else could do it for him. Why?

The Torah says: va'yimach es kol hayekum; everything - buildings, bridges etc. - was eradicated. The water, the Gemara in Sanhedrin tells us, was boiling hot, so nothing could stand up to it. So how did the ark itself remain intact?

The Megaleh Amukos answers that Hashem's name was built into the dimensions of the ark. The letters of the shem havaya have the values 10, 5, 6 & 5. The letters of the shem adnus have the values 1, 4, 50 & 10. Taking the first letter of the shem havaya and multiplying it by the first letter of the shem adnus we get 1x10=10. Doing the same with second letters gives

4x5=20. Third letters give 50x6=300. And fourth letters give 5x10=50. So we have 10, 20, 300 & 50. 10 and 20 together are 30, the height of the Teivah. 300 is its length. And 50 is its width.

These are not just numbers. We could build a boat with the same dimensions and it wouldn't have any such power. Rather, the ark was the physical embodiment of Noah's tremendous faith in Hashem. For 120 years he built it, despite the mockery of taunts of disbelief of all his friends and neighbors. Think of the courage that required; of the sacrifices that must have entailed. Remember that Noah had shown tremendous promise as a youth, which everyone had recognized: he had been named Noah when he invented agricultural tools, and everyone said: zeh yenachameinu, he's the hope of the future. He was looked up to and admired. And at the height of his powers he embarked on this seemingly wild, quixotic project to build a giant boat because the end of the world was coming. What strength of character that must have taken! What unshakable faith! What courage!

And so the very dimensions of the ark reflected Hashem's Name, they were the outer reflection of the faith and trust in Hashem, even at the cost of great self-sacrifice, that had gone into every plank and every nail of the ark. And it was that which made it impervious to destruction.

And that is why Noah had to build the ark himself. It couldn't be contracted out. Because no contractor could built into it that faith and courage which alone would give it the power to stand up to the raging, boiling waters of the flood to come.

Noah's ark, of course, is long gone. And Hashem has promised to bring another flood, at least not of water.

But there are other types of flood. There are others floods that threaten to engulf us. There is the flood of assimilation, which has swept away so much of our people. There is the flood of hedonism, the non-stop bachanal which threatens our youth. And there is the flood of anti-Semitism, the feral hatred that boils around us, which the verse describes so strikingly with the words: and the wicked are like the churning sea, which is never still.

And so we need an ark of our own, to stand up to these floods.

And we have such an ark. It's no coincidence that in Hebrew the word for ark: teivah, means – not only an ark, but also – a word. Words are also teivos. Words of truth, of honesty, of faith, have tremendous power. And most powerful of all are words of Torah. Like Noah's teivah, every word of Torah is an embodiment of our faith in G-d, of our faith and trust in Him. And just as the dimensions of Noah's ark reflected the name of G-d, so too each word of Torah reflects His name; indeed, as the Ramban explains in his introduction to the Torah, each word of Torah is a name of G-d. And so, like Noah's ark, each word of Torah is a haven and a bulward against the raging flood.

We saw before deep significance in the dimensions of the ark. There is another allusion in those dimensions, which is also pointed out by our seforim. The dimensions of the ark were 30x50x300. 30 is lamed, 50 is nun, and 300 is hin. Together they spell lashon, the tongue, whose task it is to produce teivos, words of Torah, each word a teivah, an ark, floating serenely above the boiling sea.

The floodwaters are rising. We have to be sure that the teivos are ready. With every word of Torah that we learn, with every shiur in which we participate, with every effort that we expend to support talmidei chachamim and yeshivos, we add to that fleet of teivos. And in those? teivos, because of those teivos, We can hope to make it safely home to port, despite the floodwaters, as did Noah finally, when Yonah mazah bo manoach, he found rest at last, as shall we, bimheira b'yameinu amen.

from: Ohr Torah Stone <parsha@ots.org.il>

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"Parsha and Purpose" – Noah 5781

Rabbi Kenneth Brander's weekly insights into the parsha

"How Will the World Remember COVID?"

How many lines will COVID-19 take up in human history?

Will it be a line or two? A paragraph? A chapter? Or a full book?

I think it depends on one crucial idea that we find in Parshat Noah.

In Chapter 9 of the Book of Bereshiet, we learn that in the aftermath of the flood, Noah planted a vineyard.

He drank the wine of these grapes, became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent.

Noah's son, Cham, saw his father's nakedness and shared the news with his two brothers, Shem and Yefet.

Out of respect for their father, Shem and Yefet covered their father, walking backwards into his tent with the cloth draped from their backs so as not to shame him.

Then, in verse 24, we read that when Noah woke up from his wine-induced sleep, he learned what his youngest son had done to him.

This verse is SO critical.

You see, Noah is unhappy.

He is depressed because of the loneliness that he experiences all around him.

The loss of family and friends, the loss of camaraderie and community, all casualties of the flood.

His depression causes his drunkenness, which is an attempt to escape his sorrow.

But at this point Noah realizes what his depression has caused.

He wakes up from his drunkenness, from his depression over the flood – "and learns what has happened".

Will we learn from COVID-19?

Will we learn how to have a true relationship with God?

One that is concerned not only with ritual but also with the larger messages of the Torah, such as the responsibility to make sure that our conduct allows for all of humankind to be safe and secure...

Religious experiences where ritual does not become an end in itself, but is a means to an end to ensure sacred moments in time with God.

Will we spend our time frivolously searching for religious reasons to explain why COVID-19 is happening,

Reasons that are predicated on our subjective suppositions on how society should be organized – using the pandemic to reinforce our pre-existing notions?

Or will we allow the pandemic to awaken us from our spiritually drunken stupor to recognize that we cannot take family and friends for granted?

To realize it is not about explaining why tragedy befalls society,

When such challenges arise, focusing on how we can engage to make a difference in the lives of the people around us?

How we recover from this pandemic will define how transformational this challenge has been.

Noah's righteousness is predicated not on the fact that he does not sin, but rather on his capacity to learn from his mistakes.

Similarly, the role that COVID-19 will play in human history depends on what we learn from it, and how those teachings inspire us to transform society and enhance our personal lives.

Shabbat Shalom

Dvar Torah: Noah, 5757 October 1996

Rabbi Moshe Shulman

NOACH: THE HUMAN BEING

"NOACH ISH TZADIK TAMIM HAYAH BE'DOROTAV" "Noach was a righteous and wholehearted person, IN HIS GENERATION."

Usually this phrase is understand as: "the most righteous in his generation".

But our Rabbis were puzzled by the literal translation, which would seem to indicate a superfluous emphasis on Noah's righteousness in HIS generation only. Interestingly enough, two opposing explanations are given in the Talmud. (see Rashi ad hoc.)

The first interpretation is in Noah's favour. "He was righteous DESPITE his

generation." Even though Noah saw only moral decay and wickedness all around him, he was able to overcome the peer pressure of society, and maintain his commitment to G d, and to righteous values. How much more righteous would he have been were he to have lived in a generation with great leaders such as our forefather Abraham?

The second interpretation, however, is to to Noah's detriment. "He was Righteous in ONLY IN HIS generation," but compared to great personalities of other generations, like Abraham, he would not have amounted to anything special. Only when compared to the wickedness of the generation of the flood, was Noah outstanding.

What a strange statement to make regarding one whom the Torah describes in only positive terms! Why would our Sages find it necessary to denigrate and belittle Noah's accomplishments in such a manner?

I would suggest that, quite the contrary, even this statement to Noah's detriment is really a compliment in disguise, and perhaps the more relevant role model of Noah for future generations. For diminishing Noah's own internal moral strength in fact boosts and augments his accomplishment! It emphasises his ability to withstand the pressures of the wicked society.

A great personality such as Abraham would have had no problem maintaining a righteous way of life even in the midst of an immoral society. But the lesson here is that one doesn't have to be an Abraham or an Isaac in order to maintain a commitment to one's spiritual values in a "spiritualless" society. Even a Noah, who, compared to Abraham, may not have been objectively an exemplary personality as such, was, never the less, able to overcome the temptations and pressures of a moral less society, and rise above them.

In many ways, our generation is not much different from that of Noah's! It is a secular society, full of violence, immorality, and values contrary to Judaism and its teachings. It is oftentimes quite difficult for us to remember our commitment to our Jewishness.

But we can learn from Noah, who was righteous in HIS generation, DESPITE his generation. Noah was able to stand against all the immorality and injustice of his world, stand alone, and shout: I live for values in which I believe.

Most importantly, we must remember that Noah was not a spiritual "superman". He was an ordinary man, with an ordinary life. He was "in his generation", a product of his generation, a product of his society. Yet, he was able to rise above them, and live by his commitment to G d and to spiritual values.

For many of us Noah is a more attainable role model than even Abraham. We shy away from the great Righteous giants of history, because they are too far removed from our lives. Noah is a symbol of our struggle, day by day, a struggle to maintain our commitment and values, in a world with different standards.

We must Learn from Noah, draw strength from his commitment. And in that way we shall all grow MEI'CHAYIL EL CHOYIL", "from strength to strength."

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~akiva/HOJMI/droscho.html>

<http://www.enayim.org/archives/noah5760.html>

PLEASANT COMMANDMENTS

Rabbi Mickey Siev

The concept of deracheha darchei noam (Mishlei 3:17), 'her (Torah's) ways are ways of pleasantness,' is one which finds expression within the halacha. The gemara in Succah (32a), for example, concludes that we are to understand the commandment to take kapos tamarim on the holiday of Succos as referring to a lulav and not to a palm shoot because a palm shoot is thorny. Because of deracheha darchei noam, the Torah must have intended the more comfortable of the two possible options. The gemara uses this concept in other instances as well (see Yevamos 15a and 87b), and there are several occasions in which the commentators have similarly explained

certain mitzvos as being tailored around the particular nature of human beings (a prominent example is the halacha of eishes yefas to'ar).

The idea that the Torah is concerned with the nature and comfort of human beings, and that this at times affects halacha, is very relevant to Parshas Noah. The Torah repeats (9:1 and 9:7) the mitzvah of p'ru ur'vu, the very first mitzvah in the Torah. The gemara (Yevamos 65b) explains that while men are obligated to perform this mitzvah, women are exempt. While the gemara quotes pesukim to show that this is the case, it is difficult to understand the reason behind this difference. The Meshech Chochmah accounts for this difference through the concept of deracheha darchei noam. Women, unlike men, have a tremendous amount of physical pain and even danger during childbirth. Because the Torah is sensitive to this, it does not demand that women undergo this experience.

This explanation, Meshech Chochmah points out, can be seen in the textual proofs that the gemara uses to show that p'ru ur'vu is only obligatory for men. The gemara suggests that when Hashem blesses Yaakov and tells him to have children, He uses the phrase p'rei ur'vei, in the singular, to hint that the commandment applies only to men and not to women. However, this just begs the question; when Hashem originally told Adam and Chava p'ru ur'vu, he used the plural! Shouldn't this indicate that the mitzvah in fact applies to both men and women? The Meshech Chochmah's explanation as to why only men are obligated in this mitzvah solves the problem. When Hashem originally used the term p'ru ur'vu, He was in fact addressing both Adam and Chava. That was before they sinned. The sin is the whole reason that women have pain and danger during childbirth. Because at that time this element of childbirth did not exist, women were in fact obligated. Later, Hashem used the singular form, when addressing Yaakov, because the elements of pain and danger at that time did exist for women in childbirth, and Hashem therefore gave them a dispensation from the mitzvah. (The fact that our parsha uses the plural form, p'ru ur'vu, and it is of course after the sin of Adam and Chava, does not ruin this solution. Hashem is addressing Noah and his sons (see 9:1), and the plural form is therefore in order.)

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Torah in Action /Shema Yisrael <parsha@torahinaction.com>

subject: Peninim on the Torah by **Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum**

But I will establish My covenant with you. (6:18)

Rashi explains that the covenant/promise Hashem made with/to Noah was two-fold: the food supply in the Ark would not spoil; the reshaim, evil people of the generation, would do him no harm. He would safely live on the ark. The Brisker Rav, zl, makes an interesting observation. Noah was about to enclose himself on a traveling ark with representatives of every species of animal, wild beast and fowl. One would think that this would be considered a frightening experience. These were not domesticated pets. They were vicious wild animals. Noah did not seem to be afraid. Hashem had given him many assurances that the wicked people would not harm him and that there would be sufficient food in the storehouse for them. Scary. It is well-known that the lion attacked Noah because he was late with his dinner. Multiply that by thousands, and one can have an anxiety attack. It seems that Noah was not concerned.

The Rav explains that protection from clear and present danger was not necessary. Noah knew that Hashem would protect him. In order to ensure that the reshaim of that generation not attack the ark and kill him, however, Noah required a bris, covenant.

Horav Meshullam David Soloveitchik, Shlita, supplements his father's remarks. Noah's concern for the future was after the rain began, and the Flood was apparently imminent. When the reshaim clearly saw that their end was near, they were about to die, what was it that concerned them most? What were they involved in at this moment, when the shades of life were rapidly closing on them? To kill the tzaddik, Noah! Why? He was doing nothing to them. On the contrary; for one hundred and twenty years, he had

done everything possible to convince them to alter their perverted way of life and repent. He warned them of the impending doom. They refused to listen. Now, they wanted to kill him, because he represented the truth – pure, unmitigated, unvarnished truth. This is a reality that the secular left cannot tolerate. Since they could not change the truth which was glaring them straight in the eyes, however, they wanted to kill the messenger. This has been the case throughout the millennia. Some things just do not change. They would rather quash the truth than concede that they were living a life of falsehood.

And he said, "Blessed is Hashem, the G-d of Shem. (9:26)

Noach did not directly bless Shem; rather, he said that the G-d/Hashem of Shem be blessed and glorified. By saying this, Noach intimated the mission of Shem/ his descendants, of whom the standard bearer is Klal Yisrael. Their primary goal is to serve Hashem and glorify His Name in the world. Thus, when people bless Hashem, we, His children, are – by extension – blessed. Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, points out that Hashem is the universal G-d. He is everyone's G-d. (Indeed, when the accursed Nazi held his gun to the head of the Telzer Rav and asked, "Jew, where is your G-d now?" the Rav replied, "He is your G-d too.") It is just that we are His most trusted servant and that He is especially manifest in our history. The mere fact that we continue to exist, despite the many calamities that we have endured, is testament to this verity. Furthermore, who else but Klal Yisrael has recognized, acknowledged and proclaimed Hashem's greatness?

Our mission in the world is to glorify Hashem's Name, so that the nations of the world will, upon seeing our behavior, bless the "G-d of Shem," the Ribono Shel Olam. When the Chafetz Chaim, zl, was niftar, passed away, one of the gentiles who lived in the vicinity of Radin (the Chafetz Chaim's home) came to be menachem avel, comfort the family. When he was asked concerning his relationship with the saintly deceased, who was one of the gedolei ha'dor, leaders of the generation, the man related that he was a shepherd by profession. He had occasion to pasture his herd in one of the grassy forests near Radin. Suddenly, he heard bitter weeping. He strained his ears and focused his eyes to identify from where the sounds were emanating. He searched until he came to a clearing and saw an elderly Jew standing beside a tree, weeping bitterly.

As he moved closer to hear what the man was saying, he was shocked to hear the man pleading with (he assumed) G-d that no mishap/stumbling block arise as a result of the books that he had authored. He later reported, "I stared at this man who stood before me. Here, before my eyes, stood an honest man, a man whose integrity was so pristine, his veracity so deeply committed to his G-d, that he found it necessary to shelter himself in the forest where no one would stop him. By us gentiles, such a person is unheard of. It is only by the Jews that such a person could exist and thrive.

"From that day on, I did everything within my power to get close to this holy man. I followed him and watched his mannerisms closely and saw that everything about him was ingrained in his psyche. This was not some elaborate show. He was not trying to garner attention for himself. He was the real thing."

Furthermore, the gentile related how impressed he was that the Chafetz Chaim did not recognize the appearance of the ozeres, woman who helped out in the house. Despite the fact that she had been working in his house for a number of years, the Chafetz Chaim never looked at her. This was unheard of in his world. Thus, he felt that he must come and share his emotions with the saintly man's family.

5758 1997

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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from: **Rabbi Berel Wein** / The Destiny Foundation

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date: Oct 21, 2020, 12:00 AM

subject: Parshat Noach 5781 Newsletter - Rabbi Berel Wein

LOCKDOWN FEVER

In the good old days when a person was isolated and alone for a period of time in one's own home, the common expression was that one was suffering from cabin fever. Due to the coronavirus pandemic's effect upon society, many countries including Israel have enforced stay-at-home lockdowns in an attempt to combat the contagious nature of the disease.

There is great debate raging in all the countries and especially here in Israel as to whether or not the lockdown is truly necessary, and if it is effective in slowing the spread of the disease. Unfortunately, the lockdown has become a political instead of a purely medical discussion.

There is no question that the lockdown has had an enormous effect upon our

society and community, economically, socially, psychologically, and spiritually. We are forced to wonder as to whether we have somehow made the cure as bad or perhaps even worse than the effects of the problem itself.

Since I am not a medical expert, I cannot really opine on this issue with any great degree of certainty or wisdom. Nevertheless, I think I am clearly aware of consequences that will be long-lasting after this lockdown is over and even after the pandemic is under control by vaccines, therapeutics or simply by the fact that in the past pandemics eventually run their course and end.

Whichever way we view this matter, there is no question that the lockdowns have had a devastating effect on our communities in general and on many individuals. And there are effects and consequences that will only become apparent months and years from now.

Jewish history and halachic norms based on tradition in these matters is greater even than the gift of prophecy. Invested in Torah, leadership throughout the generations many times established rules, customs, and instructions for social and private behavior that, so to speak, expanded the biblical rules of the Torah itself. These rabbinic decrees and customs many times were established not only to meet immediate and current situations but were farseeing enough to deal even with later consequences that at the moment of the decree may not have been visible or understood by the masses of Israel.

There is no question that all wise decisions must contain an element of prophecy within them. The rabbis have taught us that the wise person is someone who can anticipate the future and take steps to deal with it presently. The rabbis have also taught us that wisdom in these matters is even greater than the gift of prophecy.

I have thought long and hard about decisions and actions taken and made during these lockdown periods. I do not debate the medical wisdom involved in so doing nor do I intend to criticize or even strongly disagree with many of the rabbinic opinions advanced throughout this last period of the coronavirus. However, I do feel that many of the leniency's regarding prayer – including places of prayer and outside ad hoc prayer services – have long-term consequences, some of which may certainly not prove to be beneficial and positive.

The problem always is that Humpty Dumpty cannot be put back together again easily. Once you have told people that hearing 30 blasts of the shofar is sufficient, that many parts of the prayer service can be omitted, that attendance for prayer in an actual synagogue can be dispensed with because it is more convenient to pray at home, and that these originally ad hoc prayer meetings are allowed somehow to become permanent synagogue breakaways, then next Rosh Hashana – we should all live and be well to observe it in health and good spirits – there will be those who will somehow yearn for the good old days when we only had to be at a two -hour prayer service, with 30 blast of the shofar, no sermons and perhaps even the leisurely ability of private prayer in one's own home.

I know full well that there are people who will have difficulty physically in attending services in the synagogue building itself. But these people and people like them had such difficulties before the coronavirus struck. Everyone must do the best that they can and watch out for themselves in manners that they find healthy and convenient. However, it cannot be that the cure of the lockdown should somehow become the norm and acceptable to our community and to the Jewish world generally.

Our synagogue has remained open constantly and when we could not pray indoors because of governmental rules we prayed outside - but outside of the synagogue building and nowhere else. The preservation of our community is dependent upon the preservation of the primacy of our synagogue and only a mindset that understands this and agrees to it will allow us to escape from the ravages of lockdown fever.

Shabbat shalom

Berel Wein