



הַמִּזְרָחִי



HAMIZRACHI

PARSHA WEEKLY

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PARSHAT NOACH 5786 • 2025



ISRAEL AT WAR

748 DAYS
13 HOSTAGES*

WORLD MIZRACHI Picture of the Week

Last week, the Perez family said a final goodbye as they laid to rest their beloved son, brother, and grandson, Captain Daniel Perez Hy”d. For two long years the Perez family, together with Am Yisrael and countless around the world, waited anxiously for the return of their beloved Daniel. And now, with gratitude to G-d, we have witnessed the return of all the living hostages, and heartbreakingly, some but not all of the deceased.

This week’s edition is dedicated for the merit of the immediate return of Itai ben Ruby hy”d, a member of Tzevet Perez tank crew, together with all the remaining deceased hostages to be returned, and dedicated to the memory of Tomer ben Shay hy”d, and Daniel Shimon ben Harav Doron Eliezer hy”d.

INSIDE

TORAT MIZRACHI

- Rabbi Doron Perez 2
- Rabbi Reuven Taragin 4
- Rabbanit Shani Taragin 5
- Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon 6
- Rabbanit Sharon Rimon 7
- Sivan Rahav Meir 8
- Rabbi Danny Mirvis 9
- Riddles: Reb Leor Broh 9

PARSHAT HASHAVUA

- Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt”l 10
- Rabbi Hershel Schachter shlit”a 12
- Rabbi Yisroel Reisman shlit”a 13
- Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis KBE 14
- Rabbi Shalom Rosner 15
- Michal Horowitz 16
- Rabbi Menachem Leibtag 17
- Rabbi Eli Mansour 18

INSPIRATION

- Rabbi Moshe Weinberger 19
- Rabbi YY Jacobson 20
- Rabbi Judah Mischel 21
- Mrs. Shira Smiles 22
- Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi 23

ISRAEL CONTENT

- Hebrew Language: David Curwin 24



*At the time of publication



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World Mizrachi is the global Religious Zionist movement, spreading *Torat Eretz Yisrael* across the world and strengthening the bond between the State of Israel and Jewish communities around the world.

Based in Jerusalem and with branches across the globe, Mizrachi – an acronym for *merkaz ruchani* (spiritual center) – was founded in 1902 by Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov Reines, and is led today by Rabbi Doron Perez. Mizrachi's role was then and remains with vigor today, to be a proactive partner and to take personal responsibility in contributing to the collective destiny of *Klal Yisrael* through a commitment to Torah, the Land of Israel and the People of Israel.

HAMIZRACHI
PARSHA WEEKLY

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Trials and Tribulations

The Journey of Jewish Destiny



Rabbi Doron Perez

Executive Chairman, World Mizrachi

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges any human being has ever faced, is that of Noah and his family.

As opposed to Adam and Chava, who came into a world created perfectly by G-d, Noah stepped out of the ark into a world which had been utterly destroyed. Adam and Chava were totally alone in a world without one other human being but they had not experienced death and loss until Kayin killed Hevel. Quite differently, every single human being, every living thing, every person that Noah knew and had grown up with and had ever interacted with, was dead. The world was a wasteland, and he was charged by G-d with the responsibility to somehow now rebuild a destroyed and decimated world – a near impossible task. Perhaps this is why the first thing Noah plants is a vineyard – to make wine and celebrate life in the face of so much death. Unfortunately the wine led to inebriation and drunkenness which had painful consequences for him and his family. This was Noah's greatest mission and monumental challenge – to attempt to rebuild an entirely broken and destroyed world.

Sometimes we as human beings, and certainly as the Jewish people, perhaps more than any other people, are called upon to face seemingly impossible life circumstances and challenges of so much pain, hurt and destruction.

From Darkness to Light

Avraham, according to our Sages, faced imminent death at the hands of Nimrod who wanted to kill him for his

monotheistic belief and activism. This is hinted at at the end of this week's *parasha*. We are introduced to Avraham when his family inexplicably departs the town of Ur. Not only is it not clear why they are leaving this town, point out our sages in the *Midrash*, but also Ur means a furnace in Hebrew. From this our sages infer that the king at that place and time – Nimrod – had decreed death on Avraham for his heresy and attempted to throw him into the fiery furnace. Only by the grace of G-d was he miraculously saved. According to some opinions, this was the first of Avraham's ten *nisyonot* – his major trials and tribulations.

Yet, out of his trials and turmoil, pain and poignancy emerged the unique spiritual odyssey of Jewish destiny. Out of Avraham's baptism of fire, so to speak, emerged our foremost founder and forefather – laying the foundation for Jewish life and leadership.

So too in Egypt. Everything that was so good until it was so bad – freedom and abundance turned into slavery and servitude. Yet somehow out of the exile and darkness, came freedom and redemption.

Thus the path of Jewish history has continued in our generation, even to the unspeakable horrors of the Holocaust, from which the Jewish people somehow emerged to affirm and rebuild life – to establish a Jewish sovereign state in its ancient homeland; to rebuild the world of Torah, so much of which had been destroyed in Europe... If ever there was a people who faced impossible challenges and somehow triumphed, it was our people.

So too on a personal level. Human history in general, and the Jewish people specifically is littered with incredible individuals who have had to face impossible situations and have somehow prevailed to affirm life and to rebuild.

There is unfortunately no shortage of this – I will share just two examples from recent history. Famously, the Klausenberger Rebbe, who while he lost his wife and 11 children in the *Shoah* rebuilt a family, a community and a hospital in Israel which continues to save lives and bring healing daily. In 2004 David Chatuel of Gush Katif was informed that his wife Tali who was 8 months pregnant along with his four daughters were murdered in cold blood together in their car not far from the Kissufim junction. David remarried and today has five beautiful healthy children and has rebuilt his life and continues to be a prominent educator. They are amongst so many other examples of heroic decisions in the face of impossible circumstances.

We all today stand on the shoulders of such giants who continue to affirm life in the face of danger and death, who believe in the future, despite the challenges of the present.

Our family, like so many other families in Israel today, have and are facing great challenges. Over 900 soldiers have fallen since October 7th and around 900 civilians were brutally murdered on that day. Sixteen thousand soldiers have been injured. Families such as the Bibas family have been almost decimated, others forever broken and as of the writing of these lines there are still 15 bodies of hostages to be returned – one third of which are combat soldiers and three of them are officers including two of Daniel's friends Sergeant Itay Chen and a fellow officer



We all today stand on the shoulders of such giants who continue to affirm life in the face of danger and death, who believe in the future, despite the challenges of the present.

Captain Omer Neutra of blessed memory. Lieutenant Hadar Goldin's body remains in Gaza for over 11 years since Operation Protective Edge in 2014 and his parents Simcha and Leah continue to suffer.

Our son, Daniel HY”D, was graciously and miraculously returned for burial last week. We are forever grateful to so many people who *davened* and did so much to bring Daniel home and we fervently pray for the immediate release of all the captured of Israel.

With the perspective of Jewish history and experience, this life affirming decision seems to be what the Jewish people as a whole and the individual Jews do time and time again when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Day One

There is a remarkable comment of the famous rabbinic biblical commentator, Rabbi Ephraim of Lunichin in his commentary the *Kli Yakar*, regarding the first day of creation.

At the end of the first day of creation the *passuk* says that it was evening and it was morning – “יום אחד” – “day one.” After, every other day it says “יום שני...יום שלישי” – “The second day... the third day.” Why

is it that after the creation of light and darkness on the first day it does not say that it was the first day, but rather says “יום אחד” – “day one?”

The *Kli Yakar* quotes the *Gemara* highlights how nothing could be more opposite in life than light and darkness, than day and night – two opposite phenomena and experiences. Yet out of the contrast and contradictions, G-d says it was night and it was day, these two opposites, they are one, “יום אחד”. Everything created is indeed one. The Jewish people have proclaimed the oneness of creation and hence the oneness of G-d more than any other. The *Shema* ends with “Hashem is One,” where the Jewish people constantly proclaim the Oneness of G-d.

Life is full of inherent contradictions which seem irreconcilable. There is light and darkness, love and hate, sorrow and joy, sadness and *simcha*, exile and redemption and so many other ongoing inherent contradictions in life that we are called upon to confront.

Our belief in one G-d, say our Sages, is a belief that both the good and the bad, the challenging and the uplifting, the pain and the joy stem from the One G-d who is the G-d of all creation and ultimately wants the good for all of His creatures, although we often don't understand it.

As challenging as life so often is for us all, and especially for us as Jews, we somehow have the G-d-given capacity to find the light in the darkness, redemption from exile and the ability to continue to cope and contribute to the betterment of those around us.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Avodah: How We Serve



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An Important Pillar

We have seen that, in Avot's second *mishnah*, Shimon HaTzaddik presents the world's three pillars, beginning with the pillar of Torah because of its supreme significance.

But Torah is not the only pillar. *Avodah* is also important. Study alone is not enough for the world and our own existence. This is why man's presence in *Gan Eden* included his responsibility to do *avodah*.¹ In fact, Hashem delayed the completion of all creations until man existed and could perform his *avodah*.²

What type of *avodah* is the *mishnah* referring to?

Korbanot

The meforshim explain that *avodah* refers to *avodat Hashem* — most notably *korbanot*.³ *Korbanot* express our appreciation of Hashem's role in the world (and in our lives) as well as our interest to give to and sacrifice for Him.

Kayin and Hevel were the first people the Torah records as having brought *korbanot*.⁴ Later, when Noach brought a *korban* upon exiting the ark, Hashem responded by promising to continuously sustain the world.⁵ When we show our appreciation of and commitment to Hashem, He commits Himself to us and our world.

The Jewish people's relationship with Hashem also began with a *korban* — the *Korban Pesach*. Though the Jews were passive during the first nine *makot*, for *Makat Bechorot* and *Yetziat Mitzraim* to occur they needed to sacrifice the *Korban Pesach*. Hashem would not identify them as His *bechor* without their self-identifying through the sacrifice of the *korban*. Rav Hutner pointed out that the *Korban Pesach* is the only specific *mitzvah* the Torah describes as "*avodah*."⁶ In other words, *Yetziat Mitzraim* hinged upon our

performing *avodah*. The ideal form of this was offering a *korban*.

Korbanot reflect more than just identity and commitment. They also express our willingness to sacrifice. We demonstrate and reinforce the importance of a relationship by sacrificing for it.⁷ Ultimately, we are what we are willing to sacrifice for. This is why the Hebrew word for a sacrifice (*korban*) shares a root with the Hebrew word for closeness (*karov*).⁸ We are close to what we sacrifice for.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks pointed out:

This is true in many aspects of life. A happily married couple is constantly making sacrifices for one another. Parents make huge sacrifices for their children. People drawn to a calling — to heal the sick, or care for the poor, or fight for justice for the weak against the strong — often sacrifice remunerative careers for the sake of their ideals. In ages of patriotism, people make sacrifices for their country. In strong communities, people make sacrifices for one another when someone is in distress or needs help. Sacrifice is the superglue of relationship. It bonds us to one another.⁹

Lose the concept of sacrifice within a society, and sooner or later, marriage falters, parenthood declines, and the society slowly ages and dies. Rabbi Sacks quoted his predecessor, Lord Jakobovits, who had a lovely way of putting this: "The *Talmud* says that when a man divorces his first wife, 'the altar sheds tears.'¹⁰ What is the connection between the altar and a marriage? Both, he said, are about sacrifices. Marriages fail when the partners are unwilling to make sacrifices for one another."

Rabbi Sacks added:

"Now, however, after several centuries, the idea of love-as-sacrifice has grown thin in many areas of life. We see this specifically in relationships.

Throughout the West, fewer people are getting married, they are getting married later, and almost half of marriages end in divorce. Throughout Europe, indigenous populations are in decline. To have a stable population, a country must have an average birth rate of 2.1 children per female. In 2015, the average birth rate throughout the European Union was 1.55. In Spain, it was 1.27. Germany has the lowest birth rate of any country in the world. That is why the population of Europe is today rendered stable only based on unprecedented rates of immigration.

Ten years after Rabbi Sacks wrote these words, Europeans are struggling with the implications of their hesitance to sacrifice.

Tefillah

Of course, today, we are unable to offer *korbanot*. We offer our *tefillot* instead.¹¹ The *gemara*¹² teaches that the *tefillot* prayed during the offering of the *Korban Tamid* in communities around *Eretz Israel* used to sustain the world; today, our *tefillot* play this role.¹³

In certain ways, *tefillot* are even greater than *korbanot*.¹⁴ Petitioning Hashem for our needs expresses recognition of our dependence upon Him and our interest in a relationship with Him.¹⁵

All Mitzvot

The Rambam¹⁶ extends the pillar of *avodah* beyond *korbanot* and *tefillah* by explaining that the *mishnah* uses *korbanot* as a paradigm for *mitzvot* in general.

The Rambam's extension can be explained through Rashi's understanding of the "*rei'ach nichoach*" (beautiful smell) generated by *korbanot*. Rashi¹⁷ explains that our *korbanot* "smell beautiful" to Hashem because He receives *nachat* from our fulfillment of His request to sacrifice them. The significance of *korbanot* lies in the

Continued on page 14

ALLUSIONS AND ILLUMINATION: INSIGHTS OF THE BA'AL HATURIM

When the World Cannot Stand: “HaYekum” and the Fragility of Existence



Rabbanit Shani Taragin

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The Ba'al HaTurim, ever attuned to linguistic echoes and numerical mysteries within the Torah, notices a subtle but profound pattern surrounding a single word: “היקום” – *ha-yekum*, “the existence” or “that which stands.”

This term appears only **three times** in the entire Torah – twice in the account of the **Mabul (the Flood)** and once in Moshe's recollection of the **punishment of Datan and Aviram**:

“ומחיתי את כל היקום אשר עשיתי מעל פני האדמה”
(בראשית ז:ז)
“וימח את כל היקום אשר על פני האדמה” (שם ז:כג)
“ואת כל היקום אשר ברגליהם” (דברים יא:ו)

The Ba'al HaTurim links these three occurrences, teaching that their connection reveals not only a linguistic pattern but a spiritual truth. He writes:

“היקום אשר עשיתי – בגימטריא לא חיים לתחיית המתים.”
...‘היקום’ ג’ במסורה... לומר כשם שחטאו דור המבול מפני רוב טובה ועושר שהיה להם, כך קרח מרוב עושר שהיה לו השתרר וחטא.”

The Weight of Wealth

According to the Ba'al HaTurim, both the generation of the Flood and Korach's rebellion as recounted by Moshe in *Sefer Devarim*, share a common moral root: excessive blessing. It was not deprivation that led to destruction, but abundance. The Flood generation, overflowing with prosperity, “ate, drank, and were merry” until moral rot dissolved their sense of accountability.

Korach, similarly, was undone by the arrogance of affluence – “מרוב עושר שהיה” – “לו השתרר וחטא” – particularly significant as

a warning to *Bnei Yisrael* upon imminent entrance to *Eretz Yisrael*.

The word “יקום” thus becomes tragically ironic: derived from *קום*, to stand, it describes existence itself – and yet appears only when existence collapses.

Both societies, graced with every reason to *stand tall*, instead fell under the weight of their own success. Material blessing without moral anchoring becomes a destabilizing force – a foundation that cannot hold.

The Collapse of “Standing”

Linguistically, “יקום” denotes **all that stands upright** – all living, vital reality.

The Flood erased it: “וימח את כל היקום.” The earth that swallowed Datan and Aviram consumed “את כל היקום אשר ברגליהם” – literally, all that stood beneath their feet.

Both scenes mark the **undoing of creation**: the return of life to chaos.

In *Bereishit*, the waters of the deep reasserted dominion, unmaking the order established in the second day of creation.

In the desert, the earth once again opened its mouth – swallowing those who challenged divine order.

In both, the physical collapse mirrors a moral implosion. When humanity denies the Source of its existence, creation itself can no longer “stand.”

A Deeper Allusion: “לא חיים לתחיית המתים”

The Ba'al HaTurim's *gematria* is haunting: “היקום אשר עשיתי” equals “לא חיים לתחיית המתים” – “they will not live for the resurrection of the dead.”

This phrase suggests that there are forms of life that, even when physically animated, are spiritually lifeless, severed from eternity.

Those who misuse divine blessing – who stand on their own wealth and not on Hashem's word – forfeit the enduring vitality that transcends death; they erase existence not only in body but in spirit. The Flood and Korach both illustrate what it means to stand apart from G-d: such standing cannot endure.

Standing Anew

“HaYekum” thus becomes a theological mirror: it reflects what stands, and reveals why it falls. Moshe Rabbenu invokes this rare terminology only in *Sefer Devarim* and not in the original narrative of Korach's rebellion, as he addresses the generation that will enter the Land; he transforms it from a record of destruction into a moral warning.

The Ba'al HaTurim's insight invites us to ask – what allows our world, our community, our values to “stand?”

When blessing multiplies, will gratitude and humility anchor it, or will comfort corrode conviction?

The Flood generation and Korach's assembly both teach that existence without purpose is unsustainable. The only “יקום” that endures is one rooted not in possession but in divine mission – ושמרתם, את כל המצוה, אשר אנכי מצוה, היום – למען תחזקו, ובאתם וירשתם את הארץ, אשר אתם עבדים שמה, לרשתה (*Devarim* 11:8). *Mitzvah* observance is the means to maintaining long-term existence in the Land.

In an age of extraordinary material blessing, the Ba'al HaTurim's allusion resounds

Continued on page 12

Halachic Q&A



Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon

Nasi, World Mizrahi | Rabbi of the Gush Etzion Regional Council

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Before reciting the prayer for the hostages in my synagogue this past Shabbat, I announced that I hoped this would be the last time we would need to say it. However, it now seems possible that the bodies of some murdered hostages will not be returned for burial before Shemini Atzeret. What is the proper practice now regarding this prayer? Should we stop saying it once, with G-d's help, all the living hostages are returned home – or continue until the bodies of all the victims are also brought to burial?

I suggest stopping the prayer. Most likely, there will always remain at least one person who has not yet been returned, and if we continue indefinitely, the prayer will lose its impact. Therefore, I recommend ending its recitation, but perhaps adding a line in the “*Mi Sheberach*” for IDF soldiers such as: “May the holy martyrs be brought to eternal rest.” With G-d's help, may we soon hear good news.

A celiac patient who cannot eat bread or grain products – how should they act regarding the bracha of Leishev Basukkaa? May they recite the bracha when having a fixed meal consisting only of fruit or other non-grain foods? Is it preferable that they also drink wine?

I will answer briefly:

A. Many authorities (such as the Rif, Rambam, and Vilna Gaon) hold that one recites the *bracha* even when just entering and sitting in the *sukkah*, and their view can certainly be considered.

B. Someone fasting who sits in the *sukkah* without eating recites the *bracha*.¹

Therefore, a celiac patient whose regular meal does not include bread may recite *Leishev Basukkah* when eating their usual food. This is also the opinion of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach in *Halichot Shlomo*. If they can drink wine or grape juice, that is preferable.

The Mishnah Berurah² quotes the Birkei Yosef – based on the Gemara in Berachot – that one should not hold a baby during tefillah. Yet in practice, many women and men do so, especially when necessary. Is there a halachic basis to permit holding a baby during tefillah when the baby is calm and does not disturb others? Should one be machmir even if it means missing tefillah b'tzibur?

In principle, it is indeed problematic.

A. The Shulchan Aruch states one should not hold objects (sacred texts, money, bread, etc.) during prayer, since “one's heart is [focused] on them that they should not fall, and one will be distracted and will lose focus.”³

B. The Birkei Yosef adds that even seating a child before oneself is improper – meaning that one should remove anything that might disturb concentration, even if it is merely nearby.

Seemingly, there are two different concerns here: According to the Shulchan Aruch, the concern is the fear of dropping the item; according to the Birkei Yosef, it's any external distraction.

Why, then, does the Shulchan Aruch permit one to hold a lulav during prayer? The Beit Yosef explains: “Since the *mitzvah* is beloved to him, its weight and the need to guard it are not burdensome, and he is not distracted.” Accordingly, when something does not cause distraction, there is seemingly room for leniency – for example, one may pray with keys in one's pocket.

However, certain things truly can be distracting – such as a cellphone that may ring, or a baby who might cry. Nowadays there are baby carriers in which the child is held securely, so one does not actually need to hold the baby. In that case, the Shulchan Aruch's concern does not apply, though the Birkei Yosef's concern still might, since the baby could cry.

In practice:

One should certainly make a great effort not to hold a baby during prayer.

Regarding women – if she is busy with children in the morning, it is preferable that she *daven* Mincha instead. Nevertheless, if she feels calm and has no alternative but to hold the baby, there is reason today to be lenient, so that she can pray.

1. ט"ז. מובא במ"ב תרל"ט ס"ק מח. ויש שחלקו על הט"ז)

2. או"ח צו

3. צ"ו, א, על פי רש"י בברכות כג:

● *Compiled and Translated by Yaakov Panitch.*

הפטרת פרשת נח

”בְּרַגְעַ קָטַן עֲזַבְתִּיךָ וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים אֶקְבְּצֶךָ”

הרבנית שרון רימון

Tanach teacher and author



הפטרת פרשת נח פותחת בציווי: “רְגִי עֲקֶרְהָ לֹא יִלְדֶה פֶּצְחֵי רָנָה וְצִהְלִי לֹא תִלֶּה כִּי רַבִּים בְּנֵי שׁוֹמְמָה מִבְּנֵי בְּעוֹלָה אָמַר ה'” (נ”ד, א). הנביא פונה אל האשה העקרה, ואומר לה “רְגִי” - תשמחי כעת, עוד בשמן העקרות, מפני שמובטח לך שבעתיד יהיו לך בנים רבים. כיצד יכולה האשה העקרה לשמוח תוך כדי הקשיים שהיא חווה? השמחה יכולה להגיע כאשר היא בטוחה (מסיבה כלשהי - רפואית, אמונית או רגשית) שלמסע יהיה סוף טוב, שבעתיד היא תצליח להרות וללדת.

במשל זה פונה הנביא אל העם הנמצא בגלות, המרגיש סוג של עקרות - חוסר יכולת להביא לידי מימוש כחות לאומיים בסיסיים. הנביא פונה אל העם ומבקש מהם לשמוח בעודם בגלות, מתוך הכרה ואמונה ברורה שבעתיד הם ייגאלו, ויהיו מבורכים ב”בנים” - יוכלו לממש את כל הכחות הלאומיים. היכולת לשמוח בהווה הקשה נובעת מאמונה ובטחון מלא בגאולה העתידית. כך הצליח ר' עקיבא לשחוק כאשר ראה שועל יוצא מבית קדשי הקדשים, מתוך אמונה שאם התקיימה נבואת החורבן, תתקיים גם נבואת הגאולה.

מאין נובע הבטחון שהעקרה תלד? שאכן תהיה גאולה?

נעיין בהמשך דברי הנבואה:

”בְּרַגְעַ קָטַן עֲזַבְתִּיךָ וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים אֶקְבְּצֶךָ: בְּשֻׁצָף קֶצֶף הִסְתַּתִּי פָּנֵי רָגַע מִמֶּךָ וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רַחַמְתִּיךָ אָמַר גֹּאֲלֶךָ ה'” (ז-ח). הגלות היא תוצאה של עזיבת ה'; כעס (שצף-קצף) והסתר פנים. אם הקב”ה עוזב אותנו אפילו לרגע אחד קטן, הכל עלול להיחרב. אולם, המיקוד של הפסוק איננו בתחושה הקשה של הקלות הבלתי נסבלת של החורבן וההרס, אלא להפך - הפסוק מתמקד בשפע הטוב. הפסוק מדגיש את הפער העצום שבין קטנות הרגע של עזיבת ה' לעומת גדולת הרחמים של ה' כלפי ישראל - הגלות

מוגדרת כ”רגע קטן”, כעזיבה רגעית ואילו הגאולה מתוארת כ”רחמים גדולים” וכ”חסד עולם”, נצחי. ומוסיף רד”ק: “אף-על-פי שארכו ימי הגלות, כולם יהיו נחשבים כרגע קטן כנגד הרחמים שיהיו גדולים כשאקבצך... אותם הימים הם רגע כנגד ימי הטובה”.

וממשיך הנביא ומתאר את ההבטחה העומדת לעם ישראל: “כִּי מִי נַח זֹאת לִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעֵבֶר מִי נַח עוֹד עַל הָאָרֶץ כִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקְצָף עֲלֶיךָ וּמִקְצָף בְּךָ” (ט) - הפסוק מחזיר אותנו לתקופת המבול, הנקראת כאן “מי נח”, ומזכיר לנו שלאחר המבול ה' נשבע לנח ולאנושות כולה שלא יהיה עוד מבול:

”וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵל לְבֹו לֹא אֶסָף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד אֶת הָאָדָמָה בְּעֵבֹר הָאָדָם כִּי יִצַּר לִב הָאָדָם רַע מִנְעֲרִיו וְלֹא אֶסָף עוֹד לְהַפּוֹת אֶת כָּל חַי פֶּאֶשֶׁר עִשְׂתִּי” (בראשית ח', כא). אחרי המבול מגיעה ההכרה שבבני האדם יש כוח להרע, ובכל זאת ה' מחליט שלא להחריב את העולם בשל כך, אלא לקיימו בכל מקרה. ללא תלות במעשי האדם. החלטה זו מעוגנת בברית הקשת, הנכרתת בין האנושות לקב”ה: “וַיְהַקְמֵתִי אֶת בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְלֹא יִכָּרֵת כָּל בָּשָׂר עוֹד מִמִּי הַמִּבּוֹל וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹד מִבּוֹל לְשַׁחַת הָאָרֶץ” (ט', יא).

הנביא משתמש בברית של “מי נח”, כדי להסביר את העקרון של הבטחת הגאולה:

ברית כרותה בין ה' לעם ישראל - כשם שה' נשבע שלא יחריב את עולמו, אפילו במקרה שבני האדם ישחיתו את דרכם לחלוטין, כך ה' נשבע שלא יעזוב את ישראל ולא יפר את בריתו איתם לעולם.

עקרון “מי נח” הוא יסוד חשוב בהבטחת הגאולה. עקרון זה קובע שלעולם לא יהיה חורבן נוסף, והגאולה תגיע לא בזכות צדקת בני האדם אלא בגלל החלטה האלקית להמשיך לקיים את העולם. הגאולה תגיע בגלל שישאל נבחרו על ידי ה' ויש להם תפקיד הכרחי בקיום העולם.

אם עתיד העולם היה תלוי במעשי בני האדם, והגאולה היתה נקבעת על פי מידת הזכאות של האנושות, לא היתה אפשרות להבטיח שלא יהיה עוד מבול, ולא ניתן היה להבטיח שתהיה גאולה, שהרי יש לאדם בחירה חופשית ואין בטחון שיבחר בדרך הטוב ולא יסטה ממנה. אולם, החלטתו של הקב”ה לקיים את נח ושלא להחריב את העולם - פירושה רצון לקיים את העולם בכל מקרה, אפילו כאשר יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו, וכל מחשבות לבו רק רע כל היום. כך גם הבטחת הגאולה של עם ישראל, המהווה בסיס לגאולת העולם כולו, איננה תלויה במידת הזכאות של עם ישראל או של האנושות כולה, אלא בהחלטת אלקית לקיים את העולם.

כשם שנח “מִצָּא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי ה'”, כך עם ישראל “מצא חן במדבר”, בעיני ה' (ירמיהו ב'). נח הוא גרעין האנושות שנשאר כדי להמשיך לקיים את העולם, ועם ישראל הוא גרעין האנושות שנבחר כדי לגאול את העולם ולהמשיך את קיומו.

הבטחון שהגאולה תגיע (שהעקרה תלד), נובע מן ההבטחה נצחית העקרונית, שמעוגנת בברית “מי נח”, ואיננה תלויה במעשי בני האדם.

וממשיך הנביא וטוען שהברית בין ישראל לקב”ה חזקה אפילו יותר מהברית עם האנושות שנכרתה אחרי המבול: “כִּי הִקְרִים יְמוּשׁוֹ וְהַגְּבֹעוֹת תִּמְוֹטְנָה וְחֶסֶדִי מֵאֲתָף לֹא יְמוּשׁ וּבְרִית שְׁלוֹמִי לֹא תִמוּט אָמַר מְרַחֵם ה'”.

לכן, הגאולה היא “חֶסֶד עוֹלָם”, ואילו הגלות היא רק “רַגְעַ קָטַן” של “עֲזַבְתִּיךָ” - רגע חולף, שאיננו המהות האמתית של יחסי ה' עם עמו ישראל ועם עולמו. הקשר המהותי יותר של ה' עם עולמו הוא “רַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים” ושפע חסד הנובע עלינו ומביא לגאולת ישראל והעולם כולו.

It's Not Only the Hostages – It's Us Too



Sivan Rahav Meir
World Mizrahi Scholar-in-Residence

Several days have gone by since the return of the last living hostages from Gaza, and the relief and elation are still fresh in our minds and hearts. How many stories have you heard about them? And how many stories did we miss, stories that didn't make it onto this list?

- *Eitan Horn of Kibbutz Nir Oz*, who returned from captivity, shared that it was specifically in Gaza that he fasted on Yom Kippur. He is 37 years old, and there – for the first time in his life – he observed the holy day properly.
- *Segev Kalfon* recounted that when he saw all the Hamas men on stage in Gaza, all he wanted was to climb onto the stage and shout: “*Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad.*” Now he is home, able to say *Shema Yisrael* freely, with everyone around him.
- *Bar Kuperstein* said that the song that strengthened him most, and that he sang to himself over and over again, were: “*Ve’afilu behastara shebetoch hahastara, bevadai gam sham nimtza Hashem Yitbarach,*” Even in the darkest places, when you don’t feel G-d, when it seems He is hiding, He is still there, present with you. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov wrote those words 200 years ago. They took on new meaning in the Hamas tunnels.
- *Rom Braslavsky* shared that the terrorists offered to convert him to Islam, promising him more food and better conditions if he agreed. But he kept telling them, over and over: “I am a strong Jew!” Now, facing the cameras, he said: “I want people to understand that they are Jews, that they should do more *mitzvot*. Hamas did this to me only because I am a Jew. A Jew must know that he comes from greatness, that he’s not like everyone else.”

- *Eliya Cohen*, who returned from captivity several months ago, told how much he missed his *tefillin*. While held hostage by Hamas, he invented something both creative and moving: “Every morning I would go to one side of the room and imagine putting on my *tefillin*. I would go through the whole process, step by step, in my imagination. Sometimes, I could actually feel the *tefillin* on me.”
- *Omer Shem Tov* said this week how much he misses the connection he felt with G-d while he was in captivity, the closeness, the sense that he was speaking and that G-d was with him, listening. He described trying to rediscover that elevated feeling since his return.

All of these remarkable stories are, of course, about *them* – but in truth, they are about us as well. They reveal the depth of the Jewish soul, the power of faith, and the holiness of Jewish identity.

The entire Jewish world has just begun reading the Torah again from *Bereishit* – back to the very beginning. We are all part of this story, and each of us can reflect, reach their own conclusions, and choose a small step forward.

Because it's not only them. It's us. They remind us who we really are.



In the first portion of the Torah, *Bereishit*, which we read last week, there is just one *mitzvah*: “*Pru U’rvu*, Be fruitful and multiply.” G-d creates the world, creates humanity, and asks us to continue filling it with life.

Rinat Shalomov sent me the following message:

“In our building on Yehoshua bin Nun Street in Sderot, there are nine floors, filled with a beautifully diverse mix of *Am Yisrael*. Since last *Simchat Torah* until this *Simchat Torah* – families in our building have been blessed with 17 new babies!

We felt the need to share this abundance, this miracle, this choice of life, with all of *Am Yisrael*.

Just two years ago, during the month of Tishrei, murderous terrorists roamed beneath our building for hours. And two years later, *Am Yisrael Chai* – in the most literal sense!”

People often ask: *What will Israel's response be?* The response is not only military or diplomatic. This is also a response: This year, in a single apartment building in Sderot the following children were born – Roni Zion, Sofia, Uri Yisrael, Lavi, Agam, Rani, Daniel, Yahel, Libi, Shaya, Michael, Emunah, Avia, Avigail, Neta Rachel, Keshet, and Ziv.

Mazel tov!



Rabbi Moshe Hauer passed away suddenly at age 60, from a heart attack in his home in Baltimore, Maryland.

Rabbi Hauer was not only one of the leaders of the OU, but also, a true leader and educator, a Torah scholar who touched millions of Jews around the world – many without even realizing it.

When I first met him several years ago at his home in Baltimore, I was only beginning to understand American Judaism. On a personal level, I was struck by how someone so busy, who headed a huge organization and led a large community, could be so kind, calm, and warm-hearted.

Our last conversation was about what we called the “October 8th Jews” – the global awakening that began after October 7th. He was full of hope and data: more children enrolling in Jewish schools, more people coming to shul, more Shabbat programs for students, more Jews speaking out publicly for Israel, visiting, even making *Aliyah*.

“BRING THEM HOME NOW” is the slogan accompanying the campaign to bring

Continued on page 14

For the Shabbat Table



Rabbi Danny Mirvis
CEO, World Mizrachi
Rabbi of Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Herzliya Pituach

“**F**or in another seven days, I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights and I will wipe out every living substance that I had made from upon the face of the earth. And Noach did according to everything Hashem commanded him... And Noach came, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him into the ark, because of the waters of the flood”. (*Bereishit* 7:4-5, 7)

Following the many years of constructing the ark, gathering the animals and birds, preparing the supplies and suffering ridicule from passers-by, Noach is given a final seven day warning and the long awaited flood arrives. Despite his many years of building and preparation, Rashi criticises Noach's level of belief in these moments:

“Because of the waters of the flood’ - Even Noach was one of those of little belief. He was a believer and not a believer that the flood would come and didn't enter the ark until the waters forced him.” (Rashi, *Bereishit*, 7:7)

From the fact that the Torah writes that Noach and his family only entered the

ark “because of the waters of the flood,” Rashi (based on the *Midrash Rabbah* 32:6) criticized Noach for being “a believer and not a believer,” for despite all the years of preparation and Hashem's final warning that “In another seven days, I will cause it to rain on the earth...,” Noach remained in doubt until he was left with no choice.

There is a different character later on in this week's *parsha*, who seems to share Noach's fence-sitting, yet suffers a very different outcome.

“And these are the generations of Terach: Terach begot Avram, Nachor and Haran and Haran begot Lot. And Haran died before (in the lifetime of) his father Terach in his native land, in Ur-kasdim.” (*Bereishit* 11:27-28)

In explanation of how Haran died in the lifetime of his father, Rashi tells the story of how after breaking Terach's idols, Avram was brought before the evil King Nimrod, thrown into a fiery surface and miraculously survived. The continuation of the story is less well known.

“Haran sat and said in his heart, ‘If Avram is victorious I am with him and if Nimrod is victorious I am with him’ and when

Avram was saved, they asked Haran, ‘Who are you with?’ Haran responded, ‘I am with Avram.’ They threw him into the furnace and he burnt.” (Rashi, *Bereishit*, 11:28)

According to Rashi's explanations, both Noach and Haran had major doubts and both waited until the final moment before deciding to believe. So why did Noach merit to be saved and sustained and become the new father of all of mankind, while Haran suffered a tragic death?

The answer lies in the verses leading up to Noach's decision. Twice we are informed, “And Noach did according to all that Hashem commanded him” (*Bereishit* 7:5 and similarly in 6:22). Noach “believed and did not believe” but lived the life of a believer. He had major doubts but nevertheless acted according to all of Hashem's instructions. Haran also had major doubts but chose to live the life of a non-believer. At the moment of truth, Noach was saved but Haran perished.

It may be natural to sometimes have doubts, but how we deal with it is in our hands.

Shabbat Shalom!

Parsha Riddle



Reb Leor Broh
Mizrachi Melbourne

Find four consecutive words with letters that hint to the word
"תַּחֲיֵית הַמַּתִּים" and are an allusion to תַּחֲיֵית הַמַּתִּים.

See page 24 for the answer to the Parsha Riddle

True Morality



Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

Is there such a thing as an objective basis of morality? For some time, in secular circles, the idea has seemed absurd. Morality is what we choose it to be. We are free to do what we like so long as we don't harm others.

Moral judgments are not truths but choices. There is no way of getting from "is" to "ought", from description to prescription, from facts to values, from science to ethics. This was the received wisdom in philosophy for a century after Nietzsche had argued for the abandonment of morality – which he saw as the product of Judaism – in favour of the "will to power".

Recently, however, an entirely new scientific basis has been given to morality from two surprising directions: neo-Darwinism and the branch of mathematics known as Games Theory. As we will see, the discovery is intimately related to the story of Noah and the covenant made between G-d and humanity after the Flood.

Games theory was invented by one of the most brilliant minds of the 20th century, John von Neumann (1903-1957). He realised that the mathematical models used in economics were unrealistic and did not mirror the way decisions are made in the real world. Rational choice is not simply a matter of weighing alternatives and deciding between them. The reason is that the outcome of our decision often depends on how other people react to it, and usually we cannot know this in advance. Games theory, von Neumann's invention in 1944, was an attempt to produce a mathematical representation of choice under conditions of uncertainty. Six years later, it yielded its most famous paradox, known as the Prisoner's Dilemma.

Imagine two people, arrested by the police under suspicion of committing a crime. There is insufficient evidence to convict them on a serious charge; there is only enough to convict them of a lesser offence. The police decide to encourage each to inform against the other. They separate them and make each the following proposal: if you testify against the other suspect, you will go free, and he will be imprisoned for ten years. If he testifies against you, and you stay silent, you will be sentenced to ten years in prison, and he will go free. If you both testify against one another, you will each receive a five-year sentence. If both of you stay silent, you will each be convicted of the lesser charge and face a one-year sentence.

It doesn't take long to work out that the optimal strategy for each is to inform against the other. The result is that each will be imprisoned for five years. The paradox is that the best outcome would be for both to remain silent. They would then only face one year in prison. The reason that neither will opt for this strategy is that it depends on collaboration. However, since each is unable to know what the other is doing – there is no communication between them – they cannot take the risk of staying silent. The Prisoner's Dilemma is remarkable because it shows that two people, both acting rationally, will produce a result that is bad for both of them. Eventually, a solution was discovered. The reason for the paradox is that the two prisoners find themselves in this situation only once. If it happened repeatedly, they would eventually discover that the best thing to do is to trust one another and co-operate.

In the meantime, biologists were wrestling with a phenomenon that puzzled Darwin. The theory of natural selection

– popularly known as the survival of the fittest – suggests that the most ruthless individuals in any population will survive and hand their genes on to the next generation. Yet almost every society ever observed values individuals who are altruistic: who sacrifice their own advantage to help others. There seems to be a direct contradiction between these two facts.

The Prisoner's Dilemma suggested an answer. Individual self-interest often produces bad results. Any group which learns to cooperate, instead of compete, will be at an advantage relative to others. But, as the Prisoner's Dilemma showed, this needs repeated encounters – the so-called "Iterated (= repeated) Prisoner's dilemma." In the late 1970s, a competition was announced to find the computer program that did best at playing the Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma against itself and other opponents.

The winning programme was devised by a Canadian, Anatole Rapoport, and was called Tit-for-Tat. It was dazzlingly simple: it began by co-operating, and then repeated the last move of its opponent. It worked on the rule of "What you did to me, I will do to you", or "measure for measure." This was the first time scientific proof had been given for any moral principle.

What is fascinating about this chain of discoveries is that it precisely mirrors the central principle of the covenant G-d made with Noah:

Whoever sheds the blood of man,
By man shall his blood be shed;
For in the image of G-d has G-d made man.

This is measure for measure [in Hebrew, *middah keneged middah*], or retributive

justice: As you do, so shall you be done to. In fact, at this point the Torah does something very subtle. The six words in which the principle is stated are a mirror image of one another: [1] Who sheds [2] the blood [3] of man, [3a] by man [2a] shall his blood [1a] be shed. This is a perfect example of style reflecting substance: what is done to us is a mirror image of what we do. The extraordinary fact is that the first moral principle set out in the Torah is also the first moral principle ever to be scientifically demonstrated. Tit-for-Tat is the computer equivalent of (retributive) justice:

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.

The story has a sequel. In 1989, the Polish mathematician Martin Nowak produced a programme that beats Tit-for-Tat. He called it Generous. It overcame one weakness of Tit-for-Tat, namely that when you meet a particularly nasty opponent, you get drawn into a potentially endless and destructive cycle of retaliation, which is bad for both sides. Generous avoided this by randomly but periodically forgetting the last move of its opponent, thus allow-

ing the relationship to begin again. What Nowak had produced, in fact, was a computer simulation of forgiveness.

Once again, the connection with the story of Noach and the Flood is direct. After the Flood, G-d vowed: "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done." This is the principle of Divine forgiveness.

Thus the two great principles of the Noachide covenant are also the first two principles to have been established by computer simulation. There is an objective basis for morality after all. It rests on two key ideas: justice and forgiveness, or what the Sages called *middat ha-din* and *middat rachamim*. Without these, no group can survive in the long run.

In one of the first great works of Jewish philosophy – *Sefer Emunot ve-Deot* (The Book of Beliefs and Opinions) – R. Saadia Gaon (882-942) explained that the truths of the Torah could be established by reason. Why, then, was revelation neces-

sary? Because it takes humanity time to arrive at truth, and there are many slips and pitfalls along the way.

It took more than a thousand years after R. Saadia Gaon for humanity to demonstrate the fundamental moral truths that lie at the basis of G-d's covenant with humankind: that co-operation is as necessary as competition, that co-operation depends on trust, that trust requires justice, and that justice itself is incomplete without forgiveness. Morality is not simply what we choose it to be. It is part of the basic fabric of the universe, revealed to us by the universe's Creator, long ago.

AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE:

- Do you think people are naturally self-ish or naturally cooperative? Why?
- In the Prisoner's Dilemma, would you stay silent or tell on your partner? What would influence your choice?
- How does the story of Noach show both justice and forgiveness?



MIZRACHI



SHAGRIRIM BALEV

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Reflections on “Piety”



Rabbi Hershel Schachter

Rosh Yeshivah, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University

After the *mabul*, *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* entered into a *bris* with mankind that He would never again destroy the entire world via a flood. The rainbow was chosen to symbolize this *bris*. This is why one who sees a rainbow recites a *beracha* asking Hashem to remember and uphold His *bris*.

The Talmud (*Kesubos* 77b) states that when R' Yehoshua Ben Levi died he was greeted in heaven by R' Shimon Bar Yochai, who asked him whether a rainbow had ever appeared during his lifetime. When R' Yehoshua replied that it had, R' Shimon commented that apparently R' Yehoshua was not that great a *tzadik*. The rainbow would not have appeared in a generation of a very great *tzadik*, because in his merit, the entire generation would have been spared, and thus, there would have been no need to invoke the aforementioned *bris* and have its symbol appear.

The Talmud proceeds to comment that, in truth, the rainbow had not appeared during his lifetime. R' Yehoshua Ben Levi had lied to R' Shimon out of humility. If he would have told the truth it would have appeared as if he were bragging. The Talmud (*Bava Metziah* 23b) tells us that a

talmid chacham may lie in three types of situations, one of them being for the sake of humility, that others should not know how learned or how pious he is.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 565:6) applies this idea, stating that if one has accepted upon himself extra fast days and lets others know of his *middas chassidus*, “he will be punished for doing so.”¹ Every so often in *Shulchan Aruch* and in its commentaries, we come upon a recommendation that a *ba'al nefesh* ought to be stringent on himself regarding some *halachic* issue. Rabbi Yehuda Amital, *zt”l*, related that when he was a teenager learning in *yeshiva*, when the students learned *Mishna Berura* and came across a statement that “one who is a *ba'al nefesh* should act on accordance with the stringent view,” they thought to themselves that this certainly refers to a few outstanding *tzadikim* whom they knew of. Whereas today, he further commented, many of the *yeshiva* students instinctively assume that it refers to them!

Even one who does belong in the category of *ba'alei nefesh* must be careful that his *middas chassidus* not turn into a public demonstration of his piety. Today the term “frum” is usually used with a

positive connotation. In pre-World War II Litta, it was usually used as negative description of one who publicly displays his piety. Some of the *ba'alei mussar* used to say “a *galach* has to be ‘frum’; a *yid* has to be ‘erlich’.” They would add that the word “frum” is *roshei teivos* (an acronym) for “*fiel rishis, veinig mitzvos*” much evil and very few *mitzvos*.

Additionally, a *middas chasidus* is not to be forced upon others. The expression in the *Shulchan Aruch* always is that a “*ba'al nefesh yachmir al atsmo* – a *ba'al nefesh* ought to be stringent upon himself.”

The Talmud (*Berachos* 35b) states, “Many attempted to follow the style of R' Shimon Bar Yochai and they did not succeed.” The style of the *ba'al nefesh*, following the stringent approach, was clearly not intended for the masses. Those who are able to should certainly strive to attain the state of *chassidus*, but this must be done step by step, as spelled out in the Talmud (*Avoda Zara* 20) and elaborated in *Mesilas Yesharim*.

1. The Taz and Magen Avraham quote the aforementioned passages (*Kesubos* 77b and *Bava Metziah* 32b) in their comments to this line in *Shulchan Aruch*.

Continued from page 5

with prophetic urgency: the true measure of life is not how much we *stand upon*, but whether we *stand before* Hashem.

Questions for Reflection

1. The Ba'al HaTurim identifies wealth and abundance as the root of moral failure in both the Flood generation and Korach's rebellion.
 - How might material comfort subtly erode one's moral and spiritual awareness?
 - What safeguards can individuals or communities build to ensure that

prosperity deepens, rather than dulls, their connection to Hashem?

2. The word “יקום” literally means “that which stands.”
 - What does it take for a person, a family, or a society to truly “stand” in a spiritual sense?
 - When do we risk becoming part of a “יקום” that can no longer endure?
3. Both the Flood and Korach's downfall represent a collapse of creation followed by a renewal of covenant.

- What might this suggest about the way Hashem rebuilds – in history and in our personal lives – after moral or spiritual breakdown?
4. The *gematria* “לא חיים לתחיית המתים” warns of a life that does not merit resurrection.
 - How can we infuse our daily existence with the kind of vitality and purpose that links us to תחיית המתים – life that truly endures?

The story of Haran in the Kivshan Ha'aish



Rabbi Yisroel Reisman

Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshiva Torah Vodaas

At the end of the *parsha* we learn that Terach had three children, Avram, Haran and Nachor. Avram and Nachor left Ur Kasdim, while Haran died in Ur Kasdim. As Rashi relates in 11:28, Haran was present when Avram Avinu was thrown into a fire because he believed in the *Ribono Shel Olam*. Haran said to himself, "If Avram wins this, I am on his side. If Nimrod wins this, I am on his team." When Avram was saved, Haran declared his belief in the *Borei Olam* and was thrown into the fire where he died. But was Haran praiseworthy or mistaken?

Yeish Dorshin Lishvach

Yes, it is true that Haran was not on the level of Avram. But so what? Not everyone is on Avram Avinu's level. Avram was *Makir Es Borei*, he recognized the Creator. Haran did not. Haran needed a miracle for Avram to be saved and then he recognized his creator. So why was Haran killed?

The Kli Chemdah says that Haran died *Al Kiddush Hashem*, just as Rabbi Akiva died *Al Kiddush Hashem*. He is the first recorded person to die *Al Kiddush Hashem*. This is not derogatory towards Haran. It is saying that Haran was someone who died *Al Kiddush Hashem*. Why was he not saved? Throughout the generations, people have died *Al Kiddush Hashem* and have only been miraculously saved in a few cases. Avram was saved.

The Kli Chemdah brings a *Medrash* that Avram was saved because *Bnei Yisrael* had to come out of him. *Yaakov Ashe Pa'deh Es Avraham*. Avram had to be saved because he had to have a *Yitzchok* from whom *Klal Yisrael* would come forth. But this is not

to say that Haran did anything wrong; on the contrary.

You see, we are descended from Haran. Haran left two daughters, Sarai and Milka. Sarai became Sarah and she married Avraham Avinu, so *Klal Yisrael* descended from Haran and Milka who had a descendant named Lot, and ultimately, Rus and *Moshiach* descended from Milka, who married Nachor. And so, according to the investigation of the Kli Chemdah, the death of Haran, *Yeish Darshin Lishvach*, is something praiseworthy.

Yeish Dorshin Lig'nai

There is also the more familiar approach, which is negative and says that Haran was in the wrong. When Avram was thrown into the *Kivshan Ha'aish*, dozens, probably hundreds of people were present. Haran stepped forward and said if Avram wins, I am with him, I believe in the Creator. There were many hundreds who saw the miracle of Avram being saved and it did not shake them in the least and they stayed with their *Avodah Zora*. Why is Haran worse?

I once saw a beautiful explanation in the *Kuntras Chachmei Leiv* in the name of the Kotzker. The Kotzker said that Avraham Avinu wanted a *shidduch* from *Mai'artzi Umo'laditi*, from Aram, where I am from, and not from Canaan.

The question is "why?" When Avram was in Ur Kasdim, they threw him into the fire. When Avram was in Canaan, people joined him, and Avram was *Megayeir Anashim* and Sarai was *Megayeir Es Ho'anashim*. Why is Canaan worse for *Klal Yisrael* than Aram and Ur Kasdim?

According to the Kotzker, Avram Avinu wanted a people that would remain faithful to its commitments. A people that would believe in something through thick and thin, not a people that bends in the wind. In Canaan he saw, he came, he offered them food and they were *Megayeir*. That is not a deep commitment. He fed them and they thanked him and he said, "Do not thank me, thank G-d. Oh, who is G-d?" And poof, they gave up their *Avodah Zorah* and believed in G-d. It was not a deep commitment and it did not last. In Ur Kasdim, they believed in *Avodah Zorah*. Avram was thrown into the fire and they still believed in *Avodah Zorah*.

To convince them that there is a Creator, *Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*, you have to do a lot, but *Klal Yisrael's* personality is to be *Am K'shei Oref*, people who stick to their beliefs even when they are questioned. That is *Klal Yisrael*. *Klal Yisrael* does not want to be a people like Haran, who believe in *Avodah Zorah* and then watch a show where Avram is saved and now you believe in G-d. No! *Darshu L'gnai*, that is not good.

When the Kotzker left his rebbi in Tamashov and went in search of a town where he could begin *chassidus*, he visited a number of towns where they were interested in him, but he did not go there. When he came to Kotzk, the Jews of Kotzk were *Misnagdim* and they came out and threw mud, dirt and stones at him and told him to go away. The Kotzker said, "*Ah! Dus Iz a Shtut*, this is a city. Let us go here. This is where they feel strong in their faith. This is *Klal Yisrael*. *Klal Yisrael* believes strongly in its beliefs."

Words Produce Light



Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis KBE

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

Words produce light. This powerful message emerges at the commencement of *Parshat Noach*.

Hashem commanded Noach to construct an ark, instructing him, “*tzohar ta’aseh latevah*” — “make a window for the Ark,” enabling it to be bathed in light so that it could reflect that light.

The Sefat Emet brilliantly comments that the Hebrew word “*tevah*,” which means “Ark,” also means “word” in Mishnaic Hebrew.

At a homiletical level, he suggests that Hashem was saying to Noach: “*tzohar ta’aseh latevah*” — enable the word to be bathed in light so that it can reflect light.

Where were we standing at that point?

Hashem had seen how the first ten generations on earth were a disaster. As a result, He was just about to press the reset button, making Noah, an “Adam Mark II.”

Hashem was indicating to Noah that the violence and destruction prevalent during these generations were predominantly produced by words — the darkness of words, and the danger arising from them.

As we were about to recommence life in a new era, Hashem wanted us to know that we can ensure our words transmit and reflect light.

Words can produce light.

This message is particularly relevant today, given the harm caused by negative statements that poison minds around the globe.

For the sake of our peace, our tranquility, and the future of our fragile world, let’s guarantee that our words will always produce light!

Continued from page 4

fact that they are how we fulfill Hashem’s commandment to sacrifice them.¹⁸ We similarly serve Hashem by observing *any and all* of His *mitzvot*.

May our appreciation of the significance of our *Avodat Hashem* inspire us to be the best *Ovdei Hashem* we can be!

1. Bereishit 2:15.
2. Bereishit 2:5.
3. See Ohr HaChayim (Bereishit 2:15), who explains that man’s avodah responsibility in Gan Eden was meant to serve as a model for work on the spiritual plane. See Bereishit Rabbah (16:4), which explains that man’s responsibility in Gan Eden was to offer korbanot. See also Ramban to Bereishit 2:8.
4. Bereishit 3:3–4.
5. Ibid., 8:20–22

6. Shemot 12:25–27. See also Shemot 13:5.
7. See Bava Metzia 32a, which teaches that we combat feelings of dislike towards others through helping them. Michtav Mei’Eliyahu points out that the relationship of strongest love for another — that of a parent towards a child — is fostered through complete (one-sided) giving. This is why the word “ahavah” centers upon the two-letter-word “hav,” which means “to give.” See Rav Hirsch who makes this point in his commentary to Bereishit 22:2.
8. See Maharal (Netivot Olam, Netiv Ha’avodah 1:3), Rekanati (Bereishit 32a), and the Shelah (Kedushat ha’Achilah 69), who make this connection.
9. “Understanding Sacrifice,” Covenant and Conversation, Tzav 5776.
10. Gittin 90b.
11. See Berachot 26a. The Rambam (Aseh 5) famously derives the mitzvah to pray daily from the Torah’s mention of the need to serve Hashem “with our heart” (Devarim 10:13).

- Korbanot are avodah in deed; tefillah is avodah of the heart.
12. Ta’anit 27.
13. See the commentary of Rabbeinu Yonah on our mishnah, who sees Tehillim 51 as a source for this shift.
14. See Berachot 32b.
15. Netivot Olam, Netiv Ha’avodah 1:3. See also Sifri (Ekev 5), which presents Torah learning and tefillah as the two primary forms of avodah (she’ba’lev).
16. Peirush HaRambam L’Mishnah, Avot 1:2.
17. Shemot 29:18, Vayikra 1:9. Rav Yochanan’s famous words (Berachot 17a) about one who grows in Torah generating “nachat ruach l’Yotzro” may be the source for Rashi’s idea.
18. This explains why Rashi does not offer his explanation of the term “rei’ach nichoach” the first time it appears — in Bereishit 8:21 — because it refers there to a korban offered voluntarily.

Continued from page 8

back the hostages. I told Rabbi Hauer that after every encounter with world Jewry, I feel how that slogan describes them, too, how we need to bring them home, now.

They are not hostages in tunnels in Gaza, thank G-d — but many are held captive in other ways: lost on university campuses, confused by a progressive culture that often rejects them, caught in the hypocrisy of the UN and the global media.

Indeed, many are returning home — to themselves, to their people, and their identity.

The OU is behind the kosher food in their supermarkets, their donations to vital projects in Israel, their advocacy and growing self-confidence in the face of antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment. In his last email to me, Rabbi Hauer told me about youth delegations coming to Israel this summer, some for the very first time.

Condolences to his family, and to the countless students around the world who learned from him.

There are still millions of brothers and sisters whom Rabbi Moshe Hauer woke up every morning to care for — to bring them home.

The mission will continue.

Achieving One's Potential – מבול and Avoiding בו"ל



Rabbi Shalom Rosner

Rosh Beit Midrash, Machon Lev International program

וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחָתָה כִּי-הִשְׁחִית כָּל-בֶּשֶׁר אֶת-דְּרָכָו עַל-הָאָרֶץ: (בראשית ו:יב)

And G-d saw the earth, and behold it had become corrupted, for all flesh had corrupted **its way** on the earth. (*Bereshit* 6:12)

The *pasuk* cited above seems superfluous. It could have ended with the statement that G-d saw the earth was corrupt. What does the second clause add: **כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו** – that all flesh corrupted **its way**...?

The Sarei Alafim (Rav Twersky from Chicago) offers a very creative interpretation of this *pasuk*. In *Sefer Malachim* the month of Cheshvan is referred to as **בול**. It is interesting that these letters also represent the first, middle and last letters in the Torah (ב-בראשית, ו-גחון, ל-ישראל). What is this significance?

חנוך לנער על פי דרכו

In *Mishlei* (22:6), we are taught **חנוך לנער על פי דרכו** – one should educate a child in accordance with his unique personality and talents, “דרכו.” It is incumbent upon parents and teachers to try to bring out the best in each child, in accordance with their unique personalities, so that each child can reach his or her full potential. This statement is not only applicable to children, but each of us ought to look inside ourselves to find our own talents and the unique manner in which we can positively impact those around us. The word **דרכו** in *Mishle* refers to the manner in which we utilize these talents. When we do not utilize our talents and

maximize our potential we are **מחשית דרכו** – we destroy our potential. This is what the *pasuk* in our *parsha* is referencing: **כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ**. People used their talents in a destructive rather than a constructive manner. The second phrase is necessary to highlight what was so detrimental, the manner in which they wasted their talents.

בו"ל

Getting back to the letters **בו"ל** – each of these letters is a prefix.

ב - When we say **בבית** – we are referring to something “**in**” the home. **ב** – is the first letter in the Torah, as it is the starting point. We first need to look **inside** ourselves in order to identify our **דרך** – our talents, so that we can use them properly.

ו - The letter **ו** – adds to what precedes it. When one refers to **בית ושדה** – it is adding a reference to a field in addition to a house. Once individuals recognize their talents, they need to utilize those talents to reach the ultimate goal, by adding their present levels in **עבודת ה'**. It is the middle letter of the Torah to symbolize that, once identifying one's talents, it is a process to get to the end goal of maximizing and fulfilling one's potential.

ל - The letter **ל** means heading towards – **ל** refers to one heading towards a home. After identifying and working on our talents, our **derech**, we need to stay focused on the end goal – to achieve our full potential.

During the past year our soldiers were very focused on their goal. They utilized their training and talents to fulfill their missions, their *shlichut*, on behalf of *Am Yisrael*, always maintaining their goal of freeing the hostages and ensuring a more secure environment for our nation.

The flood is called the **מבול**. The word includes the three prefixes **בול** but adds a fourth, the letter **מ**. The letter **מ** is used to describe a separation, something that pulls an object away. **מהבית** – means **from** the home. We must focus on our goal – that is **בול**. When one is distracted from one's goal, it is destructive, like the **מבול**.

May we be able to identify our talents and utilize them properly so that we can fulfill our potential. Specifically now, following the *Yamim Noraim*, as we enter *chodesh Chesvan* (ירח בול), we have to avoid being drawn away from our goal as the **מ** symbolizes – which could lead to **מבול**. May we work hard at utilizing our talents so that we maximize our potential and positively impact all those around us.

Why Build An Ark?



Michal Horowitz
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In *Parshas Noach*, we learn of a world that is completely corrupt, save for one righteous man, Noach. The Torah tells us that *Noach was a righteous man, he was pure in his generation, Noach walked with G-d* (Bereishis 6:9). While there are those who say that while in his generation he was righteous, had he been in the generation of Avraham he would have been considered as nothing; there are rabbis who say that he was a complete *tzadik* and had he been in a generation of *tzadikim* he would have been even more righteous! (Rashi, *ibid*).

In a time of immorality, idolatry, and thievery (Rashi to 6:11), the predominant sins of the time, Noach was a pure man. G-d himself proclaims to Noach that he and his family are worthy of being saved because: *For you I have seen a righteous man before Me in this generation* (7:1).

In order for G-d to save Noach, his wife Naama (Rashi to 4:22), their three sons, Shem, Cham and Yafes, and the wives of their sons, G-d commands Noach to build an ark. The ark is to have three floors: one for the people, one for the animals that would also be saved, and one for the garbage. Into this ark all those who would be saved would enter, and would remain there all the while that the flood waters inundated the earth, and for the duration of time until the waters fully subsided.

However, G-d, Who is Omnipotent, would have many ways of saving Noach and his family. Why did He command Noach to build an ark – for one hundred and twenty years, no less!?

Rashi asks this question and explains as follows:

There are many ways for G-d to bring about salvation and deliverance (when He wants to save someone). So why did He bother Noach with this construction? So that the people of the generation of the deluge would see Noach busy with ark-building for one hundred and

twenty years, and they would inquire of him, 'What are you making for yourself?' and he would answer them and say: 'In the future, G-d will bring a deluge upon the earth (hence I am building an ark to save myself)'. Perhaps, upon hearing this, the people would repent (and the generation would be saved from destruction) (Rashi to 6:14).

Noach's ark-building affects no one in his generation, and due to a complete lack of repentance, the entire world is destroyed in the *mabul*. *And Hashem erased all existence from the face of the earth, from man to animal, to crawling things, to the birds of the heavens, and He erased them all from the land, and only Noach and that with him in the ark remained* (7:23).

What lesson can we derive from the original question: Why did G-d command Noach to build an ark for 120 years? If it wasn't for the benefit of the people of the time, was there any other benefit? If not, why did G-d not save Noach in a different (miraculous) fashion, and if so, what was the benefit, and what lesson can we derive from here?

Perhaps we can propose that the benefit of ark-building was not, in fact for anyone else; rather, *it was for Noach himself*. Noach lived in a generation of depravity and destruction due to the behaviors and immorality of the people in his time. And when he would exit the ark after the flood, he would behold a different destruction: utter desolation and complete nothingness. In short, Noach was a man who lived with destruction all around him. *Spiritual destruction* of the world pre-flood and *physical destruction* post-flood.

And so, G-d comes to him and says: *"Noach, in order to save yourself, you must build."* There is a much deeper and more profound lesson here than just building an ark. The lesson that G-d transmitted to Noach, and recorded for posterity in the *Torah ha'Kedosh*a, is that when facing a

world of destruction (R"l), one must never give up, and one must continue to build. In commanding Noach to build the ark, G-d was teaching him, and preparing him, for life after the flood.

In essence, Hashem was saying: Noach, these 120 years of building, despite all the spiritual chaos and destruction around you, are to prepare you for life after the flood. The ark was not only to save Noach and his family, for G-d has many avenues of deliverance and salvation. The ark was to teach Noach that despite it all, he must look ahead to the future, he must never despair or give up, and he must always keep building.

This insight never occurred to me until last year, as we approached the first *yarzheit* of the *kedoshim* on Shemini Atzeres/Simchas Torah *HY"D*. *Klal Yisrael*, as a nation, and *Medinat Yisrael*, as a land, were hurled into a world of *churban*, the likes of which had not been seen since the cursed days of the *Shoah*.

And now, after two years when so many – far, far, far too many – holy, heroic souls have fallen in defense of our nation and Land – we must remember the lesson of Noach and his ark. Though Noach was not the direct father of *Am Yisrael*, through his righteous son, Shem, he was the (10th generation) great-grandfather of Avraham Avinu, the father of the *Umah Yisraelis*.

Noach and his ark-building must inspire us with a lesson that carries us forward. As in every generation, they arise to destroy, and in every generation, Hashem saves us... and in every generation, we will continue to build the future. We will build for the sake of Torah, we will build for the sake of our people, we will build for the sake of our Land, and we will build for our collective future, until the great day of Redemption. For this is the courage of our people, and with G-d's help, the path to salvation.

Toladot Bnei Noach

“Setting the stage” for Sefer Breishit



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After reading the opening *pasuk* of chapter ten: “*ayle toldot bnei Noach...*” [These are the generations of the children of Noach], one would expect to find a balanced listing of the various children of Noach’s three sons (and possibly some of their notable grandchildren as well).

We would also expect for this chapter to divide into three paragraphs (or “*parshiot*”) – each one dedicated for the genealogies of each of Noach’s three sons: Shem, Cham and Yefet.

However, as we study this chapter, we’ll discover that we don’t find what we “expected.” Instead, we find a very “unbalanced” listing, and a very “lopsided” division into “*parshiot*.” In the following *dvar Torah*, we attempt to explain why, and how the names that are detailed in this chapter help “set the stage” for what will transpire later on in *Sefer Breishit*.

Take a quick glance at chapter ten, noting how it divides (as we expected) into three “*parshiot*” [see 10:1-14, 10:15-20, and 10:21-32]; but then take a more careful look at the first “*parshia*,” noting how it includes the descendants of BOTH Yefet and Cham; while the second “*parshia*” discusses ONLY the children of Canaan (even though he was only one of Cham’s many children). Note, as well, how the third (and final) “*parshia*” is dedicated solely to the offspring of Shem.

Even though the description of Yefet’s offspring is straightforward, i.e., the Torah

details his children and some of his grandchildren; the genealogy of Cham clearly puts an emphasis on Nimrod, most likely because he enters Mesopotamia, even though the rest of his family remains in Africa; or possibly because he will later become one of the builders of the Tower of Babel (see 10:10-12/note Rashi and Ramban!).

In the second “*parshia*,” we also find a unique detail, as the Torah outlines the geographical area where Canaan’s children settled – most likely because G-d will later promise this “land of Canaan” to Avraham (see 17:8). Therefore, we find not only the names of all of Canaan’s children, but also their borders.

Most bizarre is the Torah’s presentation of the descendants of SHEM (see 10:21-30). Instead of describing Shem’s own children and grandchildren, this final “*parshia*” seems to focus instead on the children of EVER, who was only one of Shem’s numerous great-grandchildren! To verify this, first note the emphasis on this point in the very opening *pasuk* of this section:

“And SHEM also had children, he [SHEM] is the [fore]father of ALL the children of EVER...” (see 10:21)

Then the “*parshia*” quickly lists SHEM’s own children, focusing on ARPACHSHAD – who gives birth to SHALACH – who gives birth to EVER. (note 10:22-25). We find no detail of Shem’s grandchildren, other than Arpachshad. However, we do find minute

detail concerning EVER’s own two sons: PELEG and YOKTAN. Then we are told of the reason for PELEG’s name (clearly this relates to, and sets the background, for the *Migdal Bavel* narrative that follows in chapter 11). Then, the Torah enters minute detail of all of the children of Yoktan ben Ever [thirteen in total] AND where they lived (see 10:25-30).

Just like CANAAN and his children became the Torah’s “key” descendants of Cham, EVER and his children become the “key” descendants of Shem.

Clearly, this entire unit (i.e., chapter ten) is not merely listing the grandchildren of Noach. Rather, this presentation provides a “background” for events that will later unfold in the book. For example, G-d promises Avraham “*ha’IVRI*” (see 14:13 – a descendant of Ever) – that one day his offspring will be charged to inherit the land of Canaan, in order to fulfill their divine destiny.

Finally, one could also suggest that chapter 10 also serves as an introduction to the story of *Migdal Bavel* (see 11:1-10). To prove this, simply note 10:5,10,20,31,32. This also may explain why *Chazal* identify Nimrod as one of the key builders of that Tower.

In conclusion, don’t let what may appear to be a “boring” set of *psukim* in *Chumash* fool you. They usually contain much more than first meets the eye.

Teaching With Passion and Conviction



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The opening verse of *Parashat Noah* tells us, “*Et Ha'Elokim Hit'halech Noah*” – that Noah “walked with G-d.” The Seforno (Rav Ovadia Seforno, Italy, 1474-1550) explains this to mean that Noah dealt kindly with other people, and sought to help them, just as G-d dispenses kindness and helps people. Specifically, the Seforno writes, Noah reprimanded his contemporaries, in an attempt to convince them to cease their evildoing and conduct themselves properly. Whereas many assume that Noah did not try to lead the people of his time to repent, the Seforno claims that Noah indeed expended great efforts seeking to uplift and inspire the sinners of his generation. He followed G-d's example of kindness by working to help the people of his time improve their behavior.

In fact, the Seforno writes later (6:10), that it was only once Noah began reprimanding the people of his time that he was blessed with children. The Torah tells that Noah begot children at the age of 500 – at a much more advanced age than others – and the Seforno maintains that this was because he was granted the blessing of children only after he started

making efforts to lead his contemporaries to repent.

Of course, as we know, Noah's efforts were unsuccessful. His teachings had no effect upon the people, and they persisted in their evildoing, until, eventually, G-d decided to annihilate all of mankind.

We might ask, why were his efforts unsuccessful? How is it possible that he was unable to impact anybody?

The answer might be that Noah did not truly believe that the sinful people of his time were capable of repenting.

In order for a teacher or rabbi to succeed in inspiring those under his charge, he needs to approach his work with conviction, with passion. He needs to believe wholeheartedly everything he says. If he is trying to convince people to change, he needs to believe in his heart that they can change. Noah, it seems, lacked this conviction. He spoke dispassionately, because he doubted whether he could have any impact. He assumed that the people had fallen too low, that they had drifted too far from proper conduct, to ever improve.

Noah failed to realize that very often, it is specifically when people hit “rock bottom” that they are open and receptive to calls

for change. Many *Ba'aleh Teshuba* became influenced to embrace religious observance after having fallen to the lowest depths, when their lives became empty and devoid of meaning and substance. When a person reaches this point, he is looking to change – and it is precisely then when one has the greatest chance of influencing that individual and inspiring him to change. The people in Noah's time were capable of change specifically because they had sunken to such depths, because they had become so evil and debased. But Noah doubted their capacity to change, and so his efforts were tepid and ultimately unsuccessful.

We should never doubt a person's ability to change. No matter where a person is, no matter how distant he might be from G-d, from Torah, and from a Torah lifestyle, he is capable of changing and returning to observance. Once we recognize this truth, and acknowledge the great potential within each and every person, regardless of his current state, we will speak with greater passion and conviction, and will then be able, with G-d's help, to inspire our fellow Jews to draw closer to Torah observance, one step at a time.

Alone Together



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When Noach was born, the world was already quickly descending into a state of depravity. He was therefore the world's hope. That is why his father, Lamech, named him Noach, which is related to the word "comfort," saying (*Bereishis* 5:29), "This one will comfort us from our acts and from the sadness of our hands..." But, although he was a *tzadik*, Noach ultimately disappointed the world. He was unable to prevent the destruction of the world, and after the flood (*ibid.*, at 9:20-24), he became drunk and embarrassed himself. What happened? The Torah never tells us stories for entertainment's sake or simply to teach us history. It speaks to this generation. What does this episode teach us? While we cannot fully understand someone Hashem Himself calls "pure" and a "*tzadik*" who "found favor in G-d's eyes" (*ibid.* at 6:8-9), why did Noach descend to that level?

The truth is that one of my rebbeim, Rav Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik, zt"l, wrote a *sefer* called "The Lonely Man of Faith" for a reason. Every *tzadik* feels alone, set apart from the rest of the world. Anyone who wants to be a *tzadik* must commit to treading his own path, not living like everyone else. There is an element of loneliness inherent in any *tzadik's* journey. This must have been true on an even greater scale with respect to Noach after the flood. Not only was he alone as a *tzadik*, but he watched the destruction of every single human being on earth except for his own family. One cannot even imagine the loneliness he felt at that time. Indeed, we know of people today who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder from far less jarring traumas than the destruction of mankind and a year of taking responsibility for the welfare of all the remaining people and other every creature in the world who survived the calamity.

When I was young, there was a song that was just becoming popular about what brings all different types of people to a bar to drink, and one verse of the song said, "they're sharing a drink they call loneliness, but it's better than drinkin' alone."

While my parents lost their parents in the Holocaust, they managed to rebuild their lives; but there were others who experienced the destruction who were completely broken by it. And there were still others who were completely broken by the fact that they survived. They felt tremendous guilt and could not psychologically survive their own survival. We cannot imagine the loneliness Noach felt or why he turned to alcohol. And we know Lot did the same thing as well after his world, the city of Sodom, was destroyed (*Bereishis* 19:30-36).

But there was another *tzadik* in the Torah who felt completely alone, and that was Avraham Avinu, who was called "העברי, the Hebrew" (*Bereishis* 14:13), which literally means "the one on the other side. The *Midrash* explains that he was called that because "the whole world was on one side and he was on the other side" (*Bereishis Raba* 42:8). The *Navi* Yechezkel said about him, "Avraham was one" (33:24), meaning that he was alone in the world. He left his father's home; he said goodbye to the entire world he knew before that and began working to change the world all by himself with no one but his wife behind him, backing him up. He was utterly alone in the world.

People do not like those who "rock the boat," who try to do things differently than everyone else. Avraham was, therefore, despised, and powerful people wanted him dead. But Avraham embraced his aloneness and worked to bring the whole world over to his side, to the side of the Master of the World (*Rashi* on *Bereishis* 12:5). A person can be

extremely intelligent, charming, talented, and bright; but if he always wants to fit in, to be "just one of the guys," perhaps above-average, but not outstanding, he will never be a "*tzadik*," he will never change the world.

A person cannot define himself by what people in the world, even nice, good, normal people, do. Even Dovid HaMelech grew up in a very good family, but to become a *tzadik*, he had to say (*Tehillim* 69:8-9), "I have borne humiliation because of You, embarrassment has covered my face. I have become strange to my brothers and alien to the children of my mother." He saw himself as alone in the world and sought out the G-d's truth wherever it led. That is how he became great.

Everything we have spoken about until now is step one. By focusing on seeking out the lonely path of the man of faith, there is a danger that one may give up on the rest of the world. Noach built a shelter, an ark, in which he and his family could hide from the world's destruction. The generation of Noach was wiped out partly because Noach was not ready to go out and speak to them and bring them into his shelter like Avraham did, who tried to bring the whole world into his tent.

This is why Noach was called, in *Yiddish*, the "*tzadik* in a fur coat." If a room is freezing, there are two ways to warm up. One is to wear a fur coat. It warms the person up, but allows everyone else to freeze. The other method is to build a fire to give warmth to everyone in the room. Noach was a *tzadik* who wore a fur coat to shelter himself from a world which was freezing because of a lack of G-dliness. So his loneliness eventually got the better of him and he was overcome by it. Avraham Avinu, however, built fires to warm up everyone with whom he came into contact. Even though he was alone in the world, he loved and cared for everyone else.

Continued on page 21

Don't Allow Cynicism to Replace Love



Rabbi YY Jacobson
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As the flood waters recede, Noah opens the window of the ark and sends out the raven, which “kept going and returning until the waters dried from upon the earth.” It would seem as if the raven did its job admirably, and the story should have ended right there. Instead, the text describes a drawn-out process in which Noah sends out a dove three times to determine whether the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. The first time, the dove returns to the ark, as it could not find a place to rest, because the earth was still engulfed in water. The second time the dove returns with a plucked olive leaf, indicating that the water has receded significantly. Seven days later, Noah sends the dove a third time. This time, it does not return anymore. At last, the dove encountered a space to dwell. The earth was once again habitable.

Why the need to send two birds, a raven and a dove? And why did he first send out the raven, and only afterward the dove?

The raven has a long-standing negative reputation. Because of its black plumage, croaking call, and diet of carrion, the raven has long been considered an unkind bird. Psalm (ch. 147) describes G-d’s mercy in feeding all creatures, even “the raven’s children who call out.” Why are the raven’s children singled out? Because ravens do not care for their young as do other birds, which is one of the reasons that the raven is singled out as a *non-kosher* bird.

Modern Western culture has continued this trend. The famous Edgar Allan Poe poem portrays the raven as a grim, spectral presence. One particular flock of ravens has attained notoriety by taking

up residence at the Tower of London, site of many gruesome beheadings and royal murders. To this day, the Beefeater guards warn visitors from getting too close, lest the ravens supplement their usual diet of carrion with a tourist’s finger or toe.

The dove, on the other extreme, is a symbol of tenderness, loyalty and kindness. The image of the dove bearing an olive branch – originating in this week’s Torah portion – resonates in the communal consciousness. The Song of Songs compares time and time again the beautiful bride to the dove. The rabbis praised the dove for its extraordinary, singular loyalty to its mate, unique in the animal kingdom. Not only is the dove a *kosher* bird, but it is the one chosen by the Torah to be offered in the Holy Temple as a sacred, divine offering, testifying to its sublime potential.

In *Kabbalistic* and *Chassidic* terminology, the raven represents the attribute of *gevurah* – aggression, strength and sternness. The dove, in contrast, represents the quality of *chesed*, kindness, tenderness and empathy.

Based on this contrast between the raven and the dove, we can appreciate the deeper rhythms behind the Noah story.

Initially, Noah felt that the proper approach in a post-flood universe must be that of the raven. It must be tough, rough and unkindly. After all, humanity deteriorated because it was spoiled rotten and it thus grew arrogant and depraved. Humanity received too much love, too much generosity, and this allowed people to lose their priorities and to forfeit their moral compass. Now, Noah assumed, we must start all over again, with the raven showing the way. The “new world order”

must be based on sternness, strength and discipline. Aggression and strict judgment must prevail if we want to ensure that civilization does not revert again to chaos.

This approach of Noah holds true in many of our own lives as well. People who have experienced a “flood,” in one form or another, people who have felt the turmoil and pain of life, often feel that the only way to build a new life for themselves is by adopting the perspective and the attitude of the raven. They develop a rough shell, a dense crust, an aggressive disposition. They become tough, strong, and stern. Sometimes they become cynical and suspicious, and their hearts shut down. They devour, as they are scared to embrace.

Can we blame them? No. They are afraid to be abused again. They can’t endure the pain twice.

But soon Noah discovered that with a raven, you can’t rebuild a world. The raven is good to remain in the peripheral; the raven “kept going and returning until the waters dried from upon the earth.” The raven is important to give borders to love, and create limits for vulnerability. The raven will hover over the new world, protecting it from a kindness and a love that could turn destructive. But who must lead the way in settling the new world and rebuilding a shattered civilization? Only the dove. The primary driving force in life must be love, loyalty and compassion.

Each of us has disappointments in life. Some of them are caused by other people; others are caused by the workings of the world. Some people feel that they have been let down by those who were supposed to care for them most. We can understand if they have learnt to develop

Continued on page 22

Noach: Second Chances



Rabbi Judah Mischel

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Reb Shlomo Lorincz was known to *Klal Yisrael* as a brilliant *shtadlan*, a respected member of the Knesset for more than thirty years, and above all, a confidant of the *Gedolei Torah* in *Eretz Yisrael*. Many speeches that Rabbi Lorincz gave during his decades in the Knesset were looked over by the Chazon Ish and later by the Brisker Rav, who considered him their faithful emissary. A multi-volume memoir, *B'mechitzasam*, is a sweeping account of some of the political drama and religious struggles in the State of Israel. A *ben Torah* through and through, he carried the refinement of the Mir in Poland into every chapter of his life. Politics may have brought him a platform, but Torah remained his lifeblood.

After stepping back from public life, Reb Shlomo discovered new sweetness in *limud haTorah*, and published *Milu'ei Shlomo*, a *sefer* discussing sugyas in *Gemara* that he learned with his *chavrusa* and neighbor, Rav Simcha Wasserman, *zt'l*.

After the murder of his family (including his father and teacher, the great Rav Elchonon Hy"ד), Rav Simcha Wasserman and his wife spent their lives spreading Torah and rebuilding *Yeshivos* and *Kollelim* in the United States and *Eretz Yisrael* with incredible sacrifice and dedication. For years, Reb Shlomo and Rav Simcha sat together, immersed in learning, their voices carrying the timeless music of *chavrusa*-shaft.

On the 2nd day of Cheshvan, 1993, Hashem summoned Rav Simcha back to the "*Yeshivah shel Maalah*." Just ten days later, his Rebbetzin, Faiga Rochel, followed him.

As she and her husband had no children, in her final days, she whispered aloud a prayer that pierced the hearts of those who overheard it: "Hashem, who will keep our memory alive? Who will come to *daven* at our *kevarim*?" After the passing of his precious friends, Reb Shlomo gathered his children together and revealed something that stunned them. Though he owned a family plot on *Har HaZeisim*, the Mount of Olives in the Old City of Jerusalem, he had purchased a new *chelek* on *Har HaMenuchos* — so that he could be buried, together with his Rebbetzin, alongside Rav Simcha and Rebbetzin Faiga Rochel.

He explained this to his children with the conviction of a man who had once persuaded governments, yet now speaking only as a father and eternal friend: "Rav Simcha and the Rebbetzin had no children. Who will come to *daven* by their *kevarim*? You, my children, will. Each time you come to us, you will stop and say a *kapitel Tehillim* at their *kever*, too. This way, they will never be alone!"

And so it was.

Rav Simcha had been *niftar* on the second of Cheshvan, and his Rebbetzin soon after. Seventeen years later, Reb Shlomo himself left this world — on *Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan*. According to *minhag Yerushalayim*, children don't visit the cemetery on *Rosh Chodesh*. Therefore, each year the Lorincz family goes instead on the following day — the second of Cheshvan, Rav Simcha's *yahrtzeit*.

In this way, with breathtaking *hashgachah pratis*, Reb Shlomo's final wish,

and Rebbetzin Wasserman's prayers, were fulfilled: every year, the Lorincz family gathers not only to honor their father's memory, but to remember and honor his beloved *chavrusa*, Rav Simcha and Rebbetzin Wasserman.



As the world unravelled around them, becoming emptied of life and creation, Noach and his family were sealed in the Ark. Inside, while the flood waters raged, there was no rest. The *Midrash* tells us that Noach and his family were busy day and night, feeding the animals that they had corralled onto the *Teivah*, each creature receiving according to its need.

Rav Simcha Wasserman would often remind his *talmidim* that the *Teivah* was more than a floating shelter constructed to save humanity and perpetuate Creation — it was an incubator of values, specifically to train Noach in the *midah* and modality of *chesed*. The world was rebuilt not through brilliance, strength, nor innovation, but through acts of kindness, tending to the needs of others, including the animals. The world is created and recreated through *chesed* and caring, as Rav Wasserman is quoted in the book *Reb Simcha Speaks*: "The Torah begins with *chesed* and ends with *chesed*. A life of Torah means living for the other — making their needs our own." May we be *zocheh* to continue to rebuild the world with kindness, merit long and fulfilled lives with good friends and good news to share.

Continued from page 19

The ideal is, therefore, to connect to other people, in touch with the social reality of one's community, while never losing sight of who one is and what he is living for. He

must never be afraid to swim against the tide. May we all merit to be like Avraham, always living in the right way as if we are alone in the world, but never indifferent

to others, always working to help them in whatever they need!

Remarkable Roots

Mrs. Shira Smiles

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Our *parashah* opens with a description of Noach's righteousness, specifically mentioning that he was a *tzadik* "bedorotav – in his generation." In what has become a famous argument, Rashi comments on the Torah's use of this specific characterization. Since Noach obviously lived in his generation, there must be an additional element to be learned here.

Looking at the word "bedorotav" as prompting a comparative, some commentators explain that it highlights Noach's greatness; he was able to live righteously in a morally depraved society. Had he lived in a generation of upright, ethical people, he would have been greater still. Other commentators, however, look at Noach through a more critical lens and explain that his righteousness was relative to those in his generation. Had he lived in a generation like Avraham Avinu's, he would not have been considered a *tzadik* at all. Yet the Torah explicitly describes Noach as a *tzadik*. Why the need to minimize his greatness with this interpretation?

Rav Schwab, *zt"l*, in *Maayan Beit Hasho'eva* offers a powerful insight. He maintains that evil cannot emerge from a source of total goodness. Hence, although we see that great people like the *Avot hakedoshim* and Moshe Rabbeinu came from Noach, we also see that his progeny included terribly wicked people as well, such as Nevuchadnezzar, Haman, and Titus. This indicates that Noach must have possessed some trait rooted in negativity. As such, *Chazal* consider Noach with a positive as well as a more critical perspective. Clearly, the lesson here is that how we develop our character will impact our future generations.

The Saba of Slabodka, *zt"l*, however, explains both views as speaking of Noach's greatness. What is being debated here is what prompted his greatness. The first, more positive view asserts that Noach was motivated by an inner desire for greatness. The second, less complimentary view highlights that Noach chose to reject the decadent lifestyle that surrounded

him; thus, his righteousness was influenced by external forces.

The Tosher Rebbe, *zt"l*, finds this alluded to in the beginning of the verse. "*Eleh toldot Noach, Noach ish tzadik* – these are the chronicles (lit. "generations") of Noach, Noach was a righteous man." Noach, he explains, "birthed" himself. He created his own chronicles, i.e., he introduced the concept of being a righteous person in his generation. Noach's greatness was that he was able to develop nobility of character without a teacher, mentor or the influence of greatness.

What a tremendous lesson for us coming on the heels of the *Yom Tov* season! As there are no holidays in the month of Marcheshvan, we each have a personal responsibility to commit ourselves to strengthen our *avodat Hashem*. When we take the initiative to grow and develop our spirituality, we will be blessed from Above with *siyata dishmaya*, Divine assistance to succeed in our endeavors.

Continued from page 20

a "raven" attitude to protect themselves in the future; even Noah himself did just that. Yet the human soul is capable of much more: of not allowing the pain of life to deprive it from its greatest power – its ability to love.

During the past seven decades the Jewish people have been attempting to recover from a flood that destroyed a third of our nation. One and a half million children were sent to the gas chambers, and nobody uttered more than a peep.

Understandably, Jewish hearts were swelling with bitterness, mistrust and profound pain. They could have easily turned into "ravens," projecting hatred and cynicism unto their children and grandchildren. But learning from Noah's example, they replaced the raven with the dove. The survivors, for the most part, built families and showered their children with love, confidence, and hope. Sure, many children of survivors suffered (and suffer still today) from the paralyzing

silence that pervaded their homes. But we can all testify that most of our parents and grandparents did the best they could to protect and nurture their loved ones and give them an opportunity to celebrate life. Will we, the recipients of that courageous choice, ever be able to thank them adequately?

Only if we, the second, third and fourth generations, continue to be guided by the dove, giving love, confidence and hope to the people around us.

After the Flood



Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi
Popular Torah teacher and author

The expression “*Après moi, le déluge*” (literally: “After me, the flood”) was most likely coined by Louis XV, the hedonistic king, when asked about his indulgent lifestyle. He cared about nothing but the here and now. He showed no interest in his responsibility for the future of the kingdom.

But the phrase “after the flood” also appears in the Torah portion of **Noah**, and it holds the **opposite meaning**: Noah **takes responsibility** for the world on the day after the flood: “*And sons were born to them after the flood.*”

Whom do we resemble more? “*These are the generations of Noah – Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation... Noah walked with G-d.*”

The Sages in the *Midrash* raise the question: Why is Noah’s name mentioned **three times** in this one verse? Their answer: “Because he saw the world built, destroyed, and rebuilt again.”

Noah, before the flood, did build an ark, but “*he believed and didn’t believe*” that the flood would actually come. He was trapped in a mindset, unable to truly comprehend the fact that “*the earth was filled with violence.*” His world was still intact.

Then came the **chaos**.

Noah rose to the occasion: he devoted himself with self-sacrifice to save the world. He was criticized for not doing enough. He was wounded and limped on his thigh. He was separated from his wife for many days. He became a kind of superhero.

And then came the **day after**. “*And Noah, the man of the earth, began and planted a vineyard...*”

In this portion, the *Midrash* counts **fourteen instances** of verbs starting with “And” (“ו”) – a Hebrew expression of lament. Why? Because **Noah gets lost** after the flood. He plants a vineyard and becomes drunk.

For **150 days**, he had been locked in the ark, crying out: “Bring my soul out of prison!” And now that the flood is over, **he cannot cope** with the world that remains.

“*He became drunk and exposed himself.*” This is, in fact, the **first instance of drunkenness in history** – the **first addiction**.

Are we returning to the familiar, addictive reality we knew before the flood? Sometimes it seems like our return to conflict and slander is our **safe haven**, our addiction. It’s the **October 6th** – the day before the flood. Arguments bring us back to a kind of comforting routine: “Look, we’re back to ourselves. The hostages have been released – now we can finally go back to feeling... at ease. At ease to go out and have fun without guilt, at ease to argue again.”

This thought is terrifying – until you meet... **the sons and daughters born after the flood**.

They, with G-d’s help, will be the healing of this nation on the day after the war.

Twenty “Victor Frankls” emerged from Gaza. **Twenty “Joseph the Righteous.”** Tens of thousands returned from reserve duty, tens of thousands still serve. **I trust them** to rebuild the world after the flood.

They – who saw the price of comfort, who paid it with their own flesh, who witnessed a generation disgraced by intoxication with division – they will be the ones to cover the shame with a garment of honor, to build a better world.

This week, in the tunnels near the Western Wall, I met orphans of the recent war, who came together to celebrate their **Bar and Bat Mitzvahs**. “What are you praying for?” I asked a young girl whose father, a hero of Israel, had fallen in heroic battle.

She answered quietly: “That the fallen who are still in Gaza will be brought to burial.”

This is a **remarkable** answer. The answer of a child **after the flood**. She understands, in a sense, what she still has that other families don’t: **a grave to visit**. And that’s what she wants to give to others.

Another girl said: “That my mother will be happy.” And a third said: “I pray for the resurrection of the dead.”

The boys and girls **after the flood** will know how to lead the **rebuilt world**, the one that follows the destroyed world. They saw a world that was whole, a world that fell apart – and now they are **restless young people**. They **will not rest** until they return with an olive branch.

“*And sons were born to them after the flood.*”

Hebrew Language in the Parsha



David Curwin

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In Parashat Noach, the genealogy of Noah's sons introduces the early nations of the world, including the first reference to Egypt.

וּבְנֵי חָם כּוּשׁ וּמִצְרַיִם וּפּוּט וְכַנְעַן

"The descendants of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan." (*Bereshit* 10:6)

The name מִצְרַיִם appears to be a dual or plural form, marked by the ending -ים. A different form of the name, מִצְוֹר, is found elsewhere in the Tanakh, including in *Micha* 7:12 and *Melachim Bet* 19:24. Some scholars suggest that מִצְוֹר referred to Lower Egypt, while פְּתָרוֹס, a region representing Upper Egypt and mentioned in Yeshayahu and Yirmiyahu, referred to the southern part of the country, and that מִצְרַיִם was a general term for both regions combined.

The noun מִצְוֹר seems related to a Semitic root meaning "border." The Hebrew word מִצְרַיִם, meaning "narrow place" or "strait,"

comes from the same root and appears in contexts of both geography and distress, like in *Eicha* 1:3 and the phrase בְּיַם הַמִּצְרַיִם. Based on this, מִצְרַיִם could mean "borderland" or "narrow land," either because of its geography or because Egypt was known for its tightly controlled boundaries, as seen in the Yosef story.

The Egyptians themselves did not use this name. They called their land something like "Kemet" (*km.t*), meaning "black land," referring to the dark soil of the Nile valley. This name entered Ancient Greek as *khemeia*, and from there into Arabic as *al-kimiya*. Medieval writers used that name to describe a form of science originating in Alexandria, Egypt - what later came to be called "alchemy." The original meaning was simply the study of natural physical processes. Only later did it take on the sense of trying to change common metals into gold. The modern word "chemistry" developed from the same source.

Some writers connected the name חָם, the biblical ancestor of מִצְרַיִם, with the Egyptian *khemeia*. In *Tehillim*, Egypt is called חָם, which encouraged the comparison. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars often repeated this link, but modern linguists reject it, pointing out that the Hebrew letter *chet* does not correspond to the Greek *chi* and that the names are unrelated.

Still, the idea persisted. The linguist Yitzhak Avineri, writing in 1945, objected to changing the traditional Hebrew spelling of chemistry - חִימְיָה with a *chet* - to the newer spelling כִּימְיָה with a *kaf*. Although the pronunciation would stay the same, he argued that the original spelling might reflect a connection to Cham or to the dark color of the Nile soil. The new spelling eventually became standard, but his argument shows how the association between Egypt, color, and transformation lasted even in modern Hebrew.

Answer to the Parsha Riddle (from page 9)

מְקַיֵּם אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם.

They occur in the following verse:

וְאָנִי הֲנִי מְקַיֵּם אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְאַתֶּם זֹרְעִים
אֲחֵרִיכֶם

Behold, I am making a covenant with you and with your offspring after you (9:9)

Baal Haturim comments that the last letters of these four words spells the word מְתִים (the dead) and is an allusion to Hashem fulfilling his covenant of bringing the dead back to life - תְּחִיַת הַמְתִּים.

Rabbi Yehudah Patayah in his sefer, *Keter Tzaddik*, connects the Baal HaTurim's comment with a *Maamar*

Chazal in *Avodah Zarah* 5a: "And similarly, **Rabbi Yosei says: Mashiach, ben David, will not come until all the souls of the body have been finished**, i.e., until all souls that are destined to inhabit physical bodies will do so. **As it is stated: 'For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always angry; for the spirit that enwraps itself is from Me, and the souls that I have made'** (*Yeshayahu* 57:16). According to Rabbi Yosei, for Mashiach to come in the end of days, it is necessary for the future generations to be born."

Looking back in *Parshat Noach* to the verses prior to and including verse 9:9

we read the following: "And now be fruitful and multiply, spread throughout the earth and multiply on it. G-d said to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: Behold, I am making a covenant with you and with your offspring after you." (9: 7-9)

Explains R' Yehudah Patayah, in light of the above *Gemara*, we can connect these three verses, as follows: Hashem commands Noah to populate the world because that that will hasten the coming of the Mashiach which will in turn is a prelude to *Techiat Hametim* when Hashem will fulfil His covenant in bringing the dead back to life.



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Escuela Maimonides

COSTA RICA
SAN JOSE
Sharai Zion

CROATIA
ZAGREB
Bet Israel Jewish Community of Croatia

CZECHIA
PRAGUE
Jewish Community of Prague

ECUADOR
Equador Jewish Community

FINLAND
HELSINKI
Jewish Community of Helsinki

GERMANY
KOLN
Jewish Community

GUATEMALA
Guatemala City Jewish Community

HOLLAND
AMSTERDAM
AMOS Amsterdam Modern Orthodox Sjoel

HONG KONG
Chabad HK
Jewish Women's Association (JWA)
Kehilat Zion – Hechal Ezra
Ohel Leah Synagogue
The Jewish Community Centre
United Jewish Congregation (UJC)

HUNGARY
BUDAPEST
Orach Chaim Kyiv

ISRAEL
JERUSALEM
Amudim Beit Midrash for Women
Baer Miriam
Hashiveinu
Jacques Sueke Foundation
Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim (MMY)
Midreshet Emunah v'Omanut
Midreshet Eshel
Midreshet HaRova
Midreshet Rachel vChaya
Neve Hagiva'a
Shapell's/Darche Noam
Torat Reva Yerushalayim
Yeshivat Eretz HaTzvi

Yeshivat Hakotel
Yeshivat Orayta

BEIT SHEMESH
Tiferet Midrasha
Kehillat Nofei Hashemesh
Yeshivat Ashreinu
Yeshivat Hesder Lev HaTorah

HERZLIYA
Mizrachi OU-JLIC Herzliya

MEVASERET ZION
Yeshivat Mevaseret

RAMAT GAN
Israel XP at Bar Ilan University

THE NEGEV
Mechinat Ruach HaNegev

LATVIA
JURMALA
Jewrmala - the Jurmala Jewish Community

MALTA
Jewish Community

MEXICO
Mizrachi México

NORTH MACEDONIA
SCOPIA
Jewish Community

PANAMA
Centro comunitario BETH EL

POLAND
Chief Rabbinate of Poland

PORTUGAL
PORTO
Rabbi Daniel Litvak

SCOTLAND
EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

SERBIA
BELGRADE
Rav Isak Asiel

SOUTH AFRICA
JOHANNESBURG
Mizrachi Glenhazel Shul

SWEDEN

The Jewish Community of Stockholm
Kehilat Adat Yeshurun
Kehiliat Adat Yisrael

SWITZERLAND

BERN

Jüdische Gemeinde Bern

ZURICH

HaKehila HaYehudit Zurich
HaKehila HaYehudit Lausanne
Mizrachi
Wollishofen

TANZANIA

ARUSHA

Bayit Kneset Shalem Al Shabazi

UNITED KINGDOM

Mizrachi UK

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kol Hatorah Kulah
National Council of Young Israel
RZA-Mizrachi USA

CALIFORNIA

Beth Jacob Congregation
Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy
West Coast Torah Center
Young Israel of North Beverly Hills
YULA High School
Young Israel of Century City

COLORADO

DAT Minyan
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue
The Denver Kehillah

CONNECTICUT

Beth David Synagogue
Congregation Agudath Sholom
Young Israel of West Hartford

FLORIDA

Beth Israel Congregation
Hebrew Academy RASG
PlayHard PrayHard
Congregation Torah Ohr
Sha'arei Bina Torah Academy for Girls
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale

GEORGIA

Congregation Beth Jacob
Congregation Ohr HaTorah

HAWAII

Kehilat Olam Ejad Ganim

ILLINOIS

Mizrachi-Religious Zionists of Chicago

MARYLAND

Kemp Mill Synagogue
Pikesville Jewish Congregation

Bnai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation

MASSACHUSETTS

Congregation Beth El Atereth Israel
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe
Congregation Shaarei Tefillah
Young Israel of Brookline

MICHIGAN

Young Israel of Oak Park
Young Israel of Southfield
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe

MINNESOTA

Congregation Darchei Noam

MISSOURI

Yeshivat Kadimah High School Nusach
Hari B'nai Zion Congregation
Young Israel of St. Louis

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hillel at Dartmouth

NEW JERSEY

Ahavas Achim
Volunteer Chaplain Middlesex County
Congregation AABJ&D
Congregation Adath Israel of the JEC
National Council of Young Israel
Congregation Ahavat Achim
Congregation Ahavath Torah
Congregation Brothers of Israel
Congregation Darchei Noam of Fair Lawn
Congregation Etz Chaim of Livingston
Congregation Israel of Springfield
Congregation Ohr Torah
Congregation Sons of Israel of Cherry Hill
Kehilat Keshet
Ma Tov Day Camp
Ohav Emeth
Pal Foundation
Shomrei Torah of Fair Lawn
Synagogue of the Suburban Torah Center
Yavneh Academy
National Council of Young Israel
Young Israel of Teaneck

NEW YORK

Beis Community
Congregation Anshei Shalom
Congregation B'nai Tzedek
Congregation Bais Tefilah of Woodmere
Congregation Beth Sholom
Ramaz
Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls
MTA – Yeshiva University High School for Boys
Young Israel of Merrick
Congregation Beth Torah
Congregation Etz Chaim of Kew Gardens Hills
Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun
Congregation Ohav Zedek
Great Neck Synagogue
Iranian Jewish Center/Beth Hadassah Synagogue
Irving Place Minyan

Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach

Kehilath Jershurun
Kingsway Jewish Center
Lincoln Square Synagogue
Merkaz Yisrael of Marine Park
North Shore Hebrew Academy
Young Israel of Merrick
NYC Department of Correction
OU-JLIC at Binghamton University
OU-JLIC at Cornell University
Queens Jewish Center
Stars of Israel Academy
The Jewish Center
The Riverdale Minyan
Vaad of Chevra Kadisha
West Side Institutional Synagogue
Yeshiva University High School for Girls
Young Israel of Hillcrest
Young Israel of Jamaica Estates
Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst
Young Israel of Long Beach
Young Israel of New Rochelle
Young Israel of North Woodmere
Young Israel of Oceanside
Young Israel of Scarsdale
Young Israel of Woodmere

OHIO

Beachwood Kehilla
Congregation Sha'arei Torah
Congregation Torat Emet
Green Road Synagogue
Fuchs Mizrachi School
Heights Jewish Center

PENNSYLVANIA

Shaare Torah Congregation

SOUTH CAROLINA

Brith Sholom Beth Israel
Congregation Dor Tikvah

TENNESSEE

Baron Hirsch Congregation

TEXAS

Mayerland Minyan Synagogue
Robert M. Beren Academy
United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston

VIRGINIA

Keneseth Beth Israel

WASHINGTON

Bikur Cholim-Machzikay Hadath
Northwest Yeshiva High School
Sephardic Bikur Holim Congregation

URUGUAY

Comunidad Yavne Uruguay

VENEZUELA

CARACAS
Ashkenazi Kehilla
Mizrachi Venezuela



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