

ב"ה Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1632

ג' מרחשון תשפ"ו • OCT. 25TH 2025

פרשת נח
PARSHAT NOACH



Davening at Ma'arat HaMachpela in Chevron

*OU Israel mourns
the sudden and heartbreaking
passing of*

Rabbi Moshe Hauer zt"l

*Executive Vice President
of the Orthodox Union*



איש צדיק תמים בראשית ו'ט'



Dear Torah Tidbits Family
Rabbi Avi Berman
Page 4



Faith in Darkness
Sivan Rahav Meir
Page 78

See pages 46-51
for Zmanim
5786



YERUSHALAYIM SHABBAT NOACH ZMANIM

CANDLES 5:21 PM • HAVDALA 6:33 PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:13 PM



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We continue to pray for the return of all the kedoshim from Gaza.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS



Earliest Kiddush Levana, 3 Days After Molad: 4 Marcheshvan/Sat. night Oct. 25

7 Days After Molad: 9 Marcheshvan/ Thurs. night Oct. 30

Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana until: 15 Marcheshvan/ Wed. night Nov. 5



We change the clock overnight between Sat. Oct. 25th and Sunday Oct. 26. At 2 am we move back to 1 am.

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



JERUSALEM

Ranges 11 days Wednesday - Shabbat*
Oct. 22 - Nov. 1 / 30 Tishrei - 10 Marcheshvan

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Earliest Tallit and Tefillin | 5:56-5:03 |
| Sunrise | 6:47-5:55 |
| Sof Zman Kriat Shema | 9:35-8:39 |
| Magen Avraham | 8:59-8:02 |
| Sof Zman Tefila | 10:31-9:33 |
| (According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya) | |
| Chatzot (Halachic Noon) | 12:23-11:22 |
| Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha) | 12:53-11:52 |
| Plag Mincha | 4:49-3:41 |
| Sunset (Including Elevation) | 6:03-4:53 |

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| | Noach | | Lech Lecha | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|---------|
| | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala |
| Yerushalayim/Maale Adumim | 5:21 | 6:33 | 4:14 | 5:27 |
| Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al) | 5:39 | 6:36 | 4:33 | 5:30 |
| Beit Shemesh/RBS | 5:40 | 6:34 | 4:33 | 5:28 |
| Alon Shvut | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:30 | 5:28 |
| Raanana/Tel Mond/Herzliya/K.Saba | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:31 | 5:28 |
| Modiin/Chashmonaim | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:31 | 5:28 |
| Netanya | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:31 | 5:28 |
| Be'er Sheva | 5:39 | 6:36 | 4:32 | 5:30 |
| Rehovot | 5:38 | 6:35 | 4:31 | 5:29 |
| Petach Tikva | 5:21 | 6:34 | 4:14 | 5:28 |
| Ginot Shomron | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:30 | 5:27 |
| Haifa / Zichron | 5:26 | 6:34 | 4:19 | 5:27 |
| Gush Shiloh | 5:36 | 6:33 | 4:29 | 5:27 |
| Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel | 5:38 | 6:35 | 4:31 | 5:29 |
| Givat Zeev | 5:41 | 6:34 | 4:34 | 5:27 |
| Chevron / Kiryat Arba | 5:37 | 6:34 | 4:31 | 5:28 |
| Ashkelon | 5:39 | 6:36 | 4:33 | 5:30 |
| Yad Binyamin | 5:38 | 6:35 | 4:31 | 5:29 |
| Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden | 5:28 | 6:31 | 4:21 | 5:25 |
| Golan | 5:34 | 6:31 | 4:27 | 5:25 |
| Nahariya/Maalot | 5:35 | 6:33 | 4:28 | 5:27 |
| Afula | 5:35 | 6:32 | 4:28 | 5:26 |

Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem): Noach - 7:13PM • Lech Lecha - 6:06PM

All Times According to MyZmanim (20 mins before Sunset in most Cities; 40 mins in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva; 30 mins in Tzfat and Haifa)

Daf Yomi: Zevachim 41



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OU ISRAEL
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My policy has always been that my column should reflect the positive attitude that I try to have in life, and that the message that I give over on a weekly basis should always be one that is uplifting, inspiring, and makes people feel good about what is going on in the Jewish world, at OU Israel, or in my own life. With the long Torah Tidbits break from Sukkot to now, I had so much to share with you in good news and experiences. But like many of you, I awoke on Thursday morning to the horrific and shocking news of the sudden passing of Rabbi Moshe Hauer, *zecher tzaddik levracha*, who was the Executive Vice President of the OU. And so, my message this week will be very different from my previous Torah Tidbits columns.

I can't help but feel unworthy as I write these words, yet I must. It is not easy to write about someone who was not only my boss, but my mentor; not only my colleague, but my dear, dear friend.

Rabbi Moshe Hauer, of incredible blessed memory, passed away on *Erev Shmini Atzeret*, hours after *Klal Yisrael* experienced such a high of our live hostages coming home, of the President of the United States coming to Israel, speaking in the Knesset, of knowing that we were all living through moments for the history books. On that day, Rabbi Hauer sent messages out that reflected how excited he was to see what was unfolding. But that night he gave back his neshama to the *Borei Olam* after 60 years of incredible accomplishments in this world.

Instead of talking about the loss so many of us feel, I want to focus on the many gifts he gave us during his life. In particular, I want to consider how we can lift up the greatness of Rabbi Hauer and embody his values. How do we take the stories, the messages, the *derech erez*, the *middot*, the love of Torah, the knowledge of Torah, the love for every single Yid, the *kibud av v'em* so evident toward his parents, the way he loved his wife and children and grandchildren, the way he created such a strong and tight bond with the OU family, the way in which he got Jews from around the world from every type of community to adore him, to look up to him, to learn from him, to seek his advice? We cannot allow a giant like Rabbi Moshe Hauer to leave this world without us striving toward continuing in his path, to bring *achdut* and a love of Torah to Klal Yisrael.

I was with Rabbi Hauer in many, many meetings over the last almost six years that he was with us at the OU. There is an idea that he would always say to those of us going in with him into the meeting, whether with Jewish leaders, *gedolim*, politicians, or an OU mission in Israel: Let's make sure that every meeting that we have leads to a *kiddush Shem Shamayim*.

That was his motto. How did he accomplish this goal? I saw it in the way he spoke in these meetings. He always spoke softly, and more often than not, despite his position, he would listen instead of speak. He wanted to hear what others had to say, what was on their

mind and on their heart, in order to be able to understand before speaking himself. He always listened in order to be able to hear other viewpoints, because he was so humble that he knew everyone had something to contribute.

Allow me to share a few more stories that stand out in my mind right now.

On October 8th, 2023, right after Simchat Torah was over in America, I received a call from Rabbi Hauer, together with Rabbi Dr. Josh Joseph, our Executive Vice President and COO, *lehavdil bein chaim l'chaim*, with one urgent question: "What is happening in Israel and how can we help?" In this call, Rabbi Hauer said to me, "Avi, I'm looking for a flight. I'm on my way." A little over a week later, he arrived in Israel.

When we met, he asked for two things. The first thing was to meet with all the OU Israel staff who were evacuated from their houses in the south. And so, together with President of the OU Mitch Aeder, and President of OU Israel Stuie Hershkowitz, we were able to sit down in the Ramada Hotel with about 20 OU Israel staff that run our teen center in Sderot. Rabbi Hauer sat there for many, many hours listening to each and every story, where they were when everything started, what they went through, how they were able to get out of Sderot, the challenges that they are having in the hotel and being evacuated from their homes.

Rabbi Hauer sat there with such endless compassion for them, with tears in his eyes at hearing their stories and understanding that they are just tens out of thousands of Jews that were evacuated from their houses. The hug that Rabbi Hauer gave to each person that evening, of connecting his heart to our hearts



is something that we will never, ever forget.

He went further. His second request of me was to go with him down south to see what had happened (and remember, there were reports that some terrorists were still on the loose at the time). He said, "Avi, unless I see it, I won't fully understand what they went through." We went. As missiles fell continuously, I said, "Rabbi, are you not afraid?" And at that moment, we looked at each other and said, "*shluchei mitzvah einam nizakin*" - we know that since we are doing this to help *Klal Yisrael, bezrat Hashem, HaKadosh Baruch Hu* will watch over us.

We went to Sderot. Rabbi Hauer was visibly in shock, seeing the police station totally destroyed, the tractors there trying to pick up the rubble of the police station, and taking it all in in order to be able to give the message over to the world. We stopped in

the street, and Rabbi Hauer said, “We need rabbis from North America to come and see what happened here.” And it was there that we reached out to our loyal colleagues in America and put together a mission that came on the 28th of October, which I believe was the first mission to come and see the story of what happened. This mission consisted of 22 OU Rabbis and 22 laypeople, who all came to hear and to hug those who needed it.

For Rabbi Hauer, this was not about saying “I was there” in order to praise himself. It was to be able to tell people from the south that he was there so that he can connect to them and their hearts that much better. It was to be able to approach American politicians and give them his eyewitness testimony in order to advocate and ask for help. It was so he could speak to others and explain the devastation that we saw that day.

I remember hearing from Rabbi Hauer so many times the concern of how to take the *achdut* that was felt so acutely across *Klal Yisrael* during those difficult times and hold onto it, not just at a time of war, but on a regular basis. Rabbi Hauer, in so many meetings with the more extreme politicians from right and from left, would make sure to sit down with them, listen, hear, and then try to give in the most delicate, calm and loving way, words of advice as to how to say things in a more loving and positive way, that there are ways to accomplish their goals without belittling others and making them feel bad. He sought to build bridges amongst all of *Klal Yisrael*, of the right and the left and the in-between. It is because of his openness and love of all factions in *Klal Yisrael* that we see Jews today from every type of denomination putting out condolence letters and posts, all mourning

Rabbi Hauer’s passing. From the most right-wing hashkafically and politically to the most left-wing hashkafically and politically, they are all talking about this gigantic loss. And it is because of his attitude and approach which was so overwhelmingly positive and uplifting.

I was always amazed at how much Rabbi Hauer was able to accomplish in a day. Rabbi Hauer would not waste a minute. Yet, when he was with you, he was truly with you. He was not looking at his phone. His mind was with you, his heart was with you, and he was listening. He had many things on his plate, but he gave you all the time in the world and all the attention possible. That listening ear, that soft-spoken voice, that passion, that love.

These attributes are things all of us can and should emulate. Can we incorporate a time of day to practice speaking a little bit softer? Of working to develop a love and passion for every single Jew? To connect to the worries and challenges of others and work on being able to help?

Rabbi Hauer was not about grabbing headlines with his work and advocacy for the Jewish people. So many times in meetings, he would be asked, “Rabbi Hauer, what about getting in a picture with this politician at the table?” He would say no, because he didn’t want the person he was meeting with to feel that the purpose of the meeting was just photo opportunities and PR. He truly wanted to help.

There are so many stories I want to tell about Rabbi Hauer, but I am probably already getting close to the record for my longest message in Torah Tidbits ever. And I could probably go on and fill up all 80 pages with stories and incredible messages that I and the OU team have learned from Rabbi Hauer. But for all of us to take just some of these

ideas into our lives would be an incredible accomplishment and an amazing testament to the life of Rabbi Hauer and his influence.

Let us work on enhancing *achdut*, on listening more, on loving more, and *b'ezrat Hashem*, doing as much as we can. These are giant shoes to fill. Perhaps no one in the world can properly fit in these shoes. But with many people trying, we will be able to make up for this tremendous, tremendous loss by adding these attributes to our own lives.

If you never had the merit of meeting Rabbi Hauer personally, I highly recommend you make sure to go and look for videos of him speaking. Make sure to take the time to learn about this incredible individual, because every minute with him was a learning experience. I assure you, you will not regret any minute that you give learning from Rabbi Hauer Zt"l.

Rabbi Hauer Zt"l contributed almost weekly to Torah Tidbits sharing his wisdom with Klal Yisrael. His last message in Torah Tidbits before passing was titled **Between Heaven and Earth**, how apropos for his last article. Rabbi Hauer has written a lot of material in advance and *bezrat Hashem* we will continue publishing his writings in editions to come. May all of the incredible messages and life lessons that we have learned from Rabbi Hauer be used as a tool by Rabbi Hauer in **Heaven** to be *Meilitz Yosher* for Klal Yisrael, his family, friends and the OU. May the values and attributes that he taught us in this world continue servicing us on the **earth** to continue walking in his footsteps to be true servants of *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,

Rabbi Avi Berman



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Our beloved Rabbi Moshe Hauer זצ"ל

We will do everything in our power to fill your shoes and follow in your footsteps, continuing your legacy and striving to make Hashem proud.





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FROM THE DESK OF MOSHE HAUER ZT"l

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Rabbi Moshe Hauer's zt"l divrei Torah were enthusiastically read each week by tens of thousands of readers of Torah Tidbits. His sudden death this past *Shemini Atzeret* came as a shock to our community and to the Jewish world at large. In the coming weeks and months we will honor Rabbi Hauer's memory by publishing some of his most compelling and thought-provoking divrei Torah. May the study of his exquisite words of Torah be a source of *chizuk* and bring blessing to his memory.

Rebuilding After Destruction

The following message was written two years ago in the immediate aftermath of October 7th. In this piece, he describes the people of Israel running themselves ragged caring for their fellow Jew – a description that would be most fitting of himself. While a lot has changed since then, Rabbi Hauer zt"l's message still resonates deeply and is a charge to us all.

I am writing to you today from Yerushalayim, where since arriving on Wednesday evening and spending time with people it has been so apparent that Israel today is filled with pain and love, regret and determination, faith and hope.

The pain could be seen in the family members at a double shiva house who gathered to see a newly discovered flash of security camera footage providing a barely recognizable view of their loved ones rushing into harm's way in their determination to save others. It is there in the eyes of the displaced who are struggling with the unspeakable trauma of

the hours they lay in fear during the terrorist attack, their harrowing escape while so many dear to them were lost, and their current state of demoralizing homelessness. It is visible in the "before and after" pictures shared by inspiring but suffering pioneers, builders of beautiful communities that now lie in ruins. And it is palpable in the exhaustion of the parents living in torturous limbo, awaiting news of the fate of their children.

The love is everywhere, as everyone seems to just want to do and to demonstrate care for each other. While the large systems of government and the army understandably struggle to meet a sudden and steep rise in needs of services and supplies, individuals and organizations rush to do anything they can possibly think of to benefit those directly affected. This is also visible in America as the Jewish community's desire to give is totally and beautifully out of control. It is even more out of control here, without any boundaries between communities.

Regret - *charata* - is everywhere, but in

the best spirit of teshuva, it is accompanied by determination, - *kabala al ha'atid*. To the army and intelligence, what happened on Shemini Atzeres was an epic failure that has led those same institutions to a steely-eyed commitment to reclaim their superiority and to defeat Hamas decisively. To many in the broader society, the newfound unity in crisis has crystallized the tragic folly of a year spent on the brink of civil war over internal squabbles, what they see now as little things that they will never allow to divide them again. And to others, observant and non-observant, it has led to a reconsideration of our reliance on our power and strength – *kochi v'otzem yadi* – in place of the Almighty.

Most inspiring is how faith and hope prevail. Our capacity for resilience draws on feeling supported by G-d and man and by living with mission and purpose. These are the strengths of the Jewish people, especially in Israel. No one is running away from their land or even from their border community. They may have to be out of harm's way until the situation is resolved, but they are determined to be back and are confident that they will be. And while confidence can sometimes be unnervingly arrogant, here it seems to draw from a strong sense of destiny, of *netzach Yisrael*.

In considering all this, many have invoked Noah and the destruction of the flood. While there are many angles of comparison, allow me to share one.

While the Torah praises Noah effusively, our Sages read between the lines and were somewhat critical of him, comparing Noah unfavorably to both Avraham and Moshe. They went so far as to blame Noah for the flood, classifying this disaster - using the

words of Yeshayahu (54:6) - as the *mei Noach*, the Waters of Noah (see Zohar I:106a), because he had not worked or prayed to avert it. This stands in contrast to Avraham's response to the impending destruction of Sodom and to Moshe's reaction to Hashem's anger at the Jewish people after the Golden Calf. Noah, by contrast, when told of the impending destruction of the world, simply accepted it and built himself the *teivah*.

But Noah does not remain that way. By the time the flood waters subside, what is left is *ach Noach*, a diminished Noah, coughing and spitting blood (Bereishis 7:23). He had just spent a year worrying about everyone but himself, running himself ragged literally 24/7 to make sure each of the world's animals got what it needed to eat when it needed it.

As the world was to come from Noah, G-d needed him to shift from a focus on himself



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THE UNTIMELY PASSING OF

Rabbi Moshe Hauer zt"l

a man of great integrity, leadership and devotion. His wisdom, Torah knowledge, compassion, and clarity of vision will be missed by Klal Yisrael.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, to the Orthodox Union and our people.

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Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Brander

PRESIDENT AND ROSH HAYESHIVA

and the entire **Ohr Torah Stone** family

to a focus on others. *Olam chesed yibaneh*. The world is built upon kindness (Tehillim 89:3); it cannot come from someone who is self-centered. But because Noach was pressured into this service by the circumstances of the flood and did not embrace that outward focus willingly, he experienced it in a way that weakened him and made him less of himself, *ach Noach*.

The past two weeks have seen Klal Yisrael running themselves ragged 24/7, not because of anything that threatened them personally but only because they have an unquenchable desire to help others who are struggling and in pain and danger. They – like Noach - are exhausted. But they, as children of Avraham and students of Moshe, are not diminished. Quite the opposite. When Klal Yisrael was activated by the tragedy of Shemini Atzeres, they were waiting as they always are for the opportunity to give and to help. Especially after the experience of this past year of division, that desire to give and to love and to heal was overwhelming. As we have watched this powerful response of giving, we are seeing the Jewish people grow in stature rather than shrink as the kindness of Avraham has granted them his descriptive as well, *ha'adam hagadol ba'anakim*, a giant in humanity.

Worlds have been destroyed, but they will be rebuilt by the powerful drive for kindness, the clear-eyed determination born of regret for all the divisions within us, and by a firm faith and hope in *netzach Yisrael*, the eternal Jewish people.

Evidently, both our father Avraham and our teacher Moshe were unable to take comfort in their own physical and spiritual safety, in their own assurance of a promising future, if others would not share that future.

The pain is overwhelming. There has been so much loss experienced here. There are 50-80 funerals being conducted daily of the more than 1500 killed by the horrific acts of Hamas, while the thousands of wounded face the complexities of life-changing injury, treatment and rehabilitation. Many have experienced clusters of loss, including multiple members of their family, army unit, or community. Thousands live in limbo awaiting news of the fate of their relatives, the 203 captives in the inhuman hands of Hamas. Hundreds have seen the homes and communities they built with love and devotion harmed or destroyed, and hundreds of thousands have become refugees within their country. The events of Shemini Atzeres were unspeakably traumatic to those who experienced them firsthand, as well as to the entire country whose sense of security was upended. While throughout Israel's existence tragic loss has been a part of life, these days it is devastatingly commonplace.

The love is overwhelming. ■



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World Mizrachi deeply mourns
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Rabbi Moshe Hauer *zt"l*

Executive Vice President of the OU.

A gentle statesman of great stature and deep conviction, he led with empathy, love and wisdom. He was a masterful *talmid chacham*, whose authoritative voice of Torah, *chesed* and faith made a deep impact throughout *Klal Yisrael*. He was a proud advocate for *Eretz Yisrael*, *Am Yisrael* and *Torat Yisrael*, who knew how to inspire Torah values through his exemplary teaching, mentoring and personal values.

He was a cherished friend of the Mizrachi movement and a prominent leader of the Orthodox Israel Coalition, where we will miss his guiding presence and counsel.

We send our deepest condolences to Rebbetzin Hauer, his dear family, and everyone at the OU.

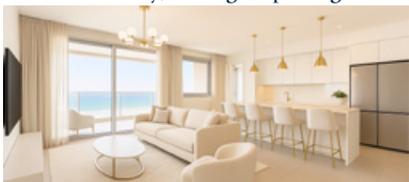
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PARSHAT NOACH

Parshat Noach describes: the destruction of the world through the Flood, Noach and his family, the story of the Tower of Babel and the introduction of Avraham’s family.

The theme we will develop in Parshat Noach is that the flood is a second try at creation. Breishit and Noach are essentially parallel creation stories, or more accurately a creation and a recreation.



1ST ALIYA (6:9-22)

Noach is righteous, while the world is filled with evil. Nocah is instructed to build an Ark, for while G-d is to destroy all living beings, He establishes a covenant with Noach to save him. Noach, his family, 2 of each animal and the food are to be brought into the Ark. Noach did all that G-d commanded.

The parsha break is curious. Because the story of the flood begins one paragraph before the beginning of our parsha.

The last paragraph of last week’s parsha describes that the world became corrupt. G-d proffered that He would destroy all living beings, as He regretted creating them. Isn’t that the logical beginning to the flood, that the world is to be destroyed? Why begin the parsha with Noach and not with the decision to destroy the world?

Perhaps the parsha break is deliberate. The story could begin with destruction. Or it could begin with the ones *not* to be destroyed. Beginning with the corruptness of the world and G-d’s desire to destroy it would frame the story as one of destruction.

But beginning with Noach being a righteous man and describing his family frames the story as not one of destruction but of survival. The flood story is *not* the story of the destruction of the world; it is the story of the *survival* of the world through Noach.

This will become a recurring theme in the Torah; near destruction, deserving destruction. But not doing it. The world deserves to be destroyed. But it isn’t destroyed. It is saved. Through Noach.

So, is it a story of destruction or a story of G-d’s generosity and kindness, of wanting to destroy but not allowing Himself to do it? Of man deserving to be wiped out entirely, but not allowing Himself to do it.

There is far more detail of the dimensions of the Ark than there is of man’s evil that is causing the world to be destroyed. The Torah is more interested in the survival, or more accurately, in the recreation of the world than it is in the story of man’s failure. The title of the Flood story should not be the destruction of the world, but rather the recreation of the world.



2ND ALIYA (7:1-16)

Noach is again described as righteous. Bring 7 of each pure animal, 2 of the impure, and all the birds into the Ark. Noach was 600 years old and brought his

family into the Ark. The waters of the springs of the depths were released and the stores of water above were opened. All entered the Ark, as G-d had commanded Noach.

The world will be destroyed with water. The Torah describes in the second verse in the Torah, that the first thing to exist in the world was water: “The spirit of G-d hovered over the waters”. If you want to indicate that the world is getting a reboot, is starting again, cover it with water, as it was “In the beginning”.

The water floods the world from below and from above. We have seen water below and above before: in Creation, Ch. 1:6, G-d separated between the waters above and below and made the heavens between. Creation involved dividing the waters; while here the division of the waters is being undone. Let it all flood the earth. The waters that were gathered in creation are here being released. The Flood is Creation being redone.



3RD ALIYA (7:17-8:14)

The Flood covers the earth. All living things on land die, save Noah and all that are in the Ark. G-d remembers Noach. The waters recede. The Ark rests on Mt. Ararat. Noach sends out the raven. Then Noach sends out the dove to see if the water has receded enough for land to be inhabitable. She returns for she has found no place to rest. After 7 days, she is sent out again and returns with an olive branch. The third time she is sent out, she does not return. Noach removes the covering and sees there is dry land.

Water covering the earth is an echo of creation, where all that existed was G-d’s spirit hovering over the water.

There is a lot of detail of water and of time. The rising water, the receding water, how many days it rained, how many days

it took to recede. The whole story, from the first drops of rain, until Noach leaves the ark takes a full year.

This stands in stark contrast to the initial creation of the world. In creation, G-d Said and it was. And after 6 days, the creation ceased. In this recreation, the covering of the world with water took months; the receding of the water took time. Why?

This is the most crucial part of this story. The world was *not* destroyed – I mean, not back to “tohu v’vohu – to void and empty”. G-d did not look at the evil of the world – man and animals - and destroy the world. He could have chosen to destroy the world entirely and begin anew with another 6 days of creation. He did not do that. He “recreated” the existing world – saving Noach, saving the world, covering it slowly with the water that existed.

It looks like G-d is committed to this world, even binding himself to it; He will flood it and rebuild it but use the world as it is. In fact, He said that to Noach – I will keep my covenant with you (6:18). What covenant was there? What was G-d Himself bound to? It would seem that He Bound Himself to this world, just as it is.

The story of the Torah is G-d’s commitment to man and to the world He created. He saves the world. He saves Noach. But even before this; Adam and Eve sinned and were punished. But not destroyed. Cain killed Abel, the most egregious sin, and is punished; but is not himself killed. G-d is committed to this world and is committed to mankind. He destroys the world naturally, maintaining it, covering it slowly with water and waiting for the water to recede. That very process communicates His commitment to His world and to mankind just the way it is.



4TH ALIYA (8:15-9:7)

Noach is told to leave the Ark with his family and with the animals, blessing the animals to teem over the land. Noach offered sacrifices on an altar. G-d committed to never again curse land and animals because of man, nor the constellations. G-d blesses Noach and family to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth. They may eat creatures but may not kill man.

The echoes of Creation continue. Noach and the animals receive the same blessings made to the animals and to man in Creation, to be fruitful and multiply. Noach is the new Adam. But with one dramatic difference. G-d pledges that never again will there be a destruction of land, animals or seasons. This was not promised at Creation.

The notion of G-d promising is shocking. **G-d** making promises to **man**? Really? **He** promises to **us**? Could it be that all the horrible evil that man is capable of perpetrating, and has perpetrated in the history of mankind – that in spite of all that evil, He guarantees the world will never deserve to be destroyed?

The Torah is conveying a dramatic philosophy of mankind. It must be that mankind, in just the way it has been created, capable of evil but capable of good, *that* creation of mankind is so precious to G-d that He commits to us, regardless of our failings. As such, the story of the Torah is a love story; G-d's love and commitment to mankind, just the way it is.



5TH ALIYA (9:8-17)

G-d tells Noach and his family that He is making a covenant with all living things that the world will never again be destroyed by Flood. The rainbow is a sign of this covenant between us. I will see the rainbow and remember this eternal covenant.

The word “brit”, covenant occurs 7 times in this paragraph of 9 verses. We are so familiar with the story of the rainbow after the flood that its plain meaning slips by unnoticed. G-d is pledging himself to the world. And, as if to make sure He Himself doesn't forget, He places a sign, a reminder of His pledge.

Noach has got to be looking around, wondering, “is He talking to me? What did I do to deserve this? The Master of the Universe, who just covered the world in water due to man's failings, He is committing to us? And binding Himself with a rainbow, lest He forget?”

The Creation story crowned man with majesty, created in the image of G-d. The Flood recreation story is a love story, the love of G-d for man, the commitment He has to man. And while a covenant has two parties, each of whom pledges to the other, in this covenant nothing is demanded of man. Only He pledges to us.



6TH ALIYA (9:18-10:32)

Noach plants a vineyard, becomes drunk and lies exposed in his tent. Cham sees Noach; the other sons cover Noach without looking. Cham is cursed, Shem is blessed, Yefet granted beauty. Noach's numerous descendents are listed, distinctive in geography and in language.

The echoes of creation continue. Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, to work it and guard it. Noach plants a vineyard. Adam (and Eve) sinned in that Garden, eating of the fruit they ought not to. And covered themselves with fig leaves. Noach drinks to excess and his nakedness is also covered.



7TH ALIYA (11:1-32)

The Tower of Babel, an attempt to unite mankind results in a dispersion and proliferation of languages. The

genealogy of Noah's descendants continues until Avraham's family is introduced, who journey toward the Land of Israel.

The story of the Tower of Babel begins as a desire for unity but ends with people scattered the world over. The desire for unity would seem to be a good thing. However, unity often implies united under me, coercing all to be like me.

World history is the history of empires seeking to make the world a better place by being just like me. The theme of dispersion, of exile which began with Adam being exiled from the Garden of Eden, and Cain exiled to wander the world has its next chapter with the dispersion, the exile of the builders of the Tower of Babel.

The dispersion and exile of the first 2 parshiot of the Torah will be reversed with the call to Avraham to come *to* the Land of Israel.

HAFTORAH: YESHAYAHU 54:1 - 55:5

This Shabbat the haftorah for *parshat Noach* is taken from chapter 54 in the Navi, *Yeshayahu*. It describes the nation of Israel after the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash. The Navi assures the people that Hashem will forever share his kindness and love with His people and He will continue to protect and sustain the people.

The special connection to *parshat Noach* is contained in pasuk 59:9 which refers to the destruction of Yerushalayim as "...this is like the waters of Noach to me..."

The Navi concludes with the reassurance that Hashem remembers His covenant with the world and His Chosen People. The degree to which we reveal Hashem's presence in our lives is the degree to which Hashem's

protection and close concern is realized. It is our responsibility to reveal Hashem. We achieve this by observing His commandments and learning His Torah. ■

STATS

2nd of 54 sedras, 2nd of 12 in Bereshit.

Written on 230 lines in a Torah, rank: 15.

18 Parshiyot; 5 open, 13 closed; rank: 12.

153 pesukim - ranks 4th. Largest in Bereshit - tied w/Vayishlach.

1861 words - ranks 11 (6th in Bereshit).

6907 letters - ranks 13 (6th in Bereshit).

Drop in ranking for words and letters is due to Noah's very short pesukim. Noah ranks 49th in words/pasuk and 51st in letters/ pasuk in the Torah.

MITZVOT

None of the TARYAG mitzvot are from Noah, yet there are mitzvot in the sedra, specifically (but not only) references to the Noahide laws. So too is P'RU URVU repeated to Noah - it is counted as a mitzva from Bereshit, when it was commanded to Adam.



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BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES
RAV, BEIT KNESSET BEIT YISRAEL, YEMIN MOSHE

"Come out of the Ark." - צא מן התבה (ח:טז)

Why did Noach not leave the Ark on his own volition when he saw the waters had rescinded? Why did Noach wait for G-d's command to leave the Ark?

The Midrash Rabbah (34:4) quotes a verse in Megillat Kohelet (10:4) "If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place." This refers to Noach who enters the Ark only after receiving permission from G-d. So too, leaving the Ark, similarly, requires permission from G-d.

The Malbim (Rabbi Meir Leibush Wisser 1809-1879, Kiev) explains that the whole process in which Noach and his family were saved from the Flood was miraculous and unnatural. The Ark had no steering ability or braking system, to prevent smashing against boulders or rocks. As this complete encounter of being saved was miraculous, leaving the Ark seemed feasible only with G-d's command. G-d could have chosen any number of natural ways to save Noach, such as placing him on a high mountain untouched by the Flood. G-d affirmed that all inhabitants of earth would be destroyed. G-d ordered Noach to take up residence in the Ark, discarding his residence as an inhabitant of the earth. Noach would become like the fish of the waters which were not affected by the Flood. Since Noach was not aware how long the curse of earth's desolation remained, he waited on the Ark, until being informed by G-d. Shabbat Shalom



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לעילוי נשמות

פנחס בן יעקב אשר וגולדה בת ישראל דוד אייז ע"ה ועזריאל בן אריה לייב ומעניה בת יצחק שרטור ע"ה

True Morality

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 Noach and the covenant made between God 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

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ר' חיים בן זרח ז"ל

Chaim Greenberg ז"ל

נלב"ע ב-ו' חשון התשכ"ו

and

יהודית בת הרב יהושע דב ז"ל

Julia Fink-Greenberg ז"ל

נלב"ע ב-ט' חשון התשס"ו

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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



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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 God made with Noah:

Whoever sheds the blood of man,
By man shall his blood be shed;
For in the image of God has God 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 allowing the relationship to begin again. What Nowak had produced, in fact, was a computer simulation of forgiveness.

Once again, the connection with the story

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(כ' חשוון, תשס"ד)

Their daughters,

Faye, Maureen, Rosi and Esti

Silton, Friedman, Lennon & Martin families

of Noach and the Flood is direct. After the Flood, God 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 necessary? 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 God'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. ■

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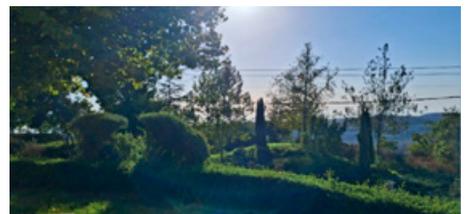
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The “Waters of Noach”

Chazal selected this week’s haftarah reading from the 54th and 55th chapters of Sefer Yishayahu, a prophecy somewhat familiar to us. The navi’s message in this haftarah focusses upon the theme of comfort and consolation, which explains why it was designated as haftarah to be read both on Parashat Re’eih and on Parashat Ki Tetze. It is, certainly, a fitting message for these post-Tish’a shabbatot.

But why, we might wonder, were these same verses chosen to be read on this Parashat No’ach?

The popular, widely-accepted, reason why

these chapters were designated to be read on this Shabbat is due to Yishayahu’s usage of the words “mei No’ach” – the waters, i.e., the flood, of Noach’s time – hence the direct connection to the events depicted in our parasha. But there are other connections as well, understated, perhaps, that touch upon the events depicted in our parasha.

For example: might the opening words of the haftarah, “Roni Akara”, “Rejoice, O barren woman”, be hinting to the final episode in the parasha, the final p’sukim that tell of the barren woman, Sarai, who would rejoice upon the birth of her son - even calling him “Yitzchak”, laughter. Such a mention connects us to our parasha and would also serve as comforting reassurance to a grief-stricken nation, searching for hope for the future – thereby a fitting theme for the haftarot of consolation. The prophet’s recalling how the nation of Avaraham, born of a once-barren woman, became, as Hashem promised, “too numerous to count” would be a source of solace to the post-churban generation.

Furthermore, there could be a subtle message for the prophet Yish’ayahu himself in the fact that the flood is referred to as the “waters of No’ach”- a term implying, according to the Zohar HaKadosh, that the flood came as a result of No’ach’s failure to pray for his generation. May we infer that Hashem was urging the navi to pray on behalf of his generation as well?

Perhaps.

But I turn to another difficulty I have

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JOCKY FEIG ע"ה

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whose 30th Yartzheit was on Erev Succot

**Her warmth and her strength
touched the lives of all who
knew her. Still part of our hearts
and minds, she was a special
blessing for us all:**

**her daughters, grand-children,
nieces and nephews, and her
many relatives and friends.**

תה"י זכרה ברוך

found in our understanding of the prophet's quotation. Many are misled in believing that the navi's reference to "Noah's Waters" is limited to Hashem's promise never to bring such destruction again when, in fact, Yishayahu's words of comfort were referring **NOT** to the flood itself but to the **post-flood** era. A simple glance into the previous pasuk would make it clear that the navi was comparing the moments of **destruction** to the promised, soon-to-be, years of **construction**. Yishayahu used his poetic expression "B'shetzef Ketzef" [v.8] – "in an outburst of wrath" – to depict the fleeting moments of G-d's anger as being of short duration compared to His many years of mercy and everlasting kindness that would follow: "B'Chesed olam richamtich" [v. 8]. The moments of punishment reflected in the "Mei No'ach" did not equal the decades of growth, development and recovery that began in the **aftermath** of the flood – precisely as Hashem had promised No'ach and the survivors.

The psalmist pleaded with Hashem, and urged Him: "Sam'cheinu kimot innitanu" – "Bring us joy to equal those days of affliction". I would submit that such was precisely Yishayahu's **guarantee** to his generation – that G-d's years of blessing and joy would far outweigh the difficult times of our suffering.

Given this promise, we would be wise **NOT** to focus on the days of affliction alone, not on "Mei No'ach", but always to remember the guarantee of "B'Chesed olam richamtich" and, thereby, look forward to future years of blessing and happiness. ■

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The Final Straw – The Sin of *Hamas*

The Torah tells us that, before the flood, ותמלא הארץ חמס - “the earth was filled with hamas.” Rashi (9:13) cites a Gemara that defines *hamas* as robbery – לא נחתם גזר דיןם - אלא על הגזל (סנהדרין ק”ח) - *their sentence was sealed only on account of their sin of robbery*. On the surface the word “*hamas*” is often translated simply as violence or robbery— but a closer reading reveals a deeper, more universal meaning.

Rav Yosef Zevin (La’Torah V’LaMoadim) inquires as to why the final straw was *gezel*-robbery? The people during the generation of Noah engaged in many transgressions. Why

is *gezel* (robbery) what triggered the flood?

OSHEK YADEINU

It is interesting to note that we refer to *gezel* in another very significant context. In the Neila tefilla at the conclusion of Yom Kippur we no longer recite “*Al Chet*”, but we do state: למען נחדל מעושק ידינו – which is translated as - ceasing to steal! At the culmination of Yom Kippur, rather than repeating the list of sins in which we may have engaged throughout the year, all we reference is robbery. Perhaps, Rav Zevin suggests, that this is all inclusive. Typically, when you have a closing statement (חתימה) it reflects the content of all that precedes it. (הכל הולך אחר החתום). How does *gezel* capture all transgressions, especially transgressions between man and God?

Essentially, each of us is gifted with certain capabilities and if we do not utilize our talents properly, in our *avodat Hashem*, we are guilty of misappropriating those gifts. When we waste time, don’t act properly in shul or in our workplace, or engage in inappropriate behavior it is as if we are misusing the valuable talents God entrusted to us, which is like stealing. That is why we reference - *oshek*- stealing as the all-encompassing phrase in Neila.

HAMAS-GEZEL

Similarly, with respect to the generation of

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the flood. Hamas- robbery - was the final sin that sealed the fate of the generation of Noach. It was not merely the acts of theft or cruelty between human beings; it was a comprehensive corruption of how people related to the world, to each other, and to God. In essence, it represents misappropriation: the taking or wasting of that which does not truly belong to us.

This misappropriation can take many forms. It includes the obvious wrongs done to others—robbery, deceit, oppression—but it also extends to the ways we fail to honor the gifts that God has entrusted to us. Talents left undeveloped, time wasted, opportunities ignored—these, too, are forms of *hamas*, theft from the Divine source of life itself. Just as in the final prayers of Yom Kippur, where all sins are summarized as *Oshek* a kind of spiritual misappropriation, the Torah teaches that the downfall of Noach's generation was

ultimately rooted in this misuse.

DIN V'HESHBON

The Gra says that in the future we're going to have to give a Din V'Heshbon (Judgment and accounting). Why the double language? Din- refers to what we did wrong. Heshbon – refers to the good things we could have accomplished during the time we engaged in transgressions.

NOACH- MIDRASH

Rav Pam asks how the people in the generation of Noach were able to fall so low? He cites a midrash that states that up until Noach, people were born with webbed fingers. Noach was the first individual to be born with separate fingers. That enabled him to create tools with which to work the land and it made it much easier to plow and plant. This innovation led to leisure hours. People became much more efficient and

suddenly had a lot of free time on their hands. Free time in and of itself is not problematic. What is problematic is when that time is used in the wrong way.

CONCLUSION

The destruction of the generation of Noah reminds us that free time, natural talents, relationships, and sacred opportunities are all entrusted to us, not for personal indulgence or neglect, but for meaningful use. When we misuse them—by wasting time, ignoring responsibilities, or exploiting others—we engage in a subtle form of theft that disrupts the harmony of life and, ultimately, the society we inhabit. The final straw – *hamas* (theft), was a warning to all future generations: integrity is measured not only by what we take from others, but by how faithfully we steward the gifts we have been given. ■



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Pinpointing Priorities

After the Great Flood that destroyed the world, it was time to begin anew and rebuild. The Torah tells us, “**Vayachel** Noach ish ha’adamah vayita karem – And Noach **began** to be a master of the soil and he planted a vineyard.” (*Bereisheet* 9:20) Rashi notes the curious use of the word “*vayachel* – and he began,” and comments that not only does the word mean ‘and he began’ but is also connotes “*chullin*,” an element of the mundane and irreverent. “This [can be understood as] he made himself **profane**,” for he should have first engaged in planting something different. — [Gen. Rabbah 36:3. i.e., he should not have planted a vineyard, from which wine is produced, but other trees.] (Rashi)

What was so terrible about what Noach

did? After all, the Midrash teaches us that he was instructed to take every species of plant and animal into the ark so it could be used after the flood. Further, after witnessing such overwhelming devastation, did Noach not deserve to relax and find comfort in wine to recover from his ordeal? It seems overly critical to say that by planting a vineyard he desecrated himself.

The famed mashgiach of Yeshivat Mir, Rav Yerucham Levovitz *zt”l* finds two fundamental ideas embedded in Rashi’s comment. The first is that “everything follows the beginning,” meaning that a thoughtful and deliberate start guides the subsequent path. Noach was charged with the responsibility to rebuild; thus his first action was foundational.

Rav Scheinerman in *Ohel Moshe* adds, had Noach had a true understanding of the significance and magnitude of laying the groundwork for the future of civilization, he would not have planted grapes, as they carry the potential to cause destruction. Noach’s *chillul*, his debasement, was his failure to grasp the scope and purpose of his obligation to rebuild the world.

The second idea that Rav Yerucham *zt”l* offers is that one’s choices, however subconsciously driven, indicate a facet of his core character. Noach’s first choice, a vineyard, suggests a leaning toward capricious or lax behavior. We can extend this perspective to ourselves; How do we choose our primary activities? What motivates our decisions and

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preferences?

Rav Simcha Wasserman *zt"l* offers an additional and fascinating perspective. Noach witnessed sweeping destruction. One could think that he deserved time to mourn the loss and allow himself the distraction of wine to help ease his transition back into a cultivated world. Here, says Rav Wasserman, lay his mistake. In the aftermath of such devastation, one cannot yield or succumb to nursing wounds and mourning. Rather, one must immediately put his efforts into reconstruction and rehabilitation. Rav Wasserman was known for speaking out against the millions of dollars invested into memorials for the Holocaust instead of dedicating the money to scholarship, education and training the new generation with Jewish values and pride.

During the month of Elul and the *Yamim Nora'im*, we involve ourselves in efforts to realign our mindset and our goals for the new year. As we read *Parashat Noach* we are reminded that the choices and decisions we make lay the foundations for the year ahead. Let us choose wisely, ensuring that the foundations are strong and focused with the correct priorities. ■



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Programming designed to support and create community for soldiers and their families affected by October 7th and its aftermath.

www.nbn.org.il/all-events



BADERECH

RABBI JUDAH MISCHEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAMP HASC
AUTHOR OF BADERECH SERIES

Noach: Second Chances

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" d), 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.

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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, Noah

and his family were sealed in the Ark. Inside, while the flood waters raged, there was no rest. The Midrash tells us that Noah 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 Noah 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. ■

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GEULAS YISRAEL

RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN

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Before The Avot: First Founders of Judaism

Parashat Bereishit recounts the three seminal failures that shaped the early history of humankind. The first failure unfolds in Gan Eden, when Adam defies Hashem's direct command, surrendering to desire rather than submitting to divine authority. The second follows soon after, when Kayin commits the first murder, disregarding the voice of moral conscience. Even without an explicit command prohibiting bloodshed, such an act should have been obviously immoral. The third tragedy appears toward the end of the parashah: powerful men seize women and claim them as they please, desecrating the sanctity of marriage. Power, once unrestrained, corrodes both judgment and spirit.

These three personal collapses—theological, moral, and social—compel Hashem to reconsider His original vision for humanity, curbing the human lifespan to one hundred and twenty years.

By contrast, Parashat Noach chronicles not personal breakdowns but collective collapse. An entire generation decays morally, compelling a divine reset of creation itself. The saga continues with the Tower of Bavel, where humanity unites with remarkable coordination and purpose, only to channel its ambition toward rebellion—imagining

that it could scale the heavens and replace Hashem. In response, Hashem disperses them into seventy nations scattered across the earth.

At this point, after the failures of Bereishit and Noach, it becomes clear that a new plan for humanity is required. Rather than expecting all of humankind to live by divine ideals, Hashem selects one man to discover Him and to inspire a moral and monotheistic revolution. That man, Avraham, would establish a family, a clan, and ultimately a nation. Avraham emerges from the moral wreckage of Bereishit and Noach—the world having been rebooted and its peoples redistributed. Amid the ruins of these ethical and spiritual collapses, Avraham is summoned to journey to the Land of Hashem and to inaugurate Jewish history.

Bereishit and Noach are stories of failure, while Lech Lecha launches the response—the unveiling of “Plan B” through the selection of Avraham. Humanity collapses, but from its ruins rises a single man who restores faith, rebuilds morality, and begins the long journey of redemption.

Yet within Parashat Noach, two figures seem to belong to the emerging world of Avraham. Their stories suggest that Lech

Lecha does not erase the past or begin upon a blank slate. Rather, two personalities from Noah play a crucial role in shaping the Jewish future and legacy. They do not encounter Hashem as Avraham does, nor do they attain his sweeping moral grandeur, yet they plant the qualities essential for the nation that Avraham will soon build.

THE PATH OF SHEM

Shem appears in Parshat Noach and then largely disappears from the rest of Sefer Bereishit. According to Chazal, he was a deeply righteous figure and a spiritual leader in the postdiluvian world. He is often identified with Malki-Tzedek, king of Shalem, who blesses Avraham after the war of the four kings, serving both as a “priest to G-d” and as a moral-spiritual guide to the emerging generations.

Chazal also teach that Shem, together with his great-grandson Ever, established a yeshiva—known as the Beit Midrash of Shem v’Ever—where, according to our Masorah, both Avraham and Yaakov studied Torah. Yet the Torah itself records only Shem’s behavior in the immediate aftermath of the Flood, leaving the rest of his story to Torah sheb’al peh. What we do witness is Noah planting a vineyard, an image reminiscent of the dawn of creation, when Hashem had planted trees in the newly formed world of Gan Eden. This Gan Eden-like moment holds the promise of a new beginning—a second chance for humanity to repair the failures of the first.

Tragically, the renewal falters. Instead of focusing on rebuilding civilization, Noah sinks into drunkenness, lying uncovered and humiliated in his tent. His son Cham witnesses the shame and rushes to tell his brothers instead of acting swiftly to protect

his father’s dignity. Shem and Yefet enter the tent walking backward, unwilling to gaze upon their father’s nakedness, and quickly cover him to end the disgrace.

For his failure to respond appropriately, Cham is cursed and condemned to servitude, while Shem and Yefet are blessed. Although the Torah describes their actions together, Chazal discern a difference: Shem was the principal actor, while Yefet followed his lead. It is this instinct for reverence and restraint that marks Shem as the ancestor of Avraham—the man who would restore holiness to human history. In this moment, Shem became our founding ancestor—not one of the Avot, but the progenitor of the values that would shape the Jewish people.

In Parashat Ha’azinu, the Torah describes the scattering of the generation of the Tower of Bavel:

בְּהַנְחֵל הָעֲלִיּוֹן גּוֹיִם, בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם, יִצַּב גְּבוּלֹת עַמִּים לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי שְׂרָאֵל (Devarim 32:8)

“When the Most High apportioned the nations, when He separated the children of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel.”

Rashi observes that this verse raises an implicit question: if humanity had fallen so deeply, why didn’t Hashem destroy the generation of Migdal Bavel as He had the generation of Noah? Rashi explains that Hashem chose to preserve humanity because the Jewish nation was destined to descend from Shem. It was Shem’s moral sensitivity and respect toward his father that laid the foundation for the future character and identity of the Jewish people.

RESTORING HUMANITY’S IMAGE

Shem’s behavior illustrates two

fundamental traits of Jewish identity. His modesty and careful covering of his father reflected an awareness of the sanctity of human beings—the *tzelem Elokim*. In the aftermath of the Flood, when most of humanity had perished and the survivors endured the cramped, suffocating confines of the Ark, it was far from obvious that human beings were meant to be treated with inherent dignity. Shem's actions preserved this vision and provided a model for the moral and ethical legacy that would define his descendants.

Noah did little to restore this vision. Instead of employing his G-d-given traits—vision, hard work, creativity, and hope—he planted grapes and indulged his sorrow in alcohol. His unclothed state and drunkenness represented a nadir in human dignity and the awareness of *tzelem Elokim*. Shem's immediate and respectful response, entering the tent without gazing at his father's disgrace, became a moment of restoration of human dignity.

This ethic became central to Shem's descendants: the belief that Hashem endows humans with distinctive traits, granting both dignity and moral responsibility. Unlike animals, who act on instinct, humans are expected to exercise free will and moral conscience in the pursuit of something higher and eternal.

Over the past two years, we have defended the value of *tzelem Elokim*, confronting forces that demean human life, glorify death over life, and fail to honor the sacred creation of Hashem. Shem's example remains a touchstone for restoring and upholding human dignity.

FAMILY AND FAITH

The second trait that Shem establishes at the core of human identity—and ultimately

at the core of Jewish identity—is respect for his father. Up to this point, the Torah presents few examples of meaningful father-child relationships. We wonder about Adam's role in the tragedy of Kayin and Hevel: where was he during this moral collapse? Would he have intervened? Did Kayin ever return to seek his father's forgiveness? We witness Lemech navigating complex relationships with his wives while his children master crafts and music. These stories unfold in parallel, yet without any meaningful parent-child interactions to provide moral guidance or nurture character. Cham fails to uphold the simplest duty: protecting his father's dignity. He hesitates, gawking at Noah instead of acting. By contrast, Shem responds with immediate reverence, honoring both human dignity and *kibbud av va'em*, the sacred respect due to a parent. Without this foundation, family building cannot commence. Up to this point in Bereishit, no fully healthy family structure exists. By honoring his father, Shem establishes the foundation for functioning families—the primary vehicle through which moral and spiritual values are transmitted. Bereishit is less a book of abstract theology than a book of family. It chronicles the struggles of our Avot to navigate human complexity: tension between children, multiple wives, succession crises, and the challenges of building households. Families serve as a microcosm for the covenantal relationship with Hashem, nurturing loyalty, selflessness, and devotion. Without Shem's moral example, these traits cannot take root.

For these reasons, Shem may be called the “proto-founder” of the Jewish people—a term meaning that while he did not formally discover Hashem or establish the covenant, he

laid the essential moral and spiritual groundwork. His recognition of the *tzelem Elokim* and his reverent care for his father created the conditions in which Avraham could later fulfill his historic role. Shem planted the seeds from which the Jewish nation would ultimately grow, making him an indispensable forerunner of the covenantal project.

ANCIENT ECHO

We all know who Terach was. The Midrash tells the famous story that he was a priest who craved idols and encouraged pagan rites. He even denounced his own son, Avram, for believing in one G-d, condemning him to certain death—a fate averted only by a miraculous divine intervention. As we recite during the Pesach seder:

מתחילה אָבְדָת עֲבֹדָה זָרָה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, תֵּרַח אָבִי
אֲבִרָהָם

“At first, our ancestors served other—Terach, the father of Abraham.”

Yet the Torah omits this sordid history, as well as the story of the idolatrous priesthood. Instead, we see Terach beginning the journey with his family from Aram Naharim toward the Land of Israel. He stops in Charan, and ultimately his son Avraham completes the journey. Still, Terach began the process. Though he was a pagan who had not discovered the one G-d, he felt a tug in his heart toward the Land of Hashem. He was the first to start the journey—the initial stirrings of aliyah. Evidently, Hashem creates within the Jewish heart the ability to respond to the pull of this Land, even when that heart is not yet fully attuned to ritual or belief. There is an ancient echo in the Jewish soul, a commitment to this Land that transcends formal observance.

We have witnessed this echo amplified

across history. The great heroes who led the Jewish people back to Israel and helped resettle the Land were not always fully observant of Torah law or halachic practice. Yet they were devoted to the Land and to the people. In their own way, they were modern-day “Terachs”: their motivation to return was deeply rooted, visceral, and instinctual—even if not entirely religiously articulated. Their movement laid the groundwork for the covenantal journey that their descendants would continue, each step echoing the ancient stirrings of a heart drawn toward the Land of Hashem.

These are the two founding ancestors of Parshat Noach—two people who gave rise to the man who would revolutionize religion and history. Each contributed foundational features of Jewish identity. Shem exemplified *tzelem Elokim* at a moment when human dignity had been degraded. He was also the first to honor a parent, providing the essential platform for family life. Terach, though a pagan, felt the call of Israel in his heart and began the journey toward the Land of Hashem. Together, these two set the stage for Jewish history. They are the twin heroes of Parshat Noach. ■



OU Press is honored to partner with Rabbi Moshe Taragin on his new volume in Hebrew regarding the recent war (*Emunah B'toch Hahastara*). This remarkable book is also available in English, “**Dark Clouds Above, Faith Below**”

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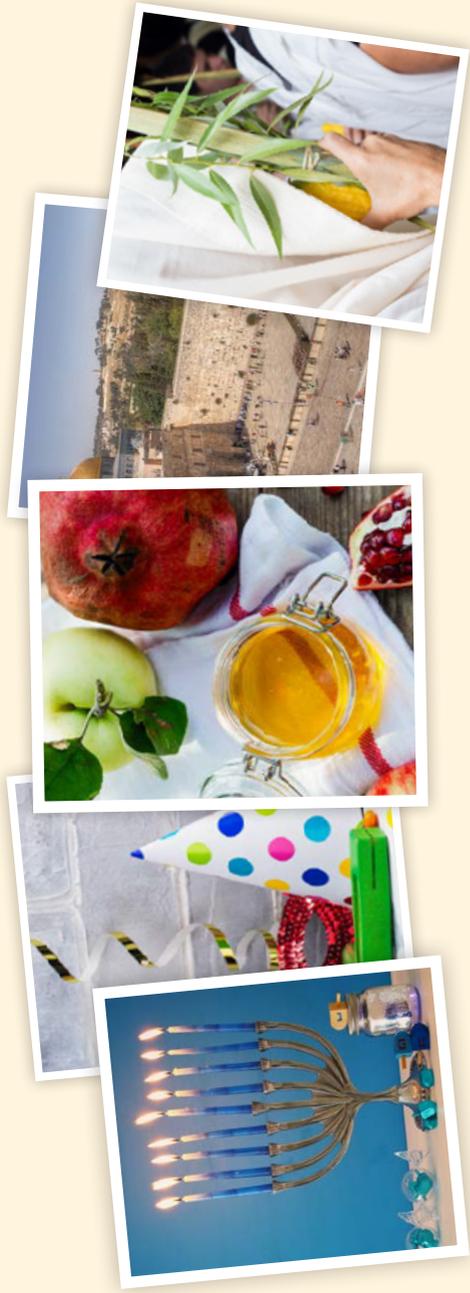
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5786 Zmanim 2025-2026 י"שנ

The centerfold - the yearly zmanim (pages 46-51) can be pulled out and saved

Shabbat Mevarchim (Molad)

| English Date | Shabbat Mevarchim | Month | Molad | ימי ראש חדש |
|---|-------------------|---------|---|--|
| Rosh Chodesh Kislev is on Friday November 21st | חיי שרה | כסלו | מולד חודש כסליו יהיה ביום תמישי בשעה 38, 13 דקות ו 9 חלקים | ראש חודש כסלו יהיה ביום הששי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Tevet is on Shabbat Dec. 20th and Sunday Dec. 21st | וישב | טבת | מולד חודש טבת יהיה בליל שבת בשעה 22, 2 דקות ו 10 חלקים | ראש חודש טבת יהיה ביום שבת קודש ולמחרת ביום ראשון הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Shevat is on Monday January 19th | וארא | שבט | מולד חודש שבט יהיה ביום ראשון בשעה 6, 15 דקות ו 11 חלקים | ראש חודש שבט יהיה ביום שני הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Adar is on Tuesday Feb. 17th and Wednesday Feb 18th | משפטים | אדר | מולד חודש אדר יהיה בליל שלישי בשעה 50, 3 דקות ו 12 חלקים | ראש חודש אדר יהיה ביום שלישי וביום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Nisan is on Thursday March 19th | ויקהל- פקודי | ניסן | מולד חודש ניסן יהיה ביום רביעי בשעה 34, 16 דקות ו 13 חלקים | ראש חודש ניסן יהיה ביום תמישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Iyar is on Friday April 17th and Shabbat April 18th | שמיני | אייר | מולד חודש אייר יהיה ביום שישי בשעה 18, 5 דקות ו 14 חלקים | ראש חודש אייר יהיה ביום הששי וביום שבת קודש הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Sivan is on Sunday May 17th | במדבר | סיון | מולד חודש סיון יהיה בליל ראשון בשעה 2, 18 דקות ו 15 חלקים | ראש חודש סיון יהיה ביום ראשון הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Tammuz is on Monday June 15th and Tuesday June 16th | קרח | תמוז | מולד חודש תמוז יהיה ביום שני בשעה 46, 6 דקות ו 16 חלקים | ראש חודש תמוז יהיה ביום שני וביום שלישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av is on Wednesday July 15th | מטות- מסעי | מנחם אב | מולד חודש מנחם אב יהיה בליל רביעי בשעה 30, 19 דקות ו 17 חלקים | ראש חודש מנחם אב יהיה ביום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |
| Rosh Chodesh Elul is on Thursday August 13th and Friday August 14th | ראה | אלול | מולד חודש אלול יהיה ביום תמישי בשעה 15, 8 דקות ו 0 חלקים | ראש חודש אלול יהיה ביום תמישי וביום הששי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה |

Shabbat Candle Lighting & Havdala

| Parsha | English Date | Hebrew Date | Jerusalem (Candles 40mins before sunset) | | Tel Aviv | | Beer Sheva | | Haifa (Candles 30mins before sunset) | |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|-----------|----------|---------|------------|---------|---|---------|
| | | | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala |
| Noach | Oct. 24-25 | 3 Marcheshvan | 5:21 | 6:33/7:13 | 5:38 | 6:35 | 5:39 | 6:36 | 5:26 | 6:34 |
| Lech Lecha | Oct. 31-Nov. 1 | 10 Marcheshvan | 4:14 | 5:27/6:06 | 4:31 | 5:29 | 4:32 | 5:30 | 4:19 | 5:27 |
| Vayera | Nov. 7-8 | 17 Marcheshvan | 4:09 | 5:22/6:01 | 4:26 | 5:24 | 4:27 | 5:25 | 4:14 | 5:22 |
| Chayei Sara | Nov. 14-15 | 24 Marcheshvan | 4:04 | 5:18/5:57 | 4:21 | 5:20 | 4:22 | 5:21 | 4:09 | 5:18 |
| Toldot | Nov. 21-22 | 2 Kislev | 4:01 | 5:16/5:54 | 4:18 | 5:17 | 4:19 | 5:18 | 4:05 | 5:15 |
| Vayitzei | Nov. 28-29 | 9 Kislev | 3:59 | 5:15/5:52 | 4:16 | 5:16 | 4:18 | 5:17 | 4:03 | 5:14 |
| Vayishlach | Dec. 5-6 | 16 Kislev | 3:59 | 5:15/5:52 | 4:16 | 5:16 | 4:17 | 5:18 | 4:03 | 5:14 |
| Vayeishev | Dec. 12-13 | 23 Kislev | 4:00 | 5:17/5:53 | 4:17 | 5:18 | 4:19 | 5:19 | 4:04 | 5:15 |
| Miketz/ Rosh Chodesh | Dec. 19-20 | 30 Kislev | 4:02 | 5:19/5:56 | 4:19 | 5:20 | 4:21 | 5:22 | 4:06 | 5:18 |
| Vayigash | Dec. 26-27 | 7 Tevet | 4:06 | 5:23/6:00 | 4:23 | 5:24 | 4:25 | 5:26 | 4:10 | 5:22 |
| Vayeichi | Jan. 2-3 | 14 Tevet | 4:11 | 5:28/6:04 | 4:28 | 5:29 | 4:29 | 5:30 | 4:15 | 5:27 |
| Sh'mot | Jan. 9-10 | 21 Tevet | 4:16 | 5:33/6:10 | 4:33 | 5:34 | 4:35 | 5:36 | 4:21 | 5:32 |
| Va'era | Jan. 16-17 | 28 Tevet | 4:22 | 5:39/6:16 | 4:39 | 5:40 | 4:41 | 5:41 | 4:27 | 5:38 |
| Bo | Jan. 23-24 | 6 Sh'vat | 4:29 | 5:45/6:23 | 4:46 | 5:46 | 4:47 | 5:47 | 4:33 | 5:44 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Beshalach | Jan. 30-31 | 13 Sh'vat | 4:35 | 5:51/6:29 | 4:52 | 5:52 | 4:54 | 5:53 | 4:40 | 5:50 |
| Yitro | Feb. 6-7 | 20 Sh'vat | 4:42 | 5:57/6:36 | 4:59 | 5:58 | 5:00 | 5:59 | 4:47 | 5:56 |
| Mishpatim/ Shekalim | Feb. 13-14 | 27 Sh'vat | 4:48 | 6:02/6:42 | 5:05 | 6:04 | 5:06 | 6:04 | 4:53 | 6:02 |
| Terumah | Feb. 20-21 | 4 Adar | 4:54 | 6:08/6:47 | 5:11 | 6:09 | 5:12 | 6:10 | 4:59 | 6:08 |
| Tetzave/Zachor | Feb. 27-28 | 11 Adar | 4:59 | 6:13/6:53 | 5:16 | 6:15 | 5:17 | 6:15 | 5:05 | 6:14 |
| Ki Tisa | Mar. 6-7 | 18 Adar | 5:04 | 6:18/6:58 | 5:22 | 6:20 | 5:22 | 6:20 | 5:11 | 6:19 |
| Vayakheil-Pikudei/ HaChodesh | Mar. 13-14 | 25 Adar | 5:09 | 6:23/7:03 | 5:27 | 6:25 | 5:27 | 6:25 | 5:16 | 6:24 |
| Vayikra | Mar. 20-21 | 3 Nisan | 5:14 | 6:28/7:08 | 5:32 | 6:30 | 5:32 | 6:29 | 5:21 | 6:29 |
| Tzav/Hagadol | Mar. 27-28 | 10 Nisan | 6:19 | 7:33/8:13 | 6:37 | 7:35 | 6:36 | 7:34 | 6:26 | 7:35 |
| Leil HaSeder | April 1-2 | 15 Nisan | 6:22 | 7:36/8:16 | 6:40 | 7:38 | 6:40 | 7:38 | 6:30 | 7:38 |
| Shabbat Chol Hamoed | April 3-4 | 17 Nisan | 6:24 | 7:38/8:17 | 6:41 | 7:40 | 6:41 | 7:39 | 6:31 | 7:40 |
| Shvi Shel Pesach | Apr. 7-8 | 21 Nisan | 6:26 | 7:41/8:20 | 6:44 | 7:43 | 6:43 | 7:42 | 6:34 | 7:43 |
| Shmini | Apr. 10-11 | 24 Nisan | 6:28 | 7:43/8:22 | 6:46 | 7:45 | 6:45 | 7:44 | 6:36 | 7:45 |
| Tazria-Metzora/ Rosh Chodesh | Apr. 17-18 | 1 Iyar | 6:33 | 7:48/8:27 | 6:51 | 7:50 | 6:50 | 7:49 | 6:41 | 7:51 |
| Acharei Mot - Kedoshim | Apr. 24-25 | 8 Iyar | 6:38 | 7:54/8:32 | 6:56 | 7:56 | 6:55 | 7:54 | 6:46 | 7:57 |
| Emor | May 1-2 | 15 Iyar | 6:43 | 7:59/8:37 | 7:01 | 8:02 | 6:59 | 8:00 | 6:51 | 8:02 |
| Behar-Bechukotai | May 8-9 | 22 Iyar | 6:48 | 8:05/8:42 | 7:06 | 8:07 | 7:04 | 8:05 | 6:56 | 8:08 |
| Bemidbar | May 15-16 | 29 Iyar | 6:53 | 8:10/8:47 | 7:11 | 8:13 | 7:09 | 8:11 | 7:02 | 8:14 |
| Shavuot | May 21-22 | 6 Sivan | 6:57 | - | 7:15 | - | 7:13 | - | 7:06 | - |

| Parsha | English Date | Hebrew Date | Jerusalem (Candles 40mins before sunset) | | Tel Aviv | | Beer Sheva | | Haifa (Candles 30mins before sunset) | |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|---|-----------|----------|---------|------------|---------|---|---------|
| | | | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala | Candles | Havdala |
| Naso | May 22-23 | 7 Sivan | 6:58 | 8:16/8:51 | 7:15 | 8:18 | 7:14 | 8:16 | 7:06 | 8:20 |
| Beha'alotcha | May 29-30 | 14 Sivan | 7:02 | 8:21/8:56 | 7:20 | 8:23 | 7:18 | 8:21 | 7:11 | 8:25 |
| Sh'lach | June 5-6 | 21 Sivan | 7:06 | 8:25/8:59 | 7:24 | 8:27 | 7:22 | 8:25 | 7:15 | 8:29 |
| Korach | June 12-13 | 28 Sivan | 7:09 | 8:28/9:03 | 7:27 | 8:31 | 7:25 | 8:28 | 7:18 | 8:32 |
| Chukat | June 19-20 | 4 Tammuz | 7:11 | 8:30/9:05 | 7:29 | 8:33 | 7:27 | 8:30 | 7:20 | 8:35 |
| Balak | June 26-27 | 12 Tammuz | 7:13 | 8:31/9:06 | 7:30 | 8:34 | 7:28 | 8:31 | 7:22 | 8:36 |
| Pinchas | July 3-4 | 19 Tammuz | 7:13 | 8:31/9:06 | 7:31 | 8:34 | 7:28 | 8:31 | 7:22 | 8:35 |
| Matot-Masei | July 10-11 | 26 Tammuz | 7:11 | 8:29/9:04 | 7:29 | 8:32 | 7:27 | 8:29 | 7:20 | 8:33 |
| Devairim/Chazon | July 17-18 | 4 Av | 7:09 | 8:26/9:02 | 7:27 | 8:29 | 7:25 | 8:26 | 7:18 | 8:30 |
| Va'etchanan/ Nachamu | July 24-25 | 11 Av | 7:05 | 8:22/8:58 | 7:23 | 8:24 | 7:21 | 8:22 | 7:14 | 8:25 |
| Eikev | July 31-Aug.1 | 18 Av | 7:00 | 8:16/8:53 | 7:18 | 8:18 | 7:17 | 8:16 | 7:09 | 8:20 |
| Re'eh | Aug. 7-8 | 25 Av | 6:55 | 8:09/8:47 | 7:12 | 8:12 | 7:11 | 8:10 | 7:03 | 8:13 |
| Shoftim | Aug. 14-15 | 2 Elul | 6:48 | 8:02/8:40 | 7:06 | 8:04 | 7:04 | 8:02 | 6:56 | 8:05 |
| Ki Teitzei | Aug. 21-22 | 9 Elul | 6:40 | 7:53/8:31 | 6:59 | 7:55 | 6:57 | 7:54 | 6:49 | 7:56 |
| Ki Tavo | Aug. 28-29 | 16 Elul | 6:32 | 7:45/8:23 | 6:50 | 7:46 | 6:49 | 7:45 | 6:40 | 7:47 |
| Nitzavim - Vayellech | Sept. 4-5 | 23 Elul | 6:23 | 7:35/8:14 | 6:41 | 7:37 | 6:41 | 7:36 | 6:31 | 7:37 |

Kiddush Levana

| Month | Earliest Kiddush Levana 3 Days After Molad | 7 Days After Molad | Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana until |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Marcheshvan | 4 Marcheshvan/ Sat. night Oct. 25 | 9 Marcheshvan/ Thurs. night Oct. 30 | 15 Marcheshvan/ Wed. night Nov. 5 |
| Kislev | 5 Kislev/ Mon. night Nov. 24 | 8 Kislev/ Thurs. night Nov. 27 | 15 Kislev/ Sun. night Dec. 4 |
| Tevet | 4 Tevet/ Tues. night Dec. 23 | 8 Tevet/ Sat. night Dec. 27 | 15 Tevet/ Sat. night Jan. 3 |
| Sh'vat | 4 Shvat/ Wed. night Jan. 21 | 8 Sh'vat/ Sun. night Jan. 25 | 15 Shvat/ Sun. night Feb. 1 |
| Adar | 5 Adar/ Sat. night Feb. 21 | 8 Adar/ Tues. night Feb. 24 | 15 Adar/ Tues. night March 3 |
| Nisan | 4 Nisan/ Sat. night March 21 | 8 Nisan/ Wed. night March 25 | 14 Nisan/ Tues. night March 31 |
| Iyar | 4 Iyar/ Mon. night April 20 | 9 Iyar/ Sat. night April 25 | 14 Iyar/ Thurs. night April 30 |
| Sivan | 4 Sivan/ Tues. night May 19 | 8 Sivan/ Sat. night May 23 | 15 Sivan/ Sat. night May 30 |
| Tammuz | 4 Tammuz/ Thurs. night June 18 | 8 Tammuz/ Mon. night June 22 | 15 Tammuz/ Mon. night June 29 |
| Av (Many wait until after 9 Av) | 5 Av/ Sat. night July 18 | 9 Av/ Wed. night July 22 | 15 Av/ Wed. night July 29 |
| Elul | 4 Elul/ Sun. night Aug. 16 | 8 Elul/ Thurs. night Aug. 20 | 15 Elul/ Thurs. night Aug. 27 |

THIS WEEK'S INSPIRATIONAL TORAH LEARNING

**SUNDAY
OCT 26**

7:30 PM

Men's Safrut (The Bais)
Rabbi Tzvi Maurer
7 Hartum Street, 2nd Floor
(Resumes November 16)



*The schedule is subject to change
Subscribe to our OU Israel
Whatsapp Community for all
information related to OU Israel
classes and programs, including
last minute schedule changes
and updates, by scanning
the QR Code above.

THE BAIS CLASSES & PROGRAMS
ARE FOR MEN ONLY



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**MONDAY
OCT 27**

8:30 PM

**The Bais (for Men) - Semichat
Chaver Program Rav Elyada
Goldwicht@ Bet Knesset
Ohel Yitzchak**
Keren Hayesod St.



**OU Israel | Women's Division
2 Radak St., Rechavia**

6:00-10:00PM

ATID Midrasha
(women in their 20's)

7:00PM

Bat Mitzvah and Beyond
Opening Event

7:00-9:00PM

Dorot Choir Session with
Hadassah Jacob

**TUESDAY
OCT 28**

OU Israel is supported by the Jewish
Federation of Broward County



COMMUNITY BEIT MIDRASH IN BAKAA

Classes @ Bet Knesset Nitzanim, 3 Asher Street, Bakaa

9:20 AM

Understanding Tefila
Rabbi Yossi Goldin

11:25 AM

Pshat in the Parsha
Rabbi Shmuel Goldin

10:15 AM

Rambam: Letters and
Introductions
Rabbi Yitzchak Breitowitz

12:20 PM

Unpacking the Messages
of Chazal
Rabbi Shai Finkelstein

TORAH TUESDAYS WITH THE WOMEN'S DIVISION

Classes @ Beit Knesset HaNassi, 24 Ussishkin St. Rechavia

9:15AM

Torah Tapestries
Parsha Shiur
Mrs. Shira Smiles



10:15AM

Living with
Emunah
Mrs. Raquel
Kirszenbaum

MODIIN-THE BAIS

Men's Programs in Modiin Yeshivat Hesder Meir Harel,
Emek Beit Shean 53, Modiin

10:00AM -2:00PM

Weekly Kollel Boker-Instructors include
Instructors include

Rabbi David Fine
Rabbi Ian Shaffer
Rabbi Aschi Dick
Rabbi Avi Herzog

1:00PM- NEW!!!

Modiin Lunch and Learn with **Rabbi Aschi Dick** - Masamerica Offices,
28 Dam HaMacabbiim St, 3rd Floor, Shiur followed by mincha at 1:45pm

This Week's Inspirational Torah Learning with OU Israel

**WEDNESDAY
OCT 29**

COMMUNITY BEIT MIDRASH IN RECHAVIA

@ Bet Knesset HaNassi,
24 Ussishkin St., Rechavia

9:15AM

Holy Poetry

Rabbi Dr. Aaron Adler

10:20 AM

Contemporary Issues in Halacha
and Hashkafa

Rabbi Anthony Manning

11:25 AM

Mussar and Self Improvement:
A study of Rav Kook's sefer
'Midot HaRaya'

Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider

12:30PM

Jews in the Middle Ages:
External Threats and Internal
Development

Dr. Deborah Polster

SPECIAL EVENT:

7:15 PM

Bat Mitzvah and Beyond
Opening Event in Beit Shemesh

**THURSDAY
OCT 30**

COMMUNITY BEIT MIDRASH IN ARNONA

Classes @ Bet Knesset Shai Agnon,
11 Rechov Leib Yaffe, Arnona

9:15 AM

Parshat HaShavua **Rabbi Ari Kahn**

10:30AM

Parashat Hashavua **Rabbi Baruch
Taub**

11:20AM

Trailblazing the Text of TaNach
Rabbi Neil Winkler

12:20 PM

Modern Masters **Rabbi Sam Shor**

8:00 PM

Halachic Controversies. (the Bais)
Rabbi Aschi Dick @ Bet Knesset
Ohel Yitzchak, Keren Hayesod St.

NOTE NEW NIGHT!!!!

8:30 PM

The Bais- Men's Chabura
in partnership with Kehilat
Hashiveinu

Rabbi Noam Kenigsberg

RAMOT

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- ◆ Rabbi Tzvi Mauner
- ◆ 1st class: Sun. Nov. 16

BET SHEMESH

Yeshivat Reishit:

- ◆ Rechov Rashi 21
- ◆ Tues. 8:30 - 10:30 pm
- ◆ Rabbi Elie Levi
- ◆ 1st class: Tues. Nov. 18

MODI'IN

Hesder Yeshiva Meir Harel:

- ◆ Emek Bet Shean 53
- ◆ Tues. 7:30 - 9:30 pm
- ◆ Rabbi Phil Schajer
- ◆ 1st class: Tues. Nov. 11

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For more Information: contact **Rabbi Tzvi Mauner** at MaunerSofer@gmail.com



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Put Your Community on the Map!



- The OU in Israel is building a **national directory of shuls with an English-speaking presence** — from fully Anglo congregations to Israeli shuls where English speakers still feel at home.
- **Are you a Rabbi, Rebbetzin, or shul leader (e.g. a vaad member)?** Please take 10 minutes to complete our short questionnaire.
- **Part of a shul but not in leadership?** Share this form with your Rabbi or leadership team so your community can be represented. Your input will help identify and strengthen English-speaking communities across Israel, hoping future opportunities for support and collaboration.
- **Complete the form by October 30th** and your community will be entered into a raffle for a free OU Israel event — from an inspiring guest speaker to a tailored community program.

Scan the QR code to get started!



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FRIDAY OCTOBER 31ST

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Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

To help refill the supply - send tax deductible donations for Be'er Tziporah a"h Bottled Water Gemach to Chabad of Rechavia - Rabbi Yisroel Goldberg email Rabbi@JerusalemChabad.org 02 800-1717
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TUE. OCT. 21 - RABBI BREITOWITZ'S SHIUR
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TUE. OCT. 21 - RABBI BREITOWITZ'S SHIUR
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TUE. SHIUR - RABBI SHAI FINKELSTEIN
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RABBI ADLER'S WED. SHIUR
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RABBI MANNING'S WED. SHIUR
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RABBI GOLDSCHIEDER'S WED. SHIUR
 Sponsored for the 2025 academic year לעילו נשמת מרים בת אברהם ע"ה ושם טוב בן שלמה ז"ל

RABBI TAUB'S WEEKLY THUR. PARSHAT HASHAVUA SHIUR
 Sponsored by The Jewish Legacy Foundation

RABBI KAHN'S SHIUR
 Dedicated for the Refuah Shleimah of our granddaughter - Avigayil Sara bat Shaina Ahrona
 Rabbi Michael & Jeri Laxmeter



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is the time to make Aliyah**





HAFTORAH INSIGHTS

BY REBBETZIN DR. ADINA
SHMIDMAN
DIRECTOR,
OU WOMEN'S INITIATIVE



Dimensions of Divine Harmony

YESHAYAHU 54:1 - 55:5

וְכָל-בְּנֵיךָ לְמִנְיָי ה' וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵיךָ

And all your children shall be disciples of Hashem, And great shall be the peace of your children. (Yeshayahu 54:13)

The blessing of peace is woven throughout our tefillot — concluding the *Shemoneh Esrei*, punctuating *Birkat Kohanim*, and echoing in countless verses and prayers. We yearn for a world of ultimate peace — a time and space where harmony prevails, and all dwell together beneath a shared canopy of understanding and unity.

Our Haftorah, with its tone of consolation, supports this vision: וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵיךָ — peace will be *rav*, abundant and far-reaching among your children. Yet in his *Iyunei Haftorah*,

Rav Avraham Rivlin, longtime *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh, offers a subtle and profound insight. He reads *rav* not as “much,” but as “many.” Can peace, he asks, be *many*?

If peace can be *many*, it suggests multiplicity — that peace exists not as a single, static state but in many forms. Rav Rivlin explains that peace is multi-dimensional, composed of layers and levels of harmony: between nations, within communities, among friends, and inside the human heart. Each form of peace demands balance — a careful dance between differing needs, values, and goals.

True *shalom* emerges when we acknowledge and honor the presence of the *many* — when we forgo the narrowness of self and make space for the other. The *rav* — the multitude of perspectives and desires — becomes absorbed into the wholeness of *shalom*.

Today, as we continue to pray for *shalom*, this vision feels especially urgent. The call for וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵיךָ is not only for vast peace but for *many* “peaces” — the restoration of calm to broken hearts, safety to our children, unity within our people, and quiet strength for those who defend our Land. Each layer of

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5 Megillot Yom Iyuv
for women

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 9:15AM-1:00PM



9:15AM Words of Introduction
Mrs. Zemira Ozarowski

9:25AM The Realities of
Relationships through the cycle
of the Megillot
Mrs. Chana Deutsch

10:15AM Mikdash and Malchut
in the Megillot
Mrs. Leah Feinberg

11:05AM Brunch Break

11:20AM Megilla Unmasked
Mrs. Sarah Malka Reichman

12:10PM Ruth: Women in the
Breach **Mrs. Pearl Borow**

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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR
DIRECTOR, TORAH INITIATIVES,
OU ISRAEL

Parshat Noach begins, with the world about to be imperiled, even face the brink of destruction, and *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* instructing *Noach* to build a *teiva*, which will not only offer shelter and protection during the onslaught of rain and flood that is about to descend upon earth, but also ensure the survival of humanity and many other species of animals.

In the directives as to how *Noach* should construct the *teiva*, *Hashem* tells *Noach*:

Tzohar Taaseh LaTeiva-you shall make a light for the teiva...

What was this *tzohar*, the source of light, that *Noach* placed within the *teiva*? *Rashi* offers two potential interpretations: According to one opinion it was a window, while according to others the *tzohar* was a precious stone that shined brightly and lit up the *teiva*.

Each of these interpretations leaves us to ask a fundamental question. How could one window or one shiny jewel provide sufficient light for a massive structure with multiple stories and compartments?

The *Baal Shem Tov HaKadosh zy'a*, offers a beautiful answer to this very question. *Noach's* mission was to take a world of misery- *tzarah* - and transform it to a world of light. The word *tzohar* is made up of the same letters as the word *tzarah*. *Noach's* mission is indeed to transform darkness and misery to light.

The *Baal Shem Tov* continued to explain that the word *teiva* can also simply mean- *word*. The *Baal Shem Tov* explains that when we recite words of *tefila* or *divrei torah* they metaphysically serve as a source of light not only for ourselves but for the entire world.

There is a fascinating teaching in the *Zohar HaChadash* that offers an interesting take on the entire narrative of *Noach*. Upon emerging from the *teiva* and witnessing the destruction in the world following the flood, *Noach* began to weep, and then called out to *Hashem*- questioning how it could be that the world was decimated. *Hashem*, according to this teaching, answers *Noach*, calling him a foolish servant- I told you that you were



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righteous before me, and that the world was destined for destruction, and you did nothing! You had the capacity to *daven* and intercede, and you did nothing to convince me that the world was worth protecting!

Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, zy'a points out something interesting in this teaching. In not advocating at all, by not making any effort whatsoever to show concern for others, *Noach* was not simply selling others short, but rather was selling **himself** short! *Noach* simply did not understand or believe that he, as a righteous person, had the ability to both advocate for or influence others! He simply didn't understand that he, like each of us, can indeed make a difference—that we are all given the gift of *koach hatefila*, the power of *tefila*, to transform ourselves, and transform the world!

Perhaps each of these ideas presented by the holy *Baal Shem Tov* and the *Kedushat Levi*, can be a source of much *chizuk* for each of us.

Yehi Ratzon, may the light that each of us can continue to bring to the world through our words of *tefila* and through sharing *divrei Torah* with one another be a source of *chizuk* for each of us and for the entire world. May the heartfelt *tefilot* we utter, and the words of *Torah* indeed shine bright, may they be a source of illumination which outshines any suffering and darkness, and may these sacred words of *tefila* and *divrei torah*, contribute to the betterment of humanity and the entire world. ■

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RABBI AARON GOLDSCHIEDER

EDITOR, TORAH TIDBITS
RAV, THE JERUSALEM SHUL
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Making a World of a Difference

Two legendary figures: Noach and Avraham. For generations, great minds have compared and contrasted their lives. Some have argued for Noach's remarkable righteousness, as he rose above the mire of depravity and sinfulness that surrounded him. Others have minimized his spiritual accomplishments, which pale in comparison to Avraham's. Rashi draws our attention to the fact that Noach is said to have walked "with God" (Genesis 6:9), while Avraham walked "before God" (Genesis 24:40 and see 17:1). He explains that Noach needed help to be righteous, while Avraham drew strength from within to follow his path of righteousness unassisted.¹

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook perceived a more profound difference reflected by the Torah's choice of words.² Penetratingly, he said that walking "with God" is fulfilling



Rav Abraham Isaac Kook zt"l

God's spiritual demands of the generation—no small feat—but no more. Noach did not take the initiative and elevate those around him; he boxed himself in, psychologically and physically on the ark, satisfied at having strenuously maintained the status quo. The opening verse emphasizes that Noach was "righteous in his generation" (Genesis 6:9), suggesting that he was resigned to the fact that little could be done to pull his contemporaries out of their quicksand of immorality.

Avraham, on the other hand, although absolutely loyal to God's word, struck out on his own. He risked acting independently and creatively to better the world around him, as when he appointed himself the defense for an urban confederacy of sinners.

The Sages say that Avraham observed the entire Torah even before it was revealed at Sinai.³

Rav Kook took this to mean that Avraham was determined to speed up the process of divine revelation, to hasten the existential perfection and rectification of the world that in the divine plan was meant to occur only later. He laid the groundwork for this by sharing divine wisdom with and raising up the spirit of his generation. Walking "before God" is to act independently while bearing God's teachings and goals in mind, and, in a

1. Rashi on Genesis 6:9, s.v. את האלוהים התהלך נח.

2. The remarks below are based on *Midbar Shur*, derush 13.

3. Mishnah, *Kidushin*, 4:14.

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way, it is even to precede God.

Avraham's expansive idealism enabled him to recognize the raw spiritual potential latent in himself and in his generation. He firmly believed that every individual could strengthen and stretch their spiritual muscles to meet Olympic benchmarks. Not only was he convinced that humanity could better itself, but he believed that humanity could be catapulted to awesome heights. Avraham entertained visions of grandeur about the world.

Not long ago, Rav Kook, himself an Avraham, followed in our forefather's footsteps and walked "before God." He discerned the amazing vitality and profound potential of the soul of the Jewish nation. After our tortuous and torturous exile, his lofty teachings, which radiate love for others, have been a

boon to the rejuvenation of our national spirit. Two great Avrahams, the first Jew in history and the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel, had the firm conviction that every individual has the power to effect revolutionary change.

We are all called to walk Avraham's path. Judaism is a faith for those who seek to change the world. To be a Jew is to seek to make a difference, to change lives for the better, to heal the scars of our fractured world. We are not meant to ride the tide, alone, but to be a tide that raises all boats. ■



Rabbi Goldscheider's most recent OU Press Publication, "Torah United" on the weekly Parsha, can be ordered directly from Rabbi Goldscheider at aarong@ouisrael.org at a special price for Torah Tidbits readers.

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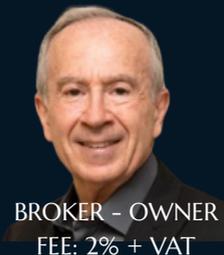


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לעילוי נשמת
יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

Mincha after Sunset

Question: I am careful to finish *Mincha* by *shki'ah* (sunset), but one day I remembered a few minutes after it, that I had not *davened*. I decided to *daven* then with the following condition – if it was still time for *Mincha*, it should count, and if it was too late, it should be a *tefillat nedava* (voluntary prayer). Was that correct? Also, what was I supposed to do when I went to *daven Ma'ariv*, considering that I am unsure if I fulfilled *Mincha*?

Answer: Indeed, one should *daven Mincha* by *shki'ah*. Although the Rama (Orach Chayim 233:1) says that those who *daven Mincha* after *plag hamincha* (now widely

practiced) have until [close to?] *tzeit hako-chavim*, the Mishna Berura (233:14) argues that one must *daven* by *shki'ah*. However, at least for several minutes after sunset, it is possible that *b'di'aved* one may still *daven Mincha* (ibid.).

You seem aware of the above and do not want to rely on the opinions (many do for at least several minutes) that when one must *daven Mincha* after *shki'ah*, he may assume it works. Your idea of dealing with the doubt contains positive points. Let us analyze it and determine how you should have proceeded.

Classical sources discuss *tefillat nedava* in two cases – #1. One who is unsure if he already *davened* may do *Shemoneh Esrei* (=SE) as a *nedava*; #2. One who wants to *daven* a second time and adds new elements to SE (Shulchan Aruch, OC 107:1, based on Berachot 21a). Your idea relates to #1, with the doubt being not whether the *tefilla* is necessary but whether it works as desired (for *Mincha*). There is no clear precedent for a *tefillat nedava* at a time that is not viable for *tefilla*, but your assumption (the Be'ur Halacha to 233:1 concurs), is that if it is too late for *Mincha*, it must be possible to *daven Ma'ariv*. Your *nedava* faces another challenge. If your *tefilla* did not work for *Mincha*, it is *nedava* of *Ma'ariv* ... before you do the obligated *Ma'ariv*. This might be possible (see Ohalei Shimon, Tefilla 20), but it is difficult to determine if all agree with this possibility.

We now follow your system to *Ma'ariv*.

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If your *tefilla* did not count for *Mincha*, you needed *SE* at *Ma'ariv* twice, the second as *tashlumin* (makeup) of *Mincha* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 108:2), for a total of three *SEs* that evening. On the other hand, you could not be sure the third one is necessary, because if the first counted for *Mincha*, no *tashlumin* was necessary. Therefore, the third *tefilla* would also need to be done as a *tefillat nedava* (a variation of scenario #1 above).

However, *poskim* (see *Ishei Yisrael* 27:6) do not embrace your system of dealing with the *safek*, but that of the Be'ur Halacha (ibid.). He says that post-*ski'ah SE* should be on condition that if it does not work for obligatory *Mincha*, it should be for obligatory *Ma'ariv*. If the first was for *Ma'ariv*, then you missed *Mincha* and the later *SE* (which will be preceded by *Kri'at Shema* and its *berachot*) will be *tashlumin* of *Mincha*.

The Be'ur Halacha's system has weak points if your first *tefilla* did not fulfill *Mincha*. *SE* of *tashlumin* should be directly after the *SE* of the present *tefilla* (Mishna Berura 108:15). In this case, if the *SE* after *shki'ah* ended up being for *Ma'ariv*, then the *tashlumin*, done with the *Ma'ariv* of everyone else, is likely to be several minutes and perhaps much more after the first *SE*. However, when need be, there can be a break, as long as it is within the timeframe of *Ma'ariv* (ibid.). Also, *Kri'at Shema* and its *berachot* will turn out to be (perhaps, significantly) after the main *SE* of *Ma'ariv* (the first *tefilla*). Once again, while not ideal (Shulchan Aruch, OC 236:2),

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it is permitted when there is need (ibid. 3).

The Be'ur Halacha avoids two weaknesses in your system that exist even if, as is likely, your first *tefilla* worked for *Mincha*. 1) You need three *SEs* instead of two; 2) We try to avoid *tefillat nedava*, which should ideally be done only if one concentrates throughout *SE* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 107:4).

While we can further debate the merits of each system, we expect that next time you will follow the Be'ur Halacha. ■

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Repairing the Shadchan Connection: From Judgment to Curiosity, Walking Beside, Not Pushing Ahead

לעילוי נשמת
מאיר יצחק בן יוסף אליהו הכהן ז"ל

Hallel asks: I have a difficulty with one of the candidates I represent, I feel he isn't giving me honest answers. He tends to avoid my questions, and I admit that I also judge him because I see him as overly critical and not very self-aware. At the same time, I truly care about him and sincerely want to help him find his wife. How can I repair the relationship between us so I can better support him?

Aleeza answers: Thank you for such an honest and vulnerable question. You're describing something many shadchanim and coaches quietly struggle with: when you care deeply for a client, but the dynamic becomes complicated. The fact that you want to repair the relationship shows that your intention is pure, although your method is ineffective.

When someone avoids questions, it often comes from fear or not knowing what to answer, and not from bad characteristics. He may be afraid of making mistakes, of being misunderstood, or of facing truths he doesn't yet know how to process. This doesn't excuse his behavior, but it helps us reframe: instead of "he's being difficult," we can think, "perhaps he's protecting himself."

Each of us is on a journey of growth, and some people develop self-awareness more slowly. Your role is not to change him through criticism, but to walk beside him with compassion.

So what can you do? Start by resetting the tone of your conversations. Instead of pushing for answers, you might say, "I care about you, and I want to understand what feels important to you. I know it's not always easy to put into words." That kind of gentle invitation can lower defenses.

You can also look inward and notice your own judgments. It's natural to feel frustrated, but the more you approach him with curiosity instead of criticism, the more safe he'll feel. Sometimes even naming the tension helps: "I sense it's hard for you to share openly with me. How can I make this easier for you?" But before you invite him to open up you'll have to earn back his trust and show him you won't criticize him if he shares honestly with you. Make a plan of how you'll be able to accomplish this goal.

And remember, you are a shaliach, a messenger. The outcome is in Hashem's hands. Your responsibility is to show up with integrity, patience, and never ending kindness. Even when progress feels slow.

May Hashem bless you with understanding, humility, and renewed connection. And may this man, with your guidance and Hashem's help, soon find the partner his soul is seeking.

Aleeza ■



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Faith in Darkness

A little over a week has gone by since the return of the last living hostages from Gaza. How many of the following stories have you heard about them? And how many others did I 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 God, 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 God while he was in captivity, the closeness, the sense that he was speaking and that God was with him, listening. He described trying to rediscover that elevated feeling.

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Sivan Rahav-Meir is a media personality and lecturer. Married to Yedida, the mother of five. Lives in Jerusalem, and formerly served as the World Mizrahi Shlichah to North America. Sivan lectures in Israel and overseas about the media, Judaism, Zionism and new media. She was voted by Globes newspaper as most popular female media personality in Israel and by the Jerusalem Post as one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world.

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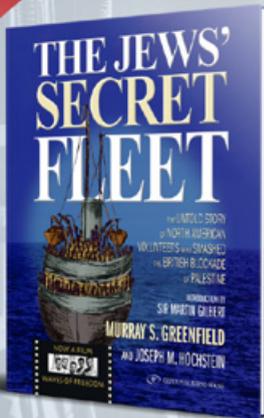
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RABBI ASAF AHARON PRISMAN

GUEST DVAR TORAH

From Chaos to Closeness: How to Embrace Challenges as Hashem's Love

The Torah describes the flood of Noach as a natural event: “All the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened” (*Bereishis* 7:11). No explicit mention of Hashem’s action is made. However, the destruction of Sodom is directly attributed to Him: “Hashem rained down sulfur and fire upon Sodom and Amora” (*Bereishis* 19:24). Why the difference?

THE WITHDRAWAL OF DIVINE PRESENCE

The *Nesivos Shalom* explains that the greatest punishment is Hashem withdrawing His presence. Normally, Hashem sustains the world through nature. When a society becomes utterly corrupt, Hashem ceases to

guide it, allowing chaos to take over. The generation of the flood was so degenerate that Hashem withdrew, and the world collapsed into destruction.

Sodom, while sinful, did not reach that level. Hashem remained involved, actively destroying them rather than passively letting nature take its course. This distinction shows that Hashem’s presence, even in punishment, is a sign of connection.

CHALLENGES AS DIVINE GUIDANCE

The serpent’s punishment in Gan Eden reflects this idea. It was cursed to “eat dust” (*Bereishis* 3:14). At first glance, this seems a prize rather than a punishment. However, based on the concept mentioned above, this is the biggest punishment, symbolizing detachment from Hashem’s care rather than deprivation. Similarly, the Gemara (*Berachos* 5a) teaches that challenges are signs of Hashem’s engagement in our lives, like a parent guiding a child. Rather than being abandoned, difficulties indicate Hashem’s presence, shaping our spiritual growth.

PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY

Hardships are not punishments but reminders of Hashem’s presence. They

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challenge us to grow and forge a closer relationship with Him. Instead of feeling abandoned, recognize adversity as a sign of Divine guidance, an opportunity to strengthen your connection with Hashem.

NOT JUST A STORY: THE STUCK NIGGUN

Shmuel Rosenberg sat at his dining room table, his head in his hands. His voice was hoarse, barely above a whisper. He had tried tea, honey, and every *segulah* people suggested, but with Yom Kippur only two days away, it was clear—he would not be able to lead *Kol Nidrei*.

He had been the chazzan for ten years. Every year, he stood before the *kehillah*, his voice soaring, carrying their *tefillos* straight to *Shamayim*. And now? He could barely croak out a *berachah*.

His wife, Miriam, set a cup of tea in front of him. “Shmuel, maybe Hashem wants you to daven differently this year.”

“How?” he asked bitterly. “A chazzan needs a voice.”

Their five-year-old daughter, Esty, climbed onto his lap. “Tatty, can you sing me a song?”

Shmuel smiled weakly. “Tatty’s voice is broken, *mein kind*.”

“But you don’t need to be loud,” she said, swaying side to side. “You just have to sing.” And then, softly, she started humming.

Shmuel’s breath caught. It was an old *niggun*, one he hadn’t heard in years—his *zeidy’s niggun*. His grandfather had sung it on Yom Kippur when Shmuel was a child, his voice trembling with emotion.

Closing his eyes, Shmuel hummed along, his voice barely there but full of feeling.

The next night, as he stepped up to the *amud*, the silence in the shul was heavy. He took a deep breath. Instead of pushing for

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strength, he let the *niggun* carry him. His voice was soft, cracked—but the *kehillah* leaned in, hanging on to every note.

As the tune swelled, something happened. The *tzibbur* picked it up. First one voice, then another, until the entire shul was singing together, louder and stronger than any solo voice could ever be.

And at that moment, Shmuel understood; Hashem didn’t need his power. He needed his heart. ■

Rabbi Asaf Aharon Prisman, author of “Prism of Torah” and host of the weekly podcast under the same name, cultivated his unique Torah perspective through studies at Toronto’s Yeshivat Or Chaim and several prestigious Israeli yeshivas. Now based in Ramat Beit Shemesh, he combines his roles as an author, podcaster, and a Ram at Yeshivat Ateres Yaakov where he gives the daily daf yomi shiur & gives personalized Gemara tutoring, where he makes profound Torah concepts accessible to all.

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AHOY THERE, AND SHABBAT SHALOM, LISTENERS! THIS WEEK WE READ ABOUT NOACH AND SONS – ARK-BUILDERS LTD.



HEAVE, LADS, THAT'S IT!
JUST A CUBIT TO THE LEFT, EH?

WE'LL JUST GET THAT BIT OF
THE ROOF UP, AND THEN WE'LL HAVE
A NICE TEA BREAK! MUM'S MADE
US SOME LOVELY MUFFINS!

NOACH, WHO WAS NOT ONLY ASTOUNDINGLY
RIGHTEOUS, HE WAS ALSO MIND-BOGGLINGLY
HANDSOME...



...WORKED TIRELESSLY, DESPITE SCORNFUL
REMARKS FROM PASSERS-BY...

HO HO, SOME
FLOOD WE'RE
HAVING...

♪ "HAVE YOU EVER SEEN
THE GRASS SO GREEN?
OR A BLUER SKY...?" ♪

♪ "RAINDROPS DON'T KEEP
FALLING ON MY HEAD..." ♪

AND THAT WAS JUST THE HUMANS...



I LOVE HARD WORK,
I COULD WATCH IT ALL DAY...

NICE!
GROUCHO MARX?

JEROME K. JEROME...



I SAY, NOACH,
MY WIFE WOULD
LIKE A ROOM
WITH A VIEW,
IF POSSIBLE...

JOIN THE WAITING LIST, PAL,
THIS TUB COMES WITH ONLY
ONE WINDOW, Y'KNOW...

I CAN GIVE YOU AN AISLE
SEAT, FOR THE SAME PRICE...

DO WE GET A MINI-BAR IN
OUR ROOM? OR AT LEAST
FREE WI-FI?

BUT IT WASN'T JUST THE PAMPERED
REQUESTS THAT TRIED NOACH'S
PATIENCE...



NOW, LOOK HERE,
YOU CAN'T PUT US
IN THE SAME
CORRIDOR AS THE
LIONSTAINS!
THEY CHOMP
IN THEIR SLEEP...

AND WE
WOULDN'T BE
CAUGHT DEAD IN
THEIR SHUL,
EITHER...

NO, BUT YOU MIGHT IN THEIR
CAT-FOOD BOWLS, IF YOU'RE
NOT CAREFUL!

IT WAS THE ADVICE THAT REALLY...



MAY I MAKE
A CONSTRUCTIVE
SUGGESTION?

NO.

HOW ABOUT
A SUGGESTION
ABOUT THE
CONSTRUCTION?

NO.



BUT, LOOK, YOUR
PLANS ARE ALL WRONG. SEE
THIS TANGENT? YOU
NEED TO TAKE THIS WALL
2.3 CUBITS TO THE LEFT!

AND DO I SEE A REGULATIONAL
SAFETY RAIL OR LIFEBOAT? I'D
ADD A WIDER ANGLE ON THE PORT
SIDE, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO
CAPSIZE...



AND WHERE DID SIR
BECOME SUCH AN
EXPERT,
MAY I ASK?

OH, MY KIND LIVE ON THE COAST!
FISHING BOATS, CRUISERS,
YACHTS, NUCLEAR SUBMARINES:
YOU NAME IT, WE'VE SQUAWKED
AROUND IT IN SEARCH OF FISH!

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CREATING A SPACE FOR LIGHT

This week we read **Parashat Noach**, where the Torah tells the story of a righteous man named *Noach* (נֹחַ). He was commanded to build a תִּבְיָה (**ark**) to save his family and two of each animal species, as G-d had decided to destroy the world with a flood because humanity had become violent and corrupt.

In G-d's instructions to Noach about how to build the ark, the Torah says:

“צַהַר תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתִּבְיָה וְאֶל-אֲמָהּ תִּכְלְנָהּ מִלְמַעְלָה וּפֶתַח

הַתִּבְיָה בְּצִדָּהּ תִּשְׂחָה וְשַׁלְשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה”

“Make an opening for daylight in the ark, and terminate it within a cubit of the top. Put the entrance to the ark in its side; make it with bottom, second, and third decks” (*Bereishit 6:16*).

Why did G-d specifically tell Noach to make an opening in the ark?

The **Ibn Ezra** explains that “צַהַר” — *light* — means an opening through which light could enter. **Rashi** and **Chizkuni** add that it may have been either a window or a precious stone that illuminated the ark for Noach, his family, and the animals during their time inside. According to most opinions, this refers to the same window Noach later used to send out the raven and the dove.

The rain fell for 40 days and nights, and the waters raged for 150 days before they began to calm. The opening in the ark allowed light to enter even when the entire world outside was flooded in darkness.

From this, we learn a powerful lesson: just as Noach was commanded to bring light into the ark, we too must bring light into our own lives — into our personal “arks.” We must open ourselves to G-d's light, recognize His hand, and see His goodness even when we feel overwhelmed or lost. We can't just wait for inspiration to arrive; we must actively create that opening for it.

True faith is not a leap into the dark — it's a leap into the light.

Shabbat Shalom!



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UNDERSTANDING NOAH'S DESTINY

In this week's parsha, we dive right into Noah's story. But who really is this guy, and why is he so important? He ends up playing a huge role in our history, but was he really

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If we look back at last week's parsha, in **Bereishit 5:29**, Lemech gives his son a prophecy. He names him *Noach*, saying, "He will comfort us from our deeds and the toil of our hands, from the ground which Hashem has cursed." Basically, Lemech is hoping his son will bring comfort and relief to the world. But let's be real — every father wants his kid to be great. So there must be more to Noach's story.

When we look at the generations before him, the Torah lists them very briefly: "Shet lived 912 years, had sons and daughters, and died." "Enosh lived 905 years, had sons and daughters, and died." That's it! But when we get to Lemech, the Torah actually pauses to tell us *why* he named his son Noach. He's the only one in this entire family tree who gives meaning to his child's name. That already tells us Noach is different — his name and story clearly have more depth and purpose.

Later, when Hashem decides to destroy the world because of how corrupt it's become, we suddenly get this short, powerful pasuk: וַיִּנַּח "מצא חן בעיני ה'" — "And Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem." Out of everyone, Hashem singles him out and says, "This one, I like."

Even more amazing — Lemech's words come true. He said Noach would bring comfort (ינחמו), and the Torah uses almost the same root when it says "וינחם ה'" — "Hashem regretted (or was comforted) about man on the earth." It's like the prophecy was fulfilled word for word.

So Noach isn't just another name in the list. He's the one who stood out, who brought comfort to Hashem and to the world.

Shabbat Shalom — may we all find ways to bring comfort and meaning into our own lives, just like Noach did. ■



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