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## Shabbos Zmanim **CANDLE LIGHTING 5:43 PM**

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<b>MINCHA/MAARIV</b>	Pirchei	18 Main Mincha	Shkiya	Tent א Maariv :40	18 Main Maariv :50
	<b>2:00 PM</b>	<b>5:40 PM</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>6:40 PM</b>	<b>6:50 PM</b>

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**12 MIN.** before shkia

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# RABBI DANIEL COREN



## Parshas Noach and MarCheshvan

Following the announcement of the new month this past Shabbos, a lively discussion ensued as to the true name for this month. Is it Marcheshvan or merely Cheshvan? For most practical and *halachic* purposes, we write Marcheshvan. However, the seemingly added letters of Mar call for an explanation. I will share three possible explanations and hopefully offer a spiritual message as well. The traditional explanation is that the word 'mar' implies bitterness. Because there are no *Yomim Tovim* in the month of Cheshvan, it is resentful. This is a difficult concept to accept. Firstly, there are other months without holidays, and we don't describe them as bitter. Additionally, despite missing a *chag*, a Hebrew month should nevertheless be content. In fact, why should any day of the year be considered contrary unless something unpleasant occurred on that day? We see this in the *passuk* ואחריתו כיום מר, which refers to a specific nasty day and is discussed in the second *perek* of *Maseches Sukkah*.

The second explanation for the addition of the word Mar is a scholarly one. I heard this from an expert and real scholar, Dr. Yehoshua Zelig Tobias z"l, who noted the following: The name Marcheshvan is really a construct of two Greek words—*marach shvan*, which means the eighth month. *Marach* means month, and *shvan* means eighth.

The third explanation is based on a *passuk* that many recited daily during the time of *Korbanos*. הן גויי כמר מדי' ה (the non-Jews are like a drop in the bucket). The word מר means a drop of water (see Rashi and Radak). The addition of the word Mar to Cheshvan is a reminder that this is the beginning of the rainy season. Rain is something we spend much time praying for, especially during the holidays of Sukkos and Shmini Atzeres, because it is during this time that we are judged as to how much rain we will receive in the coming year.

As we mentioned in the past from Rav Avigdor Miller z"l, a person can spend two hours screaming *hoshanos* on Hashana Rabbah and then walk out of shul into the pouring rain and exclaim, "What a miserable day it is." The poor man doesn't even realize the contradiction of his statement. The truth is that it is difficult for us non-farmers living far from the sweat and toil of the soil to fully appreciate the gift of water. Probably the most powerful reminder of our dependency on water occurs when we are sitting in a room and the AC suddenly stops or after jogging a few miles in the heat of the day and our body cries out to be quenched. That's when we truly appreciate this precious gift.

I think the name Marcheshvan and our dependency on water provide us with an even deeper message. Chazal teach us in many ways (see *Kesuvos* 111) regarding the dew of resurrection and the *mefarshim* regarding the illusion to Torah that water is like the Torah. Just as we cannot survive without water, so too, we cannot live without Torah. This month is all about rain. However, rain needs to be appreciated physically and spiritually. Furthermore, as the *Bnai Yissaschar* reveals to us, the third Bais Hamikdash will be dedicated during the month of Cheshvan. This adds to the powerful spiritual and physical potential that awaits us in this month. The key is to take advantage of the possibilities that await us. How do we do this? By guaranteeing that the rain — *geshem* — is focused mainly on spiritual growth. When a person uses *gashmiyus* - physical gifts — for sacred purposes such as supporting Torah learning or mitzvos, it ensures that the path of rain will be a spiritual one and will lead to positive results. May this month be filled with many blessings. Good Shabbos.

SHIUR  
SCHEDULE

**SEMICHAS CHAVER SHIUR** in R' Coren's office every  
Wednesday at 9:00 PM  
Hachana L'Shabbos Shiur in 20 Upstairs  
every Tuesday at 9:45 PM

# RABBI RAFI WOLFE



## Creating Love Towards Another

*Based on Sichos Mussar 6*

*You shall take for yourself from all the food that will be eaten, and gather it to you, and it will be for you and for them for consumption.*

As part of Noach's preparations for the impending flood, Hashem commanded him to gather all the necessary provisions for his family's year-long stay in the Ark. Not only would they need to eat; there was also a need for food for all the animals that were with them in the Ark. Some suggest that the seemingly extraneous word לך, "for yourself," is really meant to be understood as "from yourself." That is, all the food gathered must be at Noach's own expense. All the food had to be his. This command was so that Noach wouldn't think that he could take food away from other people. He may have thought it was permissible, as they were going to die in the Flood anyway. It had to be specifically his own. However, there are many problems with this interpretation.

How could Hashem suspect Noach of stealing from other people? Just because they were going to die, that's no permit to steal from them. Noach is described by Hashem Himself as a pure, righteous one. Thievery is hardly righteous behavior. Furthermore, how could Hashem suspect Noach of assuming everyone would die? The verse tells us that Noach didn't go into the Ark until the waters forced him to. We are taught that this is because Noach didn't think the Flood would actually occur, as he hoped everyone would repent. Hashem Himself was even hopeful the people would eventually repent. All this makes it very difficult to say that Hashem had to command Noach against stealing from his neighbors. Why then did Hashem command Noach to specifically gather his own food for the Flood?

Many sources teach us how a person can create feelings of love towards another. The formula is simple: perform acts of kindness for them. If a person not only strives towards this but even suffers while doing so, they will create even more intense feelings of love. A classic example of this is a woman who undergoes childbirth. Since she struggled to bring this child to delivery, her love for her child is very intense right from the beginning. It could be that this psychological insight was the impetus for Hashem to command Noach to gather specifically his own food. For there to have been enough food in the Ark for his family and all of the animals, he would have had to use all of his resources. He would have had to sell everything he owned in order to acquire the requisite food. This tremendous sacrifice would have instilled great feelings of love towards the animals. But why did Hashem want Noach to have this love?

We are taught that Noach, his family, and the animals were in the Ark for an entire year. Noach and his family knew no rest during that entire time, as they had to feed all of the animals. Some animals would eat only at a certain hour, and others at a different one. They needed round-the-clock care. In order to maintain their existence for posterity, Noach had to give them their required nourishment. This was an endless job, which would have taken its toll. In fact, Noach suffered physically during his mission. Any normal person would have given up this task pretty quickly. Hashem, not wanting any species to go extinct, ensured that Noach would be filled with compassion and love for these animals. Since Noach, before the Flood started, made great sacrifices for these animals, it guaranteed that he would be faithful in his mission to feed them. In the end, this strategy proved quite successful.



## The Hero for the Simple People

What did Noah accomplish? He saved all mankind. In the absence of Noah, humanity would have become extinct soon after it had begun. Single-handedly, he ensured the continuity of life on Earth. He is the man who builds an ark, rescues all living organisms, and ensures that our world survives.

And who is the individual who achieves this feat? A person called by the Torah “a man of the earth.” The only story the Torah tells us about Noah, outside of constructing the Ark and spending a year in it during the Great Flood, is that he was a farmer; he planted a vineyard, became intoxicated, and exposed himself. That’s all. The last thing we hear about him is that he lay there in his tent, drunk and bare.

The Rabbis deduce from the text that “Noach, also, was of those people who were wanting in faith: he believed and he did not believe that the Flood would come, and he would not enter the Ark until the waters forced him to do so.”

Noach was a fine man who lived a decent, moral life and tried to do what G-d wanted, but

was not without his flaws, doubts, and struggles. Compared to Abraham, he would not amount to much.

But look what this simple fellow achieved! In a society dripping with greed and temptation, Noah held to his morals, walked with G-d, and swam against the tide, saving the planet from destruction. Civilization survived not because of a towering, titanic figure, but because of a simple man who had the courage to live morally when everyone around him behaved despicably.

Remarkably, by degrading Noah and stating that in other generations Noah would be eclipsed, the Rabbis turned him into the most inspiring figure, someone who serves as a model for all of us ordinary men and women. Noah is my hero, the hero of the ordinary cut-of-the-mill individual who is no great thinker, warrior, leader, or man of transcendence. By explaining the biblical text the way they did, the Sages turned Noah into a symbol for us ordinary people, who appreciate a fine cup of wine and a little *schnapps*, how we can make a difference in people’s lives.

The message of Noah is life-changing. You don’t need to be Abraham or Moses to

transform the world. Noah was just another kid on the block, but look what he did! With your own courage not to toe the line of corruption, fakeness, and falsehood, with a little gentleness, friendliness, compassion, kindness, and goodness, you can save lives, ignite sparks, and create an “ark” of sanity amidst a raging flood.

In the presence of great moral giants, he might be eclipsed, the Talmud says. Standing near Abraham, he would appear insignificant. And that is exactly what made him so significant! He set a standard for those of us who appear in our own eyes as insignificant.

It is an educational mistake to see spiritual success in the absence of struggle and the repression of authentic emotions. Look at Noah. He was a flawed man, and he saved the world!

So today, decide to emulate Noah, a simple man who was true to his soul and his G-d. In your own way, stand up to lies, greed, and promiscuity. Become a beacon of light, love, and hope. Construct an ark where others can find shelter from a flood of pain and insanity. Stop giving the excuse that you are just a regular guy, minding your own business. All of us can be Noachs.

**SHIUR SCHEDULE**

**MONDAY & THURSDAY** Chassidus Shiur 7:45 AM (18 Main) • **TUESDAY** Womens Shiur 9:30 AM (84 Viola Rd)  
**SHABBOS** Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs) • **Morning 8:40 AM** (20 Upstairs) | **After Davening 12:00 PM** (20 Upstairs)  
 PLEASE NOTE: Rabbi Jacobson’s Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 AM, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 AM.

## UFARATZTA RABBI SHALOM BER MUNITZ



### MEY NOACH = PARNASSAH

Advice to someone who wrote about the situation of his *parnassah*, who did not wish to elaborate on the hardships that he went through.

The Rebbe replied:

This is not necessary. Just consult with good friends who are knowledgeable in this field to analyze why you are not being successful, although others in the same situation were successful, in order to correct this situation in the future.

=== *Igros Kodesh* V34, P184

Many times, in business decisions, the Rebbe would answer, “*Ke’atzas yedidim mevinim* – consult friends who are also experts in the field.” This is based on a *passuk* in *Mishlei* [11,14]: *Uteshua b’rov yoetz* – Salvation [comes] with much counsel.

The reason to seek advice from friends is that they know your character well, and they care enough to give you the right advice.

## CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

### Lashon Hara Dilemma QUESTION

I’m very involved in the local community, and I recently became aware of a family that is going through a difficult issue with one of their children. This has added a lot of stress to their home and has affected the other kids, too. One of their daughters, Rochel, asked if she could run a small day camp in our basement and backyard during the upcoming vacation. We agreed, even though my wife works from home. Can I tell my wife about this family’s issues so that she will be more sensitive to Rochel when she runs the camp in our home?

Benny  
**ANSWER**

Speaking about someone’s family issue is forbidden unless there is a genuine constructive benefit, such as preventing loss or harm. Therefore, Benny must honestly assess the likelihood that a *to’eles* will actually result from revealing this matter.

Benny’s wife works from home, and the camp is bound to generate a lot of mess and noise, which makes it likely that Benny’s wife will have issues to address with Rochel. Since Rochel is going through a tough time, Benny’s wife should speak to her with extra sensitivity. Benny should tell his wife the minimum she needs to know to be mindful of Rochel’s feelings. A further *to’eles* could be that Benny’s wife could subtly be a support for Rochel in this difficult time. But since it is only a probable *to’eles*, Benny should only give the general story. Details are not necessary.



## Milah – Preparation and Involvement – Part and Parcel of the Mitzvah

We previously discussed why we need a *pasuk* to exempt a mother from the requirement to circumcise her son and do not apply the regular exemption, that it is a time-sensitive mitzvah.

The *Tosfos Rid* in *Kiddushin* offers another explanation as to why the mitzvah of *milah* is not considered a time-sensitive mitzvah. He explains that the mitzvah of *milah* given to a parent is fundamentally different from other mitzvos. The mitzvah of *tzitzis*, for example, is to wear a four-cornered garment with *tzitzis*. Although a person may need to buy or make the *tzitzis*, the preparation is not part and parcel of the actual mitzvah. Since the mitzvah is to wear the garment only during the day, it is considered a time-sensitive mitzvah.

However, the mitzvah of *milah* given to the parent of the newborn baby is of a totally different nature. In this case, the mitzvah is not just to perform the actual circumcision but also includes arranging and preparing everything that is needed. Since there, the preparations can be done at any time, it is not considered a time-sensitive mitzvah.

This concept is alluded to in the *pasuk*. The *pasuk* states: וַיִּמַּל אֲבְרָהָם אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בְּיָמֵי שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים “Avraham performed the *milah* on Yitzhak at eight days.” Why does the Torah use the expression “at eight days” and not “on the eighth day”? But according to the *Tosfos Rid*, the *pasuk*’s expression is beautiful. All of the preparation of the eight days was part and parcel of the mitzvah, and Avraham was actually involved in the mitzvah for eight days, until he performed the actual circumcision itself on day eight.

Since a woman is not commanded to perform – or even arrange for – her son’s *milah*, she has no requirement to get involved, physically, financially, or otherwise. This applies even if the father of the child is not alive. In such a case, it becomes incumbent on *Klal Yisrael* to arrange for the *milah*, not on the mother.

### WOMAN MOHEL

Can a woman be a *mohel* for her own child or for another child? This is not a question from the “Equal Right’s Society” but is actually discussed in the Gemara (*Avodah Zora* 27a).

The Gemara says there is a *machlokes*, and it will depend on the reason a non-Jew cannot be a *mohel*. According to one opinion, it is based on the *pasuk* וְאַתָּה אֶת בְּרִיתִי תִשְׁמֵר – “You shall watch my *bris*,” which means only you [Avraham] and your descendants can perform the *bris* and not others. The other opinion learns this from the words הַמֵּל יִמּוּל. Rashi explains that these words can also be read הַמֵּל יִמּוּל, one who has been circumcised can perform the circumcision on others and not a non-Jew who is uncircumcised.

The Gemara points out that the *nafka mina*, the *halachic* difference between these two sources, will be in regard to allowing a woman to perform the *bris*. According to the first opinion, a woman would not be qualified because she is not someone who “keeps” the *bris*. However, if the requirement is to have someone who is circumcised, she would be allowed, because a woman is considered as if she were circumcised.

The Gemara then raises the obvious question. How can anyone suggest that a woman is not qualified to perform *milah* if the Torah writes clearly that Tziporah performed the *milah* on her son? The Gemara answers that it is possible that she asked someone else to perform the *milah* or that she just started it off, and then Moshe took over.

*Tosfos* explains that, although she cannot perform the *milah* itself, if she were commanded in the mitzvah, it would mean that she is responsible for arranging for the *milah*, such as by hiring a *mohel*. This fits well with the aforementioned notion of the *Tosfos Rid*. Since the mitzvah also includes taking care of all the necessary arrangements, that is something that could have been done by the mother.

### SUMMARY

The mitzvah of *milah* is not just to perform the actual circumcision but also includes arranging and preparing everything that is needed. A woman has no requirement to get involved, physically, financially, or otherwise. There is a *machlokes* whether a woman can be a *mohel*.

## SHIUR SCHEDULE

### KOLLEL BOKER 7:00-8:00AM

Chavrusa learning - Gemara  
Currently: מסכת יומא  
Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei  
Dyoma and relevant topics

### NIGHT KOLLEL 8:15-9:45PM

Chavrusa learning - Halacha  
Currently: הלכות ניבוי אב ואם

### SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45 PM  
Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00 PM  
Zera Shimshon Shiur | 8:15-9:00 PM

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# RABBI MAYER TWERSKY



## The Waters of Apathy

“*Ki mei Noach zos li...*For this shall be to me [like] the waters of Noach” (*Yeshayah* 54:9).

The verse in *Yeshayah* refers to the Deluge as “*mei Noach*” (the waters of Noach). In light of the fact that the Deluge erased all of mankind save Noach and his family, this is hardly a complimentary association. In fact, according to the *Zohar Hakadosh*, this verse issues a stunning indictment of Noach. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu informed Noach of the impending destruction of the world, Noach should have prayed. The verse in *Yeshayah* indicts Noach for his inaction and apathy by referring to the Deluge as *mei Noach*.

Concern for one’s fellow man is a universal obligation. Noach, after all, was a *ben Noach* (Noachite).

The obligation for concern runs even deeper for Jews vis-a-vis each other. The Torah mandates mutual responsibility and interdependence amongst Jews. *Kol Yisroel areivim ze bozeh*; Jews exist symbiotically. We are not merely responsible for each other (*arev* in the sense of guarantor), we are “mixed up with each other,” symbiotically intertwined (*arev* in the sense of mixture).

This obligation clearly extends beyond prayer. It entails teaching, reaching out, philanthropy, acts of kindness, etc. – anything that helps foster Torah observance for every Jew.

We, as Jews, have always desperately needed each other. This existential truth is more relevant today than ever, when we are ravaged by assimilation. The rate of intermarriage, *rachmana litzlan*, is, at least, fifty per-

cent. An all-too-small minority of Jewish children receive a Torah education. Even in Torah observant circles, the need is great. “Inreach” ought to be a priority. Sadly, amidst unprecedented affluence, poverty – even dire poverty – persists. The list goes on and on.

There is no question that there are virtually countless causes that need our involvement and/or financial support. There is no question that there are virtually countless avenues (outreach, “inreach,” education, strengthening our shuls, *chessed*, philanthropy...) for fulfilling the mandate of *kol Yisroel areivim*. The question is if every one of us, in accordance with our individual talents and resources, is fulfilling that mandate. To do less, *rachmana litzlan*, would invite the indictment of *mei Noach*.

# RABBI JARED VIDERS



## Seize the Moment

A family visiting Manhattan from overseas stopped alongside a vast excavation site that was teeming with activity. Curious as to what was being built, one of the tourists innocently inquired, “Excuse me, sir, can you tell us what is happening here?” To which a burly, gruff New York City construction worker sternly responded, “What’s it look like, lady? We’re schlepping bricks,” and he pressed on with his hefty wheelbarrow.

Undeterred by the less-than-pleasant response, the tourist posed the same question to the next laborer toiling under the Gotham sun. Again, she questioned, “Can I ask you what’s doing here?” “Sure,” he smiled, “we’re building a palace!”

Two similarly stationed individuals (probably members of the same union) were equally burdened with that which most of us would deem “menial labor.” Yet, owing to one’s perspective, the very same task could become marginalized as insignificant or championed as an essential component of something much larger in scope and permanence. It’s all a matter of one’s perspective.

\*\*\*

“G-d spoke to Noach, saying, ‘Go forth from the Ark; you and your wife, your sons, and your sons’ wives with you. Every living being that is with you of all flesh, of birds, of animals, and creeping things that move on the earth -

order them out with you, and let them teem on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.’” (Genesis 8:15-18)

The inestimable gift that Noach bestowed upon humanity, i.e., the entire animal and bird kingdom, is readily apparent wherever we turn. It’s the squirrels squirreling nuts and acorns for the winter. The sparrow on the telephone wire overhead. It’s your neighbor’s dog and your child’s turtle. The San Diego Zoo’s 4,500 different types of animals. It’s Chicago’s Bears, Bulls, and Cubs.

How did all of this come to fruition? Rewind a few thousand years to Noach’s year-long, grueling care of each and every species. Day in and day out. Alfalfa to the bunnies. Bananas to the orangutans. Fish to the seals. Dried corn to the parakeets. Make sure they have water. Make sure they have a clean cage.

How did the progenitor of humankind spend his days on the Ark? Strategizing how to develop the new world? Brainstorming over issues of urban planning and distribution of natural resources? No. Nothing quite as lofty nor as cerebral.

To the contrary, the individual responsible for saving humanity as we know it spent an entire year toiling ceaselessly in a manner akin to the overworked and underpaid clerk in your local pet store. What is the message here?

Much of our lives can seemingly be dismissed as mundane or trivial. It’s about car-

pooling or remembering to put the recycling out on Tuesday night. It’s about packing a snack and unloading the dishwasher.

These are not the types of activities that command headlines. These are not the ways that (so-called) dignitaries spend their precious time. And yet, one of the take-home lessons from Noach and his efforts is not only that “big things often come in small packages” but that “deeply meaningful and deeply lasting contributions to the world (and to others) often come in mundane packages.”

So next time you pack up that PB&J sandwich, remember you’re doing much more than just providing lunch; you’re helping to sustain the next generation of mankind. You’re not just helping out with homework; you’re cultivating a thirst for Torah and truth that will help forge another link in our chain of transmission back to Mount Sinai. You’re not just lending a neighbor a dozen eggs; you’re cementing a brick in the edifice of humankind and love for your fellow neighbor.

We’re not all Noachs. We’re not necessarily going to be responsible for saving the world as we know it. But in our own little arks, doing our best to navigate the high (and low) tides of life, if we double-click on that which appears mundane and insignificant, keep a close watch, we might just find that which is truly heroic and extraordinary.

## RABBI YAKOV YOSEF SCHECHTER



### Gan HaTorah

#### SERVING HAKADOSH BARUCH HU WITH CHESHEK

“אלה תולדות נח נח איש צדיק תמים היה בדרתו” - “These are the offspring of Noach – Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations.”

לֵוּי 42:3 “הוא” - “Whoever came before Me, I can reward him, for everything under the heavens is Mine.” Chazal tell us that a *bas kol* is going to hover over the top of the mountaintops and say, “Who had a *bris milah* that I did not give them a son? Who made *tzitzis* that I did not give them the article with which to put the *tzitzis* on?” In other words, without Hakadosh Baruch Hu providing everyone with everything that they have, they would not be able to perform any mitzvos. One can perform the mitzvah of *bris milah* because Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave him a son, and one can perform the mitzvah of *tzitzis* because Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave him clothing. Therefore, one is not entitled to any reward, for Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the main component in the person performing the mitzvah. However, the *meforshim* explain that those who perform mitzvos with *זריזות* וְחֶשֶׁק, alacrity and desire, are not part of *מי הקדימני*, for being that they are showing their intense desire to perform the mitzvos, they are entitled to reward for their alacrity and desire.

A *siman* to this is “זריזין מקדימין למצות” - “Those who perform the mitzvos with alacrity – they come before the mitzvah.” רבינו מאמרמזא says that the last letters of the words “נח איש צדיק” spell “חשק” - “desire.” - “אלה תולדות נח” - These are the *toldos* of Noach – these are the *ma’asim tovim* of Noach, which made him into an איש צדיק. If one will ask, but why did his *ma’asim tovim* make him into a tzaddik, when we know the concept of “מי הקדימני”? “נח איש צדיק” - The last letters of these words spell “חשק”. Since Noach had a great desire to serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu, it is considered that he came “before the mitzvos” and was therefore entitled to reward. (נחל קדומים)

Noach’s generation was a generation of immorality and theft. While it is well known that the sin of immorality is great, one would think that the sin of theft is not a great travesty. It should not be done, but what is so terrible about theft? One who steals is demonstrating that he does not believe that there is a Ribbono Shel Olam running the world. Everything that a person has, he is supposed to have. Stealing that which he should not have will be lost from him one way or another. He is ultimately not accomplishing anything by stealing. He is just creating more work for himself. If he was in fact supposed to have that which he stole, Hakadosh Baruch Hu was going to send it to him in a permitted way.

Noach understood this, was happy with what he had, and did not look at what others had. Noach served Hakadosh Baruch Hu with desire. That is a great *zechus* for one to be entitled to receive reward. While we know that Noach did not do enough to save his generation, there is still much positive to learn from him. We must seek to serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu with true חשק and recognize that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is running every aspect of this world. We must do our *hishtadlus* but remember that it is nothing more than *hishtadlus*, for Hakadosh Baruch Hu is doing everything.

## RABBI ELIMELECH BIDERMAN



### Taking the Yom Tov with Us

The Pnei Menachem *zt'l* said, “People try hard to tie the Yom Tov to them. Actually, the Yom Tov never leaves us. The problem is that we leave the Yom Tov. Our goal should be to bind ourselves to the Yom Tov. This is the meaning of אָסַר חַג בְּעִבּוּתֵינוּ; we should attach ourselves to the Yom Tov.

A story will illustrate the concept of taking our *kabbalos* of the holiday period with us into the new year.

A landlord in Golders Green, London, was always careful to lease his apartments to people he trusted would pay rent. If the person applying for an apartment appeared to be untrustworthy, he would find an excuse not to rent it to him. But there was a time, ten to twenty years ago, when there were many vacancies in the Golders Green area, and he realized that he couldn’t be too picky. If he found a potential tenant, he accepted him, even if he feared that he might not pay. At least with one of his tenants, his fears materialized, and the tenant refused to pay rent. The landlord summoned him to court, but he feared that he would lose the case because in England, the renter is favored in court over the landlord.

The judge asked the tenant why he hadn’t paid the rent. He replied, “He leased me a deficient apartment. The heating and air conditioning didn’t work, and there are also problems with the plumbing and electricity. I asked the landlord numerous times to fix these problems, but my requests fell on deaf ears. I had to pay tradesmen to come fix my apartment. So, why should I pay the rent, too?”

The landlord feared he would lose the case because he had no proof with which to disprove the tenant’s claims. However, the judge asked the tenant, “Did you pay rent for at least one month? If you didn’t even pay rent the first month, that proves you never intended to pay rent.” He hadn’t paid even the first month, so the judge ordered him to pay up entirely.

Reb Elchanan Halprin *zt'l* of Radumishla told this story and said that it is a lesson in *kabbalos tovos*. Sometimes, people have excuses for why they didn’t keep their *kabbalos*. But the Heavenly court will ask, “Did you keep your *kabbalah* at least once? Did you begin the year adhering to the *kabbalos* you took on? If you didn’t even begin with your *kabbalos*, that shows you weren’t serious, and you never truly intended to keep them.”

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## RABBI SHALOM ROSNER



### Think Rationally Towards the Future

*Noach, and Shem and Ham and Yafet, Noach's sons, and Noach's wife and his sons' three wives with them, came into the Ark in the middle of this very day. (Bereishit 7:13)*

Noach is commanded to enter the Ark smack in the middle of the day. The Torah uses the term בעצם היום הזה. Similar language is used in two other instances (highlighted by Rashi, *Devarim* 32:48). The term בעצם היום הזה is used when Moshe is to ascend the mountain to die, as well as when Bnei Yisrael leave Mitzrayim (*Shemot* 12). Rashi explains that the common denominator is that in all instances, people may try to prevent the event from transpiring, but G-d will ensure that it occurs in the light of day, and no one will be able to thwart the event from occurring!

**Noach** – The people of the generation may try to block Noach from entering the Ark, so G-d had Noach enter in the light of day to show the people they could do nothing to prevent it.

**Yetziat Mitzrayim** – The Exodus occurred in the light of day to underscore that it was visible to all, and the Egyptians could not halt it.

**Moshe's death** – The people may have tried to do all in their power to stop Moshe from ascending the mountain upon which he was to die, so Moshe ascended in the light of day to show all that they could do nothing to interfere with his death.

The *Shemen Hatov* raises an interesting question with respect to Noach. In the other two instances, with respect to *Yetziat Mitzrayim* and Moshe's death, the people had something to gain from seeking to prevent the occurrence. In the first instance, the Jewish people would remain in Egypt under Egyptian rule, and in the second, Moshe would remain alive and with the people. However, it seems like the people who would prevent Noach from entering the Ark had nothing to gain! The flood would occur and wipe them out anyway. Why would they contemplate preventing Noach from entering the Ark if they derived no benefit from that act?

The *Shemen Hatov* suggests that, unfortunately, when individuals have a strong opinion on a matter, at times they act in an irrational manner. They seek to accomplish an objective, irrespective of the ramifications it may have on other individuals or society as a whole. The people of Noach's generation may have sought to kill him because he was offering rebuke to them over the hundred years it took to build the Ark. They just wanted to stop him from preaching, whether or not there would be a positive result from their action. They did not focus on whether, in the long run, their act would have any impact on the severity of the flood and the ability to save their lives.

No matter how upset we are in a given situation, we cannot lose our cool. More importantly, we must think rationally. We ought to consider the ramifications of our actions, to look beyond the immediate situation and consider the lasting impact that what we do or say will have on others. All too often, short-sightedness can lead to a more severe result in the future than the perceived disaster we are grappling with in the present.

## RABBI NACHMAN WINKLER



### The Waters of Noach

I wish to share with you an important lesson that Rav Soloveitchik taught regarding this week's *haftorah*. The Rav quotes the question posed in the Zohar about Yishayahu's expression found in the *haftorah* reading. Yishayahu states: "*Ki mei No'ach zot li*" - "For this (Hashem's anger) is like the waters of No'ach," meaning that just as the Flood waters destroyed quickly and completely but would never again return, so too, Hashem's angry punishment destroyed quickly and completely but would never again be repeated. These words, naturally, create the obvious connection to our *parasha*. But the Zohar wonders why the *navi* called the flood waters, the rushing, tempest-tossed waters of destruction, the "waters of No'ach." They were, after all, the waters of Hashem! They were promised by Hashem and brought by Him to punish the sinners! We could understand if the flood had been called the "waters of destruction" or even the "waters of the wicked." But why call them the waters of No'ach?

The Zohar explains that the words of the *navi* were meant as a subtle condemnation of No'ach himself because he was, in a sense, somewhat responsible for the Flood's destruction. After all, nowhere do we read that No'ach prayed for his generation. Nowhere do we find him warning the people to repent, and nowhere do we see him pleading with G-d to overturn the evil decree. In fact, the Midrash (*D'varim Rabbah*) compares Noah's inaction to Moshe Rabbeinu's action in defending his people and arguing with G-d to rescind His decree. The Midrash goes on to suggest that No'ach was satisfied with the assurance that he and his family would survive even if all others would perish.

And that is why the waters of destruction were called "Mei No'ach."

Rav Soloveitchik taught that, based on the Zohar, if one is lax in praying for the ill or indifferent to the *Mi Sheberach* for the sick (or thinks that it "drags out" the service), he violates the prohibition of "*Lo ta'mod al dam rei'echa*," standing idly by while another is in danger.

In light of this understanding, I've become more sensitive to our *tefillah* for the sick. The subtle implication of Yishayahu's words, as understood by the Zohar, condemns inaction at a time of need.

This *haftorah* reminds us of the crime of indifference: indifference to the individual in pain, indifference to soldiers in danger, and indifference to a nation in crisis.

And it is for that very reason that I urge us all to consider what we do when the prayers are recited in shul. Let us not be guilty of the trespass of the righteous No'ach. Let us learn to be different than him.

Let us not be INdifferent!



## Seeking Immortality

After the destruction of civilization in the great Flood, a new generation arose and searched for a way to immortalize themselves so that their existence would withstand any new natural disasters. They gathered in the Tigris-Euphrates valley and there built the great city that would be called Nineveh. And to guarantee that their achievements would be forever remembered, they embarked on building a colossal structure, a great tower pointing towards - and seemingly even touching - the sky.

It was the first ancestor of our modern-day skyscrapers. This was the great technological leap forward in the discovery of creating bricks as a building material, which enabled such a project to be imagined and executed. The Torah specifically relates to us that the sole purpose of this tower soaring heavenward was "to build for us a name," a remembrance, an eternal monument to human technology and ability that later generations would gaze upon in awe and admiration.

It was a testament to the human ego and

its accompanying hubris. That is perhaps what the Midrash is implying when it states that, ".....We will prop up the heavens" with this tower. They were saying that puny man could successfully defy G-d and nature and immortalize itself with its technological wonders and insatiable ambitions.

Every dictator in history has sought to immortalize his achievements in stone and marble, lest his greatness becomes unknown to future generations. Almost all of these memorials have failed to live up to their original purpose. The slaves who built the pyramids of Egypt are more well-known than are their Pharaonic masters.

The Parthenon and Coliseum lie in ruins, and Nineveh itself has long since disappeared from the map of the world. And the great Twin Towers of the World Trade Center of New York City are also no longer with us.

The irony of all of this is that none of the great architectural monuments of the ancient, medieval, and modern worlds were felled by nature. There was no need to prop up the heavens in order to save Nineveh from destruction. Nineveh and all of the other

great monuments of the ancient world were all destroyed by human beings who were themselves bent upon creating their own eternal monuments to their own achievements.

It is part of the inborn competitive nature of human beings to attempt to destroy the immortality of others as a means of guaranteeing one's own immortality. Thus, we continue to hound people who are already in the grave, searching for scandal and blame. The Torah itself tells us that the tower at Nineveh was never completed because people did not understand each other's language. Basically, they could no longer cooperate with one another.

The fractiousness and parochialism of humans towards each other are what truly stand in the way of human immortality. Rabbi Yisrael Lipkin of Salant summed up this lesson in his pithy remark: "Concern for the needs of others in this world is my entry ticket to the World to Come." Torah values and its observance, coupled with good deeds, not physical monuments, are our guarantors in achieving immortality.

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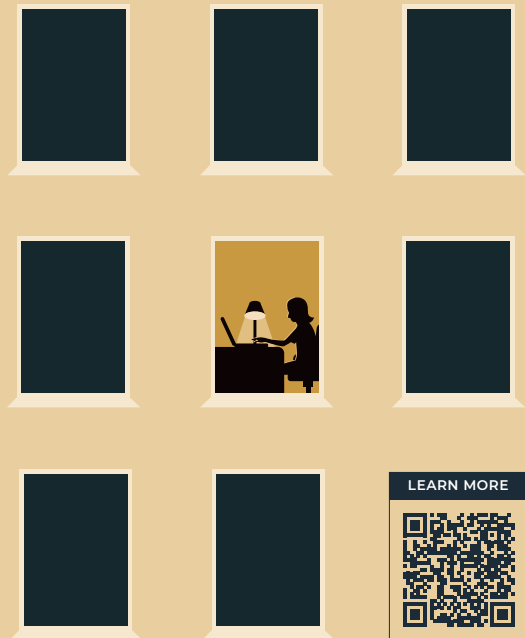
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## RABBI YITZCHAK ADLERSTEIN



### Noach and Avraham

*Based on the Meor Einayim*

*Noach was a tzaddik; perfect in his generations. Noach walked with G-d.*

By including the qualifier “in his generations,” the Torah plunges us into controversy. Rashi cites two opinions. One takes it as a compliment: Imagine how much greater he would have been in a generation like that of Avraham, in which the companionship of other inspired people would have helped propel him to even greater spiritual heights. Another opinion, however, sees it disparagingly: Had he lived in Avraham’s generation, Noach would not have impressed anyone as a spiritual giant.

This is confusing. Why would we look for ways to pare down our estimation of Noach if the *pasuk* can be interpreted as heaping praise upon him?

We can explain as follows. When a *tzaddik* rebukes people, and they fail to heed his words, he is given the good in them. The words of chastisement offered by the *tzaddik* have spiritual force. When those words are rejected by listeners who have processed them, those words return to the *tzaddik* and become part of his spiritual treasury. Those words are the good that the *tzaddik* takes from them. Therefore, living in a spiritually impoverished generation was a contributing factor to Noach’s greatness! He rebuked many others; they rejected his words. The good in those words redounded to His spiritual credit. This would not have been the case had he lived in Avraham’s generation, when his rebuke would not have been as necessary or spurned when it was delivered.

We can ask the same question about the end of the *pasuk*, where Rashi again seems to diminish Noach. He explains that while Noach walked with Hashem, Avraham walked before Him. In other words, Avraham was a trailblazer, while Noach required G-d’s support at his side as he walked. What is the point of diminishing Noach’s luster?

Know this. On a mystical plane, Hashem and *Knesses Yisrael* form a unity. We are nothing without Him; in a certain sense, *kivayachol*, He is not complete without *Knesses Yisrael* joined to Him. The way we become joined is rather specific. It always begins with an “awakening from below,” i.e., our taking the first step through longing to become joined to Him. This excites, as it were, a longing on His part for us to become united with Him, resulting in a reciprocal “awakening from below.” When the two longings coincide – when Hashem’s relationship with us shows the same passion and desire as ours for Him – He can be said to be complete in this regard.

The order, however, is specific. It is our job to begin the process with our own actions, rather than to become excited by some awakening from above. All of creation is based upon the premise that we will constantly initiate the process whereby the two longings coincide and achieve union. When the awakening comes from Above, we have essentially contributed nothing and failed in our purpose.

HKBH designed that the world continue, despite the pervasive evil of the generation of the Flood. For this reason, He reached out first to Noach. Noach responded and was able to walk with G-d, albeit with much support. He indeed became a perfect *tzaddik*. Yet, his righteousness was not comparable to that of Avraham, who walked ahead of Hashem, i.e., his awakening came from within himself, as is appropriate.

This is Chazal’s intention when they say that “These are the products of the heavens and earth *b’hibaram*/when they were created” refers to *Avraham*. It is Avraham’s model – not Noach’s – that was the basis for the creation of the world.

## RABBI DON JARASHOW



### In Line with the Divine

The ten generations from Adam to Noach ended in total moral collapse. Humanity distanced itself from the Creator until Hashem declared the world must be destroyed, except for Noach and his family. The *Dor Hamabul* began with immorality, but Hashem gave them time to repent. It was only when they turned to theft—*gezeilah*—that their fate was sealed. As *Bereishis* 6:12 says, “*The earth was corrupt... for all flesh had corrupted its way.*”

The Gemara (*Sanhedrin* 108a) teaches that the decree came specifically because of theft. But this raises a question: *Gezeilah* isn’t one of the three cardinal sins. Why would it warrant global destruction?

The Midrash (*Bereishis Rabbah* 31:5) deepens the puzzle. It describes two types of theft: *Gezel*, significant theft, and *chamas*, petty theft worth less than a *perutah*. People would take tiny amounts, like one chickpea, from someone’s basket. Each act was too small to prosecute, but collectively, they left the owner empty-handed. Hashem responded, “You acted improperly, so I will act with you improperly.”

Rav Chatzkel Levenstein offers a powerful insight:

נמצא שכל עונש דור המבול היה רק על ענין שלא כשורה

The punishment came not from the theft itself but from the mindset—acting *shelo k’shura*, outside Hashem’s line. These people weren’t just sinning; they were deliberately sidestepping Divine boundaries. That brazen defiance, even in small acts, demanded a cosmic response.

I once learned with Yehuda, a friend searching for clarity. Though he lives mostly secularly, he still keeps certain mitzvos and avoids some *aveiros*. He doesn’t know why. I told him, “You’re a Yid, created with a *tzelem Elokim*. No matter how far you feel, there’s a *pintele Yid* inside—a spark that draws you to mitzvos and shields you from *aveiros*. It’s your soul’s compass.”

This idea of *shurah*—Hashem’s line—is central. When we honor it, we sustain the world Hashem recreated after the Flood. When we cross it, we risk unraveling that creation. It wasn’t just about a stolen chickpea. It was about the boundaries we’re entrusted to uphold.

Each day, we choose between good and bad. The *tzelem Elokim* within us guides us, but it’s our *ko’ach habeichirah*, our power of choice, that determines whether we align with Hashem’s will. By respecting the *shurah*, we affirm our mission and our faith.

May we be *zoche* to the next stage of creation, free from today’s *chamas*, with the coming of *Mashiach Tzidkeinu, bimheirah beyameinu*. Amen.



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An old farmer writes to his son who is in prison: "Dear Son, this year I will not be able to plant potatoes because I cannot dig the field by myself. I know that if you were here, you would help me."

The son writes back: "Hey Dad, don't even think about digging the field because that's where I buried all the money I stole."

The police read the letter, and the next day, the whole field was dug up in search of the money, but nothing was found.

The next day, the son wrote again: "Now plant your potatoes, Dad. That's the best I can do from here."

Why was the cucumber upset?  
Because it was in a pickle!

Why do bananas never feel lonely?  
Because they all hang out in bunches

Why did the reporter go to the  
ice cream store?  
He wanted to get a good  
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## ZERA SHIMSHON

### Noach's Children

*And Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem (6:8).*

*These are the children of Noach, Noach was righteous, a perfect man, etc. (6:9).*

Last week's *parsha* ends off with the Torah saying that Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem, and it was because of this that he was saved from the Flood. The *Zera Shimshon* asks that being that Noach's children were also saved, the *passuk* should really have said, "And Noach and his children found favor in the eyes of Hashem."

The *Zera Shimshon* offers two explanations.

1) Before the Flood, one had to be one hundred years old to be punishable for their actions. Before then, a person was considered a 'minor' and would not be punished for their wicked deeds. Still, we find that all the people, even those under one hundred years old, perished in the Flood. Only the children of Noach were saved. This obviously was only in the merit of their righteous father, Noach. Therefore, they are not included in the *passuk*, and only Noach is mentioned since it was in his merit that his children were saved.

2) The *Zera Shimshon* offers another possibility. Noach's children were saved in their own merit since the Gemara (*Brachos 48b*) says, "One can tell a well-rooted sapling from the beginning stages of its growth." The Gemara uses this as an allegory to young children under the age of accountability; nevertheless, one can tell from their actions in which direction they are generally headed. So too, Noach's children, although they were not yet accountable and thereby punishable for their actions, their leaning to be good was clear. In contrast, the children of the rest of the inhabitants of the Earth showed bad leanings and were therefore eradicated.

However, Noach's righteous children were due largely to the fact that their father Noach's actions guided and illuminated the proper path for them. This is why the *passuk* only mentions the fact that Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem, because although his children were also righteous, it was due to Noach's righteousness that they were also righteous.

The *Zera Shimshon* uses this explanation to attribute a deeper understanding to Rashi's comment at the beginning of the *parsha*.

The *parsha* begins by saying, "These are the children of Noach," and then goes on to enumerate Noach's righteous ways. Rashi explains that a *tzaddik's* real children are his good deeds. This is why the Torah mentions Noach's good deeds after saying, "These are the children of Noach."

The *Zera Shimshon* understands these words of Rashi to be a lesson in *chinuch*. The *tzaddik* raises righteous children not by preaching good deeds but rather by serving as a live example. Hence, "a *tzaddik's* real children are his good deeds" means that a *tzaddik's* children grow to be righteous by seeing their father's good deeds by live example.

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