

ב"ה Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1536

י' מרחשון תשפ"ד • OCT. 21 2023

פרשת נח
PARSHAT NOACH

OU Israel Sends
its Love to the Entire
OU Family and Klal Yisrael
with Prayers for Comfort,
Safety and Shalom.



Rabbi Avi Berman
Dear Torah Tidbits Family
Page 4

Chizuk from OU Israel's
Executive Director



Rebbetzin Dr. Adina Shmidman
Haftorah Insights
Page 54

In memory of my parents Yitzhak & Chana Heller z"l
Dedicated by their daughter Dvorah Gorman

ונראתה הקשת בענן
בראשית ט"ז

YERUSHALAYIM SHABBAT PARSHAT NOACH ZMANIM
CANDLES 5:26PM • HAVDALA 6:38PM • RABBEINU TAM 7:18PM

Yearly
Zmanim
Inside
See page 30



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A SHORT VORT | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

May it be Your will, our G-d, that You shall protect and guide all our soldiers of Tzahal to safety and victory over our enemies.
את קשתי נתתי בענן...והיה בענני ענן על הארץ ונראתה הקשת (ט"ז:ג"ד)

"My bow I have set in the cloud...and when I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the cloud." (9:13-14)
The Penini Torah (Rav David Chadad) asks why the need of the pasuk to repeat itself? Once it says that G-d sets His bow in the cloud, why does the following pasuk have to reiterate that this bow can be seen in the cloud?

One can learn an important lesson. A person who truly believes and trusts in G-d is guaranteed that his spirits will never fail. Even when challenged with what seems to be dark and gloomy situations, he will still be able to discern the rays of hope. This Pasuk stresses that even at a time when G-d seems to cover the skies over Israel with dark clouds...

את קשתי נתתי בענן - nevertheless, you will all be able to see the rainbow - the rays of hope from G-d himself.
ונראתה הקשת.

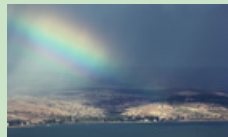
- Shabbat Shalom

THIS WEEK'S COVER IMAGE!

את־קשתי נתתי בענן והיתה לאות ברית ביני ובין הארץ

I photographed this rainbow over the Kinneret from our balcony. Whenever I see a rainbow, it gives me hope that HaKadosh Baruch Hu will remember us and protect us. We need Him now more than ever. Please G-d, all the kidnapped hostages and all our soldiers should come home soon, safe and well.

Julian Alper, Manchester. Tverya 2014



HELPFUL REMINDERS



KIDDUSH LEVANA: 7 Days from the Molad: Motzei Shabbat Oct. 21
Last time to say Kaddush Levana: Motzei Shabbat Oct. 28



This **Motzei Shabbat** (7th of MarCheshvan) we begin saying
Tal U'Matar in the bracha of Barech Aleinu

CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



OTHER Z'MANIM



	NOACH		LECH LECHA	
	CANDLES	HAVDALA	CANDLES	HAVDALA
Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	5:26	6:38	5:19	6:31
Aza Area (Netivot, Sderot et al)	5:44	6:41	5:37	6:34
Beit Shemesh / RBS	5:45	6:39	5:37	6:32
Alon Shvut	5:42	6:38	5:35	6:32
Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	5:42	6:39	5:35	6:32
Modiin / Chashmonaim	5:42	6:39	5:35	6:32
Netanya	5:42	6:39	5:35	6:32
Be'er Sheva	5:44	6:40	5:36	6:33
Rehovot	5:43	6:39	5:36	6:33
Petach Tikva	5:26	6:39	5:19	6:32
Ginot Shomron	5:41	6:38	5:34	6:31
Haifa / Zichron	5:31	6:38	5:24	6:31
Gush Shiloh	5:41	6:37	5:33	6:31
Tel Aviv / Givat Shmuel	5:43	6:39	5:36	6:33
Givat Zeev	5:46	6:38	5:38	6:31
Chevron / Kiryat Arba	5:42	6:38	5:35	6:32
Ashkelon	5:44	6:41	5:37	6:34
Yad Binyamin	5:43	6:39	5:36	6:33
Tzfat / Bikat HaYarden	5:34	6:36	5:27	6:29
Golan	5:39	6:36	5:31	6:29
Nahariya/Maalot	5:41	6:38	5:33	6:31
Afula	5:40	6:38	5:32	6:30
Rabbeinu Tam (Jerusalem) - 7:18 PM • Shabbat Parshat Lech Lecha - 7:11 PM				

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: Kidushin 69

JERUSALEM

Ranges 11 days Wed - Shabbat
Oct 18 - 28 / 3 - 13 Cheshvan

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin 5:53 - 6:00
Sunrise 6:44 - 6:52
Sof Zman Kriat Shema 9:34 - 9:37
Magen Avraham 8:57 - 9:00
Sof Zman Tefila 10:30 - 10:32
(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)
Chatzot (Halachic Noon) 12:24 - 12:22
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha) 12:54 - 12:52
Plag Mincha 4:53 - 4:44
Sunset (Including Elevation) 6:08 - 5:58



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DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
Executive Director, OU Israel

Special Message of Chizuk

Despite the fact that last week introduced such pain and sorrow for the Jewish People, the outpouring of love, support, and action was unparalleled. The Jewish People and people all over the world have responded, as Jews often do, with a question: “How?” - “How can I help?” “How can I make a difference?” In Israel, the nation has come together in a way that has not been seen in decades. There is no doubt in my mind that if I asked any one of you to put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) and write a list of the opportunities of *chesed* and giving that you encountered this past week, you could easily list 20, 30, even 50 stories of volunteering and love. There seems to be no limit to the incredible and heartwarming stories of amazing acts of kindness and unity. I’d like to share three example of *chesed* that stand out in my mind from this week.

First, hundreds of Jews have come back to Israel to respond to the call for reservists or just to see how they can help their brothers and sisters. Within Israel, so many of those not called up to join the army have sought ways to aid in Israel’s defense in any way they can. I just read an amazing story posted by a commander in the IDF. He had been given permission to send some soldiers out for a short break to visit their families. He

went over to one of the men and said, “Go home to your wife and your kids. Take a break for a day, and come back tomorrow.” The *chayal* responded, “I’m fine, my wife is fine. We’re doing ok. Put me at the bottom of the list and let that guy over there get the break, not me.” The commander went to the one he pointed to and that soldier responded, “I don’t need to go. I’m a single guy, no wife, no kids waiting for me. Put me at the bottom of the list. That guy over there, he has a wife, he

has kids, ask him to go home.” Each soldier he approached responded in the same way. The commander writes in his post how much that reminds him of the *midrash* that describes two brothers who loved each other so much that they kept adding crops to the other one’s pile. As the *midrash* goes, the space between the brothers’ fields is where the *Beit HaMikdash* was built.

The second example features the incredible hospitality of the Jewish People. Entire communities are making dinners for the mothers home with children whose fathers have joined the reserves. So many companies have made it their business to get delicious food to the soldiers on the front lines. Several non-kosher restaurants went to the trouble of *kashering* their kitchen so



that they could make food to bring to both religious and non-religious soldiers. People have opened up their homes to take in those from the north and south. So many people living overseas have given their apartments to families who evacuated their homes. I've heard of contractors giving entire projects of almost-finished houses over to those in need of places to stay. People from surrounding cities have come to clean and prepare these places for them to stay. There have been organizations who have made sure that furniture and appliances are brought so that they can live there until stability returns to Israel.

The third example is volunteers that have tied thousands of pairs of camouflaged *tzitzit* for *chayalim*. Young and old from all walks of life, *chareidi* and *dati leumi*, have gathered in *yeshivot* and *shuls* all over Israel to tie thousands of *tzitzit* to meet the demand coming from our *chayalim*, some of whom likely never wore *tzitzit* before, or at least not in a long time, wearing *tzitzit* as part of their uniform.

There are so many more stories to tell; the *chesed* has truly been endless. On behalf of the OU worldwide, I drove all over the country this week. I attended ten funerals in three days. Some of these families lost two sons this week. I visited families of *chayalim bodedim* (lone soldiers) who came to Israel to sit *shiva*. I visited advisors from our OU Israel Youth Centers who lost loved ones. I've just tried to be there for so many of our brothers and sisters who need support now.

One of the most impactful acts of *chesed* that I witnessed was at Har Herzl. People set up booths to give out sandwiches, drinks and snacks. Nobody was selling food; they just stood there and gave out as much as they could. Thousands upon thousands of people were coming every single hour to attend and pay their respects, and these teenagers and adults stood there giving out food to make sure that everyone could have something to eat. Just giving and giving. It was truly beautiful.



Henry Orlinsky and I drove to Rosh HaAyin this week to be *menachem avel* for my friend Yair Gabay who lost his sister in Sderot last week, and they had only found her body Sunday night. Yair is

currently an advisor for the OU Israel Youth Center in Kiryat Gat, and he grew up in our Makom Balev Youth Center in Sderot since he was in seventh grade. He was telling me that they decided not to sit *shiva* in their house in Sderot because they knew that people wanted to come to be *menachem avel*, and they'd have to sit in the bomb

In loving memory
of our daughter and sister

JUDY YELLIN a"h
יהודית מאשה בת אליעזר ע"ה

on her 29th *yahrzeit*
9 Marcheshvan

The Yellin and Weingarten families

shelter room much of the time. So instead, they went to his aunt's house in Rosh HaAyin. He spoke about how the entire community, within hours, had a place for them, and anything they could possibly need was provided for them to ensure they would be as comfortable as possible even in such a horrible situation. The *chesed* meant so much to them.

Every time I hear these stories of such great *chesed* occurring now, I feel like looking up and saying, "*Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, look at *Am Yisrael*. Look at who we are. This is surely us at our best. Don't look at how divided we sometimes were in the past or how much we protested against each other. These *chesed* stories now represent our real selves. This is really us, together, united with *achdut*."

Besides showing our unity to *Hashem*, these displays of unity, of brotherhood, are providing the soldiers and the families of the victims unfathomable strength during these difficult times. I met with the youth

in the south this past week, providing support through the OU family in Israel and abroad, whether physically or emotionally. When I tell them that this is coming from their brothers and sisters from around the world, people whom they have never met before, and most probably will never meet, it warms their heart as well.

I hope we can hold on to this feeling and remember how much we care for one another. Unfortunately, it often takes our enemies to remind us of this fact. I pray that we keep these feelings, how amazing and incredible they are, even after we destroy our enemies. This past Shabbat, I led the *Mussaf* prayer in shul. When we reached the *Mi Sheberach* prayer for Hashem to protect Israel, and the soldiers, it probably took me five times as long as it normally would to get through it, and I completely broke down at the prayer for G-d to return those from captivity. *B'ezrat Hashem*, we will see them home, reunited with their families very soon. I pray that we keep this feeling of *achdut*. These stories of *chesed*, kindness, and charity, represent our true selves. This is who we are.

Am Yisrael Chai!

A gigantic hug to my brothers and sisters around the world.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman
Executive Director, OU Israel
aberman@ouisrael.org

**May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits
be in loving memory of our dear friend**

**YEHUDA LEIB BERREN ז"ל
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on the third Yahrzeit of his passing.**

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FROM THE DESK OF RABBI MOSHE HAUER

OU EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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Moral Leadership in a Dark World

The ethics and morals of leaders are of essential importance.

Pirkei Avot is the best-known section of the Mishna as it is dedicated to articulating the Sages' ethical messages. Surprisingly, according to the Rambam (Introduction to Rambam's Commentary to the Mishna), it was not written for the masses but rather specifically for the leaders and judges of the community, "because if members of the masses are not ethically trained, they only harm themselves, whereas if the judge is not an ethical and well-mannered personality, he loses his way and causes the people to be lost via the harm he causes."

It was corrupt leadership that brought the destruction of the world in the *mabul*, the great flood. "The sons of *elohim* saw that the daughters of man were lovely, and they began to take whomever they chose to be their wives." (Bereishit 6:2) Rashi follows the translation of *Onkelos* and understands that these "sons of *elohim*" were the children of the leaders and judges of the time, leading Ramban to comment that society is doomed when those charged with preserving order and justice in society are themselves openly corrupt.

In this context, we can have a completely different understanding of G-d's instruction to Noach upon his emergence from

the ark: "One who sheds the blood of man - by man shall his blood be shed, for in G-d's image man was made." (Bereishit 9:6) The verse here is introducing the death penalty for the murderer, based apparently on the significance of the life he has destroyed. Yet all indications are that at this point man was further away than ever from reflecting G-d's image. Why is now the time to elevate the significance of the victim and initiate the death penalty for his murder?

In context, however, we understand that the "men in G-d's image" referenced here are not the victims but the judges, those sons of *Elokim* - the gods of the earth - whose being and actions are supposed to reflect the being and actions of the G-d in heaven but often fall short. After the disaster of the flood was brought on by the corruption and failure of the judges and leaders, Hashem turns to man and charges him to lead society towards truth and justice by zealously safeguarding it. "One who sheds the blood of man - by man shall his blood be shed." Leadership cannot sit by and watch impassively as evil is perpetrated; they must respond, "for in G-d's image man was made." Corrupt leaders destroy the world. Those who strive to live up to the Divine image of care and responsibility redeem it.

We are deeply grateful to the many

political leaders who have remained true to their *tzelem Elokim*, remembering the role they have in being beacons of justice in a dark world. We thank them for speaking up on behalf of the Jewish People and the State of Israel. ■

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ואמרו אמן

Our hearts and prayers continue to be with our brave IDF soldiers and their families, those who have lost loved ones, those in captivity, and all of Klal Yisrael.

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30

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50

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PARSHAT NOACH

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

The first 2 parshiot in our Torah, Breishit and Noach, are essentially parallel creation stories, or more accurately a creation and a recreation. However, the lessons to be learnt are not only in the parallels but in the differences. What is different in this recreation? What does G-d communicate to Noah that He did not communicate to Adam?



1ST ALIYA (6:9-22)

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

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, starting again, cover it with water, as it was "In the Beginning".

There is a detailed description of the dimensions of the Ark, while there is hardly any description of man's evil that is causing

the world to be destroyed. The Torah is more interested in the recreation than it is in the story of man's failure. The title of the Flood story is not the destruction of the world, but the recreation of the world.



2ND ALIYA (7:1-16)

Noah is again described as righteous. Bring 7 of each pure animal, 2 of the impure, and all the birds into the Ark. Noah 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 Noah.

Both aliyot began with Noah's righteousness and end with him doing as G-d commanded. In a word, righteousness is defined.

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. There He

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separated the waters; here He is releasing all the water, reversing the Creation.



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

The Flood covers the earth. All living things die, save Noah and all that are in the Ark. G-d remembers Noah. The waters recede. The Ark rests on Mt. Ararat. Noah sends out the raven. Then Noah 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. Noah removes the covering and sees there is dry land.

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. This stands in contrast to the initial creation of the world. In creation, each thing created happened immediately, each day crisp and defined. 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 Noah, saving the world, covering it slowly with the water that existed.

The story of the Torah is G-d’s love of and commitment to man and to the world He created. He saves the world. He saves Noah. But even before this; Adam and Eve sinned

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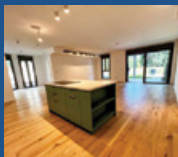
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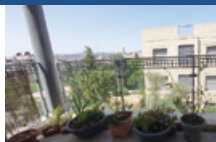


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and were punished. But not destroyed. Cain killed Abel, the most egregious sin, and is punished; but is not himself killed. G-d is committed to this world and is committed to mankind. He destroys the world naturally, maintaining it, covering it slowly with water and waiting for the water to recede. That very process communicates His commitment to His world and to mankind.



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

Noah is told to leave the Ark with his family and with the animals, blessing the animals to teem over the land. Noah offered sacrifices on an altar. G-d committed to never again curse land and animals because of man, nor the constellations. G-d blesses Noah 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. Noah and the animals receive the same blessings made to the animals and to man in Creation, to be fruitful and multiply. Noah 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? 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 Noah 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 rainbow after the flood story 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.

This rainbow is like the engagement ring in a love story. Noah 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 me? And binding Himself

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המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

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 2 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)

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

Noah seems to follow in Adam's agrarian footsteps – Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, Noah plants a vineyard. But the decline of the new man is not long in coming. The generations of Noah are described as different, distinct, separated into nations, into languages and distinct geographic regions. This gives rise to Nimrod, the warrior – distinctions and groupings give rise naturally to competition.



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, ends with people scattered the world over. The desire for unity would seem to be a good thing. However, unity often implies being united under me, coercing all to be like me. World history is the history of

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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.

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 with 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 Noach's very short pesukim. Noach ranks 49th in words/pasuk and 51st in letters/pasuk in the Torah.

MITZVOT

None of the TARYAG mitzvot are from No'ach, yet there are mitzvot in the sedra, specifically (but not only) references to the Noahide laws. So too is P'RU URVU repeated to No'ach - it is counted as a mitzva from Bereshit, when it was commanded to Adam.

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May HaShem accept our tefillot.

May we stand together as one, now and always.
May HaShem guide our leaders with strength and wisdom and achdut.
May our warriors be victorious and come back to us whole and healthy.
May our captives be redeemed and recover from an ordeal that we don't even want to imagine.
May we be comforted with mourners for the loss of so many and
May their memories be for a blessing.
May we see the coming of Mashiach and the building of the Beit HaMikdash soon and in our days.

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THE PERSON IN THE PARSHA

BY RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH WEINREB
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Judging Noah Fairly

Lately, I've been reflecting on the early origins of my basic beliefs. One of those beliefs, which has thankfully persisted to this day, has been the belief in fairness. I guess that I first learned about fairness on the playgrounds of the neighborhood in Brooklyn, where I grew up.

Our mentors on those playing fields, where we became adept at punchball, and later at softball and basketball, were not professional adult coaches. Rather, they were other boys, barely a year or two older than us. But fair play, and consideration for those of us with lesser athletic skills, were among the lessons they taught and the lessons that we internalized.

Of course, I later learned that those lessons were among the ancient teachings of the Jewish tradition. "Don't judge your fellow until you have been in his environment." "Appreciate the leaders of your own era, even if they don't quite compare with the leaders of old." "Judge each person favorably, according to his own merits."

But while I was imbibing those lessons on the playground, I was introduced to the study of *Chumash* and Rashi in the classroom. It was then that I was introduced to Noah, the central figure of this week's Torah portion, *Parshat Noach* (Genesis 6:9-11:32). Here was a man "who found favor

in the eyes of the Lord," and who was not only a *tzaddik*, a righteous man, but a *tzaddik tamim*, a perfectly righteous man.

I vividly remember asking my grandfather, who had one of the few *sukkot* in the neighborhood back then, if we could hang a picture of Noah on the wall of the *sukkah* along with the other biblical heroes whose portraits bedecked the walls of the *sukkah* of which he was so proud.

I was taken aback by his retort: "Have you not learned in school that Noah was not as great as Abraham, and that had he lived in Abraham's time, he would be a 'nobody'?" I had to confess that we had not yet learned Rashi's commentary, and certainly not the many other rabbinic sources, that insist that Noah fell short of the requirements necessary for us to adulate him, and therefore we could not invite him into our *sukkah* as we did with other

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biblical heroes from Abraham on.

Much later in life, in fact very recently, I came across what might be the harshest critique of Noah in all of rabbinic literature. It is a passage in the Holy Zohar, which contrasts Noah with Abraham. This supremely mystical work condemns Noah. The Lord informed Noah that He found mankind to be so degenerate that He had decided to wipe out all living beings and spare only Noah and his family. What was Noah reaction? Did he protest? No! He was silent. He said nothing.

But ten generations later, when the Lord informed Abraham that he was about to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wicked ways, Abraham protested to the Almighty. He challenged Him to live up to His divine principles of fairness and justice, and not punish the few exceptional individuals who were morally upstanding. Noah was silent and is therefore castigated. Abraham voiced his protest and is therefore admired.

The Zohar takes the matter even further and finds Abraham himself inferior to Moses. After all, Abraham only asked for the righteous to be spared, whereas Moses asked that the Lord even spare sinners. Moses was sufficiently stalwart to demand

that the Lord either forgive all of the Israelites, including the sinners, or else “wipe me out from the Book which You have written.” Moses was willing to give up everything rather than see anyone punished.

To this day, I ask myself the question, as numerous students of Torah have asked before me, “Are we judging Noah fairly?”

I try to empathize with Noah. I ask myself, perhaps he was a meek and humble person, who felt inadequate to stand up to others and rebuke them for their iniquities? Perhaps he was reluctant to debate those around him because he might be persuaded that their immorality was good and proper, and his morality naïve and foolish? Or perhaps he felt that his generation was so decadent that preaching to them would be a futile undertaking, that they were beyond hope of rehabilitation?

Very recently, I came across a book from which I derived an approach to understanding Noah and justifying his relative failures. It is a book by a contemporary rabbinic scholar, Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, entitled *HaMakor HaKaful* (*The Double Source*). Rabbi Bin-Nun offers an approach to understanding the psyche of the great Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook, whose leadership as Chief Rabbi and vast and

brilliant oeuvre of writings continue to inspire us to this day.

Rabbi Bin-Nun maintains that all great leaders draw from two distinct sources. He calls them *samchut* and *hashraah*, which I suggest can be translated as “a sense of one’s own authority” and “spiritual inspiration.” The former originates within the person, from the depths of his or her own psyche. The latter comes from an external source, from the Almighty. As I understand it, the former often takes the form of a felt mission, a purpose in life, an inner drive to accomplish a specific set of goals. The latter is a calling from Above, a Holy Spirit, a prophetic calling.

Rabbi Bin-Nun suggests that Rav Kook drew from both sources. He felt an internal impetus to lead, to return to the Land of Israel from his native Latvia, to envision the pioneers of early immigration to Israel as the vanguard of the ultimate redemption. But he also heard a voice from a second source, an external sublime source, a prophetic inspiration.

I suggest that Rabbi Bin-Nun’s concept of *samchut* can be used to differentiate between the inactivity of Noah, the partial response of Abraham, and the total sense of responsibility for the other as exemplified by Moses.

What was Noah’s sense of mission? He really had only one mission—to construct the ark. Once he had done that, and successfully steered the ark through months of troubled waters, he had no coherent

sense of mission. All he could do was plant a vineyard, with inevitable consequences.

His feeble sense of mission limited him, and thus he could not stand up in protest of the Lord’s Decree. He could not become a leader of men.

Abraham, on the other hand, had a clear sense of mission. The Lord Himself declared, “For I know him, that he will direct his descendants to do righteousness and justice.” Justice was his mission, and so he could stand up to the Almighty and insist upon justice.

Moses had an entirely different understanding of his mission. He was to lead the Jewish people, saints and sinners alike, into the Land of Israel. That mission enabled him to fearlessly confront the Almighty and demand that He totally forgive His people.

The lesson for all of us is that we have a mission to perform in life. It is not a simple matter to determine what that mission is. But once we achieve even a tentative sense of mission and purpose, we gain a measure of confidence and authority which equip us with capacities and capabilities beyond our expectations.

Noah was not morally defective. He was indeed a *tzaddik tamim*. However, he lacked a sense of mission and purpose, and that constrained him tragically.

We are all descendants of Abraham and disciples of Moses and are thereby blessed with a variety of missions which we must recognize, and which must motivate us to undreamed of accomplishments. ■





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A Tale of Four Cities

Between the Flood and the call to Abraham, between the universal covenant with Noah and the particular covenant with one people, comes the strange, suggestive story of Babel:

The whole world spoke the same language, the same words. And as the people migrated from the east they found a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, "Come, let us make bricks, let us bake them thoroughly." They used bricks for stone and tar for mortar. And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower that reaches the heavens, and make a name for ourselves. Otherwise we will be scattered across the face of the earth." (Gen. 11:1-4)

What I want to explore here is not simply the story of Babel considered in itself, but the larger theme. For what we have here is the second act in a four act drama that is unmistakably one of the connecting threads of Bereishit, the Book of Beginnings. It is a sustained polemic against the city and all that went with it in the ancient world. The city – it seems to say – is not

where we find God.

The first act begins with the first two human children. Cain and Abel both bring offerings to God. God accepts Abel's, not Cain's. Cain in anger murders Abel. God confronts him with his guilt: "Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground." Cain's punishment was to be a "restless wanderer on the earth." Cain then "went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden." We then read:

Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. He [Cain] built a city, naming it Enoch after his son. (Gen. 4:17)

The first city was founded by the first murderer, the first fratricide. The city was born in blood.

There is an obvious parallel in the story of the founding of Rome by Romulus who killed his brother Remus, but there the parallel ends. The Rome story – of children fathered by one of the gods, left to die by their uncle, and brought up by wolves – is a typical founding myth, a legend told to

explain the origins of a particular city, usually involving a hero, bloodshed, and the overturning of an established order. The story of Cain is not as founding myth because the Bible is not interested in Cain's city, nor does it valorise acts of violence. It is the opposite of a founding myth. It is a critique of cities as such. The most important fact about the first city, according to the Bible, is that it was built in defiance of God's will. Cain was sentenced to a life of wandering, but instead he built a town.

The third act, more dramatic because more detailed, is Sodom, the largest or most prominent of the cities of the plain in the Jordan valley. It is there that Lot, Abraham's nephew, makes his home. The first time we are introduced to it, in Genesis 13, is when there is a quarrel between Abraham's herdsmen and those of Lot. Abraham suggests that they separate. Lot sees the affluence of the Jordan plain.

Lot raised his eyes and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan up to Tzoar was well watered. It was like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (Gen. 13:10)

So Lot decides to settle there. Immediately we are told that the people of Sodom are "evil, great sinners against the Lord" (Gen. 13:13). Given the choice between affluence and virtue, Lot unwisely chooses affluence.

Five chapters later comes the great scene in which God announces his plan to destroy the city, and Abraham challenges him. Perhaps there are fifty innocent people there, perhaps just ten. How can God destroy the whole city?

"Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?" (Gen. 18:25)

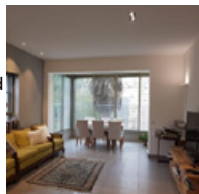


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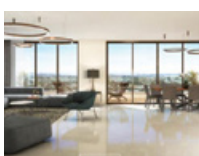
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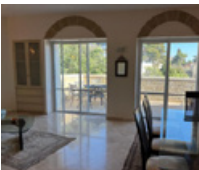
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God then agrees that if there are ten innocent people found, He will not destroy the city. In the next chapter, we see two of the three angels that had visited Abraham, arrive at Lot's house in Sodom. Shortly thereafter, a terrible scene plays itself out:

They had not yet gone to bed when all the townsmen, the men of Sodom – young and old, all the people from every quarter – surrounded the house. They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we may know them. (Gen. 19:4-5)

It turns out that there are no innocent men. Three times – “all the townsmen,” “young and old,” “all the people from every quarter” – the text emphasises that without exception, every man was a would-be perpetrator of the crime.

A cumulative picture is emerging. The people of Sodom do not like strangers. They do not see them as protected by law – nor even by the conventions of hospitality. There is a clear suggestion of sexual depravity and potential violence. There is also the idea of a crowd, a mob. People in a crowd can commit crimes they would not dream of doing on their own. The sheer population density of cities is a moral hazard in and of itself. Crowds drag down more often than they lift up. Hence Abraham's decision to live apart. He wages war on behalf of Sodom (Gen. 14) and prays for its inhabitants, but he will not live there. Not by accident were the patriarchs and matriarchs not city dwellers.

The fourth scene is, of course, Egypt, where Joseph is brought as a slave and serves in Potiphar's house. There, Potiphar's wife attempts to seduce him, and

failing, accuses him of a crime he did not commit, for which he is sent to prison. The descriptions of Egypt in Genesis, unlike those in Exodus, do not speak of violence but, as the Joseph story makes pointedly clear, there is sexual license and injustice.

It is in this context that we should understand the story of Babel. It is rooted in a real history, an actual time and place. Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilisation, was known for its city states, one of which was Ur, from which Abraham and his family came, and the greatest of which was indeed Babylon. The Torah accurately describes the technological breakthrough that allowed the cities to be built: bricks hardened by being heated in a kiln.

Likewise the idea of a tower that “reaches to heaven” describes an actual phenomenon, the ziqqurat or sacred tower that dominated the skyline of the cities of the lower Tigris-Euphrates valley. The ziqqurat was an artificial holy mountain, where the king interceded with the gods. The one at Babylon to which our story refers was one of the greatest, comprising seven stories, over three hundred feet high, and described in many non-Israelite ancient texts as “reaching” or “rivalling” the heavens.

Unlike the other three city stories, the builders of Babel commit no obvious sin. In this instance the Torah is much more subtle. Recall what the builders said:

“Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower that reaches the heavens, and make a name for ourselves. Otherwise we will be scattered across the face of the earth.” (Gen. 11:4)

There are three elements here that the

Torah sees as misguided. One is “that we make a name for ourselves.” Names are something we are given. We do not make them for ourselves. There is a suggestion here that in the great city cultures of ancient Mesopotamia, people were actually worshipping a symbolic embodiment of themselves. Emil Durkheim, one of the founders of sociology, took the same view. The function of religion, he believed, is to hold the group together, and the objects of worship are collective representations of the group. That is what the Torah sees as a form of idolatry.

The second mistake lay in wanting to make “a tower that reaches to the heavens.” One of the basic themes of the creation narrative in Bereishit 1 is the separation of realms. There is a sacred order. There is heaven and there is earth and the two must be kept distinct:

“The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth He has given to the children of men.” (Ps. 115:16)

The Torah gives its own etymology for the word Babel, which literally meant “the gate of God.” The Torah relates it to the Hebrew root *b-l-l*, meaning “to confuse.” In the story, this refers to the confusion of languages that happens as a result of the hubris of the builders. But *b-l-l* also means “to mix, intermingle,” and this is what the Babylonians are deemed guilty of: mixing heaven and earth, that should always be kept separate. *B-l-l* is the opposite of *b-d-l*, the key verb of Bereishit 1, meaning “to distinguish, separate, keep distinct and apart.”

The third mistake was the builders’ desire not to be “scattered over the face of the whole earth.” In this they were

attempting to frustrate God’s command to Adam and later to Noah to “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” (Gen. 1:28; Gen. 9:1). This seems to be a generalised opposition to cities as such. There is no need, the Torah seems to be saying, for you to concentrate in urban environments. The patriarchs were shepherds. They moved from place to place. They lived in tents. They spent much of their time alone, far from the noise of the city, where they could be in communion with God.

So we have in Bereishit a tale of four cities: Enoch, Babel, Sodom, and the city of Egypt. This is not a minor theme but a major one. What the Torah is telling us, implicitly, is how and why Abrahamic monotheism was born.

Hunter/gatherer societies were relatively egalitarian. It was only with the birth of agriculture and the division of labour, of trade and trading centres and economic surplus and marked inequalities of wealth, concentrated in cities with their distinctive hierarchies of power, that a whole cluster of phenomena began to appear – not just the benefits of civilisation but the downside also.

This is how polytheism was born, as the heavenly justification of hierarchy on earth. It is how rulers came to be seen as semi-divine – another instance of *b-l-l*, the blurring of boundaries. It is where what mattered were wealth and power, where human beings were considered in the mass rather than as individuals. It is where whole groups were enslaved to build monumental architecture. Babel, in this respect, is the forerunner of the Egypt of the Pharaohs that we will encounter many

chapters and centuries later.

The city is, in short, a dehumanising environment and potentially a place where people worship symbolic representations of themselves.

Tanach is not opposed to cities as such. Their anti-type is Jerusalem, home of the Divine presence. But that, at this stage of history, lies long in the future.

Perhaps the most relevant distinction for us today is the one made by the sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies, Gemeinschaft (community) and Gesellschaft (society). Community is marked by face-to-face relationships in which people know, and accept responsibility for, one another. Society, in Tonnies' analysis, is an impersonal environment where people come together for individual gain, but remain essentially strangers to one another.

In a sense, the Torah project is to sustain Gemeinschaft – strong face-to-face communities – even within cities. For it is only when we relate to one another as persons, as individuals bound together in shared covenant, that we avoid the sins of the city, which are today what they always were: sexual license, the worship of the false gods of wealth and power, the treatment of people as commodities, and the idea that some people are worth more than others.

That is Babel, then and now, and the result is confusion and the fracturing of the human family. ■

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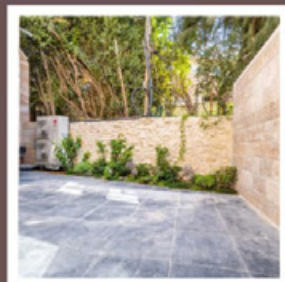
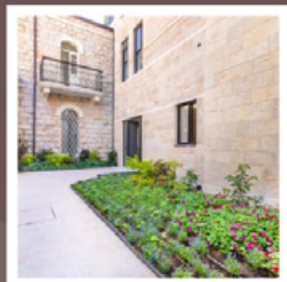
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5784 Zmanim 2023-2024 ת"שנ

The centerfold - the yearly zmanim (pages 30-35) can be pulled out and saved

Shabbat Mevarchim (Molad)

English Date	Shabbat Mevarchim	Month	Molad	
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan is Sun. and Mon. Oct. 15-16	בראשית	חשון	מולד חודש מרחשון יהיה במצאי שבט קודש בשעה 33,6 דקות וחלק אחד	ראש חדש חשון יהיה ביום ראשון וביום שני הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Kislev is Tue. Nov. 14	חיי שרה	כסלו	מולד חודש כסלו יהיה ביום שני בשעה 17,7 דקות 21 חלקים	ראש חדש כסלו יהיה ביום שלישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Tevet is Wed. Dec. 13	וישב	טבת	מולד חודש טבת יהיה בליל רביעי בשעה 8, דקה 31 חלקים	ראש חדש טבת יהיה ביום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Shevat is Thur. Jan. 11	שמות	שבט	מולד חודש שבט יהיה ביום חמישי בשעה 45,8 דקות 4 חלקים	ראש חדש שבט יהיה ביום חמישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Adar Aleph is Fri and Shabbat Feb. 9-10	יתרו	אדר א'	מולד חודש אדר ראשון יהיה בליל שבת בשעה 9, דקות 29 חלקים	ראש חדש אדר הראשון יהיה ביום השני וביום קודש הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Adar Bet is Sun. and Mon. Mar. 10-11	ויקהל	אדר ב'	מולד חודש אדר שני יהיה ביום ראשון, בשעה 10, דקות 13 חלקים	ראש חדש אדר השני יהיה ביום ראשון וביום שני הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Nisan is Tue. Apr. 9	שמיני	ניסן	מולד חודש ניסן יהיה בליל שלישי בשעה 10, דקות 57 חלקים	ראש חדש ניסן יהיה ביום שלישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Iyar is Wed. and Thur May 8-9	אחרי מות	אייר	מולד חודש אייר יהיה ביום רביעי בשעה 11, דקות 41 חלקים	ראש חדש אייר יהיה ביום רביעי וביום חמישי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Sivan is Fri. Jun. 7	בחקתי	סיון	מולד חודש סיון יהיה בליל ששי, בשעה 12, דקות 25 חלקים	ראש חדש סיון יהיה ביום הששי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Tammuz is Shabbat and Sun. July 6-7	שלח	תמוז	מולד חודש תמוז יהיה ביום שבת בשעה 1, דקות 9 חלקים	ראש חדש תמוז יהיה ביום שבת קודש ולמחרתו ביום ראשון הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av is Mon. Aug. 5	מטות-מסעי	מנחם אב	מולד חודש מנחם אב יהיה בליל שני בשעה 1, דקות 53 חלקים	ראש חדש מנחם אב יהיה ביום שני הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה
Rosh Chodesh Elul is Tue. and Wed. Sept. 3-4	ראה	אלול	מולד חודש אלול יהיה ביום שלישי בשעה 2, דקות 37 חלקים	ראש חדש אלול יהיה ביום שלישי וביום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה

Shabbat Candle Lighting & Havdala

Parsha	English Date	Hebrew Date	Jerusalem (40mins before sunset)		Tel Aviv		Beer Sheva		Haifa (30mins before sunset)	
			Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala
Bereishit	Oct. 13-14	29 Tishrei	5:34	6:45	5:49	6:47	5:49	6:47	5:39	6:46
Noach	Oct. 20-21	6 Marcheshvan	5:26	6:38	5:41	6:39	5:42	6:40	5:31	6:38
Lech Lecha	Oct. 27-28	13 Marcheshvan	5:19	6:31	5:34	6:33	5:34	6:33	5:24	6:31
Vayera	Nov. 3-4	20 Marcheshvan	4:13	5:25	4:27	5:27	4:28	5:28	4:17	5:25
Chayei Sara	Nov. 10-11	27 Marcheshvan	4:07	5:21	4:22	5:22	4:23	5:23	4:12	5:20
Toldot	Nov. 17-18	5 Kislev	4:03	5:17	4:18	5:19	4:19	5:20	4:07	5:17
Vayeitze	Nov. 24-25	12 Kislev	4:01	5:15	4:15	5:17	4:17	5:18	4:05	5:14
Vayishlach	Dec. 1-2	19 Kislev	4:00	5:15	4:14	5:16	4:15	5:17	4:03	5:14
Vayeshev	Dec. 8-9	26 Kislev	4:00	5:15	4:14	5:17	4:16	5:18	4:03	5:14
Milketz	Dec. 15-16	4 Tevet	4:01	5:17	4:15	5:19	4:17	5:20	4:05	5:16
Vayigash	Dec. 22-23	11 Tevet	4:04	5:21	4:18	5:22	4:20	5:23	4:08	5:19
Vayeichi	Dec. 29-30	18 Tevet	4:08	5:25	4:22	5:26	4:24	5:27	4:12	5:24
Sh'mot	Jan. 5-6	25 Tevet	4:13	5:30	4:28	5:31	4:29	5:32	4:17	5:29
Va'era	Jan. 12-13	3 Sh'vat	4:19	5:35	4:33	5:36	4:35	5:38	4:23	5:33
Bo	Jan. 19-20	10 Sh'vat	4:25	5:41	4:40	5:42	4:41	5:43	4:29	5:40
Beshalach	Jan. 26-27	17 Sh'vat	4:32	5:47	4:46	5:48	4:47	5:49	4:36	5:46

Yitro	Feb. 2-3	24 Sh'vat	4:38	5:53	4:53	5:54	4:54	5:55	4:42	5:52
Mishpatim	Feb. 9-10	1 Adar Aleph	4:44	5:59	4:59	6:00	5:00	6:01	4:49	5:58
Terumah	Feb. 16-17	8 Adar Aleph	4:50	6:04	5:05	6:06	5:06	6:06	4:55	6:04
Tetzave	Feb. 23-24	15 Adar Aleph	4:56	6:10	5:11	6:11	5:11	6:11	5:01	6:10
Ki Tisa	Mar. 1-2	22 Adar Aleph	5:01	6:15	5:16	6:16	5:17	6:17	5:07	6:15
Vayakhel	Mar. 8-9	29 Adar Aleph	5:06	6:20	5:22	6:22	5:22	6:21	5:12	6:21
Pikudei	Mar. 15-16	6 Adar Bet	5:11	6:25	5:27	6:27	5:27	6:26	5:18	6:26
Vayikra	Mar. 22-23	13 Adar Bet	5:16	6:30	5:32	6:32	5:31	6:31	5:23	6:31
Tzav	Mar. 29-30	20 Adar Bet	6:21	7:35	6:36	7:37	6:36	7:36	6:28	7:36
Shmini	Apr. 5-6	27 Adar Bet	6:26	7:40	6:41	7:42	6:40	7:41	6:33	7:42
Tazria	Apr. 12-13	5 Nisan	6:30	7:45	6:46	7:47	6:45	7:46	6:38	7:47
Metzora	Apr. 19-20	12 Nisan	6:35	7:50	6:51	7:52	6:50	7:51	6:43	7:53
Pesach	Apr. 22-23	15 Nisan	6:37	7:52	6:53	7:55	6:52	7:53	6:45	7:55
Shabbat Chol Hamoed	Apr. 26-27	19 Nisan	6:40	7:56	6:56	7:58	6:54	7:56	6:48	7:58
Shvii Shel Pesach	Apr. 28-29	22 Nisan	6:42	7:57	6:57	7:59	6:56	7:58	6:49	8:00
Acharei Mot	May 3-4	26 Nisan	6:45	8:01	7:01	8:04	6:59	8:02	6:53	8:04
Kedoshim	May 10-11	3 Iyar	6:50	8:07	7:06	8:09	7:04	8:07	6:58	8:10
Emor	May 17-18	10 Iyar	6:55	8:12	7:11	8:15	7:09	8:13	7:03	8:16
Behar	May 24-25	17 Iyar	7:00	8:17	7:15	8:20	7:13	8:18	7:08	8:21
Bechukotai	May 31-June 1	24 Iyar	7:04	8:22	7:19	8:25	7:17	8:22	7:12	8:26

Parsha	English Date	Hebrew Date	Jerusalem <small>(40mins before sunset)</small>		Tel Aviv		Beer Sheva		Haifa <small>(30mins before sunset)</small>	
			Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala	Candles	Havdala
Bemidbar	June 7-8	2 Sivan	7:08	8:26	7:24	8:29	7:21	8:26	7:17	8:30
Shavuot	Jun. 11-12	6 Sivan	7:10	8:28	7:24	8:31	7:23	8:28	7:18	8:32
Naso	June 14-15	9 Sivan	7:11	8:29	7:26	8:32	7:24	8:29	7:19	8:33
Beha'alotcha	June 21-22	16 Sivan	7:12	8:31	7:28	8:34	7:26	8:31	7:21	8:35
Sh'lach	June 28-29	23 Sivan	7:13	8:31	7:29	8:34	7:27	8:31	7:22	8:36
Korach	July 5-6	30 Sivan	7:13	8:30	7:28	8:33	7:26	8:31	7:21	8:35
Chukat	July 12-13	7 Tamuz	7:11	8:28	7:27	8:31	7:25	8:28	7:20	8:32
Balak	July 19-20	14 Tamuz	7:08	8:25	7:24	8:27	7:22	8:25	7:17	8:28
Pinchas	July 26-27	21 Tamuz	7:04	8:20	7:20	8:22	7:18	8:20	7:12	8:23
Matot-Masei	Aug. 2-3	28 Tamuz	6:59	8:14	7:14	8:16	7:13	8:14	7:07	8:17
Devarim	Aug. 9-10	6 Av	6:53	8:07	7:08	8:09	7:07	8:07	7:01	8:10
Va'etchanan	Aug. 16-17	13 Av	6:46	7:59	7:01	8:01	7:00	8:00	6:53	8:02
Eikev	Aug. 23-24	20 Av	6:38	7:50	6:53	7:53	6:52	7:51	6:45	7:53
Re'eh	Aug. 30-31	27 Av	6:30	7:41	6:45	7:44	6:44	7:42	6:37	7:44
Shoftim	Sept. 6-7	4 Elul	6:21	7:32	6:36	7:34	6:35	7:33	6:27	7:34
Ki Teitze	Sept. 13-14	11 Elul	6:12	7:23	6:27	7:25	6:26	7:24	6:18	7:24
Ki Tavo	Sept. 20-21	18 Elul	6:03	7:13	6:17	7:15	6:17	7:15	6:09	7:15
Nitzavim - Vayeleich	Sept. 27-28	25 Elul	5:53	7:04	6:08	7:06	6:08	7:06	5:59	7:05

Kiddush Levana

Month	Earliest Kiddush Levana 3 Days After Molad	7 Days After Molad	Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana until
Marcheshvan	3 Cheshvan/Tues. night Oct. 17	7 Cheshvan/Motzei Shabbat Oct. 21	14 Cheshvan/ Motzei Shabbat Oct. 28
Kislev	4 Kislev/Thurs.night Nov. 16	8 Kislev/Mon. night Nov. 20	15 Kislev/Mon. night Nov. 27
Tevet	5 Tevet/ Motei Shabbat Dec. 16	9 Tevet/Wed. night Dec. 20	15 Tevet/Tues. night Dec. 26
Shevat	5 Shvat/Sun. night Jan. 14	9 Shvat/Thurs. night Jan. 18	16 Shvat/Thurs. night Jan. 25
Adar 1	5 Adar Aleph/ Tues. night Feb. 13	9 Adar Aleph/Motzei Shabbat Feb. 17	14 Adar Aleph/Thurs. night Feb. 22
Adar 2	4 Adar Bet/ Wed. night Mar. 13	8 Adar Bet/Sun. night Mar. 17	15 Adar Bet/Sun. night Mar. 24
Nisan	6 Nisan/Motzei Shabbat Apr. 13	8 Nisan/Mon. night Apr. 15	14 Nisan/Sun. night Apr. 21
Iyar	4 Iyar/Motzei Shabbat May 11	8 Iyar/Wed. night May 15	14 Iyar/Wed. night May 22
Sivan	4 Sivan/Mon. night Jun. 10	10 Sivan/Motzei Shabbat Jun. 15	14 Sivan/Thurs. night June 20
Tammuz	4 Tammuz/Tues. night Jul. 9	8 Tammuz/Motzei Shabbat Jul. 13	15 Tammuz/Motzei Shabbat Jul. 20
Av (Many wait until after 9 Av)	5 Av/Thurs. night Aug. 8	10 Av/Tues. night Aug. 13	16 Av /Mon. night Aug. 19
Elul	5 Elul/Motzei Shabbat Sept. 7	8 Elul/Tues. night Sept. 10	15 Elul/Tues. night Sept. 17

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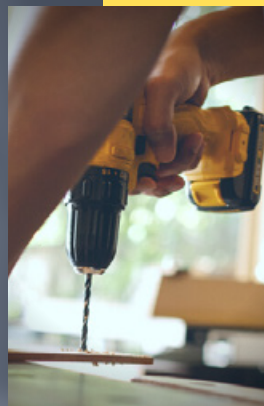


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Our Rabbis' selection of Chapters 54-55 in Yishayahu as this week's *haftarah* seems to be rather obvious. These chapters are found in the latter part of Sefer Yishayahu in the section that includes the *navi's* visions of comfort, which is why they are included among the *haftarot* of consolation that we read recently. The connection to our parsha specifically, is found in the prophet's words "ki mei Noach zot li." Through these words, G-d pledges that, after redeeming Israel from her exile, He would never again pour out His wrath against them. Hashem then reaffirms this promise by comparing it to the oath He made to No'ach, saying: "for this vow is like the oath I made regarding the waters of Noah (never again to flood the earth)," an oath, of course, that we read in this week's *parsha*.

But Rav Soloveichik, delves more deeply into this comparison between the generation of No'ach and that of Yishayahu. In commenting on G-d's decision to inundate the world, the Rav quotes Hashem's reasoning for the flood as found in an earlier verse

(*Breishit*; 6:5): "*v'chol yetzer machshevot libo rak ra ...*" - Hashem saw that Man's natural inclination is only of evil. G-d knew that a society so corrupt, one that was enmeshed in satisfying the evil inclination, could never fulfill His demand that humanity create a world of morality and justice. Strangely, however, when he promises No'ach never again to bring such a catastrophe upon the world, He explains (*Breishit*; 8:21): "*ki yetzer lev ha'adam ra min'urav*", admitting that Man's natural inclination is "evil from his youth." The Rav asks why G-d gives the very same rationale as to why He would **not** destroy the world as He gave to explain why He **must** destroy the world.

In response, Rav Soloveitchik points to the subtle difference between Hashem's explanation as to why He was determined to destroy the world and his reason as to why He would never again do so. In describing the absolute corruption of the antediluvian Man, Hashem declares that "*v'chol yetzer machshevot libo rak ra*" – **all** of humanity's natural inclination is **only** to do evil. However, when He describes the new post-flood society he states "*yetzer lev ha'adam ra*", that the new generation would also be one whose inclination would be drawn to

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Mazal Tov to



Rabbi Yaakov & Sheila Iskowitz and family on the birth of a **great grandson**

malevolence one....but not “v’chol” – not all and not “rak”, not only.

And this subtle “tweak”, says the Rav, makes a world of difference, for humanity in the post-flood generation would now have the capacity for repentance and, with that, the ability to remove the “v’chol” and the “rak”.

It is through this understanding that we better appreciate the message of our haftarah as well. In appealing to a mournful nation, Yishayahu prophesies an unprecedented increase of Israel’s population, a surprising expansion of their settlement and an unexpected renewal of the once destroyed and abandoned cities. The nation, still smarting from years of punishment, wonders how, after their corruption and their sinfulness, G-d would agree to do such a thing. The response of the navi is Hashem’s oath to No’ach: just as one sinful generation was punished and a new one was reborn with the potential for repentance, so too, the people of Israel could do the same!

Indeed, a mere month after Yom Kippur, this message is especially comforting. While some might be doubtful regarding the efficacy of their attempts to repent, whether tho one day and some weeks of effort could move Hashem to forgive, Yishayahu sends us a reassuring message in our haftarah.

We, too, despite our tendency to be selfish and fall into sin at times, we, as the post-flood generation, can also remove the “kol” and the “rak”, we too can repent. ■

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Think Rationally Towards the Future

בַּעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּא נֹחַ וְשֵׁם־וְחָם וַיִּפֹּת בְּנֵי
נֹחַ וַאֲשֶׁת נֹחַ וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת נְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתָּם אֶל־הַתֵּבָה
(בראשית ז:יג)

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

Noach is commanded to enter the *teva* (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 God 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 God 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 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 Moshe's death.

The Shemen Hatov raises an interesting question with respect to Noach. In the two other instances, both 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, Moshe will remain alive and with the people and in the second, the Jewish people would remain in Egypt under Egyptian rule. However, it seems like the people who would prevent Noach from entering the ark, have nothing to gain! The flood would occur and wipe them out anyway. Why would they contemplate preventing Noach from entering the ark if they derive no benefit from that act?

The Shemen Hatov offers three suggestions, and we will focus on the third explanation. 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 seek 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.

We see this on several occasions in the Torah. As we have mentioned before regarding *makat tzefarde'a*. Rashi points out that this *pasuk* (Shemot 8: 1-2) switches from the plural *hatzefarde'im*, the frogs, to the singular *hatzefarde'a*, the frog, and he quotes *Hazal*, who explain this discrepancy: צפרדע אחת היתה והיו מכין אותה והיא מתותח נחילים נחילים.

There was one big frog, and every time the Egyptians hit it, it split and multiplied.

Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky, also known as the Steipler, asks a seemingly obvious question: If the frog multiplied each time the Egyptians beat the frog, why did they continue to do so? It completely defies logic! They saw the consequences of their actions, so why didn't they just stop?

The Steipler explains that we see from here the power of anger. A person can become so angry that he begins to act irrationally. Then, despite the reality that stares him in the face, he can't control his reaction. The Egyptians saw that it wasn't helping to hit the frog, but their anger made them unable to think straight and control themselves. And so, they kept on hitting!



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No matter how upset we are in a given situation, we cannot lose our cool, or 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 of what we do or say may 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. ■

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Cry of Chesed

“*Vayizkor Elokim et Noach* - Hashem remembered Noach.” (*Bereisheet* 8:1) Chazal teach that Hashem remembered how Noach fed the animals in the Ark for twelve months. Was Noach not a “*tzadik tamim*,” a perfect individual who had numerous fine qualities? Is this the only thing that we can point out? Further, this is one of the ten verses quoted in the *Zichronot Musaf* on Rosh Hashanah. What is the significance of this and how is it relevant to us?

In *Lev Eliyahu*, Rav Lopian explains that had Noach and his family not been involved in this chesed, they never could have left the Ark. It was only the *zechut* of Noach's total devotion and concern for the needs of each animal that allowed him to survive the flood. Indeed, this particular act reflects the ways of Hashem Who takes care of the whole world. We too are taught, “*vehalachta bedrachav*,” to emulate Hashem and concern ourselves with the needs of others. We are obligated to feel the pain of another and see how we can alleviate their distress and address their needs.

In his *Machzor* Rosh Hashanah, Rav Druk discusses that when the world is being judged, we emphasize the middah of chesed that can tip the scales for a person's merit. “*Olam chesed yibaneh*,” we too must build our individual worlds on this quality.

“*Ve'tzedakah tatzil mimavet*” (*Mishlei* 10:2), when there is a decree of death in the world, such as at the time of the flood, the only recourse to be saved is to engage in chesed. The Ark itself was not sufficient to stop the raging waters from breaching and drowning everyone. Rather, it was the act of selfless giving to the animals during the entire year that protected Noach's family and spared them from destruction.

Rav Scheinerman in *Ohel Moshe* quotes a powerful idea from Rav Haksher that further expounds on why Noach needed this specific merit. It was a *tikkun* for Noach since he was faulted for not praying for his generation; he lacked a certain degree of necessary empathy and compassion. It was therefore important for him to rectify his error by showing boundless concern for the animals to develop and solidify this middah.

We learn in *Sanhedrin* 98b that Rabi Elazar's students asked him what one should do to be spared the pains preceding the coming of Mashiach. He responded, “Engage in Torah study and acts of kindness.” As we find ourselves in these tumultuous times, we must strengthen ourselves in this arena. To say a few chapters of Tehillim is not enough, organize Tehillim groups among friends, encourage others to create groups. Find ways to assist those

under siege, organize or contribute to collections to provide basic needs for others. Call people who may be feeling alone, give them strength and comfort. This is what we are being summoned to do, *be'ez-rat Hashem*, may it help us merit a full redemption. In the words of the prophet Yeshayahu (1:27), "*Tzion bemishpat tipadeh ve'shavehah be'tzakah.*" ■

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Noach: L'chaim...Ul'vracha

Professor Elie Wiesel wrote about his lonely and difficult years after arriving in New York as a broken, exhausted refugee. Born and raised in Sighet in the tradition of Viznitzer chasidim, a turning point in his life came when he met the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Wiesel attributed his gaining hope, and redemptive strength to move forward and rebuild his life after the War, to this relationship.

In his memoir, *All the Rivers Run to the Sea*, Wiesel describes one of his meaningful visits to 770 Eastern Parkway for *yechidus*, a private audience with the Rebbe on Simchas Torah. He was welcomed into the Rebbe's room and was offered to 'say L'chayim':

The Rebbe handed me a glass filled to the brim with vodka.

"Rebbe," I said, "in Viznitz, a Chossid does not drink alone."

"Nor in Lubavitch," the Rebbe replied.

The Rebbe emptied his glass in one gulp. I followed suit.

"Is one enough in Viznitz?" the Rebbe asked.

"In Vishnitz," I said bravely, "one is but a drop in the sea."

The Rebbe smiled; "In Lubavitch as well."

He handed me a second glass and refilled his own. He said L'chaim, I replied L'chaim, and we emptied our glasses.

"Let me bless you so you can begin again...."

Our sedra chronicles the story of the destruction and rebuilding of the world during the generations that precede and follow the *mabul*. Alighting from the *teivah* to find the world completely wiped out,

וַיְחַל נֹחַ...וַיֵּטֶע כְּרָם...וַיִּשֶׂה מְרֵהִיּוֹ וַיִּשְׁכַּר וַיִּתְגַּל
בְּתוֹךְ אֲהָלָהּ

"And Noach began...he planted a vineyard...And he drank of the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself inside his tent (9:20-21).

Rashi comments: in "beginning" by planting a vineyard, *וַיֵּטֶע עֵצְמוֹ חֵלֶץ*, "he profaned himself (as in *chol*)," as he ought to have started rebuilding society by planting something else. The 'new world' should have begun with something that would lead to goodness in life, and peace.

After the murder of his family (including his great father and teacher, 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. In shiurim, Rav Simcha often referred to the demise of Noach and the tragic conditions which Noach faced. 'Can we even begin to understand the despair and loneliness he must have felt in stepping out of the ark and viewing the world in total destruction?

How can we judge him for seeking out a bit of comfort in a glass of wine? The Torah has numerous references to the uplifting qualities of wine: *וַיֵּן יִשְׂמַח לֵב אָנוּשׁ*, “Wine brings joy to the heart of man” (*Tehillim*, 104:15). The wisest of all men, Shlomo Hamelech, himself suggested that we “give wine to those who are bitter of soul” (*Mishlei*, 31:6).

Reb Simcha answered with self-revelatory insight, reflecting on his own life’s mission. Chazal’s indictment against Noah was in fact justified. Hashem had entrusted Noah with a mission to rebuild the world after the devastating Flood. Instead of wallowing in his own personal misery and seeking an escape from his sorrows, Noah was to have planted wheat, to sustain the new world emerging from the ruins.

Another great builder who emerged from the ruins, is Rav Yisrael Meir Lau, shlit’a. In “Out of the Depths”, the former Chief Rabbi recounts the harrowing episode of the last conversation he had with the tormented survivor, Yiddish poet, Itzik Manger in the hospital. Suffering from alcoholism and depression, the bedridden and emaciated poet poured out his heart to Rav Lau, struggling to reconcile the Torah’s description first of Noah as a *tzadik* (6:9) and then later as an *ish ha’adamah*, “a man of the earth” and a lowly drunkard.

“I have reached the stage where I understand Noah,” sighed Manger. “When he went back home after the *Mabul* and began to look for his hometown, his *shtetl*, he found nothing. He wanted to visit his neighborhood *shtiebel*, his *beis medrash*, but found no trace! Where was the postman he knew, the wagon driver? No one was left. No house or street, no

neighborhood or friends — not a living soul.... In order to forget his solitude, he drank the wine and became drunk.”

Manger continued his lament by naming family members, communities and yeshivos throughout Europe — all gone. It seemed to him that “all existence on earth had perished” (7:23): “No one is left. I remained alone in the world. So you will excuse me... if sometimes, in order to forget the horrors, I drink a little, like Noah after the flood.”

.....
HaYom Yom is a collection of daily aphorisms and sources compiled by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, with the instruction to “live with each day.” In it, the Rebbe shares two versions of how one might respond to the blessing of *L’chaim*.

Citing the downfall of Noah in our Parsha, we are advised to respond, *L’chaim tovim u-l’shalom*, “For good life and for peace!” A second response, recommended by the Maggid of Mezritch, is *L’chayim v’livracha*, “For life and blessing!” *Livracha* may also be read as *leiv racha*, ‘sensitive heart’, reflecting the true *avodah* and goal of sharing a drink with another Jew — opening our hearts to feel and connect with the other, to begin life again together, acknowledging the Source of life and goodness and blessing.

Having spent years of solitude and hard labor in Siberia, Reb Mendel Futerfas, zy’a, had tasted the bitterness of Soviet persecution, yet maintained his faith and joy. He was known for his lengthy *farbrengens* and for embracing the *avodah* of ‘making a *l’chaim*’. After all, the problem was not that Noah planted a vine and prepared a drink; it was that Noah drank alone, and

did not bless another with 'L'chaim.'

Whatever flood, challenge, or difficulty we may face, may we be healthy, happy and well; may we be blessed to open our hearts and share with friends, and to 'begin again' with revealed good: *L'chaim, l'chaim U-livricha!*

לע"נ הרב אלעזר שמחה בן הרב אלחנן בונים ז"ע

In memory of Rav Simcha Wasserman, zt'l, whose yahrtzeit is this week. ■



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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

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SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

As *Parshat Noach* begins, the world is about to be imperiled, even face the brink of destruction, and *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* instructs *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*, this source of light that *Noach* placed within the *teiva*? *Rashi* offers two 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 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-*Hashem* instructs him to make a *tzohar*. The word *tzohar* is made up of the same letters as the word *tzarah*. *Noach's* mission is indeed to transform the 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 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

Mazal Tov to

Miriam & Jerry Bass and
Avigayil & Yuval Haruvi and families
on the birth of a **grand/daughter**

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. ■



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GEULAS YISRAEL

BY RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN
Ram, Yeshivat Har Etzion

Addressing the War Today

When Doves Turn Into Lions

After experiencing an apocalyptic nightmare and witnessing the devastation of an entire planet, Noach was antsy and wanted information about the receding water levels. For months, even though the rains had long abated, he was too frightened to crack open a window. Finally, summoning his courage, he dispatched birds to seek out dry land.

However, dispatching the birds wasn't just logistical to discover dry land, it was also symbolic. In particular, the journeys of the dove were highly iconic. Just as the new world was about to launch, a dove flew over the retreating waters. After its third mission the dove disappeared from view. Doves hovering above the new world provides an iconic image for the future of the new reality.

Jews are like doves. Throughout Tanach, but especially in Shir Hashirim, we are compared to doves. A dove being the first organism to settle the new order foreshadows the historical role of the Jewish people in preventing the moral collapse which led to the world's destruction in the first place. A few hundred years after the flight of the dove a nation of doves would be selected to serve as the moral and religious conscience of the world.

LOYALTY

The midrash (Shir Hashirim Rabbah

perek 4) highlights the loyalty of doves as the reason we are likened to them. While other birds rotate through different mates, doves maintain their loyalty to their original partners. Like doves we have maintained steadfast loyalty to our original husband, HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

It wasn't always this way. At the onset of our relationship with Hashem our loyalty often faltered. We flirted with fictitious gods while relying upon local superpowers such as Egypt and Assyria, in place of depending solely upon Hashem. Repeatedly our prophets warned us against this unfaithful behavior. Sadly, we learned this lesson the hard way and were evicted from our shared home with Hashem.

However, as history unfolded our loyalty grew. During our long exile we consistently rebuffed seductive invitations to join other nations or to assimilate into other cultures. From 4th century BCE Greek Hellenism to 19th century European, we held tightly to our ancient Covenant with Hashem. We were loyal, even when it was hard to be. For two thousand years it appeared that Judaism was in decline while other religions and cultures were ascendant. Loyalty, though, is blind to historical patterns and to cultural winds, and our loyalty to

Hashem is a marvel of human history. We are loyal doves.

A related Midrash compares us to doves since these birds do not struggle when put to death, but willingly submit. During this period of our great loyalty to Hashem we also offered our lives in defense of His name. Unlike suicide murderers we don't have a death wish. Unlike our despicable enemies who are infatuated with blood and death, we celebrate life. However, we are placed on this Earth to defend the presence of Hashem with every breath we take and, if necessary, with our final breath. My rebbe, Rav Yehuda Amital, would often cite a strident pasuk in Iyov to describe loyalty and faith in the post Holocaust era:

הן יקטלני לו אייחל

which loosely translates into “though you may kill me I will still wait for you”. We love Hashem for no ulterior motive and not because we expect anything from Him. We are loyal to Him regardless of the fate he delivers us. No suffering can be worse than being severed from Him. We are doves in dark times as well.

TAKING FLIGHT

We are also modern doves, in ways that our ancestors were not. For centuries we were landlocked in foreign countries without a homeland, without a state and without much choice. We could not escape the torrent of rabid antisemitism. We were more similar to sheep than to doves, as Dovid Hamelech portrays נחשבת כצאן טבחה, defenseless and without any options. The midrash describes one of the Roman emperors at our lowest moment in history, mocking us as a “lone sheep surrounded by 70 wild and rabid wolves”.

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Today we are no longer sheep, herded involuntarily. We have other options to living in Israel. There are numerous quiet and calm places to live meaningful Jewish lives. Like doves we can fly elsewhere, but we choose to stay here. We are tired of running. We aren't going anywhere.

Slowly but surely, the doves are flying home. Doves possess innate homing capacity allowing them to return home from far distances. During its first two missions, Noach's dove could not find a resting place רגליה מנוח לכך רגליה, so it returned to the ark.

However, after the third mission it never returned. It had discovered its new home. We don't know for certain where that first dove nested but it is highly likely that it was in the only land unaffected by the flood- the land of Israel. Chazal inform

us that the olive branch recovered by the dove on its second mission came from a tree in the undisturbed land of Israel. It is likely then, that the first dove made aliyah to Israel, never to be seen again by Noach. Those who live in Israel inhabit a pristine Land, untouched and unmarred by the apocalyptic flood. God's original creation.

Slowly but surely all the doves are flying home. Many are now hurrying to Israel to defend our home against the forces of darkness and death. Others are just beginning their flight, connecting through this war more deeply with our Land and our people. They are just starting to grow their wings for their final flight home. The doves will all return. The doves will triumph over hate.

BECOMING LIONS

Though we are compared to doves we are also compared to lions. This is the first time in history that a pogrom against our people will be followed by a war. After previous pogroms we had little choice but to "lick our wounds" and move on. Not this time. We will respond to depravity and barbarism and, with Hashem's help, our lions will protect our people and our Land.

Repeatedly, the Torah portrays a lion as crouching and sleeping, but quickly awakening. This highlights the lightning-fast reaction and recovery time of a lion. Over the past two weeks our people have quickly recovered from the horrible surprise assault. It is, by now, horrifyingly clear that Hamas "yimach shemam" planned a protracted invasion of our country which was only thwarted by selfless heroism of the initial soldiers and citizens who battled these monsters, knowing full well that they would likely face death. Our lions saved us from a harsher fate.

A HERD OF LIONS

Just weeks ago, we were badly fractured by civil strife and social discord. We didn't watch our words and we squandered our love for one another. We shattered our common narrative and spewed hatred rather than affection. We paid a terrible price. However, we are now united. Religious and secular, Left and Right. Protest organizations have now speedily morphed into groups providing support to our soldiers. We finally have one common purpose. We are not just lions, we are a herd of lions and Hashem is watching over us.

We have demonstrated that, despite our vitriol, we beat with one heart. Sadly, it took a horrific tragedy and an existential threat to amplify that common heartbeat, but it is finally awake. It beats loud. May Hashem hear it and save us.

(Written Monday Oct. 16) ■

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Through the Storms of Today: Yeshayahu's Message of Hope

YESHAYAHU 54:1- 55:5

כִּי־יָמִי נָח זֹאת לִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעַבֹּר מִיַּנֹּחַ עוֹד
עַל־הָאָרֶץ כִּן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקֶּצֶף עָלֶיךָ וּמִגֶּעַר־ךָ

For this is to Me as Noach's waters: just as I swore never again to pass Noach's waters over the earth, so have I sworn never again to be furious at you, or to shout at you.

In this week's Haftorah, Yeshayahu refers to the eternal nature of the covenant of Noach. Just as Hashem's word remains steadfast and He will not bring another flood, Hashem commits to not be eternally angry with His people. The Radak and Abarbanel both observe that there is a dispute as to how to read the phrase כִּי־יָמִי נָח. In some ancient texts, the initial words of the pasuk are written as two separate words, כִּי־יָמִי נָח, *because of or like the waters of Noach*, while in other texts, the phrase actually appears as only one word, כִּי־יָמִי נָח, *like the days of Noach*. The Abarbanel elaborates suggesting that there are two messages conveyed in this verse. The first message describes the challenges and difficulties of the days of Noach, כִּי־יָמִי נָח. The people were sinful and rejected G-d. Yet, there was a beacon of hope with Noach and through him, the world was rebuilt. The Jewish people are here to fulfill this

mission of bringing Hashem into the world and change the dark days into days filled with spiritual light. The second message is that just as the waters of Noach, כִּי־יָמִי נָח, destroyed nearly all the world but a remnant remained, so too Yerushalayim and her people will survive.

This twofold message resonates deeply today. We are faced with two challenges - the first is that of the war in Israel and the second is the time period we find ourselves in now. The war has ravaged our community. We are filled with sensations of wrath, rage, sadness and sorrow. We are also keenly aware that war ahead will last not only days, but likely months. This knowledge creates a sense of anxiety and stress. These two sets of feelings cause us to wonder whether Hashem is angry with us. The Haftorah, also one of the seven of consolation, provides words of comfort and compassion. Just as the days and waters of Noach are manifestation of Hashem's word, so too we pray that we see the fulfillment of the second half of the pasuk, כִּן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקֶּצֶף עָלֶיךָ וּמִגֶּעַר־ךָ, *so have I sworn never again to be furious at you, or to shout at you.* ■



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Making a World of a Difference

Two legendary figures: Noah and Avraham. For generations, great minds have compared and contrasted their lives. Some have argued for Noah'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 Noah 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 Noah 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 God's spiritual demands of the generation—no small feat—but no more.

Noah 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 Noah 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

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

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

3. Mishnah, Kidushin, 4:14.

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 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 is the author of the newly published book ‘Torah United’ (OU Press), featuring divrei Torah on the weekly parasha from Rav Kook, Rabbi Solovetichik, and the Chassidic Masters.

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Naming for One, Thinking of Another

לעילוי נשמת
יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

Question: Sometimes a man dies and his widow offers family members a monetary gift if they name a baby after him. If someone wants to do so, to be nice and also for the money, but they do not want to connect their son spiritually to the deceased (let's call him Uncle David), may they tell everyone they are naming for U. David but intend for David Hamelech?

Answer: We must warn about two limitations: 1. There are differences between similar cases; 2. We are not experts in the kabbalistically-oriented elements of giving a name. But we can generally discuss the value of naming after a deceased person, questions of honesty, and practicalities.

Names have significance in different ways. *Chazal* (including in *Berachot 7b*) focus on the meaning of the name's impact on a person's life for good or bad. More recent sources mention the idea of tapping into the good qualities of the one named after and bringing benefit to the deceased (see sources in *Otzar Habrit 6:4*). *Poskim* discuss how naming after a parent and, likely, a grandparent (not an uncle) falls under the *mitzva* of *kibbud av va'em* (see *B'tzel Hachochma I:35*). It is clear from sources and logic that intention connects

the baby to the person he is named for (the benefit to the deceased is not shared by every departed David).

We will not advise parents whether to name their babies based on ideas, sound, a relative, or a *tzaddik*. Hopefully, monetary gain is not a major factor but "a factor" in choosing between names under consideration. It is common and not controversial to have in mind for both a relative and a *tzaddik(a)* who originally inspired that name's use. It is very possible that this brings credit to the former and blessing to the child due to the latter. (We make no promises or predictions.)

For what is the aunt paying? Three main things deserve appreciation: 1) The parents' sacrifice by not giving a name they prefer (assuming David is not their preferred name).

2) Honoring and creating a living remembrance of U. David, which has innate value and can bring psychological solace to the living. This exists as long as the parents are consistent in telling the family the baby is named in U. David's honor.

These two are unaffected by the parents' intentions, and if this is what the aunt has in mind, there is no problem.

3) The prospect that the naming will benefit U. David's *neshama*. If this *segula* element is the (or a significant part of the)

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and OU Israel's Torah Tidbits.



aunt's intention, then it would be *geneivat da'at* to not intend for the baby to be named after U. David in a significant (not necessarily exclusive) way and take the money. One violates that prohibition when he gives the impression of a bigger favor than is true when it might bring reciprocity (Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 228:6; see this column, Lech Lecha 5778), all the more so when a gift is promised. While one does not violate *geneivat da'at* over the recipient's needless assumptions, a certain level of spiritual intention for the deceased is a valid assumption.

Two principles regarding doing things that make others feel good may compete. On the one hand, there is the *halacha* of *geneivat da'at*. On the other hand, one wants to make the recipient feel good and certainly not be insulted (see Yevamot 65b). Out of concern for honesty, should someone say: "Don't think my Shabbat invitation is because we are friends but because the rabbi told me no one else is willing to invite you"!

If they are unwilling to have basic intention for U. David and the aunt cares about #3, the parents should give their preferred name and explain that it was important for them. If multiple relatives have turned down the offer, insult should be weighed versus deceit. A good solution is to give a double name, with the intention that the David part is for U. David. This shows willingness to be connected to him, dispels a

misconception of his exclusivity, and "protects the child" from unwanted connection (see Igrot Moshe, Orach Chayim IV:66; Otzar Habrit 6:8)

In real cases, parents can seek family and/or rabbinic guidance to reach a balanced solution. ■

Having a dispute?



For a Din Torah in English or Hebrew contact 'Eretz Hemdah - Gazit' Rabbinical Court:
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In these trying times, as we pray for the wounded and the captives

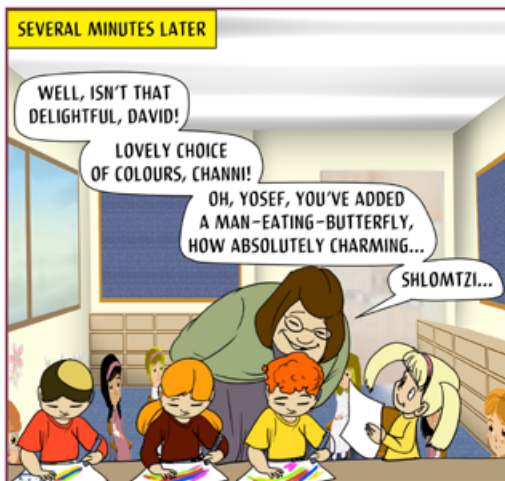
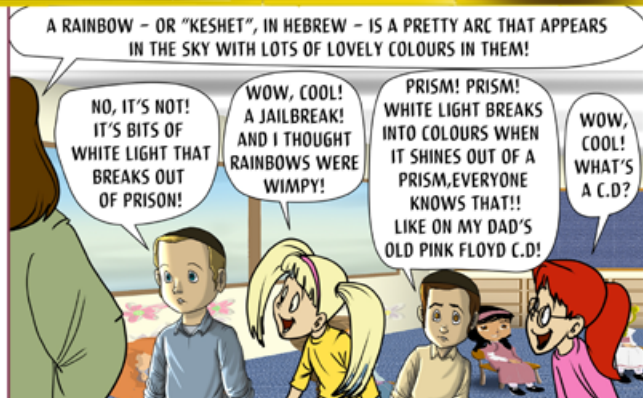


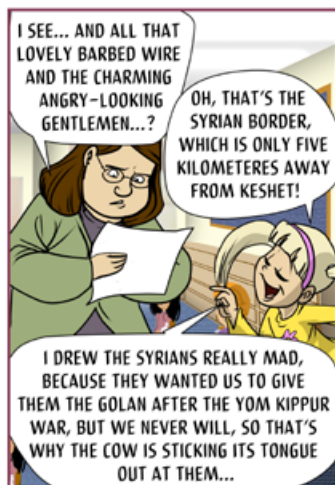
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NCSY ISRAEL



Below are articles from “Chizzuk from our Chayalim” a new NCSY Israel resource sharing words of strength and inspiration from our NCSY soldiers fighting on the front lines.

You can see more at:

israel.ncsy.org/chizzuk

I wanted to share some quick thoughts. I got called up to reserves. Baruch Hashem I'm able to help Am Yisrael, G-d's chosen people, eliminate those who want to destroy his world. Make a Kiddush Hashem by showing Hashem's presence and protection of His people. On a personal level, I feel a lot of emotions. The feelings of fear and strength/faith bouncing back and forth in my head makes it hard to focus on anything. But when learning a bit and thinking a bit about how far I've come personally, it's really a beautiful moment. To be in a fight for our lives, we must truly appreciate what our lives mean to us, how far we've come, and the positive direction where we're heading.

We must do whatever we can to stay strong, to strengthen our faith in our rock—הצור תמים פעלים. Hashem is always with us.

I saw a timely piece in the Rambam that says that doing anything that'll weaken your spirit is an Issur M'Doraytah during wartime. We need to reconsider what looking at the news is doing for us, whether it's articles or videos that display only the bad— and continue to do what we can to make a positive

difference. To learn, to daven, to donate blood, to call your loved ones. Do everything we can to actualize our drive and not let our thoughts weaken our faith.

Am Yisrael Chai!”

עקב חי בן רבקה רישא

Even though we here are doing our utmost to protect you physically, we know that you, at home, are protecting us spiritually and emotionally! We can feel the immense warm embrace of support, well wishes and Tefilot that you send our way every day, and it gives us the energy we need to do our part for Klal Yisrael! Although, if truth be told, the true heroes of these difficult times are not the soldiers in the field but their wives, parents, grandparents and children back home.

B”H we have been training for this moment for years. They have not. We are in the company of old comrades and friends. They are often alone (in the deepest sense). We are being endlessly pampered. They are changing pampers (diapers). We are kept busy and active. They are busy trying to keep everything afloat back home, holding at bay their own nerves and tears. We sleep at night (when not on mission). Their mission never ends, and sleep is no easy feat. Our sacrifice is celebrated. Theirs is unfortunately often overlooked. As this war has repeatedly reminded us, our families are the true front lines.

■ אשר יצחק בן שרה ורדית

Real Life Rescues



A Firsthand Account: Helping Survivors of Hamas Massacres Start Their Recovery *By Avi Moskowitz*

On Monday, October 9th, I traveled from Beit Shemesh down to the Dead Sea where several hotels are hosting evacuees from the south, together with fellow United Hatzalah volunteer Brynie Lezevnik. The hotel we were sent to had several families from Kibbutz Magen, Netivot and Sderot, and our role as members of the United Hatzalah Psychotrauma and Crisis Response unit was to alleviate the emotional shock suffered by the survivors of the massacres committed by Hamas on Saturday morning.

We arrived at around 4:30 in the afternoon. We saw kids outside, in the back of the hotel, and jumped right in, starting to engage with them. Some other volunteer groups had set up a bubble station and some art supplies. Other kids were running around and playing in the yard. We started by engaging the children and gaining trust and at the same time, starting to build a rapport with the parents and grandparents (many families have several generations living on the kibbutz and in the cities). We spent a couple of hours with those families, learning that they only just arrived at this hotel that same morning. Many of them started opening up, recounting their stories and how they felt during the roughly 6 hours that they had been locked up in their homes. All of these families knew each other, and their kids were all friends.

After that, the families went to eat dinner and we started connecting with the rest of the therapists who had arrived to help. Some were from organizations and some were private individuals. There was an organizer on site who took everybody's information and opened a WhatsApp group, and we started coordinating. The organizer sat with someone from the social services of Kibbutz Magen, who arrived with the evacuees, to learn what the needs of the community were. They organized a list of groups that needed to be run for various ages and we divided up the responsibilities for the next day.

After that meeting we spent another couple of hours, approaching families in the lobby of the hotel, letting them know who we were and allowing them to tell their stories. Almost everyone opened up with very little prying. People wanted to be heard. They were scared, frustrated, angry at the government, and most of all, unsure of how they could ever return to their

homes and feel safe there. This was the number one concern across the board.

At the end of the day, even though we were meant to stay in a nearby hotel and go home first thing in the morning, both Brynie and I decided there was too much work to do. We decided we would stay for another day.

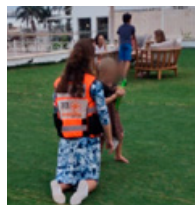
After eating something, I made my way back to the hotel where we were working. Some of the kids I had met the day prior quickly came up to me, telling me what they had eaten for breakfast. This showed that we had made some headway in gaining their trust allowing them to share with us, even miniscule facts. The families slowly started to trickle in from their rooms and from breakfast, and I started to reconnect with them. Some new families from the kibbutz had arrived, and they were welcomed by their friends and family.

One of the interactions that left a mark on me was with a woman in her 90s who had great-grandchildren living on the kibbutz. She had lived up north during the 1st Lebanon War and shared the flashbacks she was having.

Another was a man who had 3 sons and 2 grandchildren who stayed on the kibbutz to help with security efforts after the evacuation.

The survivors we met with have witnessed horrors and it will take way more than the few conversations we had with them for them to heal, but we hope to have helped them start their long journey toward recovery.

Avi Moskowitz is a volunteer in United Hatzalah's Psychotrauma and Crisis Response Unit, which addresses the emotional needs of family members, witnesses, and bystanders during and after traumatic situations. He lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh.



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