



NOACH BUILDS THE BEIS HAMIKDASH...

The *parsha* begins, **אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ** "נח איש צדיק תמים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו" *"These are the offspring of Noach – Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations."* Rashi explains the reason for this expression: *"Some of our sages explain it to his credit – he was righteous even in his generation; had he lived in a generation of righteous people he would have been even more righteous. Others, however, explain it to his discredit – in comparison with his own generation he was considered righteous, but had he lived in the generation of Avraham Avinu he would have been considered as of no importance."*

120 Years for Building an Ark?!

Let us understand, what reason is there to condemn Noach if the Torah tells us he was righteous; what did he do wrong differently from Avraham Avinu?



Hashem told Noach, *"The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with robbery through them; and behold, I am about to destroy them from the earth."* Then Hashem commands him, *"Make for yourself an Ark of gopher wood..."* Rashi explains, *"There are numerous ways by which Hashem could have saved Noach; why then did he burden him with this construction of the Ark? So that the men of the generation of the Flood might see him engaged with it for 120 years and might ask him what it's for, and he would answer them, 'Hashem is about to bring a flood upon the world' – perhaps they might repent."* However, it still needs an explanation, for since when does it take so long to build an ark?!

Foolish Leader...

In order to explain this we'll bring the words of the Zohar Hakadosh (Noach 115): *"What was Hashem's response to Noach when he left the Ark and saw the entire world destroyed, and he began crying, and said, Master of the world, You are called Merciful, why have You not had mercy on your creatures?! Hashem replied to him, Foolish leader, now you tell me that, why haven't you said this to me once I told you, 'Make for yourself an Ark ... I am about to bring the Flood-waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh...?!"*

All this time I have postponed, and prepared you, only in order for you to beg for mercy before me. And since you heard that you would be saved in the Ark, you haven't thought of the rest of the world but made yourself the Ark to be saved. Now that the world is destroyed you remembered to open your mouth with prayer?!"

We see that Hashem wanted Noach to stop Him from bringing such a destruction upon the world. However, since he wasn't wise enough to understand from Hashem's words that he ought to bring his generation closer and teach them about Hashem's ways, therefore he is called righteous only in his generation – because *"Noach did not protect his generation, and did not pray for them as did Avraham. When Hashem told him that He is about to destroy Sodom and Amora, Avraham began immediately to beg before Hashem, maybe there are some righteous in the city who can protect it from destruction"* (Zohar). The Mishkan like Avraham's Home...

The **junior**
Sweetness
of
Yiddishkeit

- Fascinating stories and interesting insights on the Parsha, with **Rebbi Mendel** and **Uncle Yitzy**. A podcast that's sure to keep your children (and their parents...!) spellbound for long hours... An excellent way to implant in them good middos, and closeness to Hashem.

- Stay tuned for **The Uncle Yitzy Show** every Tuesday, and for **The Friday Special** every Thursday night.

Based on lectures given over by Rabbi Menachem Boruch Yaveh Shlita.

Avraham Avinu made his home a dwelling place for the *Shechina*, Hashem's presence, with the cloud resting above his tent as it rested later on the *Mishkan*. His candle would burn from week to week resembling the Menorah of the *Beis Hamikdash*; and his dough was blessed, as in *Beis Hamikdash* where the *Lechem Hapanim* stayed fresh the entire week and was blessed that the little amount the *Kohanim* ate was enough to satiate them. Avraham would invite in guests, he would feed them and bring them closer to Hashem, teaching them about the One who truly owns the food.

Now it is understood that when Hashem commanded Noach to build an Ark, He wanted Noach to build a *Beis Hamikdash*, a center place of wisdom to the world, where he would serve Hashem like the *Kohen Gadol* that goes in the Holy of Holies to ask Hashem for all of humanity, and who teaches everybody about the Creator and the wonderful creation.

Noach Walks with a Cane...

However, "Noach did according to everything Hashem commanded him, so he did" – he was not wise enough to establish and create things of his own mind; to understand Hashem's true intentions and invent ideas how to please Him. Like Rashi explains, "[Why does it say by Noach,] 'Noach walked with Hashem', while Avraham said, '[Hashem] before Whom I have walked'? Noach needed Hashem's support to uphold him in righteousness, while Avraham drew his moral strength from himself and walked in his righteousness by his own effort." Avraham knew and understood of his own mind what Hashem wanted of him.

Yet, instead of improving his generation, Noach scolded and rebuked them, like Rava taught (Sanhedrin 108b): "What is the

meaning of the *pasuk*, 'A shameful torch in the thought of him that is at ease, a thing ready for them whose foot slips [mo'adei regel]'? This teaches that Noach the righteous would rebuke the people of his generation, and he said to them statements that are harsh as torches, and they would treat him with contempt..." Instead of making them come to the ark – to be *oleh laregel* during the *Mo'adim* – he made their feet stumble.

This is compared to one who sees his friend drowning in deep waters, and instead of trying to save his life he yells at him, "Why haven't you been more careful, don't you see that it's dangerous?!" which is certainly not the right thing to do at the moment. That's what happened with Noach – Hashem told him, "The end of all flesh has come before Me" – humanity is at the brink of destruction, and you must do whatever possible to save whatever possible, instead of scolding them with no purpose or goal.

Expanding the Ark...

Rabbi Avigdor Miller ztz"l said that according to the size of the *Teiva* many *thousands* of people could have fit into it, therefore when Hashem told Noach, "Make the Ark with compartments" Hashem wanted him to make it similar to the *Beis Hamikdash* and add as many compartments as needed in order to bring all the people under Hashem's wings.

Hashem commanded Noach, "Cover it inside and out with pitch," which reminds of Hashem's commandment to cover the *Aron Habris* with gold from the inside and out. "A window shall you make for the Ark – Rabbi Yochanan says, Hashem said to Noach: Set precious stones and jewels in the Ark so that they will shine for you as the afternoon sun" (ibid). Hashem wanted it to resemble the Menorah of the *Beis Hamikdash* that spread

THE SWEETNESS OF THE MABUL...

Hashem expected Noach to understand the deep meaning in his commandment. Hashem wanted him to make the place a center of closeness to Hashem – just like Avraham Avinu's tent, and later the *Beis Hamikdash* itself.



Noach would have built a *mizbe'ach* and offer *korbanos* on it, to ask forgiveness for the sins of the rest of people. He would have invited everyone to come and learn about Hashem, the way Avraham brought in guests and taught them to thank only Hashem for the food he served them.

Had Noach done all that, he might have saved the entire world or at least some of it from the terrible destruction, the *Mabul*.

light and holiness to the entire world; and with that Noach would teach his contemporaries that only Hashem is the One to give light to the Earth. This window would also indicate that the light comes out from there to the entire world – like the windows of the *Beis Hamikdash* that were made narrow on the inside and wide on the outside to indicate that the *Beis Hamikdash* brings light to the world and not the other way around.

What Opens the Sanctuary Gates?

Noach was instructed, “*Put the entrance of the Ark at its side*” – in order to teach the people who would be coming through it to come with humility (from the side). Like Chazal describe how only with David Hamelech’s humility the *Beis Hamikdash* would open its gates. When Shlomo finished building it and was ready to bring in the *Aron*, the gates stuck to each other, they wouldn’t open even after Shlomo bowed down to his knees and said 24 praises. Only when he mentioned David, his father – who was even more humble, like a servant before his master, and said, “*I am a worm and not a man, scorn of humanity, despised of people*” – only then did the gates yield and *Am Yisrael* could start with the holy work.

A Flooding River of Kindness...

Had Noach made use of this opportunity, Hashem’s words would have had a completely different meaning. Hashem’s decree, “*I am about to bring the Flood-waters upon the earth*” – would turn to be a great water spring that would fulfill the Gemara’s statement (Yoma 78a): “*Water, in the future, will bubble from under the threshold of the Sanctuary; from this point forward the spring will grow in strength and rise until it reaches the opening of David’s house. When it reaches the opening of David’s house, it will become a flowing river in which people will bathe to purify themselves.*” David Hamelech who always sought to give light to his generation, will merit that the purifying waters would come out of him. Had Noach been wise enough to bring his generation to repentance, the prophecy of the spring would become realized with the Flood-waters, which would purify the world instead of destroying it.

“*Noach found favor in the eyes of Hashem,*” but not in the eyes of the people, because he did not care to save them. Since he did not use this water to perform *nisuch hamayim* on the *mizbe’ach*, teaching everybody to appreciate Hashem for all the wonders of the water and its kindnesses, and bring them to love of Hashem – therefore, Hashem turned the water against them.

Yazkir Lo Yom Hamisa...

Hashem said He intended to “*לְשַׁחַת כָּל בָּשָׂר*”, which could also mean “*to bend down all flesh*” [instead of “*to destroy*”], “*...In which there is a breath of life*” – everybody would bow down to Hashem with appreciation for their breath of life. Instead of dying – as it says, “*Everything that is in the earth shall expire*” – the appreciation of the breath alone would bring the generation to remember the Day of Judgment at the end of life, and make them repent.

Hashem told Noach, “*You shall enter the Ark – you, your sons...*”

This *zt”l* refers not only to his children but to anybody who would learn Torah from Noach, like the Gemara says (Sanhedrin 19b), “*Anyone who teaches another’s son Torah, Hashem considers it as if he gave birth to him.*” “*...Your wife, and your sons’ wives with you,*” which refers to the women that would learn Torah from Noach’s wife, the way Sarah taught women of her generation while Avraham taught the men.

Shedim in the Teiva...

Hashem wanted Noach to bring into the Ark seven of each kind of *kosher* animals – in order to bring them for *korbanos*, with which he would teach the people Hashem’s kindness that is observed through the body of the animal – when the *kohen* shows every part and compares it to the health of our own body. Also the non-kosher animals were to be brought in, in order to learn from their good qualities, for “*if the Torah had not been given, we would have learned modesty from the cat, and about stealing from the ant, and forbidden relations from the dove, and proper relations from the rooster, which appeases the hen and then mates...*” (Eruvin 100b).

Noach was instructed to bring in not only all the animals, but also evil spirits, like Rashi says, “*And of every living thing – even the demons [shedim]*” – These are people that behave as demons, [*shaid*, is acronym for *shofech dam*, murderer].

Last Chance...

When Hashem was ready to bring the Flood upon the earth, He said to Noach, “*Come to the Ark, you and all your household... For in seven more days’ time I will send rain upon the earth, forty days and forty nights.*” Hashem wanted to remind him one last time to bring the people into the *Teiva*, and pray for them the way Moshe Rabbeinu prayed for his generation forty days and forty nights – after the sin of the golden calf, when Hashem wanted to destroy them all and bring a new nation from Moshe alone.

Had Noach done all this before the Flood came, he would have surely saved the world of destruction. However, only after he exited the Ark did he realize Hashem’s true intention, but his cry was too late. Therefore, “*Only Noach survived*” – says Rashi, “*He was moaning and coughing up blood.*” He was upset that instead of feeding his generation he had to feed the animals alone. As a punishment, Hashem made him become drunk and Cham caused him never to be able to have any more offspring. Since he was careless of the rest of humankind, therefore Hashem gave him no more continuation other than what he already had.

A MASHAL – A Wild Prince...

When Hashem saw the world destroyed, He vowed to Noach that there wouldn’t be such a flood again, instead – “*וְהָיָה בְּעָנְנֵי וְהָיָה עָלַי הָאָרֶץ וְנִרְאָתָה הַקֶּשֶׁת בְּעָנָן*”, “*And it shall happen, when I place a cloud over the earth, and the bow will be seen in the cloud, I will remember My covenant between Me and you and every living being among all flesh, and the water shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.*” The Gemara says (Brachos 59a), “*One who sees a rainbow in the cloud must fall*

upon his face.” Rashi explains, “*Since it shows Hashem’s glory.*”

To understand the symbol of the rainbow, and how it may protect humanity of extinction, we will begin with a *meshal*. There was a wise king who had a very wild son, his only heir to the crown. This son was very troublesome, he would ruin things in the palace and hurt the king’s name. The king tried every method of punishment to scare him off, but they never helped for too long.

The Beautiful Present...

When the son’s mischievousness worsened, the king summoned all his ministers and advisors to help him come up with a good idea how to bring his son under control, and prepare him for the great hope that he continue after him. Everybody gave their ideas, one said he should be locked up in prison, another said he deserves a very severe punishment, and his hands and feet should be cut off. However, these were servants that envied the prince and so wanted him to suffer. Then, one wise minister who loved the king with all his heart gave him his advice. “*Whenever the prince misbehaves, you should send him an fancy gift!*” Everybody wondered how such a thing would help in bringing the prince under control, but the king liked the idea and decided to try it out.

As they were speaking, the guards came in carrying the prince after he went wild, waiting to see which punishment the king would give him this time. However, this time the king ordered them to remove his handcuffs and escort him respectfully to his room, and then the king even sent a little present to his son. The prince wasn’t impressed and continued with his mischievous deeds, until one day he damaged the king’s own room. When the king saw that, he got up and went himself to his son’s room holding a beautiful present. When the prince saw how much his father loves him even after all that he had done, he was so ashamed and fell on

his face out of embarrassment for the mercy of his father, who cares for him even after all the damage he does. And since then he decided to behave himself as befitting for a prince, and the king’s joy knew no bounds.

THE NIMSHAL – A Colorful Gift...

First Hashem created the world with *middas hadin*, the quality of law and judgment, and therefore at the time of Noach when the people misbehaved and corrupted the world, Hashem decreed the destruction of the flood upon them. However, after the Flood, Hashem told Noach, from now on the world will be guided with *middas harachamim*, the quality of mercy, and whenever destruction is decreed I will not bring a flood, but instead, “*the bow will be seen in the cloud.*” The cloud is a great present, through it comes rain that grows our food and nourishes the entire world; and this wonderful present will be wrapped beautifully – with the rainbow, in order to show us Hashem’s affection towards us, how He colors all our foods with spectacular colors, refreshing us and making our eating even more enjoyable – besides for the fact that it indicates the degree of freshness of the food.

The rainbow also reminds us of the rest of Hashem’s marvelous creation: The green reminds us of the crops, the grass and all the plants; the blue color reminds us of the sky; the white reminds us of the water and all its wonders; the red color reminds us of the healthy blood that flows in our body; and the yellow color reminds us of the luminaries – the sun, the moon and stars, and all the new lighting we have nowadays.

This was Hashem’s covenant with Noach, but had he done what Avraham did, Hashem would have made a covenant of love with him and with all his descendants after him – such as Hashem’s covenant with Avraham.

A Stick of Chumros...

I would like to publicize this story, so it may be a *kapara* for my wrongdoing, and hopefully others will benefit from the lesson, and give me the merit to be healed and change my ways.

I live in Eretz Yisrael in a very *frum* neighborhood. I consider myself ultra-ultra-Orthodox, and I am extra careful with all kinds of *chumros* in every Halacha, getting most harsh when it comes to Shabbos. Although there is an *eiruv* in my neighborhood, but I sided with the opinion against it. This is how I raised my family for many years – to be very strict with Halacha and not look for any *heterim*.

When my father-in-law aged, he started coming often to my house with my mother-in-law for Shabbos meals, since it was hard for them to make Shabbos alone. With time, walking got harder on him and he had to use a cane to maintain his balance. As bad as it may sound, at the first Shabbos that he walked in to my house with his cane, I got very upset with him for the terrible sin of carrying outside on Shabbos, and I wasn’t one to keep my objection to myself.

I protested the desecration of Shabbos that was committed just in front my eyes, and I even humiliate him, putting him to sit away from me at the end of the table, taking no interest in him nor in his wellbeing. Once, I even went all the way to give an entire speech about how wrong it is to carry outside, even if there is an *eiruv*.

One Shabbos my brother-in-law came along with his father, my father-in-law, and I was determined to demonstrate how it hurt me to see such a thing happening in my own house. I got up, went over to him, and said in a determined voice, “To this house you won’t come in being *mechalel Shabbos!*” With that I pulled the cane out of his hand and slammed it to the end of the room. My father-in-law lost his balance at once, as he was leaning on the cane, and he was about to tumble to the ground if not for his son who grabbed hold of him in the nick of time.

Ever since, my father-in-law completely avoided visiting my apartment. A while later he got sick, and was hospitalized for a while until he passed away.

A couple months passed since his death. One day I felt an awful weakness, something nobody could explain, not even the doctors. As my weakness grew worse, I had to start walking with a cane, despite my young age. I felt very humiliated and hardly left my house, but that still wasn’t enough for me to learn a lesson.

One day as I got up to wash my hands for breakfast, my son was playing and running around the house, and suddenly he bumped into my cane. I completely lost control and I fell flat on my face, hurting my mouth terribly. Five of my front teeth broke, and I had to go through a whole lot of pain and treatments until I could speak straight again. That is when I finally understood what all my trouble came for, because there is One who rules from above and punishes people in the same way they judge others.

Identity preserved for privacy reasons