

פרשת נח - ר"ח מרחשון

Parshas Noach has many parts. As one learns through the Sedra, one finds a common thread: messages regarding the importance of the spoken word.

The Parsha begins with the description of Noach as "Tzadik Tomim ⁹Hoviv B'dorosav" - a complete Tzaadik in his generation. Rashi explains, "Hizkiro Seeper Bishevacho¹⁰" - since Noach's name was mentioned, Hashem spoke about his praise. It's an important lesson to try to always see the praise in a person, and share it.

When Hashem commands Noach to build the Taiva, Hashem gives Noach one hundred and twenty years to do the job. Rashi¹¹ explains the lengthy process by saying that while Noach was working people would be coming to him to see and ask about what he was up to. Noach would reply that Hashem is going to bring a Mabul, therefore, do Teshuva. The power of the spoken word to influence others was a reason to require Noach to spend one hundred and twenty years building the Taiva.

When Hashem tells Noach to bring his family into the Taiva, Hashem again praises Noach and calls him a Tzadik. Rashi¹²

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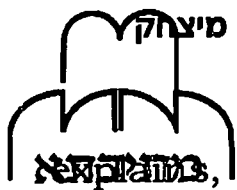
חלק חולדה נח איש נדיק. הואיל והזכירו¹⁰ סופר בשבחו, שנאמר ויהי נח צדיק ושלם ימים.

 (יד) עשה לך חצת. הרצב ריוח והלכה לשנוי¹¹ ולמה כטריחו צבנין זה, עדין עתה לא נבנה בית לאלהים.

 המבול עוסק צב ק"כ שנה, ושאלני אומר מה אמת לך, והוא אומר להם עמיד הקב"ה להציל מצולל.

 ראיני נדיק. ולא נאמר נדיק חמ"ס, מה חזק¹² שאומרים מקלם שבחו של אלם צבנין וקורו אלם.

Rabbi Leib Menahel
 Rabbi Shmuel Weissman
 Mashgiach
 Rabbi Avraham Feder
 Secular Studies



Mesivta Neimus Hatorah

... here Hashem did not call Noach a Tzadik Tamim since Hashem was speaking directly to Noach. One should only say part of the person's praise. Another message is to make sure to praise a person, but watch one's words. Make sure not to do more than one should in each circumstance.

When Hashem instructs Noach about what he will have to bring into the Taiva, Hashem says, "U'min Habehayma Asher Lo Tehora,¹³" - and from the animals that are not Tahor. The Torah here said extra words in order not to say "Min Habehayma Hatemayah¹⁴" - and from the Tamai animals - a very important lesson. A person will be influenced by the words that they say and hear. If a person wants to remain Tahor, they should make sure that the words that they use have a purity to them. Similarly, one should try to make sure that the words that are used by the friends that they keep are words that they are comfortable with. Perek Ches begins - "Vayizkor Elokim Es Noach¹⁵" - and Hashem remembered Noach. Rashi¹⁶ asks, isn't the name Elokim a reference to Midas Hadin - the measure of judgement? Rashi explains that through Tefila, a person can change Midas Hadin to Midas Horachamim - mercy. Tefila - our ability to speak to Hashem, and it's power to change a person's situation - the power of the word.

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As the waters began to recede, Noach sent out the Yona - the dove, to see if the ground was dry yet. The Yona returned with the

מן הבהמה הטמאה¹⁴

ויזכר אלהים את נח¹⁵

זה כשם מדה כדון כוא, ונכספה למדה¹⁶

רחמים על ידי הפלה כנדיקים, ורשעין של רשעים

כופכה מזה רחמים ומה כדון

ודרשו נסיע לרון מאמר, אמר יבין

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branch of a Zayis - olive tree in it's mouth. Rashi¹⁷ explains, the word B'Pehah¹⁸ - in it's mouth is to act as a Remez - a hint, *to the words of the Yona*. It was as if the Yona was speaking - saying, I would rather be fed bitter food from Hashem than sweet delicacies from man. The message - "Al Tivtichu Binediviim¹⁹" - don't place your trust in princes or the son of man, in whom there is no help. Rely on Hashem, Daven to Him.

Noach only leaves the Taiva after Hashem tells him to - waiting to hear the command, showing proper Kavod to Hashem.

After Noach came out of the Taiva, Hashem gave Noach a Brocha, saying Pru U'revu²⁰ - be fruitful and multiply. Noach was worried that there would be another Mabul eventually, when the people will again slip to such terrible levels. Noach therefore was not going to try to have more children. Hashem had to promise him that there would never again be a Mabul, be fruitful. To this Hashem then gave an Os²¹ - a sign through the Keshes²² - rainbow. The power of speech. A person has the ability to speak convincingly, and illicit a promise, thereby feeling secure.

When Noach was drunk from the wine of his vineyard, Kinaan and Cham acted improperly toward Noach. The Passuk states that part of what Cham did wrong was "Vayaged Lishnai Echav Bachutz²³" -

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מרורין כזית צידו של כקנ"כ, ולא מחוקין כדבש

צידי צמר ודס:

.18 בפיה

אל־תבטחוּ בנְדִיבִים בְּבֶן־אָדָם | שֶׁאֵין לוֹ

תשועה:

.20 פרו ורבו

.21 אות

.22 קשת

.23 וַיַּגֵּד לְשֵׁנֵי־אָחָיו בְּחוּץ:

בבל

מגדל

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he told his brothers outside what had happened. The Seforno explains' this showed that he was happy and proud of what happened - the power of the spoken word to make a bad situation even worse when used incorrectly, the power of words to reflect a person's inner thoughts and feelings!

Noach's reaction to what had happened was again with words. A Brocha for Shem and Yefes, a curse for Cham and Kinaan his son. Finally, the story of Migdal Bavel²⁴ - the tower of Bavel\ the Dor Hafloga²⁵. The problem came about because "Vayehii Kol Haaretz Safa Echas"²⁶ - and all the people spoke one language. How did Hashem remedy the situation? By mixing up their languages. Here the Torah is showing us the potential for evil that lurks even in the best of things. A good thing when used improperly can lead to a Migdal Bavel. Especially speech as it says "Hachayim v'Hamaves Biyad Halashon"²⁷ - life and death are in the hands of the tongue. These are the simple references to words and speech. The Medrash explains a deeper reference to speech. The Passuk states as the reason for the Mabul, "Ki Malah Haaretz Chomos Mipnayhem"²⁸ - and the land was filled with Chamas before them. Chamas refers to the Issur of Gezel - stealing. In the Sefer Bishaim Omro²⁹ - a Medrash Rabba³⁰ is quoted, "Ki Malah Haaretz Chomos Mipnayhem" - the Gazlanim with the Chamas of money, (the

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דור הפלגה²⁵.

ויהי כל־האָרֶץ שְׂפָה אַחַת²⁶.

החיים והמות ביד הלשון²⁷.

כִּי־קָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חֲמֹס מִפְּנֵיהֶם²⁸.

בשם אמרו בראשית ע' 29103.

30. כִּי־קָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חֲמֹס מִפְּנֵיהֶם הגזלנים

בחמס של מסון והנגזלים בחמס של דברים

{מדברים תהו כנגד מעלה} ...

ג'

ד'

ב"ק

תוספתא

money that they stole) and the Nigzal - person stolen from, with Onoas Devorim - not speaking properly. What is the Medrash saying? The Nigzal was also responsible for the Mabul? What did the Nigzal do ? The Medrash replies - Onoas Devorim. How do we understand this Medrash?

Rav Leib Bakst ZT”L in Kol Aryeh quotes a Tosefta³¹ - Mi Gadol Ganav Oh Nignav³² - who is greater - the Ganav or the one stolen from? Rav Bakst asks, how do we compare these two people?

Rav Bakst explains, everyone understands that a Ganav did something wrong. A Nignav may therefore begin to think, I have a right to do to the Ganav, or say about the Ganav whatever I please. The Passuk says otherwise. The Passuk says, “Lo Yavozu Laganav Ki Yignov Limalay Nafsho Ki Yirav”³³ - do not embarrass the Ganav who steals to fill his hunger. This Passuk is telling us that a person must also respect the Ganav and pity his situation. The Tosefta is asking who has a harder job to guard from doing wrong? The Tosefta answers that the job of the Nigzal is harder! He must overcome the feeling of being wronged, and treat the Ganav with respect. A person must always remember to speak, even with a Ganav, in a way that is proper.

In Parshas B’raishis we learn the Maaleh³⁴ - greatness, of a person over animals is his ability to communicate through speech. This week the entire Parsha is to help us recognize the responsibility that this Maaleh requires of us. May we meet the challenge.

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מי גדול גנב או נגנב³².

משלי ו' ל לא יבזו לנגב כי יגוב למלא³³.

נפשו כי ירעב

מעלה³⁴.

ארה

הרה

יה

מלא

לה

ואמר