



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Righteous In Our Generation

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

"Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generation..." (6:9)

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 108a) famously quotes a dispute regarding the above verse. Rav Yochanan infers that, while Noach was considered righteous "in his generation," he wouldn't have been considered righteous in a different generation. Reish Lakish, on the other hand, explains that he was righteous "in his generation" and all the more so in a different generation.

Many commentators have weighed in on this dispute. Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank offers a particularly novel perspective. The Talmud (Megillah 17a) teaches that one who reads *Hallel* "l'mafreyah" does not fulfill one's obligation. While the simple meaning of this statement is that one may not read the verses – or possibly even the chapters – of *Hallel* out of order, some commentators derive a deeper message from this teaching: If one says *Hallel* i.e. praises G-d only retroactively – when they see everything work out in the end, one has not fulfilled one's obligation to properly praise G-d. Rather, a person should praise G-d even when things are rough and understand that ultimately whatever happens is for the good.

When the Torah says that Noach was "righteous in his generation," it means that even in his own time he was able to recognize that all that was occurring was for an ultimate good. Rav Yochanan then infers that only because he had this recognition *in his time* was he to be considered righteous. Had Noach been able to praise G-d for His goodness only in a later generation, after seeing that everything worked out, that would not confer upon him the title of righteous. Reish Lakish, however, adopts a more lenient view and interprets the verse as follows. Noach was righteous "in his generation," for his ability to recognize G-d's goodness even in the difficult times, and all the more so in a later generation would he successfully praise G-d having already witnessed things work out for the better.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of the current pandemic, even as we acknowledge to ourselves that all that G-d does is for the good, we still might find that we are waiting to discover what ultimate good will come about through this before we properly praise and thank G-d. Noach can serve as a reminder that already now – *in our generation* – without understanding what purpose this experience will serve, we can give thanks and praise to G-d for His abundant kindness and goodness.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Charan died in the lifetime of Terach his father... (11:28)

Charan was the first person in the world to die before his father (Zohar Lech L'cha).

Didn't Hevel die before his father, Adam? In addition, Shem merited to live a long life. Many of his children died during his lifetime. What does the Zohar mean that Charan was the first person to die during his father's life?

Parsha Riddle

Who in the Torah had a father and father-in-law who had the same name?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which creation was given the opportunity to live the longest?
Answer: The human being given the opportunity to live the longest was Adam. The animal given the opportunity to live the longest was the Levyoson (Leviathan).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Noach relates how its eponymous protagonist became the progenitor of the entire modern human race, whose members are therefore referred to as his descendants - bnei Noach.

The Talmud states that there are seven mitzvos incumbent upon bnei Noach, one of which is "dinin" (laws). The Rambam understands this to be an obligation to establish a judicial system to enforce the other six laws (Hilchos Melachim 9:14), whereas the Ramban understands it to mean the entire corpus of civil law, including the laws of theft, fraud, torts and many others, similar to the laws in which Jews are commanded. (Bereishis 34:13)

The Rema discusses whether the commandment of dinin obligates bnei Noach to adjudicate all financial disputes according to Torah law, or whether each society is supposed to establish its own legal system. He ultimately accepts the former interpretation as normative, and accordingly rules that even non-Jews are bound by Jewish civil law. (Shut. Rema 10) The Netziv disagrees and maintains that bnei Noach are not bound by the specific details of Torah law. (Haamek She'eilah 2:3)

Beyond the formal mitzvos bnei Noach, some maintain that there is a universal, fundamental obligation to observe certain mitzvos that are derivable from reason alone. The Chizkuni explains that this is the reason that humanity was deserving of the punishment of the Flood despite not having yet been explicitly commanded in the mitzvos (i.e., even those of bnei Noach - Bereishis 7:21). On the other hand, R. Yosef Albo explains that according to our Sages, Adam was actually already commanded in the seven mitzvos bnei Noach, and the generation of the Flood was thus punished for violating explicitly commanded mitzvos. (Sefer Ha'Ikrim 3:7)

R. Moshe Shmuel Glasner follows the former approach that reason alone can be the basis for a prohibition, and he goes so far as to maintain that a transgression of "what is accepted to be abominable by enlightened people" is worse than a violation of laws of the Torah that do not have obvious rationales (chukim - Dor Revii Pesichah os 2). R. Asher Weiss, however, argues that this perspective has no basis in earlier sources and is untenable. (Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach V'Gidreihein)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not nature.
2. I refer to a box.
3. In English I am a place for the Torah.
4. I got stuck in "a rut."

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I mean confusion.
2. I caused miscommunication.
3. I was bricked.
4. I brought dispersion.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The sun (I ruled with another, Some confuse me with boy, I referred to Yaakov, When I leave Shabbos comes.)

#2 Chava (I was created from surgery, My title describes my source, My name defines my purpose, I caused pain.)

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to **WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers. **Answer as many as you can. Each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning!**

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