

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 182

Noac | Don't Disappoint the Youth



MESILOT

Pathways to the Soul

Illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly Parsha
of **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel Zt"l**

From the weekly lessons of his son
Rabbi Yisrael Abargel Shlita

...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

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Parshat Noach

The Arrogant Scholar

The flame caught on the wick, igniting a bright flame.

The mother carefully placed the lit match, closed her eyes, and prayed devoutly.

For several months now, the time of lighting the Shabbat candles had become a soulful moment of pouring out her soul before G-d.

All her feelings of pain and disappointment were concentrated in the tears in her eyes and the whispers of her lips at the weekly moment when she stood before G-d.

When Yossi, her youngest son, entered yeshiva, all of his teachers predicted a bright future for him: 'With intelligence and talents like his, he will surely become one of the great scholars of Israel.'

Yossi did not disappoint. With enthusiasm and passion, he studied the Talmud, eagerly devouring page after page.

The memories in her mind continued to surface:

She recalled how she was so moved when he stood under the chuppah and then how joyful she was when his son was born, making her a grandmother to a precious, rosy-cheeked grandson.

The kollel heads in the city competed over him, each arguing that Yossi was most suited for their kollel.

Eventually, Yossi joined a kollel that focused on in-depth study, and there as well, continued to dedicate all of his life and being to the pages of the Talmud.

The forces of impurity, however, were none too pleased, and circled around him, looking for an opportunity to attack and be victorious over him.

Yossi sat by the Talmud and sang out the words, as was his

usual custom. He felt, now as well, how the words enveloped him with warmth and love, and his face glowed with devotion.

Then, suddenly, he felt an 'intruding' foreign thought enter his mind.

'Yossi, how fortunate you are to sit here in this small room, yet by your Torah study you maintain the entire reality of the world. If only the world would know how great and brilliant you were, they would surely revere you.'

'Yossi, you must start appreciating yourself much more. After all, you are among the smartest, the most righteous, and the most understanding individuals that exist. The world deserves to get to know you.'

This sense of pride was new to him, and Yossi, who had never studied Zohar or the teachings of Chassidut - did not know how to deal with this dark feeling, and was 'caught' in the web.

Initially, these feelings of haughtiness manifested in his walking with a straightened back and his head held high, and

gradually deteriorated, to the point where feelings of self-importance and pride filled his entire being.

He began to belittle everyone around him, and saw their weaknesses and flaws. His destructive sense of superiority did not stop with his friends and neighbors but included even the city's rabbi, whom Yossi felt was full of flaws and weaknesses.

Yossi began to disdain and persecute the rabbi, and every opportunity he had, he used to disparage and slander him.

Yossi's mother now stood before the candles, rivers of tears flowing from her eyes: Yossi, Her beloved son was persecuting the righteous.

No matter how much she spoke and pleaded with him to stop, he was resolute - I must make this rabbi leave our town.

She had absorbed faith in the sages and righteousness from a young age, and was very worried about his fate.

The sages speak of the severity of the terrible sin of

Parshat Noach - The Arrogant Scholar

disgracing Torah scholars, and she was acutely aware of the many sad tales regarding those who pursued the righteous.¹

Knocks were heard from the door, and her husband entered the house, and to his astonishment, he saw his wife standing by the Shabbat candles and crying.

'Did you manage to light them on time?' he asked with concern.

'Yes,' she replied weakly.

'It's been already two hours since the time for candle lighting.

You've been standing by the candles for two hours already?'

'Yes I recited many prayers'.

Following the Shabbat meal, her husband told her, "There is a great Torah scholar who lives nearby, let's go and consult with him."

They arrived at the rabbi's home and the mother began, 'my son was so perfect, yet has gone to become completely corrupted.'

The rabbi's face grew serious: 'You must not say that' -

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

1. One of the early sages, Rabbi Yitzchak HaLevi, in "Peneach Raza" (Bereshit 29:31), quotes Rabbeinu Yaakov to explain the mystery of why Leah did not give thanks to G-d following the birth of her first sons:

Leah, who was one of the matriarchs of Israel, possessed clear Ruach HaKodesh (Divine Inspiration) and saw everything that would happen throughout the generations.

When Reuven was born, she foresaw that Dan and Aviram, who would oppose Moshe Rabbeinu, would descend from him.

When Shimon was born, she saw that Zimri, who would also oppose Moshe Rabbeinu, would descend from him.

When Levi was born, she saw that Korach, who would challenge Moshe Rabbeinu, would descend from him.

Our mother Leah, in an act of leadership, taught that for those who oppose the righteous, we must not be pleased and give thanks.

However, when she gave birth to Yehuda, she saw that no children would descend from him who would oppose Moshe Rabbeinu, and furthermore, that he would acknowledge his undesirable actions concerning Tamar.

Therefore, she said following his birth, "This time I will give thanks to G-d" (Bereshit 29:35).

Parshat Noach - The Burning Bush As A Parable

he rebuked the woman - 'Your son is good'.

The rabbi looked at them with kind eyes and repeated, 'You must

understand the truth, your child is good, and this is what G-d declares.'

And he began to elaborate.

The Burning Bush As A Parable

The Divine service of Moshe Rabbeinu is largely concealed from our understanding, no one knows all of the hidden paths he walked, how he purified himself, and with what strength he drew close to G-d.

In his youth we find that he shared in the suffering of others, as it is said: "And it came to pass in those days, Moshe grew up and went out to his brethren and he saw their suffering" (Shemot 2:11). Rashi explains 'and he saw their suffering' - 'he set his eyes and heart to be distressed over their burdens.'

He did everything in his power to ease the burden of the people of Israel, and thanks to his efforts, Pharaoh granted them a day of rest on Shabbat.

When he was eighteen, he went out to his brothers and saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew

slave, and he killed the Egyptian and saved the Hebrew.

Pharaoh decreed that he be killed by the sword, and Moshe managed to escape.

From here on, from the age of eighteen till his eightieth year, the Torah does not detail what occurred with him aside from the fact that he shepherded the sheep of Yitro in the wilderness.

As the verse says: "And Moshe would shepherd the sheep of Yitro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the sheep to the wilderness" (Shemot 3:1).

Rabbi Avraham, the son of the Rambam, explains this practice of Moshe ('Hamaspik Le'Ovdei Hashem', Chapter on Solitude):

"The master of the prophets, Moshe, the servant and messenger of G-d, would shepherd the sheep of Yitro, his father-in-law, and

Parshat Noach - The Burning Bush As A Parable

would lead the sheep into the wilderness not because there were no pastures near Midian, but rather because he sought distant places, far from all people, where he could withdraw from the external world to the internal world. By silencing the external reality, one can merit that the Divine Presence dwells within him.

Therefore, he went to the wilderness to immerse himself in inner solitude and to strive for the revelation, the essence of which no one else could understand. Thus, he purified himself until his body was sanctified and he ascended to a level higher than the ministering angels.

It was there, where he merited his first prophetic revelation, as it is said: "And the angel of G-d appeared to him in a flame of fire within the bush, and he beheld, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed" (Shemot 3:2).

In a lecture delivered by Rabbi Mordechai Engelman, he said the following:²

'The grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, explains in "Degel Machaneh Ephraim" (Parshat Shemot), that the first divine revelation to Moshe Rabbeinu as he stood by the bush is a story that repeats itself in the life of every Jew.

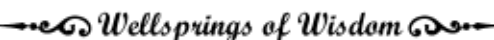
Sometimes a young man stands in prayer or studies a Talmud passage with commentary, yet feels that something is not working, that he is not connecting properly to what he is doing.

He may try to ignite within himself a fire of prayer, of Torah study, of divine service, but the fire does not catch on.

'And he beheld, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.'

-The holy fire is not sticking, and his blemishes and 'thorns' remain as they were, and are not burned or consumed.

The young man may then ask himself: 'What did I do wrong



2. 'Leha'amin B'yeladeinu' (page 165).

that the fire does not cling to me ? After all, I am exerting effort and trying, praying and studying diligently, but still, the bush of materialism is not consumed, and the fire of holiness does not penetrate my bones. "Why does the bush not burn ?" (Shemot 3:3) ?

The young man may be on the verge of despair and depression, and when he looks at himself in the mirror he may feel that he is indeed coarse and materialistic.

And it is regarding such thoughts, that G-d commanded Moshe: "Remove your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground" (Shemot 3:5).

Remember that holiness is not distant and far removed from you. Holiness is not located elsewhere. Holiness is within you and within your thoughts and feelings.

Holiness is within your daily life, with all of the confusions and the challenges.

It exists despite the ups and downs, the mood swings and the complications, and within the challenges and difficulties, the moments of failing, and even the moments of despair.

Let it never occur to you that the Divine holiness has been lost from you.

The most tragic mistake a Jew can make is to suppress and forget that the place on which he stands is holy ground.

We must instill this understanding in our children. They too must be imbued with the firm sense that even if they stumble and fail, their inner self is whole and complete, not negative or corrupt.

We must teach our children and deeply impress upon their consciousness that every child is inherently good and positive, and pure and whole at their core.

Trusting Our Children - A Catalyst for Growth

‘We must understand,’ the rabbi continued explaining to the

weeping mother, ‘that life is full of challenges. A person does not

choose their challenges, they are rather chosen for the person.'

'A family who wishes that their home be a dwelling place for the Divine Presence must not run away from these difficulties and challenges, and must not flee from reality, burying their head in the sand and ignoring reality.

On the contrary, 'According to the camel is its burden,' the greater and brighter the future of a person, the more likely they are to face great and enormous challenges,

and one must know to confront the upcoming challenges with optimism and to look forward with hope for the salvation of G-d.

One of the greatest challenges for parents is to place their trust in their children.

Parents may have trouble separating the deeds of their children from their core personality.³

Parents to challenging children, often struggle to focus and

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

3. A child who made a mistake or a misdeed, for example, if he took a pencil from his friend's pencil case, this is certainly an evil act, perhaps even a serious offense.

But when the parent approaches to rebuke him, they must be very careful with the words they use.

If they call him a 'thief,' it will damage his personal image and attach to him a stigma - 'I am a thief.'

Do not be surprised if tomorrow, instead of a pencil, he seizes a bicycle, and then some day after that, robs a luxurious car.

It is our duty to denounce a serious act of a child but not the sweet child itself who stumbled.

Our rebuke must be attributed to the act itself, explaining that theft is very serious and that one must not take or even touch that which is not theirs.

But take every caution to not attribute the misdeed to the child's essence by labeling him 'a thief'.

He merely lost control of his impulse, like a driver who veered off the road and onto the shoulder - the nearby drivers honk and alert him to return to the road.

There are children who seem to suffer from attention and concentration issues, usually stemming from neural misfires. Yet, often if you examine such a child's intellectual ability properly, you will find that their mind is astonishingly strong and healthy.

emphasize the good in their children and to convey trust and appreciation towards them.

Loving a child is not only demonstrated with hugs and kisses, but more importantly, by meeting the needs of their soul, which are more important than the needs of their body.

Of these needs, a primary and most important need is the feeling of trust.

Trust creates a powerful connection between parents and their children and enables openness and acceptance.

When we convey to our children - and to ourselves as well - that we believe in them and in their abilities, we strengthen their positive self-image and enhance their aspiration and ability to realize the potential given to them from Heaven.

Therefore, you too must first and foremost believe in the good latent within your son,' the rabbi concluded, sharing his advice and thoughts.

'But this is very difficult for me to do,' the mother said, 'I had so many expectations of him, and he's disappointed me so greatly'.

Wellsprings of Wisdom

It is merely due to stigmas attached to them by their parents from a young age, and due to the remarks and jabs, the rebukes and warnings without restraint that they received repetitively that they have narrowed, constricted, blocked, and sealed all their cognitive faculties, causing their mind to instead become shrunken and constrained.

It may be clear that they do not actually have attention and concentration disorders, but rather a constricted and frightened soul.

Therefore, the most important thing is to encourage, praise, and elevate the precious child.

For some children, getting the grade of seventy on a test is like getting a hundred for another.

We must learn to embrace our children, understand their soul, magnify their good deeds, appreciate and honor their every advancement, and inspire them with a desire to grow.

This is our primary work; this is the will of G-d, and we must place it at the forefront of our tasks, and to constantly strive toward it.

Parshat Noach - The Complete Wickedness of Noach's Generation

Nevertheless, the way forward is not by 'burning bridges'; only through love and closeness of the hearts can we succeed'.

'But how can I develop an inner appreciation and solid trust in my son?'

'Do you have a few more minutes to hear?' - the rabbi asked.

'Yes' - the worried couple replied unanimously.

'Okay then, let us start from the beginning.'

The Complete Wickedness of Noach's Generation

At the age of 130, Adam HaRishon received a precious and wonderful gift from G-d - a son was born to him, who he named Shet.

When Shet was 105 years old, he begot Enosh (thus, Enosh was born in the 235th year of creation).

Thirty-one years passed, and in the 266th year of creation, people began to worship idols.⁴

This evil generation that denied G-d was forever marked by the name - 'The Generation of Enosh'.

Ultimately, the 'Generation of Enosh' died out, and in their place, sprouting like mushrooms

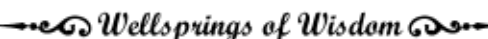
after the rain, were the people of the 'Generation of the Flood'.

The exact year of the transition of these two generations is unknown, but there is no doubt that there was no improvement in mankind, they just went from bad to worse.

The people of the 'Generation of the Flood' sinned so grievously that they corrupted the entirety of creation together with them.

To quote the 'Netivot Shalom' (Bereshit, page 36):

'As a result of the sin of the 'Generation of the Flood', the entire creation was corrupted.



4. 'Pa'aneach Raza' (Bereshit 6:3).

Just as it is the nature of man to follow his peers, so too is the nature of all of creation, including animals, who are influenced by the deeds of mankind.

The blemish spread throughout all creation, poisoning all of the parts of creation, even those creatures who act without any free will."

As the verse states: "G-d saw the earth, and behold it was corrupt" (Bereshit 6:12) - the entire creation was corrupted; the reason being: "For all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth" (ibid.) - The corruption penetrated all of creation. From 15 cubits above the highest mountains to the depth of 3 handbreadths into the earth, as well as all of the animals and creatures - everything was corrupted.

If there would have only been something that was not corrupted, G-d would have spared it, as He did with the fish in the sea, who were spared.

This is akin to a deadly epidemic of dangerous bacteria. Sometimes, a person himself may be infected but

does not harm those around him, but then there is an epidemic where the germs of the disease fill the air to the point where all of the environment is poisoned. In such a case, even someone who merely enters the area is harmed and becomes themselves a carrier of the deadly disease.

Similarly, in a spiritual sense, there is such contamination and defilement, G-d forbid, which is akin to an epidemic, spreading and poisoning all its surroundings, even the inanimate, the air, and deep into the earth.

This is the meaning of "G-d saw the earth, and behold it was corrupt" - the entire creation was poisoned and corrupted, to the point where even the creatures who do not possess an evil inclination were affected.

As a result of the entire creation being corrupted and defiled, it wasn't enough to punish the people, and the only solution was to "wipe out all existence" (ibid. 7:23), to erase the entire creation and build a new reality, as this was the only way to correct the creation.

Noach's Devotion to Torah

As mentioned, evil influenced the entire reality, the mountains and valleys, the animals and birds, and all of the entirety of creation.

However, amidst all of this chaos, four people stood apart tall and firm: Noach, Shem, Cham, and Yefet,⁵ and served the Creator of the world with all their might.

These four individuals guarded their eyes and hearts and minds with utmost vigilance, and managed to shield themselves from all the surrounding forces of impurity.

It was the power of the Torah alone that gave them the strength

to survive the poisonous air that permeated all of creation.

Noach the righteous, devoted himself to the study of the Torah with all his might, and this study gave him the strength to withstand the storm of temptations that threatened to swallow him alive.⁶

To quote further the 'Netivot Shalom' (Bereshit - page 44):

"Noach walked with G-d" (Bereshit 6:9) - In addition to being a righteous man, he also created around himself an atmosphere of holiness, and wherever he walked, 'Noach walked with G-d'.

Wellsprings of Wisdom

5. As it says: "And G-d spoke to Noach and to his sons with him, saying" (Bereshit 9:8).

Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra explains: "'And G-d spoke" - to them through their father, and others explain that all four of them were prophets.'

6. In the words of the Zohar (Noach, 58b):

"Come and see, when Noach was born, he saw the actions of the children of man who sinned before the Holy One, blessed be He, and he obscured himself

and engaged in the service of his G-d, so as not to follow their ways.

If you ask, what did he engage in?

In the book of Adam and the book of Chanoch, he engaged in them to serve his Master."

Similarly, Rashi writes regarding the pure animal Noach placed in his ark (Bereshit 7:2): "The pure one" - 'the one destined to be pure for the Jewish people. From here we learn that Noach studied Torah.'

Parshat Noach - Noach's Devotion to Torah

This aura of holiness that surrounded him protected him from being harmed by the impure atmosphere around him.

The way to achieve this is only through the Torah, which is the perfect environment that encompasses the entire reality of a person.

The study of Torah, includes the actual mitzvah of Torah study, which is a commandment like all the other commandments, and a Jew who studies Torah fulfills this mitzvah.

In addition to this, there is a special immersive aspect to the Torah. As the Rambam writes in the laws of Torah study (3:6):

'Whoever's heart is inspired to fulfill this commandment (of Torah study) properly and to be crowned with the crown of Torah, must not divert their mind to other things,'

which means that the mitzvah of Torah study requires one to not divert their mind from it.

A person thus becomes entirely immersed in the atmosphere of Torah, and through this, creates around them an aura of holiness that purifies all their surroundings.

This is unique to Torah above all other commandments. All other commandments purify one of inner impurities, but the Torah has the power to create an encompassing holiness as well, and purifies the air and environment around the person.

As our sages have said (Berachot 8a):

'The Holy One, Blessed be He, has nothing in His world except the four cubits of halacha alone,' meaning that the Torah creates four pure cubits around the person immersed in it with all his being.⁷

 Wellsprings of Wisdom

7. This is further explained in Likutei Moharan (Tinyana, 67) that the righteous are the beauty, splendor, and grace of the entire world, as in the verse: "And Yosef was of beautiful form and appearance" (Bereshit 39:6).

Meaning, as is known, every tzaddik, according to their level, merits that the Divine Presence rests within them.

Therefore, when one is fortunate to be in the presence of a tzaddik, they feel a sense of tranquility and peace of mind, a

Parshat Noach - Noach's Devotion to Torah

This was the case for Noach and his sons, but as for the wicked people of the generation, they did not desire nor agree to study Torah.

As interpreted in the Midrash:⁸

Had the people of the 'Generation of the Flood' engaged in the Torah, they too would have been saved from the forces of impurity.

"A king establishes the land through justice" (Mishlei 29:4) - refers to the people of Israel, who are called elsewhere: "A kingdom of priests" (Shemot 19:6).

"But a man who demands bribes tears it down" (Mishlei 29:4) - refers

to the 'Generation of the Flood' who did not practice 'justice', meaning that they did not study Torah.

Rabbi Acha said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, sought to bestow them (the 'Generation of the Flood') with four things: Torah, suffering, the service of the sacrifices, and prayer - but they did not want them, as it is said:

"They said to G-d, 'Depart from us'" (Iyov 21:14-15) - this refers to suffering. "

"And we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways" (Iyov 21:14) - this refers to the Torah.

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

feeling that arises from the power of the tzaddik, who has become a throne and chariot for the Divine Presence.

A person who is fortunate to feel within themselves a sense of calm, joy, and mental clarity sees the entire reality in a positive light. Thus, the tzaddikim cause all those around them to see and recognize the beauty and splendor of creation.

This is especially the case if a person is privileged to be within the physical four cubits of a tzaddik, and then breathe the very air of Gan Eden.

As brought in Tanya (Igeret HaKodesh, 27) in the name of 'Asarah Ma'amarot' - the air

of Gan Eden spreads around every person, and in this air, all their good thoughts and words in the study of Torah and the service of G-d are inscribed (and similarly, G-d forbid, around a sinner, the air of Gehinnom spreads.).

When I learned these words of the Tanya with my father, Rabbi Yoram, he told me that Rabbeinu Yoel Sirkis (who authored the Bach on the Tur) merited this level. When he would sit to learn Torah, the air from Gan Eden would spread around him, and any sick person within his four cubits would be healed, since the air of Gan Eden contains within it all the remedies of the world.

8. Shemot Rabbah (30:13).

Parshat Noach - The Root of Harm - Disrespect For the Sages

"Who is the Al-mighty that we should serve Him?" (Iyov 21:15) - this refers to the sacrifices.

"And what profit do we gain if we pray to Him?" (Iyov 21:15) - this refers to prayer.

G-d responded and said to them: What caused you to lose the twilight of this world and the morning of the world to come?

Your forsaking and refusal of the Torah.

The Root of Harm - Disrespect For the Sages

When Noach was 480 years old, G-d revealed Himself to him and informed him: "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with corruption by them, and behold, I will destroy them from the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark" (Bereishit 6:13-14).

And from that point and on, for some 120 years, Noach rebuked and warned his generation, but they refused to listen to him.

In the words of the 'Chatam Sofer':⁹

"Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations" (Bereishit 6:9) - 'he was perfect in all generations and times, and humble in spirit, refraining from

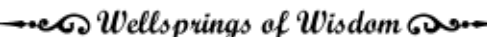
rebuking and protesting against them, and in the Midrash, he is even criticized for this.

However, in the last 120 years, while building the ark, all the time that he engaged in construction, he rebuked them day after day and admonished them to their faces.'

But the people of his generation disdained his personality and despised his words.

As it is said in the book of Iyov: "A lamp despised in the thoughts of one who is secure, is ready for those whose feet slip" (Iyov 12:5).

'A lamp' - refers to Noach who proclaimed and rebuked his generation, telling them: Repent, or else G-d will bring a flood.



Parshat Noach - The Dark Egyptian Exile

'Despised' - all his generation despised him, cursed him, and mocked his simplicity, saying to him: The flood will come upon your head.¹⁰

And indeed, five years before the flood, Lemech, Noach's father died, and five years later, his grandfather Metushelach died.

Noach became a joke. He had warned everyone about the impending flood, but in the meantime, the 'flood' had come upon his own family.

'It turns out,' the rabbi concluded, 'that the main reason they were obliterated and lost was because they disrespected the sages and disparaged Torah scholars.'

'You see,' the mother interrupted, 'when one disrespects - they are lost. Alas, you precisely described my dear son.'

'Wait, wait, patience, I haven't finished yet,' the rabbi exclaimed and continued on with his explanation.

The Dark Egyptian Exile

The flood had ended, the world was once again replenished with mankind, and the battle between impurity and holiness resumed.

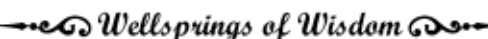
The birth of Avraham Avinu took place a few generations later, and from that moment and on, the forces of impurity began to lose their strength.

After him came Yitzchak Avinu and Yaakov Avinu, who succeeded in drawing down

refined souls, the souls of his children, the twelve tribes.

These righteous individuals devoted themselves to Torah with all their might, and by doing so, merited to be saved from the forces of impurity, as aforementioned that the power of Torah shields and creates around a person four cubits of Torah and Divinity.

Then in the year 2238 to the creation of the world, the people



10. Bereshit Rabbah (30:7).

Parshat Noach - Torah Study Leads to Action

of Israel descended to Egypt and settled in the region of Goshen.

Initially, they continued to toil in the study of the Torah, but gradually, over the years, there was a decline in their diligence, and this eventually led the Jewish people into the arms of impurity.

Pharaoh, who drew his vitality from the forces of

impurity, now had gained the power to control the Jewish people and turn them into slaves.

To be precise, not all of the Jewish people were enslaved; the tribe of Levi, which continued to devote itself to Torah study with all their might, were spared from the claws of Pharaoh.¹¹

Torah Study Leads to Action

It was G-d's will that in the year 2448 to the creation of the world, the Jewish people would receive the Torah.

They stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, and merited purification. All of the defilement that clung to them since the time of creation was removed from them, and the Divine Presence rested upon them completely.

It was there, at the giving of the Torah, that the Jewish people

received the power of action. At the revelation at Mount Sinai, the Jewish people received the power to draw down and bring the light of the Torah from its upper highest root to down below, our world.

To explain further:

In a lecture delivered by Rabbi Elyahu Dessler zt"l, he said:¹²

‘G-d's intention in giving us His Torah was that the lights of the Torah be drawn down and spread below, into our

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

11. As the Midrash says (Shemot Rabbah, 5:16):

“Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, the tribe of Levi was exempt from the harsh labor.”

12. ‘Michtav Me’Eliyahu’ (Part 4, page 24).

From here to the end of our discussion, we quote from his words there.

Parshat Noach - The Torah Draws Vitality to the World

subconscious, and deep into our heart, and ultimately reach their purpose and lead to actual deeds.

As posited in the Talmud (Yoma 86a):

'One should read and study, serve the Torah scholars, and conduct his business cordially among people, and people say about him: Fortunate is his father who taught him Torah, fortunate is his rabbi who taught him Torah. See how pleasant are his

ways, and how refined are his deeds.

About him, the verse says: "And He said to me, You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified" (Yeshayahu 49:3).'

In this way, one creates great sanctification of G-d's name and brings the holiness to overcome the side of impurity which is driven out and distanced, thus fulfilling the verse: 'G-d's name is beloved through you,' and thereby, fulfilling the purpose of creation.'

The Torah Draws Vitality to the World

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, the 'Ramchal', writes in 'Adir Bamarom' (page 77):

"I will reveal to you a great mystery. The main purpose of studying Torah is the resulting action, as our sages say (Avot 4:10): "If you have neglected the Torah, there are many idle forces against you."

This also explains what our sages say (Ketubot 59b): "Idleness leads to madness."

The Ramchal goes on at length explaining this, but we bring the idea briefly:

In the beginning, G-d emanated the light of the Torah, and with it, created the entire creation. The light of the Torah shines openly in the upper worlds, and also in each world according to its level and position.

G-d's intention is that the light of the Torah spread and illuminate in all the worlds, however, since G-d desires the work of man, He 'arranged' that the light of the

Torah be dependent on the actions of those below.

If those below study Torah and fulfill its commandments, they draw down the light of the Torah to all the worlds. But if, G-d forbid, they sin, they cause the light of the Torah to remain 'idle,' since the light of the Torah cannot spread on its own.

This is what our sages said: 'If you have neglected the Torah' - the light of the Torah always exists, but nonetheless depends on the actions of human beings. And if a person causes this divine light to be idle and does not draw it down below - 'There are many idle forces against you' - the side of impurity, which is termed 'idleness' and 'madness', grows stronger and rules down here below.

The forces of impurity are called idleness, because their existence and dominion come from the absence and idleness of the divine light.

Their idleness and absence of divine energy then leads to madness, being that idleness of spiritual light gives dominion to the side of impurity, which is truly madness'.

Thus, when a person sins and prevents the spreading of the light of the Torah, they strengthen the forces of impurity to an immeasurable extent.

Moreover, the main source of nourishment for the forces of impurity comes precisely from those who perform Torah and mitzvot with great flaws.

As is written in many holy books, that the powers of impurity derive their vitality from the sparks of holiness that have fallen into their domain.

‘And this is the power we received at Sinai’ - the rabbi completed his thought - ‘to draw the light of the Torah into the world of action.’

'Wait,'- said the mother - 'I don't understand. How is all of this connected to Yossi?'

The Descent of Torah within the Klipot

From the day the Jewish people received the Torah, everyone knew that the only way to combat impurity is through Torah study. When one engages in Torah, they create an impenetrable shield around themselves.

And the choice that lay before every individual is whether to study the Torah or not.

For about a thousand years, holiness shone in full force, and people devoted themselves to Torah study with pure intentions, and as a result, the powers of impurity had no permission to hold sway over the sparks of holiness within the Torah.

However, after about a thousand years, there began a slight weakening compared to previous generations, and this caused disputes to arise among the sages of Israel.¹³

This led to the development of false beliefs regarding the Torah, but the side of impurity had not yet been granted permission to distort the Torah itself until the time of an infamous wayward student of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Perachya. Only in that generation, did idolaters begin to use and adopt the Torah with their unfaithful interpretations.

As the years passed further, decrees and sufferings increased. The nations of the world were busy with striking and killing, torturing and plundering, without mercy or even a trace of compassion. These troubles caused the hearts of the Jewish people to be weakened more and more, and the pure study of Torah began to fade.

The forces of impurity then drew more and more sustenance from the Torah, to the point that a strange

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

13. The first dispute among the sages of Israel was regarding the laying on of hands on a sacrifice on Yom Tov. Yosei ben Yoezer was of the opinion

that one must not lay their hands, while Yosef ben Yochanan held that it was an obligation to lay one's hands (Chagigah

never-seen-before phenomenon arose (in the late 17th and early 18th centuries), - the twisted movement of 'Biblical Criticism,' which is a heretical movement who use the sanctity of the Torah to establish their heresies.

This movement of insolent and audacious swindlers dare to 'critique' the Torah and the Scriptures. With their twisted minds and influenced by their corrupt traits and desires, they delve into the most external aspects of the Torah and seek to profane it according to the dictates of their lowly thoughts.

We may ruminate and wonder: How did this phenomenon come to be? What do these so-called 'scholars' have to do with the Torah, after all, they claim not to believe in it.

Rather, it is the weakening of Torah study in recent generations that have caused the forces of impurity to gain a foothold in the very light of the Torah itself, using it to spread heresy and corruption.

It is through 'idleness,' and weakening of the study of the Torah, that we have, unfortunately and unbeknownst to us, caused heresy to derive nourishment from the Torah.

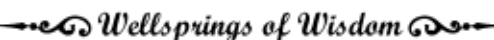
Yossi can Overcome

The souls continued to decline, and around the year 5530 (1770), the forces of impurity grew even stronger.

Across Europe, Jews who had fallen into heresy, G-d forbid, began to emerge, desecrating all that is sacred to the Jewish people, and especially to those who study Torah.

In truth, they had nothing substantial to offer, but nevertheless, the forces of impurity managed to take a foothold.

Then, a hundred fifty years later, Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz stood on the podium of the Mir Yeshiva and declared the following:¹⁴



14. ('Daas Torah', Bamidbar, page 147).

Parshat Noach - Yossi can Overcome

"Our generation is dark and gloomy, and little light is visible in it. The general atmosphere created by the 'enlightened ones' (those who cast off the yoke of the Torah), is one that disgraces Torah scholars with harsh contempt, and yet, despite all this, Torah scholars strive successfully in their studies and stand their ground proudly."

Rabbi Yerucham continued at length about the great self-sacrifice of the yeshiva students, and concluded:

"Today, in our generation, which is most dark, despite all our diminished greatness, we are completely righteous. Today's yeshiva students are even greater than those great scholars who were considered great in previous generations. Therefore, it is precisely in our generation that Moshiach will come.

Moshiach did not come in the previous generations, from the outstanding luminaries that existed then, but he will rather

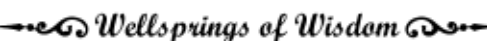
come specifically from our generation, from a generation that is shrouded in darkness, because the great luminary of the darkest of generations is the one worthy of being Moshiach."

'If the powers of the unholy powers were so strong in those days' - said the rabbi - 'what can be said of our times?'

'You must understand the forces Yossi is dealing with. Forces of impurity that have managed to derive sustenance from the Torah itself.

Although the responsibility lies with the Torah scholars who fail to bring their Torah to action, and thus redeem and redirect the sparks of holiness that lie dormant and in exile within the impure powers, as the Ramchal wrote; nevertheless, you must understand the intensity of the struggle, a struggle that has never been as powerful as it is today.

As the Rebbe Rayatz of Lubavitch once explained¹⁵ the verse:



15. Likutei Dibburim (Vaolumes 1-2, page 144).

"And the man Moshe was very humble, more than any other person on the face of the earth" (Devarim 12:3).

Moshe beheld the book of Adam HaRishon and saw in it that in the generations before the coming of Moshiach, there would be no Divine comprehension, meaning that their comprehension of matters of holiness would not be considered at all, especially compared to the comprehension of Moshe. They would not have the merit of divine service of the mind and heart, only the observance of the commandments in actual practice.

But their simple divine service would be permeated with self-sacrifice, for they would face many obstacles and hindrances, both physical and spiritual, and an abundance of concealments and distractions, yet despite all this, they would stand firm against all deterrents, trials, and tribulations, and observe the commandments with great self-sacrifice.

Moshe understood the source of this incredible power, which

emanates from the innermost essence of the Infinite G-d, and this brought him to feel great humility: They are far greater than me.

It is in the merit of the last generations, that Moshe attained complete humility.

And since this is the case,' concluded the rabbi, 'you must abandon the path of finding faults in your child and instead focus on the good within him, conveying trust and appreciation towards him, and then, with G-d's help, his heart will soften, and he will be able to listen to you.

It is by Divine providence that you came to me specifically on this Shabbat because this week marks the passing of Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel, who was characterized by this very trait.

Rabbi Yoram never saw a Jew as ugly or unbecoming. At all times and in every situation, he saw the good in people, and like an angel, he would grant them trust and hope.

During the thirty years of his leadership, Rabbi Yoram met

Parshat Noach - Yossi can Overcome

with people every day, some he met with every day, and others he met occasionally, and it made no difference to him - every person who met with him was given the opportunity to approach him and talk to him.

He would truly listen to them, and the person would feel rivers of love flowing from the rabbi's heart into theirs. The rabbi would then respond with a bright face, giving an answer that descended and was drawn down from the highest realms.

Everyone who had the merit to meet with the rabbi never forgot this experience, the pleasant feeling of knowing that there was a righteous Jew of high stature who loved them just as they were and felt them to be important in his eyes.

Jews from every spectrum, from the darkest underworlds to Jews from the highest and brightest realms, sought his closeness and longed to be in his presence.

Never did people tire of being in his presence, and even though every Shabbat he would give four lessons (Shabbat in the evening, morning, afternoon, and on Motzei Shabbat) that would altogether span about seven hours, people would attend all these lectures, week after week.

Everyone who came into contact with him felt how precious and beloved they were to the rabbi, and everyone was sure that they were among the people closest and most connected to him.

This love was not vague and theoretical; it was a love that led to results.

He genuinely desired and yearned for every Jew to have goodness in their lives, and he believed in them all sincerely, thereby opening the gate for them to enter within holy and elevated worlds.

Shabbat Shalom!

Summary and Practical Conclusions:

1. The way to protect oneself from the impure atmosphere in the world is through studying the Torah. This is the unique quality of Torah over other mitzvot; all other mitzvot can only purify a person's internal impurities, but the Torah has the power to additionally create an encompassing holiness that purifies the air and environment around a person.

2. A person crowned with the crown of Torah should not divert their attention to other matters. This means that one should not lose focus from the Torah at all, this way their entire being is immersed in the atmosphere of Torah, and through this, they create around themselves an aura of holiness that purifies all the impurities of their surroundings.

3. G-d's intention in giving the Torah to the Jewish people was that the lights of the Torah be drawn down and spread below, into our subconscious, into our very being, in a way that it influences all aspects of our reality.

Such a person, who lives the Torah with their entire being, sanctifies G-d's name with every step, bringing holiness to dominate (and thereby driving out and distancing the forces of impurity), thus fulfilling the dictum: "The name of Heaven becomes beloved through you," and in this way, fulfills the purpose of creation.

4. Life is full of challenges; a person does not choose their challenges; rather, they are chosen for them.

This is true at every stage of life, whether single, married, or as a parent.

Therefore, couples who wish for their home to be a dwelling place for the Divine Presence must understand that they must not run away from challenges or reality. On the contrary, the greater and broader a person's future, the more significant and immense the challenges they will face. The wisdom lies in knowing how to confront the upcoming challenges and to look forward to and hope for G-d's salvation.

Parshat Noach - Summary and Practical Conclusions:

5. One of the most significant challenges in life for parents is placing their trust in their children.

Loving a child does not just mean giving hugs and kisses; it is no less important to address their emotional needs, which are often more important than their physical needs.

A most essential and important need is the feeling of trust. Trust creates a proper connection between parents and their children and allows for openness and acceptance. When we convey to our children and to ourselves that we believe in them and their abilities, we strengthen their positive self-image and enhance their aspiration and ability to realize the potential given to them from Heaven.

6. When a child makes a mistake, G-d forbid, we must be very careful with our words.

We must not label them or brand them with a stigma, because eventually, they may internalize that label.

We must condemn the serious act but not the sweet and precious child who stumbled.

We must attribute the reprimand to the action itself and explain that the deed was very serious and must not be repeated, but not associate it with the child's essence.

7. Therefore, the most important thing is to encourage, praise, and uplift the child.

If a child received a perfect score on a test, it should not be taken for granted; they worked hard for it. For some children, a score of seventy is like getting a hundred for others.

We must learn to embrace them, understand their soul, magnify their positive actions, appreciate and acknowledge their every progress, and instill in them the desire to succeed.

This is our main task, this is the will of G-d, and we must place it at the forefront of our minds, and always work toward this goal.

8. On this Shabbat we mark the passing of Rabbi Yoram.

One of his most prominent traits was that he never saw a Jew negatively.

Parshat Noach - Summary and Practical Conclusions:

Always, and in every situation, he saw the good in them, and granted them trust and hope.

During the thirty years of his leadership, Rabbi Yoram met with people every day, some he met with every day, and others he met occasionally, and it made no difference to him - every person who met with him was given the opportunity to approach him and talk to him.

He would truly listen to them, and the person would feel rivers of love flowing from the rabbi's heart into theirs. The rabbi would then respond with a bright face, giving an answer that descended and was drawn down from the highest realms.

Everyone who had the merit to meet with the rabbi never forgot this experience, the pleasant feeling of knowing that there was a

righteous Jew of high stature who loved them just as they were and felt them to be important in his eyes.

Jews from every spectrum, from the darkest underworlds to Jews from the highest and brightest realms, sought his closeness and longed to be in his presence.

9. Never did people tire of being in his presence; everyone who came into contact with him felt how precious and beloved they were to the rabbi, and everyone was sure that they were among the people closest and most connected to him.

This love was not vague and theoretical; it was a love that led to results.

He genuinely desired and yearned for every Jew to have goodness in their lives, and he believed in them all sincerely, thereby opening the gate for them to enter within holy and elevated worlds.

May his merit protect us, Amen



”A person must rejoice when the time for
prayer

as the author of the Tanya says that:

every Jew, wherever he is, receives from G-d at the time of prayer a gift called **"Mochin D'Gadlut,"** meaning that the understanding of everything is expansive before him, as is written

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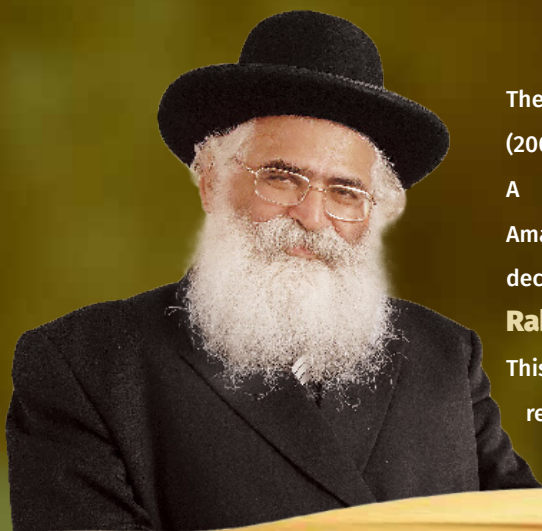
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Shabbat Times

Noach

1st of Cheshvan, 5785



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	5:33 pm	6:32 pm	7:02 pm
Miami	6:21 pm	7:13 pm	7:50 pm
Los Angeles	5:42 pm	6:37 pm	7:11 pm
Montreal	5:22 pm	6:25 pm	6:51 pm
Toronto	5:49 pm	6:50 pm	7:18 pm
London	4:14 pm	5:23 pm	5:43 pm
Jerusalem	4:34 pm	5:24 pm	5:59 pm
Tel Aviv	4:30 pm	5:20 pm	5:55 pm
Haifa	4:28 pm	5:21 pm	5:56 pm
Be'er Sheva	4:31 pm	5:24 pm	5:59 pm

Pathways to the Heart

From the Words of

HaRav Yoram Abargel zt"l

The study of the Torah is called 'קריאה', as the Mishnah says (Berachot 13a) "If he was reading - 'הקורא' - in the Torah."

The Baal HaTanya explains that 'קריאה' - 'reading,' can also be translated as 'calling':

"Through the study of the Torah, one is - so to speak - calling on G-d to come near to him. As a person who calls their companion to come to him, and as a young child who calls on his father to come be with him together."

This is the way one should genuinely feel when they study the Torah.



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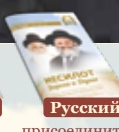
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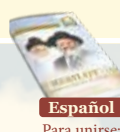
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