

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת נח תשע"ט

What was the secret that kept Noach humble?

נח איש צדיק תמים היה בדורתי את האלקים התהלך נח: (ו ט)
Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations; Noach walked with Hashem. (6:9) Noach was perfect and humble in spite of the gap between his high spiritual level and that of his lowly generation. Noach could have been swayed very easily by his generation. Being berated and scolded at daily. What then was the secret that kept him humble? The Torah gives the answer נח התהלך את האלקים, the fact that Noach "walked with Hashem." He was always aware that compared to what he owed Hashem and how far he was from Him, he fell terribly short of what he should be. (Noam Megadim by Rabbi Eliezer Halevi Horowitz, Rav of Tarnigrad) Based on this insight, we can expand in a similar direction: There is a Posuk (דברים יח יג) אלקים: (דברים יח יג) *Be wholehearted with the Lord, your God: Rashi explains: Conduct yourself with Him with simplicity and depend on Him, and do not inquire of the future; rather, accept whatever happens to you with simplicity and then, you will be with Him and to His portion.* In both verses we find the word תמים which point to being wholehearted with Hashem. The only way to attain this trait and to be a happy person, is through being with Hashem. Realizing that Hashem is with you all along. David Hamelech states this clearly in Tehilim 91: אבטח בן: *I shall say of the Lord [that He is] my shelter and my fortress, my God in Whom I trust.* For He will save you from the snare that traps from the devastating pestilence - destruction. כי מלאכיו יצוה לך לשמרך. *For He will command His angels on your behalf to guard you in all your ways.* When Hashem is your shelter, there is no fear of anyone and a promise from Hashem ארך. *With length of days I shall satiate him, and I shall show him My salvation.* When Hashem promises, He delivers with great dividends. This was the secret of Noach being able to cope with his generation. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

Why did the punishment hinge on robbery?

ויאמר אלקים לנח בן כל-בשר בא לפני כי-מלאה הארץ חמס מפניהם והנני משחיתם את-הארץ: (ו י"ג)
Hashem said to Noach, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth has become full of robbery because of them. I am about to destroy them from the earth." (6:13) Rashi mentions in an earlier pasuk (6:11) לשון ותשחת הארץ: *that the people sinned through immorality and idolatry.* Rashi quotes the gemarra Sanhedrin 108a Their verdict was sealed only because of robbery. Why then did

the punishment now hinge on robbery? A Midrash relates that Shem the son of Noach was asked by Avraham, in what merit Noach's household survived the *mabul* - severe flood. He answered that they labored greatly to care for all the different animals' needs during the *mabul*, and in return, this called forth Hashem's mercy on them and they were saved. Kindness, even to lower creatures of Hashem, marked their salvation. But since the earth's people had robbed each other, utterly devoid of mercy, that evil ensured their destruction. It poisoned the world and there could be no antidote. (*Tiferes Shlome - Radomsk*)

Another answer to the above

The Paneach Raza, Rav Yitzchok ben Yehuda Halevi from the 13th century has a sweet answer to the above question based on the gemarra Yoma 38b: *אין אדם נוגע במובן להבירו: No person may touch that which is prepared for another by God; everyone receives what is designated for him.* When someone steals from another, Hashem has to toil to return the loss to the rightful owner! Yes, the person that stole will receive his punishment for his evil act. But the object must be returned to the original owner. For this reason the people of the *mabul* by causing Hashem to toil to return all the robberies to the owners, therefore the punishment was sealed for the robberies.

Saying Barchi Nafshi and Shir Hamalos, Shabbos in the winter

The custom in Ashkenaz is to recite Barchi Nafshi and 15 Shir Hamalos Shabbos afternoon from Parshas Bereishis until Pesach. Some Khilos say it after Mincha and others say it before Mincha on Shabbos during the winter. In Halacha it also states to learn Pirkei Avos during the summer months. Barchi Nafshi represents the path toward Hashem through nature, and Pirkei Avos the path of Torah study. In the winter, nature is dormant, while Torah study is at its peak, since the long nights are conducive to the study of Torah. Therefore the path of nature must be emphasized through the recitation of Barchi Nafshi, which speaks of the wonders of nature. In the summer, however, the opposite is true. Nature is in its full glory, but the nights are short and Torah study is at its low ebb. Hence the need to learn Pirkei Avos which emphasizes the path of Torah. Here, too, Barchi Nafshi, nature, begins with a bet, and Avos begins with an aleph, to inform us which path must always be primary. There is another reason for saying the 15 Shir Hamalos. These all relate to Shabbos, therefore we are saying farewell to the Shabbos and yearning to accept it again very soon. Shabbos by Mincha is the epitome of Kedushas Shabbos. A time of teshuva and reflection with connecting to David Hamelech.

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

**** *The Chozeh of Lublin re-bonds with his childhood Rebbe, and not a moment too soon!* ****

The great Tzaddik Harav Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz, the famed "Chozeh" -Seer- of Lublin (1745 - 1815 תקנ"ה-תקצ"ה למס'), was a student of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizensk. His ability to discern human events – present and future – from long distances away was known.

Once he was traveling with his disciples on a Friday to visit Chassidim in a nearby town, when they reached a crossroads. As always, the wagon driver asked the Rebbe which way to turn. Surprisingly, this time the Rebbe -didn't seem to know what to answer. Shrugging, he said, "Loosen the reins. Let the horses go in whichever direction they want."

After a while, they arrived at a town which no one recognized. They soon realized that this was not the place they were seeking, but the sun was getting low in the sky. "We'll stay here for Shabbos," the Chozeh announced. But he added, "I forbid you to reveal my identity or that I am a Rebbe." The followers promised, but wondered, since they had no money, how they would provide for themselves over Shabbos. The Rebbe had clear advice: "We'll do as Jewish travelers have done in all generations. We'll go to shul tonight, and people will invite us when they see we have no place to go." And so it was.

They davened at the back of the shul, and afterwards, all of the Rebbe's students and attendants were invited individually to different homes. The Chozeh, however, had no invitation in hand. He always davened the Shabbos evening prayers at great length and depth and this week was no exception. By the time he finished, everyone had left, other than one person who was in the shul, an elderly gentleman. He saw that the Chozeh was immersed in his tefilos and decided to wait until he finished.

The man approached with outstretched hand and asked, "*Gut Shabbos, Reb Yid*. Where are you going for the seuda?" "Actually, I don't have a place yet." "Then why don't you just eat at the inn?" asked the elderly man. "If it's a problem of money, I'll settle your bill after Shabbos." "I noticed they didn't light Shabbat candles, so I presume that I cannot trust the kashrus of the food they serve," answered the Rebbe matter-of-factly.

"I'm sorry, but at my home, my wife and I will have only challos and wine." "That would suit me just fine," said the tzaddik,. "Then come along with me," said the elderly Yid. After reciting Kiddush and eating Lechem Mishnah, they sat calmly at the table, discussing Torah from the weekly parsha. Finally the elderly man asked where his guest hailed from. Upon hearing the word "Lublin", he asked him if he knew the famous Rebbe of Lublin. "Yes, I've seen him once or twice," was the response. "That's wonderful," said his host. "Please tell me something about him." "Why are you so curious about him?" asked the Chozeh. "Because," said the man, "I was his teacher in cheder when he was a young boy, and he was not distinguished in any way in his studies. Now I hear that he has

become a great Rebbe and performs wondrous miracles." "Did you notice anything unusual about him when he was a child?" the Chozeh asked.

"Only one thing has stayed in my mind all these years," the Yid replied. "Each morning, when I tried to call upon him to read aloud from the siddur, suddenly he was nowhere to be found. Later, when he would re-appear, I would punish him for his absence. He kept his silence. One day, I decided that I absolutely had to find out where he disappeared to. I kept an eagle-eye on him and when he exited the room I slipped out after him, tracking him from afar undetected. He headed for the forest on the edge of town. I followed, keeping him in focus. I peered through the trees and there he was, sitting next to a beehive, being stung, while shaking heaven and earth, crying out, *Sh'ma Yisrael*, oblivious to the stings!"

"After that, I never punished him again -- obviously. Now, after all these years, I would like very much to be able to see him in all his glory, but I don't know how to make that happen. I'm a poor man and I've become weak in my old age, so it's impossible for me to travel to Lublin. Nevertheless, my desire is so strong that I fast one day a week and pray to Hashem that I merit to see my talmid with my own eyes before it is too late."

Now, the Chozeh fully understood the events that Hashem had orchestrated to bring him to this particular town. The Rebbe discreetly praised Hashem for bringing him to cross paths with the old gentleman. The far-seeing eyes of the great Chozeh welled up with tears as he savored a living link to his formative years. He told the Yid softly and tenderly, "Dear Rabbi, I am he, your humble talmid, the one you seek. People call me the Rebbe of Lublin."

The old man instantly fainted and was revived, but with difficulty. The elderly Yid could not thank and praise Hashem enough for granting him his wish. The Chozeh begged his host not to reveal his identity. The newly-forged "chavrusa" spent all night together learning Torah. Come Shabbos morning after davening, the Rebbe again shared the modest seuda at his childhood Rabbi's table. Motzoei Shabbos the Chozeh departed the town along with his entourage, escorted briefly by the elderly host, who then returned home. The group traveled to a familiar town in order to conduct the Melaveh Malka with some local chassidim. After zemiros and bentching, the Chozeh revealed what he saw: "Now we must return to the town where we spent Shabbos in order to attend my childhood Rabbi's levaya and to deliver an appropriate eulogy. I must give him the honor due him." The talmidim had no idea what he was talking about, until the Chozeh revealed the amazing Hashgacha Pratis which steered them to the little town and enabled a dear Yid to depart this world with nachas, dignity and fulfillment. י"ד א"

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