

appreciate the message of the clear blue sky, the warm and luminous sun? *Hashem*, in His mercy, is telling us: You are My children and I will never again do anything to hurt you!

התאריך: 11.05.2017

ר' חשידן תשי"ע - October 24, 2009

“Human beings must be known to be loved, but *Hashem* must be loved to be known.”
A SPECIAL MAZEL TOV TO MR & MRS MOTTI SMILOW ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR FIRST GRANDSON.
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Debatable Types of Trees. Certain varieties of vegetation (unlike trees) lose their trunk (or center shoot) when they shrivel up during the winter. However, their roots remain and grow again the next year without replanting (like trees). Bananas, pineapples, and strawberries have this unique characteristic. Most *Poskim* ⁽⁵⁾ rule that they are "האדמה" and this is what we do. The **Rosh** considers them to be "העץ". If one made "העץ" on bananas, this is enough of a reason to not require him to repeat the *beracha*. Some ⁽⁶⁾ say he just finishes the banana without a new *beracha*, while the **Mishna Berura** ⁽⁷⁾ rules he should eat a little piece to justify the "העץ" and then find another "האדמה" item to make a *beracha* on to exempt the rest of the banana.

(1) או"ח ר:א (2) שם ר:ג (3) משנה ברורה ר:ג (4)
גגרות משה או"ח א:פ (5) רמ"א ר:ג כשיטת המרדכי
(6) סדר ברכת הנהנין בסידור הרב ו:ו (7) ר:ג

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויאמר אלקים לנח קץ כל בשר בא לפני כי מלאה הארץ חמס מפניהם והנני משחיתם את הארץ וגו' (ו-יג)

In a time when the world had literally gone bad, there seemed to be no hope for mankind. “*And Hashem saw the land and behold it was corrupted, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*” Robbery and promiscuity had become the norm both in humans and animals, and *Hashem* decided that it cannot go on this way. Starting with Noach, the only living being that maintained a hint of G-dliness and human empathy, *Hashem* instructed him on the manner in which he was to be saved, in order to rebuild the world anew. The institution of *chesed* - kindness, that Noach planted in the post-*mabul* world, is the original spark of kindness that the entire world feeds off until this very day - Jews and gentiles alike.

Not that many years ago - seventy-one years almost to the day - the world was again thrown into a darkness, the likes of which mankind has never experienced since the times of Noach. The rise of the Third Reich, and with it, the brutality of Nazi Germany, is a chapter in the history of the world that reflects the depths of barbarism, sadism and pure unadulterated evil on a national and even global level. Although Nazi power increased in Germany day by day from as early as 1933, it wasn’t until the night of November 9, 1938 - *Kristallnacht*: The night of Broken Glass - when all inhibitions were released and the facade of normal policy was hideously cast aside. On that infamous night, in a coordinated attack on Jewish people and their property all throughout Germany, Hitler Youth, Gestapo, SS and SA murdered 91 Jews, 25,000 to 30,000 were arrested and placed in concentration camps, 267 synagogues were destroyed and thousands of homes and businesses were ransacked. The SA shattered the storefronts of about 7500 Jewish stores and businesses, hence the appellation “*Kristallnacht*” (Crystal Night). Jewish homes were vandalized and many unfortunate Jews were beaten and assaulted.

There was one man, a famous German sports hero by the name of Max Schmeling, who did not sit by and watch the carnage unfold. Max Schmeling was a boxer who held the title of Heavyweight Champion of the world. He was rich, young and the darling of German society. However, he wholeheartedly disagreed with Nazi policies and even turned down a direct invitation by Hitler (YM”S) himself, to join the Nazi party. During the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin, Schmeling exacted a promise from Hitler that all U.S. athletes would be protected and he even refused to stop associating with German Jews or to fire his American Jewish manager, Joe Jacobs, over the public protests of Josef Goebbels and other Nazi officials.

On that fateful November night, two Jewish boys, the brothers Henry and Werner Lewin, were out on the streets of Berlin while the vicious mobs raged, pillaged and burned anything Jewish. Realizing the severity of their situation and the danger to their persons if they were caught, they ran through the streets of Berlin looking for a safe place to hide. One of the brothers recalled that their father, David Lewin, was a friendly associate of the renowned boxer, Max Schmeling, and without any other options at their disposal, they decided that they had to take a chance on his hospitality.

Schmeling lived in a suite in the ritzy Excelsior Hotel in Berlin. The Lewin brothers ran as fast as their legs could carry them to the hotel and urgently rang his bell. When he responded, they identified themselves and begged him to have mercy on them. Immediately, Schmeling agreed to hide the two teenage boys in his apartment and even went so far as to leave word at the front desk that he was ill and no one was to visit him. For two days, the Lewin boys remained under Schmeling’s personal care and he would not let them leave until it was safe to go outside once again. He requested no remuneration or acknowledgment for his kind act and he even helped the brothers get out of Germany at a later date.

Schmeling paid dearly for his insubordination to the Nazi party and Hitler personally ordered him on a suicide mission from which he miraculously survived. In a world gone mad, he was one man who demonstrated extraordinary generosity and humanitarianism.

משל' למה הדבר דומה

והקמתי את בריתי אתכם ולא יכרת כל בשר עוד ממי המבול ולא יהיה עוד מבול לשחת הארץ וגו' (ט-יא)

משל' The people of Slonim were preparing a grand reception for their newly hired *Rov*, **R’ Eizel Chorf ZT”L**, and to their great fortune, the day of honor turned out to be bright and sunny - a perfect day for a reception.

As the new *Rov* was being led around town, one of the distinguished members jokingly remarked to R’ Eizel, “Tradition has it, that rainy weather on the day a new *Rov* arrives in town is a good omen for both the *Rov* and the community. Today, though, the sky is clear and blue and not a cloud in sight. Can this be a bad omen?”

R’ Eizel was known as a “*chorif*” - a sharp witted person, for a reason and instantly shot back with the hint of a smile on his lips, “It’s true what you’re saying, but the rainfall is only in accordance with the stature of the *Rov*. If he is mediocre, only a moderate amount of rain will fall. If he is of medium stature, then a fair amount of rain will come down.

“But if,” he paused with a twinkle in his eye, “the *Rov* is as great as myself, then a veritable flood would fall. However, since *Hashem* swore that he would never again bring a *mabul* to the world, he gave us beautiful weather instead!”

כל רמש אשר הוא חי לכם יהיה לאכלה כדרך עשב נתתי לכם את כל וגו' (ט-ג)

After the worldwide destruction of the *Mabul* - Flood, *Hashem* issued a decree that, “*Every living thing shall be food for you.*” In essence, Noach’s descendants were being permitted that which was forbidden to *Adam Harishon*.

R’ Zalman Sorotzkin ZT”L (Oznaim L’Torah) illustrates how this allowance retains the educational value of teaching man his great worth and superiority over the animals. The sins of the Generation of the Flood were rooted in ignorance of this fact. They adopted the depraved ways of the animals, who have no concept of marriage or family. They assumed that people were free like animals, and “*took for themselves wives from whomever they chose*” (ו-ב). In their minds, man was no different than animals.

Similarly, by seeing strong animals chasing away weak ones from rich grazing fields so as to have them all to themselves, man learned robbery, and filled the earth with violence and slaughter. The *Mabul*, aside from being a punishment, also served to teach Noach and later generations that man is the center of Creation. Thus, when he sinned, all the other creatures on earth perished with him. Even the stars did not shine while the Flood raged. Without man, there is no need for the rest of creation.

In order to further dispel man’s misconception that humans and animals are equals, *Hashem* permitted Noach and his descendants to consume the flesh of animals to teach man that when he consumes an animal, it gives him strength, sustenance and nourishment. For this reason, the animal was created. On the other hand, no creature is entitled to prey upon man: “*Of every beast will I demand it ... I will demand the soul of man*” (ט-ה). From this, man may learn his exalted worth, and realizing that he is made “בצלם אלקים” - “*in the image of G-d,*” he will perform no more beastly acts.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

כבוד ודבירה

Parshas Noach speaks of two kindred - yet very different generations: The *Dor Hamabul* and the *Dor Haflagah*. Each generation sinned and was subsequently punished. There is a tremendous lesson to be learned from how *Hashem* dealt with each one. From here we can truly gain insight into what is truly important and beloved to *Hashem*.

Let us start with the Generation of the Flood. Their sin was גזל וזנות - meaning they did not treat one another properly. They stole and cheated each other, showing no respect to the property and feelings of others. How were they punished? *Hashem* brought the flood and destroyed the entire world! Animals, trees, everything upon the land was utterly wiped out!

Now let’s take a look at the generation of the Tower of Babel. These people decided to build a tower that would reach the heavens in order to wage a war against *Hashem*! They wished to “conquer G-d” - and worked industriously, with great brotherhood and unity, to achieve their goal. What was their punishment? *Hashem* mixed up their languages!

When we step back and look at the whole picture, it is quite amazing to see what *Hashem* considers a minor sin and for what he decided to destroy His entire world. When someone sins against G-d, even to the point of wishing to “conquer” Him, *Hashem* says, “On my own *kavod* (honor) I can be *mochel*.” But when *Hashem* sees people not showing kindness and respect to one another, *Hashem* says, “This is cause for destruction for I cannot be *mochel* someone else’s *kavod*!”

Olam Chesed Yibaneh! This week let us make a special effort to smile at others and show them kindness and respect!

TORAH GEMS

ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת ודברים אחדים וגו' (א-א)

The **Satmar Rebbe, R’ Yoel Teitelbaum ZT”L**, was once asked why he was so vehemently opposed to Zionism and the State of Israel. Hadn’t they done good for the Jewish people as well? The *Rebbe* responded by quoting the *gemara* (עבודה זרה יח): “*Praiseworthy is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked - this refers to Avrohom our father, who did not walk in the counsel of the Generation of the Dispersal.*” The question is obvious: Since they were wicked people who tried to fight against *Hashem*, why would *Avrohom Avinu* walk with them? “What is so praiseworthy about that?” asked the *Rebbe*.

“The answer is that there were actually three groups of people who built the Tower. Rashi mentions two of them. The first group said, ‘Let us go up to the heavens and fight a war against *Hashem*!’ The second group said, ‘Once every 1656 years the sky falls in. Let us make support pillars for the sky!’ Yet, the *Medrash* tells of a third group, who said, ‘Let us go up to the heavens, far from the pleasures of this world, and live there like angels!’ Now, we understand why *Avrohom* did not join the first group or even the second group. But why didn’t he join the third group? The answer is, *Avrohom* decided that one may not join any of the three groups even for the sake of becoming like an angel.

“And so it is in *Eretz Yisroel* - there are three groups. The first group is the people who renounce the *Torah* and are fighting a war against *Hashem*. The second group says, ‘We believe in *Hashem*, but we need to help Him with our army and our weapons.’ And the third group says, ‘Let us go and build *Torah* centers in *Eretz Yisroel*.’ In order to reach this third group, one must join the first two groups in order to accomplish this goal. This is unacceptable! We must stay completely separate from all groups of Zionists!”

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ותשחת הארץ לפני האלקים ותמלא הארץ חמס וגו' (ו-יא)