



שבת פרשת נח
880
 ו' חשוון תש"ע • Oct. 23-24, '09



This Shabbat is the 36TH day (of 355), 6th Shabbat (of 51) of 5770
רִבְּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר בְּשִׁבְעָה בּוֹ, חֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם אַחֵר הָחָג...

Couldn't have been an easy decision

Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb - Executive Vice President Emeritus of the Orthodox Union and newest Torah Tidbits columnist - was the scholar in residence at the Shabbaton at the Israel Center last Shabbat. Among many other topics he presented, he spoke of the final p'sukim in Parshat B'reishit in which G-d expresses His "disappointment" with humankind and His "regret" for having created the world. Rabbi Weinreb shared with us different understandings of these human feelings that are apparently attributed to G-d. His talks were quite thought-provoking and are responsible for the comments you are about to read. Thank you, Rabbi THW.

Candle Lighting
 and **Havdala** times
 Israel Standard Time

TT 880 • Rabbeinu Tam (J'm) - 6:10pm

4:22pm	Yerushalayim	5:34pm
4:40pm	S'derot	5:37pm
4:48pm	Gush Etzion	5:35pm
4:39pm	Raanana	5:36pm
4:38pm	Beit Shemesh	5:35pm
4:39pm	Rehovot	5:36pm
4:38pm	Netanya	5:35pm
4:38pm	Be'er Sheva	5:37pm
4:38pm	Modi'in	5:35pm
4:22pm	Petach Tikva	5:36pm
4:22pm	Maale Adumim	5:34pm
4:38pm	Ginot Shomron	5:35pm
4:37pm	Gush Shiloh	5:34pm
4:38pm	K4 & Hevron	5:35pm
4:38pm	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:35pm
4:39pm	Yad Binyamin	5:36pm
4:40pm	Ashkelon	5:37pm
4:25pm	Tzfat	5:32pm

The standard way of understanding the use in the Torah of any human terminology attributed to G-d is, DIBRA TORAH BILSHON B'NEI ADAM - the Torah speaks in language we can understand. G-d doesn't actually regret what He did; He doesn't really change His mind; He doesn't get angry; He has no actual arm to outstretch; and many, many et ceteras.

But its more than this! [cont p.10](#)

Shabbat Shiur 3:15pm
Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Poupko
"Noach & the Shipwrecked Ark"
Mincha at 4:15pm



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OTHER Z'MANIM
 Correct for Jerusalem

Ranges are 10 days, WED-FRI 3-12 Cheshvan (Oct 21-30)

Earliest Talit & T'filin	4:56-5:03am
Sunrise	5:47-5:54am
Sof Z'man K' Sh'ma	8:35-8:38am (Magen Avraham: 7:50-7:53am)
Sof Z'man T'fila	9:31-9:33am (Magen Avraham: 9:01-9:02am)
Chatzot (halachic noon)	11:23½-11:22¼am
Mincha Gedola (earliest Mincha)	11:54-11:53am
Plag Mincha	3:50-3:42¼pm
Sunset (based on sea level: 5:00-4:51pm)	5:04-4:56pm

Word of the Month
 First opportunity for Kiddush L'vana this month (according to Minhag Yerushalayim) is Thursday night, October 22nd. Many people will wait for Motza'Sh. p.3

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NO'ACH STATS

2nd of 54 sedras (2nd of 12 in B'reishit)

Written on 230 lines in a Sefer Torah, rank: 15th

18 Parshiyot; 5 open, 13 closed; rank 12th

153 p'sukim - ranks 4th

Largest in B'reishit - tied with Vayishlach

1861 words - ranks 11th (6th in B'reishit)

6907 letters - ranks 13th (6th in B'reishit)

Drop in ranking for words and letters is due to No'ach's very short p'sukim. No'ach ranks 49th in words/pasuk and 51st in letters/pasuk. No sedra in B'reishit has shorter p'sukim.

MITZVOT

None of TARYAG are counted from No'ach, yet there are mitzvot in the sedra, specifically (but not only) references to the Noahide laws. So too is P'RU URVU repeated to No'ach - it is counted as a mitzva from B'reishit, when it was commanded to Adam and Chava.

WORD of the MONTH cont. from p.2
A weekly TT feature to help clarify practical and conceptual aspects of the Jewish Calendar, thereby enhancing our appreciation of G-d's gift to us of HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem...

Strict 7-days-after-the-molad people will have their first op on Sunday night, but only after 11:00pm, at which time the Moon will be low on the horizon and soon to set. Which means that Monday night is more likely for 7 day people.

Some people who wait for 7 days will take earlier opportunities during the rainy season (may it be HaShem's will that it live up to its name), to avoid the risk of getting rained or clouded out night after night until the last op. OTOH many 7 day people keep it strictly throughout the year.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI (positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma respectively. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Kohen - First Aliya 14 p'sukim - 6:9-22

The sedra of B'reishit began with the glorious account of creation and "went downhill" from there: The exile of Adam and Chava from Gan Eden, Kayin and Hevel, the continuous degeneration through successive generations until G-d's "regret" for having created the world and his "decision" to destroy it.

The only high note of this universal downslide comes at the end of the sedra: "But No'ach found favor in G-d's eyes".

[P> 6:9 (4)] The sedra of No'ach continues this thread and tells us that No'ach was "completely righteous IN HIS TIME".

SDT: Rashi presents the divergent opinions as to whether "in his time" is complimentary or derogatory. Was No'ach great EVEN in his very wicked generation, or was he great only by comparison to the generation in which he lived. Although Rashi does not seem to favor one possibility over the other, it seems obvious

that No'ach was not as great as Avraham Avinu. A look at the fifth chapter of Pirkei Avot will reveal a significant difference between No'ach and Avraham. Ten generations between Adam and No'ach and ten between No'ach and Avraham, both to teach us about G-d's long patience. Same. Yet when the first full run of ten generations was up, the Flood came. When the second one was up, the Mishna tells us, that Avraham's merit sustained the whole world. No'ach's merit seems to have been only enough only to save his own family. On the other hand, there was a significant difference between the generations of No'ach and Avraham that cannot be ignored, and make comparisons unfair.

Ponder this: Concerning the two different ways to evaluate No'ach's righteousness. Remember back a few short (but busy) weeks to the Musaf of Rosh HaShana, specifically to the ZICHRONOT bracha. Not only is one of the 10 p'sukim from Tanach about G-d's remembering of No'ach, but the pasuk is introduced in a way that the following p'sukim of G-d's remembering the cry of the people in Egypt and of G-d's remembering the Avot are not similarly introduced.

"Of Noah also You were mindful in Your love, and did remember him with a promise of salvation and mercy, when You brought the waters of the flood to destroy all flesh on account of their evil deeds. So his remembrance came before You, HaShem our God, to increase his seed like the dust of the earth, and his offspring like the sand of the sea."

The Torah essentially repeats that No'ach had three sons - Sheim, Cham, and Yefet, and that the world was totally corrupt.

[S> 6:13 (48)] Then No'ach is

informed by G-d of His plans to destroy the world and is commanded to build an ark, bring into it two of every kind of animal and sufficient food for his family and the animals.

Commentaries point out that No'ach was given ample time to try to influence his generation to mend its ways. He either didn't succeed or didn't try too hard. He did exactly as he was told (implying, and not more).

Think about this...

G-d could have destroyed the world and saved No'ach and family and the pairs of animals with a miraculous snap of His finger. In no time. With no human involvement. He could have, but He didn't. He could have left No'ach on his own, to do the whole job of saving his family and sample pairs of all the animals. He didn't do that either. (It probably would have been humanly impossible for No'ach to have done the whole job on his own.)

What G-d did do is command No'ach to build an ark of a specific size, a three-tiered floating structure, and to gather all the food necessary to feed many, many animals and his family for a year. This, say some commentaries, cannot be done without a heavy dose of miracle, of suspension of the laws of nature.

But it wasn't all supernatural. No'ach was part of it. And that is what G-d usually wants when it comes to miracles. We, as humans, relate so much better to that kind of miracle. Nachshon b. Aminadav needed to jump into the Sea before it would

split. We need to see some familiar nature inside a miracle... and we also need to see the miracle inside nature.

SDT: *Baal HaTurim points out that the Torah says EILEH TO-L'DOT... four times (as opposed to VEILEH -PC), and each time it comes to negate what came before it. EILEH TO-L'DOT SHAMAYIM VA'ARETZ... nullifies the TOHU VAVOHU (chaos and emptiness that preceded formation of this world). ...NO'ACH, to negate the generations that came before him. ...SHEIM (No'ach's son), to negate CHAM and YEFET. ...YAAKOV, to negate EISAV.*

Levi - Second Aliya 16 p'sukim - 7:1-16

G-d tells No'ach and his family to go into the Teiva (ark) and to take with him seven pairs of each kind of kosher animal and bird. No'ach is told that in seven more days it will rain for 40 days and nights during which time all life on earth will be wiped out. No'ach was 600 years old at the time of the Flood. And so it happened.

G-d's commands to No'ach to take pairs of animals as well as 7 pairs of kosher animals and birds, are two separate matters. The pairs of animals were for the survival and continuation of the species. These animals, we are taught, came on their own by instinct of self-preservation. On the other hand, No'ach had to bring into the Teiva the other animals, whose destiny, so to speak, was the Altar and the dinner table.

How many deers were in the Ark?

Seven pairs because the deer is a kosher animal, or only two (one pair) because the deer is never brought as a Korban? Since some say that the reason for the seven pairs was because of sacrifices, and others say it was to provide kosher food, what's the answer for deer? Similarly, how many chickens? Sacrifices? No. Food? Yes. So which was it?

Rabbi Zev Leff explains that B'nei No'ach are permitted to offer sacrifices from ANY kosher animal or bird; No'ach was not restricted to cow, goat, sheep, and two types of doves - the only acceptable Korbanot for Jews in the Mikdash. Hence, for either reason, it would seem that there were seven pairs of deer (each and every species?), giraffe, okapi, gnu (nothing much - what's gnu with you?), yak, chicken, sparrow, peafowl, etc.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 22 p'sukim - 7:17-8:14

The rains fell and the waters of the deep surged for 40 days and nights, but the Flood remained at its highest level for an additional 150 days. G-d "remembered" No'ach and all with him in the ark, and the waters began to recede. The ark settled on Mt. Ararat and 40 days later (Remember the first 40 days which represent death of all living things? This time the 40 represents the rebirth of those who survived the Mabul), No'ach opened the "window" of the ark and sent out a raven. Then he sent out a dove, and again, and finally after a full (365 day) year, the earth was ready to receive its new inhabitants.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 15 p'sukim - 8:15-9:7

[S> 8:15 (15)] G-d tells No'ach to leave the ark with his wife, his sons and their wives, and all the animals and birds. No'ach builds an altar and sacrifices upon it from all the kosher species. G-d's "reaction" to No'ach's offerings is that in spite of the basic evil potential of human nature, He will not destroy in the "wholesale fashion" of the Flood (but rather punish on a more restricted and specific basis). The laws of nature are altered to provide the world with a never-ceasing cycle of seasons and climactic conditions.

HERE'S A THOUGHT... We can see in the account of the Flood and its aftermath, a continuation of creation. It is as if stage 1 of creation was recorded in Breishit and here we have stage 2. In other words, the world as we know it came into existence during the 6 days of creation AND during the Flood which took place 10 generations later. Sort of like a rough draft and a further revision. And we, by the way, constantly affect the continuous further dynamic revisions.

G-d blessed and commanded No'ach and his family (and all of mankind) to "be fruitful and multiply".

(Let the point in the use of the two verbs not go by without notice: The ability to have children and raise a family is a mitzva and a wonderful blessing as well.)

No'ach receives permission to eat

meat (this was denied to the previous generations), but was warned not to eat from a live animal. Murder and the other Noahide Laws are referred to and/or inferred, at this point. Again, No'ach and family are told to be fruitful and repopulate the world.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya 10 p'sukim - 9:8-17

[S> 9:8 (10)] G-d makes a promise to mankind that He will never again destroy the world as He did with the Flood. The rainbow will serve as sign and reminder of this promise.

We acknowledge the significance of a rainbow by reciting a bracha when we see one "...He Who remembers the Covenant, is faithful to it, and keeps His word." Of the 10 items mentioned in Avot as having been created at the instant between the Six Days of Creation and the first Shabbat, all but the rainbow are supernatural. The rainbow, by virtue of its inclusion on this special list, can be seen as a bridge between the natural and the supernatural. Put differently, we should see G-d's handiwork in all the elements of nature, not just in obvious miracles. "The mouth of the Earth" was a one-time creation to dispose of Korach and his gang. But regular rocks and hills, crags and clefts are no less part of G-d's handiwork.

Some say that a rainbow is a sign that G-d is angry with the world and would want to destroy it - except He promised not to. On the other hand,

Yechezkel describes the Heavenly Throne as like a rainbow, and the radiance of the Kohen Gadol upon leaving the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur is also likened to a rainbow in the sky. And it's beautiful, too!

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 44 p'sukim - 9:18-10:32

Second longest Shishi in the Torah

[P> 9:18 (12)] Some time after leaving the ark, No'ach becomes a tiller of the soil and a grape grower. He produces wine and becomes drunk. One of his sons, Cham, behaves immorally with his father in his drunken state; Shem and Yefet behave admirably in the situation, protecting their father's honor and modesty. When No'ach realizes what has happened, he curses Cham and Cham's son Canaan, and blesses Shem and Yafet.

No'ach lives 350 years after the Flood, and dies at the age of 950.

The arithmetic of No'ach's years (600 before + 350 after = 950) seems not to take into account the year of the Flood. There is a good case to be made for not considering the duration of the Flood in calculations of the chronology of the world. We might look at the Flood as a period of "suspended animation" - laws of nature were not in effect; perhaps time as we know it cannot apply to that interval either. The animals in the ark did not function in their normal ways. No'ach had no sleep during the whole period (if we take statements made as literal).

[P> 10:1 (14)] The Torah next outlines the generations that followed No'ach including mention of Nimrod, the mighty rebel against G-d, and the nations that came from Sheim, Cham and Yefet.

These are the descendants of No'ach (numbers in brackets count the 70 nations of the world).

We'll call NO'ACH the zero generation. That makes SHEIM, CHAM, and YEFET, the first generation after No'ach.

The Torah starts the genealogy with Yefet. Generation 2 from Yefet are:

[1] **Gomer**, [2] **Magog**, [3] **Madai**, [4] **Yavan**, [5] **Yuval**, [6] **Meshech**, and [7] **Tiras** (who Rashi says is Paras, which partners him nicely with his brother Madai).

Third generation from Noach via Yefet's children:

From Gomer: [8] **Ashkenaz**, [9] **Rifat**, and [10] **Togarma**.

From Yavan: [11] **Elisha**, [12] **Tarshish**, [13] **Kitim**, and [14] **Dodanim**.

2nd generation from No'ach via Cham:

[15] **Kush**, [16] **Mitzrayim**, [17] **Put**, and [18] **K'na'an**.

3rd generation via Cham's children:

From Kush: [19] **S'va**, [20] **Chavila**, [21] **Savta**, [22] **Ra'ma**, [23] **Savt'cha**

Ra'ma had [24] **Sh'va** and [25] **D'dan**. (These two being 4th generation.)

Kush also fathered Nimrod, not numbered among the 70.

From Mitzrayim: [26] **Ludim**, [27] **Anamim**, [28] **L'havim**, [29] **Naftuchim**, [30] **Patrusim**, [31] **Kasluchim**, (from

either 30 or 31 came [32] **P'lishtim** - according to Rashi, Patrusim and Kasluchim swapped wives a lot and the P'lishtim came from both of them), [33] **Kaftorim** (who might also have come from Patrusim/Kasluchim or from Mitzrayim - disputed by commentaries).

No one mentioned from Put.

[S> 10:15 (6)] From K'na'an: [34] **Tzidon**, [35] **Cheit**, [36] the **Yevusi**, [37] the **Emori**, [38] the **Girgashi**, [39] the **Chivi**, [40] the **Arki**, [41] the **Sini**, [42] the **Arvadi**, [43] the **Tz'mari**, and [44] the **Chamati**.

So far, 25 from Yefet, 19 from Cham.

[S> 10:21 (12)] From Sheim: [45] **Eilam**, [46] **Ashur**, [47] **Arpachshad**, [48] **Lud**, [49] **Aram**.

From Aram: [50] **Utz**, [51] **Chul**, [52] **Geter**, [53] **Mash**.

From Arpachshad came [54] **Shelach** and from him came [55] **Eiver**. Eiver is 4th generation. He had [56] **Peleg** and [57] **Yaktan** (5th generation).

From Yaktan: [58] **Almodad**, [59] **Shelef**, [60] **Chatzarmavet**, [61] **Yerach**, [62] **Hadoram**, [63] **Uzal**, [64] **Dikla**, [65] **Oval**, [66] **Avima'el**, [67] **Sh'va** (same name as 24), [68] **Ofir**, [69] **Chavila** (same name as 20), and [70] **Yovav**.

That's 26 from Sheim. Total 70.

Numbering from The Living Torah - R' Aryeh Kaplan z"l

It should not be lost on us that the birth of the world population is describe as the 70 nations, and the birth of Israel begins with "70 souls".

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya

32 p'sukim - 11:1-32

Longest Sh'vi'i in the Torah

[P> 11:1 (9)] The Torah tells us of the attempt to build the "Tower of Babel", the symbol of rebellion against G-d. G-d thwarted the plans, confused the languages of mankind and scattered the people far and wide.

SDT: *Commentaries contrast the two sinful generations in this sedra. Dor HaMabul was destroyed because their sins included the destruction of society by total disregard of a person for his fellow. Dor HaPlaga sinned against G-d alone, not against each other. Such a society (albeit warped) can survive; G-d can permit it to continue under these circumstances.*

[P> 11:10 (2)] The sedra returns to the lineage of No'ach, this time tracing only through Sheim. We find for each generation, the name of the "main" person, his age when his "main, named" son was born, how many years he lived after his "main" son was born, and the fact that other sons and daughters were born.

Note that the total length of life for these second "10 generations" is not given, as it was in the first set of 10 generations. For example, Yered (back in B'reishit) was 162 years old when Chanoch was born. Yered lived for 800 more years after Chanoch was born. Yered's total number of years was 962 - adding for us. Here, in No'ach, we get the two numbers and have to add them up on our own.

go out and see - what?

Sheim was 100 when he had Arpachshad (two years after the Flood). He lived a further 500 years (600).

[P> 11:12 (2)] Arpachshad had Shelach at 35. Lived 403 more years (438).

[P> 11:14 (2)] Shelach was 30 when he had Eiver. Then another 403 years (same as his father). (Total: 433).

[P> 11:16 (2)] Eiver was 34 when Peleg was born. He lived another 430 years (464).

[P> 11:18 (2)] Peleg was 30 when R'u was born. He lived another 209 (total, 239).

[P> 11:20 (2)] R'u was 32 when S'rug was born. Plus another 207 years (239).

[P> 11:22 (2)] S'rug was 30 when he had Nachor. He lived another 200 years (230).

[P> 11:24 (2)] Nachor was 29 when Terach was born. He lived 119 more years (148).

[P> 11:26 (7)] Terach was 70 (there's that number again, and also notice how much older Terach was when he had children, compared with all previous generations back to Arpachshad.) Terach had three sons, Avram, Nachor, and Haran. Haran had Lot. Haran died. Avram married Sarai and Nachor married his niece Milka, Haran's daughter.

The Torah makes a point of telling us that Sarai was barren.

This time, read it the way it is

Terach takes his son Avram, his grandson Lot, his daughter-in-law Sarai, they leave Ur Kasdim and head out for the land of K'naan. They make it as far as Charan and settle there. Terach dies in Charan at 205 years of age (the only one since No'ach with a recorded age at death).

The events the Torah mentions at the end of Parshat No'ach did not happen in the sequence recorded. Commentaries explain why.

The sedra thus ends with the stage set for the next major phase of world development - the return to belief in one G-d and the "birth of Judaism".

Haftara - 22 p'sukim Yeshayahu - 54:1-55:5

Yeshayahu draws a comparison between the covenant that G-d made with all mankind via No'ach and the promises to the People of Israel concerning their future. Just as G-d promised never to flood the whole Earth again, so too does He promise not to rebuke and punish Israel (in the future). There are phrases in the haftara that make the connection to the sedra all the stronger.

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WISDOM & WIT

by Shmuel Himelstein

When R' Chaim Soloveichik was invited to become the Rav of Brisk, following his father, the Beis HaLevi, he made his acceptance conditional on R' Simcha Zelig Rieger being appointed the head of the Beit Din of Brisk. That condition was accepted, and R' Simcha Zelig was also hired.

R' Chaim explained why he specifically wanted R' Simcha Zelig to be hired. "He has a very special quality," said R' Chaim. "He is willing to admit when he makes a mistake. Even after he has issued a ruling, if he realizes that he was wrong, he will have no hesitation in declaring, 'I made a mistake.'"

Lead Tidbit cont. from front page

We, as finite human beings, are incapable of knowing and understanding G-d's actual essence. G-d could have used terms in the Torah which commentaries would have had a hard - or impossible - time trying to explain. We would then be convinced of the unknowability of G-d, but we would have a hard time relating to Him and learning from Him.

Therefore, G-d chose to use certain terminology in the Torah in describing Himself... and that helps us understand Him better and also to emulate Him.

It's as if HaShem says to us: I want you to think about Me as one Who "realized a mistake", Who sometimes regrets what He has done. Someone Who is sometimes happy and at other times, is sad. Not that I really am, you must believe, but that's how I want you to think of Me. Because then you will be able to empathize with Me, and to feel a real pain for the situations that I told you in the Torah that I was "pained". And maybe, when you have analogous situations, you will be able to act like I did. I showed you that I K'ILU (as if) I changed My mind about destroying everything, because No'ach found favor in My eyes. You should act like that too. Your anger (G-d is telling us) is real. Mine isn't; it is something else and you cannot understand My feelings. But when I tell you about Me using certain terms that you are familiar with, I am giving you the opportunity to react and respond the way you should. The way I would like you to.

Divrei Menachem

Parshat No'ach is, in part, the story of civilization's decline. And how, one asks, did a generation that produced Enoch - "who walked with G-d"- now foster a world described as Earth, "corrupt before G-d... for all flesh had corrupted its way upon Earth"?

The Chassidic masters offer interesting insights as to what led to a world so evil that petty theft and perverted sexual relationships became the accepted norm. For now, only "before G-d" was morality turned asunder.

First - like so many of our oppressors - the people justified their deviant behavior as being, "for the sake of Heaven" ("before G-d"). Then, becoming more lax in their relationship with G-d (Bein Adam LaMakom), the loose habits transferred themselves to social behaviors (Bein Adam L'chavero), until, ultimately, only abnormal "earthly" behaviors were extant.

The Koznitcher Rebbe explains: The three essentially human, destructive elements had now surfaced in society, namely, "Jealousy" (Kayin's murder of Hevel), "Lust" (the generation of the Flood), and "Pride" (the Tower of Bavel). These self-serving behaviors were the epitome of "Chamas", the derogatory term that described the people then - and, unfortunately, still describe elements of our current reality.

GF/GS namesakes

CHIZUK AND IDUD

(for Olim & not-yet-Olim)

The first two parshiyot in the Torah describe a movement from cosmic chaos ("The earth was without form and empty") to spiritual vacuity, ("The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.") It was but a brief moment at the conclusion of creation that God was able to behold all that He had made and declare it to be "very good."

What happened? What was the point of departure from the Garden of Eden?

What precipitated a steep moral downslide that culminated in the terrible Flood?

It was the sly serpent that held out a tempting promise, "You shall be like God." When the quest for power overcame Man, he was immediately alienated from God. Humble submission to God's will was replaced with hiding from God amongst the trees of the Garden. In so doing, Man sealed his own fate and was banished from the presence of God.

The conclusion one may draw from the opening chapters of B'reishit, is that when man distances himself from God, his world is turned into chaos and confusion. Violence, crime and moral turpitude reign supreme, and in the end, man drowns in the floodwaters of destructive forces.

If, on the other hand, man draws nearer to God, expressing love and devotion, dedication and sacrifice, he will slowly, but surely, come back to his Garden of Eden. By facing westward in the direction of the Shechina, man returns from East of Eden.

Here, in Eretz Yisrael, the journey to Gan Eden is facilitated by the holiness of the Land and the proximity to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. It is here that we can enjoy greater access to the divine and experience the joy of being in the presence of the Shechina.

Reuven Grodner, Kfar Adumim

FROM THE VIRTUAL DESK OF THE OU VERBE REBBE

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and the Israel Center.

Q *I daven with a minyan on a train car in Israel that has become set aside for that purpose. Someone brings a sefer Torah (=ST) to read from on Mondays and Thursdays. I have heard that one may not move a ST from its set place to read from. Is what we are doing permitted?*

A The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 135:14) rules (based on a Yerushalmi in Yoma; the Zohar is apparently very strict on the subject) that people should not take a ST to a prison to read for the inmates who cannot make it to shul. The Mishna Berura (135:47) explains that it is a zilzul (degradation) of the Torah to be taken to people who need it, as people are supposed to congregate around it in its place. Some (see Bi'ur Halacha, ad loc.) say that the zilzul applies only when the people in need can make it to the ST (as opposed to inmates). However, not only is the Shulchan Aruch accepted, but in your case, it is unlikely that people have a need to layn specifically on the train car in a compellingly pressing manner. Thus, we have to look for room for leniency.

The Yerushalmi says that it was permitted to bring a ST to the Kohen Gadol because of his stature, which the Rama (OC 135:14) extends to other "important people". The Nishmat

Avraham (I, pg. 76) cites Rav S.Z. Orbach as saying that a "community" of ten probably has the stature of an important person. The Bi'ur Halacha also says that if there are ten inmates, then their obligation to hear Torah reading makes it proper to bring the ST. However, both are talking about cases where without bringing the ST, the ten have no way of hearing Kri'at HaTorah, which is not likely the case here.

Some discuss the idea of bringing an Aron Kodesh, so that the Torah is respected and has some permanence in its temporary location. This idea is rooted in a teshuva of the Maharam Padova (58) but this seems to apply only along with the other factor mentioned there, that the ST will stay in that location for at least a day or two (Rama, ibid., with the Mishna Berura ad loc.:49). (The Kaf Hachayim, OC135:83 says that the presence of the Aron is enough according to the lenient opinion). We understand that the ST in question comes in and out with a passenger on his daily commute (see also Aruch Hashulchan, OC 135:32).

A more promising leniency for this case takes into consideration the context of a ST's usage. The issue of zilzul pertains more fully if a ST that is based in a shul to be used there for public reading, is moved to help an individual. However,

there is no problem with writing a ST specifically for the owner to take along with him to learn from in various locations. (This is the way the 613th mitzva of the Torah was apparently intended, as the king is described as doing). The Gemara (Yoma 70a) tells that after the service in the Beit HaMikdash on Yom Kippur, many individuals would bring their own Sifrei Torah to show how nice they were. Some poskim (see Torah Lishma 58; Har Tzvi OC 71 suggests it;) deduce from here that a personal ST does not have the discussed restriction. Logically (and the matter has backing in the language of some sources), the issue is less the ownership per se, and more a matter of what the ST is slated for. A privately owned ST that has been used for reading in one place might be problematic, whereas one that was made in order to be used in a roving manner (Kaf HaChayim ibid. 78) and perhaps even a public one that has not been used in a long time, might be permitted to be designated for reading in different places.

It is likely that some of the classical poskim who do not discuss this relatively new distinction do not agree with it. However, leniency on this rabbinic matter is certainly legitimate, and we have seen the teshuva of Rav David Spector of Beit Shemesh (perhaps the ST owner's rav) who has permitted it. Therefore, one should have no qualms on these grounds about joining this group. (Regarding the advantages and disadvantages of davening in this unique setting a separate discussion is required.)

V'tein Tal u'Matar Livracha

From Motza'ei Shabbat, the eve of the 7th of Marcheshvan, October 24th, until Pesach, we (in Eretz Yisrael) ask for rain in the **BAREICH ALEINU** bracha of every weekday Amida, with the words **V'tein Tal U'matar Livracha** [hereafter, **T&M**].

A weekday Amida without **T&M** (from 7 Cheshvan until 14 Nissan) is invalid and must be repeated. This means that if you finish an Amida and realize that you forgot **T&M**, you must say the Amida again.

This means that if any time after you finish an Amida - even hours later - you realize that you omitted **T&M** (not unsure, positive that it was omitted), then the Amida is invalid and must be repeated. If you are still in the time-frame of that davening, then you can say the Amida. If it is during the next davening timeslot that you remember your omission, then you wait until the next davening and say the Amida twice - the second one being TASHLUMIN (make-up) for the one you invalidated.

If you catch your omission when you are still in the Amida, the following rules apply:

If one is still in the **BAREICH ALEINU** bracha (not having yet said G-d's name at the end of the bracha), then back up and say **V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA**, and continue from there.

If you already said G-d's name of **M'VAREICH HASHANIM**, then continue (without going back) and when you get to the **SH'MA KOLEINU** bracha, say **T&M** as follows:

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ, חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ, וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרִצּוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ, כִּי אֵיל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אֲתָהּ, וּמְלַפְנֵיךָ, מְלַכְנוּ, רִיקָם אֵל תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ. וְתוֹן טַל וּמָטָר לְבִרְכָּהּ, כִּי אֲתָהּ שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּהּ.

Because **Sh'ma Koleinu** is an appropriate b'racha for additional requests, saying **T&M** here is preferable to repeating (and thereby nullifying) one or more b'rachot, which is what would happen if we had to go back to **BAREICH ALEINU**.

If you pass the point of insertion in **Sh'ma Koleinu**, but haven't said G-d's name in the end of the bracha, then say **T&M** and continue with **KI ATA SHOMEI'A...**

If you finish **Sh'ma Koleinu** but haven't said the word R'TZEL yet, you can say **V'tein Tal U'matar Livracha** after **SHOMEI'A T'FILEA** and before R'TZEL. Since you have not yet begun R'TZEL, it is still considered being in the "brachot of request" section of the Amida, and **T&M** fits.

Once you say the word R'TZEL (and you haven't asked for **T&M** yet), you must go back to **BAREICH ALEINU** (not just SH'MA KOLEINU) and say the Amida straight from there. Although this involves repeating brachot you have already said, this is what must be done.

This rule applies from R'TZEL until you finish the Amida. That point is either when you finish צוּרֵי ה' or when you begin taking your first step back. If it is only then that you realize that you have not said **T&M**, then you must say the entire Amida from the beginning.

If one is unsure whether he said **T&M** or not, the halacha goes by probability based on habit. If **T&M** has not been said 90 times, we assume a habit has not yet formed and consider **T&M** not to have been said. After 90 times, we may assume it was said (unless you are certain it was omitted). Furthermore, one must deal with a doubt only if it enters his mind immediately, not "sometime later".

A visitor from CHU"l to here - or vice versa... complicated and not going to be covered here (yet).

More than T&M

On the eve of the 7th of Marcheshvan - this year, Motza'ei Shabbat Parshat No'ach, October 24th - we (in Israel) begin asking G-d for blessed rain with the words **V'TEIN TAL UMATAR LIVRACHA**. That is a net addition of two words from the "summertime" version of the bracha in the Amida. That is, for Ashkenazim. Look at the texts of the bracha for S'faradim.

"Summertime":

בְּרַכְנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂי יְדֵינוּ. וּבְרַךְ שְׁנַתְנוּ בְּטַלְלֵי רִצּוֹן בְּרַכָּה וּנְדָבָה. וְתַהֲי אַחֲרֵיתָהּ חַיִּים וְשָׂבַע וְשְׁלֹם כְּשָׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת לְבִרְכָּה. כִּי אֵל טוֹב וּמְטִיב אֲתָהּ וּמְבַרְךְ הַשָּׁנִים: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', מְבַרְךְ הַשָּׁנִים:

"Wintertime":

בְּרַךְ עָלֵינוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת. וְאֵת כָּל מִיְּנֵי תְבוּאָתָהּ לְטוֹבָה. וְתוֹן טַל וּמָטָר לְבִרְכָּה עַל כָּל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה. וְרוּחַ פְּנֵי תֵבֵל וְשָׂבַע אֶת הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ מְטוּבָךָ. וּמֵלֵא יְדֵינוּ מְבַרְכוֹתֶיךָ וּמַעֲשֵׂר מַתְּנוֹת יְדֶיךָ. שְׁמְרָה וְהַצִּילָה שָׁנָה זוֹ מִכָּל דָּבָר רָע. וּמִכָּל מִיְּנֵי מַשְׁחִית וּמִכָּל מִיְּנֵי פּוֹרְעָנוֹת. וְעֲשֵׂה לָהּ תְּקוּנָה טוֹבָה וְאַחֲרֵית שְׁלֹם. חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֶיךָ וְעַל כָּל תְּבוּאָתָהּ וּפִירוֹתֶיהָ. וּבְרַכָּה בְּגַשְׁמֵי רִצּוֹן בְּרַכָּה וּנְדָבָה. וְתַהֲי אַחֲרֵיתָהּ חַיִּים וְשָׂבַע וְשְׁלֹם. כְּשָׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת לְבִרְכָּה. כִּי אֵל טוֹב וּמְטִיב אֲתָהּ וּמְבַרְךְ הַשָּׁנִים: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', מְבַרְךְ הַשָּׁנִים:

Quite a difference! 32 words in the summer version of the bracha and 85 words in the winter version.

The countries where Ashkenazim lived usually had rain all year round. S'fardim lived in areas with specific rainy seasons.

Rabbi Weinreb's Weekly Column:
for **Parshat NO'ACH**
"Easy Spirituality"

The French poet Baudelaire once remarked that the devil's greatest success is his ability to convince us that he does not exist.

Whereas Judaism does not believe in the devil quite as Baudelaire does, it does believe that there is a "devilish" force called the YEITZER HARA within each of us, and that that force works in very subtle ways. At the same time, with ambivalence, we definitely do tend to believe that this YEITZER does not exist.

Jewish writings through the ages have debated the nature of this force. All these writings ultimately trace back to a verse in this week's Torah portion: "The devising of man's mind are evil from his youth" (B'reishit 8:21).

And to a similar verse in last week's Torah portion: "G-d saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and how every plan devised by his mind was nothing but evil all the time" (ibid. 6:5)

Thus, there most assuredly is an inclination for evil in each of us. He or she who wishes to live the life of a good person is well advised to guard against this natural inclination. This yeitzer-force rarely commands us directly to do what is wrong. Instead it tries to craftily delude us into thinking that what is wrong and evil is right and good.

A favorite strategy for the YEITZER is to persuade us that it seeks the same ends and objectives as G-d does, but that alternate ways of achieving those ends are also legitimate. Take spirituality, for example. How does one achieve a sense of spirituality?

For Judaism, spirituality and the emotions which accompany it can only be achieved through hard work: prayer, study, sacrifice, and above all, charity and compassion. No easy "grace"! The YEITZER, while not denying the value of spirituality, tempts us with short cuts, and cheap and ersatz methods to achieve the same results as the more arduous methods prescribed by the Torah.

A wonderful illustration of this dynamic is found in this week's Torah portion, just after the story of the great Flood. No'ach and his family are beginning anew, rebuilding their lives, rebuilding the world. What is the first thing No'ach does? He plants a vineyard. His grapes grow and ripen, he makes wine and drinks it, and gets drunk.

What prompted No'ach to make wine his first priority? Let me suggest the following imaginary scenario to answer that question. No'ach walked with G-d. He enjoyed the sense of spirituality for which many of us yearn. He experienced a spiritual "high". In the past, he achieved that level of spirituality by virtue of hard work: obedience, construction of the Ark, gathering the animals of the

What No'ach found
can be found where?

world, tending to them, offering sacrifices. Along came No'ach's yeitzer-force, and said "No'ach! There must be an easier way! You can achieve the same spiritual high, the same sense of wholeness and holiness without all that work. All it will take is a few drinks of one of G-d's own juices. Plant a vineyard, make some wine and drink it and you will feel all the good feelings you felt before, and then some."

For, you see, the YEITZER, or if you wish the devil, knows of the connection between addiction and spirituality.

How well I remember the 1960s, and the many gifted spiritual seekers who resorted to alcohol and more potent substances to generate moods of spirituality.

Judaism cautions us not to be seduced by facile techniques, even in the service of achieving higher and holier states of conscientiousness. That is why the Torah shifts next week into the story of Avraham, whose spirituality was based on service, on the courageous search for social justice, and on compassionate concern for others in need. In short, Avraham was dedicated to the very arduous methods that No'ach sought to circumvent by drink.

Join us next week as we examine the impressive personality of Abraham and learn from him how to achieve a sober sense of spirituality.

Parsha Points to Ponder
NO'ACH

1) Why does G-D command No'ach to go and gather the kosher animals but not the non-kosher animals or the kosher and non-kosher birds which will come to him on their own (7:2-3)?

2) Why does the Torah only mention the kosher birds coming SEVEN BY SEVEN but not the non-kosher birds coming two by two (7:3)?

3) Why does the Torah give us such a detailed explanation of precisely how the waters from the flood came? Would anything have been lacking had it just reported that it rained without relating that the waters rained down from above and from the springs below (7:11)?

Parsha Points to Ponder

is prepared by

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Answers are somewhere else in this issue Look for them, but only after a good pondering

No'ach can say that his sons are,
"from my family" in more ways
than one. Count them.

Spiritual and Ethical Issues in the Bamidbar Stories

by **Dr. Meir Tamari: Korach & Co. {9}**

As all the stories in the Tanach, that of Korach and his congregation too, concludes with a note that puts the whole story in its true religious and spiritual perspective. The revolt centered around the role of Aharon, the Kohanim and the Leviyim in religion, in worship and in spirituality, and its story ends with G-d's covenant with them and details their responsibilities regarding the Avoda of the Mishkan. Always they had to remember that G-d said, "I give you your priesthood as a matana, a free-willed gift" (Bamidbar 18:7).

In the aftermath of Korach, the people feared that everyone who came close to the Mishkan and its service would die; repeatedly the Torah cautioned, 'that no stranger shall draw near nor perform any of its functions'. Yet here, it was made quite clear that proximity was not the issue rather the responsibility for any carelessness or forgetfulness in the service or treatment of the vessels; this responsibility was laid completely on the Kohanim and Leviyim; "You and your father's house have to bear the iniquity against the Mishkan and the priesthood" (Bamidbar 18:1). Kohanim and Leviyim thereby became more a spiritual protection than the threat that Korach claimed.

No real wrong or sin is envisaged; rather carelessness such as forgetting the person who had brought the korban or not following the exact procedure and thereby showing disrespect for the Sanctuary and its Avoda. "If one cast

the blood of the korban as required yet does not know in whose name it was done, or offered the cheilev as required but did not know in whose name, then the kohanim are guilty of sin" (Sifri). So we see that the fate of the house of Eli was only sealed because his sons shamed the offerings. "If the man bringing the korban would say to the young kohanim, 'let the cheilev be made to smoke [as the din required] and then take as much as your heart desires, but the priest's servant said, 'give it to me now or I will take it by force'. And the sin of the young men was very great because they dealt contemptuously with the offering of the Lord" (Shmuel Alef 2).

"These examples of iniquities against the Sanctuary show that the Mikdash is not to be regarded as a building containing certain objects but as an institution for the spreading of Holiness, obtained principally through procedures of the offerings that express its demands for the way our lives are to be lived. So, avon hamikdash, iniquity against the Mikdash, is the misuse by the priesthood of their functions for their own selfish ends. Not only is there sin if a kohen were to presume to take something for himself which he is not entitled to, but even if he only takes something prematurely that which is to

Modesty is often a rationalization for inaction.

From "A Candle by Day" by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

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come to him later on. The whole meaning of the Mikdash and his Avoda must have escaped his attention; he must have forgotten that what he gets from the offerings of the people of Israel, are from G-d's table" (S. R. Hirsch).

"G-d said to Aharon, 'You shall have no inheritance in the Land nor shall you have a portion amongst them; I am your portion and your inheritance in the midst of Israel'" (Bamidbar 18:20). This portion and inheritance, is expressed in the apportioning of the Levitical cities out of the territories of Klal Yisrael; 3 cities in Eretz Yisrael and a parallel 3 across the Jordan plus an additional 42 throughout the Land. Through these cities the whole nation would be taught by this tribe that was dedicated to the service of G-d, how to grow spiritually and become elevated to a Holy Nation.

Together with the cities allocated to the Leviyim, came the ground surrounding them (Bamidbar 35:1-5): 2000 amot on each of side according to Rashi or according to Rambam, 3000. Irrespective of these sizes, is the teaching that there was to be a green belt around the city solely for beautification that could never be developed nor built on; surrounding this zone was an another area for agriculture and industry. Apart from the aesthetic and ecological implications, the fact that the townspeople could not decide to expand the city because of the green belt, meant that development and growth had to come through the establishment of new cities. These restrictions meant that the society was saved the congestion, alienation, pollution and social turmoil that accompany urbanization. Economic development of society is restricted so as too prevent abuse and

waste just that of the individual is curbed to prevent immorality and injustice.

"The cities you shall appoint as refuge, so that the manslayer who kills through error, may flee there' (Bamidbar 35:6). The cities of refuge had to constitute the small world of those exiled there for manslaughter. They had to provide for all the needs, even the special spiritual and intellectual requirements of the particular individual. Furthermore, the general population of the city had to represent all the national classes of Israel - Kohanim, Leviyim and Israelim" (S. R. Hirsch). Perhaps we may see a parallel between what constituted an iniquity of the Kohanim against the Kodshim and the conditions under which these cities gave refuge. The iniquity lay in carelessness and neglect of the prescribed ritual; the cities only gave sanctuary where a killing was unpremeditated and unintentional, where the possibility of accident should have occurred to the person and in which careful precautions may have prevented any death.

"One who kills that created like G-d's Image, even accidentally, justifiably has no place in G-d's world. However, G-d in His Infinite Mercy apportioned the cities of refuge as a place for him" (Chiddushei Harim of Gur) "Since the avoda of the Leviyim is through song, through hymns and ecstasy, their cities granted new life to one who killed accidentally and therefore would have lost his own " (Shem MiShmuel).

Why Wine Plays a Central Role in Judaism

Guest article by **Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher** Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

Why is wine so essential to Judaism? To find the answer we must look into the Talmud.

The Talmud discusses the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, wondering what type of fruit it was (B. B'rachot 40a; B. Sanhedrin 70a-b). Three opinions are presented.

According to one opinion, the forbidden fruit was wheat. This suggestion is innovative since wheat stalks are not normally considered trees. According to this line, children only begin to call their parents once they have tasted grain. The meaning of this cryptic statement may be that people only recognize their independence once they have experienced this material world. It is only after interaction with physicality that a person sees a unified world and has the autonomy to transgress against the will of the Almighty.

A further opinion suggests that the forbidden fruit was a fig, for it was a fig leaf that was later used to cover Adam and Eve's nudity (B'reishit 3:7). According to this approach, the very item that brought about the spiritual downfall of this first couple was cobbled together to cover up their embarrassing state.

At the root of this approach is the idea that the same object can be used to wreak destruction as well as to repair all that is wrong. It is in this vein that the prophet tells us that in the Messianic Era the sharp metal of the

deadly sword will be made into plows for preparing the land to provide sustenance to all (Yeshayahu 2:4).

According to the first opinion cited in the Talmud, the forbidden fruit was none other than a grape vine, since it is always wine that is the source of misery. To prove this contention, the Talmud cites the passage where No'ach partook of wine (B'reishit 9:2).

No'ach and his family came out of the ark to a new, idyllic world. All evil had been destroyed, and what remained was pure. No'ach quickly began life anew by working the cleansed land and planting a vineyard. The produce of this vineyard was made into wine, and when No'ach drank and became intoxicated, his behavior and that of his son, Ham, was inappropriate. Thus the new beginning - just like the Almighty's initial program - was sullied by wine.

While the Talmud doesn't quote this, another Biblical episode provides a similar lesson (B'reishit 19:30-36). After Lot and his daughters escaped the destruction of S'dom, they reached the safety of a cave. The two girls mistakenly believed that the entire world has been destroyed. In a desperate move, they conclude that they must have children by their father to ensure the continuation of humanity. Yet how could a father agree to such a depraved act? The solution suggested by the older daughter and implemented by the two

women is to get Lot so drunk on wine that he would be oblivious to any misdeeds committed. This decadent plan succeeded.

Thus, in an attempt to reverse this tragic trend, at every Shabbat and Festival we seek to repair the initial damage from the Garden of Eden. Wine should no longer be a tool that brings about grief, a means for impropriety. Wine should be used in the service of spiritual growth and sanctification.

The Almighty's creations are tools for bringing G-dliness into this physical world. Despite the woeful history of wine, we do not abstain from this hazardous beverage. We seek to sanctify it at moments of spiritual potential. Instead of relegating wine to the annals of vice, it is elevated to open each and every Jewish ritual service, proudly announcing that physical objects have neutral value. We choose how to employ G-d's creations and write their history; will they be recorded as tools of corruption and sin or as objects of holiness that repair this broken world?

Street on which the Nigerian Institute of Management is located

DAGESH

This will not be a thorough presentation; just a point or two about a widely neglected dot. When there is a DAGESH (KAL or CHAZAK) in a BET, for example, we know to sound the letter like a B, in contrast to the V sound of a DAGESH-less BET. But what about a MEM with and without a DAGESH CHAZAK? Most people do not sound a letter differently, with or without a DAGESH CHAZAK. But there is supposed to be a difference. And sometimes, the two different ways of saying the letter change the meaning of the word it is in.

For example, in Parshat No'ach, in the measurements of the TEIVA, we find the word for cubit (Right! What's a cubit?) - AMA. We should transliterate the word AMMA, since the MEM has a DAGESH. Without a DAGESH, the word means "maid", AMA. Therefore, there is an additional incentive to stress the MEM with the DAGESH, so the meaning of the word won't change.

However, there might be a distinction between the Ashkenazic pronunciation and the Israeli (S'fardic) pronunciation. In Israeli Hebrew, the words for maid and cubit are AMA and AMMA, with only the stressed MEM making the difference between the two words. In Ashkenazis, maid is AwMAw and cubit is AMaw. Since in this pronunciation, there is a difference between a KAMATZ GADOL and a PATACH, then neglecting to stress the MEM with the DAGESH will still leave the two words distinguishable. Not so in Israeli pronunciation.

The Inclination of Man's Heart is Evil

In our time, brain researchers have uncovered the sources of many of man's darkest thoughts, such as pride, envy, greed, anger, lust, and gluttony.

This new research can explain where our behaviors come from and help us understand why we may continue to engage in behaviors that we know are wrong. Techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), give neuroscientists the ability to study the biology behind bad intentions. Scientists have not found any one sin center in the brain but have singled out different areas of the brain that are responsible for different types of sins. That means no one can create any miracle drug to prevent us from sinning. Could it get us off the hook, and allow us to say that our brain's circuitry makes us transgress and it is out of our control?

This seems to be what verses in the Torah say - At the end of last week's portion HASHEM states: "G-d saw that man's wickedness on earth was increasing. Every impulse of his innermost thought was only evil, all day long" (6:5). G-d regretted having created man because of his sinful nature (6:6). And in this week's portion after the Flood, G-d says: "Never again will I curse the soil because of man, for

the inclination of man's heart is evil from his youth..." (8:21).

So if we are so evil, how can we be expected not to sin? And how do we actually stop ourselves from sinning?

Researchers such as Mario Beauregard of the University of Montreal would say there are specific areas in the brain that control this. For example in his research on lust (which takes over the whole brain), he found that to control our thoughts we call upon the right superior frontal gyrus and right anterior cingulate gyrus. He and others propose that these brain areas form a conscious self-regulatory system. We, as opposed to animals, are able to control our own neural processing. This network sets us apart from all other creatures. This makes us human.

We can't rely solely on human nature because 'man's heart is evil'. Man could not do it on his own. We need laws - whether it was the laws HASHEM gave to No'ach after the Flood or all our laws of Torah that are meant to keep us in line. Halacha enables us to choose what is good to do and not necessarily what we would naturally want to do. It enables us to overcome our 'evil heart'. Where and how Halacha works on our brain is a question for modern day neuroscientists to research further.

This cake is sinful because of all its calories and cholesterol. For those on a diet, use low calorie substitutes or follow your **YETZER HATOV**.

DAIRY 4-LAYER CHOCOLATE SIN CAKE

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 8 Tbsp (125g) butter, melted
- 250g cream cheese
- 1 cup sugar or powdered sugar
- 1 small whipping cream
- 2 sm. pkg. chocolate pudding (or 1 chocolate and 1 vanilla)
- milk to make pudding

First Layer: Mix flour, pecans and butter and pack in bottom of baking dish. Bake at 350°F for 15 minutes. Let cool.

Second Layer: Beat cream cheese, sugar and the whipping cream and spread on cooled first layer.

Third Layer: Mix the pudding with milk as per directions on package. When thick spread on second layer.

Fourth Layer: Spread a small carton of Cool Whip on third layer. Sprinkle with nuts and/or chocolate chips.

Refrigerate and serve in squares.

Parsha Points to Ponder Suggested answers

1) The Ramban explains that G-D wanted Noach to put forth effort for the animals which would be brought as a sacrifice. Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky teaches that this should have applied to the kosher birds as well but since they have no external signs of kashrut, there would have been no way for No'ach to determine which birds were kosher and which were not. Thus, he was not commanded to gather any birds.

2) The Meshech Chochma answers that the Torah does not mention the kosher ones since there are relatively few non-kosher birds and so many more kosher ones. It does mention the non-kosher animals since they are more numerous than the kosher ones.

3) The Malbim teaches that without that information people could have said that this was simply a natural disaster - either a tsunami from below or torrential rains from above. However, suggesting that these two things happened naturally at the same time would be ridiculous. Thus, these words come to remove the possibility of someone saying it was simply natural and not a punishment from G-D.

He started with the end and ended with call

MACHON PUAH Preventing Mistakes

Last week we discussed a case that made worldwide headlines last month. An American non-Jewish couple, John and Carolyn Savage had learned that the baby Carolyn was carrying was not her genetic baby. A human error in the lab led to her being impregnated with another couple's embryo.

Although it is impossible to totally remove human error from IVF or any fertility treatment, there are procedures and systems that can reduce the risk to levels near zero. In fact, these systems have been in place for over a decade and have saved dozens of families from dilemmas such as that of the Savages.

In Jerusalem in the early 1990s, religious Jewish couples seeking to undergo the relatively new process of IVF were turning to their Rabbis for advice on the permissibility of these procedures in halacha. Issues such as allowing surrogacy and identifying parentage in such cases became major concerns without precedent upon which to base their rulings.

At the time, precisely because of concern over potential errors similar to the one that happened to the Savages, most Rabbinic authorities forbade any fertility treatment that required processing of genetic materials outside the body. Without a process to verify the veracity of the labs, the risk of error was deemed excessive. As we can see, that reasoning is clearly justified by the fact that in 2009, with all of our

modern technologies, mistakes are still being made.

Additionally, halacha requires clear verification of lineage to determine things such as inheritance or issues regarding yibum, etc. The advent of IVF and other fertility technologies required some form of certification of the identity of each child born as a result of these treatments. According to halacha, anyone who has a potential conflict of interest (such as the embryologist) in these cases is ineligible to provide such certification. As such, there was a need for some system that would, in a manner consistent with halacha, provide independent certification.

Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, the Chief Rabbi of Israel at the time, assigned Rabbi Menachem Burstein, one of his students, to study the technology behind IVF and fertility treatments and reconcile any issues regarding halacha. In 1991, Rabbi Burstein founded the PUAH Institute in Jerusalem, named after one of the Jewish midwives in galut Mitzrayim. PUAH Institute was to serve as a center for study of fertility and halacha as well as the counseling of couples with fertility issues.

Seeking to provide a means for religiously acceptable certification, Rabbi Burstein devised a method of independent supervision of all fertility processes, expanding upon the existing practices being used in the certification of Kosher food. The process requires constant and direct monitoring of the processing of the genetic materials by an independent third party, from the time the materials are taken from the body until the time

they are reintroduced to the womb.

The introduction of an independent observer serves a vital purpose. Although embryologists are clearly professional and careful in their approach, when we consider the fact that they each perform hundreds and thousands of these procedures each year, human error is unavoidable. The independent observer provides an additional pair of eyes whose sole focus is maintaining the integrity of the process and as a result, the avoidance of human error. The supervisor is not concerned with the processing of the materials, monitoring their growth or any other factor involved with the laboratory work.

PUAH Institute has documented dozens of cases in which their independent supervisor avoided a lab error. Put another way, PUAH Institute has been instrumental in preventing dozens of families from facing a crisis such as the one the Savage family has had to endure. Regardless of the checks and balances that currently exist, there is a clear need for PUAH style certification.

Although PUAH's efforts focus primarily on the Jewish market worldwide (with 100+ supervisors based out of Jerusalem, New York, Los Angeles and Paris), our methods and system are based on a practical approach to the verification of the identity of all genetic materials. PUAH methods, designed to provide active certification for religious purposes should be the model which is adapted for more universal use.

7th gen worked with 10th & 2nd

This case has been a wake up call for the fertility community. Without a universal standard for verification, one that involves independent monitoring of some form at each step, human error will still creep into the equation. Any parent whose child was born in a modern hospital within the last 15 years will vouch for the fact that there are multiple layers of checking and double checking that each couple leaves with their own baby. Fertility professionals need to hold themselves to the same standard.

With an efficient network in place, the additional labor costs of having a human being operating the monitoring system should only be dollars per procedure. The peace of mind provided to the couples involved is priceless.

Next week - If they had been Jewish, what is the Halachic view?

TTTRIDDLES

Prizes for best solution sets (when awarded) are furnished by Noam Productions and/or Big Deal.

Last issue's (B'reishit) TTriddles:

[1] When did they do this in 1977 - Indians (13) & Redsox (6)?

When Parshat B'reishit comes around, an old joke or riddle comes to mind and won't go away until it is formed into a TTriddle. In a game in 1977, the Indians and Redsox combined to set a record in MLB history by scoring the most runs in a single inning. Three other times, a single team has scored 18 runs its half of an inning, setting that record. But taking both halves of an inning, the top honor goes to this Cleveland-Boston collaboration. This feat, then, was accomplished IN THE BIG INNING (which is the pun - pow (play on words) of IN THE BEGINNING, as in B'REISHIT.

[2] The anagram kings are m'chutanim

This is a particularly good TTriddle - if we do say so ourselves. And the M brothers (DM/J'lem and MM/Bklyn both got the solution. The term anagram king was meant to be misleading, as if it referred to people particularly skilled and anagrams. Rather, it means to take the word for king - MELECH, and rearrange its letters to get an anagram of king, namely LEMECH. The Torah mentions two LEMECHs, both in Parshat B'reishit. The first mentioned LEMECH is a descendant of KAYIN. Specifically, KAYIN's son was CHANOCH. To CHANOCH was born (the Torah's unusual language) IRAD, and IRAD fathered M'CHUYA'EIL. M'CHIYA'EIL (his variant name) was the father of M'TUSHA'EIL and M'TUSHA'EIL "begot" LEMECH. LEMECH took two wives - ADA and TZILA. His children included YAVAL, YUVAL (from ADA), TUVAL-KAYIN and his sister NAAMA (from TZILA). Point we need: LEMECH is the father of NAAMA. The other LEMECH is the great (x6)-grandson of Adam HaRishon, son of M'TU-SHELACH. Point here is that he is the father of

NO'ACH. According to our tradition, NO'ACH's wife was NAAMA, making the two LEMECHs (the two anagram kings) M'CHUTANIM.

[3] Adam, Mahalaleil, Avraham, Yaakov

We decided not to give the solution to this one but rather to challenge TTridders (especially the TTriddler types) to solve this. It now is not one of several TTriddles; it is a stand-alone challenge. The first person to submit a correct solution will win CDs (plural) from Noam Productions.

[4] Initial preview of Name switch

The Name switch referred to here is ELOKIM, which the Torah calls G-d from B'REISHIT BARA, to the YUD, HEI, VAV and HEI name, which is first introduced in B'reishit 2:4, the 35th pasuk in the Torah. Over the first 34 p'sukim, the name ELOKIM occurs 35 times. At first, HASHEM is part of the two-word name, HASHEM ELOKIM. There are 20 of those before we find a HASHEM by itself, in 4:1. The "score" in Parshat B'reishit is 65 ELOKIMs and 42 HASHEM, with the 20 pairs, as mentioned above. That means 45 ELOKIMs by themselves and 22 HASHEM. Over the whole Torah, HASHEM is used far more times than ELOKIM. (Over 1800 HASHEM to just over 300 ELOKIMs, but not counting other forms of ELOKIM.) Okay, but what about the TTriddle? The INITIAL (read RASHEI TEIVOT) preview of the Name (uppercase N for HaShem's name), of the YUD... name is in the words we say in Kiddush on Friday night: Yom Hashishi Vaychulu Hashamayim. Some have the custom to pause briefly before and after this four word sequence to highlight G-d's name in Rashei Teivot.

[5] 7, 3, 3, 3 or 5, 7 - What?

The Troah reading of the days of Creation. One Simchat Torah, we read - in the morning for the Chatan B'reishit - the account of all 7 days. This year at Mincha of Simchat Torah, we read the first 3 days of Creation. Then on Monday morning, we also read the first 3 days. On Thursday, there are two practices. Some read the same 3 day portion; others add day 4 and 5 to finish with Yom Chamishi

(i.e. Thursday). And then on Shabbat B'reishit, we, of course, read about all 7 days again.

[6] MazalPic

Scorpio, the scorpion. AKRAV in Hebrew. Pictured are Herb Score, an oldtime pitcher for the Cleveland Indians, a fairly good pitcher. His fame, however, was due to his having been hit in the eye by a line drive. He recovered from his injuries and continued to play. We're just interested in his last name, SCORE. Next to him is the famous android robot from Star Wars, C3PO. Assuming his first name is C3, we're again only interested in his last name, PO - giving us SCORE-P-O.

[7] ParshaPix

Once again, we ran out of space in TT, having to cut several ads and the ParshaPix explanations. First, there were the "regular" elements which represent the Seven Days of Creation: Light switches for day one; ocean and cloud for the 2nd day; grass and trees for the 3rd day; Sun, Moon, and stars for 4th day; fish, octopus, eagle, ladybug for 5th day; hippo, beaver, cat, kangaroo, people for 6th day; and candle sticks for Shabbat. There was a (candy) cane for Cain (KAYIN) and Abraham Lincoln (that is Abe L.) for HEVEL. The flute is both a musical instrument and something made from metal, indicating a joint project of the half-brothers YUVAL and TUVAL-KAYIN, the former being the "father" of musical instruments and the latter being the pioneer of working with metals. The Hamantash is for "HAMAN from the Torah, where?" The answer is in G-d's challenge to Adam (in 3:11) - ...did you eat from the tree I commanded you not to eat from? HAMIN (spelled HEI-MEM-NUN, as is the name HAMAN) HA'EITZ... This is not just a play on words. One commentary explains it this way: One of Haman's negative characteristics was his inability to be satisfied with having so much, because he didn't have everything. He had wealth, power, honor, status, family... but he declared to his wife and loved ones: And all this is not worth anything to me, when I see Mordechai... To want even Mordechai to bow to him is one thing. Understandable. But to say

that nothing he has is worth anything because of Mordechai - this is truly a negative characteristic. This is what G-d was asking Adam. Are you Haman-like (so to speak) in that you could not be satisfied with having every other tree in the GAN to eat from; you needed to eat from this one tree that I commanded you not to eat from? The 29 is for the date of Erev Rosh Chodesh and of MACHAR CHODESH. The three arrows are from the haftara of Machar Chodesh.

Remember the special TTriddles challenge (aside from this week's crop of TTriddles):

Adam, Mahalaleil, Avraham, Yaakov