

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"o, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



תשפ"א Noach

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

גלייך 108

אמרות שמשון

In Whose Merit Were Noach's Three Children Rescued from The Flood

אלה תולדות נח נח איש צדיק תמים הנה בדרתיו את האלקים התהלך נח. ויולד נח שלשה בנים את שם את חם ואת יפת (ו ט-י):

These are the offspring of Noach, Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations; Noach walked with Hashem. Noach had begotten three sons...

There is much that needs to be understood in this Passuk. Firstly, the Midrash discusses its opening words, אלה - *These are*, and says as follows. בכל מקום שנאמר 'אלה' פסל את הראשונים, 'ואלה' מוסיף על הראשונים. כאן שנאמר *Wherever the Passuk introduces a group of items by stating 'these are', it intends to exclude the items mentioned in the previous passage; and whenever the Passuk states 'and these are', it intends to adjoin the following items to the ones mentioned in the previous passage* [i.e. because when the Passuk says '*and these are*', it implies a linkage with those mentioned above, by contrast, '*these are*' connotes exclusiveness]. Thus, here, where it is stated, '*These are the offspring of Noach*', it purports to exclude the ones mentioned in the previous passage, namely, the generation of the Flood. The תוואר asks

on this Midrash; why was there a need for the Torah to explicitly exclude the Generation of the Flood from Noach's righteousness when this is obvious, as we find that only Noach was rescued from the flood while the rest of the generation all succumbed in the flood?

Furthermore, the Torah begins the Passuk with the clear intention of enumerating Noach's offspring, but instead goes on to list his praises. Rashi explains this deviation as follows. - *Since the Passuk mentioned him, it told of his praise*. This explanation of Rashi is hard to understand, for we can ask on the mere mention of Noach's name as well; why was there a need to mention his name, and to enumerate his children, altogether - don't mention his or his

children's name and have no need to list his praises either?

Additionally, we can ask; because the three children of Noach were rescued from the flood as well, why does the Torah say in the last Passuk of the previous Parsha, ונח מצא חן בעיני ה' - *And Noach found grace in the eyes of Hashem*, and not '*Noach and his three children found grace in the eyes of Hashem*', as they too were found worthy of being rescued from the flood.



The Passuk in Parshas Bereishis (ה' ל"ב) says, ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה - *When Noach was five hundred years old, he begot Shem, Cham and Yafes*.

Rashi explains the seemingly unproportionate old age of Noach when begetting his children. כבש את מעינו ולא הוליד עד חמש מאות שנה, כדי שלא יהא יפת הגדול שבבניו ראוי לעונשין לפני המבול. - *Hashem caused Noach to be infertile, and he did not beget children until the age of five hundred, so that at the time of the flood, Yafes, the oldest of his sons, should not be of age to be subject, by the Heavenly court, to punishments for his sins.*



According to this notion, that Noach's children were all too young at the time of the flood to be subjected to heavenly judgment, we can understand all that we questioned above.

The reason why the Torah says, ונח מצא חן בעיני ה' - *And Noach found grace in the eyes of Hashem*, and not '*Noach and his three children found grace in the eyes of*

Hashem', is because although Noach's children were indeed rescued as well, it wasn't because they were righteous like their father, rather because they were too young to be subjected to heavenly punishment.

But according to this, the obvious could be asked; if so, why don't we find other young people of that generation being saved merely because they weren't of age to be subjected to punishment? Therefore, the Torah feels the need to explain and say that Shem, Cham and Yafes were the children of Noach, to imply that it was their young age in addition to the merit of their father that saved them from the flood, as opposed to the other young people of that generation, who although were also too young to be judged by the heavenly court, nevertheless

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they all perished in the flood as part of the punishment meted out to the general public. Therefore, the Torah indeed needed to tell us, אלה נח תולדות נח - *These are the offspring of Noach*, to imply that it was for this reason that those three were saved, and *once the Passuk mentioned his name, it told of his praise...*

At the same time, the Torah also wanted to explain why all the other youngsters were not rescued; and thus says 'אלה' - *these are*, to explicitly exclude the Generation of the Flood from Noach's righteousness, in order to imply that this was the very reason that their children were not rescued the same way that Noach's children were rescued.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות א

The Severity of One Who Separates Himself And Doesn't Share in The Pain of His Community

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים לְנֹחַ קֵץ כָּל בָּשָׂר בְּאֵל לִפְנֵי כִי מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מַשְׁחִיתִם אֶת הָאָרֶץ. עֲשֵׂה לְךָ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי גִפְרִית תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת הַתֵּבָה וְכִפְרָתָהּ אֲתָהּ מִבֵּיתָ וּמִחוּץ בַּכֹּפֶר (בראשית ו יג-יד):

Hashem said to Noach, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for earth is filled with robbery through them; and behold, I am about to destroy them from the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make the ark with compartments, and tar it inside and out with pitch".

The Midrash (ברד"ל ז) tells us what occurred during those one hundred and twenty years that Noach was following Hashem's command and was building the Ark. *During the entire one hundred and twenty years Noach planted cedar trees, and when they were fully grown, he cut them down to use their wood for the construction of the Ark. The people asked him, "Why are you doing this?" Noach replied to them, "Thus did Hashem say, that He is going to bring a Flood upon the whole world". They said to him, "If a flood comes, it shall come only on the house of Noach".*

We need to understand why the people of his generation felt that it was Noach who deserved to be eliminated by the Flood, so much so that they clearly told him, *"If a flood comes, it shall come only on the house of Noach".*



The Zohar (סו ע"ב) tells us the following. *After Hashem informed Noach that he and his children would be rescued, as the Passuk says, 'Behold, I am about to bring the Flood-waters... and I will blot out all existence that I have made from upon the face of the ground... but I will establish my covenant with you and you shall enter the ark...', he didn't pray on behalf of the rest of mankind, and therefore they were all destroyed.*



In view of this, we can understand why the people felt that it was Noach *himself* who deserved to be stricken by the Flood. For this phenomenon, of separating oneself from the distress of the community and not sharing in their pain or praying on their behalf, is reason enough to deserve to suffer and not merit the ultimate salvation that the community will ultimately witness.

This is something that Mordechai warned Esther about when she refused to advocate for her people, when he told her as follows (אסתר ד'): *"Do not imagine that you will be able to escape in the King's palace any more than the rest of the Jews. For if you persist in keeping silent at a time like this, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from some other place, while you and your father's house will perish".*

The Gemara in Taanis (יא ע"א) clearly cautions us from behaving in this manner, and says as follows. *The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: At a time when the Jewish People are steeped in distress and one of them separates himself from the community and does not share in their pain, the two ministering angels that accompany a person come and place their hands on his head and say, 'This person who has separated himself from the community, shall not witness the consolation of the community when they will be delivered from their affliction'. It was taught in another Braisa: At a time when the community is steeped in distress, a person should not say: I will go to my house and eat and drink, and peace be upon my soul... rather a person should suffer along with the community... and whoever suffers along with the community will merit and witness the consolation of the community.*

The Gemara in Makkos (נ"א ע"א) cautions us in this regard as well. The Mishnah there tells us that because an inadvertent killer must go into exile and may only go free upon the death of the Kohen Gadol, therefore the mothers of the Kohanim Gedolim would generously supply the exiles with food and clothing, so that they would not pray for the Kohen Gadol to die. The Gemara infers from this Mishnah that if the exiles would have indeed prayed for the death of the Kohen Gadol, the Kohen Gadol would in fact have died. The Gemara asks why the Kohen Gadol would die just because the exiles prayed for his death; aren't these prayers an undeserved curse which should not come upon the one at whom they are directed? The Gemara replies as follows. *The Kohanim Gedolim should have beseeched Hashem for mercy that inadvertent killings should not happen;* and because they did not do so, the exile is somewhat deserved.

We can now understand why the people of his generation felt that it was Noach himself who truly deserved to perish in the plague. This was because, when he didn't pray on their behalf, Noach clearly revealed that he didn't care to share in their suffering, and thus even if they were to merit a salvation, Noach himself would not merit the same.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות ב

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