



*Parshas Noach 2019, one for all, all for one*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is dedicated in memory of Shlomo Ben Edward, may his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.*

*This week marks one year since the Parsha Perspective started, and I would like to thank each one of you for reading and sharing the Parsha Perspective each week!*

Our Parsha introduces Noach, a man who remained faithful to G-d while the rest of society descended into chaos and anarchy. G-d told Noach that a Mabul (flood) would soon destroy all of civilization. Only he and his family would survive in a Teviah, an ark he was to build. He was given the ark's dimensions and commanded to bring 7 of every kosher animal and a pair of every non-kosher animal.

Noach slowly built the ark to give people a chance to repent and stop the flood, but he was unsuccessful. The rain began on the 11th of Cheshvan as Noach entered the ark with his entire family and every animal. The downpour lasted 40 days and nights, killing all humans and animals not in the ark. The waters continued to stir and boil for 150 days until G-d commanded it to subside.

Noach sent out a raven to determine the extent of the water's retreat; however, the raven did not fly far before returning to the Teivah. Noach waited and then sent out a dove three separate times. The first time the dove left, it returned empty-handed.

But, It returned with an olive leaf in its beak the second time, indicating that new growth had sprouted. The dove did not return the final time, signaling to Noach that the land had dried. On the 27th of Cheshvan, Noach and his family exited the Teivah to reinhabit the world exactly one year after entering.

A question comes to mind: if Noach was the only righteous person in a society that was entirely against G-d, and the only person who merited that he and his family would survive the world's greatest flood, then why don't we view him as one of the fathers of the Jewish people?

Furthermore, the Parsha introduces Noach as a tzaddik, an extremely righteous and holy person. He is the only person in the Torah given that title; not even Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, or Moshe Rabbeinu is given that honor. So if he was such a righteous and holy person, why is he not one of the foremost role models of the Jewish people?!

When the Torah introduces Noach, it says, ***"Ish Tzaddik Tamim Hayah Bedorosav- he was a righteous man and perfect in his generation."*** Rashi quotes an argument from Gemara Sanhedrin (108A): Rabbi Yochanan says, from the fact the Torah writes that *"Noach was perfect in his generation,"* we can deduce that had he been in another generation, he would not have been considered a tzaddik.

However, Reish Lakish argues the opposite. Since Noach was perfect in this generation, he would have been perfect in any other generation too! One of the reasons for this argument between Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish is that Noach did not pray for his generation to be saved. As it says in Zohar (1.68A), *"Noach did not ask for mercy to be given to the world."*

It is now understandable why Noach is not considered one of the forefathers of the Jewish people — he did not adhere to one of the core principles of Judaism. ***"Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeih"-All Jewish people are responsible for each other."*** (Gemara Shevuos 39A)

We see the opposite in Avraham Avinu and Moshe Rabbeinu. In Parshas Vayeira (18:23), Avraham Avinu starts to plead and beg G-d to save the wicked people of Sedom, even though they did not deserve or merit to be saved.

In Parshas Ki Sisa (31:30), Moshe Rabbeinu heads back up Mt. Sinai to implore G-d to forgive the Jewish nation for the grave sin of the Golden Calf.

To be considered a father of a nation, you must be able to connect to each person at their level and be willing to assist them regardless of their status, like a father who loves his child unconditionally and be willing to help them out in any situation.

Although we are not leaders of nations, we are still responsible for one another. We are intrinsically connected; therefore, the future of the Jewish people lies in every Jewish person's hands. So when we care for both the physical and spiritual well-being of every Jew, we will merit the ultimate redemption!

In our daily life, we must understand that we need to be kind and compassionate towards one another, even if the other person is not deserving of such kindness. We must not stand still when we know a person requires assistance, even if they did not ask for our support. And when we do offer our help, we must do so in a kind, compassionate, and discreet manner — that is the way of the Jewish people.

***“Remember, upon the conduct of each lies the fate of all.”***

*—Alexander the Great*

*Have a great Shabbos!*

*Rabbi Sholom Yemini*