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maskil le'David

Faith in Hashem Brings About Success

"This is how you should make it" (*Bereishit* 6:15).

Chazal (*Mechilta Shemot* 12:2) explain the verse, **"This** month shall be for you." The word **"this"** teaches that Moshe Rabbeinu was unclear how the moon would appear at the beginning of the month, until Hashem showed him an image. We also find this expression concerning the *menorah*, as it says, **"This** is the workmanship of the *menorah*," and similarly concerning the mitzvah of giving half a shekel it says, **"This** shall they give." All these expressions share the same sentence structure, with the word **"this"** implying that Hashem had to show it to Moshe because it was a complicated matter.

From the wording of the verse **"This** is how you should make it," it is clear that Hashem showed Noach an image of the *teivah* (ark). But how do we understand Noach's difficulty with building the *teivah*? Did it require a special expertise beyond Noach's understanding to the extent that Hashem had to show him? We know that Noach was skilled with his hands because his father Lemech named him so saying, "This one will bring us rest (נַחֲמֵנו) from...the toil of our hands" (*Bereishit* 5:29). Rashi explains that this was said in reference to the invention of farming tools (which brought them relief), which are attributed to Noach. We therefore know that Noach was skilled in construction, so it seems surprising that Hashem had to show him an image of what the *teivah* should look like.

I would like to suggest that Noach's difficulty lay in grasping the technicalities of the *teivah*: how could it contain and accommodate all the animals, seven of each pure species and two of each impure species, while its size was only three hundred *amot* long and fifty *amot* wide?! In addition, how would there be room in the *teivah* for provisions for each animal for an entire year? Noach also grappled with the difficulty of being able to single-handedly feed all the numerous animals in the *teivah*. Some animals eat in the morning, some in the afternoon,

and others at night; this would hardly leave time for him to rest!

Furthermore, how would the *teivah* survive the boiling waters of the flood and not disintegrate from the extreme heat which would reach several thousand degrees? How would the roof covering the *teivah* not melt? Noach was also commanded to make a window for the *teivah*, as it says (*Bereishit* 6:16), "A window shall you make for the Ark." Why was the door of the *Teivah* not enough? And the *re'eim* (a giant beast) and Og king of the Bashan (a giant) – Noach didn't know how they would fit into the *teivah* due to their great size.

Chazal tell us (*Zevachim* 113b) that a miracle was performed for the *re'eim* and Og: the waters on the side of the *teivah* cooled down and that is where they stood. *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer* (Chapter 23) writes that Og sat on one of the steps of the ladders of the *teivah*, promising Noach and his sons that he will be an eternal slave to them. What did Noach do? He dug a hole at the side of the *Teivah* through which he sent food to Og every day; that is how Og survived, as it says, "For only Og king of the Bashan was left of the remaining Rephaim" (*Devarim* 3:11). It was hard for Noach to understand how to build the *teivah* and accommodate all of these necessities.

Therefore Hashem showed and taught him how to build the *teivah*, which resulted in strengthening his faith in Hashem. With each plank of wood, Noach pledged his faith and trust in Hashem, that He will sustain the *teivah*, and negated his own intellect and understanding of how his construction of the *teivah* will help save him and the world. Only through the power of the great faith he had in the Creator were those miracles performed for him, and in that merit he endured life in the *teivah* and survived.

Had he built the *teivah* while his heart was full of doubts in Hashem, then G-d forbid it would have not survived; this would have endangered the entire world. Therefore, Hashem guided him in constructing the *teivah* so that he built it without reservations and with complete faith in Hashem, and indeed Noach believed wholly in the Creator of the World. Although Chazal tell us that Noach's faith was less than perfect, he possessed great faith. The proof is that the *teivah* did not sink, and he and all those with him in the *teivah* were saved.

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3 Cheshvan 5786
 25 October 2025

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Noach



Hilula

3 Cheshvan
 Maran Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef,
 Head of Mo'etzet
 Chachmei HaTorah

4 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Klonimus Shapira,
 author of *Chovat Hatalmidim*

5 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Moshe Bardugo,
 author of *Rosh Mashbir*

6 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Shlomo David Yehoshua,
 Admor of Slonim *hy"d*

7 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin,
 established Daf Yomi

8 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Nochum of Horodna

9 Cheshvan
 Rabbi Shimon Shkop,
 author of *Sha'arei Yosher*





PARSHAH PEARLS

Inspiring Reflections

Righteous and Perfect Versus Righteous Alone

“These are the offspring of Noah, Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generations” (*Bereishit* 6:9).

Here the verse testifies about Noah that he was righteous and perfect, and later on (*Bereishit* 7:1) it says, “Then Hashem said to Noah, ‘Come to the Ark, you and all your household, for it is you who I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation.’” Rashi quotes the Gemara: from here [the fact that Noah is described only as righteous] we learn that one says only part of a person’s praise in his presence.

The Beit Yosef explains the change in the description of Noah in this way: Noah lived for several generations. He lived through the generation of the flood and also the generation of the dispersion. In the generation of the flood the main test was immorality, while the generation of the dispersion sinned by denying Hashem’s existence.

The measure of a righteous person (*tzaddik*) is one who constrains himself from immorality, just like Yosef Hatzaddik – he passed the test of holiness. However, the description “perfect” (*tamim*) is awarded to one who conducts himself with perfect faith, as it says, “You shall be wholehearted (*tamim*) with Hashem, your G-d.”

At the beginning of the Parsha the Torah describes Noah as “a righteous man, perfect in his generations” for throughout the generations that Noah lived, he was both a “*tzaddik*” – during the generation of the flood when he constrained himself from immorality – and “*tamim*” – during the generation of the dispersion he withstood the test of heresy. However, later on Hashem spoke to him just before he entered the *teivah* during the generation of the flood, and the verse says, “For it is you that I have seen to be *righteous* before Me in this generation” – in this particular generation of the flood, the description of *tzaddik* was appropriate.



WORDS OF THE SAGES

The Segulah of Eating Fish on Shabbat Parshat Noach

Shabbat of Parshat Noach is an auspicious time for eating fish; it is a symbolic request for a good life. After the flood, it became apparent that everything on dry land died, but the fish of the sea did not die, as the midrash tells us (*Bereishit Rabba* 32:11), “Everything that was on dry land, died.’ This implies that the fish did not die.”

This *segulah* of eating fish on Shabbat Parshat Noach and thereby enhancing our existence, is mentioned in the name of Rabbi Avraham Eiger of Lublin *zt”l* (*Shevet mi’Yehuda*). It correlates with the statement expressed by the holy Ateret Tzvi of Ziditshov *zt”l*: “Rabbi Shlomo’le of Karlin would say that one who does not eat fish in honor of the holy Shabbat should be concerned, more so than the matter about which Chazal (*Yuma* 88a) say one should be concerned the entire year. I add to this that one who eats fish in honor of the holy Shabbat, need not worry whatsoever for the coming week.”

The holy Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov *zt”l* also promises a three-fold blessing to those who eat fish on Shabbat. He writes in his *sefer Bnei Yissachar* (*Ma’amarei Shabbatot* 1:11): “A reason for this choice mitzvah of eating fish on Shabbat is that we find in the work of creation that a blessing was given to three things on three consecutive days. A blessing for the fish on the fifth day, a blessing for man on the sixth day and a blessing for Shabbat on the seventh day. As we know, a three-ply thread will not quickly unravel, so *man* who eats *fish* in honor of *Shabbat* will be blessed with a three-fold blessing which will not quickly be severed.”

The *Dorshei Reshumot* also explains: it says (*Tehillim* 23:2) “In lush meadows He lays me down.” The Hebrew word “דשא” (meadows) is an acronym for “דגים, שבת, אדם” (fish, Shabbat, man) – a three-fold blessing on the day of rest. The verse continues stating the outcome, “In tranquil waters He leads me.”

Why specifically were fish chosen as a Shabbat delicacy? Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel *zy”a*, in his *sefer Ben Yehoyoda*, quotes the above midrash, “Of everything that was on dry land, died’, this implies that the fish of the sea did not die.” He explains that fish were chosen as a Shabbat delicacy to teach us that the fire of Gehinnom does not have power on Shabbat, just as the fire of the hot waters of the flood had no power over the fish.

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This teaches us that Hashem performs miracles for a person according to the degree of his faith. This is the implication of “Hashem is your protective Shade at your right hand” (*Tehillim* 121:5). Trust and faith in Hashem are comparable to a person’s shadow. If someone raises a single finger and looks at their shadow, they will see only that one finger; if he lifts up his entire hand, he will see the shadow of his entire hand. It is the same with trust in Hashem: if one has a small amount of faith in Hashem, He shows him a small amount of His Divine Providence, but those with great faith experience a great measure of Divine Providence.

Let us conclude that we learn from Noah that the foundation of the world is faith and trust in Hashem. This is the meaning of “But the righteous person shall live through his faith” (*Chabakuk* 2:4). May it be His Will that we strengthen ourselves greatly in our faith and trust in Hashem Yitbarach. Amen v’Amen.



FROM THE TREASURY

Based on the teachings of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto, shlita**

The Generation of the Flood Sinned

The *mekubalim* inform us that the generation of the flood possessed lofty and holy souls and they had the power to strive spiritually and achieve the highest level in the service of Hashem.

But Chazal tell us that the greater a person, the greater his *yetzer hara*. The *yetzer hara* was victorious. It succeeded in defeating them, bringing them down to the depths and leaving them bereft of the ability to climb out. If one sins purposely, deliberately rebelling against Hashem, Hashem hates him and wishes to annihilate him, as it says (*Malachi* 1:2-3), "I loved Yaakov. But I hated Eisav." In general, Hashem does not hate the wicked but rather waits for them to repent and return to Him, like children who return to their father's lap. If so, why here does Hashem say "But I hated Eisav?"

The answer is that Yaakov and Eisav originally studied Torah together, and certainly both merited observing the holy and righteous conduct of the Avot. Yaakov Avinu absorbed an immense measure of holiness from them, Torah and *yirat Shamayim*. Eisav too was given all the conditions to be righteous and pious like his brother Yaakov, but he intentionally and deliberately did not want to draw upon the holiness of the Avot, and his heart did not want to absorb their purity of spirit. He chose for himself the path of evil as a way of life. He wished to live a life of recklessness and corruption even though he knew and recognized the correct path, the path of Torah. Hashem cannot bear a deliberately wicked person. He is not compelled to act in this way, he does not sin unintentionally. Eisav knew the Creator yet nevertheless purposely rebelled against Him, and this is why Hashem said, "But I hated Eisav."

This was also the case with the generation of the flood. They too sinned intentionally and persistently turned away from the path of Hashem, knowingly and deliberately. They were aware of their capabilities, they knew that they possessed lofty and powerful souls. They knew that they descended from Adam Harishon who was Hashem's handiwork, and they merited seeing Cain repent and observed the sign that Hashem inscribed on his forehead. Nevertheless they committed the most serious sins and distanced themselves from Hashem purposely and with insolence. That is why Hashem hated them and wished to wipe them out from the world. Hashem said, "What do I gain from giving them life? They will continue to sin against Me and transgress My Will and disregard My Torah. Therefore 'I will blot out Man whom I created from the face of the ground.'"



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto, shlita**

Praying for the Operation's Success

One who fills his days and years with Torah and *yirat shamayim*, strengthening himself with complete faith in Hashem, is granted long life, health, *nachat* and peace of mind so that he can continue his holy service.

I heard the following story about an elderly gentleman whose life was in grave danger ^{r"l}, who was about to undergo a complicated operation. The Chinese surgeon explained that the chances of the operation being successful were extremely slight. However, the elderly Jew believed in Hashem with complete faith, and asked the doctor to say these few words before commencing the operation: "With G-d's help the operation should be successful."

At first the doctor laughed at the sick man's request and said, "I do not believe in anything besides medicine. The medical prognosis is that the chances that you will survive this complicated operation are extremely slim." However, the patient did not let up and passionately begged the doctor to recite those words. The doctor, realizing that he was facing an innocent individual who was totally convinced of his faith, eventually relented, even though he was a complete heretic.

When the patient woke up after the operation was over, these were the words with which the doctor addressed him: "You should know that your life was given to you as a gift. The operation was successful beyond all expectations, despite the complications being even more significant than what was originally diagnosed. Throughout the operation I felt my hands moving of their own accord, as if an unseen Upper Hand was working on you and saving your life." The doctor added to the surprised patient, "I am sure that the words I recited as per your request, that the operation be successful with G-d's help, were the cause of the operation's success. I am prepared to promise that from now on, before any act I carry out, I will ask for G-d's help." Indeed, with Hashem's kindness, this elderly man, who seemingly had little chance of surviving, lived for many more years.

From this impressive story we learn that the time may have come for a person to pass away, as was the case with this critically ill man who under natural circumstances had no chance of surviving the complicated operation. Yet his faith in Hashem was so great – he merited strengthening the non-Jewish surgeon's faith in G-d! Hashem therefore granted him long life; it is suitable and appropriate to lengthen this kind of person's life.

May it be Hashem's Will that we all merit serving Him sincerely and completely. May Hashem increase our days and years with good life in order that we may serve Him. Amen v'Amen.

A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

The Importance of fulfilling Hashem's Command



The Torah tells us that the flood was on the earth for forty days, and during those forty days all earthly life ceased, as it says (*Bereishit* 7:21-22), "And all flesh that moves upon the earth expired...All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of everything that was on dry land, died." In addition, it also says, (*Bereishit* 7:23), "And He blotted out all the existence that was on the face of the ground, from man to animals to creeping things and to the birds of the heavens; and they were blotted out from the earth."

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Attar *zy"ra*, in his holy *sefer Ohr Hachaim*, explains that besides the expiration that is mentioned in the first verse, all the remains of the dead were also wiped away through the profusion of hot and cold water. All the corpses became like water and it appeared as if they had never existed.

With this, apparently, the role of the flood came to an end.

But the Torah writes differently. "And the waters strengthened on the earth a hundred and fifty days" (*Bereishit* 24). Meaning, for another one hundred and fifty days the waters continued increasing on the earth, until "G-d remembered Noach and all the beasts and all the animals that were with him in the Ark, and G-d caused a spirit to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, and the rain from heaven was restrained" (*Bereishit* 8:1-2).

What was the purpose of this additional rain?

The holy Ohr Hachaim goes on to explain: "The intention was to announce that Hashem commanded the waters to strengthen. Just as Hashem commanded the waters in the Six Days of Creation, "Let the waters teem" (*Bereishit* 1:20), so too now He commanded them to increase. That is why we find that after all life on the entire planet was wiped out, the verse says, "And the waters strengthened," although this was seemingly unnecessary for even the corpses of the creatures had been wiped out.

The true reason why the waters strengthened is simply because the waters were engaged in fulfilling the command which Hashem had ordered them, and it was not for them to find reasons why not to strengthen even though the entire universe had already been wiped out.

Just like the waters of the flood, we too are obligated to fulfill Hashem's wish without making all kinds of calculations, and without trying to understand the purpose behind fulfilling various mitzvot.

I Cannot Do Such a Thing

The *sefer Sha'al Avicha V'yagedcha* brings the following story, which proves that if a Jew is determined to observe Hashem's commands just as he is instructed without changing them an iota or trying to adapt them to the reality of life as he sees fit, he merits special Divine Assistance.

During the first year of rabbinical leadership of the Rav of Brisk, a Jew was caught transgressing the law and sentenced to death. According to government regulations, anyone sentenced to death had to recite a confession before he was killed. A Jewish person recited *vidui* with his rav, and *l'havdil*, a gentile with a priest.

And that is what happened in this case too. At the appointed time of execution, in the midst of the Shabbat day, a special messenger was sent to the Brisker Rav in the name of the regional governor, who presented him with a document ordering him to accompany the messenger to the jail to recite *vidui* with the Jew who was sentenced to death.

When the Rav saw the order, he replied curtly and forcefully: "I am not going."

And why did the Rav refuse? He was of the opinion that by going and saying *vidui* with the offender, this would hasten his death, for until he says *vidui* they would not kill him.

His refusal was firm and uncompromising. When they tried to explain that if he does not accompany the messenger, the government will order a different rav to come, he replied, "If they do this, I cannot stop them, but as for myself, I am not doing such a thing since it is forbidden according to Torah law."

The messenger left, returning to the governor empty-handed. On hearing the turn of events, the governor became very angry and hurried to send a more senior official to the Rav's home.

He arrived and not only forcefully demanded that the Rav accompany him to the prisoner, but also added harsh, serious threats. He told him unequivocally that he will suffer for his refusal, for as a rav he is

obligated to carry out the instructions of the law.

But he too returned empty-handed and told the governor that the Brisker Rav would not change his mind.

On hearing these words, the governor flew into a rage and personally went to the Rav's home.

When the townspeople saw the governor's carriage outside the Rav's home they were filled with dread. They surrounded the Rav shouting, "The Rav is bringing destruction to the town! The Rav is putting all of us in danger!"

But the Rav remained firm and did not change his mind. He once again made it clear that he would not consider transgressing a Torah command for the sake of fulfilling this order.

Indeed, even when the governor stood before him and gave the order along with warnings and open threats that the Rav will be punished for his refusal with the full severity of the law, still the Rav was undeterred and did not accede to his demand.

Furious, the governor left the Rav's home.

The congregants remained in the Rav's room, frightened and expecting the worst...

The News: Pardon Granted

Within a short time, the entire town of Brisk was in an uproar. There were those who sided with the Rav and those who were in opposition. There were congregants who agreed with the Rav's decision not to deviate an iota from the Torah law, and others who forcefully claimed that he was obligated to carry out the governor's order despite the Torah law, so as not to endanger everyone.

But no one anticipated what happened a few hours later: a telegram arrived to the governor's home on Motza'ei Shabbat informing him of the astonishing news – a pardon had been granted to the Jew who had been sentenced to death!

Now everyone understood that if not for the Rav's stubbornness, that pardon would have arrived too late! It was specifically the Rav's uncompromising devotion to Hashem's command that saved a Jewish life! (*Umatok Ha'or*)