

**Parshat Noach**  
**A World Recreated – Filling the Void**

Simon Wolf

After the Flood, Noach, his wife and his children and their wives exit the Ark to enter a newly created world. This conception differs from the creation of Breishit in that it is *ex materia* (out of existing material *יש מיש*) as opposed to in Breishit where it is *ex nihilo* (out of nothing *יש מאין*). This is reinforced by the fact that Noach and his family, who emerge as the progenitors of mankind in the post Mabul world,<sup>1</sup> form a chain of continuity to humanity that existed in the pre Flood world. That is as opposed to Adam, the father of humankind, who is created by God and has no human predecessor. Does that difference in the nature of the creations bespeak a more fundamental distinction between the two worlds or is the new world into which Noach emerges identical to the world inhabited by Adam, just with a fresh start?

Upon Noach's exit from the Ark, he builds an altar and offers sacrifices to God.<sup>2</sup> God responds positively to Noach's overture and says to Himself because of man, since the devisings of man are evil from his youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done. So long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease."<sup>4</sup> This stands in stark contrast to God's sentiment before the Flood, "God saw how great man's wickedness was on earth, and how every plan he devised was continually evil. And God regretted that He had made man on earth, and in His heart He was saddened ( *וַיִּאֶמֶר* ) וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל-לְבוֹ, וַיִּאֶמֶר ( *וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל-לְבוֹ* ),<sup>3</sup> "I will no longer curse the earth because of man, since the devisings of man are evil from his youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done. So long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease."<sup>4</sup> This stands in stark contrast to God's sentiment before the Flood, "God saw how great man's wickedness was on earth, and how every plan he devised was continually evil. And God regretted that He had made man on earth, and in His heart He was saddened ( *וַיִּאֶמֶר* ) וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל-לְבוֹ, וַיִּאֶמֶר ( *וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל-לְבוֹ* ),<sup>5</sup> God said, 'I will blot out man, who I created, from the face of the earth – man together with beasts, creeping things, and birds of the sky; for I regret that I made them."<sup>6</sup> The monologue describing God's intent to destroy the world concludes with, "But Noach found favor in the eyes of God ( *וַיִּחַד נֹחַ בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה* )." The divergence between these two reactions helps to

highlight that there are three key elements to God's response to Noach's initiation of sacrifices.

Noach's offerings highlight the capacity of man to do good and to realize their elevated Godly side. Without delving into the nuances and the theological underpinnings, in this new world, God now views man's evil inclination as a perpetual challenge to his success. God accepts the fact that the evil that man perpetuates is not necessarily because he is traitorous, but because he is unable to successfully ennoble his Godliness. He is unfortunately captured by his hedonistic desires and succumbs to his primal animalistic nature. With patience, God believes man, with hard work, can reach his potential and overcome these innate challenges. God's patience and mercy that was manifest in a limited fashion in the pre Mabul world,<sup>7</sup> now becomes the central tenet by which God conducts this new world. This new way of administering the world has two major ramifications.

The first of which is that God commits to never again destroy the entire world because of man ( *וְלֹא-אֶסְפָּךְ עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת-כָּל-חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי* ).<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, if man or a society deteriorates to a state of complete evil, akin to humankind before the Flood, God will rain down upon them utter destruction (i.e. S'dom and Amora). The devastation wrought by the Flood was as the Ramban points out directed by Elokim (אלוקים), God's name representing nature and strict justice.<sup>9</sup> Back then, evil resulting in destruction was still a central fabric of the world and a natural *quid pro quo*. God's conducting hand was still conspicuous, though not obvious. There might be delays in implementation, but in the end God's pleasure or displeasure were patently obvious because of the scale of the reaction. After the Mabul, patience is the overwhelming virtue by which God administers the world. In order for this to be the case, it is a *sine qua non* that God's presence be less overt in the world and therefore

1... וגם את נח באהבה זכרת. ותפקדהו בדבר ישועה ורחמים, בהביאך את מי המבול לשחת כל בשר מפני רוע מעלליהם. על כן זכרוננו בא לפניך יקוק אלקינו, להרבות זרעו כעפרות תבל וצאצאיו כחול הים. (מוסף ראש השנה, זכרונות)  
2 וַיִּצְא נֹחַ וּבָנָיו וְנִשְׁתָּי וְנִשְׁתֵּי בָנָיו אִתּוֹ... וַיִּבְנוּ נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְחַם מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכָּל הַעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ: (בראשית ח, יח-כ)  
3 וַיִּאֶמֶר ה' אֵל לְבוֹ - לֹא גִלָּה הַדְּבַר לְנֹחִי בְּזִמְנוֹ הַהוּא, רַק בְּיוֹם צוּתוֹ אֶת מִשֶׁה בְּכַתִּיבַת הַתּוֹרָה גִּלָּה אֵלָיו, כִּי כֹאשֶׁר הִקְרִיב נֹחַ קָרְבָּנוֹ עֲלֵה לְפָנָיו לְרִצּוֹן, וְגַזַּר שְׁלֹא יוֹסִיף לְהַכּוֹת אֶת כָּל חַי. וְכִבֵּר כַּתְּבִיתִי בְּזֵה (לעיל ו') סוּד נִרְמַז לְרַבּוּתוֹ ז"ל: (רמב"ן בראשית ח, כא) וְהַאֲבָן עֲזָרָא חוּלֵק עַל הַרְמַב"ן: אֵל לְבוֹ כְּמוֹ עִם לְבוֹ, אַחֲרַי כֵּן גִּילָה סוּדוֹ לִנְח כִּי נִבְיָא הִיָּה. (אבן עזרא בראשית ח, כא) וְגַם הַסְּפֹרוֹת חֲלֻקִית: וַיִּאֶמֶר ה' אֵל לְבוֹ. שְׁלֹא גִלָּה לְנֹחַ וּלְבָנָיו עַד שֶׁקִּבְּלוּ מִצוּתוֹ וְהִקִּים בְּרִית: (ספורנו בראשית ח, כא)  
4 וַיִּרַח יְהוָה אֶת-רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וַיִּאֶמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-לְבוֹ לֹא-אֶסְפָּךְ עוֹד אֶת-הָאָדָמָה בְּעֵבֹר הָאָדָם כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע מִנְּעֻרָיו וְלֹא-אֶסְפָּךְ עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת-כָּל-חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי: עַד כָּל-יְמֵי הָאָרֶץ זָרַע וְקָצִיר וְקֹר וְחֹם וְקָיִץ וְחֹרֵף וְיוֹם וְלַיְלָה לֹא יִשְׁבֹּתוּ: (בראשית ח, כא-כב)

5 וינחם ה'. ויתעצב אל לבו - דברה תורה כלשון בני אדם. והענין, כי מרו ועצבו את רוח קדשו בפשעיהם. וענין "אל לבו", כי לא הגיד זה לנביא שלוח אליהם, וכן הלשון במחושב, כדרך לדבר אל לבי (להלן כד מה). וזולתו: (רמב"ן בראשית ו, ו)  
6 וַיִּרַח יְהוָה אֶת-רִיחַ הָאָדָם בְּאָרֶץ וְכָל-יֵצֵר מִחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ לְבוֹ רָע כָּל-יְמֵי הַיּוֹם: וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה אֶת-עֲשֵׂה אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל-לְבוֹ: וַיִּאֶמֶר יְהוָה אִמְחָה אֶת-הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר-בְּרָאתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד-בְּהֵמָה עַד-רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נִחַמְתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתִם: (בראשית ו, ז)  
7 וַיִּאֶמֶר יְהוָה לֹא-יִדּוֹן רִחִי בְּאָדָם לַעֲלֹם בְּשֶׁגֶם הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיָה יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה: (בראשית ו, ג)  
8 וַיִּרַח יְהוָה אֶת-רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וַיִּאֶמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-לְבוֹ לֹא-אֶסְפָּךְ עוֹד אֶת-הָאָדָמָה בְּעֵבֹר הָאָדָם כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע מִנְּעֻרָיו וְלֹא-אֶסְפָּךְ עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת-כָּל-חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי: (בראשית ח, כא)  
9... והסתכל כי בכל ענין המבול הזכיר "אלקים", ובכל ענין הפלגה הזכיר השם המיוחד, כי המבול בעבור השחתת הארץ, והפלגה בעבור שקצצו בניטעות, והנם עושים בשמו הגדול, וזה טעם הירידה, וכן במדת סדום. והמשכיל יבין: (רמב"ן בראשית יא, ב) וְגַם הַשֵּׁם הוּא גַם מוֹפֵיעַ לְגַבִּי מַחִיית הָאָדָם וְהַהֲצֵלָה בְּזִמְנוֹ הַמְּבֹרָךְ אֲבָל לֹא לְגַבִּי הַמְּבֹרָךְ עַל-פִּי זֶה נִרְאָה שֶׁהַרְמַב"ן סוֹבֵר שֶׁשֵּׁם אֱלֹקִים הוּא הַשֵּׁם הַשֵּׁיִיךְ לְמַבּוּל

evil will no longer be met with wholesale destruction or an undeniable response from God.

This results in God's second declaration that the natural order of the world will no longer be suspended (עד כלי-ימי הארץ זרע וקציר וקר וחם וקיץ) (and the world will no longer be so apparent).<sup>10</sup> God's manifestation in the world will no longer be so apparent. Chazal point out that God's commitment to not to interfere with the essential nature of the world (seasons, day and night) implies that it was not the case during the Mabul. During the flood, God's strict justice (sin/evil=destruction) superseded the natural order and caused its suspension which made God's will and presence palpable through the perceptible negative feedback to wrongdoing. After the Mabul, in order to facilitate this more covert presence of God, God's name of Elokim needs to be relegated to a role supporting this new order of patience. That means instead of producing *quid pro quo* destruction or reactions to evil, where God can be felt tangibly, it will form a system of uncompromising principles that become known as nature. With proper perspective, one who contemplates the greatness of nature will "see" God, but its perpetual consistency will make God's interaction with the world far less apparent. In this new world, God will selectively make his presence known by discriminately interfering with nature. That is why the destruction of S'dom and the dissemination of the Dor HaPilaga were carried out by the Tetragrammaton name of God (יקוק),<sup>9</sup> the name that represents mercy or the supernatural. Maintaining patience and being merciful (יקוק) means that the status quo or the natural course, whether good or bad, will persist for much longer than would be expected in order to not make God's hand in changing course obvious. A good example of this is the economic and political prosperity experienced during the reign of the evil king of Yehuda, Menashe, which was a remnant of the great Teshuva movement undertaken by his father Chizkiya. Similarly, in the opposite direction, the deteriorating political and economic situation sustained during the rule of Yoshiyahu, that was bequeathed to him because of the evil ways of his father and grandfather (Amon and Menashe), was despite his leading an incredible national religious revival.

The third thing God declares is that the land will no longer be subject to the curse placed upon it (לא-אסף לקלל עוד את-האדמה בעבור האדם)<sup>8</sup> because of the sin of Adam.<sup>11</sup> Earth will return to its once productive state<sup>12</sup> and God will no longer tie the land's destiny or productivity to man's conduct.<sup>13</sup>

Interestingly, of God's three declarations, He only shares one of them with Noach. His pledge not to destroy the world again in the Covenant of the Rainbow. Reading between the lines, one might be able to also discern God's commitment not to disturb the natural order because a natural phenomenon (קשת) is utilized as the sign of the covenant and God's name of Elokim (אלקים) is used to describe God as a party to this unilateral resolution. Though that perception is only really possible in hindsight and would not be an obvious conclusion absent knowing God's pledge vis-à-vis nature. Given that, it would seem that the two commitments not disclosed to Noach are either not important for him to know or more likely that they are a perforce outcome of the Mabul that would be self-evident to him. If, as noted above, the Flood was a reset back to the original creation then the fact that the ground would return to its former state, prior to Adam's sin, would be axiomatic to a renewed and reset creation. Similarly, the fact that nature would return to its former course would be a natural result of the restoration of the original creation. In that case, Noach was just a new Adam attempting to do a better job than his predecessor.

On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that such a reset would precipitate an assurance that God would not destroy the world if it followed a similar path to that which had taken place prior to the Flood.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, God must inform Noach (and the world) of this new development. As discussed above, that change in God's interaction with the world yields a number of other developments, most important of which is that God's presence and hand in the world would not be as pronounced. By "removing" Himself from the world, God was granting more latitude to man to determine his destiny and the direction of the world. On occasion, God will initiate corrective action through interaction with individuals or

<sup>10</sup> עד כלי-ימי הארץ זרע וקציר וקר וחם וקיץ ותרוף ויום וליילה לא ישבתו: (בראשית ח, כב)  
<sup>11</sup> ולאדם אמר כי-שמעת לקול אשתך ותאכל מן-העץ אשר צויתך לאמר לא תאכל ממנו  
 ארורה האדמה בעבורך בעצבון תאכלנה כל ימי תיבך: וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך ואכלת  
 את-עשב השדה: בזעת אפיק תאכל לחם עד שובך אל-האדמה כי ממנה לקחת לך  
 עפר אתה ואיל-עפר תשובו: (בראשית ג, יז-יט)  
<sup>12</sup> וטעם לא אוסיף עוד לקלל כאשר קללה ע"י אדם כי כן כתוב ארורה האדמה (ברא' ג, יז)  
 (אבן עזרא בראשית ח, כא) \\ אבל יש מסבירים אחרת: בעבור האדם - כי יסופו  
 הרעים בבני אדם ותעמוד האדמה לטובים ואם תשחת קצת האדמה עם הרעים כמו

ארץ סדום שנשחתה עם אנשיה, אין בה השחתת אדמה אם מעט מן האדמה תשחת  
 כמו ערי הכנר, ויחשבו כמו מקומות הנשקעים הם ואנשיהם: (רד"ק בראשית ח, כא)  
<sup>13</sup> וטעם בעבור האדם - כי בעבורו נענשו, ואם אדם לא חטא היו הם ניצולין אף על פי  
 שהשחיתו גם הם דרכם: (רמב"ן בראשית ח, כא) \\ ארץ ישראל היא היוצאת דופן בזה  
 כמו שמעיד עליו הפסוק שהשגחת ה' בה תמיד (דברים יא, יב) ועל פי דרך הקבלה  
 היא מבחינת גן עדן שבתוכו החטא כן משפיע  
<sup>14</sup> זה גם נכון לגבי ההצהרה שלא לשוב ולקלל את האדמה או להשביט את הטבע בעתיד  
 אבל נ"ל שהם כלולים בברית של ההנהגה החדשה שלא להשחית כל בשר שהוא  
 תמידי וגם האיפוס של הבריאה הוא מצב שנכשיו משיך תמיד

nations, but on the whole He would manage the world from the background with the guidance of His "hidden hand."

The "void" left by God needs to be filled and that is where man's role has changed. In exchange for more forbearance from God, man is expected to take a more central role in determining the trajectory of the world and the facilitating of God's presence in the world. The location of Noach's appearance in God's two contrasting monologues cited above highlights the key difference between them and captures this point. In God's declaration that He will destroy the world, Noach is almost a footnote to the narrative. God is calling the shots, pulling the strings and actively choreographing the course of the world. Noach is simply a means to ensure human continuity, a vassal to God's plan. After the Mabul, on the other hand, Noach is the impetus for God's pronouncement. It is Noach's initiative and lead that invites God's response. This is allegorically indicated by the fact that when Noach enters the Ark, God seals him in,<sup>15</sup> but when he emerges from the Teiva, it is Noach who opens the door.<sup>16</sup>

Noach emerges into a new existence, both a universe returned to its former pristine post creation state and a world governed by new principles of engagement between God and man. The most striking aspect of which is the empowering of man in this new world. In this new reality, God in a sense has delegated authority to Noach to determine the direction of the world and to be the successor to God in the places where God has figuratively relinquished authority. Man's partnership with God has been upgraded and this is evidenced by the laws and narratives that follow the Flood.

In the first directives that God relays to Noach and his sons after the Mabul, there are two notable changes to man's standing. The first of which is his relationship vis-à-vis other animals. Before

the Flood, man gained his sustenance by either foraging in the same trough as the animals or having a somewhat distinct vegetarian diet (see Breishit – Of Fruits & Vegetables). Man was restricted from taking the life of an animal for his own purposes and animals were enjoined from or not interested in taking the life of human beings. After the Mabul, man's new Godly role has put some distance between him and the animals and they are no longer in a relationship of parity. God permits Noach and his sons, with some limitations,<sup>17</sup> to take the lives of animals for their sustenance or other utility.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, animals are warned against taking the lives of humans.<sup>19</sup> This inequality is a direct result of man's new responsibility and his partnership with God.<sup>20</sup>

Subsequent to that, God reiterates that a person may not take the life of their fellow man.<sup>21</sup> Here too there is a major difference from the account where we previously encountered murder prior to the Mabul. When Kayin murdered his brother Hevel, God acted as the prosecutor, the witness, the judge and the executioner.<sup>22</sup> Intriguingly, here, God empowers man to take over those roles once played by God. Murder is met by a demand from God that "his (the murderer's) blood should be spilled (דָּמּוֹ יִשָּׁפֵךְ)."<sup>23</sup> With a more "distant" God, it is incumbent upon man to become an Elohim (אלהים - see Mishpatim – God or Judges?) and to ensure that fair and just punishment is met out.<sup>24</sup> This is emphasized later in the Torah where God tells Bnei Yisrael that the "there is no expiation for the blood that is shed on the land except by the blood of the one who shed it (וְלֹא־יִכָּפֵר לְדָם אֲשֶׁר שִׁפַּךְ-בָּהּ כִּי־אִם בַּדָּם שִׁפְכוּ)."<sup>25</sup> This new Godly mantle assumed by man is best described by the Gemara in Shabbat, "...it comes coming to teach you that any judge who judges a true judgment truthfully, even if he sits in judgment for only one hour, the verse ascribes to him as if he became a partner to the Holy One, Blessed be He, in the act of Creation (אלא לומר לך כל דיין שדן)

<sup>15</sup> והבאים זָכַר וְהִקְבֵּה מִכָּל־בֶּשֶׂר בָּאוּ קִאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹקִים וַיִּסְגֵּר יְקֹנֵק בְּעֵדוֹ: (בראשית טז, טז)

<sup>16</sup> וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וַיִּפְתַּח נֹחַ אֶת־חַלּוֹן הַתֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: (בראשית ח, יו) \\\ וַיְהִי בְאַחַת וּשְׁש־מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה בְּרֵאשׁוֹן בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ חָרְבוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ וַיִּסַּר נֹחַ אֶת־מִכְסֵה הַתֵּבָה וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה חָרְבוּ כָּנִי הָאֲדָמָה: (בראשית ח, יג)

<sup>17</sup> אַךְ־בֶּשֶׂר בְּנִפְשׁוֹ דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכְלוּ: (בראשית ט, ט)

<sup>18</sup> וּמוֹרָאֲכֶם וְחַתְכֶם יִהְיֶה עַל כָּל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְעַל כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּכֹל־אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמַשׁ הָאֲדָמָה וְכָל־דָּג הַיָּם בְּיַדְכֶם נִתְּנוּ: כִּלְרִמְשׁ אֲשֶׁר הוּא־חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֻכְלָהּ כִּי־רַק עֹשֵׁב נִתְּנִי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל: (בראשית ט, ב-ג)

<sup>19</sup> וְאִךְ אֶת־דַּמְכֶם לִנְפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם אֲדַרְשׁ מִיַּד כָּל־חַיַּת אֲדָרְשׁוּנוּ וּמִיַּד הָאָדָם מִיַּד אִישׁ אֱחָיו וְאִךְ אֶת־נַפְשׁ הָאָדָם: (בראשית ט, ט)

<sup>20</sup> ואחר שהעלה נח העולות התיר השם לאכול הבשר: (אבן עזרא בראשית ט, ג) \\\ וְהָיָה זֶה, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁבְעֵלֵי נֶפֶשׁ הַתְּנוּעָה יֵשׁ לָהֶם קִצַּת מַעֲלֵה בְנִפְשָׁם, נִדְמוּ בֵּה לְבַעֲלֵי הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַמְשֻׁכֵּלֹת, וַיֵּשׁ לָהֶם בְּחִירָה בְּטוֹבָתָם וּמְזוֹנֵיהֶם, וַיִּבְרְחוּ מִן הַצַּעַר הוֹמִיתָהּ. וְהַכְּתוּב אָמַר מִי יוֹדֵעַ רוּחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הַעוֹלָה הִיא לְמַעֲלֵה רוּחַ הַבְּהֵמָה הַיּוֹרֶדֶת הִיא לְמַטָּה לֹארוֹץ (קְהֵלֶת ג' כ"א): וְכֹאשֶׁר חֲטָאוּ, וְהַשְׁחִיתוּ כָּל בֶּשֶׂר אֶת דְּרוֹכּוֹ עַל הָאָרֶץ, וְגִדְּרוּ שִׁמוּמֵי הַמְּבוּל, וּבַעֲבוּר נֹחַ הַצִּיל מֵהֶם לְקִיוֹם הַמַּיִן, נִתַּן לָהֶם רְשׁוּת לִשְׁחוֹט וּלְאֻכֹּל, כִּי קִיוֹמָם בַּעֲבוּרוֹ: (רמב"ן בראשית א, כט) \\\ נִתְּנִי לָכֶם אֶת כָּל מַאֲחָר שְׁנִיאוֹ לְבִתְּיָה שְׁעִיתָם

ועל ידכם באה להם הצלה הרי הם בידכם לעשות להם כטוב בעיניכם. (חזקוני בראשית ט, ט)

<sup>21</sup> וְאִךְ אֶת־דַּמְכֶם לִנְפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם אֲדַרְשׁ מִיַּד כָּל־חַיַּת אֲדָרְשׁוּנוּ וּמִיַּד הָאָדָם מִיַּד אִישׁ אֱחָיו וְאִךְ אֶת־נַפְשׁ הָאָדָם: שֹׁפֵךְ דָּם הָאָדָם בְּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשָּׁפֵךְ כִּי בַצֵּלִם אֱלֹקִים עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם: (בראשית ט, ט-י)

<sup>22</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר קִוֵּן אֱלֹהֵי הַבַּיִת אֱחָיו וַיְהִי בְהִיּוֹתָם בְּשִׁדְּהָ יְקֹנֵם קִוֵּן אֱלֹהֵי הַבַּיִת אֱחָיו וַיְהַרְגֵהוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר יְקֹנֵק אֶל־קִוֵּן אִי הַבַּיִת אֱחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יִדְעִיתִי הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱחָיו אֲנִכִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר מִה עֲשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אֱחָיו צַעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן־הָאֲדָמָה: וְעַתָּה אָרוּר אַתָּה מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת־יְדֶיָּהּ לְקַחַת אֶת־דְּמֵי אֱחָיו מִיַּדְךָ: כִּי תִעַבְדוּ אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה לֹא־תִסְפָּק תִּתְּכֶחָה לָךְ עַל גֵּד תִּהְיֶה בְּאָרְץ: וַיֹּאמֶר קִוֵּן אֶל־יְקֹנֵק גְּדוּל עוֹנֵי מִנְשָׂא: הִן גְּרַשְׁתָּ אֹתִי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפְּנִיךְ אֶסְתַּר וְהִיִּיתִי גֵעַ וְנִדַּ בְּאָרְץ וְהִיָּה לְכִי־מִצָּאִי יְהַרְגֵנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְקֹנֵק לִכֹּן כָּל־הָרֶג לָקוּן שִׁבְעֵתַיִם יִקֶּם וַיִּשֶׁם יְקֹנֵק לְקוֹן אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַפּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מִצָּאֵי: (בראשית ד, טו-טז)

<sup>23</sup> שֹׁפֵךְ דָּם הָאָדָם בְּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשָּׁפֵךְ כִּי בַצֵּלִם אֱלֹקִים עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם: (בראשית ט, י)

<sup>24</sup> באדם דמו ישפך - אם יש עדים המיתוהו אתם, למה, כי בצלם אלקים וגו': (רש"י ט, י)

\| שפך דם האדם באדם דמו ישפך - אני אדרוש דם ההורג אם אין עדים, אבל אם יש עדים, על השופטים להרוג כמו שראונו, זהו באדם, על ידי הדיונים:

(רד"ק בראשית ט, י) \\\ באדם דמו ישפך. בב"ד של מטה: (ספורנו בראשית ט, י)

<sup>25</sup> וְלֹא־יִכָּפֵר אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אִתָּם בָּהּ כִּי הָדָם הוּא יִחַיֵּף אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא־יִכָּפֵר לְדָם אֲשֶׁר שִׁפַּךְ־בָּהּ כִּי־אִם בַּדָּם שִׁפְכוּ: (במדבר לה, לד)

דין אמת לאמיתו אפילו שעה אחת - מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו נעשה שותף להקדוש ברוך הוא במעשה (בראשית).<sup>26</sup>

When Noah begins to sojourn on the land after the Flood, "he becomes a man of the earth and he plants a vineyard." While skipping many steps, the Torah relates that Noah eventually turned the fruit harvested from those vines into wine and he becomes inebriated from that which he consumes. In that state of intoxication, he is indecently exposed in his tent and his son Cham somehow wrongs him. His other two sons, out of respect for their father, cover up that which is inappropriately exposed. When Noah sobers from his drunken state, he realizes that which all his children had done and he curses and blesses them accordingly. It is interesting to contrast this story with that of Adam and Chava and their violating of God's demand to not eat from the Etz HaDa'at. Firstly, according to one opinion in the Gemara Berachot, the Etz HaDa'at was a grape vine which only serves to enhance the reasons for comparing these two stories. Both narratives include parties who are exposed and who are later covered up. In addition, the stories include an infraction that is met with a punishment and being cursed. In the Garden of the Eden, Adam and Chava are naked and they sin by abrogating the word of God. They are then punished **by God cursing them and humankind and their nakedness is covered by God** providing them clothing. In Noah's story, Noah acts inappropriately which results in the revealing of his nakedness. He is "punished" by another **person**, his son Cham, behaving improperly. Noah is then **rescued from his nakedness by his other two sons**, Shem and Yefet. Cham is punished by **Noah cursing him and his descendants**. Once again here, in this new world, man is filling the roles that used to be occupied by God.

In the story of the Tower of Bavel, God decides that their initiative is flawed (see Noah – What

Toppled the Tower of Bavel?) and that their plans need to be thwarted (וַיִּזְחַק הַתְּלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת).<sup>27</sup> God intervenes subtly, but their undoing is then self-made (their inability to communicate) and no one present would attribute the demise of their plans to the intercession of God. On the other hand, this is a very different outcome than that which happened to another culture that developed prior to the Flood (וַיְהִי כִּי-הִחֵל הָאָדָם).<sup>28</sup> There God also declares his displeasure with their behavior, but He deals with their misdeeds by destroying the whole world.

The world after the Mabul sees a downgrading of the relationship of God and man. God will no longer be actively and visibly involved in directing the world because man was unable to flourish under those conditions given his human frailty and propensity for hedonism. That seemingly sad state of affairs has a silver lining. The world cannot survive and thrive with a complete removal of God's overt presence and therefore in the absence of God's conspicuous presence and interaction, He needs proxies to act on his behalf. In the post Flood world, man is anointed with that role. The risk of course is if man fails to take that crown, the resultant depravity will be worse than the state of the world prior to the Mabul. On the other hand if man rises to the occasion, here is hope for a better outcome. After the Flood, God attempts to offset man's animalistic tendencies by having him be a more active partner in the creation and destiny of the world. The elevating of man to wear this more godly mantle and to accept more responsibility for the direction and success of the world empowers him to utilize his "image of God (צלם אלקים)" and by doing so conquer and master his unrestrained indulgences and desires that led to man's downfall prior to the Mabul. It is a partnership made in heaven which allows man's image to soar to Godliness.

Shabbat Shalom

<sup>26</sup> רב חסדא ורבה בר רב הונא הוו יתבי בדינא כולי יומא, הוה קא חליש לבייהו. תנא להו רב חייא בר רב מדפתי: ויעמד העם על משה מן הבקר עד הערב, וכי תעלה על דעתך שמשה יושב ודן כל היום כלו? תורתו מתי נעשית? אלא לומר לך כל דין שדן דין אמת לאמיתו אפילו שעה אחת - מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו נעשה שותף להקדוש ברוך הוא

במעשה בראשית. כתיב הכא ויעמד העם על משה מן הבקר עד הערב, וכתיב התם ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום אחד. (שבת י')  
<sup>27</sup> וַיִּאמֶר יְקֹזֵק הֵן עִם אֶחָד וְשִׁפָּה אֶחָד לְכָלֵם וַיִּזְחַק הַתְּלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת וְעֵתָהּ לֹא-יִבְצֵר מֵהֶם כָּל אֲשֶׁר יִזְמֶוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת: (בראשית יא,ו)  
<sup>28</sup> וַיְהִי כִּי-הִחֵל הָאָדָם לְרַב עַל-פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוּת יִלְדוּ לָהֶם: (בראשית ו,א)