



The Marcos and Adina Katz YUTORAH IN PRINT

Noach 5783

Hello, Cruel World

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm z"l (Originally delivered October 27, 1973)

For forty days and nights the heavens opened and the rains came. Then, for some one-hundred and fifty days, the waters rose. The world was engulfed in a cataclysm, and all living things were drowned in their watery graves. Afterwards, the waters receded, and the earth was turned into a mushy swamp. Finally, as Noah's ark rested on Mount Ararat, he heard the divine command: "God spoke to Noah, saying: *Tzei min ha-tevah*, Go out of the ark."

A careful reading of this passage indicates that apparently Noah was averse to leaving his ark. After all, for several periods of seven days each he had sent out birds to test the quality of the land, and decided that it is better to stay indoors. At the end, he did not leave until he heard a direct order by God to do so. He needed a divine command to eject him from his ark.

Philo, the Midrash, and the Ibn Ezra, among others, all wonder why Noah was so reluctant to leave. After all, I imagine that had I been cooped up with the same people and with all those animals in a floating menagerie for twelve months, I would be extremely anxious to get out and place my feet on earth again.

The commentaries offer various answers, but none of them is completely satisfactory.

Let us search for an answer by putting ourselves in Noah's place. That should not be too difficult. Because, in a manner of speaking, we too have almost had a Noah-experience. *Mutatis mutandis*, we Jews are just emerging from our ark, surveying the terrain, discovering death and destruction in so many families we know, and, even more, becoming suddenly precipitously aware of the flood of fire that engulfed and almost destroyed our people.

I find several reasons, as a result of this psychological identification with Noah, why he would not want to leave the ark. I discover the elements of fear, despair, weariness

at having to start all over again, even feelings of guilt. But, because of lack of time, allow me to concentrate on one special reaction that I suspect Noah had--because I experienced it in our analogous situation.

I believe that Noah was reluctant to leave his ark because of disgust. He must have surveyed the land about him and noticed painfully how this beautiful world had been destroyed, how all the magnificence of nature and the achievements of man had been turned to naught--all because of the irresponsibility, the immorality, the petty thievery of his contemporaries. He must have looked at this deluge--soaked ruin that the earth had become, and shuddered in revulsion at the kind of people who brought this on. He probably thought to himself that it is preferable to remain in the company of honest beasts rather than to walk even amongst the remains of such false humans. Touching earth again made him relive his profound disappointments in his fellow men, and he wished to stay on the ark.

I can sympathize with Noah. Having lived through the past three weeks, who is not disappointed in Homo Sapiens? What Jew would want to embrace this treacherous hypocritical world?

The Rabbis speak of the blood brought on because of the sin of those who used to steal *pahot mi-shaveh perutah*, articles worth less than a penny. And then they speak not only of *mabbul shel mayim*, the flood of water that engulfed the world in the days of Noah, but also the threat of *Mabbul Shel esh*, the flood of fire.

We are, all of us, sick and disgusted by the *Mabbul shel mayim*, the petty thievery that has brought on, if not a flood of water, then a flood of Watergate revelations. They are sickening to all of us.

But far more consequential, far more disastrous, infinitely more evil, is the duplicity in international politics

which threatens to bring a mabbul shel esh, a flood of fire onto the world and especially onto the Jewish people. Watergate remains indeed a petty crime when compared with the enormity of the blasphemous collusion that now threatens us with the fire of Soviet missiles' bombs.

Consider this: when Israel was first attacked from two sides, during these fateful 24 or 48 hours, and the United States brought in a cease-fire proposal to the Security Council, it could hardly find one other government to go along with it. There were all kinds of discussions and conversations, and we were told that they could not agree on a cease-fire resolution until "the military situation is clarified." What incredible rot, what transparent hypocrisy! What they meant--and any intelligent 10-year old knew about it--was that they first had to find out who was winning the battle. If the Israelis were winning, they would call an immediate cease-fire in order to limit its victories. If the Egyptians and Syrians were winning, they would let them continue until they finished off Israel.

And our great Western allies: France, la belle France! They have become the successors to India and Krishna Menon as the paragons of pious duplicity, of sanctimonious self-righteousness, of moral unctuousness. And France continues to maintain that the Mirages it sends to Lybia are not meant for combat. Apparently, they are meant merely for the entertainment of Lybia's dictator who likes to play with jet planes.

England, that land of civilization and gentlemen, continues to play the same game it always has: when you are out of the government, you are a pro-Israel Zionist, and when you are in the government you are pro-Arab. And it does not matter whether you are Tory or Labor.

And those primitive African nations, bribed by oil, who do not have the elementary decency to break relations with Israel and keep quiet, but have to float ads in the New York Times, maintaining that their enmity towards Israel is not because of oil, but because of the issues--and here they repeat the ritualistic inanities about Israel, mimicking the Arabs. And these nations have the unmitigated gall to call themselves "non-aligned!"

Greece and Turkey, which have been greased and fattened by United States help, will not allow their great benefactor to come to the help of an embattled small ally.

And Germany--ah Germany! What marvelous progress! Thirty years ago Germans killed and others were passive spectators, surveying the massacre of Jews with glossy eyes,

and never raising a voice in protest. Now the Germans have climbed up the moral ladder. Now others are doing the killing, while Germany stands by as the passive spectator refusing to help!

When Moses took the Children of Israel out of Egypt to Palestine he pleaded with the leaders of Edom: Naavrah na be'artzekha, permit us to go through your land; we will not harm anything and we will pay for everything. But Edom refused. And so these contemporary descendants of Edom, these modern reincarnations of Esau and all that he stands for, refuse to allow Israel even air-space above their territories!

And the United Nations--what an abominable exercise in low comedy! The Security Council has become a forum in which people revile each other in obscene language, in which delegates rush at each other in fist fights, and open their jackets to bear gun-holsters. International delegates have become armed thugs, and the Security Council is characterised by brawls that would disgrace a self-respecting saloon. A world forum steeped in double-think and obvious anti-Semitism!

So there is a tendency for us to clam up, to shut ourselves in, to remain enclosed in our own cocoons, to turn sour on the world. We react with disgust and revulsion. We build ourselves psychological arks, constructed from emotional strands of disgust and revulsion and fear and despair and wariness, and we prefer to remain away, remote from the world.

Yet, the divine command calls out to us tzei min ha-tevah, get out of that ark. What shall we do? The answer is you must reassess your understanding of man. It is quite possible that your disappointment in man was so great because your expectations were too high. You, Noah, must no longer entertain such extravagant notions about man's capacities. You have been too idealistic and too romantic.

Note this: God encourages Noah to a more realistic view by telling him that, as it were, God too had a mistaken notion of what man could accomplish. The divine judgment is issued: Yetzer lev haadam ra mi'neurav, I have just "discovered" that the inclination of man's heart is evil from his very infancy. God says: from now on man need no longer be a vegetarian, he may eat meat. I had imagined heretofore that man could rise to a higher level (to the level where he can exist without spilling blood) by himself. Now I see that I must compromise. I must allow this gluttonous, blood-thirsty human to bite into meat and let the blood

soil his mouth and his heart, and perhaps in that way allay his blood-lust for his fellow human. But one maintain standard I insist upon: no murder of fellow man.

So, become realistic! Do not expect too much, but keep your minimum ideals alive.

For us, that means that we must do away with our old liberal pipe-dream about the capacity of the human community to transcend its Yetzer, its own self-interest at all costs. No more must we turn our eyes heavenward and put on a pious mien when we recite that liberal litany about the UN representing “the family of nations.” Family of nations indeed! But there are families and there are families; there are good families and there are Mafia families! And the UN has proved itself to be a Mafia family of Nations!

No more must we permit ourselves messianic fervor in speaking of the international community, as if a large collection of individual nation-roguers can merely by virtue of its size, become saintly.

We must recognize that cynicism and deceit and duplicity are part of the game, and we must not expect it to be otherwise.

But we must continue to use our ideals realistically. We

The What and Why of the Ark

Dr. Erica Brown

My grandchildren love to play with my collection of wooden Noah’s ark figures. Some have moveable animals and a small Noah holding a staff. When I clean up after the children, I make sure to keep the animals in pairs. The children adore the Noah story. The image of the ark appears on kids’ wallpaper and in their books; it’s the stuff of toys.

The only problem is that the Noah story is not for children. It’s an unhappy story of immorality, loss, and despair. The land takes its revenge on society and destroys all within its path. Even the closing covenant God made with Noah contained a note of the tragic: “Never again will I doom the earth because of man, since the devisings of the human mind are evil from youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done” (Gen. 8:21). God’s promise never to destroy the world again is predicated on a lowering of expectations. Humans will forever be flawed. I’m not going to tell my young grandchildren the whole story just yet.

must continue to insist that man is created in the tzellem Elokim, in the image of God, and we must always strive to enhance that image—even if we are the only ones to do so. Because that is our burden, and that is our glory.

So Noah teaches us something about our own condition today. Despair and guilt and disgust all make us turn away from the world and the tasks at hand. It is a justifiable reaction, God forces us too out of our psychological and emotional arks and prods us to reenter the stream of events, in effect to say “hello” to the cruel world, and go about our business wiser if sadder.

These have been traumatic weeks and we shall have to rethink them, reexamine ourselves, indulge in national self-criticism, and ask new questions. But despite our own well-founded reluctance to take on new tasks, we shall have to emerge into the new situations with resolve, vigour, vitality and, above all, a proper combination of realism and idealism.

And like Noah who was commanded to leave the ark and confront the world in all its cruelty, so may we be the recipients of *va-yevarekh Elokim et Noah*, the divine blessing.

Read more at www.yu.edu/about/lamm-heritage.

Maybe the only way we can understand this story is by standing with Noah before he built the ark:

God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with lawlessness because of them: I am about to destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make it an ark with compartments and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Make an opening for daylight in the ark, and finish it within a cubit of the top. Put the entrance to the ark in its side; make it with bottom, second, and third decks. “For My part, I am about to bring the Flood—waters upon the earth—to destroy all flesh under the sky in which there is breath of life; everything on earth shall perish. (Gen. 6:13-17)

Imagine, for a moment, a Divine voice calling out to you with an important task that you, and only you, can actualize. Aside from a few family members, there will

be no one to assist you. You are on your own. Your world will narrow into this one responsibility for the foreseeable future, but surprisingly, it is to create something rather prosaic. You are told to build a ship and to populate that ship with a pair of animals from every species. You try to prepare yourself mentally for the assignment, but you still cannot understand its significance. Unsure of how large this boat should be, you pay careful attention to the dimensions God commands.

You read the instructions a dozen times and make a list of what you'll need. You don't want to get it wrong. The job is too important. You create an architectural rendering of the ark. You wake up with the sun. Hammer in hand, you spend all day in the hot Near East nailing boards together. Everyone around you laughs. They jokingly look for the body of water where you are going to place your ship. They act as if you've lost your mind. But the word of God is a constant whisper in your ear that keeps you focused.

It's only when the rain first beats on the roof and you rush your family and the animals inside that you realize you've missed something critically important. You just closed the door on all of humanity. Holed up in the ark's dark and cavernous inside, you review the directions repeatedly to see where you went wrong. Suddenly you see what you failed to see before. With your singular focus on following directions, you missed that in the opening and closing of the instructions, God presented an apocalyptic vision of the world. And now it is too late to do anything to help all those you left behind. All you can do is monitor the sea and pray.

This is the fate of Noah.

God told Noah exactly what to do. But God also told Noah why. Noah focused on the what and bypassed the why. The directions he was given form a unique and unusual passage because the Tanakh rarely offers concrete recommendations. Abraham was told to go to another country and start a nation with no GPS. Moses was commanded to free the Jews from slavery and take them out of Egypt with no map and no guidance other than a staff. Esther was told by Mordechai to save her people but was given no script. Ruth made a covenantal commitment to Judaism without any explicit instructions. Why is it that Noah, of all people, was given such clear guidelines?

There is a powerful framing to God's technical instructions. Every few lines, God explicitly told Noah about the moral state of the world. Noah responded by

taking out his tools and concentrating on the skylights. Noah missed the larger driving factor behind the situation. Rashi notes this and cites a passage of Talmud (BT Sanhedrin 108b) to support his reading. There are numerous ways, Rashi notes, that God could have saved Noah. Why select an ark? "So that the men of the generation of the flood might see him constructing it for 120 years and might ask him, 'What do you need this for?' and so that he might answer them, 'The Holy One, blessed be He, is about to bring a flood upon the world' — perhaps they might repent."

According to the Talmud, the ark's significance was not in its use during the flood but its very presence long before the water hit. Noah's neighbors would be curious about this building project—how could they not be?—and badger him with questions. Noah could use this conversational opportunity to discuss the larger forces in society that prompted this task and perhaps convince others to repent. They could have all built arks, every last one. The ancient seas could have, without much imagination, been filled with many other arks captained by all of Noah's friends and neighbors. But if any such conversations existed, they are not recorded in our sedra.

Noah was righteous, one midrash states, in his generation. This is both compliment and criticism. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, in *Lessons in Leadership*, concludes that "Noah was a good man who was not a leader." He was, in the words of leadership experts Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky, a master of technical leadership. He focused on what he had to do logistically, but it ironically blinded him from seeing what he had to do adaptively. Adaptive leaders do more than solve problems. They examine causes, assess risks, and anticipate challenges and resistance. They learn the skills that will help them manage contingencies and crises.

When Noah left the ark, he offered a sacrifice — an act of giving to repair a world once flooded with theft and lawlessness. But Noah also planted a vineyard, produced wine, and got drunk in his tent. The enormity of the trauma he experienced was overwhelming. We understand his desire to lose himself in obliviousness. Drinking might have temporarily numbed Noah to all he ignored when building the ark, but at some point, the sobering reality set in. Noah had to construct a new world immune to the moral challenges of the one he left. His technical skills would be of little use. Everything about the new world

required adaptive leadership.

One day, when my grandchildren are ready, I will tell them the whole story and remind them to listen to directions and always ask why and what they can do to help. Because that's what leaders do. Simon Sinek in *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take*

What's Your Name, Again?

Rabbi Joshua (The Hoffer) Hoffman z"l

At the end of parshas Noach, we are informed about the family of Terach, and the marriage of two of his three sons, Nachor and Avram, we are told, took wives. The name of Avram's wife was Sarah, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milkah, the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milkah and Yiskah. Rashi says that Yiskah was actually the same person as Sarai, and that the name Yiskah was taken from the word 'sacha,' which means 'to see, because she saw with the holy spirit, and because everyone looked at her beauty. Rashi also says that Yiskah has the connotation of 'nesichs,' or nobility, a characteristic trait that Sarah also possessed. Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt'l, in the third volume of his *Kol Ram*, asks why she is ultimately known only as Sarah, which has only one meaning, that of being a ruler over others, rather than by the name Yiskah, which has three separate meanings, as Rashi points out. He answers that, actually, being known by one name, with one meaning, is a greater accomplishment than being known by a name that has multiple meanings. Wouldn't it be better to use a name that implies more kinds of praise?

Rav Moshe zt'l, answers that when someone is still young, he is praised for many things, so that he will be encouraged to grow. Once he has gotten older, however, and accomplished many praise-worthy things, he is known by only one name, having achieved much in his life, and not requiring the kind of encouragement he needed when he was young. The editor of *Kol Ram* notes that Rav Moshe said this in 1979, in a celebration held in connection with the wedding of one of his grandsons, Hillel Tendler. While the groom is given many praises when he gets married, he said, when he gets older, he should be known by one name, which encompasses his entire personality. I believe that what Rav Moshe was saying is that a person should strive to have an integrated personality, so that he only needs one name, a name that

Action, writes that, "Regardless of WHAT we do in our lives, our WHY—our driving purpose, cause or belief—never changes." Leaders who only ask 'what' questions are liable to forget the why. But it's always the why that catalyzes true and meaningful change, one raindrop at a time.

encapsulated in one word who he really is, and what he represents.

Actually, what Rav Moshe said at his grandson's wedding was said about him by his distinguished and devoted student, Rav Nisson Alpert, zt'l, when he spoke at Rav Moshe's funeral in 1986. Rav Alpert said that different Torah scholars are distinguished by their erudition in different tractates or orders of the Talmud, or for different, specific character traits in which they excelled. In this way, they are, in a sense, somewhat disproportionate in their gestalt, with one part of their scholarship or personality appearing being greater than the other, just as a person with specific physical attribute appears a bit strange in that the entire body does not appear as an integrated whole. Rav Moshe, however, was great in everything, in terms of his erudition as well as his personality. Everything fit together, and, therefore, he did not appear unusual in any way. This, I believe, is what Rav Moshe meant in his remarks about Sarah, and in the message he gave to his grandson in 1979.

Interestingly, Rav Moshe's cousin, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, zt'l, as brought in *Man of Faith in the Modern World* also known as *Reflections of the Rav*, volume 2), pps. 88-89, said something similar in regard to Sarah, in explaining a well-known Rashi in the beginning of parshas Chayei Sarah. The Torah tells us there that the lifetime of Sarah was 'one hundred years and twenty years and seven years,' and ends the verse by saying, 'the years of the life of Sarah.' Rashi explains that all of her years were equally good. When she was one hundred years old she was like a twenty-year old, in regard to sin, in that just as a twenty-year old has not sinned, because punishment from heaven only begins at age twenty, so, too, at age one hundred, Sarah had not sinned. In addition, when Sarah was twenty, she was as a seven-year old in terms of her beauty. Rav Soloveitchik explained that what Rashi is suggesting is that

Sarah carried with her, into each successive stage of life, the positive characteristics of the previous stage, so that all three stages of life, childhood, youth and adulthood, were, ultimately, integrated within her personality. This is

waht the word sarah, according to Rav Moshe, zt'l, implies an integration of the different positive traits that Sarah developed throughout the different stages of her life.

We Are the Fate of the World

Rabbi Assaf Bednarsh (Transcribed and adapted by a talmid from the YUTorah shiur originally given at Gruss Kollel in Yerushalayim on November 3, 2016)

You can find something interesting if you are *medayek* in *pshuto shel mikra* of the story of the Mabul in Parshas Noach. The Mabul is an example of the concept of *sechar ve-onesh*. Everyone in the world was corrupt and evil, and they deserved a big *onesh* according to Hashem's *midah* of justice—and they all got killed. But there are many ways that Hashem could have destroyed everyone. Why *davka* pick the method of a Mabul? Carefully compare parshios Bereishis and Noach. How did Hashem create the world in Parshas Bereishis? *Ve-ruach Elokim merachefes al pnei ha-mayim*. There was no earth. Therefore, there were no people and animals because there was water everywhere. So what did Hashem do? He made some of the water go up into the heavens and some down into the seas. And that exposed some land where the terrestrial creatures and man can live. What happened in a Mabul? *Ba-yom ha-zeh nivke'u kol ma'ayanos tehom rabah, va-arubos ha-shomayim niftachu*. All the waters from below came up. All the water from above came down. It's not just another *onesh*. It is, quite literally, a reversal of *Ma'aseh Bereishis*. What Hashem did at the beginning of Noach is *Va-yinachem Hashem ki asa ha-Adam ba-aretz*. Since he regretted how the world turned out, He reversed *Ma'aseh Bereishis* and turned it back into a sort of *tohu va-vohu* that existed at the very beginning of parshas Bereishis. Therefore, it is no wonder that Chazal say that there was no light and that the Heavenly bodies did not function during the year of the Mabul. And this continues the theme of the *peshuto shel mikra* since there was also a *bitul of va-yehi ohr*—as there was no light and there was a *bitul of meoros ha-shomayim*. And obviously, there was a *bitul* of all the *ofos* and the *chayos* in the world. So the words of Chazal fit the *peshuto shel mikra* in showing how the reversal of the entire *Ma'aseh Bereishis*. And then, what happens after the Mabul makes sense. The *lashon* of *va-ya'aver Hashem ruach*

al ha'aretz va-yashoku ha-mayim is reminiscent of *ve-ruach Elokim merachefes al pnei ha-mayim* in *Ma'aseh Bereishis*. It is as if Hashem had to recreate the world during the Mabul—He went back and made a new *Ma'aseh Bereishis*. And just like during the original *Ma'aseh Bereishis* Hashem told Adam: *Pru u'rvu*, He now tells Noach: *Pru u'rvu*. And just like Hashem assigns Adam his food, He likewise does to Noach. And I think that the *omek* of the *pshuto shel mikra* here is that we are supposed to learn two things from the story of the Mabul. One: On a simple level, there is such a thing as *sechar ve-onesh*. If you do bad things, it is worthy of punishment—Hashem punishes evil. But not just that. If people are not going to do the right things and they will do *aveiros*, then all the *Ma'aseh Bereishis* is not worthwhile anymore. It's not worth having a world if *kol basar* is going to *hishchis darko ba'aretz*. Because the only reason Hashem created the world is for people to do the right thing. And I think that the main message of Parshas Noach and the Mabul is not just that evil people get punished—that there is *schar ve-onesh min-hashomayim*. The world is not here even for the million billion stars and galaxies, countless wonderous species of flora and fauna, and all kinds of beautiful *niflaot ha-teva*, etc., out there. The world exists for us to make the right decision, use our *bechira* to serve Hashem, and do *mitzvos*. And if not, the world as well may not have been created and has no purpose whatsoever. And that imposes a sense of *achrayus* on us. As Rambam says: Everyone should view themselves at every moment as if the whole world is in the balance, and their next choice would determine whether it is judged as mostly good or mostly bad. Not just whether they deserve to be rewarded or punished. But whether there is a point to the entire world—if there was a point for Hashem to create this world—it's our *achrayus* to do the right thing and justify *Ma'aseh Bereishis*. Shabbat Shalom.

Religious People must also be Humanists

Rabbi Moshe Taragin

Sometimes we confuse our terminology. The term humanism is often misunderstood and is often confused with related terms such as liberalism and individualism. Unfortunately, this misperception causes many religious people to reject the core values of humanism, many of which are central to Jewish belief.

Fundamentally, humanism addresses the question of Man's innate nature: are human beings inherently noble or inherently evil? Many modern thinkers asserted that we are inherently evil, and, if left to our own devices and our own conscience, we would quickly descend into chaos and violence. Hobbes, Dostoevsky, and Orwell all portrayed man as inherently corrupt and sinful.

Judaism sharply disagrees with this pessimistic view of human nature, claiming instead, that Man is created virtuous and noble. Observing the final stage of creation capped by the formation of Man, Hashem announces that his handiwork is "tov me'od" - wonderful and agreeable. Of course, Man, though inherently virtuous, also possesses powerful desires which, if left unchecked, lead to moral freefall. The story of flood displayed the depths of moral degeneracy, and Hashem was forced to reboot all of civilization. Yet, even in the aftermath of this apocalypse Hashem never decries Man as innately evil. Rather Hashem acknowledges Man's penchant for disobedience and vows to never annihilate humanity. The Torah never deviates from its optimistic view of human nature, even at this low point of moral history.

Asserting the nobility and dignity of Man, Judaism is predicated upon a humanistic outlook. Every human possesses a tzelem elokim or divinely endowed traits exclusive to the human condition including free will, consciousness, creativity, moral sensibility, cognitive communication, and emotional awareness. Additionally, Judaism designates superior status to human beings based upon their divinely assigned mission and duty. Man's superior station is not just a product of his inborn lofty character traits, but more importantly, due to his religious and moral calling.

A humanistic view demands that we respect the dignity of every individual crafted in the image of Hashem. Similarly, we should respect their intelligence and learn from both their greater wisdoms and their worthwhile

achievements. These humanistic values are enshrined with Judaism. Yet, even though Judaism is built upon humanistic values, the term "humanism" is often threatening to religious people. Ironically, it is not humanism per se, but some of the historical effects of humanism which pose challenges to religious values. Secular humanism Conceptually, Humanism draws upon a religious belief, that Hashem invested Man with superior and uncommon potential. Many of the first humanists were deeply religious and derived their ideas from the Bible. One of the first humanists, Pico Della Mirandola, a 15th century Italian philosopher, wrote a manifesto of humanism entitled "Oration on the Dignity of Man" in which he claimed "to [man] it is granted to have whatever he chooses, to be whatever he wills." Though Pico and his fellow Renaissance thinkers were deeply religious, regrettably, their lofty ideas eventually yielded a secularized humanism which eliminated God from human history. Gradually, the belief that Man is a surpassing being, implied that human potential alone was sufficient. With its tools of ration and science, and its inherent moral sensibility, humanity could produce utopia without any need of divine assistance or religious guidance. Sadly, secular humanism yielded the secular world we currently inhabit. In addition, secular humanism often prioritized human experience over religious submission. If Man was a superior creature, perhaps human prosperity and enjoyment represented the highest goal. Whereas religion elevates obedience to Hashem as the supreme value, secular humanism often designates human prosperity as the highest achievement. Ultimately, secular humanism clashes with religion on these two central issues: it suggests that that Man has little need of heavenly assistance, and it designates human prosperity as the highest objective. However, though secular humanism is incongruent with religion, humanism itself, with its belief in the in the majesty and potential of human beings is central to religion. It is imperative not to confuse the two and crucial that religious people define themselves as humanists as well.

Liberalism Secular humanist thought didn't just pose intellectual challenges to religion but also caused a reimagination of society and politics. As religion and state became separated, society was now viewed as a collection

of different citizens rather than an organic community united by race, religion, or nationality. This shift was welcome news for many Jews looking to integrate into the broader society. Jews could now achieve full membership in liberal societies which didn't discriminate between its citizens. However, liberal societies always challenge national identity and, in particular, raise questions about the concept of a chosen people. If citizens of liberal democratic societies are all equal, how can Jews also lay claim to being a people chosen by Hashem? For many Jews living in liberal societies which stressed the commonality and universality of all human beings, Jewish rituals and traditions now appeared tribal or parochial. Historically, many Jews, who entered liberal society rejected or significantly diluted their Jewish identity, practice, or their sense of historical Jewish mission. Rebbi Akiva said "beloved is Man created in the divine image, special divine affection exists for the Jewish people who are called children of Hashem." We assert that every person has divine majesty but still uphold our special relationship with God, and our unique calling. Universal belief in the virtue of Man should not dilute national identity or religious commitment. Erosion of Values Additionally, since Humanism champions the potential of each individual, it also, implicitly, defends the rights of each individual, thereby providing the intellectual grounds for political democracy and the protection of basic human rights. The doctrine that the rights of each individual are sacred, led to the false notion that the values and ideals of each individual are also sacred. In this manner, liberal society, founded upon humanist values generates a swirl of moral relativism which blurs core religious and moral

values. We have witnessed the erosion of traditional values such as identity, family, community, and morality. In response to this deterioration of values, religious people turn away from liberalism toward more conservative approaches which appear to more strongly uphold traditional religious values. Religion and Conformity There is a third effect of humanism which threatens religious identity. Religious commitment is a delicate calibration between personal expression and conformity to values and practices common to all. Religion demands surrender of unlimited personal autonomy and submission to divine will. Each religious community establishes a different balance between collective experience and personal expression. For several reasons, many modern religious communities have veered toward greater conformity and less personal expression. This is very evident in both Hassidic and Charedi cultures, but is also evident in many other religious communities. Humanism glorifies the singular traits of each and every human being and thereby encourages more personal expression and individual behavior. For this reason as well, many religious people remain suspicious that humanism will subvert conformism and sabotage religious submission. It is crucial to discriminate between core tenets of humanism and the manner in which secular humanism has crafted liberal societies which challenge national identity, muddle our core values, and overemphasize personal expression. Religious people must unconditionally reject secular humanism and its social and cultural influences. It is crucial however, not to reject the core notion of humanism- belief in human nature and respect for every human crafted in Hashem's image.

The Offspring of The Righteous

Mrs. Michal Horowitz

In this week's parsha, Parshas Noach, we learn of the famous deluge that inundated the world, washing all life away, destroying the top layer of the earth itself, save for Noach, his wife Naama, Shem, Cham, Yafes and their wives, as well as the animals they took with them into the Ark (and the fish). Due to the corruption of mankind upon the earth, ten generations after Adam, Noach and his progeny were to rebuild and start the world anew.

And yet, when the flood waters subside, and we expect Noach and his family to emerge from the Ark, something

very different occurs. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z'l writes, "The rain comes; the earth is flooded; Noah and those with him are the sole survivors. The rain ceases and the water abates.

"We expect to read that Noah emerges from the Ark. Instead, the narrative slows down and for fourteen verses almost nothing happens. The water recedes. The ark comes to rest. Noah opens a window and sends out a raven. Then he sends out a dove. He waits seven days and sends it out again. It returns with an olive leaf. Another

seven days pass. He sends the dove a third time. This time it does not return, but Noah still does not step out onto dry land. Eventually, G-d Himself says, 'Come out of the Ark.' Only then - in response to the Divine directive - does Noah exit the Ark..." The lesson is unmistakable. "When it comes to rebuilding a shattered world, you do not wait for permission" (Covenant & Conversation, Genesis, p.45).

A number of years ago, I noticed something simply astonishing in the sedra of Noach. Noach, whose name itself means 'passivity' or 'at rest', does not speak. Look through the entire sedra, from the very first pasuk (Bereishis 6:9), through almost the very end of the Noach narrative. Noach is silent. Passive. At rest. Noach does not talk. [Noach does speak, but only at the very end of the sedra, when he has more of a nevuah than active speech which he would have initiated of his own free will and volition. See Bereishis 9:25-27 for Noach's nevuah.]

Adam, the first man and first sinner, speaks to G-d. Kayin, the first murderer, speaks to G-d. Avraham Avinu and Moshe Rabbeinu spend their entire careers speaking to G-d; bargaining, pleading, praying, negotiating, thanking and praising. Bilaam, whose last name is rasha, speaks to G-d. It is highly unusual that the Torah portrays the life of a major Biblical personality with such detail - as it does of Noach and the deluge - and said personality does not talk. Even the primordial serpent and Bilaam's donkey both speak!

In a Torah of action, Noach is the outlier, the exception, the man who is faulted for his silence. Rabbi Lord J. Sacks continues, "Noah is the paradigm of Biblical obedience. He does as he is commanded. What his story tells us is that obedience is not enough (*Italics in the original*). This is an extraordinary phenomenon. It is reasonable to assume that in the life of faith, obedience is the highest virtue. (And yet,) in Judaism, it is not. One of the strangest features of biblical Hebrew is that - despite the fact that the Torah contains 613 commands - there is no word for 'obey.' Instead the verb the Torah uses is shema/lishmoa, 'to listen, hear, attend, understand, internalize, respond'... In Judaism, G-d does not command blind obedience. As the Sages teach: G-d does not deal despotically with His creatures' (Avoda Zara 3a). If He sought no more than mindless submission to the divine will, He would have created robots, machines, or genetically programmed people who respond automatically to commands... G-d wants us to be mature, deliberative, to do His will because

we understand or because we trust Him when we do not understand. He seeks from us something other and greater than obedience, namely responsibility...

"Noah's end - drunk, disheveled, an embarrassment to his children - eloquently tells us that if you save yourself while doing nothing to save the world, you do not even save yourself. Noah, so the narrative seems to suggest, could not live with the guilt of survival... When it comes to rebuilding the ruins of catastrophe, you do not wait for permission. You take the risk and walk ahead. Faith is more than obedience. It is the courage to create (and when need be, re-create)" (Covenant & Conversation, Genesis, p.45-47).

While Noach was a good man, righteous in his generation, he does not merit to become the founder, father, or leader of the Umah Yisraelis. When Avraham's nephew was captured in battle, Avraham became involved - risking his life to save someone else. When dusty nomadic travelers, with the dust of idolatry upon their feet, searched for water and food on a hot Middle Eastern day, Avraham ran to serve them. When the towns of Sodom and Amorah were facing destruction, Avraham bargained with G-d. Avraham became our father - a paradigm of action, initiative, compassion and humanity. As for Moshe Rabbeinu, our greatest leader to ever live, he spent his entire career advocating, praying and saving the people.

Noach was passive and at rest, Noach followed the commands of G-d, but did nothing beyond exactly what he was commanded to do. He saved himself, but did not even attempt to save anyone else. For this reason, he could not be Avinu, nor Rabbeinu.

A true leader is always concerned with the well being of the klal. A talmid was once sleeping over at the Kamenetsky home. He heard the phone ring at 1am, then again at 3am, then again at 5am. In the morning, he could not contain himself and asked, "Doesn't the Rosh Yeshiva (HaRav Shmuel Kamenetsky shlita) ever take the phone off the hook?" "No," said Rav Shmuel. He explained that he had learned from his father, Rav Yaakov zt'l, that one must always be available to a Yid in need. "I can't always help them, but at least I can listen, and see if there's something I can do." After thinking a moment, Rav Shmuel added that there was one time he remembered taking his phone off the hook. A caller had called every half hour straight through the night and at a certain point he apologized, but explained he needed to take the

phone off the hook because his wife wasn't able to sleep (Mishpacha Jr., Succos 5783, Issue 931, p.10).

In a world of corruption, Noah was a good man, and for this, he merited salvation. But a true leader carries the klal with him, and advocates for others in their time of need.

Plowing in the Fields of Torah

Rabbi Steven Gotlib

When Hashem decided to destroy humanity, He chose Noah to build up future generations. But what, exactly, made Noah so special?

The first verse of our parshah notes that Noah was “a righteous man; he was blameless in his age.” (Bereishit 6:9, all biblical translations JPS 2006) Rashi, commenting on that verse, notes that Noah must have truly been righteous in order to warrant being praised after being introduced. Furthermore, the fact that it is his righteousness that follows the words “These are the progeny of Noah,” rather than the list of his children, teaches that the true progeny of righteous individuals are their good deeds.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 108a) records an important debate about the emphasis on “in his age”: Rabbi Yochanan said that Noah was great compared to the horrible generation in which he was born, but that he would not have been considered righteous at other points in history. Reish Lakish, on the other hand, says that if Noah was able to still be righteous amongst the influences of his own generation, he'd be all the more righteous in other generations. But regardless of who is ultimately correct, it is clear that Noah was chosen because he was able to stand above those around him.

There may, however, be more to understanding why Noah was chosen, beyond his righteousness (relative or otherwise). At the end of last week's parshah Hashem saw that humanity's increase had led to the spread of wickedness. (Bereishit 6:18) One of the earliest blessings that Hashem gave to humanity, to be fruitful and multiply, had been tremendously misused. Perhaps this is emphasized by the Torah describing that the rain “multiplied” as it overtook humanity and lifted the ark. (ibid. 7:17)

Just before all of this (ibid. 5:29), Noah was given his name precisely because, “This one will provide us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands, out of the very soil which Hashem placed under a curse.” Rashi

And so, it is at the end of parshas Noach, that we meet Avraham Avinu - the founder of our nation, a leader and advocate for all. May we learn from his ways and emulate his path.

comments that the relief that Noah will bring refers to his invention of agricultural instruments to help ease the burden that Hashem had cursed humanity with following the expulsion from Gan Eden. (Bereishit 3:17) Rabbi Ovadia Seforno notes that the word noach at various points in Tanach also refers to respite from one's enemies. Perhaps Noah's name refers to his eventual selection as a course corrector for the world away from wickedness. In that sense, Noah can be said to have literally acted as Hashem's agricultural tool in rendering the earth more fertile than it otherwise could have been.

Indeed, a midrash (Shemot Rabbah 30:13) claims that the generation of the flood was offered the Torah and, in fact, turned it down. Perhaps this is why it had to be water, which is so often associated with Torah, that had to be the mechanism for purifying the earth. Only one who was righteous, whether fully or comparatively, would be in an ideal position to ensure that the fertile soil remaining would be able to support the seeds of Torah. Only one who is righteous can really ensure that Torah is able to grow and spread. As Rebbe Nachman notes (Likutei Moharan 8), the Torah is a garden, while the Jewish people are those who examine the different plants growing within it. But it is only the wisdom of Hashem that actually allows the Torah to grow, via the fountain that is human prayers, which are themselves inspired by the righteous of our own generation.

Of course, Noah's initial steps after emerging from the ark included planting a grapevine, which is seen as a failing. Nonetheless, in his overall arc, Noah can be seen as representing the beginning of a process that continues to this very day. Just as his righteousness allowed Torah to grow in a land that was previously unsuitable for it, so too can righteousness in our own generation inspire greater prayers and stronger connections to Torah.

Parenting from the Parsha: Caring for Others

Rabbi Yossi Goldin

The first few parshiyot of Sefer Bereishit are so action packed, that there are sections in each parsha that we tend to read through quickly, almost skip over. These parts appear uneventful- fillers meant to provide information, but nothing more.

And yet, if we look closely, we can often glean important messages even from these sections of the Torah...

At the end of this week's parsha, the Torah lists the generations from Noach to Avraham Avinu. This mirrors a similar section at the end of last week's parsha, where the Torah lists the generations from Adam's son Sheit to Noach. A very subtle, yet very interesting, textual nuance emerges in both locations.

As the Torah lists the personalities from each successive generation, it notes how many years each individual lived before he had his first child- and then notes the number of years he lived after the child was born.

Why does the Torah list the generations in such a strange way? What is the significance of dividing each person's life into the years before he had children and the years after he had children?

Perhaps we can suggest that the Torah is teaching us a fundamental lesson regarding childbearing. In essence, the Torah maintains, there are two distinct stages to the life of a parent- the life he lives before he has a child, and his life after the birth of a child. Those two stages are so fundamentally different, that the Torah lists each stage separately.

The message is clear: An individual's life changes completely once his first child is born

This lesson may seem obvious, almost intuitive- but it is a crucial one for us to carefully consider and remember. While having children is the ultimate bracha, as we have often noted before, it also is a tremendous responsibility, and forces us to change the way that we think about ourselves and live our lives. This is true in a few ways.

Firstly, it causes a shift in our overall mindset and focus. Until we are blessed with a child, our lives ultimately revolve around ourselves and our needs. This reality changes fundamentally when a child is born. For the first time in our lives, we are tasked with giving wholeheartedly and expecting nothing in return. We can no longer simply think about our needs, but we must be constantly

thoughtful and aware of the child's needs as well. We are responsible for every aspect of the child's life, for life-ultimately there is no "turning back". This accountability and responsibility forces us to dramatically shift our mindset and mentality.

The birth of a child also impacts the dynamic between husband and wife. Rather than focusing on their relationship with each other, the couple now shifts their overarching focus to their child. They are also tasked with working together towards the raising this child. These new realities may give rise to pressures and conflicts that did not appear before.

I have often heard from Dr. David Pelcovitz that studies show that if you wake up a mother in the middle of the night and ask her "what are you?", she will answer that she is "a mother". At the same time, if you ask a father the same question, then he will say that he is "a husband". This distinction highlights the fact that husbands and wives view their roles in life very differently after a child is born. While the mother's understanding of her role shifts dramatically, the father's remains more static. This difference could impact the dynamic between the couple as well.

Finally, and most importantly, another profound paradigm shift occurs with the birth of one's child. For the first time, a parent begins to understand the concept of legacy and continuity. As he looks upon this tiny creature, in whose creation he played a crucial role, he begins to see the continuation of himself, his values and his legacy. This realization is hard to fully describe but is incredibly powerful. It enables us to realize the profoundness of parenthood, and also causes us to reflect upon our role as children, as a link to the legacy of our parents, grandparents, and predecessors. This in turn causes us to look at, and live, our lives in a drastically different way than we did before.

At the end of this week's parsha, the Torah subtly hints to a crucial message in parenting- the fact that the birth of a child changes the lives of its parent's in dramatic fashion. New realities and responsibilities are thrust upon the new parents, and shifts in perspective and roles begin to occur. Such realities and shifts may naturally cause newfound tensions to emerge- and the more aware we are of these

possible tensions in advance, the better equipped we will be to deal with them.

At the same, becoming a parent also cause a tremendous paradigm shift- as it causes us to consider the implications

The Most Important Offspring...

Rabbi Efreim Goldberg

Parshas Noach begins, אלה תולדות נח, נח איש צדיק – “These are the offspring of Noah; Noah was a righteous man.” The Torah here introduces the “offspring of Noah,” but before listing the names of his sons – which we find in the next pasuk – the Torah first speaks of Noah himself, mentioning that he was righteous.

The commentators explain that a person’s greatest “offspring” is himself, his own personal accomplishments and achievements. As important as it is to invest in our children, to work hard to raise them, educate them, and prepare them for a life of success and achievement, and as much as we should certainly long to receive nachas from them – our most important “offspring” are our own actions, that which we ourselves accomplish. Noah was the father of Shem, Ham and Yefet – and, essentially, of all mankind. Nevertheless, the primary תולדות נח, his most important legacy, was נח איש צדיק – his righteous conduct, his resisting the immorality of his time and living a life of piety.

The pejorative Yiddish word for somebody who has not

The Story of Noah: Fact or Fantasy?

Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald

This coming week’s Torah portion, parashat Noah, that features the famous “Flood story,” is a truly intriguing portion. Academic and scholarly literature speak of the story of the Flood as if it were a myth, or a fairy tale. From the Jewish perspective, it is, not only, a fascinating narrative, but is also a parasha that is replete with groundbreaking insights, and profound messages for humankind.

It is not at all surprising that many of the ancient Near East documents contain parallels to the story of the flood. Perhaps, the most famous is the Babylonian “Epic of Gilgamesh” which tells the story of a man named Utnapishtim. In the Epic narrative, the gods decide to destroy the earth. There’s a great flood, and Utnapishtim,

of raising children in our image and the continuity of our legacy, even as we re-envision our own role in preserving the legacy of those who came before us.

Wishing everyone a Shabbat Shalom!

achieved or accomplished anything significant is “*lemech*.” Interestingly, Lemech is the name of Noah’s father. Rav Yechezkel Weinfeld explained that Lemech left no legacy other than his righteous son, who saved the world. As far as we know, he has no other accomplishments to his credit. A “*lemech*” is someone who does not bother contributing or achieving, and chooses instead to ride on his children’s coattails. A “*lemech*” is the kind of person who is always talking to people about what college his child got into, what kind of job his child has, his child’s net worth, his child’s prestigious award, and so on. This is the kind of person who does not try to accomplish on his own, but tries instead to live vicariously through his children’s achievements. Such a person is a “*lemech*,” an underachiever, a person with no legacy.

אלה תולדות נח – נח איש צדיק. The most important offspring that we beget, the most important legacy that we leave, is not our children, but rather our personal accomplishments, the real difference that we’ve made through our contributions.

who is the favorite of one of the gods, Eau, is saved.

Of course, if there really was a flood that inundated the ancient Near East, quite a few striking parallels between the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Torah’s story of Noah are to be expected. And yet, despite the parallels, the stories are profoundly different. In the Babylonian story, the gods arbitrarily decide to destroy the earth, as if humanity is a plaything. Furthermore, the gods choose to save Utnapishtim only because he’s a “favorite” of theirs—not because he’s moral, righteous or more deserving.

The Torah revolutionizes the Flood story, and adds what is most significant—a moral element. It’s not that G-d arbitrarily decides to destroy the world, but rather that the world had become corrupt and self-destructive. Noah

himself is described, (Genesis 6:9), as an *אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים*—a righteous person who was perfect in his generation. In fact, it says about Noah (Genesis 6:9), underscoring his specialness, that he walked with G-d, *אָתְּ הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֵּךְ נֹחַ*.

According to the Midrashic tradition, Noah builds an ark for 120 years, to give the people a chance to repent. People pass by and ask, “Noah, what are you doing?” He replies, “I’m building an ark. The world is going to be flooded because of the evil deeds of the people.” Noah enters the ark with his wife, his three sons, and daughters-in-law. Once they are on the ark, G-d waits an additional seven days before bringing the waters of the flood. Again, a delay, giving the people an additional opportunity to repent. And even when it begins to rain, the Torah states, (Genesis 7:12), *וַיְהִי הַגֶּשֶׁם עַל הָאָרֶץ*, implying that the rain started to fall lightly, indicating that the Al-mighty would have reversed His decision and stopped the flood, had the people only repented. But they did not!

It rains for 40 days and 40 nights. Meanwhile, Noah has to care for all the animals that are on the ark. Although the rain stops after the 40 days, Noah, in fact, has to wait a full year for the earth to dry.

The earth is now dry, and Noah’s remarkable inaction is recorded in the Torah. After caring for all the animals for a full year, feeding and cleaning them, living with elephants, bulls and orangutans, (you can hardly imagine what it must have been like!)—after a full 365 days have passed, G-d says to Noah, (Genesis 8:15-16), *צֵא, מִן הַתֵּבָה*, “Noah, get out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your daughters-in-law!” Can you imagine, after being cooped up in the ark, the horrible and smelly ark, for a full year, G-d has to command Noah, *צֵא, מִן הַתֵּבָה*?! Get out of the ark! Most people would have jumped out of their skins to get out of the ark. But Noah is hesitant to leave!

Elie Wiesel offers a revealing insight to explain Noah’s behavior. He suggests that Noah is really the “first survivor.” After all, the world had experienced a Holocaust, and Noah was reluctant to leave the ark because he knew that the entire world was, in effect, one huge graveyard. If Noah would walk on the earth, he would be treading upon the remains of his neighbors and friends—the people with whom he had partied and played. He simply could not face the fact that he had survived, while they did not.

After giving thanks to G-d, and offering sacrifices, the Torah informs us, Genesis 9:20-21, *וַיִּשַׁע נֹחַ, אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה, וַיִּשַׁע*, *וַיִּחַל נֹחַ, אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה, וַיִּשַׁע*, that Noah’s first reaction after the flood was to begin

to plant—a vineyard. All this is very nice, a gratifying and hopeful action to take after a great destruction—to plant anew. But what does Noah plant? He plants a vineyard. Scripture records (Genesis 9:21), *וַיִּשֶׂת מִן הַיַּיִן*, and he drank of the wine, *וַיִּשְׁכָּר*, and he became drunk, *וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶלָה*, and he [Noah] wallowed in the muck in his tent.

Poor Noah, couldn’t face the fact that everybody except he and his family had been lost in the deluge. He looks for an escape—and finds it in alcohol, and becomes a drunkard. He could not go out to work, he couldn’t face reality! Noah’s reaction was not unsimilar to the response of some Holocaust survivors of our generation. Some were just unable to face the fact that they were singled out to survive, while their friends and relatives, spouses, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters had perished.

In this state of inebriation, Noah, who is terribly vulnerable, something very shocking happens.

The Torah records that Noah had three sons: Shem, Cham, and Yafet. The Torah text, always referred to Cham as “Avi Canaan, the father of Canaan.” The Torah reports, (Genesis 9:22), that when Noah was well-inebriated, Cham, Avi Canaan, the father of Canaan, saw his father’s nakedness and told his two brothers outside. The Rabbis note that the expression “to see a person’s nakedness,” often implies a sexual encounter. In fact, they suggest that Cham did not just see his father’s nakedness, or merely mock his father, but that he actually sodomized or emasculated his father, and went and told his brothers. He said to them, “Come see our father the drunk. Noah, the survivor, has become a vegetable. Can’t face reality. He’s a plain drunk!”

But the two remaining sons of Noah, Shem and Yafet, empathize with their father’s pain, and, rather than participate in Cham’s mortification of Noah, take a cloak, put it on their own shoulders, and walk backwards. Covering their father’s nakedness, they do not see their father’s nakedness.

The Bible then relates, (Genesis 9:24), that as soon as Noah awakens from his alcohol-induced stupor, *וַיִּדַע*, *אֵת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לוֹ בְּנוֹ הַקָּטָן*, that he knew what his little son, Cham, had done to him. (Had Cham only mocked his father, Noah would not have known. Cham obviously did something physical to him.) Noah says, (Genesis 9:25), *אָרוּר כְּנַעַן*, “May Canaan be cursed!” Note that Noah does not curse his son, Cham, but rather curses his grandson, Cham’s son, Canaan. *יְהִי לְאֶחָיו, עֶבֶד עֶבְדִים*, “May he always be enslaved to his brothers.”

Why does Noah curse his grandson, rather than Cham, his own son? Perhaps it is because, of all the children, Cham was the only one who was himself at this time a father. Of all Noah's children, Cham was certainly aware of the challenges of parenthood. Consequently, of all the children, he should have been most sensitive to Noah's plight. Yet he was the least sensitive! And Noah says, "If that's the way you expect to act, if you intend to be an indifferent, insensitive parent, you should know what impact your behavior will have on your own child, Canaan." Because of his own inability to control his own behavior, he will, perforce, become a slave to his own wicked passions, because the example provided to him by his own father is one of subservience to unbridled wickedness.

The story of the flood is not at all a myth. It is a fascinating historical record, replete with incredibly revolutionary insights, as is the entire Torah. As with all of Torah, it must be studied and constantly reviewed, for in it we shall find the most profound secrets of human behavior and of human relations.