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Noach and Re-Creation

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

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**Torah comes to reveal and not to conceal.[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.[[2]](#footnote-2)**

# HaShem, Man, and Land

There is an intimate connection between HaShem,[[3]](#footnote-3) man and the **land** (adamah - הָאֲדָמָה). In order to understand The Mabul, The Flood, one must first understand this intimate connection between HaShem, man, and the **land**. One can see this intimate connection being emphasized every time that man, sins. Man’s sins *separate* man from HaShem and this is reflected in the *separation* between man and the **land**.

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A quick review of the Torah will make this idea more apparent.

The Serpent

The serpent sinned when he enticed Chava[[4]](#footnote-4) to eat the forbidden fruit. HaShem God[[5]](#footnote-5) cursed the serpent that beguiled Chava, He cursed him to be greatly reduced in stature. He lost his arms and legs and he was forced to eat dust instead of his normal food. The serpent became diminished and more earth-like. He literally became part of the **land** when he ate the dust.

Adam

When Adam sinned, HaShem cursed the **land** (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה) and made it difficult for man to eat the produce of the **land**.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Chava

Childbirth was designed as a process where two went up to their marital bed. When they came down, their children came down with them. That is how it was supposed to be.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXII:2*** *AND SHE CONCEIVED AND BORE CAIN. R. Eleazar b. ‘Azariah said: Three wonders were performed on that day: on that very day they were created, on that very day they cohabited, and on that very day they produced off- spring. R. Joshua b. Karhah said: Only two entered the bed, and seven left it: Cain and his twin sister, Abel and his two twin sisters.[[7]](#footnote-7)*

When Chava sinned, God created pain for the woman in childbirth.[[8]](#footnote-8) Why did Chava’s sin result in such a result? To answer this, we must ask, what is a child? One’s wife is a *field* where her husband plows, plants seed, and reaps produce. A husband’s progeny are the produce of his field (wife) that he has plowed, planted, and harvested. Thus, we understand that Chava’s punishment distanced her from childbirth. Adam’s field, Chava, no longer easily yielded its produce. Both of Adam’s fields, his wife and his **land**, had been cursed.

As an aside, if you look carefully, you will notice that progeny and the land are intimately connected in the covenants that HaShem made with the patriarchs.

Adam and Chava

When Adam and Chava sinned, HaShem God expelled them from His garden, Gan Eden. HaShem God distanced man from the ideal **land**, God’s garden, which allowed man *maximum intimacy* with HaShem. This intimacy was facilitated by being able to eat with the *absolute minimum of effort*, and with the *absolute maximum of pleasure* from the food he ate. Expulsion from the garden also meant expulsion from the highest level of intimacy with HaShem. When man moved away from HaShem, by his sin, man also distanced himself from the ideal **land** and forced him to a poor substitute **land** where he had to exert the *absolute maximum amount of effort* in order to procure produce with greatly diminished taste and quality. This reduction in the produce of the **land** (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה) was reflected in the physicality of man. Adam’s and Chava’s sin caused them to be reduced in stature and increased in corporeality.

Cain

When Cain killed Abel,[[9]](#footnote-9) his sin caused him to distance himself from HaShem. This distance was reflected in the **land** not yielding its strength to Cain[[10]](#footnote-10) and being cursed to become a wanderer with no **land** (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה) that would allow him to settle. Just as his brother, Abel, no longer had a place on earth, Cain no longer had a place on earth where he could settle. Cain had distanced himself from HaShem and this was reflected in his further distance from the **land**.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Noach

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20*** *And Noach built an altar to HaShem; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*

Noach’s response to his salvation was the bringing of offerings to HaShem. Although Cain and Abel had already offered up sacrifices, this is the first instance where an offering is presented as emblematic of a relationship that the one bringing the offering has with HaShem. Noach’s reaction to being saved, to weathering the ordeal of the flood, being put back on the **land**, and to being given a second chance, was to offer up some of his bounty to HaShem.

This offering motivated HaShem’s blessing for Noach, his descendants and his new world:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21*** *And HaShem smelled the pleasing odor; and HaShem said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for Man’s sake; for the imagination of Man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing, as I have done.*

Before The Flood, the **land** was punished for not obeying HaShem’s commandment to the letter.[[12]](#footnote-12) HaShem commanded the **land** to grow “fruit trees” and the land created instead “trees that only grow fruit”. After The Flood, the **land** became part of the permanent nature of the four seasons and thus no range of free will.[[13]](#footnote-13) The Talmud[[14]](#footnote-14) states that in the future the barren trees will give fruit. This can be understood as a tikkun (fixing) of the natural law during the time of the creation of the world.

Noach, in gratefulness for surviving, has moved to have a closer relationship with HaShem. Since Noach has assumed a measure of responsibility for his relationship with HaShem, there is now room for a covenant which “obligates” HaShem to allow man to work the **land** without any the curse, of the **land**, that was the result of Adam’s sin. Additionally, HaShem promises never to destroy every living thing with a flood.

In summary, we are surely heading towards a better world. As the world changes, we must decide what to salvage and what we need to give up on. What’s for sure, though, is that there is great hope for the world when Mashiach comes and restores all things.

## Rain

Rain in Israel is a reflection of the relationship between HaShem and His chosen people.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 11:13*** *If, then, you obey the commandments that I enjoin upon you this day, loving HaShem your God and serving Him with all your heart and soul, I will grant the rain for your land in season, the early rain and the late.*

As the land of Israel is central to Judaism, Jewish prayer reflects this by making the prayers reflect the passage of the seasons in Israel. But the rains in Israel are not entirely set in their seasons and, according to the Torah, are affected by the actions of the Jews.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:4*** *If you follow My laws and faithfully observe My commandments, I will grant your rains in their season, so that the earth shall yield its produce and the trees of the field their fruit.*

From the rain we learn that the **land** will receive rain and will produce food only if we perform improve our relationship with HaShem, which will move us closer to HaShem.

## Descent of the Generations - Yeridat HaDorot

Ever since the sin of Adam, the entire Creation has been undergoing changes. Who cannot see what sin does? Who cannot see how sin has corrupted and filled the whole world, knocking out the light of the world, from inanimate objects and plants, to animals and humans. There is nothing which has not been struck by sin. The entire creation has been destroyed from its very foundation. We are experiencing the descent of the generations - Yeridat Hadorot.[[15]](#footnote-15)

We see from the Torah chronology that after The Flood, people’s life spans steadily shorten. Moshe’ older siblings, Aaron and Miriam, lived 123 and 126 years respectively. Moshe died at 120, and this appears to have become the new limit. After Moshe, there are only a few people noted to have lived longer, one of which is Yehoyada the High Priest, who lived 130 years.[[16]](#footnote-16)

What accounts for this steady degeneration in longevity?

***Bava Batra 75a*** *The elders of [the generation of the Exodus] said:*

***The face of Moshe*** *[was as bright] as the face of the sun.*

***The face of Joshua*** *was like the face of the moon. [It did not generate light, only reflected it.]*

*Woe for this embarrassment, woe for this disgrace, [that we did not merit another leader of the stature of Moshe].*

***Sotah 48b*** *From the time when Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi died [the last three prophets], the Divine Spirit departed from the Jewish people.*

***Shabbat 112b*** *Rava bar Zimuna said: If the early generations were sons of angels, then we are sons of men. And if the early generations were sons of men, then we are like asses.*

The Talmud[[17]](#footnote-17) states: “If the earlier generations [scholars] were sons of angels, we are sons of men; and if the earlier [scholars] were sons of men, we are like asses…” This is one of many passages that attests to the well-known concept of Yeridat HaDorot, “the descent of the generations”. It is said that each passing generation falls lower and lower in its wisdom and spiritual greatness due to their sins. This diminished stature reflects our diminished relationship with HaShem.

This concept can help us understand why previous generations used to live longer.

***Yoma 9b*** *Rabbi Yoḥanan said: A fingernail of the [early sages] is worth more than the belly of the [later sages].*

***Eruvin 53a*** *Rabbi Yoḥanan said: The hearts [i.e., the wisdom] of the early Sages were like the doorway to the Entrance Hall of the Temple, [which was 20x40 cubits], and the hearts of the later Sages were like the doorway to the Sanctuary, [which was 10x20].*

*As for us, [today], [our hearts] are like the eye of a fine needle.*

***Berachot 20a*** *Rav Pappa said to Abaye: What is different about the earlier generations, for whom miracles occurred, while miracles do not occur for us? …*

*Abaye replied: The previous generations were wholly dedicated to the sanctification of God’s name, while we are not as dedicated.*

HaShem[[18]](#footnote-18) created the world with tests for the people, as opportunities to receive a reward.

He created Adam and Chava, gave them one mitzva (don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) and free choice. They failed and the world descended from perfection. Adam and Chava descended from perfection and became smaller, less spiritual, and ashamed of their nakedness.

HaShem re-assembled the broken pieces, of His world and His people, with lower standards. Adam and Chava[[19]](#footnote-19) were expelled from Gan Eden[[20]](#footnote-20) and had to work for their food and struggle with childbirth. The land (HaAdamah - הָאֲדָמָה) gave thorns and thistles when they planted wheat and barley.

Chazal teach that, “There is no generation that is not more cursed than the one before it”.

Later, the people failed again (except for Noach and his family) and HaShem brought the Mabul[[21]](#footnote-21) to re-create the world with different rules to help us succeed. Again, HaShem re-assembled the broken pieces with lower standards. Now man, and animals, could eat meat and the world was drastically different. The differences meant that man had to work much harder for his food and shelter. Man had no free time to speak of. This re-created world had rain, snow, winter, fall, spring, and summer. This was a vastly different world.

In this wonderful world Noach and his sons certainly spoke only one language as there was no need of other languages.

Later, most of the people failed again with their rebellion at the Tower of Bavel. Shem and his descendants were not enticed by the sin of Babel. Again HaShem re-assembled the world with yet lower standards and still free choice. He confused their language and He confused communication between folks of the same language. This confusion of languages forced the people to move apart and settle more of the earth – at a greater distance from HaShem. While Shem and his descendents continued to speak Hebrew, they were no longer able to accurately communicate the thoughts of their heart.

Still later, the Bne Israel,[[22]](#footnote-22) by then the chosen people, failed again with the sin of the golden calf. Moshe, Aharon, the Levites and most of the people did not sin. Yet again HaShem re-assembled the world with lower standards and all the details in the Torah, and still He gave the people free choice. All future sins would incorporate some of the punishment for the sin of the golden calf.

Twice we lost the pristine perfection when the Temple was twice destroyed[[23]](#footnote-23) because of our sins. Twice HaShem sent us into exile. We’re still in this longest darkest exile yet.

Today we still are largely failing in our relationship with HaShem. 85% of Jews are not yet keeping the Torah. The proximate cause of this last exile, baseless hatred, still exists among Jews. It’s no wonder non-Jews still harbor antisemitism. If Jews can’t get along and sometimes despise and slander other Jews, what can be expected of a non-Jew?

So the repeated pattern is where HaShem sets up His world with rules and a test, He gives free choice to the people, pass or fail, and He gives us an evil inclination to encourage us to build up His world, and then we fail…

Each re-assembly of His world was designed to provide a better chance for us to succeed in cleaving to HaShem. Yet each re-creation had a lower spiritual level and was less idyllic.

The coming of Mashiach[[24]](#footnote-24) and the end of this last and final exile is just one more in this series of tests, and failures, and His reassembling the broken pieces. And when that happens, imminently, there will be no more tests, no more failure, and the culmination of this entire project we call creation will be fulfilled. There will be some who will cleave to HaShem. HaShem’s last test will test to see whether we *trust* HaShem and His Torah even when the circumstances seems to ‘prove’ that the Torah in not true and that HaShem cannot be trusted. Are you up to the challenge?

***2 Timothy 2:15***  *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

**Back to the Future**

-There are two types of knowledge: Nigleh (Revealed) and Nistar (Concealed).

In Nigleh, the generations are indeed declining, but in **Nistar they are improving and raise us closer to God.** From Moshe Cordovero (the Ramak[[25]](#footnote-25)) to Isaac Luria (the Arizal[[26]](#footnote-26)) to the Baal Shem Tov[[27]](#footnote-27), we are making steady progress.

-There is more study of kabbalah now than in the past because we are on a higher spiritual level and better able to understand it.

-Earlier generations were closer to Sinai, but we are closer to light of Messiah.[[28]](#footnote-28)

-Fallacy: Is that light retroactive?

-The Ba’al Shem Tov is quoted as saying flatly: Our period enjoys superiority over those that preceded it.[[29]](#footnote-29)

-Rav Kook, 20th -century chief rabbi of Mandatory Palestine, adds: Theory of evolution, which is now conquering the world, is in greater accord with the secrets of the Kabbalah than any other philosophical theory… All of existence has evolved and become [spiritually] elevated.[[30]](#footnote-30)

This improvement in our spiritual level was designed to enable us to prepare the world for the Mashiach and to return to the Garden of Eden.

As we move closer to the ketz, to the end, we are beginning to see the beginning of a renewal process. We see that the Bne Israel have been restored to the promised land with their own government. The world is seeing the lost sheep of Israel returning as the baal teshuva[[31]](#footnote-31) movement with great repentance and a desire to learn Torah and to keep the mitzvot.[[32]](#footnote-32)

## The Sadness

After Adam and Chava sinned, HaShem God cursed the Adam’s two fields – his wife[[33]](#footnote-33) and his **land**. This resulted in sadness under certain circumstances.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16-17*** *Unto the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your* ***sadness***(עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ) *and thy travail; in* ***sadness***(בְּעֶצֶב) *thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ 17 And unto Adam He said: ‘Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the land for thy sake; in* ***sadness***(בְּעִצָּבוֹן) *shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*

Because of their sin, Adam and Chava were going to experience **sadness.** Chava would experience **sadness** when she bore children, and Adam would experience **sadness** when he plowed, planted and reaped his two fields: His wife and his land for his food. Adam was becoming **sad** because of his alienation from the earth because he had to toil to make it produce.

Now, the translation of Eitzev - עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ, *toil* and *pain,* in Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16-17, doesn’t mean toil and pain as we normally understand them. What it literally means is **sadness**. Eitzev - עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ in Hebrew always means **sadness**. It’s borrowed from the meaning of **sadness** to here mean toil and pain. But if you translate it literally what it means is; I will greatly increase your **sadness** in conception - to Eve. In sadness will you bear children. To Adam; In **sadness** will you eat from the land all the days of your life. Adam would become **sad** when he struggled to get his two fields (his wife and his land) to produce fruit.

After our sin in the garden, HaShem changed man and changed the earth. We had fallen from the height of perfection to something so low that it made us **sad**. We were feeling the alienation. The **sadness** had a purpose. The **sadness** was to provide an incentive to restore our relationship with our Creator. *The stronger the sense of alienation is from your creator, the stronger is the homing beacon that says, but I got to go back, I’ve got to reconcile, I’ve got to put this together*. This is the potential rehabilitative aspect of alienation.

What is the purpose of this **sadness**? It appears to be that *HaShem wants us to realize what we had in Gan Eden*[[34]](#footnote-34) and have a very strong desire to repair that relationship and return to HaShem.

This idea of ‘**sadness**’ reappears when the Torah tells us why He was bringing The Flood.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:6*** *And it repented HaShem that He had made man on the earth, and it* ***saddened***(וַיִּתְעַצֵּב) *Him at His heart.*

The verbs and the adjectives, in the above pasuk, are also found when Noach is born. I would like to point out that **sadness** is a part of the prophesy of Lemech, Noach’s father.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29*** *And he called his name Noach, saying: ‘This same shall comfort us in our work and in the* ***sadness***(וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן) *of our hands, which cometh from the land which HaShem hath cursed.’*

Why does HaShem borrow the language with which Lemech named Noach, almost mimicking the language with which Lemech named Noach in His declaration to decide to destroy the world?

Clearly, HaShem is **sad** and man should be **sad**.

Lemech, Noach’s father prophesied that Noach was going to bring comfort to the world. Rashi comes to explain ‘how’ Noach will bring comfort:

**Rahi to Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29 - This one will give us rest:** Heb. יְנַחֲמֵנוּ. He will give us rest (יָנַח מִמֶּנּוּ) from the toil of our hands. Before Noach came, they did not have plowshares, and he prepared [these tools] for them. And the land was producing thorns and thistles when they sowed wheat, because of the curse of the first man (Adam), but in Noach’s time, it [the curse] subsided. This is the meaning of יְנַחֲמֵנוּ. If you do not explain it that way, however (but from the root (נחם), the sense of the word does not fit the name, [נֹחַ], and you would have to name him Menachem.[[35]](#footnote-35) [i.e., If we explain the word according to its apparent meaning, “this one will console us”, the child should have been called Menachem, the consoler.]

Noach was a Tzadik,[[36]](#footnote-36) the creation of the plow is not evil in its own right, there is nothing about a **plow** that makes it evil, it’s how it’s used and it’s how people look upon it that makes it evil. It is Lemech and his generation’s perspective upon the **plow** that is evil, it is the notion that the plow can provide comfort for sadness that is evil – because we were given the sadness to encourage us to repent and return to HaShem. Yet the creation of the **plow** itself is pareve[[37]](#footnote-37) and in fact, I think it’s ironic and perhaps even fitting that Noach becomes the builder of the new world. Because the **plow,** in the same way that it was the perspective of Lemech and his generation upon the **plow** that destroyed the world, it is the creator of the **plow** that becomes the builder of man’s recreated world.

In God’s world you don’t need the plow, plows aren’t needed and as long as God’s world is a possibility, as long as you can climb back and re-create God’s world then to seek comfort in the plow is a blasphemy. But if God’s world is over, if we begin anew, if it’s man’s world and man has to take care of his world, then it’s fitting in a way that Noach, the one who finds grace in the eyes of God, and is saved, to build his ship and to take responsibility for a new world, it’s fitting that he becomes the creator of the plow, the instrument that man will use to till his world and subdue it.

Now, we would not have to toil so hard. The plow would relieve our toil. In this recreated world **sadness** is no longer used to encourage us to return to HaShem because we have used technology to deaden our feelings towards HaShem.

Alienation from the land is toil. Why? Because if land is really supposed to just give itself to me and give me produce naturally and now I have to farm for it, so I have to toil to work that. Now toil is not just toil, there’s an existential side to toil, there’s something **sad** about toil, because every time I toil I’m supposed to feel what? What does the word toil imply? How is toil different than work? Toil implies what? It implies futility and drudgery. What is **sad** about futility and drudgery? The recognition that it doesn’t need to be this way. There’s nothing wrong with working hard, if I’m working really hard but I’m getting what I need to out of that work, there’s nothing **sad** about that. But if I’m working hard and I know *that it doesn’t have to be this way*, that I could just push a button and get the same thing, then it feels like drudgery to me, then it feels like toil. Toil is not an objective measure of how much work I put into something, it’s how much work I *need* to put into something *relative* to how much work I am *actually* putting into something. That is what defines something as toil.

With Noach’s birth, God partially lifted the curse. Then Noach invented the plow and now everything should be good.

But, no! With the plow, *man had decided that he no longer needed a relationship with HaShem*. The ache in his heart for returning to HaShem had become anesthetized by the plow. The plow was the last straw. HaShem saw this as the point of no return. Man had decided not to rebuild his broken relationship. Man was content to be alienated from HaShem.

Once mankind has given up and has said, this is just the way it is, then there is no hope to respond and to get back. *Then the purpose of* ***sadness*** *doesn’t make sense.* It doesn’t make sense to curse the land anymore, it’s a lost cause. You can’t have a technical solution to an existential problem. There’s no such thing as the plow solving the problem of **sadness**. You’ve missed the whole point. You’ve thrown in the towel in the relationship ever being what it is.

The purpose of **sadness** has now been destroyed. What is the purpose of **sadness**? It’s not to make you **sad**, it’s rehabilitative, it’s to activate the homing beacon, it’s because you’re supposed to believe and understand that that’s not the way it’s supposed to be, that it can be different. You’re supposed to imagine a different life where you don’t have to have that sadness and work to achieve it. Once you try to comfort yourself from the sadness, once you say it’s just the way it is, we just have to get used to it, the land is cursed, let’s find a technical solution to the problem, you’ve missed the boat – pun intended. You are reconciling yourself to something you shouldn’t reconcile. You, mankind, are giving up on the relationship ever being what it needs to be, what it can be. You’re saying the baseline is **sadness**. That convinces HaShem that the relationship can’t improve with **sadness**.

God was going to write off the old relationship that he had with man. God needed to recreate a new world with different rules that reflected this diminished relationship. God decided to destroy *His* world and create a new world which will become “*man’s* world”. The goal of this new world was to reflect this diminished relationship and create a new environment in which man would realize his distance from God through his toil and through this dramatically different world. This new world was designed to help men want to return to God.

The baseline of our new relationship is God’s act of recognition, that man is frail. Our relationship is now built on the fact that you haven’t apologized (repented), this is what it is, I’m going to be more guarded in my relationship with you now, I’m going to be careful, I’m not going to expose myself, but we will have a relationship. And it has achieved its new equilibrium. There’s a new equilibrium, there’s nothing out of kilter now. Why? Because I kissed that old relationship goodbye.

HaShem was **sad** that the plow had brought His relationship with man to this dead end. Technology made it so that man could ignore God and content himself with his technology to fill the God shaped void within his heart.[[38]](#footnote-38) Man, *in God’s world*, was never going to return to God. God would remain **sad** because He wanted a close relationship with man.

If one were to pay attention to the world of 5783 (in the year 2023), we would see that in the western world, everyone has fallen into their smart phone. They are busy texting, watching cat videos, and reading social media. Man is no longer searching for HaShem. Man is no longer seeking a relationship with HaShem. In fact, man seems to be distancing himself from all relationships. Television, computers, and smart phone “programming” fills every spare moment. Man is no longer is interested in seeking HaShem. *Man’s world* is broken. Man’s world is coming to an end. Man has reached the 49th level of impurity and is about to become unredeemable.

As in Noach’s day, there is still a small remnant, like Noach and his family, that HaShem will give grace to them. This remnant will be redeemed. This should make us all very **sad**.

That said, there is a bright side to this recreated world:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-22*** *And Noach builded an altar unto HaShem; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.* ***21*** *And HaShem smelled the sweet savour; and HaShem said in His heart: ‘I will not again curse the land any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.* ***22*** *While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.’*

*The previous curses of the land at the time of Adam and in The Flood itself were intended for Man’s own benefit: to weaken his physical strength that had been misused, and to make it easier for him to focus on the spiritual. Man’s life span and energy had been reduced (in order to make him quickly realize his own mortality), and now HaShem saw that there was no need for further such reduction, since Noach demonstrated that it was possible to succeed spiritually with the level of strength that he had.*

*From now on, the source of Man’s temptation to sin would no longer be the raw physicality of the world, which had been tamed to a great extent. Instead, “the evil impulse of his youth” would be man’s major challenge. This refers to the fact that a person begins life in an animalistic state, devoid of intelligence; by the time his rational faculties appear (at age 13), these faculties are at a disadvantage.*

*Now there would be no more point in cursing either “the earth”, the physical nature of the world, or “smiting all life”, the animals that symbolize the many character traits within a person since these were already on a level compatible with a successful struggle for good. Now each individual would be charged with working against the negative images and ideas acquired in childhood and overcoming them with the intelligence of his mature soul. [[39]](#footnote-39)*

In the commentary Haamek Davar by Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin,[[40]](#footnote-40) we find:

*‘So long as the earth endures…’ — Immorality comes from lack of activity that results from abundant blessing and good bodily health. But from this time forward, all the days of the earth will be seedtime and harvest, etc. All this will necessitate labor and cause sickness due to the change in weather. This will bring about that — ‘day and night they will not cease’ — and thereby all mankind will not sin.*

According to this understanding, לא ישבתו — “they shall not cease” — refers not to the time periods, but to mankind. The changes wrought upon the earth as a result of the flood will cause mankind not to cease their work. They will always be toiling to plant and harvest in order to survive, as well as to maintain their bodily health. HaShem caused this necessity in order to keep men from becoming idle, under which conditions they had previously descended to such depths of sin as to necessitate their destruction.

## Depth of the Plowshare

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them* ***from*** *the earth.*

Why were men to be destroyed *from the earth*?

Rashi comes to help explain why *the earth* is mentioned.

**Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13 -** **from the earth:** [אֶת הָאָרֶץ] is similar מִן הָאָרֶץ: “from the earth”. Similar to this is:[[41]](#footnote-41) “When I go the city” [meaning] “from” the city;[[42]](#footnote-42) “He was stricken his feet” [meaning] “from” his feet (i.e., he suffered from a foot ailment). Another explanation: אֶת הָאָרֶץ means “together **with** the earth”, for even the **three handbreadths** of the **depth of the plowshare** were blotted out and obliterated.

The Midrash, the source of Rashi’s comment, provides an enigmatic answer: Even the earth was corrupted and “unfaithful”. When its inhabitants planted wheat it would produce “*zunin”* [some translate this as darnel,[[43]](#footnote-43) a grain that is poisonous for humans but fit for some birds.] Thus, God punished the earth for its unfaithfulness.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXVIII:8*** *For all flesh had corrupted their way, etc..[[44]](#footnote-44) R. Julian [Lulianus] b. Tiberius said in R. Isaac’s name: Even the earth acted lewdly; wheat was sown and it produced pseudo-wheat,[[45]](#footnote-45) for the pseudo-wheat we now find came from the age of the deluge. R. Johanan said: We learnt:[[46]](#footnote-46) The judgment of the generation of the Flood lasted twelve months: having received their punishment, are they to enjoy a portion in the World to Come?[[47]](#footnote-47) Said R. Johanan: The Holy One, blessed be He, will boil up in Gehenna every single drop which He poured out on them, produce it and pour it down upon them. Thus it is written, What time they wax hot, they vanish,[[48]](#footnote-48) which means, they will be destroyed absolutely by scalding water. As well their love,[[49]](#footnote-49) i.e. they loved idolatry; As their hatred:[[50]](#footnote-50) they hated the Holy One, blessed be He, and provoked His jealousy; Is long ago perished, neither have they any more a portion in the world [to come] on account of everything that was done [by them] under the sun (ib.).[[51]](#footnote-51) FOR IT REPENTETH ME, etc. R. Abba b. Kahana observed: FOR IT REPENTET H ME THAT I HAVE MADE THEM AND NOACH-surely not![[52]](#footnote-52) Even Noach, however, was left not because he deserved it, but because he found grace: hence, BUT NOACH FOUND GRACE IN THE EYES OF THE LORD.[[53]](#footnote-53)*

Commentators ask how is it possible to punish the earth? The earth is inanimate, incapable of possessing an evil inclination. How can God punish something that has no free choice?

Why did God remove three handbreadths of earth, not more and not less?

When a creation loses its ability to be elevated it loses it raison d’etre.[[54]](#footnote-54)

We must still understand why the three handbreadths mentioned by the Midrash and Rashi is described as “the depth of the plow”?

Perhaps it is a hint to the words of our Sages in the Midrash, cited by Rashi, that the reason Noach was called Noach, which is related to the word for “easing”, is that Noach eased the plight of humanity by inventing the plow. Before Noach people plowed the earth with their bare hands. By inventing the plow Noach brought relief to the world and ameliorated God’s curse of Adam, “Accursed shall be the earth because of you, through suffering shall you eat of it all the days of your life… By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread…”. As Rashi explains, before Noach, the earth was cursed to produce thorns and thistles instead of wheat.

In Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29, we read that Noach was given his name because, as explained by Rashi, when Noach was born the people said, “**This shall give us rest in our work and in the toil of our hands, from the ground that HaShem has cursed.**” Rashi explains his statement with a Midrash stating that from the time of the curse of Adam HaRishon, everything was dysfunctional. When people planted wheat, the ground would produce thorns. But when Noach was born, the curse stopped and life became easier.

Rav Moshe Meiselman, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Torat Moshe in Yerushalayim explained that until that time people were constantly sinning, claiming that it was because of the hard lives that they endured as a result of the curse. So now HaShem gave them a tremendous amount of wealth and comfort to see how they would act without the curse.

However, instead of changing their ways, they used their newfound comfort to do even more evil. They soon became bored with their normal pleasures and began to look for new ways to spend their time. The result was the abominable acts of incest and moral corruption that led to their ultimate demise.

This explains why the Midrash and Rashi refer to the earth’s producing darnel[[55]](#footnote-55) instead of wheat (before Noach was born) as a form of unfaithfulness. Noach, by inventing the plow, was able to remove the curse of the earth not producing suitable vegetation.

After Noach invented the plow, men began using it to ease their workload and thereby their sadness which came when they distanced themselves from HaShem. This caused God to remove the soil that provided their easier life in order to bring back their sadness, in order to cause men to repent and seek a closer relationship with HaShem.

Can we draw a parallel to our times? The overwhelming speed of technological advancements has made life “so easy”. The days of hard physical labor for the general populace are long gone. Not only that, the standard work schedule leaves hours each day and two days each weekend with nothing to do. Hence the flourishing of the entertainment industry with all its evil. Once again, as people become bored with the old forms of fun, they seek new ways to “kill” time (literally). As soon as they satisfy their old lusts, they need to create new and more disgusting ones. The worldwide level of morality has sunk to an all-time low. Where are we heading?

## A Corrupted Earth

Why Did HaShem bring a flood and destroy life on the earth? Remember that in the beginning, for the most part, everything was either good or very good.[[56]](#footnote-56) What went so horribly wrong? God gives us a clue in the following pasuk:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9-12*** *These are the generations of Noach. Noach was in his generations a righteous and whole-hearted man; Noach walked with God. 10 And Noach[[57]](#footnote-57) begot three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.[[58]](#footnote-58) 11 And the earth was corrupt[[59]](#footnote-59)* ***before God****, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.*

*As an aside*: When a person sins and at least recognizes what he did was a sin, then there is always hope for him. However, when a person sins and has no doubt that his sin was really not a sin and he can stand before HaShem without any fear, then there are problems. Had the generation of Noach sinned, that would be one thing. However, when they sinned “before God”, then there was no hope for them.

The Torah, above, tells us that Noach was *righteous* and then immediately tells us that he had *progeny*. I believe that this is why his sons were saved from the flood; Noach deserved progeny because he walked with God. This is consistent with what we will see later with the Patriarchs whereby the covenant, with HaShem, included the promise of land AND *progeny* because they had restored a relationship with HaShem.

**Rashi to Genesis 6:11** - **was corrupt:** Heb.וַתִּשָּׁחֵת is an expression of immorality and idolatry. (other editions add: immorality, “for all flesh had corrupted (הִשְׁחִית) its way”, and idolatry), as in (Deuteronomy. 4:16): “Lest you deal corruptly (תַּשְׁחִיתוּן)”.[[60]](#footnote-60)

**Rashi to Genesis 6:12** - **for all flesh had corrupted:** Even cattle, beasts, and fowl would mate with those who were not of their own species.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Rashi explains that the generation of the Flood was guilty of three crimes. The people had adopted **idol worship**. They had abandoned all parameters of proper sexual conduct and even incestuous relationships were common (**sexual sins**). Finally, **theft** accomplished by force and violence was common.[[62]](#footnote-62) Rashi further notes that the judgment of the generation was sealed because of the crime of violent theft.

To understand Rashi’s reasoning we must be aware of a Midrash which says that when God punishes man, He does not start off by punishing the person himself. *First* He strikes at his *material belongings*, then if there is no repentance He punishes the person himself.[[63]](#footnote-63)

But this principle can only make sense when the person’s material possessions were lawfully earned. If he had stolen other’s property, then God’s punishing his property would not deprive the person of anything that was really his. He would only be losing what he had stolen.

In such a case God would have no choice but to begin by punishing the person himself, since the first line of defense, his possessions, could not be meaningfully attacked.

Idolatry and sin were greatly increasing our ‘distance’ from HaShem. Instead of moving closer in our relationship, we were moving away.

This, then, is what Rashi means. The major sins were lewdness and idolatry and for them man was to be punished. But God would have begun punishing him by destroying his property first and only later destroying him, if he didn’t repent.

However, since mankind had also sinned by stealing other people’s property, his fate was sealed by the sin of thievery, meaning that now he would be immediately punished personally because of his sins of lewdness and idolatry. The usual first stage of punishment, attacking his possessions, wasn’t an available option for God, since man’s possessions were stolen from others and not rightfully his.

So Rashi says correctly, “his fate was only sealed due to the sin of robbery”. Meaning his fate of being immediately doomed to destruction was sealed.

Theft is the crime that is referred to as “violence” in the following passage.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

So, these three sins caused the earth to become corrupted. When we no longer desired intimacy with HaShem, then the land reflected this by becoming corrupted. (It is important to keep noticing that our sins move us away from HaShem. This movement is reflected in the distance between us and the land. The land no longer produces. The relationship between us and HaShem is unproductive, therefore the land is unproductive.

**Nachmanides** teaches that although the generation of The Flood engaged in many, very serious sins, their fate was only decided when it became clear that the people were incapable of repentance and change. This level of degeneration became evident from the people’s engagement in behaviors that were clearly self-destructive and yet, the people could not restrain themselves. Violent theft is a self-destructive behavior of this type. It is obvious that this behavior is self-destructive. Once society becomes lawless and its members forcibly seize other’s property, everyone’s livelihood, security, and happiness is compromised. No one can insulate him or herself from harm in a pervasively violent society. Those who contribute to creating an environment of violence will, eventually, become a victim of other’s violence. In other words, an individual’s relationship with the Creator and personal sexual behavior may be subject to theological debate, but controlling violent tendencies and working towards an orderly society involves only an appreciation of the practical necessities of society and the exercise of self-control. Therefore, Nachmanides explains that violent theft sealed humanity’s fate.

The Zohar then comes to give us an understanding of how flagrant these sins were, that led to the corruption of the earth.

***Zohar Noach 60****: Rabbi Yehuda asked: If it says “And the earth was corrupted”, why “before Elokim”? It is because they performed their sins openly, in front of everyone’s eyes. And that is why the verse states, “before Elokim”. Rabbi Yosi said: I believe the opposite. “And the earth was corrupted before Elokim” means that they did not sin openly. They sinned only before Elokim and not before Man. But eventually, they also sinned openly. As it is written: “And the earth was filled with violence”,[[64]](#footnote-64) which indicates that there was not a place on earth that did not witness their sins. Therefore, the verse declares that they sinned in two ways.*

**Soncino Zohar, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 66b -** *‘There is no sin in the world which so much provokes the anger of the Almighty as the sin of neglecting the covenant, as we read, “a sword that shall execute the vengeance of the covenant”.[[65]](#footnote-65) The proof is that in the generation of the Flood the measure of sin was not filled up until mankind became (sexually) perverted and destroyed their seed.*

In Genesis 6:11 and 6:12 the word corrupt appears three times. The Rabbis have taught that, when a word is repeated in a text, the purpose is to intensify the meaning of the text. This was extreme corruption. *Allegorically*, the way to deal with corruption is thorough cleansing. Hence, we have the Flood.

Rav Soloveitchik[[66]](#footnote-66) notes a subtle difference between the state of mankind prior to and after the flood. The Almighty decided to eradicate mankind upon seeing “how great was man’s wickedness on earth”, and “how every imagination devised by his mind was only evil all the time”.[[67]](#footnote-67)

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:5****And HaShem saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

After the deluge, by contrast, God observes that “the devising of man’s mind are evil from his youth”.[[68]](#footnote-68)

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21****And HaShem smelled the sweet savour; and HaShem said in His heart: 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.*

While the antediluvian man devised ONLY evil, mankind after the flood is characterized by a combination of sorts between good and evil. Apparently, the flood marked a point of transformation after which mankind is no longer entirely evil, implying that prior to the destruction, man was corrupt at his very core and essence. The Midrash comes to tell us how bad this corruption was:

***Midrash Rabbah on Bereshit 26:5*** *The generation of the Mabul was not wiped out of the world until the males wrote marriage contracts for [a male] with a male and with a beast.*

What sealed the fate of that generation was, as themidrash on parashat *Noach* says, that when a man who married another man or an animal, a guy could marry his pet!, would have to write a *ketubah, a marriage contract.* Their evil dictated that they would have to document, **legally**, the corruption. So, God said: *enough is enough!*

That’s what America has become. They have corrupted themselves in a way which dooms society. Now, it’s the “in” thing to be homosexual, to be LGBTQ. It’s astounding! I don’t want to dwell on that but that’s the problem, America. It’s a beacon to the entire world which means that this is going to spread throughout the planet so how can the world continue to exist? Therefore, this is the End. That’s the despair. It’s one thing when these things happen but they’re **not** **legalized**. When this stuff is **legalized**, it’s over because you cannot reverse it. It’s going to spread the discrimination to the point at which a yeshiva will be compelled to hire a homosexual. Think about that!

The flood that preserved Noach and his family was intended to eliminate the men, animals, plants, earth, and air that had become corrupted.[[69]](#footnote-69) What does ‘corrupted’ mean? To answer this question will require a bit of background.

The rabbis tell us that the destruction included not only the animals, but all the plants, and even extending into the air itself: 15 cubits[[70]](#footnote-70) above the land, and into the very earth itself, three tefachim,[[71]](#footnote-71) about a foot into the ground.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXI:7*** *BEHOLD, I WILL DESTROY THEM WITH THE EARTH - R. Huna and R. Jeremiah in R. Kahana’s name said: Even the three handbreadths of the earth’s surface which the plough turns was washed away.[[72]](#footnote-72) It is as if a royal prince had a tutor, and whenever he did wrong, his tutor was punished; or as if a royal prince had a nurse, and whenever he did wrong, his nurse was punished. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, said, ‘ BEHOLD, I WILL DESTROY THEM WITH THE EARTH: behold, I will destroy them and the earth with them.’[[73]](#footnote-73)*

***Yoma 76a*** *Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.[[74]](#footnote-74) Were there indeed fifteen cubits [high] in the valley, [fifteen cubits in the lowlands], fifteen cubits on the mountains?[[75]](#footnote-75) Were the waters standing like a series of walls? And, furthermore, how could the ark come to the top [of the mountains]? Rather, all the fountains of the great deep came up first until the water was even with the mountains,*

All of which raises some very obvious questions. Why should all of the animals have been destroyed? Why the plants? Why the air and the earth? They don’t have free will. They didn’t “choose” to do anything evil. OK, man was wicked, destroy man. Why punish things that didn’t choose to do wrong? After all, as Abraham Abinu argued with God, *will not the judge of all the earth act righteously*?[[76]](#footnote-76) Where’s the justice in killing animals and destroying inanimate objects?

*Rashi’s* commentary on the verse which says “for all flesh had become corrupted” says that even the animals were behaving strangely, engaging in the sexual improprieties of **interspecies mating**. Their main sin was one of illicit relations, which forced the **creation of strange hybrid creatures**, and the essence of a new creation is formed in the first forty days after conception.

The generation of the Flood had the commandment to “be fruitful and multiply.” However, Man desecrated this commandment by mating with other creatures.

The Mabul also destroyed the non-human descendants of Adam. According to tradition Adam, was estranged from Chava one hundred and thirty years:

***Bereshit Rabbah 20:11*** *Rabbi Simon said: “‘The mother of all living’ means the mother of all life”. For Rabbi Simon said: “Throughout the entire one hundred and thirty years during which Adam held aloof from Chava the male demons were made ardent by her and she bore, while the female demons were inflamed by Adam and they bore, as it is written, ‘If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the afflictions of the children of man -- Adam’,[[77]](#footnote-77) which means, the children of the first man”.*

Said Rabbi Isaac: “They were themselves responsible for becoming vulnerable to demons, [for they argued]: ‘What is the difference whether one worships an image or worships man?’ Hence, ‘Then man became degraded to call upon the name of the Lord’.’”[[78]](#footnote-78)

Another interpretation: These are descendants, but the earlier ones were not [human] descendants. What, then, were they? Demons. For R. Simon said: “Throughout the entire one hundred and thirty years during which Adam held aloof from Chava the male demons were made ardent by her and she bore, while the female demons were inflamed by Adam and they bore, as it is written, ‘If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the afflictions of the children of man -- Adam’,[[79]](#footnote-79) which refers to the children of the first [primeval] man.

(The reason for the view that house-spirits are benevolent is because they dwell with him [man], while the opinion that they are harmful is based on the fact that they understand man’s evil inclinations. He who maintains that the spirits of the field are benevolent does so because they do not grow up with him; while as for the view that they are harmful, the reason is because they do not comprehend his evil inclinations.)

These are the descendants of Adam, but the earlier ones were not descendants of Adam. Why? Because they were destroyed by the flood.[[80]](#footnote-80)

This idea is further elaborated in the Midrash on this verse, *This is the book of the descendants of Adam*:

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXIV:6*** *THIS IS THE BOOK OF THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM. These were descendants, while the earlier ones[[81]](#footnote-81) were not descendants. What then were they? Divinities! [The answer is as] Abba Cohen Bardela was asked: [Why does Scripture enumerate] Adam, Seth, and Enosh, and then become silent? To which he answered: Hitherto they were created in the likeness and image [of God], but from then onwards Centaurs were created. Four things changed in the days of Enosh: The mountains became [barren] rocks, the dead began to feel [the worms], men’s faces became ape-like, and they became vulnerable (hullin) to demons. Said R. Isaac: They were themselves responsible for becoming vulnerable to demons, [for they argued]: What is the difference whether one worships an image or worships man? Hence, Then man became degraded to call upon the name of the Lord.[[82]](#footnote-82) Another interpretation: These are descendants, but the earlier ones were not [human] descendants. What then were they? Demons. For R. Simon said: Throughout the entire one hundred and thirty years during which Adam held aloof from Eve the male demons were made ardent by her and she bore, while the female demons were inflamed by Adam and they bore, as it is written, If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the afflictions of the children of man-Adam,[[83]](#footnote-83) which means, the children of the first [primeval] man. (The reason for the view that house spirits are benevolent is because they dwell with him [man], while the opinion that they are harmful is based on the fact that they understand man’s evil inclinations. He who maintains that the spirits of the field are benevolent does so because they do not grow up with him; while as for the view that they are harmful, the reason is because they do not comprehend his evil inclinations.) These are the descendants of Adam, but the earlier ones were not descendants of Adam. Why? Because they were destroyed by the flood, for R. Joshua b. Levi said: All these names signify chastening. Irad: I shall drive them (‘ordan) out of the world; Mehujael: I shall wipe them (mohan) from the world; Methushael: I shall wear them out (matishan) from the world; what have I to do with Lamech and his descendants?*

Sources attest to hybrid creatures originating from the mating of humans with angels, i.e. the giants (Nephilim) who lived in Noach’s period that are described in the Torah text as those born to the sons of God and the daughters of humans;[[84]](#footnote-84) mating of humans with animals, such as centaur, a creature which is half-human, half-horse.[[85]](#footnote-85)

There is a mouse that is half-flesh and half-earth, and does not procreate.

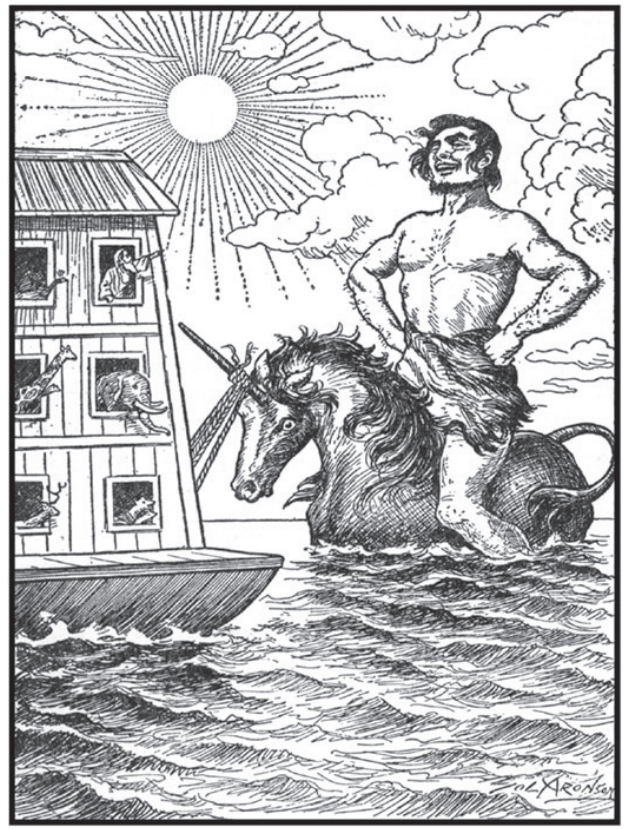
***Chullin 127a*** *The text therefore teaches: That creep[[86]](#footnote-86) signifies, wherever it creeps[[87]](#footnote-87) [it renders unclean]. But perhaps it is not so but that the expression ‘that creep’ signifies, all that breed[[88]](#footnote-88) can render unclean, but those that do not breed cannot render unclean, and so I would exclude the mouse which is half flesh and half earth since it does not breed.[[89]](#footnote-89)*

In his commentary to the Mishnah on Chullin 127a, Maimonides has this to say: *The case of the mouse which uniquely grows from the earth so that it is half-flesh and half dust and mud is very well known. There is no end to the countless numbers of those who have told me that they have seen it, even though the existence of this creature is astonishing, and there is no known explanation for it.*

Israel Lipschutz of Danzig[[90]](#footnote-90) wrote a very important two-part commentary on the Mishnah called Tiferet Yisrael. In it, R. Lipschutz got very excited about this whole mouse thing: *I have heard heretics mocking the existence of this creature, mentioned here and in the Talmud Sanhedrin. They deny its existence and claim it is not in any way real. So I have found it appropriate to mention here what is published in a German book written by one of the wisest and most well-known of any nationality, named Link. In his book Urwelt[[91]](#footnote-91) he states that such a creature was indeed found in the district of Thebais in Egypt. In Egyptian this mouse is called Dipus Jaculus, and in German it is called the spring-mouse. Its head, chest and front paws are well-formed, but its rear is still unformed and is just bits of earth. But after a few days, the mouse becomes made entirely of flesh. And I said “Lord, how great are your works”![[92]](#footnote-92)*

*Rabbi Naftali Berlin* (*Netziv[[93]](#footnote-93)*) in Parshat Noach[[94]](#footnote-94) suggested that **dinosaurs** roamed the world in the antediluvian period. According to Chazal, animals in the antediluvian era mated outside their species, leading to the birth of different types of **hybrid creatures**, including the dinosaurs. The flood waters destroyed the dinosaurs and it was HaShem’s intent that their bones remain buried for centuries, as a warning to future generations not to mate with different species.

The Netziv in Parshat Noach[[95]](#footnote-95) says that gigantic creatures (dinosaurs?) did actually exist before the Mabul. HaShem left their bones around to be discovered at a later time, in order to show the world the size and strength of these creatures that existed before the great flood. The Netziv said that dinosaurs were *not* naturally occurring creatures. Instead, they were monstrous chimeras,[[96]](#footnote-96) hybrids produced by the sinful activities of the Generation of The Flood. Accordingly, they were destroyed in The Flood.

The Malbim[[97]](#footnote-97) explains that fossils are not evidence of creatures that lived hundreds of millions of years ago, but were actually animals that were destroyed by the flood. He writes in his commentary to Genesis 7:23 that not only were the so-called prehistoric animals all destroyed in the flood, with only their fossilized bones remaining, but also the earth was disturbed so that scientists, who date fossils based on the layer of rock in which they are found, are misled by the effects of the flood.[[98]](#footnote-98)

*Rabbi Meir Leibush ben Yechiel Michel[[99]](#footnote-99)* also suggested that dinosaurs lived in the era prior to the flood. Accordingly, although “they (i.e., the dinosaurs) may have survived the action of the water, they were nevertheless eliminated from the face of the earth by the strong currents which carried them into the chasms that had been formed when the ground was split. They were absorbed and deposited thousands of cubits deep - and so completely that when Noach later left the ark, he found no traces of any animal remains, not even of those giant creatures which existed before the Flood”.

Source: Gertrude Landa, Jewish Fairy Tales and Legends,

In the Talmud,[[100]](#footnote-100) Rabbi Yohanan teaches that animals prior to the flood were mating not only across species but also across genera, and that humans were mating with “everyone”. This interspecies orgy was the “corruption of all flesh”[[101]](#footnote-101) that caused the Creator to destroy life on earth. The Torah’s orderly procession of animals into the ark “two by two”, emphasizes species differentiation, which the Bible apparently believes to be a priority of the Creator:

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *For all flesh had corrupted its ways on earth.[[102]](#footnote-102) Said Rabbi Yohanan: This teaches that beasts mated with animals, and animals mated with beasts, and all mated with humans, and humans mated with all others. Said Rabbi Abba bar Kahana: And they all repented except the tusblami.[[103]](#footnote-103)*

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXVI:5*** *THAT THE SONS OF GOD (BENE ELOHIM) SAW THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN, etc. (VI, 2). R. Simeon b.Yohai called them the sons of nobles; [furthermore], R. Simeon b. Yohai cursed all who called them the sons of God.1 R. Simeon b. Yohai said: If demoralization does not proceed from the leaders, it is not real demoralization.[[104]](#footnote-104) R. ‘Azariah said in R, Levi’s name: When the priests steal their gods, by what can one swear or to what can one sacrifice?[[105]](#footnote-105) Now why are they called the sons of God? R. Hanina and Resh Lakish said: Because they lived a long time without trouble or suffering,[[106]](#footnote-106) R. Huna said in R. Jose’s name: It was in order that men might understand [astronomical] cycles and calculations.[[107]](#footnote-107) The Rabbis said: It was in order that they might receive their own punishment and that of the generations that followed them.[[108]](#footnote-108) THAT THEY WERE FAIR (TOBOTH). R, Judan said: Actually tobath[[109]](#footnote-109) is written: when a bride was made beautiful for her husband, the chief [of these nobles] entered and enjoyed her first.[[110]](#footnote-110) Hence it is written, For they were fair, which refers to virgins; And they took them wives, refers to married women,[[111]](#footnote-111) Whomsoever they chose: that means males and beasts. R. Huna said in R, Joseph’s name: The generation of the Flood were not blotted out from the world until they composed nuptial songs[[112]](#footnote-112) in honour of* *pederasty[[113]](#footnote-113) and bestiality. R. Simlai said: Wherever you find lust, an epidemic visits the world which slays both good and bad. R. ‘Azariah and R. Judah b. R. Simon in R. Joshua’s name said: The Holy One, blessed be He, is long-suffering for everything save immorality. What is the proof? THE SONS OF MEN SAW, etc., which is followed by, And the Lord said: I will blot out man.[[114]](#footnote-114)*

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, man and wife.[[115]](#footnote-115) Have then beasts marital relationship? — R. Samuel b. Nahman said in R. Jonathan’s name: It means of those with which no sin had been committed.[[116]](#footnote-116) Whence did he [Noach] know? — R. Hisda said: He led them past the ark; those which the ark accepted had certainly not been the object of sin; whilst those which it rejected had certainly been the object of sin. R. Abbahu said: [He took only] those which came of their own accord.[[117]](#footnote-117)*

People had become so corrupt and wicked; they polluted the spiritual environment of the world like a deadly virus that spreads with a sneeze or a cough. The corruption of people was so bad that it spread throughout the environment, to the point that even creations that don’t have a yetzer hara, a wicked inclination, became corrupted. Even the air and earth itself were rendered poisonous by the sins of mankind. So God had no choice but to push the “reset button”, to erase what he had created and start over. To correct this situation, God did more than destroy man. *He destroyed the very bonds which coupled heaven and earth so tightly*. And this could only be achieved by destroying the entire earth, that spiritually-charged place which so closely reflected man’s spiritual state. And so, God washed away all. The Midrash tells us that the Flood washed away the top three handsbreadths of the world’s topsoil.[[118]](#footnote-118) The very rich and verdant earth which, as reflection of the spiritual worlds, had become corrupted by man, had to be removed forever. The one that would remain would be far coarser and earthier, but it would not be so vulnerable to the rise and fall of fickle man.

**Rashi to Genesis 6:11**: ותשחת [THE EARTH] WAS CORRUPT — It means lewdness and idolatry, as[[119]](#footnote-119) פן תשחיתון “lest ye deal corruptly” (the following words show that this refers to idolatry) and as ‘כי השחית כל בשר וגו “for all flesh had corrupted etc”.... (in next verse of this chapter where Rashi states that this has reference to lewdness).[[120]](#footnote-120)

**Rashi to Genesis 6:12**: כי השחית כל בשר FOR ALL FLESH HAD CORRUPTED — even cattle, beasts and fowl did not consort with their own species.[[121]](#footnote-121)

**Ibn Ezra to Genesis 6:12**: Our sages are correct in interpreting for all flesh had corrupted their way to mean that all flesh engaged in unnatural and perverted sexual acts. Indeed, how precious is their interpretation to the effect that they corrupted with water and were punished by God with water. Just as they placed their waters above and below, so God punished them by a flood whose waters came from above and below.

**Sefer HaYashar 4:18** And their judges and rulers went to the daughters of men and took their wives by force from their husbands according to their choice, and the sons of men in those days took from the cattle of the earth, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and taught the mixture of animals of one species with the other, in order therewith to provoke the Lord; and God saw the whole earth and it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon earth, all men and all animals.

Everyone committed improper deeds in the generation of the flood, the dog with the wolf, the rooster with the peacock.[[122]](#footnote-122)

I wonder if some of the strange hybrid creatures that resulted from interspecies mating were things like: “bar yochni”,[[123]](#footnote-123) “krum”,[[124]](#footnote-124) salamanders, dragons,[[125]](#footnote-125) “ziz”,[[126]](#footnote-126) sirens mice which are half-flesh and half-earth,[[127]](#footnote-127) phoenix (orshina),[[128]](#footnote-128) Reem,[[129]](#footnote-129) and aurochs.[[130]](#footnote-130)

I am also wondering whether many so-called ‘mythical’ creatures are really the offspring of these corrupted men and animals. Here is a list of some of these so-called ‘mythical’ creatures:

Mermaid, Chimera,[[131]](#footnote-131) Griffin, Centaur,[[132]](#footnote-132) Pegasus,[[133]](#footnote-133) Manticore,[[134]](#footnote-134) Cyclops,[[135]](#footnote-135) Gorgon[[136]](#footnote-136) / Medusa, Aqrabuamelu,[[137]](#footnote-137) Minotaur,[[138]](#footnote-138) Faun,[[139]](#footnote-139) Phoenix,[[140]](#footnote-140) Basilisks,[[141]](#footnote-141) Hydra,[[142]](#footnote-142) Cockatrice,[[143]](#footnote-143) Satyr,[[144]](#footnote-144) Alukah (“horse leech”).[[145]](#footnote-145)

## What Happened to the Corrupted Creatures?

This is a somewhat obvious question. After all, if there were all of these weird, mythical creatures, why don’t we see their remains? The Torah begins to answer this important question:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:21-22*** *And all flesh perished that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every swarming thing that swarmeth upon the earth, and every man; 22 all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, whatsoever was in the dry land, died. 23 And He blotted out every living substance which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping thing, and fowl of the heaven; and they were blotted* - וַיִּמָּחוּ *out from the earth; and Noah only was left, and they that were with him in the ark.*

We can gain more insight by examining the Hebrew words.

“And every swarming thing was destroyed..”..[[146]](#footnote-146) [The usage of the word vayimach (וַיִּמָּחוּ) carries with it the implication that creatures were nimcheh - dissolved]. The bodies were dissolved. The verse is precisely worded, “… which was upon the face of the ground..”.. Only those that were lying upon the land [became dissolved]. There were, however, many bodies that remained whole as much earth fell on them through the force of the water, and the bodies remained whole. These are the bones which are found by those who dig up the earth; bones of animals who no longer inhabit this world.

Our Sages have also come to elucidate the removal of the corrupted creatures:

**Or HaChaim on Genesis 7:23**: **He dissolved all life**. Not only did all living creatures of the earth (dry land) die, as pointed out in verse 21, but their remains dissolved completely due to the heat of the waters. No trace of them was left. (…), Rabbi Ami meant that man disintegrated before the curse, i.e. before all the animals’ bodies dissolved. He referred to man dying ahead of the animals during the deluge. Who needed Rabbi Ami to tell us something that the Torah has already spelled out in verse 7:23? Actually, when you look at verse 21 you notice that the death of the creatures is reported in the reverse order, i.e. first the animals, then the human beings. According to our interpretation there is no contradiction here. Whereas verse 21 discusses the timing of the deaths, verse 23 discusses the dissolution of the remains of the dead creatures. Man’s remains dissolved first though he had died last”. Again, we see the confirmation of the earlier idea that man dissolved first.

**Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 7:23**: “He obliterated all existence”. The Torah here includes all living creatures on earth as having been killed by the boiling waters which covered the earth”.

**Radak on Genesis 7:23**: וימח, The word is in the kal conjugation similar to וישע in Genesis 4:4, but it is in a transitive mode. There are verbs which by definition are in a transitive mode though they appear in the conjugation kal. וימחו מן הארץ, if God wiped out these creatures, וימח, is it not obvious that they were wiped out, וימחו? So what do these words tell us? The repetition is to indicate that they were so thoroughly wiped out that not a trace of them remained. There were no ruins left behind, concerning which anyone could ever say: “this building had been owned or built by a certain individual”. Our sages in Sanhedrin 108 understand the repetition as וימח referring to their destruction in this physical material world, whereas the word וימחו refers to their obliteration also from the world to come”.

**Ramban on Genesis 7:23**: “**[He] obliterated (vayimach).** After stating that all flesh perished and that everything on dry land died, Scripture adds that even the bodies were obliterated. The word vayimach signifies dissolving”.

**Sforno on Genesis 7:23** the structure of all the living beings was completely dissolved, but not that of the plants.

**Sforno on Genesis 7:23**: ​This is why the Torah added the word, “man or beast, moving creatures, including the birds of the sky disintegrated completely”. No traceable remains survived.

The other issue explaining what exactly dissolved and how to understand the report that nothing of the antediluvian survived is Radak’s statement that: *“The repetition is to indicate that they were so thoroughly wiped out that not a trace of them remained. There were no ruins left behind”.*

What happened to the Garden of Eden? Did The Flood cause this special place to depart?

## Comparisons of Noach’s Day to 2023

It is very problematic that the comparisons between Noach’s day and our own ‘modern’ era are so similar. Just as they sinned because they had a lot of free time, so also are we doing evil because we have a lot of free time each day and two days on the weekend. Hence the flourishing of the entertainment industry with all its evil. Once again, as people become bored with the old forms of fun, they seek new ways to “kill” time (literally). As soon as they satisfy their old lusts, they need to create new and more disgusting ones. The worldwide level of morality has sunk to an all-time low. Where are we heading?

Consider the following comparisons:

**A.** Noach’s generation was wiped out by the flood because of idolatry, corruption of justice, bloodshed, sexual perversion, polygamy, Homosexuality, pederasty, and bestiality.[[147]](#footnote-147)

**a.** In 2023, pederasty is rampant among our leaders. Homosexuality is everywhere and it is sanctioned by the governments of the western world.[[148]](#footnote-148) Abortion sheds much blood.

**B.** Rashi, to Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13, indicates that the corruption of Noach’s generation was robbery. The initial 40 days of intense punishment, when the rains began, were a result of their committing robbery, the numerical value of the three letters of “gezel”, the Hebrew word for “robbery”, totals 40!

**b.** In 2023, robbery is commonplace with the government stealing from their citizens and giving it to those who did not earn it.[[149]](#footnote-149)

**C.** Noach’s generation ignored the commandment given to Adam,[[150]](#footnote-150) “Be fruitful and multiply”.[[151]](#footnote-151) Since their goal in life was to gratify their instincts, they attempted to minimize the number of children that they had. (Midrash Hagadol)

**c.** In 2023, many choose not to have children and use many things to prevent conception. Abortion has been normalized.

**D.** In Noach’s generation the judges were corrupt.

**d.** In 2023 the source of corruption in all generations to this day is the court of law itself. Legislation that is lenient for the powerful and judges who are “liberal-minded” are responsible for the destruction of the country. Our judges are corrupt.

Our earth is filled with men who were obsessed with sextual immorality and perversion. Pederasty, pedophilia, bestiality, fornication, adultery, wife swapping, homosexuality, gender fluidity, masturbation, pornography, and other sexual perversions filled the earth. The depth of their perversions spurred them to commit follow-on actions which redoubled their sins. Birth control greatly limited family size. Induced abortion ended eighteen percent of all pregnancies. Infanticide is a major cause for concern in several nations such as China, India, and Pakistan. Large numbers of children are missing after being kidnapped by pedophiles.

People in this sex-addled world were loath to work and relied on government largess – tax theft – to fund their desires. The world went mad with stealing the wealth of those who work and giving it to those who did not work. People journeyed from around the world to come to nations which gave them ‘free stuff’. In order to provide ‘free stuff’, politicians resorted to fraud and other illegal behaviors in order to steal elections and oppress the people. People who did not fear God began working ‘under the table’ to avoid taxes and increase their own profits.

Wicked people resorted to looting and rioting in order to steal and exert their power. Politicians aided and abetted this behavior by not prosecuting miscreants. This inevitably resulted in fewer arrests which only encouraged more looting and rioting. Lawlessness has become rampant.

Theft is now permitted in California as long as it doesn’t exceed a thousand dollars. Destruction of private property and of  *livelihood*, one that may have taken many years to build up, is now acceptable. Isn’t it elementary to think that such behavior destroys civilization?  And yet, this is what we see, incredibly.

Corruption has permeated all levels of society. Now we are heavy into the corruption of mankind, *very heavy*. Because of sexual perversion, blackmail has become normative. This blackmail, in turn, encourages further wickedness.

**This was the state of affairs in Noach’s day and it is our sorry state in 2023.**

The only difference between this era and the era just before The Flood, is that then the “restart button” was utter destruction. This time, the “restart button” will be *Redemption*. The concept of evil will still exist during the messianic era but, by the time of the Future World, God “yanks out of existence” the conception, the idea, of evil. For us to conceive of something, no matter how novel, it must exist within Creation. When it no longer is given existence, it is inconceivable. That is how complete the Redemption of mankind will be.

In order for the Light to come, we need the Darkness to bring the lessons God wants to bring to the world.

## Giants

The Hebrew term for "giants" is "refa'im", a grammatical plural. Non-Israelitish clans are designated as "the Gazzite", "the Ashdodite", "the Gittite", "the Hittite", "the Perizite", etc.,[[152]](#footnote-152) i.e., by the race-names in the singular with the definite article prefixed, the names "Caphtorim" and "Pelishtim" constituting the exceptions. From this it would appear that "rephaim" and the singular "ha-rafa'" are appellatives ("the giants", "the giant"), and that in the opinion of the writers the giants did not constitute a distinct, non-Israelitish race or nationality, but were a breed of men of great stature found among various peoples. Thus Og belonged to Bashan;[[153]](#footnote-153) the Anakim were politically Amorites at the time of the conquest, while they were presumably Hittites under Abraham.

It is well-known that there were giants on the earth before and *after* the flood.

Where did they come from?

Why weren’t they destroyed by the flood?

Og, the giant survived the flood by hanging on the outside of the ark, and Noach fed him through the window. Thus he survived The Flood and procreated more giants.

Before the flood, men were much taller.

The people were very tall.[[154]](#footnote-154) Rashi[[155]](#footnote-155) explains that when God made Adam smaller, He shrank him to 100 cubits, about 150 feet tall. The Talmud[[156]](#footnote-156) says that Adam was created as tall as one end of the heavens to the other (also described as from earth to the heavens), but after he sinned God made him smaller. It is said that antediluvian men were all this tall.

The pasuk states:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23*** *And He blotted out every living substance which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping thing, and fowl of the heaven; and they were blotted out from the earth; and Noach only was left -* וַיִּשָּׁאֶר אַךְ-נֹח*ַ, and they that were with him in the ark.*

“Vayishaer ach noach,” that Noach alone was left behind. Ba’al Haturim points out that the words *vayishaer* and *ach* are both exclusionary words and the phrase would therefore be a double negative which would then mean, as the Talmud says, that the pasuk means to include something. Says Ba’al Haturim, the passuk is including Og, whom the Talmud states survived the flood, meaning that in the words that tell us that Noach alone was left there is a hint that Og was left as well. Correspondingly, the gematria (numeric value) of “ach Noach” (79) is equal to the name Og.

How did Og and Sichon survive the flood?

The Talmud[[157]](#footnote-157) tells us that Og was the grandson of Shemchazel, one of the fallen angels[[158]](#footnote-158) who was exceptionally powerful and tall. Based on a Midrash, Rashi identifies Og as being one of the Nephilim who were giants on earth before the Flood at the time of Noach.[[159]](#footnote-159)

Many Midrashim tell us that Og was a giant who was very strong. *Rashbam*, the master of simple meaning rather than quoting Midrash, comments that the reference to Og’s bed being made of iron rather than wood is to Og’s cradle when he was a baby. Even as a baby, Og was so strong that he would break any wooden cradle. As an adult he had more sense and self-control and would not destroy his own bed, so his adult bed did not need to be made of iron.

According to one opinion, Og survived the flood by riding on top of the ark.[[160]](#footnote-160) According to another opinion, his great height allowed him to walk alongside the ark with his head out of the water. Although the waters of the flood were boiling hot, they were miraculously cool around the ark, and Noach gave Og food through the window.

***Rosh Hashanah 12*** *The Gemara asks further: Granted, according to Rabbi Yehoshua, who holds that the flood began in the month of Iyar, this is what it means that He changed the acts of Creation with a flood, as rain does not usually fall in Iyar. But according to Rabbi Eliezer, who holds that the flood began in Marcheshvan, what did He change?*

*Rav Ḥisda said: They sinned with boiling heat, and they were punished with boiling heat; they sinned with the boiling heat of the sin of forbidden sexual relations, and they were punished with the boiling heat of scalding waters. This is derived from a verbal analogy. It is written here, with regard to the flood: “And the waters abated” (Genesis 8:1), and it is written elsewhere, with regard to King Ahasuerus: “And the heated anger of the king abated”,[[161]](#footnote-161) which implies that the word “abated” means cooled. This indicates that at first the waters of the flood had been scalding hot.*

(The Torah states that “the survivor arrived and told Avram the Hebrew, that his nephew Lot had been taken captive”.[[162]](#footnote-162) Said Rabbi Yochanan: this refers to Og the King of Bashan who survived the flood.[[163]](#footnote-163))

Og swore to Noach that he would be his family’s eternal servant if Noach would allow him into the Ark.[[164]](#footnote-164) The Talmud[[165]](#footnote-165) states that the rain waters of the Flood were actually boiling hot. Yet, the rain that fell upon Og while he held unto the Ark was miraculously cool, allowing him to survive. Perhaps Noach saw that Og had some sort of merit (after all, his grandfather was the one angel that repented). Noach therefore had mercy on Og, and made a special niche for Og in the Ark. This is how the giant survived the Flood.

(As a side note, there is a little-known Midrash which states Og survived the Flood simply because he was so large, and the flood waters only reached up to his ankles![[166]](#footnote-166))

Before entering the ark, the wife of Cham, Noach’s youngest son, became pregnant with Sichon through a relationship with Shemchazel.[[167]](#footnote-167) Cham brought her into the ark together with him, and there she gave birth to Sichon. Consequently, Sichon and Og were brothers from the same father.

**Reem**

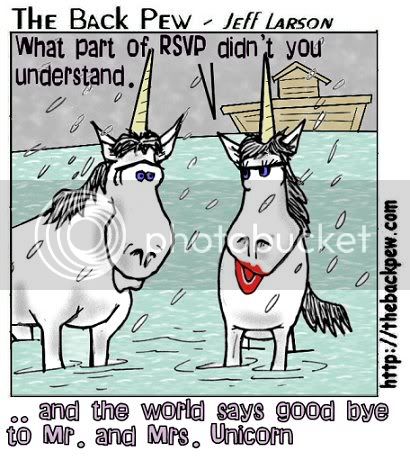
Og was somehow persevered, as was the mythical “Reem”, a huge beast much too large to have been contained by the ark. “Said Resh Lakish: it was tied by its horns to the ark’s exterior, and as for Og he grasped the sides of the craft and survived!”[[168]](#footnote-168)

How does all of this square with the Torah’s statement:

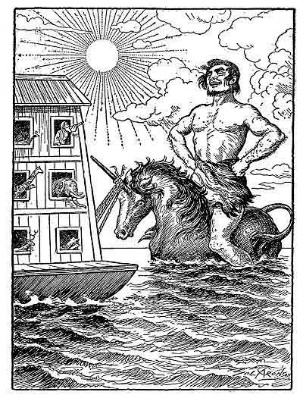
***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:17*** *Behold, I plan to bring a flood of waters upon the earth to wipe out ALL FLESH THAT POSSESSES THE BREATH OF LIFE FROM UNDER THE HEAVENS, EVERYTHING UPON THE EARTH SHALL PERISH.*

One possible answer is the Reem and Og were not UPON THE EARTH, they were, in fact, floating with the ark.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 31:13*** *AND OF EVERY LIVING THING, OF ALL FLESH, etc.[[169]](#footnote-169) R. Hoshaya said: Even spirits entered the ark with Noah; hence it is written, AND OF EVERY LIVING THING, OF ALL FLESH: i.e. Of those for whom souls [spirits] were created but not bodies.[[170]](#footnote-170) R. Judah said: The reem[[171]](#footnote-171) did not enter the Ark,[[172]](#footnote-172) but his whelps did. R. Nehemiah said: Neither he nor his whelps, but Noah tied him to the Ark, and he ploughed furrows [in the water] as great as from Tiberias to Susitha,[[173]](#footnote-173) as it is written, Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his hand in the furrow, or wilI he harrow the valleys after thee?[[174]](#footnote-174) In the days of R. Hiyya b. Abba a [reem’s] whelp invaded Eretz Israel and did not leave a single tree which it did not uproot. A fast was proclaimed and R. Hiyya prayed, whereupon its mother bellowed from the desert and it [the whelp] went down [to the desert] at her voice.*

The exact meaning of reem רֵּ֣ים is not known. It is often translated as “ox” and interpreted as the great aurochs, or wild bulls, which recently went extinct.[[175]](#footnote-175) In the Jewish tradition, however, reem were understood to be giant one horned animals, the size of mountains. The Talmud[[176]](#footnote-176) asks the question the obvious question “how did the reimah[[177]](#footnote-177) remain [after the flood]? Given its large size (in modern measurements, 3 miles long), it clearly could not have fit into Noach’s ark”. One answer, from Rabbi Yannai is “They brought reimah cubs into the ark, and they survived the flood”. Another answer, from Rabbi Yoḥanan is “They brought only the head of the cub into the ark, while its body remained outside”.

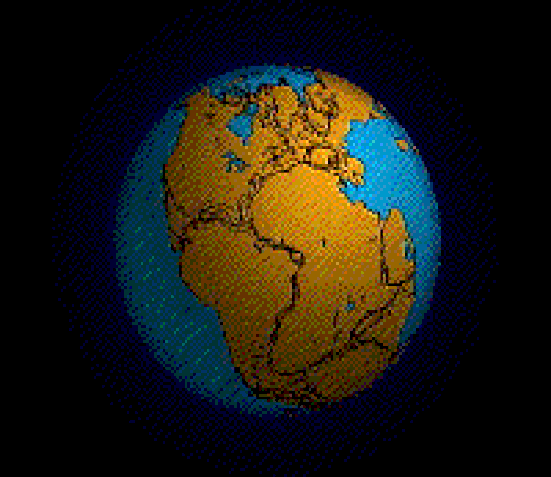
Some translate Reem as a unicorn.

Hence, as shown in the illustration from “Aunt Naomi’s Jewish Fairy Tales and Legends”, Og the Giant could ride the mountain sized unicorn through the flood, as we might ride a horse across a flooded river.

# Pangea – Collecting & dispersing the Animals

Pangea was a supercontinent that came apart and formed the seven continents. Pangea was shaped, like a fetus with the bulk of its mass stretching between Earth's northern and southern polar regions. Pangea was centered on the equator.

According to Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch’s interpretation of the Midrash, before the flood all the continents known to us today formed one super continent. Believers of Evolution likewise acknowledge the existence of super-continent called *Pangaea*.



Rav Moshe Yitzchak Ashkenazi quotes Rav Yitzchak Chaim[[178]](#footnote-178) Castiglioni,[[179]](#footnote-179) who supports the interpretation that prior to the Dor Haflaga, In the days of Peleg, we all lived together on Pangaea, and that is when the splitting of the continents took place.

The Zohar speaks of the breakup of Pangea when commenting on Genesis 1: 9:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:9*** *And God said, ‘Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’. And it was so.*

In the above pasuk, note that “‘THE’ dry land appear”. Land is in the singular and is referred to as “THE dry land”. The Zohar goes on to comment on this:

***Zohar Chadash 12:1*** *“It was taught, one actual land came out of [or released] the waters and from this came the seven continents”.*

***Mishle (Proverbs) 9:1*** *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars;*

The Midrash states that prior to the Mabul all land masses were connected, commonly called Pangea.[[180]](#footnote-180) This reflected our relationship with HaShem. The land was close when we were close to HaShem.[[181]](#footnote-181)

**Ibn Ezra[[182]](#footnote-182) to Genesis 1:2** - First God created one continent, but then split it into seven continents...

A thousand years ago, Abraham Ibn Ezra knew that the continents were merged, and that there were seven continents. This was written long before America, Australia, or Antarctica were discovered.

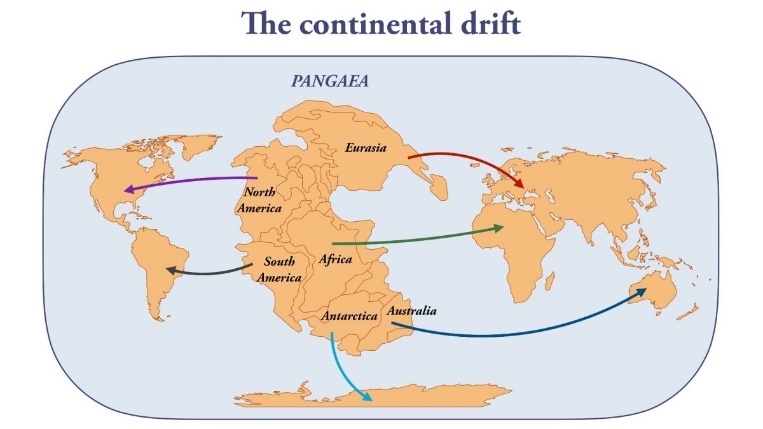
Dr. Hadassah Melamed in her book, “The Secret of the Flood, The Bermuda Triangle, and Continental Drift” published in Hebrew in the year 2000 proves that these geological changes from one continent happened over a short period of less than a year during the Flood. She indicates the problem with modern geologists and their theories is that they refuse to recognize the flood as an event in geologic time and therefore find their theories to be inadequate.

While the word *land* – Eretz - הָאָֽרֶץ is written in singular form, the word *sea* – Mayim - הַמַּ֖יִם.  
Sages asked this question in the Midrash: *And the reservoir of waters He called - Seas. Rabbi Yose bar Chalafta said: But isn’t here (at the time of creation) only one Ocean? What can we learn from this place calling Sea - Seas? This is because different taste of the fish - different from Acco, different from Sidon and different from the Spanish Sea.[[183]](#footnote-183)*

According to the most current geological theory, referred to as plate tectonics, there was a point in time when the land masses, which we know today as the seven continents, were interlocked to form one large contiguous mass of land. Theory of plate tectonics asserts that the outermost crust of the Earth is composed of a series of plates that slowly move. It is therefore possible for the continents to initially have been interconnected and subsequently to have separated, a phenomenon known as continental drift, to form the current geography of the Earth. According to the commentaries, other differences in the Earth before the Mabul include the absence of many mountains present today and a more robust soil, in which planting was only necessary once every forty years.[[184]](#footnote-184)

There is a famous theory of geologists called “the Continental drift” which talks about the splitting of the one archaic continent, called Pangea, into many continents. And apparently this is indicated in the Torah where it says that in the days of Peleg, about 1757AM, “the earth was divided”.[[185]](#footnote-185) Continental drift was a result of some kind of upheaval of the land masses, and the continents we see today drifted apart from the main land mass of Pangea. This upheaval is thought to have been caused by a splitting of the earth’s crust, and the underground water table bursting upward, like a fountain, covering everything. This splitting could also have resulted in a huge earthquake, which broke the continental plates into pieces, allowing them to drift apart.

Is Noach’s flood the reason why Pangea broke apart?

No. it may have been the start of the inner core moving, shifting its centrifugal density, dragging the mantel down, and later on pushing it back above the surface again, but Pangea broke up around a hundred years after the flood, in the days of Peleg.

It is easy to understand how Noach was able to collect animals from all the continents on the earth. A single land mass makes this easy and practical. The animals can just walk to Noach’s ark.

Rabbi Avigdor Miller in his commentary on Sefer Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19 says the following: *From All the living, from all flesh, two of each you shall bring into the ark. At the beginning, all animals were equally distributed over the earth, for the climate everywhere was mild and uniform. It is evident from fossils everywhere that previously there had existed a more even distribution of plants and animals. Therefore, the animals that entered the Ark did not need to travel great distances, because all of them were available in the vicinity.*

Now, if Pangea broke up shortly after The Flood, then this would account for the dispersion of the animals to the various continents which were connected at that time.

One central landmass solves another issue as well: the specialization of animal types in certain areas of the globe. All organisms are adapted to their environment to a greater or lesser extent because they traveled to the remote lands and then adapted to that environment.

Chazal teach that Kefitzat HaDerech, a leaping of the land – like a wormhole, was normal for the antediluvian world. This suggests that even the animals may hve been able to use this mechanism to travel to the four corners of the earth.

The reason that Pangea broke apart was because of our sins and our failure to repent and restore our intimacy with HaShem.

Rav Moshe Yitzchak Ashkenazi quotes Rav Yitzchak Chaim (Vittorio) Castiglioni, who supports the interpretation that prior to the Dor Haflaga,[[186]](#footnote-186) we all lived together on Pangaea, and that is when the splitting of the continents took place.

The Torah itself calls the original land *the* landmass.

When did the landmass break up? There is a verse in Deuteronomy that clearly refers to the existence of other landmasses under the skies other than the “known” lands of yesteryear.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:32*** *Please, ask concerning the days of old that were before you, (even) from the day that God created man on the land, and from one end of the sky to the far end of the sky. Was there ever something similar to this great thing (the giving of the Torah at Sinai) or has there been a similar claim heard?*

Why did Moshe, at around 1500 years *after* the flood, tell the Children of Israel that they should check out this issue from one end of the sky to the far end of the sky? Are there people who live in the sky? Obviously not! So why did he say this? Simple: he knew that there were people living *in distant lands* which were not part of the known landmass of Europe-Asia-Africa… but they are all under the same sky! Now if the tectonic movements of the continental landmasses were as slow as the scientific community claims then how did Moshe, living so long before the discovery of the Americas and of Australia/New Zealand, know this? They should have been long scrubbed from memory! But Moshe tells his people know that there are other peoples living across the seas, and even if you were to meet them and to ask them if among then there is any nation with a claim that matches the claim of the children of Israel: National Revelation and living to tell the tale they will tell you “Nope! Never heard it… never will!”

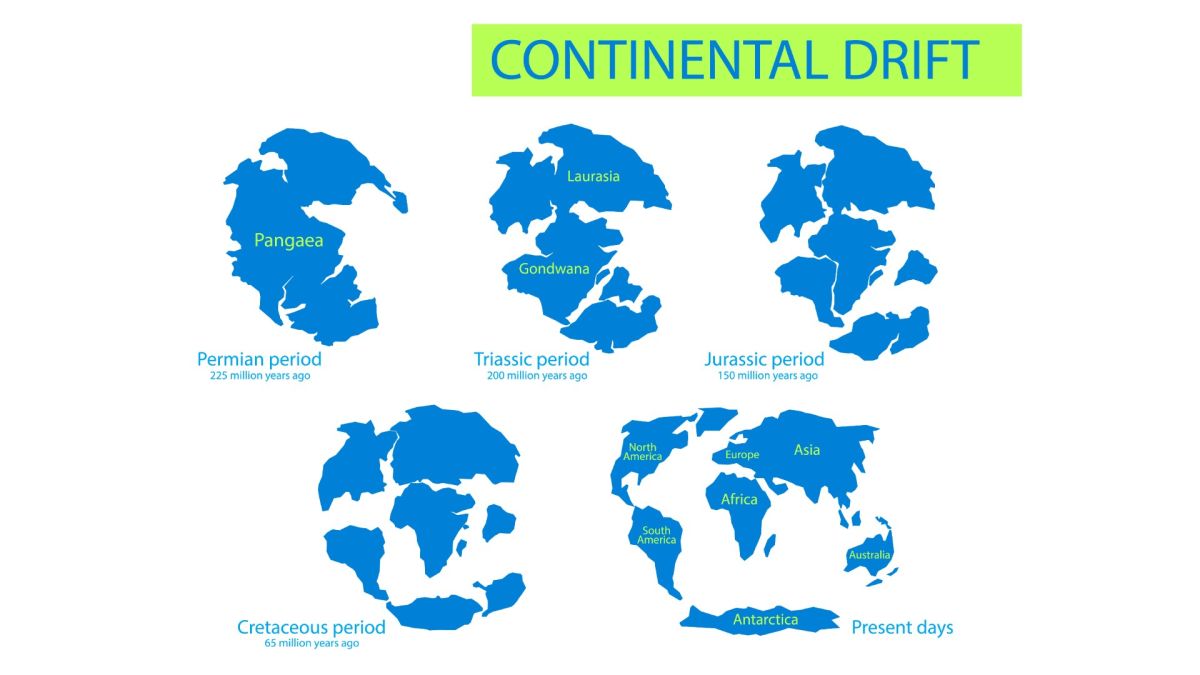
This means that by the time of Moshe,[[187]](#footnote-187) our teacher, the landmasses had already separated and distanced themselves enough to have been forgotten. So obviously we already have an upper limit. On the other hand, it cannot have happened until after Noach landed and deposited the animals on dry land because otherwise we will have to wonder how the various life-forms found their way to the four corners of the globe! Interestingly enough there is a verse in Genesis which gives us a clue:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 10:25*** *And unto Eber were born two sons; the name of the one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth (Eretz -* הָאָרֶץ*) divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan.*

***Dibre Hayamim alef (I Chronicles) 1:19*** *And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg; for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother’s name was Joktan.*

***Sefer HaYashar******Noach*** *Shem begat Arphaxad, and Arphaxad begat. Selah, and Selah begat ‎Eber; and unto Eber were born two sons, the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the sons ‎of man became divided, and in his last days the earth also was divided; and his brother’s name ‎was Joktan, because in his days the duration of the life of the sons of man became shortened and lessened.*

If Pangea began to separate in the end of the days of Peleg (1757AM), Then the generation of the division[[188]](#footnote-188) would have had time to move apart and would end up on separate continents when the breakup occurred. Thus we can understand how we find people on six of the seven continents now, and hints to people on all seven continents.

*Peleg* means to “move apart in separate pieces”. According to Gesenius’ Lexicon, the word is more specifically *geological* division. I believe this refers to what happened to the earth (הָאָרֶץ), however, not mankind. Scripture actually says, “in his time the earth was divided” not the people of the earth. That said, The division of the land, I believe, reflected our sins which caused the diminishing of our relationship with HaShem.

Peleg was born just 100 years or so after the flood – in 1757AM - and lived about 239 years, and in his days, the earth was separated. Carrying with it animals and people speaking different languages that had migrated away from the chaos of Babel (about 1996AM) a couple of decades earlier.

Some theorize that when the “waters of the deep” or the “fountains of the deep” burst forth, this subterranean body of water beneath the earth’s crust “burst” at a fault line in the middle of the large land mass. This crack and earthquake happened almost instantly, encircling the globe and cracking the crust of the earth spewing forth the water of subterranean oceans into the upper atmosphere and freezing it. Near the poles, it fell as ice and creating an instant ice age. This would account for frozen mammoths, and humans, standing up. Sub polar ice falling back to earth turned back to water would have come down for weeks as rain, and flooded the earth. This pre catastrophe earth probably only had minor hills and small mountains, where 2000-3000′ of water could have covered the planet. But during the deluge, great turmoil and upheavals were happening under the water. The earth was flooded for almost a year, while volcanoes erupted, and mountains began to form as earth shifted. As the waters then receded, canyons were washed out, deltas were formed from the silt and mud from and the settling of the flood. These settlement layers would have buried the massive herds from the pre flood oxygen and life rich earth. Being buried instantly would keep their bones from being scattered, which is why we find whole fossilized animal skeletons today. It explains how the dead plants and animals could start down the process of fossilizing over the next few thousand years.

This catastrophic event, however, was not the end of the subterranean events one could surmise. The crack that released the water now allowed the one large continent to begin to separate and move apart. Modern day science believes this took millions of years, but with the massive subterranean events taking place the separating continents could have begun their “slide” to the east and west. These tectonic shifts would have forced up more mountains, sending crust upward over other layers of crust on all the continents of the earth forming even more new mountain ranges than those formed during the flood.

Somewhat interesting is that Pangea is kind of shaped like a fetus, and Israel is kind of where the belly button would be.

***Sanhedrin 37a*** *R. Aha Hananiah said: Scripture states, Thy navel is like a round goblet [‘aggan ha-Sahar] wherein no mingled wine is wanting.[[189]](#footnote-189) ‘Thy navel’ — that is the Sanhedrin. Why was it called ‘navel’? — Because it sat at the navel-point[[190]](#footnote-190) of the world. [Why] ‘aggan?[[191]](#footnote-191) — Because it protects [meggin] the whole world. [Why] ha-Sahar? — Because it was moon-shaped.[[192]](#footnote-192) [Why] in which no mingled wine is wanting? — I.e., if one of them had to leave, it had to be ascertained if twenty-three, corresponding to the number of the minor Sanhedrin, were left,[[193]](#footnote-193) in which case he might go out; if not, he might not depart.*

In The Psalms

***Tehillim (Psalms) 104:6-9*** *Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a vesture; the waters stood above the mountains. 7 At Thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away-- 8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank down--unto the place which Thou hadst founded for them; 9 Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass over, that they might not return to cover the earth.*

From the statements above we can learn that high mountains did not exist before the Mabul.[[194]](#footnote-194) There were however higher and lower elevations on the supercontinent and perhaps even large areas of the depression. One of those lower areas is described by **Rashi**: **A FLOOD** — so called because it ruined (בלה) everything; because it cast everything into confusion (בלל), and because it brought (הוביל from root יבל) everything down from the heights to a lower level. And this last explanation underlies the translation of Onkelos who translates it by טופנא (Ar. טוף = Heb. צוף) because the Flood caused everything to float about and brought it (the Ark) to Babel which is a low-lying district. That is the reason why it (Babylon) is also called, Shinar (שנער): because all those who died through the Flood were shaken out (ננערו) into it.

We can only suspect that other areas in postdiluvian land configuration which are rich in fossil fuels, were also such lower districts of the antediluvian continent.

Oceans underneath the continents?

***Tehillim (Psalms) 136:6*** *To Him that spread forth the earth above the waters, for His mercy endureth for ever.*

This coincides with one of our morning blessings:

Blessed are You, HaShem our God, King of the Universe, Who spreads the earth above the waters.

# Noach[[195]](#footnote-195)

Noach, aka Noah,[[196]](#footnote-196) is the hero of the flood narrative. As he and his family are the only survivors (except for Og), it is important to understand a bit about this great man.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:1*** *And HaShem said unto Noach: ‘Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation.*

Was Noach righteous enough to be saved when God is going to destroy the rest of the world? The Torah seems to say ‘no’ to this question. We see this is the previous chapter.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:8*** *But Noach found grace* (חֵן) *in the eyes of HaShem.* ***9****These are the generations of Noach. Noach was in his generations a man* (אִישׁ) *righteous* (צַדִּיק) *and whole-hearted* (תָּמִים)*; Noach walked with God.*

Grace (חֵן) is something we do not merit. It is something bestowed on a person who does not deserve it. Thus we would say that Noach was NOT righteous enough to be saved. Noach was saved because HaShem chose to save him, not because he was righteous. HaShem decided to save Noach when He destroyed the rest of humanity. HaShem decided He was going to provide some continuity back to Adam, and Noach was His guy.

Noach was an ISH - אִישׁ (a royal man) TZADDIK - צַדִּיק (righteous person) TAMIM - תָּמִים (who was completely righteous)".[[197]](#footnote-197) The word ISH is a compliment in its own right, and the additional descriptions heap honor upon honor on Noach. **No other personality is described with so many consecutive praises in one verse**!

The first verse in the Book of Psalms teaches:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 1:1*** *Fortunate is the man (ISH) who has not gone in the counsel of the wicked, and has not stood in the path of sinners, and has not sat in the company of scoffers.*

The Midrash Socher Tov, in the name of Rabbi Yehuda, comments that the phrase "Fortunate is the man (ISH)", refers to Noach, since Noach is called ISH, as in Genesis 6:9. Why is Noach described as "fortunate"? According to the Midrash, Noach was fortunate in that he did not follow the ways of the three categories of people (wicked, sinners, scoffers) cited in Psalms. These three negative categories correspond to the three generations that arose in the world over the course of Noach's lifetime: the generation of Enosh (Adam's grandson, who initiated the practice of idolatry); the generation of the Flood (immersed in immoral behavior); and the generation of the dispersion (who built the Tower of Babel in order to wage war against God). It was Noach's good fortune that he did not go in the path of any of these three generations.

Noavh epitomized the ability to channel negative forces toward a higher purpose. A hint to this idea is found in his name. The Torah tells us[[198]](#footnote-198) that Noach found chen (favor) in the eyes of HaShem. The name NOACH (nun-chet - נֹחַ), when reversed, spells CHEN (chet-nun - חֵן)! Noach found favor in the eyes of HaShem by mastering the art of reversal. He had the ability to redirect every energy from a negative goal to a positive one.

The Gemara is going to now tell us of the limitation of Noach’s righteousness.

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *With regard to the verse: “These are the generations of Noach; Noach was a righteous man, and wholehearted in his generations”,[[199]](#footnote-199) Rabbi Yoḥanan says: Relative to the other people of his generation he was righteous and wholehearted, but not relative to those of other generations. And Reish Lakish says: In his generation he was righteous and wholehearted despite being surrounded by bad influences; all the more so would he have been considered righteous and wholehearted in other generations.…*

In the story of Noach we find Noach does not influence any other members of his generation to do teshuva, in fact the Navi calls the flood, "the Waters of Noach".[[200]](#footnote-200) Noach's flaw was that he was not zealous, we have no record of him trying to pressure anyone or try and implore them to do teshuva.

The Nun and the Chet of Noach’s name went in to Pinchas, these are his middle two letters. A piece of Noach's soul needed to be rectified through Pinchas's zealous action. Pinchas is then given the covenant of Peace which gives him extremely long life.

The Zohar teaches us that although Noach was personally righteous, he was content with his own individual piety to save himself and his family without being properly concerned about the welfare of his contemporaries. The Midrash compares Noach to a captain who saved himself while allowing his boat and its passengers to drown. With this insight, we can now appreciate that Noach’s spiritual level was indeed complex and somewhat contradictory. He withstood the tremendous temptation to join the rest of his sinful generation and remained uniquely pious, yet at the same time he could have done much more on behalf of others.

Seizing upon the phrase, “A tzaddik, righteous in his times”,[[201]](#footnote-201) the midrash unhesitatingly portrays Noach as a passive figure, lacking leadership qualities and sensitivity to the spiritual state of the surrounding society. He reacts to events, but is unable or unwilling to initiate any positive action. He is conscientious and honest, the maintenance of personal integrity and honesty in a wholly corrupt society is itself a noteworthy accomplishment, but he is certainly not a heroic figure or a tzaddik for the ages. Actually, in some contexts, Chazal consider him simply the best of the lot; someone had to be saved so that creation would not be defeated, and Noach was merely the best available candidate.[[202]](#footnote-202)

Thus, Noach can be viewed as an “Everyman” whose heroism lies precisely in the fact that he is not a hero. He is a positive, honest, well-meaning person with a measure of human weakness who was called upon to save humankind. This is what makes him a limited figure, who, lacking the greatness of Avraham Avinu or Adam, neither leads the way before HaShem nor attempts to be as a HaShem. Like the famous story of Zusha,[[203]](#footnote-203) all he wants is to be Noach. He wants to follow God in a normal, human fashion. He is an average person; he represents us and our human composition, our “normal” righteousness.

However, the significance of the Noach episode runs much deeper than providing an example of HaShem’s treatment of ordinary, unspectacular humans, important as this may be. Actually, the story of HaShem’s selection of Noach is the drama of the transition from Din to Rachamim, from an antediluvian world judged by absolute exacting standards of behavior to a newly recreated cosmos whose inhabitants are evaluated and held accountable only through the loving prism of divine Mercy.

This claim is based upon the premise that the pre-Flood world in which Noach grew up was qualitatively different from the one that replaced it afterwards. A careful reading of Parashat Bereshit indicates that its protagonists are great heroic figures, attempting to straddle the universe and interested in leaving their mark upon the world. From Adam through Kayin and Lemech and their progeny, the pattern holds true; they are more heroic and charismatic than Noach’s bland mediocrity, their transgressions more flagrant than his. Concurrently, they are held up to a higher standard of accountability than are Noach and his sons.

What did HaShem want Noach to do?

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.* ***14*** *Make thee an ark of gopher -* גֹפֶר *[[204]](#footnote-204) wood; with rooms shalt thou make the ark, and shalt pitch -* בַּכֹּפֶר *it within and without with pitch.*

Gopher wood is spelled **גֹפֶר**.[[205]](#footnote-205)

Pitch is spelled **כֹּפֶר**.

Only one letter separates these two words. Further, כֹּפֶר is also the wod for *atonement* or *expiation*. This suggests a connection between th Noach’s ark and the ark of the covenant in that they both are places of atonement.

I would like to point out that Noach is using ‘pitch’ to seal his ark. Normally, folks will tell you that such petroleum products are formed by compressing plants for “millions of years”. However, the earth is only 1500+ years old at this time. This suggests that HaShem created the world with pitch already formed and available to Noach. Thus, the world was created with apparent age. This also suggests that one cannot be sure whether the mabul created oil, gas, tar, pitch, etc., or whether it was part of the original creation.

However, there is another way to get pitch: One can manufacture it. If it was produced artificially, this presupposes a highly advanced knowledge of chemistry, particularly in the area of hydrocarbons. If the antediluvians were knowledgeable in hydrocarbon chemistry and production, then the entire range of petroleum products was within their grasp, from water-proof sealants (the ‘pitch’ of the ark) to plastics and other synthetic materials. Most important, however, they would have been able to produce machine lubricants and engine fuel. This is quite an intigueing idea.

The first task that God gave to Noach was to build an ark. When He commissioned that the ark be built, God explicitly outlined His plan to destroy the earth. Later on, Noach will be told to bring animals onto the ark.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19*** *And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.*

**Malbim taught**: The commandment to Noach to bring animals into the ark seems to be repeated in the Torah, with a slight change: First Noach was told that one pair from each species would come to him to survive the Flood: *“And God said to Noach... from every living thing, from all flesh, bring two of each into the ark to survive with you ... from every type that crawls upon the earth, two from each will come to you to survive”*.[[206]](#footnote-206)

*A few verses later, however, the Torah records that he was told t0 bring seven of each species of clean” animals, and two of each species of “unclean” ones: “And HaShem said to Noach ... from every clean [domestic] animal, take for yourself seven of each ... but from the [domestic] animals that are not clean, two.[[207]](#footnote-207)*

What is the explanation of this seeming contradiction? There are clues in the second instruction to Noach that help clarify the matter:

* In the second instruction, the four-letter Name of God, *HaShem,* is used, as opposed to the name *Elokim* that is used the first time Noach was told to gather animals.
* In this section, only “*behemoth”,* domestic animals, are mentioned, as opposed to the previous section where “everything that crawls upon the earth” is included.
* In the second section, Noach is told to take his “entire household” into the ark with him.

All of these facts indicate in this instance God is speaking to Noach on a *more personal* level than He had previously:

In the earlier instruction, Noach was told to bring enough specimens of all types of animals to ensure their perpetuation. Here, on the other hand, God is giving Noach permission to save some of his own private domesticated livestock among his other possessions, “his household”.[[208]](#footnote-208)

Here, the four-letter Name is used, since it represents the more particular type of Providence in action here, in contrast to the general Providence at work in the preservation of animal species overall.

From this we see that in the previous verses, God is laying out the plan for the earth’s survival. Here, Noach *himself* is being rewarded for his own personal righteousness, over and above the protection he and the inhabitants of the ark would receive as a result of their world-rescuing mission.

Noach was told to bring two pairs of unclean animals and seven *pairs* (14 animals)[[209]](#footnote-209) of clean animals two *pairs* (4 animals).[[210]](#footnote-210) Rashi, to Bereshit 7:2, writes that we learn from the fact that Noach brought in 7 pairs of pure animals that Noach learned Torah, because otherwise he could not have known which animals were kosher since at that time no one had been commanded yet not to eat clean animals.[[211]](#footnote-211) According to this, we may say that since Noach learned Torah he also knew which animals were Tereifah. [[212]](#footnote-212)

Torat Chaim on Avodah Zarah[[213]](#footnote-213) writes that in the early generations, it was certainly possible to discern -- even when the animal was alive -- whether or not it is a Tereifah. Even in later times they were able to know this, as the Sefer Chasidim and Tashbatz write, that there are several signs and experiments that exist to make it possible to know whether a live animal is a Tereifah or not. The Torat Chaim writes that certainly Noach, who was a Navi, a great Sage and expert concerning all the creatures under Heaven, would be able to know this.

Noach was also permitted to bring any of his own household property so that he could feel “at home” in the ark. It is also obvious, as we shall see later, that Noach brought a grape vine onto the ark as one of his personal posssessions.

All of this was not only for Noach’s personal benefit; it also served a larger purpose in ensuring that the achievements of the ten pre-Flood generations would not be lost.

The animals that came in by themselves were all wild animals, even those from the same species as the domestic ones that Noach added to them.

*As an aside*: Has there been any other time in history when a miracle like this happened? In fact, yes.

Leviticus chapter 11 gives the Torah Laws about which creatures are ritually pure for Jewish consumption, and which are not. In verse 2, God tells Moses, “Speak to the Children of Israel, saying, ‘These are the creatures that you may eat from among all the animals that are upon the earth”. Rashi explains, based on Talmud, that Moses held up each type of creature, each type of animal, bird, and creeping thing that is mentioned there by name, and showed it to the Israelites. He pointed and said, “this kind you may eat”, and “this kind you many not eat”. One of each of all those types of creatures came on its own, as inspired by God, to Moses at Mount Sinai at that time, just as the animals came to Noach’s ark 17 generations earlier. *End of aside*

Two *pairs* of wild oxen, two *pairs* of mountain goats, etc., were all that would have been preserved if Noach had not brought some of his own flock with him, and the process of domestication would have to have been repeated after the Flood.

Similarly, Noach brought with him the products of technological progress of invention up to his time, and presumably the knowledge of how to produce them as well, so that the world would not have to begin again from scratch in a material sense. God wished to destroy the moral degradation of the pre-Flood world, but He had no desire to destroy all of the physical progress that had been made up until that time; and, in His personal mercy on Noach, He provided for the continuity of civilization after the Flood.

[Some of the technical achievements of the antediluvian world:

1. City building. – Gen. 4:17
2. Invention of tents. – Gen. 4:20
3. Invention of shepherding. – Gen. 4:20
4. Invention of the harp and pipe. – Gen. 4:21
5. Invention of cutting instruments. Gen.4:22
6. Invention of metalurgy – Gen. 4:22
7. Invention of the plow. - Tanchuma Bereshit 11, Rashi commenting on Gen. 5:29
8. Invention of magic. - Soncino Zohar, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 56a
9. Invention of lumber tools. – Gen. 6:14
10. Invention of ships. – Gen. 6:14
11. Invention of wine. – Gen. 9:20-21[[214]](#footnote-214)
12. Invention of farming. – Gen. 9:20
13. Invention of garment making. – Gen. 9:23 ]

These two aspects of God’s relationship to the world at the time of the flood became real and evident in the opposite order when the Flood actually began. First, seven days before the Flood, “Noach did everything as he was commanded by HaShem”.[[215]](#footnote-215) The four-letter Name for God is used to show that here the Torah is describing Noach’s preparation for the Flood by bringing his own possessions into the ark and setting it up as his home.

Afterward, on the day of the Flood itself, Noach and his family entered the ark “because of the water of the Flood”, a reaction to the physical threat to survival; all animals, whether “clean” or unclean”, arrived in single pairs “to the ark”, for preservation rather than for Noach’s personal use. All of this was “as Elokim commanded Noach”,[[216]](#footnote-216) showing God’s general concern for the existence of Creation rather than His specific care for Noach and or human civilization.

The preparation seven days earlier was done consciously and deliberately, corresponding to the fact that Noach’s intentionally acquired property and the intelligent products of human ingenuity were being preserved. The actual entry into the ark was motivated by the instinctual fear of the “water of the Flood”, in consonance with its purpose of saving the world’s natural order, which functions by nonconscious physical law. Together, these wo sides of God’s way of dealing with the world guaranteed its continued existence.

## Noach the Comforter

Mabul Noach, literally “Noach’s Flood” (or mei Noach, “Noach’s waters”) resulted in the utter and total destruction of all life: Plants, animals, and people, except for Noach and his family. Noach and his family were saved because “with HaShem [did] Noach walk”;[[217]](#footnote-217) and, as such, he merited that he and his family were spared from the destruction. However, there is much more to the saga of Noach then meets the eye. We can begin to see some of the great aspects by going back to Noach’s birth.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 5:28-29*** *And Lemech lived a hundred eighty and two years, and begot a son. 29 And he called his name Noach, saying: ‘This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh from the land which HaShem hath cursed.’*

The world had a glimmer of hope of when it reverted to an almost Gan Eden[[218]](#footnote-218) state with the birth of Noach, who was capable of restoring some harmony betweenHaShem, mankind, and the land. With Noach’s birth, the curse of the land was retracted. The land immediately began producing extraordinary crops and yields. They had to plant only once every forty years!

The Midrash describes the antediluvian environment further:

***Bereshit Rabbah 34:11*** *WHILE THE EARTH REMAINETH, SEED TIME AND HARVEST, AND COLD AND HEAT, AND SUMMER AND WINTER, AND DAY AND NIGHT SHALL NOT CEASE.[[219]](#footnote-219) R. Judan said in R. Aha's name: What did the children of Noah think: that the covenant made with them would endure to all eternity?[[220]](#footnote-220) That is not so, but only as long as the heaven and earth endure will their covenant endure.[[221]](#footnote-221) But when that day cometh, of which it is written, For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall be worn out like a garment,[[222]](#footnote-222) then [shall the verse be fulfilled], And it [sc. the covenant] will be broken on that day.[[223]](#footnote-223) R. Aha commented: What was responsible for their rebelling against Me? Was it not because they sowed but did not cut down, i.e. they gave birth but did not bury?[[224]](#footnote-224) Therefore henceforth there shall be SOWING AND CUTTING DOWN:[[225]](#footnote-225) they shall bear and bury. COLD AND HEAT: [they shall suffer] fever and ague. SUMMER (KAYYIZ) AND WINTER (HOREF): I will cause the birds to summer upon them,[[226]](#footnote-226) as you read, And the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.[[227]](#footnote-227) It once happened that one of the great men of his time-some say that it was R. Samuel b. Nahman-was suffering with headache, and he lamented: This is what the generation of the Flood did for us![[228]](#footnote-228) Another interpretation of WHILE THE EARTH REMAINETH, etc.: R. Huna said in R. Aha's name: What do the children of Noah think: that the covenant made with them will endure to all eternity? [No, for] thus said I to them: WHILE THE EARTH REMAINETH. But as long as day and night endure, their covenant will endure. Yet when that day cometh of which it is written, And there shall be one day which shall be known as the Lord's, not day, and not night,[[229]](#footnote-229) at that time [shall be fulfilled the verse], ’And it will be broken in that day.’ R. Isaac commented (at the time before the Mabul): What was responsible for their rebelling against Me? Was it not because they sowed without having to reap?[[230]](#footnote-230) For R. Isaac said:* ***They used to sow once in forty years****, and* ***they travelled from one end of the world to the other in a brief period****, [[231]](#footnote-231)* ***cutting down the cedars of Lebanon in their course, making no more of the lions and leopards than of pulling hair from their skin****.[[232]](#footnote-232) How is this to be understood?[[233]](#footnote-233)* ***They enjoyed the climate [now usual] between Passover and Pentecost (Spring) [right through the year****].[[234]](#footnote-234)*

Never the less, mankind used their leisure time to engage in corrupt behavior.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:6-9*** *And it repented HaShem that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. 7 And HaShem said: ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.’ 8 But Noach found grace in the eyes of HaShem. 9 These are the generations of Noach. Noach was in his generations a righteous* (tzaddik - צַדִּיק)[[235]](#footnote-235) *and whole-hearted man; Noach walked with God.*

Noach was worthy of surviving the flood because he was a tzaddik.[[236]](#footnote-236) The Torah refers to him as a “Tzadik”, meaning he used the abilities HaShem gave him completely for righteous service of Him.

Noach was 600 years old at the time of the flood. Imagine how much knowledge *we* could accumulate if we lived that long without growing senile. It is also understood that the effects of sin have greatly diminished our spiritual and physical abilities. Moreover, imagine how much technology we would have if every genius since the Renaissance was still alive. It should come as no surprise that Noach had a vast array of knowledge, greatly exceeding our current level of technology. Unfortunately, this knowledge did not allow him to correct his world. Noach was only able to save himself *and his family*.

The Prophet speaks of another time when Noach would not have been able to even save his family.

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 14:19-20*** *Or if I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it, even though Noach, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.*

HaShem singles Noach AND his family, out to survive the flood and begin civilization again. The most critical lesson Noach and his children must impart to all future generations is the significance of Chessed, giving to others.

To reinforce this lesson among Noach and his family, HaShem devised a plan in which the animal world would be saved. Noach and his family members would be responsible for caring for all of the animals in the ark for almost an entire year. HaShem could have saved the animals through many means, yet this method was chosen in order to grant Noach, and his family, the opportunity to perfect the trait of Chessed, of giving, preparing him to instill this most critical trait in his descendants.

## The Purpose of the Mabul

The purpose of the flood does not appear to be the destruction of men. In fact, the purpose seems to be the destruction of the *earth*, and everything on it. Note what the text says:

**Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11** And the *earth* was corrupt before God, and the *earth* was filled with violence. 12 And God saw the *earth*, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the *earth*.

It seems that the earth needed to be re-created. We see that all flesh was corrupted, not just men:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12*** *And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.*

Noach was chosen by God:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:8*** *But Noach found grace in the eyes of HaShem.*

It appears as though Noach was *saved only by the grace[[237]](#footnote-237)* of HaShem.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:29-30*** *And God said: ‘Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed--to you it shall be for food; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, [I have given] every green herb for food.’* (יֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב) *And it was so.*

It clearly tells us that both man and beasts were *vegetarians* at the time of their creation. **All that crawls which lives, for you it will be for eating, like green plants**. This is the end of the last vestige of Eden: not only will humans and the other animals not share the same food, but the other animals will become food.

Noach’s world is different from the world at creation. We have more power in Noach’s world because we can now eat animals.

In this first pasuk we are given Noach’s age when the flood began:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:6*** *And Noach was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.*

Next, we are dating the flood to Noach’s age.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

Finally, we are given “*the six hundred and first year”,* but Noach is not even mentioned. It seems that it is just a given that all dating is now relative to Noach.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:13*** *And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noach removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the land was dried.*

In the beginning we counted time from creation. Now, we are counting time from Noach’s life.

HaShem closed the door of the ark, because this was *God’s world*:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:16*** *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him; and HaShem shut him in.*

But, Noach opened the door of the ark, because this was *Noach’s world*:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:13*** *And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noach removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the land was dried.*

Noach has become the center of this world. The world, at creation, was run according to God’s directives. Now, the world will be run according to Noach’s directives. Time is reckoned by Noach’s age and Noach now takes the initiative to open the door of the ark.

God was re-creating the world after the flood – let’s stop and think why it matters so much. It matters because it actually changes, in a subtle way, our whole understanding of why God brought the flood in the first place.

Torah is telling you that it was the earth that had been destroyed; that was the flood’s principal target. Humanity’s demise was almost, strange as it is to say it… incidental.

One of the tantalizing questions we have is this: If after the flood, God is, in fact, re-creating the world, is He making the same world all over again, or is he designing a different world?

The answer is that God had designed a new world which gave man a greater chance to rebuild their relationship with God. Thus, when God declared after the Flood, “Never again will there be a flood that will destroy the earth”,[[238]](#footnote-238) He was not reconciling Himself to people continuing to sin as they had before, nor was He admitting that by flooding the earth, He had made some kind of blunder that He would never again repeat. Rather, He was saying that by flooding the earth, He altered reality in such a way that it would never again become *necessary* to bring on a flood, not because people’s nature had improved for the better, but because He had now provided them with a novel mechanism that they could use to counteract and even eradicate the effects of negative behavior.[[239]](#footnote-239)

God’s world has been destroyed. Man’s world, however, will never again be destroyed by water because the world has fundamentally changed. The world is now “man’s world” that can be corrupted if he wants to corrupt it. This reminds me of the luchot. The first set were HaShem’s luchot and they were destroyed. The second set were carved by Moshe and were never destroyed.

A comparison of The sixth day of creation and the flood account gives us a number of interesting correspondences. Keeping these in mind will aid us in understanding and comparing Noach’s activities after the flood.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Gen. 1:28 God’s speech to Adam.** | **Gen. 9:1 God’s speech to Noach.** |
| Exo. 31:13-17 Sabbath covenant (Covenant, sign, for generations, between you and me, forever, cut off) | Gen. 9:9-17 *rainbow* covenant. (Covenant, sign, for generations, between you and me, forever, cut off) |
| Gen. 1:28 ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth…’ | Gen. 9:1 ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth…’ |
| Gen. 1:28 dominion over animals | Gen. 9:2 fear of you shall be on every beast, because men can eat animals. |
| Gen 1:29 men and animals eat herbage. Men cannot eat animals. | Gen. 9:3 Men can eat animals and herbage. |

Let’s compare the opening pesukim of Genesis with the pesukim which tells us about the flood.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| First verse before story: Gen. 9:19 These three were the sons of Noach, and of these was the whole earth overspread. | **Vineyard Story** | First verse before story: Gen. 10:**1** Now these are the generations of the sons of Noach |
|  | Genealogy |  |
|  | Genealogy |  |
|  | Genealogy |  |
|  | Genealogy |  |
| First verse before story: Gen. 10:32 These are the families of the sons of Noach, after their generations, in their nations; and of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood. | **Tower Story** | First verse before story: Gen. 11:10 These are the generations of Shem. |

If we zoom out and look at the overall structure of creation vs. re-creation, we see a one-for-one correspondence.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **World of Creation** | | | | |
| World develops in ‘6 days’ | God’s seventh (Sabbath) day | Generations of heaven and earth | God ‘Begins’ man from earth | God plants a garden |
| **Noach’s World** | | | | |
| Noach’s world develops | *rainbow* covenant | Noach’s children | Noach, man of earth ‘begins’ | Noach plants a vineyard |

A critical lesson that must be understood in order to understand creation vs. re-creation, is that creative activities must have an end point. They must not continue forever. This stopping point in creation was *Shabbat*,[[240]](#footnote-240) The Seventh day. This stopping point in re-creation was the *rainbow*. Thus, we understand that the stopping point of God’s creating was a covenant with man. Either the *shabbat* covenant or the *rainbow* covenant.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Disciplined Creativity** – to allow the world to exist and reach its potential. | |
| **Shabbat** | **Flood** |
|  |  |
| **There is a halt to creation** | **There is a halt to destruction** |
|  |  |
| When **mankind**… | When **God**… |
| …who has *created* before, wishes to *create* again.. | …who has *destroyed* before, wishes to *destroy* again… |
| …he *must* stop… (Ex. 20:10) | …He *will* stop… (Gen. 9:15) |
| … at the sign of the covenant. (Ex. 20:10) | …at the sign of the covenant. (Gen. 9:15) |
|  |  |
| Work six days, but the seventh is shabbat.  (Ex. 20:10) | It will be a sign of the covenant, whenever God convenes clouds… (Gen. 9:14) |

After the shabbat of creation and the *rainbow* of re-creation, we find that we continue to see that the two events correlate together.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **God’s World**  **(God is the initiator)**  **Creation:**  **Genesis 2:4-5,10** | **Noach / Man’s World (Man is the initiator plays God and Adam)**  **Re-Creation:**  **Genesis 9 + 10** |
| God begins. Gen. 1:1 | Noach begins. 9:20 |
| **Gen 2:4** These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven. | **Gen. 10:1** Now these are the generations of the sons of Noach: Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and unto them were sons born after the flood. |
| **Gen. 2:5 …**Before vegetation was upon the earth, | …After vegetation was destroyed upon the earth, |
| **Gen. 2:5** …Because God had not yet made it rain (benevolently)… | Because God had just made it rain (destructively). |
| **Gen. 2:5** …And man was not yet upon the earth… | And man is now on the earth once again… |
| **Gen. 2:7** God creates a man ‘from the earth’. | Noach is ‘a man of the earth’. Gen. 9:20 |
| **Gen. 2:6** A mist came up from the earth to the heavens, to water the earth [and foster new life]. | Torrential rain came down from the heavens to the earth, to flood the earth, [and destroy all life]. Gen. 9:15 |

To understand what Noach was trying to accomplish with his re-creation, we must understand that Chazal viewed the grape as the fruit of the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’:

***Berachot 40a*** *R. Meir holds that the tree of which Adam ate was the vine, since the thing that most causes wailing to a man is wine, as it says, And he drank of the wine and was drunken.[[241]](#footnote-241)*

Let’s compare the post creation account with the post flood account.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **God’s World**  **(God is the initiator)**  **Creation:**  **Genesis 2:4-5,10** | **Noach / Man’s World (Man is the initiator plays God and Adam)**  **Re-Creation:**  **Genesis 10** |
| **Gen. 2:7** God begins aman formed from dust from the earth | **Gen. 9:20** Noach, a man of the earth, begins (he was trying to create / father a child, his ‘fourth’ son) |
| **Gen. 2:8** God plants a garden. | **Gen. 9:20** Noach plants a vineyard. (his vineyard is a substitute for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.) |
| **Gen. 3:6** Eats from the tree of knowledge. It plays with his mind and he becomes confused. | **Gen. 9:21** Noach drinks wine he makes from a vine – it plays with his mind and gets him drunk.  Chazal go so far as to suggest that Noach actually ate from the self-same vine as Adam![[242]](#footnote-242) |
| **Gen 3:7** Adam and Chava discover that they are naked. | **Gen. 9:22** Noach gets naked and is seen by Ham. |
| **Gen. 3:21** God covers Adam and Eve. | **Gen. 9:23** Shem and Yafet cover Noach. |
| **Gen. 3:14** God curses serpent, the instigator of evil. | **Gen. 9:25** Noach Curses Canaan, an instigator. |
| **Gen. 3:15** Snake becomes subservient to his former colleagues. | **Gen. 9:26-27** Ham becomes a servant of his brother. |
|  | **Gen. 10:1** Now these are the generations of the sons of Noach: Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and unto them were sons born after the flood. |

## Noach and his vine

According to the Midrash, the forbidden fruit Chava offered Adam was wine; Chava was aware of the importance of joy and sought to attain it through wine. But she failed to experience *holy* joy, since she succumbed to the feelings of self-awareness and ego that are the by-products of less-than-holy celebrating. Prior to the sin, Adam and Chava were merely a vehicle for Divine expression; once they took the fateful sip of wine, they gained self-awareness and began to operate in a realm of seeming separateness from God.

Noach attempted to rectify Eve’s error, to experience joy without self-awareness. He therefore sought to negate his selfhood through drunkenness. But this endeavor was misguided, since the goal is not to numb the mind and emotions through drinking, but rather to lose the self through humility and surrender to God.

Noach, in his attempt to fashion a society based on proper ideals, tried importing the pre-sin state of existence. By getting drunk, Noach thought he could get rid of the pervasive self-awareness and thereby resurrect a state of complete unity with the Divine. Noach’s mistake was that he thought all oblivion was created equal. What he didn’t realize was that lack of self-awareness that doesn’t come from subjugation to a higher power, but rather from excessive alcohol consumption, is merely confusion, and isn’t in fact an enlightened spiritual state.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29*** *And he called his name Noach, saying: ‘This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh from the land which HaShem hath cursed.’*

Noach’s repair of Adam’s sin is hinted at the Torah already in the giving of his name: “And he called him Noach, saying, ‘This one shall comfort us (יְנַחֲמֵנוּ) for our work and the toil of our hands because of the land which God has cursed”‘. Lets examine this hint through the eyes and ears of Rashi, the Talmud, and the Midrash.

Rashi tells us two things based on this pasuk. The first is that prior to Noach, people did not have agricultural tools. Noach gave these tools to people, making their work easier. Second, Rashi tells us that the curse Adam Ha-rishon had received, that thorns and thistles would grow when man planted wheat, ceased in the generation of Noach. The pasuk says zeh yenachameinu, indicating a level of comfort between man and the natural world that had not been felt since Adam and Chava were expelled from Gan Eden.

Now, lets see what Noach did with agriculture after the flood.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20*** *And Noach the man of the earth began, and planted a vineyard.* ***21*** *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.*

Rashi brings additional insights on this passage.

**[And Noach] began:** Heb. וַיָּחֶל. [This can be understood as] “he made himself profane”, for he should have first engaged in planting something different.[[243]](#footnote-243)

**a master of the earth:** אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה, the master of the earth, like (Ruth 1:3): “Naomi’s husband (אִישׁ)”. Rashi explains that Elimelech was called אִישׁ נָעָמִי because of his mastery over her. Cf. Commentary Digest ad loc.

**and he planted a vineyard:** When he entered the ark, he brought with him vine branches and shoots of fig trees.[[244]](#footnote-244)

And why does Rashi insist on specifically these two fruits, the vine and the fig? Micah prophesies that, at the end of the days, when the world will accept God’s morality emanating from Zion and Jerusalem, then:

***Micah 4:4*** *every man shall sit under his grapevine or fig tree with no one to disturb him.*

Now the Midrash comes to give us insight on this passage:

Rabbi Chiya bar Ba said: On that very day Noach planted, on that very day he drank, and on that very day he was put to shame:

**Midrash Tanchuma Noach 13:2** Three men toiled upon the earth and degraded themselves thereby. They were: Cain, Noach, and Uzziah. It is written of Cain: *He was a tiller of the land*,[[245]](#footnote-245) and that is followed by the verse: *You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth*.[[246]](#footnote-246) Noach, as it is written: *And Noach, the husbandman, began, and planted a vineyard*.[[247]](#footnote-247) And soon thereafter he disgraced himself: *He drank of the wine*.[[248]](#footnote-248) Our sages held that on the very day he planted the vineyard, it bore its fruit, he harvested it, pressed it, drank the wine, became intoxicated, and exposed his private parts.

(Note that wine is a symbol of freedom. Remember the Passover cups of wine as the sign of redemption.)

The vine grew and produced far faster than any vine in today’s world.

**As an aside**: In Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22. Based on the phrase “*Further, all the days*..”., I would argue that God is saying that He will facillitate the reestablishment of civilizations, which would consequently overwrite any societal evidence of a near-extinction of humanity. The world needed to be repopulated and God didn’t waste any time. He blessed Noach and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land. This blessing allowed for them to reproduce at an accelerated pace, so much so that the names of their children are the names we have for the seventy nations, because they very rapidly grew in number, diversified, and reestablished civilization. **So there is no evidence of interruption in ancient Egypt, because their effectively was none.** God kept the Egyptian structures and civilizations intact throughout the flood, repopulated the region very rapidly, and provided its inhabitant with all the knowledge they needed to resume Egyptian history.

This is similar to what happened in Egypt where HaShem blessed His people and they multiplied very, very rapidly with 6 babies in every birth, according to Rashi on Exodus 1:7. This means that in 210 years they went from 70 people to more than 3 million!

Was this the way things grew in the antediluvian world? Consider the following:

***Chullin 60b*** *One verse says: ‘And the earth brought forth grass,’ referring to the third day, whereas another verse when speaking of the sixth day says: ‘No shrub of the field was yet in the earth.’ This teaches us that the plants commenced to grow but stopped just as they were about to break through the soil, until Adam came and prayed for rain for them; and when rain fell they sprouted forth”.*

It seems that after Adam prayed the vegetation grew and attained maturity to the point that on that first day he ‘ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil’. Thus every plant grew rapidly to maturity. Rashi taught the same thing: Only when Adam prayed did the rain fall and bring forth the greenery of the garden.[[249]](#footnote-249)

As a consequence of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge Good and Evil, three relationships have deteriorated:

1. The relationship between God and humans,
2. between woman and man, and
3. between humans and the land.

The flood story continues the history of these relationships. At the end of the story, the relationship between humanity, God, and the land is replaced by a covenant. The animals are equal partners in this covenant.

Why did Noach get drunk? To understand this answer, it is necessary to understand what Chazal understood; namely that the grape vine was the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’.

***Berachoth 40a*** *For it has been taught: R. Meir holds that the tree of which Adam ate was the vine, since the thing that most causes wailing to a man is wine, as it says, And he drank of the wine and was drunken.[[250]](#footnote-250)*

***Sanhedrin 70a*** *R. And Noach began to be a man of the earth, and he planted a vineyard, — Hisda said in R. ‘Ukba’s name, and others state, Mar ‘Ukba said in R. Zakkai’s name: The Holy One, blessed be He, said unto Noach: ‘Noach, shouldst thou not have taken a warning from Adam, whose transgression was caused by wine?’ This agrees with the view that the [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine. For it has been taught: R. Meir said: That [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine,*

***Sanhedrin 70a*** *‘Ubar the Galilean gave the following exposition: The letter waw [and] occurs thirteen times in the passage dealing with wine: And Noach began to be a man of the earth, and he planted a vineyard:*

It is known that by drinking wine, Noach wanted to rectify Adam’s sin, because Chava gave him the juice of the grapes to drink, that was the Tree of Knowledge. But, we can rectify this sin by drinking wine. Wine is joyful.

Just as God engaged in planting the Garden of Eden, so too Noach engaged in planting. If so, then we can suggest that Noach’s actions after The Flood mimic God’s actions in Creation. Indeed, the entire section contains many **parallels** to the Creation story. According to the opinion[[251]](#footnote-251) that the vine was banished together with Adam from the Garden of Eden, Noach intended to rectify the vine with which Adam had transgressed. This would suggest that Noach had taken to heart the message of The Mabul. He understood that all the other people, except for his family, had abandoned any relationship with God. Noach resolved to do what he could to correct this in his own heart. He wanted to reconnect his relationship with God by re-enacting Adam’s sin and NOT getting drunk. He failed, but it was a VERY noble attempt. The fact that he had no further progeny emphasizes his failure.

It appears to me that Noach was attempting to draw near to God by attempting to rectify Adam’s sin. This is reflected in the Torah telling us that Noach “began to be a man of the earth”. As Noach drew near to God he also, at the same time, drew near to the earth.

Noach’s failure to rectify the sin off Adam resulted in a lack of any further progeny.

***Sanhedrin 70a*** *And he drank of the wine and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father, and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. And Noach awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.[[252]](#footnote-252) [With respect to the last verse] Rab and Samuel [differ,] one maintaining that he castrated him, whilst the other says that he sexually abused him. He who maintains that he castrated him, [reasons thus;] Since he cursed him by his fourth son,[[253]](#footnote-253) he must have injured him with respect to a fourth son.[[254]](#footnote-254) But he who says that he sexually abused him, draws an analogy between ‘and he saw’ written twice. Here it is written, And Ham the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father; whilst elsewhere it is written, And when Shechem the son of Hamor saw her [he took her and lay with her and defiled her].[[255]](#footnote-255) Now, on the view that he emasculated him, it is right that he cursed him by his fourth son; but on the view that he abused him, why did he curse his fourth son; he should have cursed him himself? — Both indignities were perpetrated.[[256]](#footnote-256)*

What did Ham do?

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXVI:3*** *A HUSBANDMAN [lit. A MAN OF THE EARTH’: he was so termed] because he saved the face of the land, since for his sake the land was preserved; and because he filled the face of the ground- A MAN OF THE EARTH: just as a castle-guard is called by the name of the castle.[[257]](#footnote-257) R. Berekiah said: Moshe was more beloved than Noach. Noach, after having been called A righteous man,[[258]](#footnote-258) is called A MAN OF THE EARTH;[[259]](#footnote-259) but Moshe, after having been called An Egyptian man,[[260]](#footnote-260) was then called The man of God.[[261]](#footnote-261) He was more beloved than Noach, who ended as a castrate.[[262]](#footnote-262) AND PLANTED A VINEYARD. As he was going to plant the vineyard the demon Shimadon met him and proposed, ‘Come into partnership with me [in this vineyard], but take care not to enter into my portion, for if you do I will injure you.’*

**Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 9:25** Cursed be Canaan You have caused me to be incapable of begetting another fourth son[[263]](#footnote-263) to serve me. Cursed be your fourth son, that he should minister to the children of these older ones [Shem and Japhet], upon whom the burden of serving me has been placed from now on.[[264]](#footnote-264) Now what did Ham see (what reason did he have) that he castrated him? He said to his brothers, “The first man [Adam] had two sons, and one killed the other so as to inherit the world, and our father has three sons, and he still desires a fourth son”![[265]](#footnote-265)

It was not Ham, Noach’s younger son who *saw him naked*, who is cursed, but Ham’s son. And not just any son, but his fourth son. We will also see that Ham tried to promote Canaan, his son, into Ham’s generation in order to get the double portion of inheritance which we will see later, is for the first born. Yet, Ham was the youngest son, not the firstborn.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:24*** *And Noach awoke from his wine, and knew what his* ***youngest son had done unto him****.*

This is the first incident of the struggle of children to be ‘firstborn’ and get the double portion.

Now many of us savvy sophisticates know that when the Bible speaks of “seeing the nakedness” of someone it is euphemism for having sex. Leviticus 20:17 leaves no doubt:

If a man takes his sister, his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter, and **sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness**, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness. He shall bear his guilt.

So this makes a bit more sense than Ham merely peeping at his naked father. Noach did, after all, know what Ham had “done unto him”. That’s a bit stronger than having a peek.

Rashi in the commentary says that the castration was performed “for inheriting the world”.

This would also explain why Noach cursed Ham’s fourth son. If Noach could no longer have a fourth son then Ham’s fourth son was to be cursed.

***Genesis Rabbah 36:7*** *You prevented me from producing a youngest son who would serve me; consequently, the same man [you] will be his brother’s slave. . . . You prevented me from producing a fourth son, consequently I curse your fourth son.*

Why is the Midrash speaking about 600 year old Noach having a fourth son?

When you look at the above table, you see that when God ‘began’ He was creating men. When Noach ‘began’, he must have been doing the same thing to fulfill what God desired in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1*** *And God blessed Noach and his sons, and said unto them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.*

Noach, too, was trying to create men by procreating. So, he drinks wine preparing to procreate and gets drunk. Before he can complete his mission, Ham castrates him to prevent Noach from being fruitful and multiplying.

The following ATBaSH (chiasm) demonstrates the focus of Noach’s intention.

When the Torah presents a chiastic structure, whether in narrative or legalistic text, it does so in order to highlight the “center”.

An ATBaSH or chiasm:[[266]](#footnote-266)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 9 Chiasm | |
| **The re-creation of the garden of Eden.** | |
| **20** And Noach the husbandman began, and planted a vineyard.[[267]](#footnote-267)  **21** And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. |  |
| **22** **And Ham**, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, … | Focus on Ham |
| **22** …and told his two brethren without. | Ham in relation to his brothers |
| **23** And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. | Shem and Yafet |
| **24** And Noach awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. | **Center is the focus**  All of this text revolves around this critical pasuk. |
| **25** … a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. | Cham in relation to his brothers Shem and Yafet |
| **25** And he said: **Cursed (אָרוּר) be Canaan**; … | Focus on Ham through his son Canaan. The only other place where we find ‘cursed – אָרוּר ‘ is in: Gen. 3:14, 17, 4:11, 12:3, 27:29 – by God himself. Noach is taking on God’s function to destroy rather than to create. (Jacob also uses this word in Gen. 49:7) |
| 26 And he said: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant.  27 God enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant. | Shem and Yafet |
| **28** And Noach lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.  **29** And all the days of Noach were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died. |  |

## Noach’s wife – Na’ama

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:19*** *And Lemech took unto him two wives; the name of one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20 And Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle. 21 And his brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe. 22 And Zillah, she also bore Tubal-cain, the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naama.*

Na’ama is one of only three females included in the genealogies of the early chapters of Bereshit (Genesis). The three females are the two wives and one daughter of Lemech, whose offspring constitute the seventh generation after creation. The symbolism of the number seven in the Torah points to the seventh generation as significant: humanity is now fully launched. Lemech’s children thus are the human founders of vocations, in contrast to divine creators of cultural roles.

As the daughter of Zillah, Na’ama is the sister and half sister of three brothers, all founders of an aspect of human culture. Their names are linked to their archetypal occupation (for example, the name Jubal, ancestor of instrumental musicians, may be related to the Hebrew word for “horn” or “trumpet”). No vocational role is ascribed to Na’ama; however, her name may signify one. It comes from the Hebrew root n’m, which means “to be pleasant” or “lovely” (compare Naomi); but the same stem can mean “to sing”, which would make her the ancestral singer. The intimate connection between women and song, going back to the maternal tuneful, rhythmic soothing of infants and found widely across cultures, would support the idea that Na’ama is the archetypal founder of vocal music.[[268]](#footnote-268)

***Targum Jonathan on Bereshit (Genesis) 4:22*** *And Zillah bare also Tuvalkain, the chief (rab) of all artificers who know the workmanship of brass and iron. And the sister of Tuvalkain was Na’ama; she was mistress of elegies and songs.*

***Midrash Aggadah, Genesis 4:22:2*** *The sister of Tuval Kain was Na’ama. Our wise ones, may they be remembered for a blessing, said that she was called Na’ama for she was pleasant in her ways, that the ministering angels requested to wander after her and she fled from in front of them.*

***Bereshit Rabbah 23:3*** *...And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Na’ama. Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said: Na’ama was Noach’s wife. Why was she called Na’ama? Because all of her deeds were pleasant (ne’imim). The Rabbis said this is a different Na’ama. Why was she called Na’ama? Because she beat on a drum to draw people to idol worship.*

***Abarbanel on*** ***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:22***: “His (Tuval-Cain) sister was called “Na’ama” (from the root na’im, meaning “pleasant”) because she brought about the pleasantness of vocal singing… Perhaps she started to write lyrics, since her brother Yuval was a musician she composed the song to fit the tune such as a lament or perhaps she simply had a pleasant voice and became a vocalist”.[[269]](#footnote-269) However, the Rabbis, by identifying Na’ama as the wife of Noach,[[270]](#footnote-270) bestowed upon her a truly significant role. While the ten generations from Adam to Noach were all wiped out by the flood,[[271]](#footnote-271) a descendant of Cain, Na’ama the wife of Noach, survived along with Noach, a descendant of Seth.

***Ramban on Genesis 4:22*** *In Breshit Rabba (23:3) they say that she was the wife of Noach, and why was she called Na’ama? For her deeds were pleasant and pleasing. What they intended was that she was known in those generations for she was a righteous woman and gave birth to righteous ones, and thus the text mentions her. If this is so, then a remnant of Cain remains in the world, and if you say that this is not the wife that Noach had three children with, then why is she mentioned?*

**Rashi on Genesis 4:22** נעמה NAAMAH — She was Noach’s wife.[[272]](#footnote-272)

**Radak on Genesis 4:22** The reason the Torah mentions this is to inform us that Tuval Kayin did not have a brother, as opposed to his half-brother יבל, but that the sibling he did have, i.e. a sister, was called נעמה According to Bereshit Rabbah 23:3 this Na’ama became the wife of Noach, being the only surviving individual of the offspring of Kayin. She was called נעמה in recognition of her good character. Other scholars in the same Midrash do not agree that the Na’ama who became Noach’s wife was the one mentioned here. They attribute the name Na’ama here to this woman’s ability to play music on these instruments.

**Gur Aryeh on Bereshit 4:22** She is Noach’s wife. For if this was not so, why did the text mention this woman from amongst all the women? This was to inform us that she was a fit woman. And what does this mean? She was the wife of Noach, and that it should not be difficult for you, for Noach was saved on his merit, and his three children and their wives were saved for they had no guilt, but why was his wife saved? The text here says that she was fitting and righteous and that her actions were pleasant. Therefor, she is mentioned here where other women are not, for we did not know why she merited to be saved, and here her righteousness is revealed.

Noach’s wife is identified as Na’ama (נַעֲמָה),[[273]](#footnote-273) daughter of Lemech and Tzillah.[[274]](#footnote-274) One might posit that tradition makes this identification in keeping with the internal logic often described as the biblical “theory of conservation of characters”:[[275]](#footnote-275) Later in the text, a woman named Na’ama makes a significant appearance in the narrative. However, the more we delve into this woman’s background and life-story, the more we understand the story of the flood, and the more it becomes apparent that the sages did not identify Noach’s wife as Na’ama in an arbitrary pastiche of biblical names and characters; Noach’s wife could only be Na’ama.

Naama – Solomon’s Wife

There was another Woman named Naama. She is the only other Naama in the Tanach. I am convinced that they are related because they have the same name. Yet, I have no idea, yet, as to ‘how’ they are related. Solomon’s wife, Naama, was named three times in the Tanach. She is called an Amonitess each time she is named. This tells us that she is part of the messianic line from the incest of Lot and his daughter.

Obviously Solomon’s wife named Naama was a descendant of Naama, Noach’s wife.

***Melachim alef (1Kings) 14:21*** *And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which HaShem did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother’s name was* ***Naamah*** *an Ammonitess.*

## Noach’s Number is three (3)

As you study Noach’s life you will find that he is constantly surrounded by the number three (3).[[276]](#footnote-276) Consider the following:

We are told that he had three attributes,[[277]](#footnote-277) as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9:

1. In his generations a man righteous - Tzadik,
2. Whole-hearted - Tam,
3. Noach walked with God - Mit’haleich Et HaElokim.

We are told that he had three sons, as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:10. The Torah goes out of its way to tell us that Noach had three sons; why? Can’t we count?:

1. Noach begot three sons, Shem,
2. Cham,
3. And Yafet.

The ark, as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16, had three stories.

There were three groups of animals that were to be brought into the ark, as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:20:

1. fowl after their kind,
2. cattle after their kind, and
3. of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind.

The ark was to have three attributes, as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14:

1. Make thee an ark of gopher wood;
2. with rooms shalt thou make the ark,
3. and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

The ark had three dimensions, as detailed in Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15:

1. the length of the ark three hundred[[278]](#footnote-278) cubits,
2. the breadth of it fifty cubits,
3. and the height of it thirty[[279]](#footnote-279) cubits.

The mountains were submerged 3 X 5 cubits deep:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:20*** *The water prevailed fifteen cubits above, and the mountains were covered.*

Noach saw three different worlds.

1. He saw the fantastic world that existed before the flood.
2. He saw the flooded world.
3. He saw the renewed world after the flood.

Three had intercourse in Noach's ark and were punished - the dog, the raven and Cham.

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *The Sages taught: Three violated that directive and engaged in intercourse while in the ark, and all of them were punished for doing so. They are: The dog, and the raven, and Ham, son of Noah. The dog was punished in that it is bound; the raven was punished in that it spits, and Ham was afflicted in that his skin turned black.*

When the Torah describes the impending flood that will destroy the world, it describes the problem as follows:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *G-d said to Noach, ‘The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with robbery through them; and behold, I am going to destroy them from the earth.’*

Rashi supplies an alternate translation for the last words of this verse and renders it thus: “I am going to destroy them with the earth.” Rashi then adds: “**Three** handbreadths of earth, of the depth of the plow, were dissolved and washed away.”

Noach is listed as one of the three righteous men who are able to deliver only their own souls, as we see in:

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 14:14****though these three men, Noach, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.*

What binds these three men is that they each saw three different worlds.

1. Noach saw the antediluvian world, the flooded world, and the re-newed world after the flood.
2. Daniel saw the first Temple, he saw the world withou the Temple, and he saw the second Temple.
3. Iyav (Job) saw his house and family when they were whole. He saw his world when his family and possessions were all destroyed. Finally, his family and possessions wre restored.

Each of these men was saw three worlds. They saw a world in its original form. Then they saw a destroyed world. In the end they all saw a re-created world.

Each of these three worlds was destroyed because of theft. Consider the folowing:

1. Noach’s original world had its fate sealed because of theft (geneiva / gezel / chamas). Rashi explains that the generation of the Flood was guilty of three crimes. The people had adopted idol worship. They had abandoned all parameters of proper sexual conduct and even incestuous relationships were common. Finally, theft accomplished by force and violence was common.[[280]](#footnote-280) Rashi further notes that the judgment of the generation was sealed because of the crime of violent theft. It is this crime that is referred to as “violence” in the above passage.[[281]](#footnote-281) One of the seven laws of Noach was the prohibition agains theft.[[282]](#footnote-282)
2. Daniel’s first Temple was destroyed because of idol worship, licentiousness, and murder.[[283]](#footnote-283) Each of these sins involves theft. For example, idol worship is stealing the worship that belongs to HaShem.
3. Iyov testified himself regarding theft - in the Mesilas Yesharim’s 11th Chapter, discussing the trait of Nekius (being clean of sin), namely in the area of stealing/theft. The Ramchal continues: “Even Iyov testified on himself: “if my step has turned aside from the path and my heart has gone after my eyes, and if any speck has stuck to my palms’ (Iyov 31:7). Consider this beautiful analogy in which he compared unseen theft to something which tends to stick to a person’s hand (ex. flour when kneading) for even though one does not intend to go and take it and by itself it sticks to his hands, nevertheless, it remains in his hands. So too here, even though one does not go out to actually steal, it is difficult for his hands to be completely empty of theft”.[[284]](#footnote-284)

In the account of the flood, in Bereshit (Genesis) chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9, we find Torah using the number three, five times:

1. Ge 6:10 And Noah begat **three** sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
2. Ge 6:15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*: The length of the ark *shall be* **three** hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.
3. Ge 7:13 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the **three** wives of his sons with them, into the ark;
4. Ge 9:19 These *are* the **three** sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.
5. Ge 9:28 And Noah lived after the flood **three** hundred and fifty years.

There are three kinds of Noachides according to Jewish law. A Noachide is a human being who is obligated to keep all the Noachide laws by virtue of being saved from the flood or descended from someone saved from the flood.

1. The first is a Noachide who lives outside of Israel and is not also bound to the covenant of Mt. Sinai. These noachides are known as Bnai Noach. Noachide does not mean non-Jew, it means one who is bound to the covenant of Noach (The Covenant of the Rainbow).
2. The second is a Noachide who lives and resides permanently in Israel and is not bound to the covenant at Sinai. This is a Ger Toshav also known as Bnai Abraham. These Noachides are bound to all the commandments Shem, Ever Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes were bound to in the land of Israel. Shabbat was not mandatory at this time, nor was it kept in the same manner as after Sinai. A Ger Toshav keeps the Torah in a similar manner as the Patriarchs did and must be circumcized.
3. The third type of Noachide is a Bnai Israel. This is someone bound to the covenant of Mt. Sinai either by birth or conversion under Jewish law.

# The Tebah - תֵּבָה (Ark)

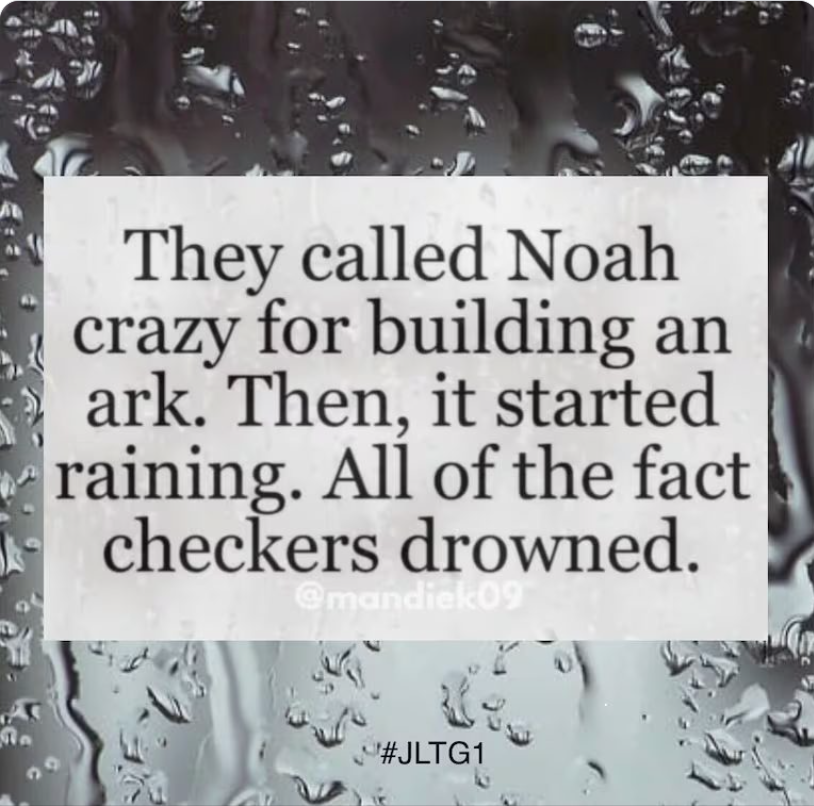
***Bereans (Hebrews) 11:7*** *By faith Noach, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

Noach created the tebah through the powers of speech. The gematria of the dimensions of the tebah testifies to this fact:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15*** *And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*

The dimensions of the ark were 300 cubits by 50 cubits by 30 cubits. The gematria of these dimensions is: **ל** - lamed (3), **ש** - shin (300), **נ** - nun (50) = lashon.[[285]](#footnote-285) Noach created the ark with the *power of speech*! The secret of Noach's ark is the secret of rectified language.

Because the ark was dimensionless, the animals all had their own climate zone sections of the ark. There was cold and snow for the artic and antarctic creatures. There was hot and dry for the African animals, etc.

**Ibn Ezra[[286]](#footnote-286)** notes the name tebah - תֵּבָה, ark (indicating in its most literal meaning: a chest or box-like object.[[287]](#footnote-287)) is used instead of ‘boat’, because it was not shaped like a ship and it had no oars.

The flood (mabul) represents all aspects of the world which interfere with our Divine service. What is the remedy? “Come into the ark”. The Baal Shem Tov[[288]](#footnote-288) taught that the word for “ark” in Hebrew is “tebah” which is a homonym for “word”. A Jew must lock himself inside the “words” of Torah and prayer (which are **word processes**). There are three Hebrew words for the English word “word”: “davar” which means “a matter”, “milah” which means a spoken word, and “tebah” which means a written word. Jewish commentators have creatively mistranslated the word “tebah” in Genesis 6:16, that refers to Noah’s “tebah” (ark), as “word”, and we can read this verse this way: “Make a light (skylight, or gemstone) for the word.” Through this creative mistranslation, the command to Noah to make a light for the ark becomes a direction for prayer and study, to make a light to shine down into the word.

Now, think about this: If the tebah (ark) is the word, then Yeshua, as the Living Word, is also the Tebah. This helps us to understand that the ark being made of wood and covered with pitch, is a picture of something alive.

The Sfat Emet explains that the word *tebah* in Hebrew means a box / ark, but it also means ‘a word.’ Just as the tebah created a protective environment for Noach and his family, so too the words of the Torah and our tefillot create a protective environment for ourselves that connect us to HaShem.

HaShem is telling us also to “enter” into the “words” of Torah and prayer. Sometimes when we study Torah we forget its holiness and the One who gave us the Torah; we say our prayers without sincerity or attention to their meaning.

Just as Noach was commanded to “enter” with his entire being into the ark (“tebah”), so we are told to “enter” with all our heart and soul into the words (“tebot”) of Torah and prayer, reading the words carefully from the Torah-book or prayer-book, saying each word with feeling.

In this way we will fulfill, in the spiritual sense, a (previous) command HaShem gave to Noach: “A light shall you make for the tebah”,[[289]](#footnote-289) you shall illuminate the words (“tebot”) of Torah and prayer with deeper feeling and holiness, until they become “bright and shining” words that illuminate one’s whole being with God’s holiness.

Before God destroyed the earth because of its corruption, He made provisions to save some things. We will first look at a mysteious light source.

The Zohar[[290]](#footnote-290) likens Noach’s ark to a succah, the temporary dwelling huts that the Jews lived in during their wandering in the wilderness; the huts that we re-build and dwell within, each year during the festival of Succoth [Tabernacles]. Moreover, the Succah itself represents the Divine presence that surrounds us and protects us.

The Midrash mentions a prohibition against sexual intercourse in the ark. The prohibition is not mentioned explicitly in the biblical text and it is learned from homiletic interpretation of the verses.[[291]](#footnote-291)

The Midrash notes that all the creatures obeyed the ban aside from three, among them the dog: Our Rabbis taught: Three copulated in the ark, and they were all punished: the dog, the raven, and Ḥam ben Noach. The dog was doomed to be tied, the raven expectorates [his seed into his mate’s mouth],[[292]](#footnote-292) and Ḥam was smitten in his skin.[[293]](#footnote-293) According to the version of Genesis Rabbah,[[294]](#footnote-294) only Ḥam and the dog copulated in the ark and were punished: Rabbi Hiya said: Ḥam and the dog copulated in the ark, therefore Ḥam came forth black-skinned while the dog publicly exposes its copulation.[[295]](#footnote-295) Rabbi Levi said: This may be compared to one who minted his own coinage in the very palace of the king, whereupon the king ordered: I decree that his effigy be charred [in Hebrew: mephuḥam=dark, defaced] and his coinage cancelled. Similarly, Ḥam and the dog copulated in the Ark [and were punished]. Accordingly, Ḥam became mephuḥam [defaced] and the dog is known in his copulation.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 36:7*** *AND HE SAID: CURSED BE CANAAN:[[296]](#footnote-296) Ham sinned and Canaan is cursed! R. Judah and R. Nehemiah disagreed. R. Judah said: Since it is written, And God blessed Noah and his sons,[[297]](#footnote-297) while there cannot be a curse where a blessing has been given, consequently, HE SAID: CURSED BE CANAAN. R. Nehemiah explained: It was Canaan who saw it [in the first place] and informed them, therefore the curse is attached to him who did wrong. R. Berekiah said: Noah grieved very much in the Ark that he had no young son to wait on him, and declared, ' When I go out I will beget a young son to do this for me.’ But when Ham acted thus to him, he exclaimed, ' You have prevented me from begetting a young son to serve me,[[298]](#footnote-298) therefore that man [your son] will be a servant to his brethren!’ R. Huna said in R. Joseph's name: [Noah declared], ‘You have prevented me from begetting a fourth son, therefore I curse your fourth son’,[[299]](#footnote-299) R. Huna also said in R. Joseph's name: You have prevented me from doing something in the dark [sc. cohabitation], therefore your seed will be ugly and dark-skinned. R. Hiyya said: Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark, therefore Ham came forth black-skinned while the dog publicly exposes its copulation. R. Levi said: This may be compared to one who minted his own coinage[[300]](#footnote-300) in the very palace of the king, whereupon the king ordered: I decree that his effigy be defaced and his coinage cancelled. Similarly, Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark and were punished.[[301]](#footnote-301)*

According to the Torah text, the ark was supposed to help the chosen creatures survive *The Flood* so that they could initiate a more correct world. Namely, the ark was a temporary stage of transition between the old broken world and the new world that would exist after leaving the ark.

Various midrashim stress man’s responsibility for nature and for the environment as encompassed in the pre-flood commandment “to work it and take care of it”.[[302]](#footnote-302) This responsibility belongs to Noach, as the ark with its many varied inhabitants is a microcosmos that requires preservation. Noach, who cared for the animals so that they will survive the holocaust of the flood, reflects the role of the “intelligent creature” who tops the ecological pyramid by caring for all creatures so that they will continue to live together in a balanced system. Hence, caring for the animals is a return to the initial ideal Creation and part of the process of correcting the moral injustices that had become prevalent among human beings. Caring for the animals is a manifestation of giving, loving kindness, and concern for others, and it constitutes a moral response to the egotism and aggressiveness that had spread among those of Noach’s generation.

## The Tzohar – צהר

Lets start by looking at the relevant Torah.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13-16*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.* ***14*** *Make thee an ark of gopher wood; with rooms shalt thou make the ark* (Tebah[[303]](#footnote-303))*, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.* ***15*** *And this is how thou shalt make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.* ***16*** *A Tzohar shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*



luminous gem lighting up the ark, DALL-e 1

God instructs him to build an ark. The instructions for this ark are quite detailed: God tells him what wood to use, how to waterproof it, the specific dimensions, and more. Among these details is the specification that Noach should make a Tzohar (light source) for the ark. Many commentaries relate the word to either tzaharayim, meaning afternoon[[304]](#footnote-304) or zahir, meaning shining or radiant; either way, it is understood that the tzohar was some sort of light source. Rashi[[305]](#footnote-305) famously offers two possibilities, from midrash: “some say a window,[[306]](#footnote-306) and some say a precious stone[[307]](#footnote-307) that provided light for them”. The general rule when we hear two opinions is that both opinions are correct! The challenge is to understand ‘ how’ or ‘when’ they are both correct.

The obvious difference between a window and a light is whether the light comes from within, or from outside the Ark, and, more significantly, that a window allows the people inside the ark to see what is happening outside, whereas the chandelier leaves them focused entirely on their own small world inside the Ark.

Targum Yonatan may be the first source to claim the tzohar was a luminous stone, pulled from the primordial river Pishon.[[308]](#footnote-308) This is elaborated on in Genesis Rabbah 31:11:

*During the entire twelve months that Noach was in the Ark he did not require the light of the sun by day or the light of the moon by night, but he had a polished stone which he hung up – when it was dim, he knew it was day, when it was bright, he knew it was night.[[309]](#footnote-309)*

Noach got luminous gems from Gan Eden.

The Tzohar, the precious stone had the miraculous quality of being able to generate light within the darkness.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 31:11*** *A LIGHT (TZOHAR) SHALT THOU MAKE TO THE ARK (VI, 16). R. Hunia and R. Phinehas, R. Hanan and R. Hoshaia could not explain [the meaning of TZOHAR]; R. Abba b. Kahana and R. Levi did explain it. R. Abba b. Kahana said: It means a skylight; R. Levi said: A precious stone.[[310]](#footnote-310) R. Phinehas said in R. Levi’s name: During the whole twelve months that Noach was in the Ark he did not require the light of the sun by day or the light of the moon by night, but he had a polished gem which he hung up: when it was dim he knew that it was day, and when it shone he knew that it was night.[[311]](#footnote-311) R. Huna said: Once we were taking refuge from [Roman] troops in the caves of Tiberias. We had lamps with us: when they were dim we knew that it was day, and when they shone brightly we knew that it was night. AND TO A CUBIT SHALT THOU FINISH IT UPWARD. R. Judah and R. Nehemiah disagree. R. Judah said: It contained three hundred and thirty compartments, each compartment being ten cubits square, and two corridors each four cubits wide; the compartments ran along each side [of the corridor], and there were two cubits at the [outer] sides [of the compartments].[[312]](#footnote-312) R. Nehemiah said: It contained nine hundred compartments, each being six cubits square, and three corridors of four cubits breadth, compartments running along each side and leaving two cubits at the [outer] sides.[[313]](#footnote-313) On the view of R. Judah there is no difficulty;[[314]](#footnote-314) but on R. Nehemiah’s view there is a difficulty?[[315]](#footnote-315) As was its cubit below so was its cubit above: AND TO A CUBIT SHALT THOU FINISH IT UPWARD.[[316]](#footnote-316) R. Nehemiah said: It was like a vaulted carriage, and he built it sloping inwards so that it tapered to a cubit.[[317]](#footnote-317) AND THE DOOR OF THE ARK SHALT THOU SET IN THE SIDE THEREOF. R. Isaac said: The Torah teaches you practical knowledge, that when you make a chamber ten cubits square, you should set its door at the side. WITH LOWER, SECOND, AND THIRD STORIES SHALT THOU MAKE IT: the bottom storey for garbage, the second for himself and family and the clean animals, and the third for the unclean [ones]. Others reverse it: The bottom storey for the unclean animals, the second for himself and family and the clean animals, and the top for the garbage. How then did he manage?[[318]](#footnote-318) He arranged a kind of trapdoor through which he shovelled it sideways.[[319]](#footnote-319) S HALT THOU MAKE IT. It helped [to build] itself.[[320]](#footnote-320)*

Bartenura suggests that what is at stake between the two interpretations is the etymology of the word tzohar itself. One relates it to the word tzahorayim, meaning “midday”. In that case, the brightness was to come from the sun, the sky, the outside. Therefore tzohar means “a window, a skylight”. The other view is that tzohar is related to zohar, “radiance”, which suggests something that radiates its own light, hence the idea of a miraculous precious stone.

Chizkuni and others suggest Noach had both: a window[[321]](#footnote-321) and some form of artificial lighting for the prolonged period of the flood itself when the sun was completely overcast by cloud and the world was shrouded in darkness.

According to the Talmud Yerushalmi,[[322]](#footnote-322) the tzohar wasn’t intended simply to provide illumination, but to somehow indicate when it was daytime and when it was nighttime – which was important for the sake of knowing when to feed various nocturnal and diurnal animals.

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *A window[[323]](#footnote-323) shalt thou make to the ark. R. Johanan said: The Holy One, blessed be He, instructed Noah, ‘Set therein precious stones and jewels, so that they may give thee light, bright as the noon’.[[324]](#footnote-324) And in a cubit shalt thou finish it above: for thus would it stand firm.[[325]](#footnote-325) With lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.[[326]](#footnote-326) A Tanna taught: The bottom storey was for the dung; the middle for the animals; and the top for man.*

The Gur Aryeh, his own explanation for God’s command of the tzohar is that it was part of His overall desire to make the ark emulate the world itself: following his kabbalistic inclinations, he suggests that the three levels of the ark imitated the three “worlds”, and that illuminating gemstones were necessary to take the place of the sun, moon, and stars.

*Throughout the biblical era, the word tebah meant an ark, large in the case of Noach and the Flood, small in the case of the papyrus basket coated with tar in which Yocheved placed the baby Moshe, setting him afloat on the Nile.[[327]](#footnote-327) More generally, it means “box”. However, by the time of the Midrash, tebah had come also to mean “word”.*

*It seems to me that the Rabbis of the Midrash were not so much commenting on Noach and the Ark as they were reflecting on a fundamental question of Torah. Where and what is the tzohar, the brightness, the source of illumination, for the tevah, the Word? Does it come solely from within, or also from without? Does the Torah come with a window or a precious stone?[[328]](#footnote-328)*

Much of the ambiguity and the imaginative use of the word tzohar is grounded in its status as a hapax legomenon, a word that appears only once in the Tanach, and therefore lacking any further point of comparison for the purpose of fixing its meaning.

All we have to go on with tzohar is one context, and that context is Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16. In this verse it seems at first glance to refer to a structural feature. Based on this, some translators propose “roof”. Others use “window”, “skylight”, or simply “opening”. Each translation presents a problem in that we already have elsewhere in the Tanach other words for these objects. There are also logic problems: why put an opening in a structure that will subject to torrential rain for 40 days? And since the day and night provided little or no natural light during the Flood,[[329]](#footnote-329) what would be the purpose? All this invites speculation the tzohar was something as unique as the word itself.[[330]](#footnote-330)

The Tzohar at the top of the ark would have lighted only the upper deck leaving the remaining decks in darkness. We can therefore understand that there was something miraculous about this Tzohar that caused it to light the whole ark.

\* \* \*

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan to Genesis 6:16****: Go you unto Phison, and take from thence a precious stone, and fix it in the ark to illuminate you: with the measure of a cubit (or span) will you complete it above. And a door will you set in the side of the ark; and with dwelling-places, inferior, second, and third, will you make it.*

\* \* \*

According to the Book of Noach, engraved on the sapphire that glowed inside the ark was the sacred book given to Adam in the Garden of Eden.

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 58b*** *When Noach grew up, and saw how mankind were sinning before God, he withdrew himself from their society and sought to serve his Master, so as not to be led astray by them. He was especially diligent in the study of the* ***book of Adam*** *and the* ***book of Enoch*** *which we have mentioned, and from them he learnt the proper forms in which to worship God. This explains how it is that he knew it was incumbent upon him to bring an offering; it was these books which revealed to him the basis on which the existence of the world depends, to wit, the sacrifices, without which neither the higher nor the lower world can endure.’*

\* \* \*

Literally (P’shat), *Parashat Noach* tells how the wicked of the earth are drowned and only Noah and the inhabitants of the ark are saved to start a new world. Allegorically, though, (Remez), it’s a parable about maintaining your balance in a time of crisis (*Noach* means calmness or equanimity). It also can be interpreted (D’rash) as follows: the Hebrew word *teva*, or ark, can be linked to *teivot*, which means letters. Now it’s a story about how the letters of the Torah are a refuge from strife. Finally, read through a mystical lens (Sod) the skylight (tzohar) in the ark[[331]](#footnote-331) teaches words alone can trap you unless you have a portal through which divine wisdom can enter.

## The Specifications of Noach’s Ark[[332]](#footnote-332)

There was a pipe that let in air to the Tebah (like a submarine).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14-16*** *Make thee an ark of gopher wood; with rooms shalt thou make the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15 And this is how thou shalt make it: the* ***length of the ark three hundred cubits****, the* ***breadth of it fifty cubits****, and the* ***height of it thirty cubits****. 16 A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*

Before we go further, let’s determine the ark’s dimensions in modern terms.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15*** *"... thus shall you make it: the length shall be 300 cubits, the breadth 50 cubits, and the height, 30 cubits."*

There are a number of values for the actual length of the "cubit". Three popular values are: 20.62 inches, or 17.4, or 18 inches for one cubit. These measurements reflect users in Egypt, Rome and England. Based on a thorough examination, it’s our opinion that the cubit used by Noach measured 25 inches

Accordingly, the conversion of Genesis 6:15 from cubits to feet is as follows:

• The length of 300 cubits x 2.09 = 627 ft. long. In other words, the ark was longer than two football fields!

• Width of 50 cubits x 2.09 = 104.5 ft. wide. The Ark was wider than one football field!

• Height of 30 cubits x 2.09 = 62.07 ft. high. That’s equal to six story building!

Regarding the capacity and size of the Ark, Ramban comments, “This Ark could never contain them (people, animals, and supply), nor even *ten* arks like it! It was matter of miracle that small was able to contain large”. Further, the Ramban explains, following Ibn Ezra, that all the creatures before The Flood were much larger than the people and animals after The Flood. So even if the Ark would be made according to their measurements, it still would be too small for all of the contents. The Midrash tells us that when Adam HaRishon, the first man, was interred in Maarat Hamakpeila, the tomb of Patriarchs, he was more than twice as tall as anyone living today.

In light of this comment, we see that evident miracle took place, at least according to our standards of “natural”. It can be called a “Rabbit Hole”, to borrow the idea from “Alice in the Wonderland”, or “portal to another dimension”, to use more modern language. The fact “that small was able to contain large” cannot be explained by natural phenomenon.

The Targum to Genesis 6:15 brings some greater detail on the innards of the ark:

*A hundred and fifty cells will you make to the ark in its left side, and thirty and six in its breadth; and ten cabins in the midst, to lay up in them provision; and five repositories on the right, and five on the left.*

To learn the **weight** of the ark both empty and fully loaded, we will turn to Gen. 7:20. It states, “Fifteen cubits above them (the mountain peaks) the water prevailed and the mountains were covered.” Later,[[333]](#footnote-333) we find “And the waters returned from off the earth continually; and after the end of 150 days, the waters abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the 17th day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month, on the first day of the month were the tops of the mountains seen.”[[334]](#footnote-334)

A simple reading will never disclose the hidden clues this passage contains. After all, who cares that the waters were 15 cubits above the peaks! Except for ark and its passengers, the entire world is desolate! Yet the fact is, these verses prove what we’re about to write here.

In Genesis 7:20, the Torah tells us that the ark was now buoyant and free to drift without striking a peak. We must assume that the ark is less than 15 cubits in the water as established by its weight at the start. It also establishes how much water must later disappear. Verse 8: 3 tells us that the water receded at a constant rate. But we do not yet know what this rate is. Verse 8: 5 gives us the answer. The Torah shows us that, from the time when the water began to recede to the moment when the mountain tops were visible, we have the following months and days:

7th month Kislev 30 days long, water’s peak

8th month Teveth 29 days long

9th month Shevat 30 days long

10th month Adar First day, mountain reappeared

Total elapsed time: 90 days

Since 15 cubits of water receded in 90 days at a steady rate, we can easily determine that the water receded at a rate of one cubit every six days. We find 18 days elapsed from the high point of water to the time when the ark rested. 18 days, divided by six days per cubit, tells us that three cubits have gone.

If three cubits have receded, then the ark is still twelve cubits in the water when it touched ground. In order for these 12 cubits to recede, 72 days had to pass. (12 cubits x 6 days per cubit). At that point, the mountain tops appeared.

We can now determine the water displaced by the ark when it was fully loaded. Using Archimedes principle, we can multiply the length, width, and water depth of the ark to determine its displaced volume.

627’ (length) x 104.5’ (width) x 25.08’ (depth) = 1,643,299.22 cubic feet.

Salt water weighs 64 pounds per cubic feet. However, the flood consisted of both salt and fresh water. So we will use the fresh water value of 62.4 pounds per cubic foot.

1,643,299.22 cubic ft. displacement x 62.4 per cubit ft. water

= 102, 541,871.32 lbs. gross weight of the ark.

In other words, the fully-loaded ark displaced 51,270.93 tons!

## The Ark was a Pyramid

Read the verses of the Torah, and you’ll learn that the ark was a giant rectangular pyramid.[[335]](#footnote-335)

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16*** *A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*

Commenting on Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16, **Ibn Ezra** stated that *the Ark was of triangular shape with a sharp vertex and acute angles to prevent it from overturning.* Abraham ibn Ezra interpreted the ark as a vessel that remained under water for 40 days, after which it floated to the surface.[[336]](#footnote-336)

A LIGHT. *Tzohar* (a light) means an opening through which light would enter. It comes from the same root as *tzohorayim* (noon).[[337]](#footnote-337) The opening was made in the usual place, on top of the ark.[[338]](#footnote-338) Scripture tells us that the top of the ark was a cubit in length.[[339]](#footnote-339) We gather from this that it was a sixth of a cubit wide.[[340]](#footnote-340) The ark was triangular in shape.[[341]](#footnote-341) Its top came to a point, and so did its corners. Therefore it did not overturn. The door was on one side[[342]](#footnote-342) and was reached by climbing a ladder.[[343]](#footnote-343) Now, we know that the ark was very large.[[344]](#footnote-344) Furthermore, it is known that Noach was much taller than we, for the cubits mentioned with regard to the ark are Noach’s cubits.[[345]](#footnote-345) It is also possible, since the ark was divided into three stories, that the bottom story was ten cubits high.[[346]](#footnote-346) Some say that the ark had many stories and that Scripture abridged the number.

Commenting on Bereshit 8:4, **Ramban** said: *Besides, when Noach sent forth the dove on the seventeenth day of the month of Ellul,[[347]](#footnote-347) the waters were yet on the face of the entire earth,[[348]](#footnote-348) and the trees were covered, and in a matter of twelve days[[349]](#footnote-349) the whole earth dried! And by way of reason, if the ark was submerged in the waters eleven cubits, that being more than a third of its height [which was thirty cubits],[[350]](#footnote-350) it would have sunk because it was wide at the bottom and finished to a cubit at the top,[[351]](#footnote-351) contrary to the structure of ships, and there was also in it great weight!*

Commenting on Bereshit 6:16, **Abrabanel** wrote: *the Holy Scripture says that He instructed him to build the Ark in a triangular shape, leaving at the top a length of just one cubit and six cubits wide formed by four beveled facets so that the falling raindrops stream down the walls of the Ark.*

**Ibn Ezra to Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14**: [ARK.] The Bible uses the term ark and not ship, for it did not have the shape of a ship nor did it have oars.

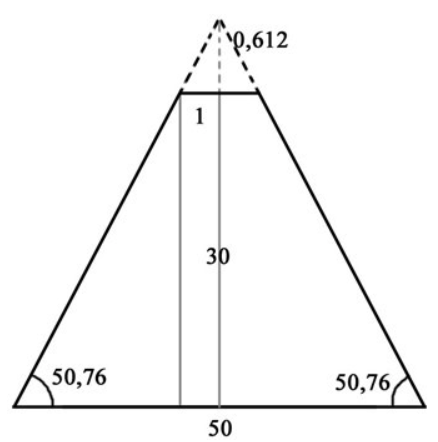
The early Church Father and theologian Origen,[[352]](#footnote-352) in response to a critic who doubted that the Ark could contain all the animals in the world, argued that Moshe, the traditional author of the book of Genesis, had been brought up in Egypt and would therefore have used the larger Egyptian cubit. He also fixed the shape of the Ark as a truncated pyramid, square at its base, and tapering to a square peak one cubit on a side.

“Origen says, “Judging from the description, I imagine that it had a rectangular bottom and that the walls converged gradually as they rose to the top, where the width was only one cubit . . “.

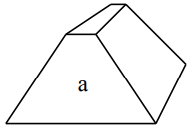
Origen continues, “Given the conditions resulting from the rain and the Deluge, a more appropriate shape could not have been given to the ark than this narrow summit which let the rainwater run down, like a roof, and this rectangular bottom flat on the water, keeping the ark from pitching or sinking under the action of the wind and the waves because of the animals’ restlessness”.

The Dead Sea Scrolls describe the ark as a truncated pyramid. Source?

Haaretz reported that the new reading of the fragments of the Dead Sea scrolls, using different wavelengths of light, has changed our understanding about Noach’s Ark. Thanks to the high-resolution imagery, a word following the phrase “the ark’s tallness” had previously been illegible. However, the new scans showed that the correct words is ne’esefet, meaning “gathered”, which according to researcher Dr. Alexey Yuditsky, means that the ark’s ribs were gathered together at the top in the shape of a pyramid. Dr Yuditsky said that the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Bible dating to the third century BC, used a Greek verb with a similar meaning to describe the Ark. Moreover, medieval authors like Maimonides suggested that the ark’s roof was pointed.



Read the verses of the Torah, carefully, and you’ll learn that the ark[[353]](#footnote-353) was a giant rectangular **pyramid**.[[354]](#footnote-354) The picture below shows how this appears in geometrical terms.

It was three stories high and divided into small rooms for people, animals and food.[[355]](#footnote-355) The Ark took the shape of a cut off pyramid.[[356]](#footnote-356) I wonder if the Tzohar[[357]](#footnote-357) sat at the top (pyramidion) and completed the pyramid shape. Perhaps this ark was to become the model for **pyramids[[358]](#footnote-358)** all over the world.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXI:11*** *R. AND TO A CUBIT SHALT THOU FINISH IT UPWARD.[[359]](#footnote-359) Nehemiah said: It was like a vaulted carriage, and he built it sloping inwards so that it tapered to a cubit.[[360]](#footnote-360)*

Science today is also aware of the special properties a space within a pyramid possesses, e.g.: food stays fresh for longer, plants grow faster, water is cleansed, power is concentrated, etc.

From the above it can be concluded that the sacred holy space of the Ark was a pyramid built according to the principle of the golden ratio, the builders of the pyramids must have been aware of the geometry of Noach’s Ark and built them following the same design.



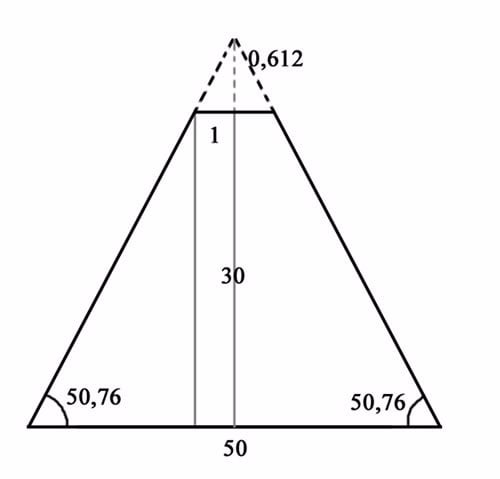
Noach’s Ark / Pyramid Baptistry Door panel

Lorenzo Ghiberti 1401 Florence, Italy

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15*** *And this is how thou shalt make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16 A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*

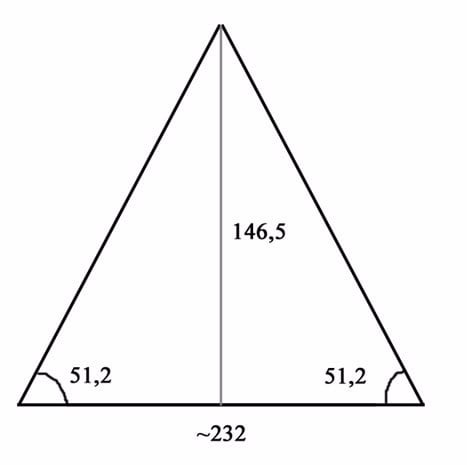
As depicted in the picture above, the ark was a floating triangle / pyramid about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet tall.[[361]](#footnote-361)

“This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. You shall make a (tzohar) window for the ark, and narrow it to a cubit at the top”. The picture below shows how this appears in geometrical terms.



**Figure 1**. Geometry of the Ark

Figure 1 shows that the Ark was shaped like a truncated pyramid. The angle of elevation at its side equals 50.76°. The angle of elevation of the Great Pyramid of Giza is 51.52°. The angle of elevation of the Pyramid of Khafre is 52.2°. The angle of elevation of the Pyramid of Menkaure is 50.47°. Thus, it is obvious that the angle of elevation of the Ark’s side matches the angles of elevation of the three pyramids of Giza within the bounds of observational error.



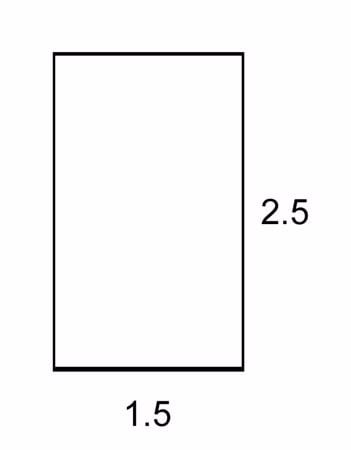
**Figure 2**. Geometry of the Great Pyramid of Giza

Based on what we shared above, we may make the bold supposition and say that the Egyptian Pyramids were constructed in the likeness of Noach’s Ark and they were ‘modelled’ on it.

If we divide the sum of width and height of the Ark by its width, i.e. 50 + 30.612/50, the result is 1.612. If we divide the width of the Ark by its height (50/30) the result is approximately 1.667.

As for the Great Pyramid of Giza, this ratio is approximately 1.631. The Golden Ratio (φ) is approximately 1.618. Just like π, φ is a universal irrational number in mathematics. In this case, the insignificant deviation of the Ark’s dimensions from φ can be explained by the fact that HaShem instructed Noach only in integers.

When the Jews constructed the tabernacle in the Wilderness, G‑d commanded Moshe: “Let them make an Ark [of covenant], of cedar wood, two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubit wide, and one and a half cubit high”. (figure 3)



**Figure 3**

If we take ratio (2.5 + 1.5)/2.5 = 1.6

If we take ratio 2.5/1.5 = 1.(6)

Here the difference between ratios of Ark of Covenant and Golden Section (φ) is due to the fact that G‑d gave the size of the Ark in integers.

The Golden Ratio is a special number found by dividing a line into two parts, so that the longer part divided by the smaller part is in the proportion approximately of 68/32. The first mathematician to study the Golden Ratio was Euclid, who did so around 300 B.C. Euclid demonstrated that the Golden Ratio can be found in various geometric figures. The Golden Ratio was also studied in the Middle Ages, and even today mathematicians continue researching this. The Golden Ratio is often utilized in painting, music and architecture phenomenon. Among those who have studied the Golden Ratio we can name Leonardo of Pisa, astronomer Johannes Kepler, and Roger Penrose. Fibonacci, the great Italian mathematician of the 12th century who brought algebra to Europe, showed that the ratio between any two adjacent numbers in a series named after him (where every following number is the sum of the two preceding ones) tends towards φ. The Golden Ratio is often utilized in painting, music and architecture, and we can often observe it in nature (in the structure of leaves or parts of the human body), as well as on the atomic level. Some researchers compare the Golden Ratio to the structure of the human DNA genome.

The fact that we find in Torah a universal mathematical number constitutes irrefutable evidence that HaShem has written the Law of our universe in a way that it can be also read in mathematical language.

It is also not by accident that the Ark was shaped like a truncated pyramid. Some hypotheses (although not yet confirmed academically) say that the space inside a pyramid-shaped structure acquires special properties in terms of energy. Famous Torah commentators have also written about the shape of the Ark.

Thus, we see once more that the Torah contains the fundamental mathematical principles of our universe’s structure.

With my deepest gratitude to Berel Lazar, Chief Rabbi of Russia, and Alexander Boroda, Chairman of the Board, the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia (FJCR). - By Eduard Shyfrin

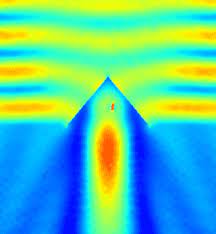
\* \* \*

Pyramids are strong and stable structures that could withstand the forces of a flood.

Pyramids are associated with ancient civilizations that believed in a great flood.

What makes this so interesting is that the pyramid shape ark was on top of the water. The great pyramid of Giza was also built on top of water. Many of the pyramids in the Americas were also built on top of water. Now I understand why Noach’s ark was on top of water, but why were other pyramids built on top of water sources?

A second interesting anomaly is the Tzohar - window / crystal on top of Noach’s ark (pyramidion) which provide light for the entire ark. The great pyramid also concentrates and exhibits electromagnetic energy.[[362]](#footnote-362) Is it possible that the shape combined with a crystal is able to manifest this electromagnetic energy?

*An international research group has applied methods of theoretical physics to investigate the electromagnetic response of the Great Pyramid to radio waves. Scientists predicted that under resonance conditions, the pyramid can concentrate electromagnetic energy in its internal chambers and under the base. The research group plans to use these theoretical results to design nanoparticles capable of reproducing similar effects in the optical range. Such nanoparticles may be used, for example, to develop sensors and highly efficient solar cells. The study was published in the Journal of Applied Physics.[[363]](#footnote-363)*

## Contents of each Level

What did each level of the tebah house?

There are multiple opinions concerning the answer to this question. From the top level down:

1) People, All animals, Waste. There is no specific mention of where the birds were.[[364]](#footnote-364)

2) People and kosher birds, Non-kosher birds and domesticated and wild animals, Waste.[[365]](#footnote-365)

3) People and kosher birds in the same quarters and non-kosher birds on the same level, Domesticated and wild animals, Waste.[[366]](#footnote-366)

4) People, Domesticated and wild animals and birds, Waste.[[367]](#footnote-367)

5) All non-kosher species, People and all kosher species, Waste.[[368]](#footnote-368)

6) Waste, People and all kosher species, All non-kosher species.[[369]](#footnote-369)

7) People and all birds, Domesticated and wild animals, Waste.[[370]](#footnote-370)

8) Insects and crawling creatures and people, All birds, All domesticated and wild animals. No mention is made of the area used for waste storage.[[371]](#footnote-371)

The most common understanding is that there were three storeys in the ark: The uppermost storey was for the people (Noach, his wife, his sons and their wives); the second storey was for the animals; and the third was for refuse. Noach coated the Tebah with pitch both on the outside and the inside (in contrast to the basket in which Moshe Rabbenu was placed as an infant in the Nile River, which was coated with pitch only on the outside) since it needed extra protection against the intensity of the flood. The construction of the Tebah took one hundred and twenty years, an extremely long time, in order to arouse the curiosity of all who noticed it, who would then ask Noach, “What are you doing?” Noach would then answer, “In the future, HaShem is going to bring a great Mabul to the world”. This was in the hope that within such a time span, maybe some people would be inspired to return in repentance; however, the people persisted in their wicked ways and rebellion against HaShem, continuing to sin.

The Tebah’s construction began in 1556A.M., about 20 years before Noach’s sons were born.

When the appointed time for the Mabul approached, the people of the generation tried to prevent Noach from approaching the Tebah to enter it, they even tried to demolish the Tebah . Therefore, HaShem sent wild animals to surround the ark; bears and lions which killed anyone who came too close. On the 10th of the month of Marcheshvan Noach entered the ark with his family and the intended animals, and seven days later on the 17th of the month, the Mabul began. Noach was then six hundred years old.[[372]](#footnote-372)

## Miraculous Space

So how did Noach’s ark contain the multitude of creation? Nachmanides offers that it was a miracle. “The small space contained a large volume”.[[373]](#footnote-373) G‑d will tend to His creations, regardless of whether it squares with the laws of physics or not. But He prefers human innovation over Divine intervention. Miracles come on the heel of human effort; they do not replace it.

Miracles are part of our world. Some we recognize and some to which we are completely oblivious. The Mabul, the flood, brought with it many open miracles. Noach,[[374]](#footnote-374) who found favor in the eyes of HaShem, was protected and saved miraculously. When someone tells you that the ark was not big enough to hold eight people and all of the animals, seven pairs of clean animals and two pairs of unclean animals, plus all the food needed for Noach and his family AND all of the animals, let them know that you agree with them. Noach did his part by building the ark, then God did His part by blessing Noach and his family, the animals, the ark, and the food. They were blessed so that that which man had done would become ‘more’ and would be sufficient to the task.

Regarding the capacity and size of the Ark,[[375]](#footnote-375) Ramban comments, “This Ark could never contain them (people, animals, and supply), nor even ten arks like it! It was matter of miracle that small was able to contain large”.

***Gittin 57a*** *A heathen skeptic once scoffed at the claim made by the Sages that millions of Jews once lived in a part of the land of Israel called Har Hamelech; he accused them of being liars because the area could not possibly hold so many people.*

*To this Rabbi Chanina responded with the description given by the Prophet Yirmiyahu of the land of Israel as “the land of the deer”. Why is it compared to a deer? When the skin of a deer is removed from its carcass it is impossible to once again have it envelop the deer’s flesh, because it has contracted. In similar fashion, when Jews live in the land of Israel the Land expands to absorb them but when they do not live in the Land it contracts.*

But that’s not all! The Sages teach us that the more holy a place is in the Land of Israel, the more it transcends the laws of nature, and the less space it occupies, as we shall now illustrate:

In Pirke Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 5:7 the Mishnah states that ten miracles were performed for our ancestors in the Holy Temple and Jerusalem. The tenth miracle listed there is that no man ever said to his friend, “There is insufficient space for me to stay overnight in Jerusalem”. Though throngs of people came to Jerusalem, especially for the Festivals, miraculously there were sufficient accommodations for them all.

As we enter the Holy Temple itself, we see yet another example of transcending space. The Sages teach in Pirke Avot (ibid) that another miracle was that “the people stood crowded together, yet prostrated themselves in ample space”. Throngs of pilgrims gathered in the Temple Courtyard on the Festivals and Yom Kippur, filling it to capacity. Yet miraculously, though there was barely enough room for so many to stand, each person had ample room to prostrate himself (bow down) and confess his sins on Yom Kippur or to recite private prayers on the Festivals without being overheard by his neighbor.

The highest level of transcending space in the land of Israel manifested itself in the “Holy of Holies”, the holiest place on earth.

The Rabbis stated in Yoma 21a that “the place of the Ark of the covenant did not take up any space”. This means as follows: The centerpiece of the Holy Temple was the Ark, which contained the Tablets and which occupied the most honored place in the Holy of Holies. The Ark had a defined measurement: 2.5 cubits by 2.5 cubits square. Yet the place of the Ark presented no measurements. The Holy of Holies was 20 cubits across, yet if you measured the Holy of Holies on one side of the ark, it would measure 10 cubits, and if you measured from the other side, it would also measure 10 cubits. The Ark miraculously took up no space.[[376]](#footnote-376)

The Mabul brought many miracles. Every time you feel incredulous about some part of this epic, just remember that HaShem is making miracles to bring success to this enterprise.

Noach, his wife, and his children were the only people in the history of the world to see the world before the flood, during the flood, and after the flood. They lived through three different ‘worlds’, witnessing changes in the world from before, during and after the flood. After The Mabul the world was not as spiritual as it had originally been from the time of Adam and Gan Eden.

## Mount Ararat - אֲרָרָט

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:4*** *And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat[[377]](#footnote-377)* (אֲרָרָט).

***The Targum Yonathan (Bereshit 8:4)*** *And the ark rested in the seventh month, which is the month of Nisan, in the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Qadron; the name of the one mountain is Qardania, and the name of the other mountain Armenia; and there was built the city of Armenia in the land of the east.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20*** *And Noach builded an altar unto HaShem; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.*

**Radak on Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20** ויבן נח, at the very site where he had come out of the ark. It is possible that he left the ark on Mount Ararat, where the ark had been reported as coming to rest (7,2), or that the ark had moved away from there after having come to rest there temporarily. Or, Noach, after exiting from the ark walked a distance before he found a suitable site or cave to establish a temporary residence. As soon as he found a place to start farming, he built an altar to thank G’d for his and his family’s deliverance. According to Bereshit Rabbah 34,9 this was the great altar in Jerusalem where Adam had brought his offering, and this is what Psalms 69,32 refers to when David speaks of ותיטיב לה' משור פר מקרין מפריס, “which will please the Lord more than oxen, bulls with horns, and hooves.”

The location of “the mountains of Ararat” is subject to debate; Ararat is also mentioned in Melachim Bet (II Kings)19:37 and echoed in Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 37:38.

These are presumably what are known today as the twin peaks of Mt. Ararat[[378]](#footnote-378) in Armenia. I will not deal here with the gap between the simple meaning of the verses, according to which the altar was built on the mountains of Ararat, and the tradition of Chazal,[[379]](#footnote-379) according to which Noach rebuilt THE altar which was built on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem.

***Bereshit Rabbah 34:9*** *"And Noach built an altar to the Lord”[[380]](#footnote-380)… R. Eliezer ben Yaakov says: On the great altar in Jerusalem, where Adam sacrificed, as it is stated: "And it shall please the Lord better than an ox, or a bullock that has a horn and hoofs".[[381]](#footnote-381)*

**A Midrashic approach**: (Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer 31) sees in the letter ה, of Bereshit (Genesis) 22:9, which is a definite article an allusion to the altar which Adam had built and on which also Cain and Hevel had offered their respective sacrifices. The site of this altar had been known to be at Mount Moriah. **This was also reputed to be the altar on which Noach had offered his thanksgiving to HaShem after the deluge**.[The latter detail is difficult to reconcile with the distance Noach would have had to travel from Mount Ararat in North Eastern Turkey to offer his thanks to G’d. Ed.]

**Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer 23:13** Noach sat and mused in his heart, saying: The Holy One, blessed be He, delivered me from the waters of the Flood, and brought me forth from that prison, and am I not obliged to bring before Thee a sacrifice and burnt offerings? What did Noach do? He took from the clean animals an ox and a sheep, and from all the clean birds, a turtle-dove and pigeons; and **he built up the first altar upon which Cain and Abel had brought offerings**, and he brought four burnt offerings, as it is said, "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and he offered burnt offerings on the altar".[[382]](#footnote-382)

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXIV:9*** *AND NOAH BUILDED (WAYYIBEN) AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD. Wayyaben (he understood) is written:[[383]](#footnote-383) he considered the matter, reasoning: For what reason did the Holy One, blessed be He, order more clean animals [to be preserved] than unclean? Surely because He desired that sacrifices should be offered to Him of them. Straightway, AND TOOK OF EVERY CLEAN BEAST, etc. AND HE OFFERED BURNT - OFFERINGS ON THE ALTAR. R. Eliezer b. Jacob said:* ***That means on the great altar in Jerusalem, where Adam sacrificed****, as it is written, And it shall please the Lord better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs[[384]](#footnote-384).[[385]](#footnote-385)*

The Zohar also relates Noach’s altar to Adam’s altar.

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 69b*** *AND NOAH BUILDED AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD; AND TOOK OF EVERY CLEAN BEAST, AND OF EVERY CLEAN FOWL, AND OFFERED BURNT OFFERINGS ON THE ALTAR. The altar that Noah made was the very same on which Adam, the first man, offered up sacrifice. Why did Noah bring burnt offerings,*

The altar is [to be constructed] in a very precise location, which may never be changed… Rambam offers the folowing insight:

**Hilkhot Beit Ha-Bechira 2:1-2** It is universally accepted that the place on which David and Shelomo built the altar, the threshing floor of Arvana, is the location where Avraham built the altar on which he prepared Yitzchak for sacrifice. And Noach built [an altar] on that location when he left the ark. It was also [the place] of the altar on which Kayin and Hevel brought sacrifices. [Similarly,] Adam, the first man, offered a sacrifice there and was created at that very spot, as our Sages said: Man was created from the place where he [would find] atonement.

Now, this suggests that either the “mountains of Ararat” are in the immediate vacinity of Jerusalem, or else Noach had “Kefitzat HaDerech[[386]](#footnote-386) - קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ”.

The Talmud reports that at one point Sancheriv had found a plank from Noach’s ark and reasoned that it was a god named Nisrokh:

***Sanhedrin 96a*** *He [Sennacherib] went away and found a plank of Noach’s ark. ‘This’, said he, ‘must be the great God who saved Noach from the flood. If I go [to battle] and am successful, I will sacrifice my two sons to thee’, he vowed. But his sons heard this, so they killed him, as it is written, And it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword etc.*

This would seem to introduce a possible contradiction concerning the location of the wood as Sancheriv had removed it quite some time prior to the events of Purim. However 2 Kings 19:37 records that these two sons then fled to Ararat:

***Melachim bet (2 Kings) 19:37*** *And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sarezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 37:37-38*** *So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went, and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sarezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.*

And based on this, the Rav Pealim[[387]](#footnote-387) as reported in She’arim Mesuyanim[[388]](#footnote-388) suggested that Sancheriv’s sons brought the plank of wood with them to Ararat, thus furnishing the opportunity for Parshandatha to obtain it when he was the governor there.

## Haman’s Gallows

In the Biblical account, the Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat where it remains until this very day. According to one Midrashic account, the Ark served a crucial function close to 1,500 years later. When Haman sought to have Mordechai hanged he fetched a board from Noach’s Ark to use in constructing the gallows. It was on this very board that Haman himself was hanged!

Without too much probing beneath the surface we can see a correlation between these two disparate events: The Ark saved humanity and the Ark saved the Jewish people from annihilation at the hands of the wicked Haman.

Haman and his ten sons were hung on gallows… and left there forever! The Targum[[389]](#footnote-389) contends that despite the biblical injunction against leaving a body hanging over night,[[390]](#footnote-390) Esther maintained (by reference to the hanging of Saul’s sons as precedent) it was appropriate to leave the bodies of Haman and his sons up on the gallows not just for six months, but forever:

***Targum Sheni 9:24*** *When the royal scribes of Haman saw him and his sons hanging many days on the gallows, they asked: “Why does Esther transgress what is written in the law, ‘Thou shalt not let his body remain all night upon the tree’? Esther answered them: “Because King Saul had killed the proselytes of the Gibeonites, his sons hung upon the gallows from the beginning of barley harvest until the day when rain came down upon them, which lasted six months; and when the Israelites came up to appear before the temple, the nations asked them: ‘Why do these hang?’ The Israelites answered them: ‘Because their father has laid his hand upon the proselytes of the Gibeonites and killed them.’ How much more does the wicked Haman and his sons, who wanted to destroy all Israel, deserve to hang on the gallows — FOREVER!”*

Accordingly, it may be presumed that the gallows stood at least as long as Esther reigned. Furthermore, its use as such may be argued was a perpetuation of the original function for which the wood served.

**She’arim Mesuyanim (p.270):** What emerges from the debate is whether the “remembrance of His wonders” is a remembrance of the loving-kindness (chesed) of God [in His abating of the flood], or as a remembrance of the strength (Gevurah) of God when he destroyed the world. This distinction also determines how we see the hanging of Haman upon the wood. For if the wood was a remembrance of the might (Gevurah) of God who destroyed the wicked with the flood, it is evident that Haman similarly was hanged because of his wickedness - which is not the case if it was a remembrance of the loving-kindness (hesed) of God. However, if the latter [i.e. that it is a remembrance of the loving-kindness of God] is in fact so, then we see that hanging of Haman is also a continuation of “His wonders” for just as He saved humanity from the flood so too did He save the Jewish nation from Haman’s decree.

It was divinely orchestrated that Haman use wood from the Ark to build the gallows that he himself would ultimately be hung on. For the same wood that was used to save the remnants of humanity was once again used to save the Jewish people.[[391]](#footnote-391)

The Midrash[[392]](#footnote-392) states that when Haman desired to build the gallows HaShem called upon all the trees from the time of creation asking which would be used to hang Haman. A fiery debate broke out between the trees, each one claiming the merit to have Haman hung on it. Others[[393]](#footnote-393) however interpret that each one claimed why they did not want the impure Haman hung on them. The “Kotz” [thorn] was then chosen as the tree. Haman proceeded to search for a beam that would be 50 Amos long and could not find one. He had to destroy his pergola and remove from it a 50 Amos beam.[[394]](#footnote-394) Haman positioned himself near the beam to demonstrate to his friends how Mordechai would be hung. A heavenly voice then proclaimed “The tree befits you; the tree is prepared for you since the times of creation”.[[395]](#footnote-395) Another Midrash[[396]](#footnote-396) states that they searched for a beam of wood that is fifty Amos tall and the only beam they found was in possession of Haman’s son, Parshandasa,[[397]](#footnote-397) who removed it from the ark of Noach.

And while we may not know what happened to the gallows consequent to Esther’s reign, it would seem that according to some sources the remainder of the ark continued to serve as a memorial in its original location. Josephus reported:

**Antiquities of the Jews, Book 1, ch. 3** the Armenians call this place, ‘The Place of Descent’; for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shown there by the inhabitants to this day.

David sings in Psalms[[398]](#footnote-398) that God makes “a memorial for His wonders” so that people remember His miracles and sing His praise. The commentaries explain that this is why remnants of the Ark were preserved.

A survey of Midrashic literature yields at least three additional views on the source of the gallows upon which Haman was hanged.

According to Pirke D’Rebbe Eliezer, the lumber for the 50 cubit tall gallows was taken from the Holy of Holies, the innermost and most holy section of the Holy Temple.

According to the Talmud, Haman’s name is hinted in the verse which quotes God’s admonition to Adam: “Have you eaten of the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?” The phrase “Hamin-have…from” shares the consonants of the name Haman. Hence Haman’s name is associated with the Tree of Knowledge, intimating that his gallows were connected to this infamous tree.

According to another Midrash, the gallows were prepared by God in the Six Days of Creation, and another opinion states that the wood came from the Tree of Knowledge, the source of the forbidden fruit eaten by Adam and Eve.

How can we thematically connect the four sources of Haman’s gallows?

In Chassidic literature, the Ark represents the future Messianic Age when the entire world will experience total peace and unity. This phenomenon, in miniature form, existed in the Ark. The creatures and eight humans that populated the Ark coexisted peacefully. The Ark should therefore not be viewed solely as a reminder of the destruction caused by the flood but primarily as a reminder of how perfect the world could and will be.

When God created the world, He did it so that the world would eventually become a dwelling-place for God. During the first week of Creation God established that the purpose of Creation was “Bereshit”. Rashi translates this opening word to mean “Because of the two primary entities, Torah and Israel, God created the world”. The purpose of Creation will be fulfilled when Israel receives and then fully implements the Torah, the Master Plan for existence.

Once the world was completed by the creation of Adam and Eve, God gave humanity, to whom he would eventually entrust His Master Plan, a test commandment: Do not eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The disobedience of Adam and Chava set back the timetable for implementation of God’s Master Plan. Indeed, from that time onward, everything seemed to have gone downhill until the time of the Great Flood. Here we can detect a “Haman” effect: the undermining of God’s Master Plan. This is the reason we associate Haman with the Tree of Knowledge and Adam and Eve’s partaking of it.

The next stage in God’s Master Plan was the Flood. On one hand, it destroyed the evil that had permeated the Earth up to then and prepared the world for its rehabilitation. Towards that end, God gave Noach the “Seven Noachide Commandments”, which are geared to making this a civilized and habitable world.

Hence, the hanging of Haman, who represented the greatest threat of his age to the Master Plan, with his diabolical plan to hang Mordechai and annihilate the entire Jewish people, can be traced back to Noach’s Ark. The Ark and the gallows both reversed a potential for evil to challenge and frustrate God’s plan.

The gallows that destroyed Haman represents the force that will enable us to rebuild the Holy Temple. Our Sages teach us that the destruction of the seed of Amalek will precede the rebuilding of the Holy Temple. It is from the Holy Temple that the Godly spirit will spread to the entire world, which will finally resemble the Ark with its peaceful and unified atmosphere.[[399]](#footnote-399)

## Sancheriv’s Idol

At the end of II Kings 19, it relates that during the reign of King Hezekiah over the nation of Judah, King Sancheriv of Assyria laid siege against Jerusalem with an overwhelming army of 185,000 soldiers. Hezekiah prayed to God with full faith, and that night an angel killed the entire army, except for King Sancherev. Sancheriv fled to the temple of his idol, where he was assassinated by two of his sons. The Talmud relates that his idol was a beam from Noach’s ark.

King Sancheriv and Haman[[400]](#footnote-400) were exceedingly rich people. So we can presume that whole beams from Noach’s ark were highly valued collector’s items, which people with their level of wealth could afford. Therefore there is good reason to doubt whether there is really any of Noach’s ark left on Mount Ararat.

## The Passengers on the Ark

People:

The Torah is quite explicit that Noach and his wife, and Noach’s three sons and their wives were the only people *in* the ark.

Never the less, the Midrash also tells us that **Og** held on to the *outside* of the ark and survived.

Animals:

Noach and Shlomo HaMelech knew the languages of all the creatures.

God told Noach to bring two, male and female, of every impure creature. In addition, God told Noach to bring seven pairs, male and female, (14 total) of the clean animals.

**Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:2**: **הטהורה CLEAN**—It means those cattle which will in future be permitted to Israel as clean; we thus learn that Noah studied the Torah.

God also told Noach to bring all of his personal flocks of animals.

The rabbis speak of a large bullock, a giant Taurus if you will, who was in modern measurements, 3 miles long, who could not fit into the Ark. Its name is Reem. Noah strapped it to the side of Ark, and Noah feed it. Some translate Reem as a unicorn.

The exact meaning of Reem רְאֵם is not known. It is often translated as “ox” and interpreted as the great aurochs,[[401]](#footnote-401) or wild bulls, which recently went extinct (1627 CE). In the Jewish tradition, however, Reem were understood to be giant one horned animals (unicorns, giant rhinoceros?), the size of mountains. The Talmud[[402]](#footnote-402) asks the question the obvious question “how did the Reima[[403]](#footnote-403) remain [after the flood]? Given its large size, it clearly could not have fit into Noach’s ark”. One answer, from Rabbi Yannai is “They brought Reima cubs into the ark, and they survived the flood”. Another answer, from Rabbi Yoḥanan is, “They brought only the head of the cub into the ark, while its body remained outside”.

***Zevachim 113b*** *On the view that the Flood did not descend there, it is well: thus the reem[[404]](#footnote-404) stayed there. But on the view that it did descend, where did it stay?[[405]](#footnote-405) — Said R. Jannai: They took the young [of the reem] into the Ark. But surely Rabbah b. Bar Hanah said: I saw a sea reem, one day old, which was as big as Mount Tabor. And how big is Mount Tabor? Forty parasangs.[[406]](#footnote-406) Its neck, stretched out, was three parasangs; the place where its head rested was a parasang and a half. It cast a ball of excrements and blocked the Jordan! — Said R. Johanan: They took its head [only] into the Ark. But a master said: The place where its head rested was three parasangs? — Rather, they took the tip of its nose into the Ark. But surely R. Johanan said: The Flood did not descend in Eretz Israel?[[407]](#footnote-407) — He explains [it thus] on the view of Resh Lakish. But the Ark plunged up and down?[[408]](#footnote-408) — Said Resh Lakish: They tied its horns to the Ark.[[409]](#footnote-409) But surely R. Hisda said: The people in the generation of the Flood sinned with hot passion, and with hot water they were punished?[[410]](#footnote-410) — And on your view, how could the Ark travel [at all]?[[411]](#footnote-411) Moreover, how did Og king of Bashan stand?[[412]](#footnote-412) Rather, a miracle was performed for it [the water], and it was cooled at the side of the Ark.*

On the flag of the tribe of Manasseh was embroidered a unicorn, in allusion to the verse “And his horns are the horns of the *reem -* רְאֵם *“*.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 33:17*** *(Speaking of Joseph) His firstling bullock, majesty is his; and his horns are the horns like the Reem - רְאֵם; with them he shall gore the peoples all of them, even the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh*

Teva

The teva was a giant bird that was so large that it blocked out the sun with its wings.

Phoenix

The Gemara[[413]](#footnote-413) relates that there was a bird on the ark which saw how difficult it was for Noach to feed each animal according to its own unique feeding schedule, and opted to be merciful and not to request any food. Upon recognizing this, Noach blessed the *phoenix* bird[[414]](#footnote-414) that it should live forever. The Maharsha writes that this was the bird which didn’t eat from the fruit of the tree of knowledge like the other animals.[[415]](#footnote-415) If it didn’t take part in the sin which brought the decree of death to the world, why did this bird need Noach’s blessing that it shouldn’t die?[[416]](#footnote-416)

The Talmud relates that after Chava / Eve ate from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge she gave her husband and all the animals and fowl to eat from it as well. There was one bird that did not eat from it and did not become subject to the curse of death. It lives for 1000 years and then it incinerates and reemerges becoming alive again! This bird’s name is *Chol* (the Talmud calls it *Orshina*).

Rashi to Iyov (Job) 29:18: **and I will multiply days as the phoenix** Heb. וכחול. This is a bird named חול, phoenix,[[417]](#footnote-417) upon which the punishment of death was not decreed because it did not taste of the Tree of Knowledge, and at the end of one thousand years, it renews itself and returns to its youth.

It could very well be that the bird that was sensitive towards Noach was the same one that did not eat from the Tree of knowledge and was alive/reborn 1656 years later!

Behemoth:

How did the great Behemoth, which grazed 1000 mountains, fit into the ark? He answers that it has a *Sod*, deep hidden meaning, and is not intended literally.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 50:10*** *For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*

Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer expands upon this as an animal which grazes on 1000 hills; and also mentioned in Tanchuma and Bamidbar Rabbah.

And how did the bird which obscures the light of the sun with its wings fit on the ark?

The giant bird obscuring the Sun is based on the next pasuk:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 50:11*** *I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine.*

***Midrash Rabbah - Leviticus XXII:10*** *As recompense for the prohibition of certain fish you will eat Leviathan, a clean fish; as recompense for the prohibition of certain fowls you shall eat ziz, which is a clean fowl. Hence it is written, I know all the fowls of the mountains; and ziz[[418]](#footnote-418) of the fields are Mine.[[419]](#footnote-419) R. Judah son of R. Simon says: When ziz spreads out his wings he darkens the disc of the sun. Hence it is written, Doth the nez[[420]](#footnote-420) soar by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south.[[421]](#footnote-421) Why was it called by the name of ‘ziz’? Because it possesses many kinds of tastes, the taste of this (zeh) and of that (zeh).*

Fallen Angels

Genesis 6:4, for example, describes the Nephalim as “the divine beings [who] mated with the human women”.

Demons - shadim:

The strangest passengers which are virtually never spoken about are the *demons*. Rashi brings this:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19*** *And of all living things of all flesh, two of each you shall bring into the ark to preserve alive with you; they shall be male and female.*

**Rashi to Genesis 6:19** - **And of all living things:** Even demons.[[422]](#footnote-422)

The basis for this explanation is clearly laid out. “all” is inclusive of something, and “living” implies that this inclusive element has an aspect of life. This would be something with a soul but not a body. This would be spirits. The standard commentators assume this means sheidim, demons.

The Gemara brings us additional insights:

***Chagigah 16a:5-7*** *The Sages taught: Six statements were said with regard to demons: In three ways they are like ministering angels, and in three ways they are like humans. The baraita specifies: In three ways they are like ministering angels: They have wings like ministering angels; and they fly from one end of the world to the other like ministering angels; and they know what will be in the future like ministering angels... and in three ways they are similar to humans: They eat and drink like humans; they multiply like humans; and they die like humans.*

**Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 6:19:1** מכל החי, “and from all living creatures, etc”. Our sages in Bereshit Rabbah 31,13 explain this expression is meant to include demons. God commanded them to enter the Ark... It was necessary therefore to bring these demons or spirits into the Ark as they too would have perished during the forty days of hot rain.

Someone asked Rabbi Mendel of Kotzk: “The Rambam in *The guide to the Perplexed* denies the existence of demons and magic, yet in the Torah it is written ‘and they shall no longer offer their sacrifices to seirim?’ Also, how can the words of Rashi be resolved, that Noach was commanded from the Mouth of the Omnipotent to bring demons to the ark? The Rabbi of Kotzk replied, ‘This as that are simultaneously true. In days of old, demons and magic existed. But, from the time that Rambam came and said that they did not exist, behold, Rambam is a posek, and they agreed to him as well in Heaven, and established his words halacha leMaaseh[[423]](#footnote-423) such that demons vanished from the earth”.

# Moshe’s Tebah

The Hebrew word for Noach’s ark is tebah. This word, tebah, is used in only one other context: The ark that Moshe Rabbenu was placed in when he was set afloat on the Nile.

***Shemot (Exodus) 2:3****And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark* (תֵּבַת) *of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink.*

Throughout the biblical era, the word tebah - תֵּבַת meant an ark, large in the case of Noach and the Flood, small in the case of the papyrus basket coated with tar in which Yocheved placed the baby Moshe, setting him afloat on the Nile.

Noach coated the Tebah with pitch both on the outside and the inside (in contrast to the tebah in which Moshe Rabbenu was placed as an infant in the Nile River, which was coated with pitch only on the outside) since it needed extra protection against the intensity of the flood.

Noach’s teiva and Moshe’s teiva are not just conveyances, but connectors between safe harbors.

Moshe was a gilgul[[424]](#footnote-424) of Noach's neshama. The Arizal says the same thing. They both note that Noach and Moshe were saved by being placed in a tebah, which was floated upon the very medium that brought death to the others of their generation- Noach on the waters of the Mabul, which killed everyone of his generation, and Moshe on the waters of the Nile, into which the male children born at that time had been thrown to drown. Noach's neshama was given the opportunity to do its special mitzva a second time, and to do it properly this time Although Noach was a great Tzadik and beloved by HaShem, he was criticized for not doing enough to influence and save the people of his time. Moshe rectified this imperfection, because he, too, faced almost identical circumstances, but reacted very differently. When the Bne Israel did the sin of the golden calf, HaShem told him that the people deserved destruction and that Moshe would be the only survivor who would begin a new race. Moshe did not accept this terrible judgment. Moshe said that he cannot exist without the people he was responsible for. He said, HaShem, forgive the people, and if not, erase me from your book of life.[[425]](#footnote-425)

Noach and Moshe both saved people.

Both were saved from water.

Noach spent 120 years building the tebah, Moshe lived for 120 years.

Moshe went up to get the Torah-which is compared to rain-for forty days and nights, in Noach’s lifetime it rained at the beginning of the Mabul for forty days and nights…!

In fact the Arizal writes that Moshe had the same root Neshama as Noach!

There is a deeper connection between Noach and Moshe. We know that gilgul, reincarnation, is meant to repair a failing of the previous incarnation. This indeed is the repair that Moshe Rabbenu did for Noach, explains the Shvilei Pinchas. We are told that Noach found favor in HaShem's eyes. Noach personally was a tzadik, completely righteous. But Noach maintained his relationship cloistered in seclusion with HaKodash Baruch Hu, never going out to try to influence the people of his generation to correct their ways. For this omission, Noach is faulted, and the Prophet therefore refers to the flood as mei Noach, the waters of Noach. Perhaps, by admonishing the people, Noach could have prevented the flood and saved the world. Nevertheless, the flood was delayed for one hundred twenty years, the number of years Moshe would live.

Noach's behavior contrasts sharply with Moshe's behavior. When HaShem told Moshe He wanted to destroy Bne Israel, Moshe was willing to die with them rather than have a new nation descend from him. Moshe's response to HaShem is, "Mecheini na, erase me". Why this specific phrase? The Shvilei Pinchas points here to another anagram, MeCheNI, Mei NoaCH, the waters of Noach. Thus Moshe repaired the lapse in Noach.

The Shvilei Pinchas, citing the Arizal, goes even further. He suggests that the people of Noach's generation were reincarnated into the babies born in Egypt. Just as the earlier generation was punished with water, so too would this generation be punished by water, by being thrown into the Nile. But through the hard labor of the enslavement, many had already refined their souls enough so that they could reach full refinement by accepting the Torah.

On the seventh day of Hag ha-Matza, Moshe is set adrift in an tebah on the Nile river, 81 years before The Exodus.[[426]](#footnote-426)

The description of Moshe’s tebah, in Shemot (Exodus) 2:3, is not only reminiscent of Noach’s – but also that Noach’s sons’ names which are hidden within 4 words, nearly all in a row.

# The Ark of the Covenant

The Zohar says that the tebah and the aron are the same thing via a Gezerah shevah. A gezeira shava is a tradition of a known rule applying to a new case based upon an identical word or phrase in both cases. For example, the Torah first uses the word Brit – covenant, for the first time in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:18*** *But I will establish My covenant with thee; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.*

This is its essence! The concept of Brit was created specifically related to the tebah, to Noach’s ark. We see a similar usage for the ark of the covenant in:

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 10:33*** *And they set forward from the mount of HaShem three days' journey; and the ark* וַאֲרוֹן *of the covenant of HaShem* בְּרִית-יְהוָה *went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting-place for them.*

The wording of Genesis 6:18 says explicitly that Noach *could not* go into the ark *until* that covenant was established.[[427]](#footnote-427) Thus the ark, the tebah, was an ark (tebah) of the covenant!

Noach did not go into the ark until that covenant was established. Thus the ark, the tebah, was an ark (tebah) of the covenat! Just as the aron (ark of the covenant) was dimensionless, so also was the tebah dimensionless, according to the Zohar. So, there was room for the animals, their food, Noach and his family and their food.

When God told Noach, “and you, take for *yourself*”:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:21*** *And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.'*

He meant that he should prepare food adequate only for *himself* for the duration of the flood. Miraculously, this food would increase and be sufficient for all the inhabitants of the ark: “For you and for *them,”* the members of your family and all the animals.

This was one of the many miracles that occurred in the ark. Another was the animal’s contentment with human food.

The following *pasuk* states that “Noach did all that God commanded him to do.” Superficially, one may wonder, why is it necessary to state this. Would Noach have dared to deviate? The Torah is accentuating Noach’s great faith in HaShem. He entered the ark without preparing *any* food for the animals, and he relied on a miracle that they would be satisfied with his food and survive the flood.[[428]](#footnote-428)

According to the Talmud, the space occupied by the aron (ark of the covenant) did not take up space. What does that mean? The Holy of Holies of the Mishkan[[429]](#footnote-429) was 10 cubits wide, and the ark, which stood in the center, had a length of 2.5 cubits. Yet, when measuring from the sides of the ark to the wall, one would find five cubits on each side.[[430]](#footnote-430) This paradox was entirely miraculous, something we cannot even wrap our heads around; the ark both taking up space and not taking up space at the same time.

Just as the aron was dimensionless, so also was the tebah (Noach’s ark) dimensionless, according to the Zohar. So, there was room for the animals, their food, Noach and his family, and their food.

# *The* Mabul (*The* Flood)

The account of Noach’s flood in the Torah, when interpreted according to the normal sense of the words, speaks of a global scale cataclysm that destroyed almost all the air-breathing terrestrial life on earth within the span of a single year. Indeed, The Flood is the only event mentioned in the Torah since the creation of the earth itself up to the present capable of producing global-scale geological change.

The reason HaShem chose to destroy the world using water is no coincidence. In Bereshit (Genesis) 6:7, the Torah describes what will happen using the word “Michuy”, *wiping off*. Rashi explains that this is because the man was created with soil from the earth together with water; therefore, by washing man off with water is a way to return him to the wet soil. It seems that with this action HaShem is returning the world back to its ancient state of matter.

In books of Chassidus[[431]](#footnote-431) The Mabul is described as one great 'Mikve' (ritual bath).[[432]](#footnote-432)

The Sefer Hachinuch[[433]](#footnote-433) points out that the underlying concept of a Mikveh is to have a person return to the beginning of the world, when it was only water. According to this, we can now understand how during the Mabbul, the world was now its original existence. This is before it was formed and shaped, and before the occurrence of the transgressions of its inhabitants.

Lets look at a passage that we say every morning in our prayers.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 105:5*** *Remember the wonders that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth…*

Everybody who prays, if they come to the Esnoga on time, says that. After all, it’s in the siddur so you can’t skip it. But even if you say it, the question is do you know what you’re saying? We are in the habit of rattling off pesukim and we don’t think about what they’re telling us. But since we’re not saying it merely for the words, just to be pious, it makes sense that we should take the time to study the words we say. It’s important because we’re being told now about a new mitzva, a command that most of us were unaware of: *Remember His wonders that He did*. Why are the words “that He did” added? It seems superfluous. And the answer is that it’s telling us why He made the wonders. He did it for the purpose that **we should remember them**.

One of the greatest of the wonders that He made in order for us to remember, is told to us in parshat Noach. And that’s the Mabul, the great Flood that wiped out Mankind.[[434]](#footnote-434) There’s no question that among all of the wonders, the Flood was one of the grandest and most terrible episodes in history.

4,127 years ago[[435]](#footnote-435) there was the great flood, the Mabul הַמַּבּוּל, which flooded the world in the days of Noach.[[436]](#footnote-436) The Torah’s account of Noach[[437]](#footnote-437) and the *Mabul*,[[438]](#footnote-438) in 1656 AM (2104 BC),[[439]](#footnote-439) is extremely important and profound for a number of reasons which include moral lessons, life lessons, and the providing of significant insights into creation and **re-creation**. Consider, for example, that it occupies three chapters of Torah – which is a great deal of ink.

Noach was 480 when God told him to construct the ark and 600 years old when the flood came. That means that he spent 120 years building the ark (the Tebah - הַתֵּבָה). A careful reading of the Torah reveals that Noach and his family actually spent 365 days in the ark, a full solar year!

Exactly one solar yean Rashi refers to it not as a "solar" year but as a "complete" year. This idiom emphasizes that, spiritually, the year in which the Flood took place was not just a solar year, but rather the synthesis of a lunar year, which is 354 days, and a solar year—a complete year.

The explanation for this is rooted in the differences between studying the Torah and performing the commandments, on the one hand, and engaging in mundane activities, on the other. The Torah and the commandments are like the sun since, like the sun, they are self-illuminating. Mundane activities, in contrast, are, like the moon: lightless by nature until we illuminate them with properly-focused intentions.

Now, one would assume that since the Flood is a metaphor for engagement with the mundane, it should have lasted one lunar year. Why, then, did it last an extra eleven days to constitute a complete year?

The answer is that the synthesis of the two modes of action creates an additional element of completeness. For example, if we discuss the Torah while eating with others, we are considered to have "eaten at God's table."

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:5-12*** *And Noach did according unto all that HaShem commanded him.* ***6*** *And Noach was six hundred years[[440]](#footnote-440) old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.* ***7*** *And Noach went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.* ***8*** *Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the land - HaAdamah,* ***9*** *there went in two and two unto Noach into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noach.* ***10*** *And it came to pass after the seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.* ***11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.* ***12*** *And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*

**Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:7** - **because of the flood waters:**Noah, too, was of those who had little faith, believing and not believing that the Flood would come, and he did not enter the ark until the waters forced him to do so.[[441]](#footnote-441)

*Rashi comments on the verse, reporting that Noach and his family entered the ark "because of the water of the flood".[[442]](#footnote-442) The previous verse already said that the flood had begun. We would expect Noah's family to have boarded the ark then. Rashi says that Noah was "small" in faith. He believed and yet did not believe that the flood would be so vast, so he did not enter the ark until the water forced him in! Rebbe Yechiel Michel of Zlotshuv[[443]](#footnote-443) asks how could Rashi suspect such a great person as Noach to be lacking faith? He explains like this: The word "emuna", often translated as “faith“, can denote the faith that a certain event will undoubtedly occur. Another interpretation of the word “emuna” is "trained" or "nurtured", as in "And he [Mordechai] trained[[444]](#footnote-444) Hadassah [Esther]." In other words, there is a certain strength in “emuna” that makes something happen.*

*When you truly believe, you can actually help actualize a particular event. It is a cliche, but worth repeating: do not underestimate the power of faith! Noach, as one who was close to HaShem, understood this. Of course, he believed totally in HaShem and in whatever HaShem told him. Nevertheless, he was afraid to totally believe in the Flood because he did not want to help cause it. He was wary that his very powerful faith could make the Flood happen!*

*This is what Rashi referred to by saying that Noach was of "small faith". He made his faith small, at first believing in the Flood's immanence, but then forcing himself to not believe in it; finally, the waters of the Flood forced him into the ark, leaving him no choice. The Shelah writes that maybe Noach was not so great, since he did not argue with HaShem when told that the world was going to be destroyed. But from the above we can justify it, Noach did not want to let himself believe it.[[445]](#footnote-445)*

Chapters 6 through 9 have an extremely interesting Atbash (Chiastic) structure that is well worth studying. To begin understanding the chiastic structure of the flood narrative, let’s examine a couple of chiasms that span chapters 6 through 9:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Noach and his sons (Genesis 6:10) | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | All life on earth (6:13:a) | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  | Curse on earth (6:13:b) | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  | Flood announced (6:7) | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | Ark (6:14-16) | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | All living creatures (6:17-20 ) | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Food in the ark (6:21) | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Animals in man’s hands (7:2-3) | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Entering the Ark (7:13-16) | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Waters increase (7:17-20) | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | God remembers Noach (8:1) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Waters decrease (8:13-14) | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Exiting the Ark (8:15-19) | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Animals (9:2,3) | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Food outside the ark (9:3,4) | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | All living creatures (9:10a) | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | Ark (9:10b) | | | | | | |
|  |  |  | No flood in future (9:11) | | | | | | | |
|  |  | Blessing on earth (9:12-17) | | | | | | | | |
|  | All life on earth (9:16) | | | | | | | | | |
| Noach and his sons (9:18,19a) | | | | | | | | | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Noach (6:9) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Shem, Ham and Japheth (6:10) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  | Ark to be built (6:14-16) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  | Flood announced (6:17) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | Covenant with Noach (6:18-20) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | Food in the ark (6:21) | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Command to enter ark (7:1-3) | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 7 days waiting for flood (7:4-5) | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 7 days waiting for flood (7:7-10) | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Entry to ark (7:11-15) | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | HaShem shuts Noach in (7:16) | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 40 days of rain (7:17a) | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Waters increase (7:17b-18) | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Mountains covered (7:19-20) | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 150 days waters prevail 7:24 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | GOD REMEMBERS NOACH (8:1) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 150 days waters abate (8:3) | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Mountain tops visible (8:4-5) | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Waters abate (8:5) | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 40 days (end of) (8:6a) | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Noach opens window of ark (8:6b) | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Raven[[446]](#footnote-446) and dove leave ark (8:7-9) | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 7 days waiting for waters to subside (8:10-11) | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 7 days waiting for waters to subside (8:12-13) | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Command to leave ark (8:15-17) | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | Food outside ark (9:1-4) | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | Covenant with all flesh (9:8-10) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  | No flood in future (8:11-17) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  | Ark (9:18a) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Shem, Ham and Japheth (9:18b) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Noach (9:20) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## The Generation of The Flood

The generation of the flood caused the divine presence to ascend to the fourth heaven because of their social and sexual sins.

After Adam and Eve ate from the fruit of the tree of knowledge, G‑d informed them that they and their progeny would eventually die. In remorse for bringing death into the world, Adam attempted to repent for and rectify his sin. As part of this process, and because he reasoned that there was no purpose in bringing children into the world if they were destined to die anyway, he separated from Eve. It was only 130 years later that he realized the faultiness of his logic, by losing an argument with Lamech's wives. During these 130 years of celibacy, Adam apparently was not able to control himself completely, and committed the sin of wasteful emission of seed.

They had previously been incarnated as the generation of the flood, who used to also spill [their] seed on the ground, inasmuch as they were derived from the same origin.[[447]](#footnote-447)

The generation of the flood was the first incarnation of the Adam's wasted drops. Since they were the first "generation" of this ill-conceived seed, their spiritual makeup was powerfully predisposed toward the same mentality that produced them. They therefore committed the same sin that this mentality led to.

They were eventually wiped out. This is the mystical meaning of the verse:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:5*** *And G‑d saw that man's evil was great.*

For wasteful emission of seed is called "evil," and one who wastefully emits his seed is also called "evil," as it is stated in the Zohar (1:57a) with reference to the verse:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 5:5*** *the wicked will not abide with You.*

It follows that the generation of the flood were veritably Adam's evil. This is also the mystical meaning of [G‑d's statement before the flood];

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:7*** *I will wipe out the man that I have created.*

Inasmuch as the name *Adam* means simply "man," the phrase *"And G‑d saw that man's evil was great"* may be read, *"And G‑d saw that****Adam****'s evil was great,"* meaning that G‑d saw that [this generation, the physical embodiment of the souls produced by] *Adam's* evil [emission of seed], was [sinning] *greatly* [just as he did].

Similarly, the phrase in the following verse, *"I will wipe out the man that I have created"* may be read, "I will wipe out *Adam*, who I [personally] created," meaning that G‑d was planning to wipe out the generation because it was an embodiment of the sin of Adam himself.

The generation of the flood has no portion in the future world.

***Sanhedrin 107b*** *Mishna. the generation of the flood has no portion in the future world, nor will they stand at the [last] judgment, as it is written, [and the lord said,] my spirit will not always enter into judgment with man:[[448]](#footnote-448) there will be neither judgment nor [my] spirit for them.[[449]](#footnote-449)*

The generation of the flood has no portion in the future world.

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *GEMARA. Our Rabbis taught: The generation of the flood have no portion in the world to come, as it is written, And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the land[[450]](#footnote-450) and every living substance was destroyed refers to this world; which was upon the face of the land — to the next: this is R. Akiba’s view. R. Judah b. Bathyra maintained: They will neither revive nor be judged, as it is written, My spirit will not always enter into judgment with man:[[451]](#footnote-451) teaching, neither judgment nor spirit. Another meaning of ‘My Spirit will not enter etc.’: their soul shall not return to its sheath.[[452]](#footnote-452) R. Menahem son of R. Jose said: Even when the Holy One, blessed be He, restores the souls to the dead bodies,[[453]](#footnote-453) their soul shall grieve them in the Gehenna, as it is written, Ye shall conceive chaff ye shall bring forth stubble: your soul, as fire, shall devour you.[[454]](#footnote-454)*

The wicked will not stand in the judgment.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 1:5*** *Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*

The wicked will not stand in the judgment.

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *therefore ‘the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment’, refers to the generation of the flood;*

The antediluvian world was a world of bliss that should have engendered gratefulness towards HaShem and His blessing, but instead engendered independence from HaShem and contempt.

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *Our Rabbis taught: The generation of the flood waxed haughty only because of the good which the Holy One, blessed be He, lavished upon them. Behold, what is written of them? Their houses are safe from fear, ‘neither is the rod of God upon them,[[455]](#footnote-455) it is also written, Their bull gendereth, and faileth not,’ their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf;[[456]](#footnote-456) further, They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance; further, They take the timbrel and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ;[[457]](#footnote-457) and it is also written, They spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures;[[458]](#footnote-458) and it is also written, and in a moment go down to the grave.[[459]](#footnote-459) And ‘tis that which caused them to say to God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?[[460]](#footnote-460) They said thus: Do we need Him for aught but the drop of rain? We have rivers and wells to supply our wants. Thereupon the Holy One, blessed be He, said: By that very good which I lavished upon them they provoke Me, and by that I will punish[[461]](#footnote-461) them, as it is written, And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth.[[462]](#footnote-462)*

***Aggadat Bereshit on Bereshit 9-10***  *Better is the little for the righteous …*(Psalm 37:16). For Noah, his three sons were better than the multitudes that were in the generation of the Flood – because he was called ‘righteous’: … *than the multitude of many wicked*.[[463]](#footnote-463) For there were many multitudes in the generation of the Flood, `because each and every woman among them gave birth to four or five children each time, and they gave birth twice a year, like flock. They walked when they were a day old, and they went to their fathers as it is stated: *They send out their little ones like a flock*.[[464]](#footnote-464) [**Genesis Rabba 36.1** states: ‘The generation of the Flood were living in abundant prosperity, and because it made them arrogant instead of grateful, they made the Holy One angry.’] See how many they were! For that very reason they made the Holy One angry. But what is it written about Noah? *When Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth*.[[465]](#footnote-465) About him, it is not written like about all the others: ‘and he begot sons and daughters’, but: *These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth*.[[466]](#footnote-466) Three: that were all the sons of Noah. Better were these three sons of Noah than all those masses, as it is stated: *Better is the little for the righteous*.[[467]](#footnote-467)

Antediluvian man was greatly corrupted and their punishment was great.

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *R. Johanan said: The corruption of the generation of the Flood is characterised as great, and their punishment is characterised as great. Their corruption is characterised as great, as it is written, And God saw that the wickedness of man, was great in the earth;[[468]](#footnote-468) and their punishment is characterised as great, as it is written, All the fountains of the great deep. R. Johanan said: Three of those [hot fountains] were left,[[469]](#footnote-469) the gulf of Gaddor, the hot-springs of Tiberias, and the great well of Biram.[[470]](#footnote-470)*

It would be intriguing to compare the “Generation of the Flood”, their indictment and sentence with those of the “Generation of the ‘Palagah’ (dispersion)”.

## Timelines

**Ramban’s Timeline[[471]](#footnote-471)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ↓2/17/600 | |  |  | | --- | --- | | ↓7/17/600 | ↓10/1/600 | | ↓1/1/601 | ↓2/27/601 |
| 150 Strengthening   |  |  | | --- | --- | | 40 Flood | 110 Strengthening | | 163 Receding and Drying   |  |  | | --- | --- | | 73 Mountaintops | 90 Receding | | 57 Drying |  |

The following is a chronology of the Flood, as indicated by the dates and time periods given in the Torah’s account and calculated by **Rashi**:

**Cheshvan[[472]](#footnote-472)** 17 (mid-fall): Noach enters ark; rains begin.

**Kislev** 27 (early winter): Forty days of rain end; beginning of 150 days of water’s swelling and churning.

**Sivan** 1 (early summer): Water calms and begins to subside at the rate of one cubit every four days.

**Sivan** 17: The bottom of the ark, submerged 11 cubits beneath the surface, touches down on the top of the mountains of Ararat.

**Av** 1 (summer): The mountain peaks break the water’s surface.

**Elul** 10 (late summer): Forty days after the mountain peaks become visible, Noach opens the ark’s window and dispatches a raven.

**Elul** 17: Noach sends the dove for the first time.

**Elul** 23: The dove is sent a second time, and returns with an olive leaf in its beak.

**Tishre** 1 (early fall): Dove’s third mission. Dove rested and did not return. Water completely drained.

**Cheshvan** 27: Earth had fully dried. Noach exits ark.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nisan | Tishri |
| Iyar | Heshvan |
| Sivan | Kislev |
| Tammuz | Tevet |
| Av | Shevat |
| Elul | Adar |

***Rosh HaShana 12a******The Sages taught*** *in a baraita:* ***The Jewish Sages count*** *the years* ***from*** *Creation and* ***the flood in accordance with*** *the opinion of* ***Rabbi Eliezer,*** *from Tishrei, and they calculate* ***the cycles*** *of the sun and the moon* ***in accordance with*** *the opinion of* ***Rabbi Yehoshua,*** *from Nisan.* ***The sages of the*** *gentile* ***nations of the world,*** *on the other hand,* ***count both*** *the years* ***from*** *Creation and* ***the flood in accordance with*** *the opinion of* ***Rabbi Yehoshua,*** *from Nisan.*

Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua define their different outlooks:

***Rosh HaShanah 10b-11a*** *Rabbi Eliezer says: In Tishrei the world was created… In Nisan they were redeemed, and in Tishrei they are destined one day to be redeemed in the future. Rabbi Yehoshua says: In Nisan the world was created…. In Nisan they were redeemed, and in Nisan they are destined one day to be redeemed in the future.*

Both Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua agree that the month in which the world was created is the month in which Israel is destined one day to be redeemed. Both agree that there is an inherent connection between the Creation and the final redemption, and both agree that there is a connection between Creation and the Flood, because both agree that “the second month”[[473]](#footnote-473) in which the Flood began and finished means the second month from Creation (whether Creation was in Tishrei or in Nisan). So, who is correct?

Rabbeinu Tam, the great 12th century French rabbi observed that our liturgy, in particular the piyutim, the special liturgical poetry, that we recite in **Tishri** assume that the world was created in **Tishri**. And the piyutim that we recite in **Nisan** assume that the world was created in **Nisan**. And, to make things even more confusing, Rabbeinu Tam reminds us that the great Jewish poet Elazar HaKallir was the author of *both* of these poems. For those who have studied Tosafot, the Talmudic commentaries authored by Rabbeinu Tam and his students, this is a classic dialectic contradiction. Two sources, each one equally reliable and authoritative, teach something that contradicts the other without an obvious way to reconcile them. Here, the question does not concern a detail of talmudic law, but a question of existential importance to humanity: when was the world created?[[474]](#footnote-474)

So… when was the world created? Rabbeinu Tam answers, “Elu v’Elu Divrei Elokim Hayim - both of these opinions are the words of the Living God, for the idea of creation first arose in the Mind of God in Tishri but the actual creation itself took place in Nisan”.[[475]](#footnote-475)

The answer is that they are BOTH correct! (Now, one must study to understand how they are *both* correct. One answer is found by looking at the triennial Torah lectionary and noting that we begin a reading cycle of 3 ½ years on *both* Tishri 1 and on Nisan 1.

And now things begin to fall into place. Tishri and Nisan are two stages of Divine creation, thought and actualizing that thought into action. The two seasons of newness in the Jewish calendar, Rosh Hashanah and the Tishri holidays, and Pesach and the month of Nisan, commemorate two different aspects of creation and two different origin stories.

The following table, showing the timeline of the flood, is from the Meam Loez on Bereshit (Genesis) 6.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of**  **Flood** | **Hebrew date**  **According to Rabbi Eliezer** | **Hebrew date**  **According to Rabbi Yehoshua[[476]](#footnote-476)** | **Commentary** |
| -7 | Cheshvan 10 | Iyar 10 | Mourning for Methuselah[[477]](#footnote-477) |
| 0 | Cheshvan 17 | Iyar 17 | Noach enters the ark and the rains begins. |
| 40 | Kislev 29 | Sivan 29 | Forty-day rain ends; 150 day torrents begin. |
| 190 | Iyar 29 | Heshvan 29 | 150-day period of torrents ends. |
| 191 | Sivan 1 | Kislev 1 | Water begins to recede. |
| 207 | Sivan 17 | Kislev 17 | Ark rests on Ararat. The ark, submerged 11 cubits. |
| 250 | Av 1 | Shevat 1 | Mountaintops are visible. |
| 290 | Elul 10 | Adar 10 | Raven sent out. Mountain tops visible. |
| 296 | Elul 17 | Adar 17 | Dove sent out on first mission. |
| 303 | Elul 23 | Adar 23 | Dove brings olive leaf, second mission. |
| 310 | Tishri 1 | Nisan 1 | Dove does not return from third mission. Water drained. |
| 365 | Cheshvan 27 | Iyar 27 | Earth completely dry. Noach exits the ark. |
|  | | | |
| **Total time in ark: 365 days (one solar year; one year and 11 days on the lunar calendar).** | | | |

The Torah[[478]](#footnote-478) tells us that the animals all came into the ark seven days before Noach and his family entered the ark. Rather than start raining immediately however, as one might have expected, the torrential rains are nowhere to be seen. "And it came to pass after seven days that the flood waters began to be upon the earth". What is the meaning of this curious seven-day wait that is interjected here? The Midrash associates the seven-day wait with the traditional seven days of mourning observed on the occasion of the death of a loved one. 'Methuselah the Righteous,' a very long-lived nanocentenarian-plus (969 year old), expires on the eve of the Flood and in deference to his mourning rites, the flood is delayed!

Today the second month is Iyar in the past the second month was Cheshvan.

Iyar 27 is the 42nd day of the omer, which is the day when Noach and all his relations (i.e., his family plus all the animals) received the *rainbow* covenant, on the 27th of the second month.[[479]](#footnote-479) (this is *rainbow* Day.[[480]](#footnote-480)) The flood has everything to do with Shmita.

This chronology follows the opinion of the Talmudic sages Rabbi Eliezer and according to Rabbi Joshua.[[481]](#footnote-481)

Armed with this timeline, we can now fully appreciate the bimodality of the Jewish calendar and of the Torah readings as they existed in Israel after the Babylonian exile. Lets look at one facet of our calendar.

## The Rainbow Covenant – Lag B’Omer

The 12th century Biblical commentary Ramban[[482]](#footnote-482) has a striking explanation for the symbol of the *rainbow*: ancient cultures fought their wars with the bow and arrow, and the side which surrendered, pursuing peace instead of war, would express their will to do so by raising an inverted bow that the enemy could see. Similarly, God places an inverted bow, a *rainbow*, in the heavens as a sign that He is no longer warring against humanity... Whatever the symbolism, it’s clear that the *rainbow* is a half-picture, lacking a second half to complete the circle of wholeness. God can pledge not to destroy humanity, but since He created humanity with freedom of choice, He cannot guarantee that humanity will not destroy itself...[[483]](#footnote-483)

This concept of ‘half’, is found in the Talmudic Torah lectionary. Curiously, this lectionary will lead us back to the bow and arrow of Lag B’Omer.

The biblical calendar of agriculturally-based religious holidays divides the year neatly into two halves (the early and the latter rains). On the 15th of Tishri, we celebrate the fall harvest with Succoth and six months later, the spring harvest coincides with our celebration of Pesach. Each of these festivals lasts for seven days and then is followed by an extra gathering, an **atzeret**, at its conclusion. However, the atzeret celebrations of Succoth and Pesach differ in their timing. The concluding festival of Succoth, now called Shemini Atzeret, happens immediately at the conclusion of the holiday, giving Succoth the feeling of being an eight day celebration, whereas the atzeret of Pesach arrives a full seven weeks later with the arrival of Shavuot. I am calling this bifurcation of the calendar the bimodality of the year. In the following paragraphs, I will try to explain how this bimodality connects the flood and Lag B’Omer.

On the 27th day of the second month, Noach, his family, and all the animals that were with them left the ark.[[484]](#footnote-484) Exactly one lunar year and ten days before, one complete solar year, the flood began on the 17th of the second month, the day before Lag B’Omer. When Noach, the animals and his family went out from the ark, God made a covenant,[[485]](#footnote-485) with all the animals and the people, that there would never be again be a flood of water to destroy life on Earth.

The rains of the mabul began on Heshvan 17. The first full day of the rains was on Heshvan 18 which is known as Lag B’Omer, the scholars holiday.

Rashi here notes that the forty days of rain do not include the first day. This is because the rainfall of the first day was incomplete due to the fact that it did not rain the prior evening. Thus, according to Rashi although the windows of the heaven along with the fountains of the great depths were opened on the seventeenth, the mabul did not begin until the eighteenth day of the second month. The seventeenth day of the month was just the warm up period. There is a dispute in the Gemara as to whether the months of the Torah are calculated from Tishre or from Nisan. If we follow the opinion that they are calculated from Nisan, it emerges that the mabul started on the eighteenth day of Iyar, which is the same day as Lag B’Omer.

The *rainbow* covenant was given with a *rainbow* as a sign of the covenant on Iyar 27,[[486]](#footnote-486) which is always the **42nd day** of the Omer,[[487]](#footnote-487) the day before Yom Yerushalayim. Other days connected the *rainbow* Covenant include Shabbat Noach and Shabbat Behar.

The septennial Torah reading lectionary[[488]](#footnote-488) is divided into two 3 ½ year cycles, which follows the standard Sabbatical cycle (shmita). Every time we read about the mabul in Bereshit (Genesis) chapters 7 – 9, it will juxtapose Iyar 18 with Heshvan 18, 3 ½ years later – When the mabul took place. Now, Iyar 18 and Heshvan 18 are normally juxtaposed bimodally[[489]](#footnote-489) EVERY YEAR of the septennial cycle. Now, this just ‘happens’ to line up precisely with the opinions of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua in Seder Olam Rabbah, ch. 4. I am repeating the following table in order to emphasize this bimodality and its effects.

Just as our calendar is bimodal with two halves, the early and the late rains, so also did our Sages debate whether the ‘second month’ was Iyar or Cheshvan. This makloket, this halachic dispute was reflected in the following table of dates for the flood:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of**  **Flood** | **Hebrew date**  **According to Rabbi Eliezer** | **Hebrew date**  **According to Rabbi Yehoshua** | **Commentary** |
| -7 | Cheshvan 10 | Iyar 10 | Mourning for Methuselah[[490]](#footnote-490) |
| 0 | Cheshvan 17 | Iyar 17 | Noach enters the ark and the rains begins. |
| 40 | Kislev 29 | Sivan 29 | Forty-day rain ends; 150 day torrents begin. |
| 190 | Iyar 29 | Heshvan 29 | 150-day period of torrents ends. |
| 191 | Sivan 1 | Kislev 1 | Water begins to recede. |
| 207 | Sivan 17 | Kislev 17 | Ark rests on Ararat. The ark, submerged 11 cubits. |
| 250 | Av 1 | Shevat 1 | Mountaintops are visible. |
| 290 | Elul 10 | Adar 10 | Raven sent out. Mountain tops visible. |
| 296 | Elul 17 | Adar 17 | Dove sent out on first mission. |
| 303 | Elul 23 | Adar 23 | Dove brings olive leaf, second mission. |
| 310 | Tishri 1 | Nisan 1 | Dove does not return from third mission. Water drained. |
| 365 | Cheshvan 27 | Iyar 27 | Earth completely dry. Noach exits the ark. |
|  | | | |
| **Total time in ark: 365 days (one solar year; one year and 11 days on the lunar calendar).** | | | |

At the same time, we read about the *rainbow* covenant (Bereshit (Genesis) 9:9-17), which took place on the 27th day of the second month (Heshvan 27 – Rabbi Eliezer’s opinion), will also line up with the 27th day of the second month (Iyar 27 – Rabbi Yehoshua’s opinion). The triennial cycle puts events very close to their proper time slot, and brings into sharp focus the words of Chazal!

This juxtaposition of Lag B’omer with the reading of the rains of the mabul, is another reason for associating the *rainbow* with Lag B’Omer.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:12-17*** *And God said: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I have set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the cloud, 15 that I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.’ 17 And God said unto Noach: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.’*

In the wake of the great flood in Parashat Noach, God established a sign that He would no longer seek to entirely destroy humanity. The appearance of the *rainbow*, the keshet, after a heavy rain is a reminder to God that He promised not to harm us. It is a sign to us that we deserved to be flooded and God could have brought a second great flood and He didn’t.

The commentators explain that this is one reason for the custom that children play with bows and arrows on Lag B’Omer. The Hebrew word for bow is keshet - הַקֶּשֶׁת. This is the same word used for *rainbow*. The *rainbow* was designated by HaShem to serve as a sign, of peace, that He would never again bring a mabul to the world. We remind ourselves of this sign on the anniversary of the mabul, i.e. Lag B’Omer.



It is a custom of Israel that school-age children shoot with a bow (*keshet*) on this day.

“In the days of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, no *rainbow* was ever seen”.[[491]](#footnote-491) This is because the *rainbow*, the symbol of God’s promise never to destroy the world, was not necessary so long as Shimon Bar Yochai lived. His mere presence on earth was sign enough of God’s favor toward humanity. So, as the Chasidic Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Rimonov teaches, the bow of Lag B’Omer, the one with the arrows, and the bow of God’s covenant, the one with the colors, are one and the same bow, called keshet in Hebrew, at once a symbol of peace and a symbol of righteous resistance. [[492]](#footnote-492)

**Sforno on Genesis 9:13:2**

There is a dual function to the *rainbow*;[[493]](#footnote-493) it is true that the scientists have already tired of trying to explain the phenomenon of the various colours of the second *rainbow*, something which appears in the opposite order of the colours in the original *rainbow*.

[according to the encyclopedia Britannica, there are primary and secondary *rainbow*s, the secondary *rainbow* having a colour pattern in a reverse order of that known as the primary *rainbow*. Our author may understand that which has baffled scientists in his time, as a hint of the dual nature of the *rainbow*, i.e. as a warning, or a promise respectively. Ed.]

**Between Me and the earth**. The land is a primary partner in this, the first covenant.

Our Sages interpret this passage as an oath taken by God to refrain from the type of destruction described in the Flood story, no matter the degree of human provocation. They even authored a blessing to recite when one sees a *rainbow*, the natural phenomenon selected by God to serve as the symbol of this oath:

“Blessed are You, HaShem..... Who remembers the covenant, is trustworthy in His covenant, and fulfills His word”.

Abudraham explains the blessing; when you see a *rainbow* you know that the world should really be destroyed owing to the preponderance of human iniquities; the fact that it is not being destroyed is entirely due to the oath God made to Noach.

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan to Genesis 7:11*** *- In the six-hundredth year of the life of Noah, in the second month, which was the month of Marcheshvan, for hitherto the months had been numbered from Tishri which was the beginning of the year at the completion of the world, in the seventeenth day of the month, in that day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up. And the giants were gathered there together with their sons and perturbed them, and afterwards the windows of heaven were opened.*

Lag B’Omer takes place of the 18th day of the second month. However, in the beginning the second month was not Iyar, rather the second month was Heshvan, according to the Gemara. (HaShem changed it in Shemot 2:12.) The Torah teaches us that the flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month:

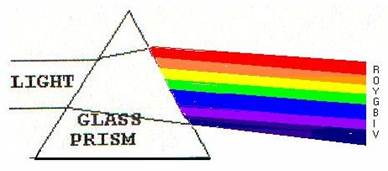
***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*

This means that the first full day of the flood was the eighteenth day of the second month!

From this we understand that Lag B’Omer is the bimodal equivalent of the Mabul, the flood. As we examine the customs of Lag B’Omer you will constantly see the flood motifs coming through.

On Lag BaOmer it is customary to take the children to picnics to play with bows and arrows. One of the explanations given for this custom is that we are told that in the course of Hakham Shimon’s lifetime, no *rainbow* appeared in the sky. The *rainbow* is a sign of human failing: as related in the ninth chapter of Genesis, HaShem promised that whenever mankind shall be as *undeserving* as it was in the generation of the flood, the *rainbow* will remind Him of His vow to never again destroy His world. But as long as Hakham Shimon was alive, his merit alone was enough to ensure that HaShem would not regret His creation. Hence the connection of the bow (*Keshet*) to Lag BaOmer. One of the most complete expressions of unity is the establishment of oneness between adults and children, two opposites. For this reason, Lag BaOmer is celebrated by activities with Jewish children.

A *rainbow* reveals the hidden secrets of white light. White light seems indivisible, yet with a prism we can reveal its hidden colors. No color can be discerned in its pure whiteness. The *rainbow* reveals the secret of the white light. It shows us how the white light is really composed of all the colors.



Lag B’Omer is the day of the passing of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (Rashbi). The day on which he left this world, Rabbi Shimon revealed many of the hidden secrets of the Torah, the hidden light. Lets explore this a bit more deeply.

The rain and the waters of the mabul are an allusion to Torah. “Water actually stands for Torah, as it is said, ‘Ho, all who are thirsty, come for water’.[[494]](#footnote-494) It is written, “And they journeyed[[495]](#footnote-495) for three days in the wilderness and did not find water”. On this the Sages comment: “Those who closely investigate[[496]](#footnote-496) the Scriptural texts say that water alludes to Torah; since the people had journeyed for three days without Torah they grew weary”.

Water as a metaphor for Torah became a staple of rabbinic literature.

On the day Rashbi died, he revealed deep and wondrous secrets that he was not allowed to reveal beforehand, and he [simultaneously] cried and laughed. Therefore, the day a tzaddik departs this world is similar to a wedding, because on that day he is privileged to fully connect to the Shechina, and his Torah becomes a great light in the supernal worlds. Subsequently, his disciples and successors in this world can also connect more deeply to his Torah and the secrets [he taught]. This is why those students who understand this deep idea have a custom to celebrate a hillula on the day their righteous mentor died and revealed the Torah’s secrets. The anniversary of death of a great scholar in the realm of the Written Law, Torah SheBichtav, which is fixed and stable, is a painful day. An example of this is the seventh of Adar, the day on which Moshe Rabbeinu died. In contrast, we make a hillula on the day a great scholar in the realm of the Oral Law, Torah SheBaal Peh died, because his Torah continues to grow and become more detailed after his death.

Rashbi, who wrote the Zohar, is unique in that even Jews who do not understand the secrets of the Torah commemorate the anniversary of his death. This is how Lag B’Oner became a day of celebration for the esoteric [side of] the Torah.

On the day of Lag B’Omer, R. Akiva began teaching new students, including Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who did not die in the plague, and through them Torah spread among the Jewish people. This is why we rejoice on Lag B’Omer.[[497]](#footnote-497) Others claim that on the thirty-third of the Omer R. Akiva gave rabbinic ordination to his five new students: R. Meir, R. Yehudah, R. Yosi. R. Shimon bar Yochai, and R. Elazar ben Shamu’a, who continued the tradition of Torah.[[498]](#footnote-498)

From this understanding of the giving of the esoteric side of Torah and the building of Totah into the five students, we can understand the connection of Noach’s rain coming down with the bringing down of Torah. As Noach’s flood re-created the world, so also does Rashbi’s Torah and R. Akiva’s Torah re-create the world. Serious education and lifelong Torah study are what vivify inert letters into life giving water.

## The Mabul and the Manna

On Lag BaOmer, HaShem sent The Bread from Heaven (manna).[[499]](#footnote-499) The Chatam Sofer says that it was on the 18th of Iyar (Lag BaOmer) that the Manna began to fall. This is based on the idea that the food supply (matza) that we brought out of Egypt lasted until the 14th of Iyar (which marks the 14th of Iyar as the end of the Pesach time frame, hence its choice by HaShem for the second Passover). Then the people went hungry for three days on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of Iyar, and complained to Moses before they received the Manna on the 18th.

When studying the commentaries we discover that many important events occurred on Lag BaOmer. Let us present one such event. The first is the mabul. The pasuk records that “on the seventeenth day of the second month all the fountains of the great depth were opened and the windows of the heaven were opened. There was rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights” (Bereshit 7:11,12). Rashi here notes that the forty days of rain do not include the first day. This is because the rainfall of the first day was incomplete due to the fact that it did not rain the prior evening. Thus, according to Rashi although the windows of the heaven along with the fountains of the great depths were opened on the seventeenth, the mabul did not begin until the eighteenth day of the second month. The seventeenth day of the month was just the warm up period. There is a dispute in the Gemara if the months of the Torah are calculated from Tishri or from Nisan. If we follow the opinion that they are calculated from Nisan, it emerges that the mabul stared on the eighteenth day of Iyar, which is the same day as Lag BaOmer.

The commentators explain that this is one reason for the custom that children play with bows and arrows on Lag BaOmer. The Hebrew word for bow is keshet. This is the same word used for rainbow. The rainbow was designated by HaShem to serve as a sign that He would never again bring a mabul, a flood, to the world, though the rainbow only appears when we deserve to be flooded again. We remind ourselves of this sign on the anniversary of the mabul.

There is an interesting Gemara which related the manna to the flood. The discussion attempts to understand how much manna fell by comparing the amount to the amount of water send for the mabul:

***Yoma 76a*** *It is told: Rabbi Tarfon, and Rabbi Yishmael, and the Elders were sitting and discussing the passage about the manna and Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i was sitting among them. Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i responded and said: The manna that fell for the Jewish people was sixty cubits high. Rabbi Tarfon said to him: Moda’i, how long will you collect words and bring upon us teachings that have no basis? He said to him: Rabbi, I am interpreting a verse. How so? It states about the Flood: “Fifteen cubits above did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered”.[[500]](#footnote-500) Is it possible that it would be fifteen cubits high from a valley, fifteen cubits from the plain, and fifteen cubits from the mountains? Did the water stand as though in layers, conforming to the height of the land below it? Furthermore, how could the Ark travel over water that was at different levels? Rather: “On the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up”,[[501]](#footnote-501) until the water rose and was level with the mountains. Afterward, the verse states that “fifteen cubits above did the waters prevail.” Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i continues:* ***But which attribute is greater, the attribute of goodness or the attribute of retribution****? One must say the attribute of goodness is greater than the attribute of retribution. With regard to the attribute of retribution, in the case of the Flood, the verse states: “And the windows of heaven were opened”,[[502]](#footnote-502) which indicates that there were only windows. Whereas, with regard to the attribute of goodness, in the case of the manna, the verse states: “He commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them heavenly grain”.[[503]](#footnote-503) Based on this, the Gemara calculates: The area of how many windows are in a door? Four. A door is equivalent to four windows in size. One adds another four for the second door, as the verse uses the plural “doors,” which implies that there were two doors. This equals the area of eight windows. If the depth of water in the Flood is based on the phrase “windows of heaven,” implying two windows,* ***then the manna fell at a rate four times that of the water of the Flood****. Since the water of the Flood reached a depth of fifteen cubits, it turns out that the manna that fell for the Jewish people was sixty cubits high, i.e., four times as high.*

*… The Gemara asks how Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i can compare the depth of the Flood waters with the amount of manna that fell in the desert: This is not similar, and the calculation is inaccurate. There, in the case of the Flood, the water rose fifteen cubits in forty days; but here, in the case of the manna, it took only one hour every day to fall. Conversely, there the Flood was for everyone and covered the whole world; whereas here the manna was for the Jewish people alone. And there would be much more manna for them than sixty cubits, which is the measurement put forth by Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i. The Gemara answers: Rabbi Elazar HaModa’i derived “opening” in the verse: “He commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of heaven”,[[504]](#footnote-504) from “opening” in the verse: “And the windows of heaven were opened”.[[505]](#footnote-505) He used a verbal analogy that teaches that the skies opened in both instances in the same way.*

Another interesting connection between the mabul and the manna is that both the manna and the rainbow were created at twilight of the sixth day of creation.

***Avot 5:6*** *Ten things were created on the eve of the Sabbath at* ***twilight****, and these are they:*

*[1] the mouth of the earth,*

*[2] the mouth of the well,*

*[3] the mouth of the donkey,*

***[4] the rainbow,***

***[5] the manna****,*

*[6] the staff [of Moshe],*

*[7] the shamir,*

*[8] the letters,*

*[9] the writing,*

*[10] and the tablets.*

*And some say: also the demons,*

*the grave of Moshe, and*

*the ram of Abraham, our father. And some say: and also tongs, made with tongs.*

## Generations of the World

Midrash Bereshit Rabbah states that in the end of days, God will break the covenant he made with the nations of the world after Noah left the ark. Flooding will appear to destroy parts of the world like never before seen since the floods in the days of Noach. At the same time, rains will appear as a comfort for the people of Israel.

The Midrash notes that the covenant God made with Noach was “for the generations of the world”.[[506]](#footnote-506) The Midrash states that this will end when the Messiah arrives to bring the final redemption.

“And the final flood will begin on the same day that the flood of Noah ended; the 17th of Sivan”, the website added.

## The Waters of the Mabul

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

Where did all of the water come from? Most of the water came from the gound according to the Torah.

The fountains of the great deep were thought to be fiction until the Russians decided to digg the deepest well and study what they found. The **Kola Superdeep Borehole** is the result of a scientific drilling project of the Soviet Union in the Pechengsky District, near the Russian border with Norway, on the Kola Peninsula. The project attempted to drill as deep as possible into the Earth's crust. Water was unexpectedly found at three to six kilometers deep. Water was not naturally vaporizing at any depth in the borehole. Instead, water was found at these greater depths. Scientific models previously had not predicted water to be found at such great depths. It was discovered that deep granites can be fractured and receive water this deep. As a result of these findings, many scientists now theorize that aquifers of water can be found at much greater depths than older scientific models had previously thought possible. The Kola Superdeep Borehole SG-3 retains the world record at 12,262 metres (40,230 ft) reached in 1989 and is still the deepest artificial point on Earth.

Ringwoodite from volcaones have 1.5% water.[[507]](#footnote-507) If all the ringwoodite in the transition zone is as damp as the samples that Jacobsen and his team detected, that layer would hold three times as much water as all of the Earth’s oceans combined, reducing their share from 96.5% of all known water to a relatively paltry 24.8%. In other words, the ringwoodite discovery could quadruple the amount of water found on Earth. A blue planet, indeed.

In the mantel, beneath the crust, there is 3 times more water than in all of the oceans.[[508]](#footnote-508)

Let’s examine what Chazal[[509]](#footnote-509) knew about the Mabul and the ark to try to understand the severity of the earth changes that occurred because of the Mabul. The first thing to note is that the Mabul affected the Land of Israel different that the rest of the world. There a a dispute as to the differences, but everyone agrees that there were difference.

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *Rebbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish disagree about whether the Mabul occurred in the land of Israel. Reish Lakish says that the Mabul occurred in the land of Israel just as it occurred in the rest of the world.*

*Rebbi Yochanan says that the waters of the Mabul never entered the land of Israel. The Gemara continues to discuss this argument at length. Later,[[510]](#footnote-510) the Gemara explains that according to Rebbi Yochanan, the people in the land of Israel died from the heat that spread due to the boiling waters[[511]](#footnote-511) of the Mabul.*

Pirke De-Rabbi Eliezer[[512]](#footnote-512) brings the following conclusion:

*The waters of the flood did not pour down on the land of Israel from the heavens, but rolled in to it from the surrounding lands.*

The Mabul water was not water as we know it. It was not fluid like water[[513]](#footnote-513) but had a thicker consistency,[[514]](#footnote-514) and came from both the earth and the sky. And it didn’t merely rain and bubble up. The air and the earth themselves turned into water.[[515]](#footnote-515) The water that came from the earth was boiling hot,[[516]](#footnote-516) hot enough to obliterate the flesh of the animals.[[517]](#footnote-517)

***Sanhedrin 108b*** *And He blotted out – “Rav Chisda said, ‘They sinned with heat [i.e. promiscuity], and were judged accordingly with boiling water [i.e. the waters of the Flood were scalding].*

Rashi comments on this Gemura that the natural order of Planet Earth was disrupted at the advent of the flood. Rashi to Genesis 8:22 comments, “And day and night, shall not cease”. This implies that day and night ceased during the Flood; the constellations did not function; and the difference between day and night was indiscernible”.

The flood waters caused the flesh of the people and animals to turn into water.[[518]](#footnote-518) The water that came from the sky was cold as snow.[[519]](#footnote-519) Each drop that fell from the sky was heated in Gehinom.[[520]](#footnote-520) But although the waters were hot enough to burn the flesh off the wildlife, they did not harm Noach in the Tikvah[[521]](#footnote-521) / ark, nor Og who was hanging on to it, because miraculously, when the waters neared the Tebah they were cool enough to protect the occupants of the Tebah from the heat that was devastating the rest of the world.[[522]](#footnote-522)

The “waters” surgically destroyed what HaShem wanted them to destroy, but that which HaShem did not want hurt, remained untouched. This miraculous liquid, whatever its physical makeup, was treated with an other-worldly heat and an other-worldly chill that were designed to enforce the Heavenly verdict by means of the two types of Gehinnom. This Hell water punished the humans and it punished the animals. It spared the fish because there was no heavenly verdict to punish the fish.[[523]](#footnote-523) And it spared Noach and his company as well.

But it wasn’t only the hell water that was unnatural. Nature was turned on its head. The sun rose from the west and set in the east;[[524]](#footnote-524) the roles of the sun and the moon were altered;[[525]](#footnote-525) the entire earth tilted off its axis, cold climates found themselves near the equator and hot climates were suddenly freezing.[[526]](#footnote-526) The lifespan of creatures, and the productivity of the world itself changed after the Mabul.[[527]](#footnote-527) The Maharitz Chiyus in Niddah[[528]](#footnote-528) says the Mabul caused geologic upheavals that created mountains and valleys where previously there were none.[[529]](#footnote-529)

**Sforno** writes: so that now I will destroy them together with the earth. I will destroy the climate which could support life on earth by interfering with the sun’s orbit and rearranging it from the beginning of the deluge for the entire future.

**Sforno on Genesis 8:22 writes:** All the time periods mentioned in this verse will somehow be related to the position of the sun at different times during the year. It would be different from before the deluge. Whereas prior to the deluge the sun had remained at a fixed distance relative to the Earth all year round, its orbit being circular, resulting in eternal spring in the populated parts of the Earth, now there would be all these changes, though at predetermined intervals, resulting in alternating seasons of relative warmth and cold due to the elliptical nature of the sun’s orbit.

This Mabul was not merely “local”. It destroyed all humankind. “And [HaShem] destroyed everything in existence on the face of the earth, except for Noach etc.[[530]](#footnote-530) And except for Og king of Bashan … and except for Eretz Israel”.[[531]](#footnote-531)

When the flood was over, “the water that came from up above was swept away by the wind (air); the water that came from down below was swallowed [back] into their place”.[[532]](#footnote-532) The waters still had an effect on the earth until Shlomo HaMelech built the Bais Hamikdash.[[533]](#footnote-533)

This is but a small sampling. The Mabul waters were other-worldy; the way the flood came was supernatural; the way the flood dissipated was supernatural as well. What geological effect this miraculous destruction and miraculous restoration had on the earth is impossible to anticipate. Was there tremendous pressure? Radioactivity? Changes in the atomic structure of some physical aspects of nature?

We are told, explicitly, that the Mabul changed the world and made it quite different:

***2 Peter 3:3-7*** *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as [they were] from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

The assumption of the constancy of natural processes throughout the ages has been disputed by some of the greatest names in science. In 1939 the English physicist and Nobel Prize laureate Paul Dirac wrote, “At the beginning of time the laws of Nature were probably very different from what they are now. Thus, we should consider the laws of nature as continually changing within the epoch, instead of holding uniformly throughout space-time”.[[534]](#footnote-534)

The *Mabul* took place in the year 1656 of Creation (2105 BCE) and it lasted 12 months. That was 4,127 years ago.

There is no continuum of natural law that includes the contemporary world, the period of the *Mabul* and the antediluvian world. Interpreting the results of the process of Creation, the time between creation and the *Mabul*, or the chaos[[535]](#footnote-535) of the *Mabul* is beyond our ability.

Why didn’t the animals eat each other on the ark?

ANSWER: Noach’s ark evoked the time of the future redemption, when “the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall crouch with the kid”.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:6-9*** *And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.* ***7*** *And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.* ***8*** *And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk’s den.* ***9*** *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of HaShem, as the waters cover the sea.*

In this **messianic idyll, the prophet depicts in glowing colors the harmonious state that will prevail in nature.** The biological being will not follow its orgiastic instincts; instead it will be guided by an ethical impulse. Nature will be hallowed, the animal in us will be sanctified. The demonic drive will be converted into an ethical motivation. The ethos and bios will cooperate and coexist. the words “and the lion shall eat straw like an ox” are remarkable. **They allude to the primordial antediluvian state of things, when man and animal were cereal eaters...[[536]](#footnote-536)** Thus we understand that what was in the beginning will be in the end, there is nothing new under the sun.[[537]](#footnote-537)

The Flood was to have been a downpouring of messianic light rather than its analogue, water. HaShem wanted to bring theMashiach after ten generations, to Noach’s generation but, instead of that happening, the world became irredeemably evil.  What we learn from this is that, before the light of utter truth can be seen, a test takes place in which civilization breaks down. We experience light’s opposite.

The following chiasm demonstrates a connection to the events during the flooding to the events as the flood was subsiding:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A **(7 days)**: “ ‘Come you and all your house into the ark; for you have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast you shall take to you seven pairs, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean one pair, the male and his female. Of birds also of the air by seven pairs, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For in another seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth.’ “ (7:1-4,10) |  |  |  |
|  | B **(40 days)**: “And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights”. (7:12) |  |  |
|  |  | C **(150 days)**: “And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days”. (7:24) |  |
|  |  |  | And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark…(8:1) |
|  |  | C’ **(150 days)**: “And the waters returned from off the earth continually; and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated”. (8:3) |  |
|  | B’ **(40 days)**: “And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noach opened the window of the ark which he had made” (8:6) |  |  |
| A’ **(7 days)**: “And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which did not return back to him anymore. And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noach removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the earth was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, was the earth dried. And God spoke to Noach, saying, ‘Go out from the ark, you, and your wife, and your sons, and your sons’ wives[[538]](#footnote-538) with you.’ “ (8:12-16) |  |  |  |

## Why 40 Days and Nights?

Why did it rain for 40 days and 40 nights?

The waters of the Flood are like the waters of a mikvah (which contains 40 seah of water), where the waters spiritually cleanse the one who enters it. The world similarly received a spiritual cleansing, setting the course of history on a course of hope and purpose. And just as a mikvah must contain 40 seah (an ancient measure of volume), so did the rains of the Flood last for forty days.

Rashi states that the number forty was by design. The gestation period of a child,[[539]](#footnote-539) is forty days. Thus, HaShem punished them, for, through their immoral behavior and illicit relationships, they had caused Him to create many illegitimate children. Forty days of destruction for the forty days of their destroying the many potential souls, which they compelled HaShem to bring into the world. Alternatively, Hakham Shimshon R. Hirsch, z”l, writes that the number forty implies creation (forty-day gestation period). The Mabul lasted for forty-days, alluding to it setting the tone and foundation for the re-creation of the world. With the decimation of that society, the world as we had known it then, the world that was left was actually the beginning of the creation of a new world.

## No More Flood of Water

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:11****And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.'*

God promised Noach that he would not bring another flood of water but the Midrash teaches us that, as he did with Sodom and Gomorrah, the nations are held accountable for their part in the Noahide covenant.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21****And HaShem smelled the sweet savour; and HaShem said in His heart: 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;* ***neither will I again smite any more every thing living****, as I have done.*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:9****For this is as the waters of Noach unto Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noach should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

This time, the wiping out of sin won’t happen with a flood of water, but with redemption itself.

The waters of the Flood are called “the waters of Noach”, because the intent and the actual effect was to bring rest and pleasure to the world. Unfortunately, however, because man did not respond positively, this constructive outcome was coupled with destruction the Flood obliterated every living creature on the face of the Earth.[[540]](#footnote-540)

In Bereshit Rabbah, it is taught that, at the point when legal contracts were drawn up to formalize the relationship between two men or between a man and an animal, God finally decided to bring the flood and destroy the world. “That was the straw that broke the camel’s back”.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXVI:5*** *Whomsoever they chose: that means males and beasts. R. Huna said in R, Joseph's name:* ***The generation of the Flood were not blotted out from the world until they composed nuptial songs[[541]](#footnote-541) in honour of pederasty and bestiality****. R. Simlai said: Wherever you find lust, an epidemic visits the world which slays both good and bad. R. ‘Azariah and R. Judah b. R. Simon in R. Joshua's name said: The Holy One, blessed be He, is long-suffering for everything save immorality. What is the proof? THE SONS OF MEN SAW, etc., which is followed by, And the Lord said: I will blot out man.[[542]](#footnote-542) R..Joshua b. Levi said in Bar Padiah's name: The whole of that night Lot prayed for mercy for the Sodomites. They [the angels] would have heeded him, but as soon as they [the Sodomites] demanded, Bring them out unto us, that we may know them[[543]](#footnote-543) for intercourse-they [the angels] said, ' Hast thou here any besides?[[544]](#footnote-544) Hitherto you may have pleaded in their defence, but you are no more permitted to do so.’*

## Bavel

Why does the account of the tower of Bavel follow the account of the flood?

Rashi provided the following insight:

**Rashi on Genesis 6:17** - מבול A FLOOD — so called because it ruined (בלה) everything; because it cast everything into confusion (בלל), and because it brought (הוביל from root יבל) everything down from the heights to a lower level. And this last explanation underlies the translation of Onkelos who translates it by טופנא (Ar. טוף = Heb. צוף) because **the Flood caused everything to float about and brought it (the Ark) to Babel** which is a low-lying district. That is the reason why it (Babylon) is called, also, Shinar (שנער): because all those who died through the Flood were shaken out (ננערו) into it.[[545]](#footnote-545)

# Creation vs. Re-creation

Creation was miraculous. Re-creation was every bit as miraculous as creation.

The Ramban describes the world after the flood as being newly created, and not merely repopulated, an idea supported by the many parallelisms between HaShem’s charge to Adam after creation and to Noach after the deluge.

Parallels:

1. Both stories begin with the blessing to “be fruitful and multiply”.
2. God planted a garden; Noach planted a vineyard.
3. Both stories turn for the worse when the protagonist(s) consumes some fruit.[[546]](#footnote-546)
4. After the eating/drinking of the forbidden fruit, the protagonist’s naked state, and the efforts to cover it, becomes prominent details in the story.
5. Curses (and blessings) are distributed at the finale of the story (creating the parallel between Cham and the snake).

***Kli Yakkar Bereshit 1:2*** *“And the Earth was formless and void”. “...HaShem foresaw that through the deeds of the wicked the world would return to formless and void, as in the generation of the flood”.*

“After the world first being entirely water in water, [and] by HaShem’s Will the dry land was revealed... the world will return to being water in water, as He did in the generation of the flood, when the rain fell from the heavens and the water covered the dry land...to return the creation to formless and void”.[[547]](#footnote-547)

Chazal have noted many parallels between the creation of the world and the re-creation of the world in the days of Noach. Here I will list a few of them:

1. Before the world was created there was a world completely covered by water. In Noach’s day the world was again completely covered by water. Noach is taken up from the earth. He joins the spirit of God that hovers, as in the beginning, over the face of the water, over the face of the earth which is covered in water, which has returned to its primordial state of void and chaos from prior to the six days of Creation.

2. When Noach came out of the ark, he was granted dominion over the animals, a dominion that expanded that which was given to Adam HaRishon.. Chazal see criticism in the words:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20*** *And Noach the husbandman began, and planted a vineyard.[[548]](#footnote-548)*

The Targum Yonathan Ben Uziel explains the previously-cited verse: “And Noach began to become an individual working the land, and he found a vine that emanated from a river that flowed from Eden. And he planted his vineyard, and on that same day it blossomed and produced ripe grapes and he squeezed them yielding wine”. Finding a vine in a river that came from Gan Eden, the original place where Adam had come from, was taken as a sign (perhaps from Heaven) that he should try to bring the world back to that place and time.

Rashi: **[And Noach] began:** Heb. וַיָּחֶל. [This can be understood as] “he made himself profane”, for he should have first engaged in planting something different.[[549]](#footnote-549)

As a result of his chillul, he drank and was exposed. I see here a connection, an echo, of the story of Adam HaRishon. Noach ate from a tree, which happens to have been the grape[[550]](#footnote-550) and as a result, his nakedness was exposed.[[551]](#footnote-551)

3. After Adam and Chava were created, HaShem blessed them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Then HaShem blessed Noach and family to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth.[[552]](#footnote-552)

4. Noach and the animals receive the same blessings made to the animals and to man in Creation. The fact that the animals, along with man, are once again blessed to be fruitful and that man is once again given dominion over the animals is perhaps the clearest indication that this is a new creation, not a continuation of the old one. For if this was not so and it is the same world that goes on after the annihilation of the sinners, then what need is there for a new blessing and for a restatement of man’s power over all living things?

5. Adam was told, “Have dominion over the fish of the sea”, while Noach is told, “The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the sky”. **Fear of you** - This sounds like dominion, but according to tradition, it is not. Rashi[[553]](#footnote-553) says that after the flood, dominion, did not return. According to Rashi’s interpretation of dominion (that the humans would call and the animals would come), *fear* is the exact opposite.

6. Noach, the man of the land who experiences the re-creation of the world, imitates Adam[[554]](#footnote-554) and tries to go back to the Garden of Eden. He plants a vineyard and drinks of its fruits, thereby “repairing”, as it were, the original sin of Adam eating from the Tree of Knowledge in the midst of the Garden. Adam’s eating of the fruit of the Tree gave him knowledge and the ability to distinguish between good and evil, and he hurriedly covers his nakedness. Noach, in contrast, loses his ability to distinguish and is found naked in his tent. The return to the Garden of Eden from before the sin is now complete. Noach appears to have turned the wheels of history backwards, to the days of Adam in the Garden of Eden, prior to his sin.

7. In both there is a keyword, repeated seven times, but it is a different word. In Genesis 1 the word is *tov*, “good”. In Genesis 9, the word is *brit*, “covenant”. When we call something good, we are speaking about how it is in itself. But when we speak of covenant, we are talking about relationships. A covenant is a moral bond between persons.

8. they both state that God made the human person in His image, but they do so in markedly different ways. In Genesis 1 we read:[[555]](#footnote-555)

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:26-27*** *And God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth”. So God created man in His image, In the image of God He created him, Male and female He created them.*

And this is how it is stated in Genesis 9:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:5-6*** *And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man’s brother, will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God, He made man.*

The difference here is fundamental. Genesis 1 tells me that I am in the image of God. Genesis 9 tells me that the other person is in the image of God. Genesis 1 speaks about the dominance of Homo sapiens over the rest of creation. Genesis 9 speaks about the sanctity of life and the prohibition of murder. The first chapter tells us about the potential power of human beings, while the ninth chapter tells us about the moral limits of that power. We may not use it to deprive another person of life.

**By the hand of every beast.** Rashi, Ramban and the Talmud all say this means, ‘I will let the animals kill anyone who kills another human’.

9. Man’s diet (and animal’s diet), which had originally included only plants, is now extended to include meat. Corresponding to the original limitation and warning; “from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it”, Noach is now commanded, “But flesh with its life, which is its blood, you shall not eat”.

Rashi on Bereshit 9:3 brings the Talmudic teaching that before the flood man was **not** permitted to kill for meat and only after the flood it was permitted.

The following table details some of the items / words that compare the creation with the re-creation following the Noach’s flood:

| **Bereshit (Genesis) 1 - Creation** | **Bereshit (Genesis) 8 – Re-creation** |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| The World is Built on Chessed (Kindness)[[556]](#footnote-556) | The ark was a “re-creation of the world”, it had to be built on chesed. Noach and his family tended the animals (Chessed) on the ark in re-creation. |
| 1:2 Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the wind/spirit of God Hovered over the face of the waters. | 8:1-2 1 And God Remembered Noach, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him in the Ark; and God Made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. 2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.[[557]](#footnote-557) |
| 1:6 God separates between the waters above and the waters below. | 8:2 above and the waters below come together, as both the heavens and the depths release the flood waters. |
| 1:9 And God Said: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear. And it was so. | 8:5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.[[558]](#footnote-558) |
| 1:12 And the earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed after its kind, and tree bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after its kind; and God saw that it was good. (God planted plants) | 8:11 And the dove came in to him at eventide; and lo in her mouth an olive-leaf freshly plucked; so Noach knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.  Noach planted grape vines. |
| 1:14 ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for **seasons**, and for days, and years….’ “ | 8:22 ‘While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and **summer and winter**, and day and night shall not cease.’ “ (8:22) – [note also that in 8:12, the dove comes to Noach “in the evening”, the first mention of any distinct time of day after the flood; evidently, night and day were blurred during the entire cataclysm] |
| 1:20 “ ‘…let the waters be filled with many kinds of living creatures, and birds that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.’ “ | 8:10 “And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which did not return back to him any more” (8:12 – i.e. the dove returned to its earlier station as a “bird that flies above the earth”) |
| 1:24, 1:26, 1:28 “ ‘Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind; and it was so…let us make man in our image, after our likeness…’…and God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ “ | 8:16-17 “ ‘Go out from the ark, you, and your wife, and your sons, and your sons’ wives with you.[[559]](#footnote-559) Bring out with you every living thing that is with you, of all flesh, both of bird, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.’ “  9:1 And God Blessed Noach and his sons, and said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. |
| 1:31 “And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day”. | 8:21 “And the Lord smelled the pleasing odor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse[[560]](#footnote-560) the land any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing, as I have done”. |
| 2:16 And the LORD God Commanded the man, Saying: Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. | 9:3-4 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be for food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. 4 Only flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. |
| 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.  2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. | 9:21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken;  and he was uncovered within his tent. |
| Besides these fairly clear parallels, the denouement of the first Creation is, of course, the institution of Shabbat. Even though there is no explicit parallel in the Noach narrative, the final phrase of Chapter 8 – “ ‘While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease’ “ – uses the same root – (Sh\*B\*T\*) as does the word used twice in the Shabbat narrative (2:1-3) to describe God’s ceasing creative activity. | |

All in all, the Torah does seem to be telling us that the world which Noach re-entered was a re-creation of the first world, a world which became so polluted and corrupt that it was destroyed. The following chart details the common Hebrew words (translatd into english) that connect creation to to the re-creation in Noach’s flood:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Creation: Genesis I** | | **Re-creation : Genesis 8-9** | |
| 1 Day | 1:2 | “earth”, deep”, “Spirit”, “waters” | 8:lb-2a | “wind”, “earth”, “waters”, “deep” |
| 2nd Day | 1.7-8 | “waters”, “sky” | 8:2b | “sky” |
| 3rd Day | 1:9 | “water”, “dry earth”, “appear” | 8:3-5 | “water”,  “tops of the mountains”, “appear” |
| 4th Day | 1:14-19 | Creation of luminaries | 8:13 | Re-creation / starting of luminaries |
| 5th Day | 1:20 | “birds”, “above the earth”, “across the surface of the expanse” | 8:7-8 | “raven”, “from the earth”, “from the surface of the land” |
| 6th Day | 1:24  1:26  1:28 | “creatures”, “livestock”, “creatures that move along the earth”, “wild animals”  “man”. “image”  “blessed”, “be fruitful”, “increase in number”, “fill the earth”,  “rule...every living creature” | 8:17  9:6  9:1-2 | “creature”, “birds”, “animals”, “creatures that move along the earth”  “image”, “man”  “blessed”, “be fruitful”, “increase in number”, “fill the earth”,  “fear...of you.. upon every creature” |
| 7th Day | 2:1-3 | “God rested”  “He rested” - וַיִּשְׁבֹּת  “God blessed” | 8:21-  9:2 | “HaShem smelled the sweet savor”  “shall not rest (cease)” - יִשְׁבֹּתוּ, “God blessed” |

The Zohar gives us an idea for which came first: The upper or the lower wisdom.

*… the upper gates of wisdom[[561]](#footnote-561) will be opened and also the wellsprings of wisdom below…*

It seems that the upper wisdom begins first followed by the lower wisdom. It also seems that this order is opposite the order of the flood in Noach’s day.

*… fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

The reversal of this order suggests that the punishment of the flood is reversed (the lower waters first) and we are now getting a blessing (the upper waters first) which will prepare us for the arrival of Mashiach.

## Re-creation

The flood in the days of Noach was designed to destroy the **world**, not just the people. If He wanted to just destroy the people a plague was all that was needed. Don’t get me wrong, God intended to destroy all of the people except those on the ark, but He clearly also wanted to destroy the earth. Therefore, we understand that the flood was designed to DESTROY THE WORLD. The following pesukim demonstrate this:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11*** *And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12*** *And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13*** *And God said unto Noach: ‘The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

In three verses, Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11-13, the narrative drives home the problem: Human beings have damaged their environment irredeemably. “The earth” is mentioned six times, each time with the connection that it is corrupted, from the root שָׁחַת meaning spoiled, destroyed, corrupted, decayed….

God doesn’t directly reference the corruption of the people, it is the earth which is expressing the consequences of human action and inaction, the earth which is acting out the full horror of what humanity has become. And it is on the earth that the full punishment will be felt, as the floods rise and the rain falls, the waters that surround the land which were divided above and below at the time of creation return to their place, and no land will be seen for 150 days and nights.

The intertwining of people and land is complete. What one does affects the other, yet we also know that the land is used again and again in bible to be the metric against which ethical behaviour is measured – and should we not follow God’s requirements we will be unceremoniously evicted from the land for which we have stewardship.

How could God’s reason for destroying the world and the reason for never again destroying it; be virtually the same? Consider the following pesukim:

Before the flood:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:5*** *And HaShem saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

After the flood:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21*** *And HaShem smelled the sweet savour; and HaShem said in His heart: ‘I will not again curse the land any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.*

The antediluvian world was still relatively young, and all forms of life possessed the full vigor of youth, as evinced most strikingly by the extraordinary human longevity that characterized this era. Yet this strength was brittle: once creatures developed and matured, they became inflexible, almost immutable; it was almost impossible for them to change. This was no less true of the spiritual dimension of life than of the physical dimension: once people’s characters were molded and their modes of behavior formulated, it was extremely difficult for them to change. And since societal norms were all the while becoming increasingly corrupt, the overwhelming majority of humanity became progressively entrenched in a downward spiral of degenerating moral attitudes and behavior.

The Flood changed all this. The battering waters softened the earth not only physically but spiritually, as well, making reality more pliable, more flexible, more receptive to change. The “new world” Noach beheld upon emerging from the ark[[562]](#footnote-562) was one in which the winds of repentance (*teshuvah*) were blowing freely, accessible to all, no matter how chronically unwholesome their behavior might become.

Thus, when God declared after the Flood, “Never again will there be a flood that will destroy the earth”,[[563]](#footnote-563) He was not reconciling Himself to people continuing to sin as they had before, nor was He admitting that by flooding the earth, He had made some kind of blunder that He would never again repeat. Rather, He was saying that by flooding the earth, He altered reality in such a way that it would never again become *necessary* to bring on a flood—not because people’s nature had improved for the better, but because He had now provided them with a novel mechanism that they could use to counteract and even eradicate the effects of negative behavior.

As such, the Flood was a highly significant and crucial step toward achieving the goal of Creation, namely, promoting and disseminating Divine consciousness in the world until it ultimately would be transformed into God’s natural home.[[564]](#footnote-564)

Clearly the world has changed, and man has not changed. It is clear from the pesukim and the explanations of Chazal that the nature of the world changed as a result of the flood in an extreme manner. These changes included changes in climate and, most profoundly, man’s lifespan, which was immediately shortened significantly, indicating that there were other changes in nature as well. Before the flood, the physical nature of the world was very developed. Had man lived with proper recognition of HaShem, he would have found all of his needs taken care for without any trouble, in the manner in which the Rambam describes the time of Mashiach.

Malbim gives a fascinating insight on the verse quoted here, 8:21; “I will no longer curse the earth for man…” sometimes it is translated from the Hebrew as “BECAUSE of man”, but the Malbim explains that the Hebrew word used connotes ‘FOR’ and not ‘because’. (This holds true for modern colloquial Hebrew as well.) What is the difference? The Malbim explains that before the flood edible products grew in a form which required no peeling. Everything was truly ready to eat off the tree or the field. Mankind grew accustomed to it and **grew strong** from this special food and there were giants, but they abused the system and became corrupt – therefore God cursed the earth that it should produce food which would require processing before it could be consumed, and this was FOR the good of mankind, so that they would be kept too busy to sin. In other words, God cursed the EARTH, FOR the good of mankind. Gam zu la Tobah.

The Ba’al HaAkedah[[565]](#footnote-565) points out that God told Adam that he would rule over the animals:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:26*** *And God said: ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.’*

Noach instead is told that the animals will be afraid of him.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:2*** *And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all wherewith the earth teemeth, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered.*

This chapter comes AFTER the flood! This implies that prior to exiting the ark, the animals had NO FEAR of man. The wild animals will flee from you to distant forests. Can you imagine birds that had no fear of man?

The subject of the following verse is **Noach** and, oh by the way, that is when the flood came:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:6*** *And Noach was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.*

The subject of this verse is the **flood** based on Noach’s life.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

Finally, Noach is completely removed from the picture and the subject is the **flood**.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:13*** *And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noach removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the land was dried.*

Noach has become the standard for time. Time is now measured by Noach’s life. In the beginning we counted time from the beginning. Now, with the flood, we will be counting time from Noach’s life. Why are we suddenly counting time from Noach?

To understand the answer to this question we need to ask another question: Who closed the door of the ark?

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:16*** *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him; and HaShem shut him in.*

Who opens the door of the ark?

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:13*** *And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noach removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the land was dried.*

In God’s world, He shuts the door. In God’s world, God is the landlord and man is a tenant who is responsible to work the earth and to guard it. God’s world is fragile. It is susceptible to destruction because of man’s sins.

When Adam sinned he was exiled from God’s world and was put into God’s cursed world. This cursed world was corrupted by man. This cursed corrupted world is the world that God destroyed.

In Noach’s world, Noach opens the door. The world has become fundamentally different.

God’s world has been destroyed.

After the world has been re-created it has become Noach’s world. This world will never be destroyed because of man’s sins. In Noach’s world, Noach is the landlord. Noach’s world is no longer fragile and susceptible to destruction because of man’s sins.

Because it has become Noach’s re-created world, we will now measure time by Noach in order to let people know that this fundamentally changed world is Noach’s world.[[566]](#footnote-566)

\* \* \*

Question: Is the flood a re-creation of the world?  
  
Answer: Yes because if you look at the original story of creation, there are parts of both stories that are similar and therefore signify that the world was in fact re-created.

The account of Noach in the Torah is an account of HaShem re-creating the earth. As such, we can learn a great deal by comparing the account of creation with the account of the re-creation. This paper attempt to examine and compare these two accounts with an eye towards deepening my understanding of both accounts.[[567]](#footnote-567)

Rabbi Joshua Berman wrote an article[[568]](#footnote-568) in Herzog College’s Tanach journal, Megadim. There he argued that Chapter 8, the recovery of the flood and the subsiding of the waters, is more than a rebuilding. He argued that chapter 8 was a veritable re-creation. Note that each aspect of re-creation is in exactly the same order as they were at creation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Day | **Bereshit Chapter 1 - Creation** | **Bereshit Chapter 8 – Re-Creation** |
| **1** | and the **spirit of God** was hovering over the face of the water. | 8:1 and **God caused a spirit** to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. |
| **2** | God made the expanse and it separated between the water that was below the expanse and the water that was above the expanse. | 8:2 And the **springs of the deep** were closed, and the windows of the heavens, and the **rain from the heavens** was withheld |
| **3** | God said, “Let the water... gather into one place, and **let the dry land appear**. . Let the earth sprout vegetation ... and **fruit trees**” | 8:5, 11 the **mountain peaks appeared**,. The  dove returned ... an **olive leaf** in its mouth.[[569]](#footnote-569) |
| **4** | And God made the two great luminaries: the great luminary to rule the **day** and the lesser luminary to rule **the night**, and the stars. | 8:11 seven days … evening. Celestial world was not destroyed by the flood. |
| **5** | let **birds** fly over the earth | 8:7 he sent forth the raven, and it went out, back and forth. |
| **6** | “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kind, **cattle and creeping things and the beasts** of the earth according to their kind | 8:17 Every living thing that is with you of all **flesh, of fowl, and of animals and of all the creeping things** that creep on the earth, bring out with you, and they shall swarm upon the earth, and they shall be fruitful and multiply upon the earth |
|  | And God created man in His image in the image of God ...God said to them, “**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth** and subdue it, and **rule over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the sky and over all the beasts that tread upon the earth**”. (no fear)  29. And God said, “Behold, I have given you every seed hearing herb, which is upon the surface of the entire earth, and every tree that has seed bearing fruit; **it will be yours for food**. | Ch.9 And God blessed Noach and his sons, and He said to them: “**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.**  2. **And your fear and your dread shall be upon all the beasts of the earth and upon all the fowl of the heaven; upon everything that creeps upon the land and upon all the fish**  **of the sea**, [for] they have been given into your hand[s).  3 **Every moving thing that lives shall be yours to eat;** like the green vegetation, I have given you everything.  6. ...for He made Man in His image ... |

The following chiasm shows the post creation ‘Eden’ and the post re-creation ‘Eden’.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 2 + 3 ATBASH | | Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 9 ATBASH | |
| **The creation of the garden of Eden.** | | **The re-creation of the garden of Eden.** | |
| **2:15** And the LORD God *took* the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.  וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, אֶת-הָאָדָם; וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ בְגַן-עֵדֶן, לְעָבְדָהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ. | Originally made from dust outside Eden, then placed in the garden. | **20** And Noach the husbandman began, and planted a vineyard. **21** And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. |  |
| **2:16** And the LORD God commanded *the man*, saying: ‘Of *every* tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; | Adam is permitted to eat from the tree of life. | **22** **And Ham**, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, … | Focus on Ham |
| **2:23** And the man said: ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’  **2:25** And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. | She is called ‘woman’. No clothes required. | **22** …and told his two brethren without. | Ham in relation to his brothers |
| **3:1** Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman: ‘Yea, hath God said: Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’ **2** And the woman said unto the serpent: ‘Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; **3** but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said: Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.’ **4** And the serpent said unto the woman: ‘Ye shall not surely die; **5** for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.’ **6** And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she *gave* also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. | Conversations between the snake, the woman and the man.  Explanations | **23** And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. | Shem and Yafet |
| **9** And the LORD God called unto the man, and said unto him: ‘Where art thou?’ **10** And he said: ‘I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.’**11** And He said: ‘Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?’ | They realize that they are naked and hid from God. | **This is the center**  **24** And Noach awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. | Noach becomes naked and curses Canaan. |
| **12** And the man said: ‘The woman whom Thou *gavest* to be with me, she *gave* me of the tree, and I did eat.’ **13** And the LORD God said unto the woman: ‘What is this thou hast done?’ And the woman said: ‘The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.’ **14** And the LORD God said unto the serpent: ‘Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou from among all cattle, and from among all beasts of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. **15** And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; they shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise their heel.’ **16** Unto the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy travail; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ 1**7** And unto Adam He said: ‘Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the land for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. | Conversations between the man, the woman and the snake, and God.  Consequences | **25** … a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. | Cham in relation to his brothers Shem and Yafet |
| **3:20** And the man called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.  **3:21** And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them. | She is called Chava (Chava). Clothes are required. | **25** And he said: **Cursed (אָרוּר) be Canaan**; …  The only other place where we find ‘cursed – אָרוּר ‘ is in: Gen. 3:14, 17, 4:11, 12:3, 27:29 – by God himself. Noach is taking on God’s function to destroy rather than to create. (Jacob also uses this word in Gen. 49:7) | Focus on Ham through his son Canaan. |
| **3:22** And the LORD God said: ‘Behold, *the man* is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.’ | Adam is no longer permitted to eat from the tree of life. | 26 And he said: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant. 27 God enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant. | Shem and Yafet |
| **3:23** Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the land from whence he was taken.  וַיְשַׁלְּחֵהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, מִגַּן-עֵדֶן--לַעֲבֹד, אֶת-הָאֲדָמָה, אֲשֶׁר לֻקַּח, מִשָּׁם.. | Adam sent from garden to the place where his dust was originally formed, and this was the land he must work. | **28** And Noach lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. **29** And all the days of Noach were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died. |  |

All of life is wiped out and the world returns to a state remarkably similar to that which existed prior to the six days of Creation, a time of void and chaos. Once again, as in the beginning, the world is covered in water. A precise analysis of God’s promise after the Flood, “Summer and winter and day and night will not cease”, led Chazal to conclude that what had in fact ceased during the Flood was not just what God had created on the third, fifth, and sixth days, but also that which had been created on the first day (day and night) and the fourth day (the heavenly luminaries were created).[[570]](#footnote-570) We may find an allusion to the creation of the second day in the verse, “The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed”,[[571]](#footnote-571) and perhaps even to the creation of the first day in the verse, “In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were visible”, indicating that there was once again light to illuminate the world. Since God’s work of the second day, the firmament that separated water from water, was certainly wiped out in its entirety by the Flood, we conclude that all the work of the six days of Creation was nullified and the world returned to its state of void and chaos.

As the Flood waters subside it is not simply that the old world is revealed. No! A new world is created! The text of ch.8 follows almost precisely the order of the creation in Bereshit ch.1!

First we have the SPIRIT OF GOD HOVERING upon the water – just like on Day 1 of Creation. Next, the floodwaters ABOVE and BELOW are stopped, a clear parallel to the division of waters on Day 2 creating a non-water space in between. DAY 3 is the exposure of dry land and the creation of plants, represented here by the finding of dry land and the olive branch. Day 4 is more complicated. Day 4 is the creation of luminaries, the sun and moon, to regulate time, as it says in Bereshit:

And God said, “Let there be luminaries in the expanse of the heavens, to separate between the day and between the night, and they shall be for signs and for appointed seasons and for days and years.

The Talmud and Midrash that the Flood did not reach the Land of Israel.[[572]](#footnote-572) This is based on Ezekiel 22:24 which refers to Israel as a land “not rained upon on the day of fury”. Thus, the antediluvian giants and others who lived there were unaffected. This, however, is inconsistent with the Talmud there that although the water itself did not reach Israel, its inhabitants died from the water’s burning heat. Other commentators also suggest that although it did not directly rain in Israel.[[573]](#footnote-573) And thus, the dove was later able to find an olive leaf there, water spread from other locations, drowning the inhabitants.[[574]](#footnote-574) Some suggest that even so, giants such as Og were powerful enough to withstand the indirect effects of the Flood.

Understanding creation necessitates first understanding a critical axiom: **The Torah does NOT describe the world. Torah creates and defines the world. The world looks like it does because of what is in the Torah. Torah is the DNA of the world.**

Another way to find texts for comparison involves looking at unique, or nearly unique words which occur only within a certain context. These inter-textual words will shine light on companion accounts. This next table attempts to find these inter-textual clues to compare creation with re-creation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Creation** | **Flood: Re-creation** |
| **Inter-textuality** | |
| DAY 1 - Gen. 1:2 וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים (spirit / wind of God) Chaos, darkness, water everywhere. | Gen. 8:1 אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ (God’s spirit / wind) Flood waters rage. |
| Gen. 1:2 spirit of God hovered… | Gen. 8:1 God made a wind to pass over… |
| DAY 2 - Gen. 1:7 upper and lower waters separated by sky. | Gen. 8:2 Upper and lower waters come together to flood.. |
| DAY 3 - Gen. 1:9 dry land appears. | Gen. 8:4 dry land (mountains) appears. |
| Gen. 1:11 plant life created. | Gen. 8:11 Plant life (olive branch). |
| DAY 4 - Gen. 1:14 lights in the heavens created. | ??? – Heavenly lights did not need re-creating. But note that these bodies were for signs and seasons. Gen. 8:22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.’ |
| DAY 5 - Gen. 1:20 birds created. | Gen. 8:12 dove does not return – birds are in the world. |
| DAY 6 - Gen. 1:25-26 animals and men created. | Gen. 8:16-17 men and animals repopulate the earth. |

Two 19th-century commentators argue that verse 8:22 is a testament to the change of nature following the flood. Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin (the Netziv) writes in his work Ha’amek Davar that antediluvian idleness was the parent of mischief. Early man had it too easy: there was food aplenty and longevity was common. But now, “seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night” were the order of the world. Man would have to work for a living, he’d have little time or inclination for sin. The Malbim (Rabbi Meir Leib ben Yechiel Michoel) gives an elaborate description of how the sun and earth interacted differently in the two eras. He also repeats a rabbinic idea that agriculture did not follow the same patterns that it currently does, but that sowing and harvesting were activities undertaken once every forty years. Changes in climate and more regular seasons required that man exert more and constant efforts to feed himself. This left man weak and occupied, with his desires dampened. A 20th-century rabbi, Zalman ben Ben-Zion Sorotzkin contributes the notion that by imposing cold and winter on the world God caused man discomfort, and this suffering precluded the need for global response to sin.

Here too, God pronounces after the Mabul:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22*** *So long as the earth endures, Seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.*

Clearly, this pronouncement informs us that time stopped in some way during the flood. No seasons existed, and it would appear that even night and day were suspended in some manner during the flood period. And hence, Noach’s understanding that the dove has to be sent after 7 days clearly indicates that the days and nights, the regulation of time via the luminaries of Day 4, have been resumed. Day 5 is reflected in the birds – the raven and dove, creations of day 5 now released to their habitat. And day 6 is the releasing of the animals, all defined using their chapter 1 language – to the wild from the restriction of the Ark.

The pinnacle of this entire structure however, comes when Noach is addressed by God who instructs him in a manner that is parallel, if not identical, to the original commands[[575]](#footnote-575) to Adam as seen in ch.1. Here we have “be fruitful and multiply”; we have the information as to the food that is at Noach’s disposal etc.

It is clear from all of this that this is not simply the end of the flood, but very deliberately, very clearly stated, this is a NEW CREATION! This is the Bereshit of a new world. In this world , God accepts that “the inclination of man’s heart is evil from his youth”, and He seeks, despite that reality, to establish a covenant with Man, with Noach, promising to continue the world indefinitely. As Noach emerges from the Ark, God expresses his confidence and faith in Mankind!

The flood is not simply the end of something. It is also the beginning of something.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 7:10. And it came to pass **after the seven days**, that the flood waters were upon the earth. | | | |
|  |  | 7:12 And the rain was upon the earth for **forty days and forty nights.** | | |
|  |  |  | 7:24 And the water swirled upon the earth **a hundred and fifty days**. | |
|  |  |  |  | 8:1 And God remembered Noach and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark, and God caused a spirit to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. |
|  |  |  | 8:3 And the waters receded off the earth more and more, and the water diminished at the end **of a hundred and fifty days.** | |
|  |  | 8:6 And it came to pass **at the end of forty days**, that Noach opened the window of the ark that he had made. | | |
|  | 8:10 And he waited again **another seven days**, and he again sent forth the dove from the ark. And the dove returned to him at eventide, and behold it had plucked an olive leaf in its mouth; so Noach knew that the water had abated from upon the earth. | | | |

The Torah is deliberately seeing the Flood in a chiastic manner; the advance of the waters and their retreat, the destruction and the revival, the punishment and the recovery. Far from the Flood being seen simply as the final note to the Creation of the world, we must also view it as the prologue, the foundation work of a new world.

## Water Re-Creation and Mashiach

Noach entered the ark in the *six hundredth* year of his life, which was also the six hundredth year[[576]](#footnote-576) of the second millennium.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

Theme of water as the medium of creation is present again in Parshat Noach, when the Mabul, the flood, covered the world with water. The deep idea behind the flood is that God was not destroying the world, He was recreating it. The generation of the flood had become so corrupted that God decided to start over again with Noach alone. HaShem therefore immersed the world in water, so that it could go back into its primordial state of formlessness and void. Only once it went back into its original state could the dry land emerge once again from the waters, recreated. Only once the dry land emerged, and the world was born once again, did Noach leave the ark.

As a time of ‘formlessness’ when the world is void, God forbade sexual intercourse on the ark because it was not a time of creating, it was a time of dissolving. It was not a time of physicality; it was a time of spirituality. The Ramban[[577]](#footnote-577) explains that in fact, the dimensions of the ark did not contain enough space for all species to live, *from a physical dimension*. He explains that a miracle occurred that allowed them all to fit in. This can teach us that inside the ark everyone puts their "Gashmiyut" (physical side) aside. This is a perfect reaction to the falling and the sinning of the world that took place. The physical nature of the world knew no bounds and limitations were non-existent.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 36:7*** *AND NOACH AWOKE FROM HIS WINE:[[578]](#footnote-578) he was sobered from his wine. AND KNEW WHAT HIS YOUNGEST SON HAD DONE UNTO HIM. Here it means, his worthless son, as you read, Because the brazen altar that was before the Lord was too little to receive the burnt- offering, etc.[[579]](#footnote-579) AND HE SAID: CURSED BE CANAAN:[[580]](#footnote-580) Ham sinned and Canaan is cursed! R. Judah and R. Nehemiah disagreed. R. Judah said: Since it is written, And God blessed Noach and his sons,[[581]](#footnote-581) while there cannot be a curse where a blessing has been given, consequently, HE SAID: CURSED BE CANAAN. R. Nehemiah explained: It was Canaan who saw it [in the first place] and informed them, therefore the curse is attached to him who did wrong. R. Berekiah said: Noach grieved very much in the Ark that he had no young son to wait on him, and declared, ‘ When I go out I will beget a young son to do this for me.’ But when Ham acted thus to him, he exclaimed, ‘You have prevented me from begetting a young son to serve me, therefore that man [your son] will be a servant to his brethren!’ R. Huna said in R. Joseph’s name: [Noach declared], ‘You have prevented me from begetting a fourth son, therefore I curse your fourth son.’ R. Huna also said in R. Joseph’s name: You have prevented me from doing something in the dark [sc. cohabitation], therefore your seed will be ugly and dark-skinned. R. Hiyya said: Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark; therefore, Ham came forth black-skinned while the dog publicly exposes its copulation.*

***Talmud Sanhedrin, 108b*** *Three copulated in the ark, and they were all punished - the dog, the raven, and Cham. The dog was doomed to be tied, the raven expectorates, and Cham was smitten in his skin*.

The flood in Noach’s day foreshadowed the ‘flood’ mentioned in the holy Zohar. Two thousand years ago, the holy Zohar[[582]](#footnote-582) foretold a great explosion of knowledge: [commenting on the Torah pasuk, that Noach was in his sixth hundredth year when the flood came. The Zohar explicitly refers to Noach in that pasuk:

***Zohar Hakadosh 116b*** *And after six hundred years of the sixth thousand (5600 - 1840) there will be opened the gates of wisdom above and the fountains of wisdom below, and the world will make preparations to enter on the seventh thousand as man makes preparations on the sixth day of the week, when the sun is about to set. As a mnemonic to this we take the verse, “In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life. . .all the fountains of the great deep were broken up”.[[583]](#footnote-583)*

*In the 600th year of the 6th millennium[[584]](#footnote-584) the upper gates of wisdom[[585]](#footnote-585) will be opened and also the wellsprings of wisdom below.[[586]](#footnote-586) This will prepare the world for the 7th millennium like a person prepares himself on Friday for Shabbat, as the sun begins to wane.[[587]](#footnote-587) So it will be here. There is a hint about this in the verse “In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life …all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened”.[[588]](#footnote-588) [[589]](#footnote-589) [[590]](#footnote-590)*

Herein lies the connection made by the holy Zohar between the mabul, flood, and the gates of wisdom. *The time of the flood was a time marked for a down-pouring of wisdom into this world*. If the world had been worthy this would have been manifested in the simple form of chachma, a tremendous revelation of wisdom. But the world was not ready, and a flood of destruction was released instead, representative of the destruction caused by misused chachma.

The sixth century of the sixth millennium that the Zohar speaks about corresponds to the years 1740-1840 in the Gregorian calendar.

**Kol HaTor 2:5** For with the revelation of the *Mashiach*, and the 999 footsteps involved, the upper wisdom and the lower wisdom will be revealed, as written in the *Holy Zohar*: “In the 600th year of the Sixth Millennium, the gates of the upper wisdom and of the lower wisdom will be opened, the world will be repaired... in order to raise the Knesset Israel from the dirt, “ etc. All these are the mission of Rabbi Eliyahu, the Gaon of Israel, whose light will last till the day is established with the aid of the Rock of Israel and its Redeemer. Therefore, the Gaon tried to understand with his holy spirit also the seven wisdoms from below which are known to be like mixtures and samples at the bottom of the mountain, in order to explain the wisdom of the Torah and to hasten the Redemption -- whose great purpose is sanctification of God as is written: “and all the peoples of the earth will see the salvation of our God, “ also in order to repair the world in the *Malchut* of the Almighty, etc.

The contemporary scholar of Kabbalah and Hasidut, Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh, identifies Isaac Newton as the modern reincarnation of Noach on his website. He uses gematria in this identification, but also describes associations that run deeper. In the commentary of the Zohar on the story of Noach’s flood, the Zohar gives a prediction that in the latter part of the 6th millennium in the Hebrew calendar dating system,[[591]](#footnote-591) a great increase in “Wisdom (In the flood: water) from Above, and Wisdom (Biblically: water) from Below” will be revealed to prepare for the 7th Messianic millennium. If the generation of Noach had been worthy, their flood would have taken the form of wisdom rather than destructive water. This predicted expansion of Torah wisdom (“from Above”) and Secular Wisdom and Science (from “Below”) was instead delayed until the 6th millennium. This interpretation ties Newton, the founding forerunner of Modern Science, with Biblical Noach. Additionally, Newton rejected Trinitarian ideas in favour of Old Testament Monotheism, a more complete expression of the Seven Laws of Noach. He devoted his scholarly activity as much to esoteric calculations of Bible Codes and the Third Temple, of which Noach’s Ark is seen in Jewish commentary as the spiritual prototype, as much as to Mathematics and Physics. His Newtonian physics defined the mechanistic philosophy of Science until modern Physics broke it, analogous to “Wisdom from Above” superseding “Wisdom from Below”. Additionally, the Seven Colours of Newton’s prism split light are the Jewish symbol for the Seven Laws of Noach.

Yitzchak Ginsburgh uses this Kabbalistic identification to support his articulation of the inner Kabbalistic meaning of the Noachide Laws, which have both outer legislation in Halachah, and inner meaning in Kabbalah. Their inner meaning helps fulfill the eschatological role of each Righteous Noachide in the Jewish Messianic description of Universal Redemption for all Nations of the World.

Rabbi Schneerson[[592]](#footnote-592) teaches that Hassidism is intrinsically messianic, and that science and the industrial revolution are also both potentially equal partners in the fulfilment of the eschatological plan. This exegesis of this Zohar, suggests that there is a parallel between, and an interrelationship with science and technology at the very heart and formulating fabric of Hassidism, that both together (not independently) will lead ultimately toward the redemption. This view of history is by definition eschatological. Rather than equating the two fountains of knowledge, further explanations of Rabbi Schneerson interprets them theocentricly. He explains that the more the ‘gates of knowledge above…open’ then the more the ‘fountains of knowledge below, will be opened’. It is therefore, the advances and developments of Torah through Hassidic philosophy that bring about the possibility for scientific and technological development, and not visa-versa.

Given this background, it appears that the birth of Mashiach ben David began with His *conception* in the 600th year of the sixth millennium. While intercourse was forbidden on the ark due to the catastrophe going on outside the ark, the sixth millennium will see a sprouting forth of secular and Torah knowledge which implies “knowledge” at the sexual level.[[593]](#footnote-593)

Since we know that the future redemption will be like our redemption in the days of Moshe,[[594]](#footnote-594) then we can assume that this pregnancy will also last 210 years.[[595]](#footnote-595) Yet the Torah itself says that they were in Egypt 400 years[[596]](#footnote-596) or 430 years.[[597]](#footnote-597) Nevertheless, a calculation of the years spent in Egypt reveals that they spent only 210 years there.[[598]](#footnote-598)

Our sages explain that the countdown of 400 years began with Isaac’s birth. God’s promise does not refer to Egypt by name,[[599]](#footnote-599) rather to a “land that is not theirs”. As soon as Abraham had a child, his seed were subjected to living in lands that were not theirs, including Canaan which wasn’t “theirs” at the time. Interestingly, 400 years prior to the year 6000 “deadline” was the year 5600, which corresponds to the secular calendar year of 1839-1840. The Zohar[[600]](#footnote-600) states: “In the six hundredth year of the sixth millennium [the Hebrew year 5600], a great light will shine forth from the heavens, causing a transformation in the world”.

Going Back to Gan Eden***[[601]](#footnote-601)***

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20-21*** *And Noach the husbandman began, and planted a vineyard. 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.*

Very briefly, the Torah tells us that Noach plants a vineyard, becomes intoxicated and debases himself in the privacy of his tent. Cham immodestly gazes upon his father in the moment of his compromised state and ultimately becomes the subject of his father’s curse. Shem and Yaphet take the high road, cover their father and remain above reproach.

Chazal are quick to point to the connections between Noach and Adam. After all, Noach is the new Adam. He’s the first person to be born after Adam’s death. And in the aftermath of the flood, he becomes the father of civilization. He’s the one who picks up Adam’s baton and bears the command to be fruitful and multiply.

But the connection goes even deeper.

Our tradition suggests four identities for the forbidden fruit in the garden and prominent among those suggestions is the notion that the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” was not a tree at all, but actually a grapevine.[[602]](#footnote-602) On this reading: Just as Adam ventures out into his new world and partakes of the forbidden fruit, Noach ventures out into his new world and does the same, except this time around, Noach has transformed grapes into wine.[[603]](#footnote-603)

The question is: Noach surely knows the tale of Adam in the garden. Given the tragic consequences of that story, why would he begin his new life by making the same mistake?

What I’d like to suggest is this: The key to understanding this puzzling text is to appreciate the effects of the vine. In the case of Adam, the Torah is quite explicit. Before they ate from the tree: Both Adam and Chava were naked and they were not ashamed.

But as soon as they eat from the tree…

They open their eyes and perceive their own bodies; and suddenly they’re in need of clothes because now they are ashamed.

**The Zohar states that Chava squeezed grapes from the Tree of Knowledge and gave Adam to drink.[[604]](#footnote-604)**

What I’d like to suggest is that Noach goes back to the vine because he’s trying to turn back time. He’s trying to return, not just to the pre-flood state, but to the pre-sin state!

Having witnessed extreme depravity and immorality, and the destruction it left in its wake, Noach had come face to face with the consequences of sin. Noach got drunk (and subsequently disrobed) as an ambitious attempt to return the world to the innocent time before sin. He was trying to undo and reverse the negative effects of Adam and Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden.

***Zohar Noach 308*** *Rabbi Shimon said that there is a sublime secret hidden in this passage. Noach had come to reexamine Adam’s sin OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, so that he could refrain from repeating it and could make reparations in the world. But he was unable TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, However, because after squeezing the grapes, so that he could examine them, he got drunk, was uncovered, and had no strength to get up. This is why the verse says, “and was uncovered”, meaning that he ‘uncovered’ a gap in the World, which had been covered until that time.*

Noach planted grapes[[605]](#footnote-605) upon leaving the Ark in an attempt to rectify the sin of the forbidden fruit.

**Rabbi Shimon [bar Yochai] said**: This verse contains the secret of wisdom. When Noach wished to examine the sin that Adam had committed with the intention of avoiding it himself and learning how to rectify it and the world, he was unable to [fathom its secret]. So he squeezed grapes in order to examine [the secret of] the vineyard.

Noach intended to rectify the vine with which Adam had transgressed. However, instead of sanctifying the wine which he made from the grapes, he became drunk on it. He thus debased himself by repeating Adam’s sin.

The idea of becoming drunk so intoxicates him because he thinks by taking the wine out of the bottle, he can put the genie back in.

Having born witness to the destruction of humankind, Noach doesn’t just want to forget what’s happened; he wants to escape into the painlessness of naiveté and innocence. He wants to go back to a moment in time when man’s perception was dim and distant.

So Noach wasn’t just looking for a good time, and it wasn’t just a passing idea. His actions were part of a grand plan to fashion society on the foundations of spiritual enlightenment. It just didn’t play out the way he imagined.[[606]](#footnote-606)

Noach retreats to the privacy of his tent, to the place where he can be utterly exposed, like primeval man, without being seen. It’s an attempt to recapture a solitary state in which human relatedness is rendered irrelevant; a state in which what other people think is of no concern.

When Cham appears and sees his father, he undoes Noach’s plan by causing his father to be shamed. His great sin is the sin of seeing that which Noach had hoped would remain unseen.

In the end, we don’t return to Gan Eden and Noach needs clothes because he still feels naked and ashamed.

What’s interesting to note is that all the rewards and punishments dished out as a result of this event are related to clothing.

## Noachide Laws

Our ancient Sages actually understood that Noach and his children are now given by God seven fundamental principles that are to govern their lives and the lives of all people after them. These things, known as the “seven Noachide commands”, are regarded by our tradition as the basic building blocks of any functioning moral society, and are extended to Noach and to his children as they stand before God on the cusp of a new and hopeful era of human history. As succinctly enumerated by the Rabbis in the Talmud,[[607]](#footnote-607) the seven principles are:[[608]](#footnote-608)

(1) the directive to establish a judiciary,

(2) the prohibition of blasphemy,

(3) the prohibition of idolatry,

(4) the prohibition of adultery and incest,

(5) the prohibition of murder,

(6) the prohibition of theft, and

(7) the prohibition of consuming the flesh of a limb torn from a living creature.

In the Torah portion that relates the establishment of the covenant between HaShem and Noach (and all generations to come) by means of the *rainbow*, the word “covenant” (בְּרִית) is repeated seven times. These seven appearances of the word “covenant” allude to the seven colors of the *rainbow* studied and documented by Isaac Newton, and to the seven Noachide commandments. The seven colors of the *rainbow* and the seven Noachide commandments correspond to the seven lower sefirot as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **might גבורה** |  | **loving-kindness חסד** |
| RED |  | BLUE |
| prohibition against  murder |  | prohibition against  adultery |
|  |  |  |
|  | **beauty תפארת** |  |
|  | YELLOWׁ |  |
|  | prohibition against  theft |  |
|  |  |  |
| **thanksgiving הוד** |  | **victory נצח** |
| ORANGE |  | VIOLET |
| prohibition against  blasphemy |  | prohibition against  idolatry |
|  |  |  |
|  | **foundation יסוד** |  |
|  | GREEN |  |
| prohibition against eating the flesh of a live animal | | |
|  |  |  |
|  | **kingdom מלכות** |  |
|  | INDIGO |  |
| injunction to establish a just legal system | | |
| Partzuf of *rainbow* Colors and Noachide Commandments | | |

But most curiously, these seven laws that are rightly taken to constitute the touchstone of the new world order, are not explicitly enumerated in our above passage! While the prohibition of consuming a creature alive as well as the proscription of killing a human being are spelled out, the five remaining provisions are glaringly omitted: “…do not consume the flesh of a creature while it is still alive…He that sheds the blood of a person shall have his own blood shed by other people, for man was wrought in God’s image. As for you, be fruitful and multiply, swarm[[609]](#footnote-609) upon the earth and increase”.[[610]](#footnote-610)

And while Rabbi Yochanan goes on to furnish a source for all of the seven Noachide laws:

From whence are these seven things derived? Said Rabbi Yochanan: the text states that “God Lord commanded the earthling saying: you may surely eat from all of the trees of the garden…”.[[611]](#footnote-611) The words “(He) commanded” refer to providing for a judiciary, as the verse states: “I know him that he will command his descendants and his household after him to observe the ways of God and to do that which is righteous and just…”.[[612]](#footnote-612) The word “God” refers to the prohibition of blasphemy, as the verse states: “He that blasphemes the name of God shall surely be put to death”.[[613]](#footnote-613) The word “Lord” (“*Elohim*”) refers to the prohibition of idolatry, as the verse states: “You shall not have other gods (“*elohim*”) before Me…”.[[614]](#footnote-614) The words “the earthling” (“*HaAdam*”) refer to the prohibition of murder, as the verse states: “He that sheds the blood of a person (“*haadam*”) shall have his own blood shed by other people…”.[[615]](#footnote-615) The word “saying” refers to the prohibition of adultery and incest, as the verse states: “Saying: behold if a man sends forth his wife and she becomes married to another man, shall she then return to her first husband? Shall not that land become defiled?”.[[616]](#footnote-616) The words “from all of the trees of the garden” imply the prohibition of theft. The words “you shall surely eat” refer to the prohibition of eating a limb torn from a living creature.

# Purification not Punishment

***Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 36:25*** *And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*

This explains why the Torah states:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:19*** *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered.*

The word “prevail” shows that good must eventually overcome evil, but not without a struggle. In other words, the flood should not be understood as punishment, but rather as purification, as:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:8-9*** *In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have compassion on thee, saith HaShem thy Redeemer.* ***9*** *For this is as the waters of Noach unto Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noach should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

The navi calls the mabul (Great Flood), “the waters of Noach”, as in the above pasuk from Yeshayahu.

***Soncino Zohar, Vayikra, Section 3, Page 14b, 15a*** *R. Jose said: ‘It is written, “For this is as the waters of Noah unto me”.[[617]](#footnote-617) Why have we here the expression “waters of Noach” and not “waters of the flood”? The reason is that when mankind are sinful and there is a righteous man in the world, God speaks with him in order that he may pray for mankind and obtain forgiveness for them. God first promises to save him alone and destroy the rest. Now the proper thing for a righteous man to do at such a time is to forget himself and espouse the cause of the whole world in order to appease God’s wrath against them, as Moshe did when Israel sinned. When God, however, said to Noach, “The end of all flesh is come before me”, Noach replied, “And what wilt thou do to me?”, to which God replied, “I will establish my covenant with thee, make thee an ark of gopher wood”. So Noach did not pray for the world, and the waters came down and destroyed mankind, and therefore they are called “the waters of Noach”.’*

# Technology

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:6*** *And the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.*

In telling us that “Chava saw that the tree was good", the Bible means that she “understood” that the tree was good. Like Adam, she intuitively saw the essence of a particular object by merely looking at it.

The episode of the Tower of Babel hints to this form of communication. The story of the Tower of Babel is preceded by the verse that lists 70 clans, Gen. 10: 5 states …” everyone after his tongue, after their families in their nations…” Suddenly, we find Gen. 11: 1, which states, “And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.” There may be no contradiction if we assume that the sons of Noah still retained the ability of mental telepathy that Adam and Chava used to communicate with the snake.

The point is, both Adam and Chava had a high degree of insight into the world around them. Even before the Sin of the Tree of Knowledge, they could easily communicate with each other, with G-d, and with other creatures (like the snake) perhaps telepathically.

This superior knowledge never was taken from them. Rather, Adam and Chava took along their wisdom (and their experience) when they left the Garden of Eden, and passed it along to their heirs.

In his Antiquities , Josephus describes that Seth (Adam’s son) knew astronomy, invented the Hebrew letters, and understood how time was divided into weeks, months, and years.According to Josephus, Adam’s great-grandson, Kenan, “was a great genius, knowing all things, even how to dominate the spirits….”

As knowledge and wisdom increased, it was passed down through the generations. By the time of Noah, men could identify the weight of the planet Earth to six decimals; the exact diameter of the Earth and its orbital displacement; and all the key mathematical formulas in astronomy. The pre-Flood civilization also knew planetary speed, axis and solar systems.

It sounds impossible, but consider this. The great Pyramid was built approximately one hundred fifty to three hundred years before the great flood. To build the structure, the Egyptians had to know algebra, trigonometry and calculus. But that’s just the beginning. This ancient structure is only five seconds in error in respect to N.S. and E.W. In contrast, the Palomar Observatory, which was designed and built expressly for study of celestial movement, is several minutes off.

What’s more, the stones of the Pyramid fit so perfectly that, until modern times, it was not known that there they had openings. It was even difficult to find any joints. (In fact, it is believed that there are still concealed areas. Sound wave tests indicate hollows yet undiscovered.)

Over time, the people began to feel that science was supreme. (Sound familiar?) Having mastered the physical sciences, they overcame any and all obstacles to their physical health and material well-being. Bored by their intellectual achievements and material success, they began to use their powers to satisfy their physical desires instead of spiritual needs.

# Monumental Changes

Chazal teach us that Adam, before the fall, was not a human like us. In many texts,[[618]](#footnote-618) Adam is described not simply as a being of flesh, but rather as a being of light. Though most will interpret this metaphorically, there are those sages, such as the Arizal[[619]](#footnote-619) that interpret this quite literally. It remains to be seen what this means exactly, but we know that in the end we will be like Adam before the fall.

After the fall, Adam and Chava no longer enjoyed the closeness with HaShem that they shared in the garden. Adam and Chava had pushed HaShem away. This distance resulted in the earth being cursed and the difficulty in childbirth. It also greatly diminished the stature of man. With the generation of The Flood, man had pushed HaShem even further away. At the same time, the earth reflected this distance and became less sensitive to the deeds of man. This distance had profound efeects upon the earth and everything on the earth. In this chapter we will examine some of those profound changes. Suffice it to say at this juncture, that these changes meant that HaShem would no longer need to destroy and recreate the world with a flood.

It is worth noting that all of the earth changes and the changes to man were all designed to encourage man to close the distance and return to HaShem. This recreated world was built to allow man to feel the distance between him and HaShem and encourage man to mourn for his loss.

The Flood and its aftermath restored the world’s fundamental balance. In addition to weakening the material universe, God bolstered humanity’s spiritual side with the Noachide Code of basic morality. The Flood annulled all previous obligations, and initiated a new era of repairing the world via the Seven Mitzvot of *Bnei-Noach*:

The seven Noachide laws as traditionally enumerated in the Talmud,[[620]](#footnote-620) are the following:

1. Not to worship idols.
2. Not to curse God.
3. Not to commit murder.
4. Not to commit adultery or sexual immorality.
5. Not to steal.
6. Not to eat flesh torn from a living animal.
7. To establish courts of justice.

## The Antediluvian World

The Gemara speaks of the antediluvian world as quite idyllic:

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *Our Rabbis taught: The generation of the flood waxed haughty only because of the good which the Holy One, blessed be He, lavished upon them. Behold, what is written of them? Their houses are safe from fear, ‘neither is the rod of God upon them,[[621]](#footnote-621) it is also written, Their bull gendereth, and faileth not,’ their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf;[[622]](#footnote-622) further, They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance; further, They take the timbrel and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ;[[623]](#footnote-623) and it is also written, They spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures;[[624]](#footnote-624) and it is also written, and in a moment go down to the grave.[[625]](#footnote-625) And ‘tis that which caused them to say to God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?[[626]](#footnote-626) They said thus: Do we need Him for aught but the drop of rain? We have rivers and wells to supply our wants. Thereupon the Holy One, blessed be He, said: By that very good which I lavished upon them they provoke Me, and by that I will punish[[627]](#footnote-627) them, as it is written, And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth.[[628]](#footnote-628)*

According to the Midrashic narrative, at first, when Adam was still in the Garden of Eden, the relationship between the mouse and cat was positive and friendly, compatible with the idyllic utopian world before the primordial sin.[[629]](#footnote-629)

Did the flood recreate the same world that we had before the flood?

No, God did not create the same world we had before the flood, as the passage from 2 Peter 3:3-7 spells out:

***2 Peter 3:3-7*** *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as [they were] from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

Before the devastation of the Flood, the world was different than the world we know; it was younger and more vibrant. Its physical aspects were much stronger, and people lived longer lives. Just as the body was more robust, the intellect was also very powerful. People were expected to utilize their intellectual powers as a guide for living in a sensible, moral fashion. The truth alone should have been a sufficient guide for a strong-willed individual. Ideally, awareness of HaShem’s presence should be enough to enlighten and direct one’s actions. This was the potential of the pristine world of the Garden of Eden.

Alas, our sin caused the destruction of this idyllic world. In order to help man complete his mission and to help him establish a closer relationship with HaShem, HaShem changed his world to be less ‘physical’, to be less enticing to man physically.

The Divine light became ‘clothed’ in a more physical form, concrete mitzvot. HaShem God gave to Noach the first and most basic moral code: the seven laws of the Noachide code. These commandments served to bridge the divide between intellect and deed, between the metaphysical and the physical.

We can now understand God’s promise never again to flood the world. After *The Flood*, total destruction of mankind became unnecessary, as the very nature of human ethical conduct was altered. Our inner spiritual life became more tightly connected to our external physical actions. In addition, the world was dramatically altered to assist man in his relationship with HaShem.

The world preceding the Flood was marked by abundance, health, and prosperity. The average human lifespan lasted many hundreds of years, and the climate across the globe was temperate and pleasant.[[630]](#footnote-630) Yet these qualities were just the beginning. The differences between the antediluvian world and the post-flood world can be appreciated by looking at this abbreviated list of what it was like in the world before the flood.

## Seasons and Weather are Created

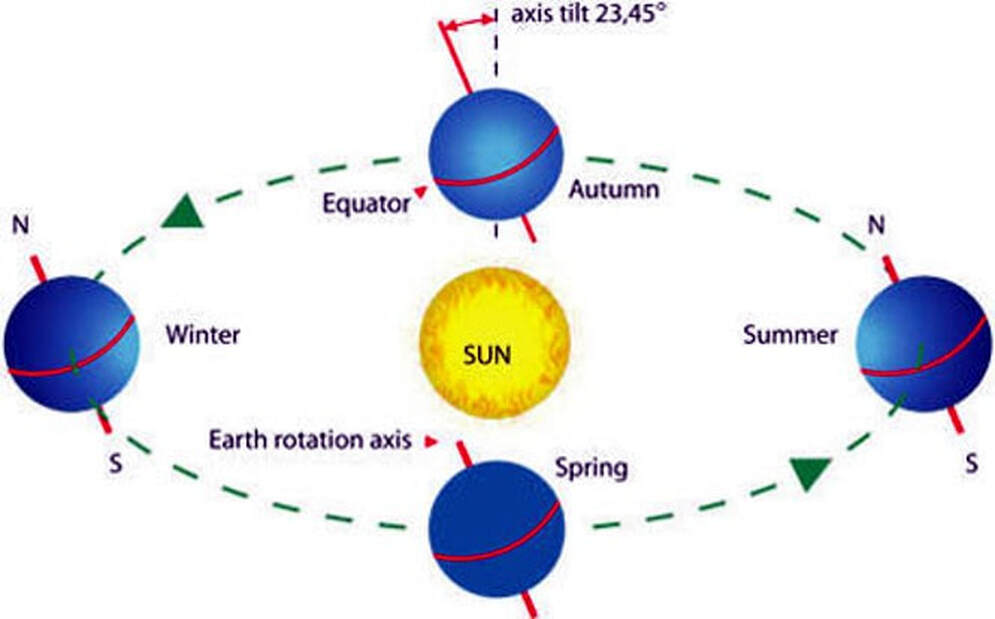
In the beginning God used a “mist” or dew to water the earth rather than rain:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:5*** *No shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for HaShem God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the land;* ***6*** *but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the land.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22*** *So long as the earth endures, Seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.[[631]](#footnote-631)*

Rashi’s statement that the heavenly bodies stopped functioning is based on an explicit verse: when God promises, after the flood, that “so long as the earth exists... day and night will not cease”,[[632]](#footnote-632) Scripture itself testifies that day and night did cease during the flood. So at the literal level of Torah interpretation, to which Rashi confines himself, there can be no dispute about this matter.

Clearly, this pronouncement informs us that time stopped in some way during the flood. No seasons existed, because the earth was not tilted 23 degrees on its axis. And it would appear that even night and day were suspended in some manner during the flood period. And hence, Noach’s understanding that the dove has to be sent after 7 days clearly indicates that the days and nights, the regulation of time via the luminaries of Day 4, have been resumed. Day 5 is reflected in the birds, the raven and dove, creations of day 5 now released to their habitat. And day 6 is the releasing of the animals, all defined using their chapter 1 language, to the wild from the restriction of the Ark.

The Malbim, explains, based on his interpretation of the verses earlier in Genesis, that prior to the Flood, the Earth’s axis was straight, and its orbit was circular rather than elliptical. Because of this, the entire world had one temperate climate[[633]](#footnote-633) with no seasons. In addition, he says, rain was very rare. On the occasions that it did rain, heavy clouds would gather around the whole globe at once. The ensuing deep soaking rain provided long-lasting moisture in the land which, together with the steady temperate climate, ensured that the land could produce food until the next rain. The fruits grew bigger and were more nutritious as well. All nature, fauna and flora, grew bigger, stronger, and older, including man. people were stronger. The steady, pleasant climate and enriched food produced strong people who lived longer and healthier lives.

The Sforno attributes the shorter life span to the changes of temperature throughout the year. He says that originally the earth was aligned at its poles perpendicularly to the sun and the climate and temperature were always quite steady. However, after the Mabul, HaShem changed the angle of the poles by tilting them 23 degrees. This is what gives us the change of seasons. The whole planet bounced in the way that what once was East became West and perhaps even the entire planet flipped in the way that magnetic poles were switched around. Deposits of ferromagnetic metals in sedimentary strata, suggest precisely this replacement.

**Rashi on Genesis 8:22:7**: **DAY AND NIGHT SHALL NOT CEASE** — From this we may infer that they (day and night) ceased during the period of the Flood, for the planetary system did not function, so that there was no distinction between day and night”.[[634]](#footnote-634)

We learn from this Rashi, that during the entire time of the Mabul, the orbit of the Earth was disrupted in some way. But Ein Yaakov,[[635]](#footnote-635) [[636]](#footnote-636) tells us that indeed the first period of the Mabul was different that rest of it.

*​****Bereshit (Genesis) 7:10*** *And it came to pass after the seven days that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.*

God told Noach that The Flood would come at the end of another seven days. God delayed the Flood to give the people time to complete their seven days of mourning for Methuselah. Since a period of mourning is a time for the mourners to be introspective about their own lives and to do repentance and better their ways, that was a final chance for the people to repent from their sins. If they would repent, God would rescind His decree to bring a flood over the entire world. The people did not repent, but this episode holds a lot of teachings for us.

What is the nature of these seven days? Rav said: “The seven days of mourning for Mesushelach. From this you may learn that the lamentation [upon the death] of the righteous *delays* evil dispensation from coming”.

Along with these atmospheric changes that weakened the physical world, the system of precipitation changed. Now there are climates, seasons, and weather systems that are local, not global. A *rainbow* can only appear if the sky is covered by clouds on one side and the sun is shining into the clouds from the clear sky on the other side. This never happened before the Flood because when it rained, the clouds were always thick and fully covering the entire sky. Only after the Flood does the possibility of having a sky partially covered by clouds exist.

The Ramban[[637]](#footnote-637) explains: The implication of the text referring to “this sign” is that there had never before been a *rainbow* in the clouds since the time of creation. Now God created something entirely new, to provide a *rainbow* in the heavens at the time of rainfall…

The Malbim writes that prior to the Mabul, the sun did not revolve on its yearly cycle at an angle of twenty-three degrees as it does today. The time for the recital of Birchat hachamah (the blessing on the returning of the sun to its original place in the cosmos where it was placed at creation) is once in twenty-eight years – but if one calculates the number of years from creation, it emerges that one year is missing from the calculation – from which we can derive that during the year when the floodwaters covered the earth, the sun did not revolve as usual.[[638]](#footnote-638)

The relationship between climate and reward and punishment appears often in the Torah. For example, for good behavior Debarim (Deuteronomy) 11:14 promises “I will grant the rain for your land in season, the early rain and the late”. But 11:17 warns that conversely man may provoke “the Lord’s anger to flare up against you, and He will shut up the skies so that there will be no rain and the land will not yield its produce”.

After the flood

An examination of the Torah's account of the first twenty generations of history reveals two primary differences between the world before The Flood and the post-Flood era.

The pre-Flood generations enjoyed long lives, we find people living into their 8th, 9th and 10th centuries (Noach's grandfather, Methuselah, lived 969 years; his father, Lemech, 777 years; Noach himself, 950 years). The Zohar explains that this was an era of divine benevolence, in which life, health and prosperity flowed freely and indiscriminately from Above.

Following the Flood, we see a steady decline in the human lifespan. Within ten generations, Abraham is old at the age of 100.

The second difference is one that seems at odds with, and even contradictory to, the first: After the Flood, the world gained a stability and permanence it did not enjoy in the pre-Flood era. Before the Flood, the world's very existence was contingent upon its moral state.

The flood story is the culmination of that degeneration. The flood begins because, as the Torah tells us seven times, humanity’s חמס chamas and רע ra, violence and evil, are corrupting and ruining the land itself. According to the Torah, the problem is not described as an intrinsic problem of violence, but rather as a problem because of what this violence does to the land.

The flood ends with God declaring that the connection between humanity and the land has been torn asunder (“I will no longer add anymore to cursing the land for the sake of humanity”[[639]](#footnote-639)), while the relationship between people and animals is ruined (instead of the way it was in Eden, when Adam would call to the animals and they would come straightaway, now “terror and dread of you will be upon all the animals”[[640]](#footnote-640)). It is no mere detail that the first covenant (the *rainbow*) is not with humanity but between God and all flesh / all the animals, and between God and the land.[[641]](#footnote-641) Humans are out of the picture as far as divine providence is concerned.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXX:6 …*** *And he that is wise taketh souls: for he fed and provided for [its inhabitants] the whole twelve months in the Ark.*

Rabbi Sorotzkin in Oznayim Latorah[[642]](#footnote-642) says that Noach continued to feed all the animals for the year after they left the Tebah . In Genesis 8:17, HaShem gives a bracha which includes the term שרצו which implies increasing like the “creeping things” (such as insects). Thus, Rabbi Sorotzkin says that immediately upon leaving the ark they began repopulating the world miraculously and being fed miraculously until there were enough to live as a balanced ecology. As an example, it is obvious that, except for the above, the fox might have eaten a mouse and there would no longer be mice to repopulate the world.

The Ibn Ezra raises an important question, “What did predatory birds and carnivorous animals like the lion eat?” “This is not a question”, he answers, “because one who cannot find meat, will eat grass and fruit when he hungers”. The Radak explains: “The truth is that the animals did not eat meat just as they did not eat [meat] at the beginning of creation”.

The commentators[[643]](#footnote-643) explain it to be a reward to Noach for caring for them during the flood, and for the fact that if not for Noach, no animals would have survived. (As for fish, they were permitted so there’ll be no difference between the species).

And the water increased (prevailed): Ramban explains this verse correctly that [it means that] the waters came with great force and uprooted the trees. . . . And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth: The waters went on to uproot great stretches of land. Through this activity, **mountains and hills that didn’t exist before the Flood were formed**.[[644]](#footnote-644) This is obviously so, for the mountains of Ararat are portrayed as being the highest mountains on earth and this is not true. Rather, those [higher mountains] came to be through the Flood. . . . For those mountains that are presently higher than the mountains of Ararat came into being during the days of the Flood.[[645]](#footnote-645)

Rashi goes a bit further in describing Araat as a valley:

**Rashi *A FLOOD*** — so called because it ruined (בלה) everything; because it cast everything into confusion (בלל), and because it brought (הוביל from root יבל) everything down from the heights to a lower level. And this last explanation underlies the translation of Onkelos who translates it by טופנא (Ar. טוף = Heb. צוף) because the Flood caused everything to float about and brought it (the Ark) to Babel which is a low-lying district. That is the reason why it (Babylon) is also called, Shinar (שנער): because all those who died through the Flood were shaken out (ננערו) into it.”

We can only suspect that other areas in postdiluvian land configuration which are rich in fossil fuels, were also such lower districts of the antediluvian continent.

Interestingly, Josephus, in his work *Antiquities of the Jews*, claimed to have known the whereabouts of Noach’s Ark and quoted earlier historians, including the 3rd century BCE Berosus the Chaldean, as saying that people would take parts of the Ark to use as amulets to ward off evil.[[646]](#footnote-646)

When Noach came out of the ark, God spoke to him the words in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22*** *Continuously, all the days of the earth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease* - lo yishbotu *-* לֹאיִשְׁבֹּתוּ.[[647]](#footnote-647)

The Hebrew words *“*lo yishbotu *-* לֹאיִשְׁבֹּתוּ*”* at the end of the verse are intended to communicate two meanings. One meaning is *“they will not cease”,[[648]](#footnote-648)* although the seasons stopped functioning during the year that the flood lasted, from that time on they won’t stop from following their normal pattern.

“lo yishbotu[[649]](#footnote-649) *-* לֹאיִשְׁבֹּתוּ” also means “*don’t make a Sabbath*”.[[650]](#footnote-650)In Tractate Sanhedrin, the sage Reish Lakish says that this was a command to the Children of Noach that they are **forbidden** to keep a ritual Sabbath.

This can be interpreted on a drash, a homeletical level, that Shabbat was being withdrawn from the world, as a way of HaShem distancing Himself from humans, until the Bne Israel came into existence. Then Shabbat was returned, but not to all. Shabbat became the eternal sign of the covenant between HaShem and the Children of Israel. Whatever other peoples do, however they mark the week, it is not the same as our Shabbat.

And then, as a result of the Exodus from Egypt, Shabbat wears a second hat. So in Kiddush we also describe Shabbat as a commemorative of the Exodus. And that aspect of Shabbat is certainly ours alone. Shabbat is the original example of sanctity of time. And as the first of the holy assemblies, it shares its sanctity with the Jewish calendar, as well.

The Sabbath is clearly HaShem's gift to the Jewish people, it is this phrase *Lo Yishbotu*, which also refers to the Halacha[[651]](#footnote-651) that non-Jews are forbidden to rest on the Sabbath - “they shall not cease”, that is, cease from work, just like the planets who do not take off a day in the week from moving in the planetary system.  In fact, our rabbis tell us that a non-Jew who does rest on the Sabbath is liable to death at the hands of Heaven.

***Sanhedrin 58b*** *Resh Lakish also said: A heathen who keeps a day of rest, deserves death, for it is written, And a day and a night they shall not rest,[[652]](#footnote-652) and a master has said: Their prohibition is their death sentence.[[653]](#footnote-653) Rabina said: Even if he rested on a Monday. Now why is this not included in the seven Noachian laws? — Only negative injunctions are enumerated, not positive ones.[[654]](#footnote-654)*

Rashi clarifies that this command was given as a prohibition directly for Noach himself, who righteously followed the Seven Commandments, and for his whole family, and for all his descendants that would come from him (with the exception of the Jewish people, who were commanded differently after HaShem miraculously brought them out of slavery in the Exodus from Egypt). Rabbi Yehudah the Prince then explains there in the Talmud that this applies for any day of the week. Therefore Rambam brings this in *Laws of Kings*, ch. 10, as part of the Noachide Code.

Rashi explains that a non-Jew is obligated to work every day, because the Torah writes, “Yom ValaylaLo Yishbotu”,[[655]](#footnote-655) which can be interpreted to mean, “Day and night they (i.e., the non-Jews) may not rest”. The Rambam,[[656]](#footnote-656) however, explains that a gentile is prohibited from making his own holiday or religious observance, because the Torah is opposed to the creation of man-made religions. In the words of the Rambam, “A non-Jew is not permitted to create his own religion or mitzvah. Either he becomes a righteous convert[[657]](#footnote-657) and accepts the observance of all the mitzvot, or he remains with the laws that he has, without adding or detracting”. A third reason mentioned is that a Jew may mistakenly learn from a gentile who keeps a day of rest, and the Jew may create his own mitzvot.[[658]](#footnote-658)

Because of this halacha, a non-Jew studying for conversion must perform a small act of Shabbat desecration every Shabbat. There is a dispute among poskim whether this applies to a non-Jew who has undergone brit milah and is awaiting immersion in a mikvah to complete his conversion.[[659]](#footnote-659)

**Rav Hutner** adds that when the pasuk mentions that day and night Lo Yishbotu means that a non-Jew is not to observe the Shabbat. Why is that mentioned here? Rav Hutner explains that until the Mabul everyone could keep Shabbat but the image of God was so reduced that only those so commanded could keep the Shabbat and others could not.

## Haman’s Gallows

What is the connection between Noach’s ark (Tebah) and Haman’s gallows that the Midrash should connect these two?

There is an interesting Yalkut Shimoni,[[660]](#footnote-660) where it details that when Haman was searching for a large enough beam of wood with which to make the gallows - he ended up using a beam from his own house, which his son Parshandasa, who was hegmon (governor) of the region of Cadronia had in turn taken from Noach’s ark.

**Yalkut Shimoni remez 256 (on Parshat Beshalach)** And he took one beam from the ark of Noach that HaShem had preserved as a memorial to let all generations know that He had brought flood upon the world.

A little less than 200 years after Sennacherib, during the story of Purim, Haman built a gallows “50 cubits high” (approximately 75 feet) with the intention of hanging Mordechai upon it. One tradition in the Midrash[[661]](#footnote-661) tells us that one of Haman’s children was the governor of the province where Noach’s Ark was located, and he provided Haman with a beam from the Ark, which was 50 cubits wide.[[662]](#footnote-662)

It was divinely orchestrated that Haman use wood from the Ark to build the gallows that he himself would ultimately be hung on. For the same wood that was used to save the remnants of humanity was once again used to save the Jewish people.[[663]](#footnote-663)

## Before and After Table

| **Before the flood** | **After the flood** |
| --- | --- |
| People, including Noach and his family, and animals[[664]](#footnote-664) were forbidden to eat meat. | Men and animals could now eat meat.[[665]](#footnote-665) However, you may not eat parts of a living animal or blood.[[666]](#footnote-666) |
| Man was given dominion over the animals, but animals did not fear man.[[667]](#footnote-667) The meaning of dominion in Eden was that when Adam would call to the animals, they would come to him. Now it would be the opposite – they will run away in terror.[[668]](#footnote-668) | We still have dominion over the animals, but animals now fear man.[[669]](#footnote-669) If we can eat them, then they would fear man might kill them. |
| Rav Salant explains that before the flood, mankind exerted full control over the animal kingdom, and the animals immediately obeyed all the human being’s commands. | People had such power and control over the natural world, that their behavior directly impacted that of the animal kingdom, and thus mankind’s moral deterioration resulted in the deterioration of the animals’ behavior. |
| Man and animals possessed immense spiritual power and potential.[[670]](#footnote-670) | Men and animals have diminished spiritual power. The curse is gone[[671]](#footnote-671) and now man has no need to seek God because the land produces food easily. |
| Mature men had become inflexible, almost immutable. Repentance had become almost impossible. | The world, and men had become more pliable and flexible. They were more receptive to change and to repentance. |
| Animals did not eat meat, just as they will not eat meat in the future redemption.[[672]](#footnote-672) | Animals eat meat. |
| Animals could talk and mate with humans. | Animals cannot talk or mate with humans. |
| Human beings and animals were somewhat equal before the Mabul occurred because animals and all creations were on a higher level. | After the Mabul, the world became more spiritual for humanity and the level of the wildlife declined. |
| The world could be flooded. Before the Flood, the world’s very existence was contingent upon its moral state. | God promised never to flood the world again. |
| Before the Mabul, the land was punished for not obeying HaShem’s commandment to the letter.[[673]](#footnote-673) HaShem commanded the land to grow “fruit trees” and the land created instead “trees that only grow fruit”. | After the Mabul, the land became part of the permanent nature of the four seasons and thus no range of free will.[[674]](#footnote-674) |
| Noach was given his name because, as explained by Rashi, when Noach was born the people said, “This shall give us rest[[675]](#footnote-675) in our work and in the toil of our hands, from the land that HaShem has cursed”. Rashi explains his statement with a Midrash stating that from the time of the curse of Adam HaRishon, everything was dysfunctional. When people planted wheat, the land would produce thorns. But when Noach was born, the curse stopped and life became easier. | Now wheat and thorns grow side-by-side. Until Noach’s birth people were constantly sinning, claiming that it was because of the hard lives that they endured as a result of the curse. So now HaShem gave them a tremendous amount of wealth and comfort to see how they would act without the curse.  However, instead of changing their ways, they used their newfound comfort to do even more evil. They soon became bored with their normal pleasures and began to look for new ways to spend their time. The result was the abominable acts of incest and moral corruption that led to their ultimate demise. |
| Wheat[[676]](#footnote-676) ripened as soon as it was planted.[[677]](#footnote-677) | Now wheat takes all spring to ripen. |
| The Earth did not have a tilt to its axis. Climate was uniform.[[678]](#footnote-678) | The earth was now tilted on its axis by 23 degrees. We have seasons. The world’s climate is established as we know it today. |
| There is a hint to the fact that a ‘month’, the length of a lunar month, was 30 days long rather that 29.5 days long.[[679]](#footnote-679) | Lunar months are now 29.5 days long. |
| At the beginning, all animals equally distributed the earth, for the climate everywhere was mild and uniform” and ”It is evident from fossils everywhere that previously there had existed a more even distribution of plants and animals.[[680]](#footnote-680) | Now temperate animals are in one place, and tropical animals in another. Each climate having its own particular animals. |
| Low entropy until the atmosphere degraded during the 1656 anno mundi Mabul impacts.[[681]](#footnote-681) | GRADUAL increase in entropy over about 1k year. |
| Pangea had not yet been broken up.[[682]](#footnote-682) | Shortly after the flood, in Peleg’s day,[[683]](#footnote-683) Pangea was split apart. |
| No tall mountains, though there were higher and lower places. | The world was filled with tall mountains and deep valleys. |
| The people had no medical problems.[[684]](#footnote-684) There was no sickness.[[685]](#footnote-685) | Now there were medical problems and there was sickness. |
| They were able to travel from one end of the earth to the other in a very short time[[686]](#footnote-686) “Kefitzat HaDerech - קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ”. They could walk the earth from end to end in one hour.[[687]](#footnote-687) | Now we need bicycles, cars, planes, and jets in order to travel quickly. |
| People lived much longer, some more than 900 years.[[688]](#footnote-688) | People were reduced to lifespans of 120 years.[[689]](#footnote-689) |
| The people were very tall.[[690]](#footnote-690) Rashi[[691]](#footnote-691) explains that when God made Adam smaller, He shrank him to 100 cubits – about 150 feet tall. The Talmud[[692]](#footnote-692) says that Adam was created as tall as one end of the heavens to the other (also described as from earth to the heavens), but after he sinned God made him smaller. It is said that antediluvian men were all this tall. | People, now a days, are of an ordinary size.  **Rabbi Meir says:** In the future, the Jewish people will have the stature of **two hundred cubits (300 feet), equivalent to two** times the **height [*komot*] of Adam the first** man, whose height was one hundred cubits.[[693]](#footnote-693) |
| They were very advanced in science and technology.[[694]](#footnote-694) | We are ignoramuses by comparison, though Noach got to bring all that technology with him an the ark. |
| Humans had mastered the secrets of the natural world.[[695]](#footnote-695) |  |
| They would uproot cedars of Lebanon as they walked and they regarded the lions and leopards as if they were lice on their flesh.[[696]](#footnote-696) | Now we are puny and weak. |
| There were no cold or warm fronts and no storms.[[697]](#footnote-697) No snow, rain, or storms. It had NEVER rained![[698]](#footnote-698) | Now we have cold and warm fronts with the resulting storms, as well as rain and snow.[[699]](#footnote-699) |
| All the animals were in one place for Adam to name and all were there at the time Noach summoned them into the Ark. | Animals are now dispersed to locations unique to their needs. All lands were together (Pangea) after the flood to allow the animals to disperse to the 4 corners of the world. |
| There was no sunlight[[700]](#footnote-700) peeking through the vapor canopy, this explains why the *rainbow* could not have been seen until Noach’s day. | Now we have bright sunlight and *rainbow*s because the clouds are thinner.[[701]](#footnote-701) |
| (Gen. 1:6), “Let there be a firmament”, the misty water rose up until it reached the place where the clouds are situated, for He made a division between the water which was above the clouds which remained water in the potential form [of vapor], and between the lower waters which are in liquid form, so that **half of the water was above the firmament** and half was in the ocean. At the time of the Flood, however, through the word of God, they all fell below to the earth, as it is stated, (Gen. 7:11), “the windows of the heavens opened”. This is referring to the store housesof the heavens in which the abundance of water [in the form of vapor] was stored and was suspended there through the command of the King.[[702]](#footnote-702) | Now most of the water is in the ocean. |
| During the year of the flood the sun did not set.[[703]](#footnote-703) | The sun sets normally. |
| The Omnipresent changed the order of the world and the sun came out of the west and set in the east. For that reason it is written, “And it came to be, after the seven days had passed”.[[704]](#footnote-704) | The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. |
| The canopy formed what we would recognize as a terrarium. The earth watered itself just as a terrarium does. This can be seen in Genesis 2:5-6. The canopy also did a couple of other things. It protected the earth from cosmic radiation. It also kept the earth pressure at about 3 atmospheres. This allowed all living creatures the ability to heal much faster than we do today. Just like the medical use of a hyperbaric chamber. R’ Yitzchak Abarbanel z”l writes: The physical laws which cause a *rainbow* to appear existed from creation, but there had never been a *rainbow* before the flood. This was due to a difference in atmospheric conditions before and after the flood.[[705]](#footnote-705) | We have lost the canopy, resulting in rain to water the earth. We have also lost atmospheric pressure and we are now down to one atmosphere. |
| Sun, moon, and stars were not functional nor visible through the vapor canopy.[[706]](#footnote-706) | The celestial bodies began to function again and we could now see the sun, moon, and stars. |
| The sun rose in the west and set in the east. | The Omnipresent changed the order of the world and the sun came out of the west and set in the east. For that reason it is written, “And it came to be, after the seven days had passed”.[[707]](#footnote-707) |
| Men had six mitzvot. | Men had seven mitzvot. |
| Animals in Gan Eden could talk, walk, and fornicate with people. | Animals cannot talk, walk, or fornicate with people in the normal way. |
| Men were smarter, e.g. Genesis 4:22 which seems to be describing some of Tubal Cain’s metallurgical hobby projects, including something about bronze and iron. Have a look at the Masoretic Hebrew, which calls Tubal Cain a *lotesh kal-horesh* (לֹטֵ֕שׁ כָּל־חֹרֵ֥שׁ) that is to say “an instructor of every craftsman”. | Men are not as smart but able to make progress through sheer numbers of people. People like Einstein, smart as he was, stood on the shoulders of Newton, who stood on the shoulders of wise men before him. |
| Men never grew old or looked old.[[708]](#footnote-708) The Talmud,[[709]](#footnote-709) in a few brief comments, depicts a people blessed with natural bounty and physical beauty. The earth was richer and more bountiful than it is today. Humans lived longer and led more fruitful lives. They were not shackled by physical weaknesses of any kind, old age, arthritis, hemorrhoids, bad backs, nearsightedness, etc. The flesh was strong: they were invincible. | People are now weak and look and feel old as they age. They are now sickly and possess many infirmities. |
| A child never died during its parent’s lifetime.[[710]](#footnote-710) | Children occasionally die during their parent’s lifetime. |
| Infant children were able to prance as sheep as soon as they were born.[[711]](#footnote-711) | Infants now needed about a year before they could even walk. |
| The Midrash relates the unusual feats and super strength of the people at the time.[[712]](#footnote-712) | We no longer can perform unusual feats nor do we have super strength. |
| A single crop would yield enough food for 40 years.[[713]](#footnote-713) [[714]](#footnote-714) [[715]](#footnote-715) | A single crop yields enough food for one year. |
| On that very day he planted, on that very day he drank…[[716]](#footnote-716) | Harvest takes place months after planting. |
| It was springtime (lit. from Passover to Shavuot) all year round,[[717]](#footnote-717) as it is written (Gen. 8:22), “While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”.[[718]](#footnote-718) | Now we have seasons and some are not as nice as springtime. |
| The Malbim explains that before the flood edible products grew in a form which required no peeling. Everything was truly ready to eat off the tree or the field. | Fruits, for the most part, all have to be peeled now. Natural foods all have a husk of some kind. |
| Wild animals did not hurt people.[[719]](#footnote-719) Men related to ferocious lions and leopards as if they were tapeworms. | Wild animals hurt and kill people. |
| No special effort was needed to harvest a crop. Strolling a field and collecting was sufficient.[[720]](#footnote-720) | Lots of effort must be extended to harvest a field. |
| *Everyone* practiced the magic handed down from Adam.[[721]](#footnote-721) | Only the wicked practice this same kind of magic. |
| Before the flood the clean animals were much, much more numerous than the unclean animals. The Midrash tells us that not all of the unclean animals got on the ark, but all of the clean animals did.[[722]](#footnote-722) | Unclean animals are much more numerous than clean animals. |
| **for all flesh had corrupted:[[723]](#footnote-723)** Even cattle, beasts, and fowl would mate with those who were not of their own species.[[724]](#footnote-724) Only uncorrupted animals were allowed on the ark.[[725]](#footnote-725) The Talmud writes that the people of the time mated animals of different species both with each other and with humans.[[726]](#footnote-726) | Each animal breeds with its own kind. |
| Noach and his family did not sleep on the ark because they had to feed the animals.[[727]](#footnote-727) | They had time to sleep.[[728]](#footnote-728) |
| Mountains were no higher than Ararat.[[729]](#footnote-729) | Mountains have gotten much higher than Ararat.[[730]](#footnote-730) |
| Women gave birth to their children on the same day of the conception;[[731]](#footnote-731) the children could immediately stand, walk and speak, and they lived always longer than their parents. One of the characteristics of Gan Eden was that everything took place immediately. Adam and Chavah had their children without delay.[[732]](#footnote-732) | Pregnancy takes 40 weeks and the resulting child is helpless. |
| Each birth had six children. | Most births have only one child. |
| The earth was very rich, lush, and verdant which was a reflection of the spiritual world. The earth was infinitely richer because the physical reality of the world below was a much stronger reflection of the spiritual one above. | The soil that would remain would be far coarser and earthier, but it would not be so vulnerable to the rise and fall of fickle man. The world lost much of its lushness and vitality. |
| The world was a spiritually-attuned place. The physical world was far superior to the postdiluvian world. The earth was richer. All nature, fauna and flora, grew bigger, stronger, and older, including man. people were stronger, and generally speaking the world was a closer reflection of the God who created it.[[733]](#footnote-733) | The world became more earthy, stubborn, and physical. |
| Everyone could observe and keep Shabbat because the image of God (Tzelem Elohim) was great in man. | The image of God (Tzelem Elohim) was so reduced that only those so commanded could keep the Shabbat and others could not.[[734]](#footnote-734) |
| In Genesis 1:28, God gives man *dominion* over the animals. – When Adam would call, the animals would come to him *without fear*. | In Genesis 9:2 God says that the animals would have *fear* and *dread* of man. - Fear of you. This sounds like dominion, but according to tradition, it is not. Rashi[[735]](#footnote-735) says that after the flood, dominion, did not return. According to Rashi’s interpretation of dominion (that the humans would call and the animals would come), *fear* is the exact opposite. |
| Wine was not as intoxicating. The world was different. | The Sefat Emet suggests that Noach’s mistake of immediately planting a vineyard and getting inebriated was due to the fact that the nature of the world changed, and after the flood, the intoxicating degrees of wine changed. |
| The pre-Flood world was like a brilliant pupil who grasps the most profound teachings of his master, but who lacks the ability to conceive of a single original thought of his own. So once corrupted, once it had distanced itself from its Master and disavowed its relationship with Him, it lost the basis for its existence. When man ceased to respond, the world held no further use for the Creator.[[736]](#footnote-736) | After the Flood, God imbued the world with a new potential—the potential to create. He granted it the ability to take what it receives from Above and develop it, extend it, and expand upon it. The world was now like a disciple who had been trained by his master to think on his own, to take the ideas which he learns and apply them to new areas. Man was now able not only to absorb the divine input into his life but also to unleash its potential in new, unprecedented ways.[[737]](#footnote-737) |
| Men were more robust physically with much longer life-spans, but it was much harder for them to grasp spiritual ideas, which distanced them from HaShem. | After the flood, Man’s physicality was decreased with the average life span lessened, and with this alteration came a closer connection to God’s light and an easier grasp of spiritual truth. This world was naturally drawn to more organized and moral societies. |
| The rains of the flood, described in Kabbalah as “a cosmic Mikvah”.[[738]](#footnote-738) did not only destroy an unsalvageable world; they also cleansed it and purified it, leaving in their wake a new world with a new nature. The mighty waters that were emitted from heaven impregnated the truths of spirituality and Godliness into the very fabric of the earth.[[739]](#footnote-739) Like a pupil who had been trained by his mentor to think on his own, humanity in the post-flood era absorbed the goodness and harmony of its creator within its very structure. From now on, even if man would alienate himself entirely from his Divine source, he could always recreate himself through the light engraved in the depth of his being. | Normal rains began falling. |
| The Rosh cites a teaching from Rav Yehudah HaChasid that prior to Noach people’s hands were different and the joints did not provide the same dexterity. With fingers that could not bend, the opposable thumb was of little service.[[740]](#footnote-740) | People’s hands now have joints and worked like Noach’s hands. |

The generation of the Mabul was one that lived for themselves, “What’s in it for me”, was their only concern. It was a generation that didn’t give of their time, lend a helping hand or grant a listening ear. It was a time of total apathy.

While it rained for forty days, it took a full year for the waters to subside, and for Noach and his family to be able to exit the ark to dry land. One year of being the world’s “busiest zookeepers”, on call morning through night, never taking a break. Life in the ark was “chesed boot-camp”.

Noach and his family exited the ark changed people. They left the ark with a new understanding of selfless giving.

## Evil from his youth[[741]](#footnote-741)

“And 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”.[[742]](#footnote-742) Noting the opening “and” in the first word, “va-ani,” which implies that this statement was a response to something that came before, Rashi comments: “I am prepared to agree with those who encouraged me [the angels] and already said before me, ‘What is man that you should remember him’”.[[743]](#footnote-743) According to Rashi, HaShem regretted creating the world and decided to destroy it. The Ramban notes that this does not fit with the subsequent command to build the teiva, which ensures the continuation of the world, and he therefore offers another explanation.

In order to understand Rashi’s comment, we must examine the flood and the changes that it brought about.

We will begin with the Torah’s description of mankind’s fall, as described in the previous parsha: “And the bnei ha’elohim saw the daughters of man, that they were good, and they took for themselves wives from any that they chose”.[[744]](#footnote-744) HaShem’s reaction was: “My spirit shall not abide in man forever”.[[745]](#footnote-745) The Torah goes on to describe that HaShem “saw that man’s evil was great”.[[746]](#footnote-746) The only sin described here is one of promiscuity. Later, however, the Torah describes that HaShem decided to destroy the world due to “chamas”.[[747]](#footnote-747) Why doesn’t the Torah mention giluy arayot as the reason for the punishment? Chazal famously explain that the gezar din was sealed due to gezel, but why didn’t the Torah then begin by focusing on this sin?

Another difficulty relates to HaShem’s perspective on man. Before the flood, man’s yetzer, which is “evil from his youth”,[[748]](#footnote-748) is mentioned as the reason for man’s distance from HaShem. After the flood, however, man’s yetzer is mentioned as a reason to be lenient regarding his failings: “Never again will I doom the earth because of man, since the yetzer of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done”.[[749]](#footnote-749)

It is clear from the pesukim and the explanations of Chazal that the nature of the world changed as a result of the flood in an extreme manner. These changes included changes in climate and, most profoundly, man’s lifespan, which was immediately shortened significantly, indicating that there were other changes in nature as well.

Before the flood, the physical nature of the world was very developed. Had man lived with proper recognition of HaShem, he would have found all of his needs taken care for without any trouble, in the manner in which the Rambam describes the time of Mashiach. Man would thus have had the opportunity to preparation necessary for contemplation of intellectual matters, which is his ultimate goal. However, the physical perfection of the world led man to become immersed in his physical desires, which determined his lifestyle and choices. The fact that the immoral acts described were perpetrated in public and by the higher strata of society, the “bnei ha’elohim,” indicated that the yetzer of man was immersed in evil to the degree that this appeared to him to be proper behavior. The spirit of HaShem could not join with man under such circumstances.

The perfection of nature also led to the second failing of man, gezel, which damaged human society, and thus wreaked destruction on the entire world. The punishment therefore affected not only man, but rather entailed uprooting the whole world. The angels foresaw this danger, and this is what Rashi means when he says that HaShem agreed with their assessment.

The new world that was created after the flood was weak and unstable. Man would thus recognize his weakness and his dependence on the forces of nature, as he needed to cope with them. This further increased his recognition of his dependence on other people, creating the basis for human society, and also made it easier for man to submit to HaShem.

These differences are reflected in the korbanot offered before and after the flood. The korbanot offered by Kayin and Hevel are referred to as a “mincha,” whereas Noach’s korban is called and olah and a rei’ach nichoach. Offering a korban that gives off a pleasant aroma expresses submission to HaShem, as it reflects HaShem’s “enjoyment” of the fact that His will was fulfilled. A mincha, in contrast, can also be offered to other humans. Before the flood, HaShem was the King and man was the central creation. This led to man’s admiration of his physical powers, as they reflected perfection. It was for this reason, Chazal teach us,[[750]](#footnote-750) that HaShem created man with the need to excrete bodily waste – to remind man that he is not a god. This recognition is reflected in the offering of a korban.

In the new world created after the flood, the new system prevented the possibility of complete destruction. Thus, man’s yetzer was now a reason to be lenient with him. HaShem would now repair creation by making local changes, instead of starting from scratch.

The idea that the purpose of the flood was to destroy the existing and world and recreate a new world is expressed in the midrash:[[751]](#footnote-751) “It is comparable to an officer who built a palace and settled in it along with him inhabitants who were mute, and they would arise and inquire after the welfare of the king using gestures and signs. The officer said, ‘If these mute men arise and inquire after my welfare using gestures and signs, how much more so would they do so if they could speak!’ The officer then settled within the palace inhabitants who could speak, but they took over the palace, saying, ‘This palace does not belong to the officer, but rather to us!’ The officer said, ‘Let the palace go back to the way it was!’ So too, in the beginning HaKadosh Baruch Hu was praised only by the water… He said, ‘If the waters, which cannot speak, praise me, how much more so will man when I create him!’ The generation of Enosh came and rebelled, the generation of the flood and rebelled, the generation of the dispersion and rebelled. HaKadosh Baruch Hu said, ‘Let these depart and I will bring them [the waters]!’” The flood returned the world to the original stage of water, reflecting its destruction and rebirth.

## Hints to the Antediluvian World

Our Sages teach that the flood did not affect the land of Israel *in the same way* it affected the rest of the world. This suggests that the antediluvian world was somewhat like the land of Israel. The following are some hints as to what the antediluvian world was like.

One view is expressed that the Flood did not cover the Land of Israel:

***Zevachim 113a*** *The master said: ‘Said R. Johanan to him, But surely the whole of Eretz Israel had been thus examined’. Wherein do they differ? — One master holds that the Flood descended in Eretz Israel;[[752]](#footnote-752) while the other master holds that it did not descend [there]. R. Nahman b. Isaac observed: Both interpret the same text, [Viz.:] Son of man, say unto her: Thou art a land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.[[753]](#footnote-753) R. Johanan holds: Scripture speaks rhetorically:[[754]](#footnote-754) O Eretz Israel, how art thou not clean; did then the rain [flood] descend upon thee in the day of indignation? While Resh Lakish holds that it bears its plain sense: Eretz Israel, thou art not clean, [for] did not the rain descend upon thee in the day of indignation?*

***Zevachim 113b*** *Others state, Resh Lakish refuted R. Johanan: ‘Where are the dead of the Flood; where are the dead of Nebuchadnezzar?’ Surely then, since the latter were [in Eretz Israel], the former too were there? — Why say thus? each had its own state.[[755]](#footnote-755)*

*Resh Lakish refuted R. Johanan: Whatsoever was in the dry land, died:[[756]](#footnote-756) according to my opinion that the Flood descended to Eretz Israel, it is well: for that reason they died. But on your view, why did they die? — Because of the heat, in accordance with R. Hisda. For R. Hisda said: With hot passion they sinned, and by hot water they were punished. [For] here it is written, And the water cooled; whilst elsewhere it is said, Then the king’s wrath cooled down.[[757]](#footnote-757)*

*Others state, R. Johanan refuted Resh Lakish: Whatsoever was in the dry land, died. On my opinion that the Flood did not descend to Eretz Israel, it is well: for that reason is it called dry land. But on your view, what is the meaning of ‘dry land’? — The place which was originally dry land. And why does he specify ‘dry land’?[[758]](#footnote-758) — In accordance with R. Hisda. For R. Hisda said: In the generation of the Flood the decree [of destruction] was not decreed against the fish in the sea, because it says, ‘Whatsoever was in the dry land died’, but not the fish in the sea.*

*On the view that the Flood did not descend there, it is well: thus the reem[[759]](#footnote-759) stayed there. But on the view that it did descend, where did it stay?[[760]](#footnote-760) — Said R. Jannai: They took the young [of the reem] into the Ark. But surely Rabbah b. Bar Hanah said: I saw a sea reem, one day old, which was as big as Mount Tabor. And how big is Mount Tabor? Forty parasangs.[[761]](#footnote-761) Its neck, stretched out, was three parasangs; the place where its head rested was a parasang and a half. It cast a ball of excrements and blocked the Jordan! — Said R. Johanan: They took its head [only] into the Ark. But a master said: The place where its head rested was three parasangs? — Rather, they took the tip of its nose into the Ark. But surely R. Johanan said: The Flood did not descend in Eretz Israel?[[762]](#footnote-762) — He explains [it thus] on the view of Resh Lakish. But the Ark plunged up and down?[[763]](#footnote-763) — Said Resh Lakish: They tied its horns to the Ark.[[764]](#footnote-764) But surely R. Hisda said: The people in the generation of the Flood sinned with hot passion, and with hot water they were punished?[[765]](#footnote-765) — And on your view, how could the Ark travel [at all]?[[766]](#footnote-766) Moreover, how did Og king of Bashan stand?[[767]](#footnote-767) Rather, a miracle was performed for it [the water], and it was cooled at the side of the Ark.*

*Now according to Resh Lakish, even granted that the Flood fell upon Eretz Israel, surely, however, none [of the dead] were left there. For Resh Lakish said: Why was it [Babylon] called Mezulah? Because all the dead of the Flood were dumped [niztallelu] there? And R. Johanan said: Why was it called Shinar? Because all the dead of the Flood were shaken out thither [nin’aru lesham]? — Yet it was impossible that some should not have cleaved [remained]. R. Abbahu said: Why was it called Shinar? — Because it shakes out its wealthy men [mena’ereth ‘ashirim].[[768]](#footnote-768) But we see that there are [wealthy people there]? — They do not last three generations. R. Ammi said: He who eats earth of Babylon is as though he ate the flesh of his ancestors.[[769]](#footnote-769) It has also been learnt likewise: He who eats earth in Babylon is as though he ate the flesh of his ancestors. Some say, It is as though he ate of abominations and creeping things.[[770]](#footnote-770)*

The Gemara clearly suggests that the flood did not affect the land of Israel in the same way that it affected the rest of the world. I believe that this is why we find that the land of Israel was the superior land.

The Torah directly tells us of the superiority of the land of Israel and the Gemara tells us how much better.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 8:7-10*** *For HaShem thy God bringeth thee into a good land, 8 a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, springing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey; 9 a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 13:22*** *They went up in, the south, and he came to Hebron, and there were Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of the giant. Now Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan of Egypt.*

Rashi then comments thusly:

***had been built seven years:*** *Is it possible that Ham built Hebron for Canaan, his youngest son, before he built Zoan for Mitzrayim, his eldest son? Rather, it was stocked with everything good, seven times more than Zoan. The intention is to inform you of the excellence of the Land of Israel, for there is no place in the Land of Israel rockier than Hebron, which was why it was designated for a burial ground. And there is no country in the world as excellent as Egypt, as it says, “it was like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt”.[[771]](#footnote-771) Zoan is the best part of Egypt, for the residence of the kings is situated there, as it says, “for his princes were in Zoan”.[[772]](#footnote-772) Yet Hebron was superior to it seven times over.[[773]](#footnote-773)*

The superior climatic conditions caused the earth to yield fruits and vegetables far superior in nutritional qualities to anything we have known. There is a hint to this in the book of Numbers when the spies brought back a report concerning the land:

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 13:23*** *And they came unto the valley of Eshkol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bore it upon a pole between two; they took also of the pomegranates, and of the figs.--* ***24*** *That place was called the valley of Eshkol, because of the cluster which the children of Israel cut down from thence.--* ***25*** *And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days.* ***26*** *And they went and came to Moshe, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.* ***27*** *And they told him, and said: ‘We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.*

Following Moshe’s instructions, the spies took samples of fruit from the land. A cluster of grapes was so large that it took eight men to carry it. Two more men carried a pomegranate and a fig each. The fruits of this land were visibly superior to the fruits that they had seen in Egypt:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 13:10*** *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before HaShem destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of HaShem, like the land of Egypt, as thou goest unto Zoar.*

The people of the land of Israel were also visibly superior as they were giants.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 13:32-33 32*** *And they spread an evil report of the land which they had spied out unto the children of Israel, saying: ‘The land, through which we have passed to spy it out, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nephilim; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.’*

The Land of Israel produced massive peaches.

***Ketubot 112a*** *R. Helbo, R. ‘Awira and R. Jose b. Hanina once visited a certain place where a peach that was [as large] as a pot of Kefar Hino[[774]](#footnote-774) was brought before them. (And how big is a pot of Kefar Hino? — Five seah.) One third [of the fruit] they ate, one third they declared free to all, and one third they put before their beasts. A year later R. Eleazar came there on a visit and [a peach] was brought to him. Taking it in his one hand[[775]](#footnote-775) he exclaimed, A fruitful land into a salt waste, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.[[776]](#footnote-776)*

The Land of Israel produced massive wheat grains.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:13*** *He made him ride on the high places of the earth, and he did eat the fruitage of the field; and He made him to suck honey out of the crag, and oil out of the flinty rock;* ***14*** *Curd of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and he-goats, with the kidneys of the wheat; and of the blood of the grape thou drankest foaming wine.*

**Consider:** People used to live 900+ years in the early years of Creation. Now we are down to something like 80-90.

If humans who are made in the image of HaShem suffered such downgrade, what would that mean for vegetable and inanimate matter? They probably suffered a lot more, and in an exponential sense, though they wouldn’t show so much to the naked eye.

The term: “kidneys of the wheat” caused the rabbis to declare that in the world to come there will be grains of wheat the size of kidneys. This suggests that this was the normal size of wheat in the beginning.

***Taanit 23a*** *Another explanation. ‘In their season’: [This means that rain would fall only] on the Chava of Wednesdays[[777]](#footnote-777) and Sabbaths. For so it happened in the days of Simeon b. Shetah. [At that time] rain fell on the Chava of Wednesdays and Sabbaths so that the grains of wheat came up as large as kidneys and the grains of barley like the stones of olives, and of the lentils like the golden denarii and they stored specimens of them for future generations in order to make known unto them the in effects of sin, as it is said****. Your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have withholden good from you.****[[778]](#footnote-778) Likewise we find happened in the days of Herod when the people were occupied with the rebuilding of the Temple. [At that time] rain fell during the night but in the morning the wind blew and the clouds dispersed and the sun shone so that the people were able to go out to their work, and then they knew that they were engaged in sacred work.*

The land of Israel was a land flowing with milk and honey.[[779]](#footnote-779)

***Megilah 6a*** *For Resh Lakish has said: I have myself seen the trail of milk and honey21 round Sepphoris, and it is sixteen miles by sixteen miles. Nor can you say that [even so] his is not as good as his brothers, since Rabbah b. Bar Hanah said in the name of R. Johanan: I have myself seen the trail of milk and honey of the whole land of Israel, and it extends [altogether] about as far as from Be Kubi to the Fort of Tulbanke, twenty-two parasangs in length and six parasangs in breadth?[[780]](#footnote-780) Even so, he preferred fields and vineyards. This is also indicated by the language of the text, as it says, ‘Naphtali upon the high places of the field’. This is a proof.*

“*flowing with milk and honey* - This is a recurrent symbol of the land’s fertility. Ancient Egyptian sources testify to the richness of the land. The combination of milk and honey implies that the land supports both agriculture (honey from dates) and pasturage (milk from goats). The phrase is never included in the divine promises to the patriarchs, for whom famine was frequently a grim reality. Their faith did not need to be reinforced by stressing the attractiveness of the land. **Such an enticement would carry weight for the demoralized, enslaved masses of Israelites.** Milk in the Bible is generally from the goat, “the little man’s cow”. A plentiful supply presupposes an abundance of goats, which in turn points to ample pasturage and the prospect of plentiful meat, hide, and wool. Honey in the Bible is predominantly the thick, sweet syrup produced from dates. The combination of milk and honey provides a highly nutritious diet. Some Arab tribes are known to subsist for months at a time solely on milk products and honey”.[[781]](#footnote-781)

“This leads to the examination of one additional interpretation by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch in his commentary on the expression a “land flowing with milk and honey”. Instead of focusing on the meaning of milk and honey, Rabbi Hirsch focuses on the meaning of the word for flowing (zavat), and writes: “It is very characteristic that the abundance of produce by *zov* only occurs in reference to Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel) In Tanakh, the word zov never means overflowing. It occurs mainly to describe a human pathological condition, and otherwise as a flowing forth caused by miraculous power. It does not seem to describe a land that develops the abundance in accordance with its natural fertility, but a land that only does this under special conditions. Palestine is a hard land which can only blossom and flourish ‘under the continuous special care of God for it, from one end of the year to the other.’ When it gets water, it blossoms luxuriously. But it only gets the water from above. It is a land that makes it necessary for its inhabitants to be good”.[[782]](#footnote-782)

Nachmanides[[783]](#footnote-783) writes that the key word in the verse is “flowing”. Fruit trees grow in many different terrains, but their produce overflow with nectar only when the land is especially fertile, when the trees are particularly well-nourished.

Similarly, livestock survives in many habitats, but only overflow with milk when they are in particularly fertile pastures. Thus, a “land flowing with milk and honey” is indicative and symptomatic of a greater good—the fertility of the Promised Land.

The Midrash[[784]](#footnote-784) explains that milk symbolizes superior quality, richness of taste, and nourishment. Honey represents sweetness. The goodness of Israel is both nourishing and pleasant.

## Back to the future

What is fascinating is a statement given by King Solomon:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9-10*** *The thing which has been, is that which will be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, “See, this is new?” It has already been in ancient times before us.*

We learn from this that there is a future world in which all of the changes brought by the curse and the flood will be reversed. We will again walk with HaShem in Gan Eden.[[785]](#footnote-785) All of the fantastic things that existed in the beginning will be restored. Meditate on those changes and you will see that we have a lot to look forward to.

However, there is another amazing aspect to these pesukim. This means that if you read about the lion and the lamb laying down together, in the future, then is also means that it happened in the past!

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:6-9*** *And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of HaShem, as the waters cover the sea.*

R. Nahman claims that the Latter Days will induce greater understanding accompanied by "a marvelous peace in the world". Only in a time of great peace can two major antipodes such as the wolf and the lamb coexist. This increased understanding will also eliminate anger and cruelty, which now result from its absence. R. Nahman bases this on the verse in Ecclesiastes: "Anger abides in the breasts of fools”.[[786]](#footnote-786)

We can see this same idea by looking at one of five unique words that can be read as applying to two phrases:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21*** *HaShem smelled the pleasant aroma, and said: I will no longer curse the earth for the man.*

The word בַּעֲבוּר, translated here as “for”, can also mean “because of”. That is, it can mean that the earth was punished because of man, or on his behalf. The same phrase was used previously in a similar context, when Adam was given his punishment:

אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה בַּעֲבוּרֶךָ

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17*** *The earth will be cursed for/because of you.*

Why should the earth have to pay the price for man’s sin? The answer is that it is not being punished, but is rather being made to adapt to man’s new level. That is to say: The earth provides for man’s needs. It originally functioned on a high level, with ready-made trees to nourish high-level mortals. But after man was taken down a notch as a result of his sin, the earth was brought lower as well, so that man, on his new, low level, could still, somehow, enjoy its benefits, albeit “by the sweat of his brow”,[[787]](#footnote-787) and not die. This is what is meant by “the earth will be cursed on your account”.

Accordingly, in the future, when man once again repairs his ways and his soul, the earth, too, will be raised up. We see this process beginning before our eyes: Working the land has been made easier with modern equipment, just as giving birth, Chava’s punishment, has been made less painful by modern medicine. In addition, the status of women has been upgraded, and men no longer rule over them, the other aspect of women’s punishment, as they once did. The world is coming closer to its final rectification of the sin of Adam and Chava, leading to its ultimate redemption.

Change in Nature's Characteristics:

Nature's characteristics will be different in the Latter Days. Ezekiel prophesizes foul waters will become healthy ones: "But its swamps and marshes shall not become wholesome; they will serve to [supply] salt. All kinds of trees for food will grow up on both banks of the stream. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail; they will yield new fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the Temple. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing”.[[788]](#footnote-788)

Midrashic literature mentions similar changes: "R. Yehuda said that in this world there is a harvest every six months and the trees give every twelve months fruit. When the Messiah arrives, there will be a harvest every month and the trees will give fruit every two months”.[[789]](#footnote-789)

Another midrash talks of peace in the 'Future to Come,' a synonym for the Messianic era. It also says the environment will change and provide greater affluence, quoting Isaiah: "For thus said the Lord, I will extend to her prosperity like a stream, the wealth of nations like a wadi in flood; And you shall drink of it”.[[790]](#footnote-790)

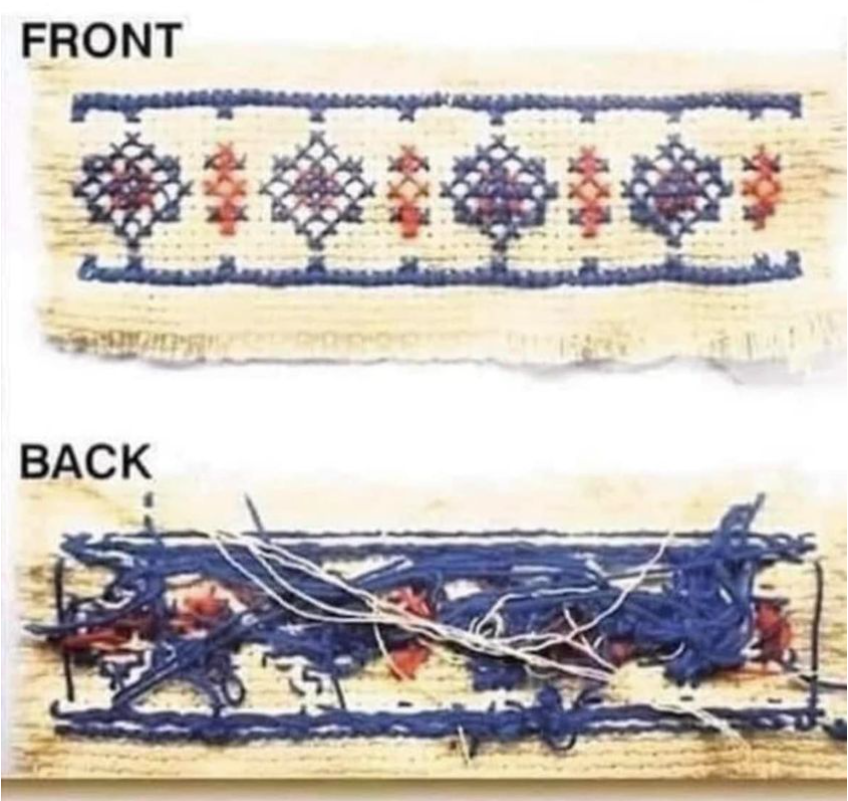
The Talmud quotes R. Hia, son of R. Ashi, who says, in the name of Rav, that "trees which bear no fruit, in the future will give their produce”.[[791]](#footnote-791) Elsewhere it mentions that Rabban Gamliel predicted that one day the trees would produce fruit every day. One student joked there was nothing new under the sun, indicating that as this was not happening presently anywhere, it would never happen. So Rabban Gamliel showed him a caper bush, which produced fruit daily.

On another occasion Rabban Gamliel predicted how in the future the land of Israel would bring forth bread and finished woolen clothes. The student once again joked and Rabban Gamliel then showed him various things resembling bread and woolen clothes such as some types of mushrooms and barks of trees.[[792]](#footnote-792)

These makloket, these disputes regarding things that demonstrate that these changes are not new things, but rather thigs that had been before, will also resolve bthemselves when we understand the antediluvian world.

One midrashic source develops the connection between the environment in the Latter Days and that of Paradise. It relates that R. Bibi, in the name of R. Reuven, claimed that there were six elements which were taken away from Adam, to be restored to him by Ben Nahshon, the Messiah.[[793]](#footnote-793) One concerns changes in the cosmic environment. The light of the moon will become much brighter. This is based on Isaiah's saying: "And the light of the moon shall become like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall become sevenfold, like the light of the seven days”.[[794]](#footnote-794)

# The Tapestry Woven by Noach



The episode involving Noach is a tapestry with threads that weave themselves through time and through the scripture. They inform and elaborate on future events and will reverberate throughout time.

Let’s start by examining a pasuk from the Torah and look at how it weaves through history.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

The Zohar interprets the above pasuk along prophetical lines:

***Zohar I:117a*** *In the 600th year of the 6th millennium [****1839*** *CE] the upper gates of wisdom will be opened and also the wellsprings of wisdom below. This will prepare the world for the 7th millennium like a person prepares himself on Friday for Shabbat, as the sun begins to wane. So it will be here. There is a hint about this in the verse “In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life …all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened”.[[795]](#footnote-795)*

This passage,[[796]](#footnote-796) from the Zohar, has been explained by the Talmudic[[797]](#footnote-797) Sage-Mystics of Israel, the Chassidic masters and specifically by the Sages of Shklov,[[798]](#footnote-798) as referring to the fact that from the 18th, and especially from the 19th, century onward, the Kabbalah would experience a profound renewal clarifying and rendering more accessible her own esoteric traditions.[[799]](#footnote-799) Any student of contemporary mysticism cannot but be astounded by the relatively recent dramatic accessibility of the Kabbalah and its new and ever increasing popularity.[[800]](#footnote-800)

*With the gradual opening of the gates of wisdom[[801]](#footnote-801) above and below the messianic revelation that will begin from the year 1840 will resemble the wisdom of King Solomon in his day.[[802]](#footnote-802)*

Paralleling the revelations of “wisdom from above”, this prophecy necessitates revolutionary discoveries occurring simultaneously in the secular world, with regards to the “wisdom from below”. Stimulated by the Industrial Revolution of the 18th century, the wellsprings of theoretical models and new technology have incessantly burst forth. A wholly new paradigm of scientific thought, and consciousness, is emerging. The year 1840 witnessed the emergence of electromagnetic theory,[[803]](#footnote-803) electromagnetism,[[804]](#footnote-804) which in turn paved the way for the discovery of radio waves, the harnessing of electricity, telecommunications, television, computers, and the investigation of atomic energy and the development of the atomic bomb. New psychological and neurological descriptions of the brain, ethnopharmacology,[[805]](#footnote-805) black hole phenomenon,[[806]](#footnote-806) genetic engineering, lasers and holography, are further examples of the changes and ideas that have taken place in our generation. Of even greater significance has been the effect of the early 19th century breakthroughs of non-Euclidean geometry, which set the stage for the 20th century theories of Einstein’s relativity,[[807]](#footnote-807) quantum mechanics, and the search for the Unified Field Theory.[[808]](#footnote-808) Currently, under the name of “Super Strings”,[[809]](#footnote-809) this theory is being proclaimed by leading physicists as an unmistakable genesis of a new physics. Most recently, the scientific community and public at large are being initiated into a new world of fractal geometry,[[810]](#footnote-810) chaos theory,[[811]](#footnote-811) virtual reality,[[812]](#footnote-812) and the ever accelerating, neural network[[813]](#footnote-813) of the worldwide Internet.

The statement, “wellsprings of wisdom below”, is interpreted as the industrial revolution, which according to Wikipedia, had its origins in the 1780’s but was not felt until 1830’s or 1840’s. We are still feeling the effects today with all the scientific revolutions that followed.

The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanize production. The Second used electric power to create mass production. The Third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century. It is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres.

There are three reasons why today’s transformations represent not merely a prolongation of the Third Industrial Revolution but rather the arrival of a Fourth and distinct one: velocity, scope, and systems impact. The speed of current breakthroughs has no historical precedent. When compared with previous industrial revolutions, the Fourth is evolving at an exponential rather than a linear pace. Moreover, it is disrupting almost every industry in every country. And the breadth and depth of these changes herald the transformation of entire systems of production, management, and governance.[[814]](#footnote-814)

According to the teachings of esoteric Judaism, all knowledge, both spiritual and material wisdom, originally coexisted in a seamless unity within a higher dimension. Together, these two modes of wisdom comprised a larger, all-encompassing Universal Torah.[[815]](#footnote-815) A collapse, i.e., the episode of the eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil,[[816]](#footnote-816) however, ensued in which the database of all knowledge split itself into “spiritual” and “material” planes of existence. Thus, we have the roots of the conflict between “religion” and “science”. Yet, any given mystical or technological truth can only be one of two sides of the same puzzle. Thus, the material world is also a mode of spirituality, only externalized and concretized. Vice-versa, the spiritual world is a mode of the material reality, only internalized and spiritualized.[[817]](#footnote-817)

From both a secular and scientific perspective, as well as from a fundamentalist religious perspective, this unique synergistic re-union is very challenging, if not intimidating and appears “heretical”. Yet, this is the explicit doctrine of the Gaon of Vilna[[818]](#footnote-818) and his clandestine cadre of Talmudic Sage-Mystics of Shklov. The ultimate truth is not revealed through the supra-natural alone nor is it only discovered through scientific development; it is more than both. Both forms of wisdom are destined to reunite. Perforce, this is stimulating a worldwide paradigm shift in consciousness. These stages of global evolution are aspects of the Messianic Era which is central to the teachings of esoteric as well as traditional Judaism.[[819]](#footnote-819)

The greatest challenge to religion is science because science can offer an alternative to HaShem[[820]](#footnote-820) and His creation. That is why the Satan makes this offer to those who would choose this path. As a matter of interest, we have no record of any atheists[[821]](#footnote-821) before the rise of science, and in particular the idea of evolution.

According to this tradition, our role as the “Final Generation” in the re-unification of these two modes of wisdom is achieved by matching the right tool with the right job. In other words, we must use the new maps, models, and metaphors of the “wisdom from below” in order to grasp the “wisdom from above”. In turn, the transcendent wisdom of the Torah will cast its light of clarity and direction upon the enchanting and often overpowering tools of science and technology.

The “gates of wisdom above” parallel the opening of the “wellsprings of wisdom below”. This refers to revolutionary discoveries in the sciences that would completely change our view of the world.[[822]](#footnote-822) We have also seen ongoing examples of the revelations of “wisdom from above”. We can see it historically in the release and publishing of crucial Kabbalistic teachings. Although a number of the works of the Arizal[[823]](#footnote-823) were circulated after he died in 1572, the most authoritative texts of Lurianic Kabbalah, the *Shemone Sh’arim[[824]](#footnote-824)* by R. Chayim Vital,[[825]](#footnote-825) remained in closely guarded manuscript until the beginning of the 20th-century. The availability of previously unpublished esoteric manuscripts of the early Kabbalists, the teachings of the Ramchal[[826]](#footnote-826) and the Hasidic masters,[[827]](#footnote-827) and finally the esoteric writings of the Gaon and his disciples, including *Kol HaTor,[[828]](#footnote-828)* have given our generation increasing access to these crucial teachings.

This does not mean that our generation is more advanced than our predecessors. To the contrary, our grasp of the “inner” wisdom is decidedly more “external”. It does mean, however, that this wisdom is no longer restricted to a select few. In order to hasten the redemption, the inner wisdom has come down into the public domain, with all the inherent dangers that this “descent” suggests. This is born out, on the one hand, by the emergence of the Kabbalah as an accepted field of academic research in universities in Israel and in the world at large. This is in sharp contrast to the Kabbalah’s previous status of belonging to the “Old World” and the realm of superstition. On the other hand, this prophecy is reflected in the appearance of Orthodox Yeshivot, mainly Sephardic, which openly teach Kabbalah side by side with Talmud[[829]](#footnote-829) and Halachah.[[830]](#footnote-830) Further, any longtime student of the Kabbalah cannot but be staggered by the recent proliferation of classical Kabbalah literature, in Hebrew, English, and other languages, which continues to increase in momentum.

5750AM[[831]](#footnote-831) (September 1989) on the cosmic weekly calendar corresponds to 12:00 noon. At that time the sun begins to set. 5750AM begins the change over to the final climax. We are expecting the following events:

1. ikvot Meshicha – the footsteps of the Messiah - The time immediately before Mashiach.[[832]](#footnote-832)
2. HaAtchalta d’Geula[[833]](#footnote-833) – the release of Mashiach ben Yosef from captivity.
3. Yemot HaMashiach[[834]](#footnote-834) – Messianic days.

September 1989, 5751AM, is Friday noon[[835]](#footnote-835) (between the eves). Thus, the intensity of Ohr Mashiach is rapidly increasing. This time frame saw the collapse of the Berlin wall and the beginning of the demise of communism in Russia. It is also the time when the internet opened up. By 9/11/1993 the World Trade Center collapses after the most dramatic terrorist event in history. It was also the deadliest.

We are now at approximately 12:40 PM, in 5776. Every hour is 41 years and 8 months. (At the time of evening there will be light.) Six and a half hours after dawn.

In our day we are seeing 7500 journal articles published every single day! These all represent new ideas and understanding in the many fields of science. That’s how fast science is growing. The sum total of man’s knowledge doubles every 5.5 years. Nine out of ten scientists, that have ever lived, live today because of the tremendous outpouring of the Ohr Rishon. The acceleration of human knowledge is astounding! Just remember: This all brings the Geula, the redemption, by preparing the world and effecting the needed tikkun, correction.

This is all necessary to prepare the world for the outpouring of Chakma, wisdom, that will come with Mashiach. Remember what happened at Mt. Sinai when the Bne Israel were blasted back 12 mil?[[836]](#footnote-836) We need to be prepared, and this out-pouring of the Ohr Rishon is necessary so that we are able to withstand the Chakma, the wisdom, of the messianic age. It is not just the Jewish world that needs to be prepared, it is also the Gentile world that needs to be prepared.

This preparation includes movies which are highly spiritual and messianic in nature. Consider Star Wars and “the force”. Its similarity to kedusha or tumah, impurity, is so obvious that it is concealed only from the naïve. Yet, they are gaining the Chakma, the messianic understanding to prepare them for the Ohr Rishon. Hollywood is teaching kabbalistic concepts in a manner that is palatable to the general public, via movies and videos. Many movies are so strongly kabbalistic that the wise have no problem discerning it. What is remarkable is that these movies are being shown throughout the world and are translated into many other languages, all to prepare the world for the messianic age. HaShem is using the tumah, the impurity, of Hollywood movies to convey deep spiritual concepts in a form that is acceptable to the Gentiles; so that the whole world is prepared for Mashiach. They are learning the concepts of redemption, of Messiah, of kedusha, and evil vs. good.

***Iyov (Job) 14:4*** *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Eventually, when the world is properly prepared, the unclean will be removed and only the clean will remain.

In the Torah world, we are now seeing books on the Gemara from ArtScroll that fully explain the Gemara, in English. The books contain background and explanations that are difficult to come by. We have never had such publications in the past. This suggests that Torah is emerging from the klipah, the husks that have made learning so difficult in the past. The whole concept of daf yomi’s popularity revolves around the ArtScroll Gemara’s accessibility to those who were not able to attend Yeshiva. Because HaShem is freeing Torah from the klipot, we are getting all of these astounding publications, which are bringing Torah to a much wider audience.

The Ohr Rishon will have three components to notice:

1. The topics
2. The forms
3. The methods

ArtScroll is completely remaking the form into that which is much more comprehensible with less research and providing expert insights at the tips of your fingers.

Kabbalah, together with scientific discovery and its technology, is essential in ushering in, and even accelerating, the incoming and final stage of global evolution, traditionally referred to as the Messianic Era. Thus, modern science and technology are one of the manifestations of the messianic process itself. The doctrine of (combined and intertwined) “Kabbalah and science” securely grabs hold of both extremities of the separate, and often opposing, disciplines of ancient *religious truth* and evolving *scientific knowledge*. Accordingly, the true confluence and interpenetration of these systems will only emerge when these two things happen. Paradoxically, the newly discovered models and metaphors provided by the “external wisdom” of science will help illuminate the deepest secrets of the ancient mysteries of the “internal wisdom” of the Kabbalah. Reciprocally, those same ancient mysteries of the Kabbalah’s “internal wisdom” will define, explain, and help reshape our perception of the entire phenomenon of the external physical world.

There is even more to the unique vision of the role that secular wisdom must play in the messianic unfolding. Not only does science and technology play a prophetic and mystical role, alongside the ancient mystical teachings[[837]](#footnote-837) of Judaism but, according to this tradition of the Talmudic Sage-Mystics, this synthesis depends upon the Jewish nation being re-centered in a rebuilt Jerusalem.

## Canaan’s curse

How long did it take to grow the wine grapes that Noach planted?[[838]](#footnote-838)

Answer: It flourished in a day. Remember he had already offered copious sacrifices.

Where did Noach get the grape vines?

Answer: According to the Midrash, he took them on the ark. According to the Targum, a river washed it from Gan Eden. According to the Zohar, the vine already had ripe grapes.[[839]](#footnote-839)

What was Noach attempting to do when he drank the wine, what was his goal?

Answer: Our Sages teach that the grape vine was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Noach was attempting to recreate the test of Gan Eden and avoid the sin. Unfortunately, he failed.

Answer #2: Rashi says that Noach was attempting to create a fourth son.[[840]](#footnote-840)

What sin was perpetrated against Noach?

Some say he was emasculated.

Some say that Noach’s wife’s nakedness was seen.[[841]](#footnote-841)

Some say that Noach’s nakedness was seen.

Cham in fact committed an incestuous act with Noach’s wife (his mother). The rationales for this interpretation are several. First, the wording of “uncover nakedness” is only used in Vayikra to describe heterosexual incest, not the homosexual act. More specifically, Vayikra 18:8 equates “the nakedness of your mother” with the “nakedness of your father”. As well, if Cham engaged in incestuous sex with his mother, the text’s emphasis on his son Canaan becomes clear. Canaan is the product of this incestuous union, as Moab and Ammon are the product of Lot and his daughters. That is why the text consistently identifies Cham as the “father of Canaan”, and why Noach chooses to curse Canaan upon awakening. The Torah also alludes to the possibility that this occurred in Cham’s mother’s tent. As Rashi notes, the written word (the ketiv) “the tent” in v 21 has the feminine possessive suffix, “her tent”, although we read (keri) the word as “his tent”.

**Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 9:21**:

**his tent**: it is written אָהֳלֹה [and not the usual אָהֳלוֹ]. This alludes to the Ten Tribes, who were referred to by the name of Samaria, which was called Oholah [אָהֳלָה],[[842]](#footnote-842) who were exiled on account of wine, as is written:[[843]](#footnote-843) “who drink from basins of wine”.[[844]](#footnote-844)

Cham’s act of sleeping with his mother would therefore be seen as an act of rebellion against Noach’s authority (as seen later with Reuven with Bilha, Avshalom with David’s concubines, and Adoniyahu’s attempt to claim Avishag as his rightful bride from Shlomo). We could suggest that this was Chazal’s intention in interpreting his act as castration – the ultimate removal of the father’s creative power.[[845]](#footnote-845)

How did Noach know who had sinned against him?

He had a spirit of prophecy.

How long did it take Cham to raise four boys?

Good question. Based on how long it took to grow the grapes... It was the same day. What a miraculous world.

Noach cursed Canaan:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20-27*** *And Noach the husbandman began, and planted a vineyard. 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. 24 And Noach awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. 25 And he said: Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said: Blessed be HaShem, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant. 27 God enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant.*

The curse of Canaan is a thread that will be woven down through time and have a tremendous impact of the Bne Israel and the land of Israel.

Why did Noach curse *Canaan* when **Cham** was the one who committed the sin?

Answers:

1. Canaan was Cham’s fourth son and Noach was trying to have a fourth son. In the ark, Noach suffered greatly under the workload and wished he had a fourth son to serve him. He hoped to have one after the Flood, but now this opportunity was denied him. He thus cursed Canaan, in effect saying that just as Ham denied him a fourth son to serve him, so too his fourth son[[846]](#footnote-846) would not serve his father but would be forced to serve the other brothers.[[847]](#footnote-847)

2. It was actually Canaan who sinned against Noach (by castrating and possibly also sodomizing him, as the Talmud[[848]](#footnote-848) explains). Ham only “saw”[[849]](#footnote-849) and mockingly spread the word.[[850]](#footnote-850)

3. Noach and his three sons had already been blessed by HaShem and therefore could not be cursed.[[851]](#footnote-851)

4. Noach saw prophetically that the Canaanites would be the most accursed of Ham’s descendants – just as our forefathers saw their lowliness and eschewed them. Thus, the status of slavery was most appropriate for them.[[852]](#footnote-852)

Why did Noach make Canaan and his descendants slaves?

Answer: Noach wanted the fourth son to serve him in his old age.[[853]](#footnote-853)

**Rashi’s comments to Genesis 9:25**: **Cursed be Canaan:** You have caused me to be incapable of begetting another fourth son[[854]](#footnote-854) to serve me. Cursed be your fourth son, that he should minister to the children of these older ones [Shem and Japhet], upon whom the burden of serving me has been placed from now on.[[855]](#footnote-855) Now what did Ham see (what reason did he have) that he castrated him? He said to his brothers”,The first man [Adam] had two sons, and one killed the other so as to inherit the world, and our father has three sons, and he still desires a fourth son”![[856]](#footnote-856)

Notice in Bereshit (Genesis) 9:25 that Noach did not say that Canaan would become cursed, but rather that Canaan was ALREADY cursed.

Remember that none of the Patriarchs or tribes married Canaanites because they were cursed.[[857]](#footnote-857) This tells us that it was not JUST Canaan who was cursed, but all of his descendants as well.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 24:2-3*** *And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3 And I will make thee swear by HaShem, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:*

**Bereshit (Genesis) 28:1** And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him: ‘Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Before his death, Noach divided the land between his three sons, and the country in which Mount Moriah is located was given to his youngest son Shem.[[858]](#footnote-858)

This next reference shows that even though Noach assigned the Holy Land to Shem who became the priest because Noach was maimed and could no longer be the priest.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 306*** *THESE ARE THE OFFSPRINGS OF NOACH: NOACH. Thus it is written, The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that is wise taketh souls:[[859]](#footnote-859) what is the fruit of the righteous? Life, religious actions, and good deeds.[[860]](#footnote-860) And he that is wise taketh souls: for he fed and provided for [its inhabitants] the whole twelve months in the Ark. After all this praise, Behold, shall the righteous be requited in the earth?[[861]](#footnote-861) When he was about to leave it, was he requited? Surely R. Huna said in R. Liezer’s name: When Noach was leaving the Ark a lion set on him and maimed him, so that he was not fit to sacrifice,1 and his son Shem sacrificed in his stead.*

In order to further understand the biblical text and its significance today, we must take a look at the next time the Land of Canaan appears in the Bible, right at the end of our Torah portion: “And Terah took his son Abram, and Lot the son of Haran his grandson, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, wife of Abram his son, and they departed with them from Ur Kasdim to set out for the Land of Canaan; they arrived at Haran and settled there”.[[862]](#footnote-862)

Shem resided in Jerusalem officiating as the priest, while Canaanites occupied the rest of the land of Israel.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 12:6*** *And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite [was] then in the land.*

God’s thoughts are very profound indeed. Consider for a moment why He wanted Canaan of all people to own the Holy Land before it came into possession by the Jewish people. Seeing that Canaan was the slave who became the servant of Shem at his father’s command and who acquired the Holy Land at the time all the nations were split up, there would **not** be the slightest complaint by anyone who would be dispossessed due to the Jewish people taking over that land. Had it not belonged to slaves who by definition do not own anything in their own right, God would have had to justify dispossessing such a people. Now that this land was “owned” by the Canaanites there was not even a need to justify their becoming dispossessed, because everything that they owned belonged to Shem and his descendants who owned these Canaanite slaves.

## Earth’s Curse

After Adam ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good an Evil, HaShem God cursed the land.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17*** *And unto Adam He said: ‘Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it;* ***cursed is the land*** *for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.* ***18******Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth*** *to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.* ***19*** *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the land; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’*

The curse was such that if Adam planted barley, then thorns and thistles sprouted. Adam, and his descendants, worked hard but were unable to reap much because of this curse. However, this all changed with the birth of Noach, in 1056AM.:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29*** *And he called his name Noach, saying: ‘This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh from the land which HaShem hath cursed.’*

***Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 11*** *Lemech lived a hundred and eighty-two years and begot his son*,[[863]](#footnote-863) through whom the world was to be reestablished. He called him Noach (lit. “comfort, ease”), saying: *This one will comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hand*.[[864]](#footnote-864) How did he know that this one would comfort us in our work? Was Lemech a prophet? R. Simeon the son of Yehozadak said: There was a tradition that when the Holy One, blessed be He, told Adam: *Cursed be the land for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it*,[[865]](#footnote-865) Adam inquired: “Master of the Universe, how long will the land be cursed”?[[866]](#footnote-866) He replied: “Until a man-child already circumcised shall be born”. When Noach was born circumcised, Lemech understood immediately that this was the one concerning whom the Holy One, blessed be He, had said: *This one will comfort us in our work*.[[867]](#footnote-867)

***Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 11***What do the words *in our work and in the toil of our hands* (ibid.) imply? Prior to Noach’s birth, men did not reap what they sowed. They would sow wheat and reap thorns and thistles, but when Noach was born, the world reverted to normal: Wheat was sown and wheat was reaped; barley was sown and barley was reaped. Furthermore, prior to Noach’s birth, men performed all their labor by hand, as it is written: *And in the toil of our hands,* but after Noach was born, plows, scythes, axes, and other implements were introduced.

After a little more than a thousand years, with the birth of Noach, the curse that Adam incurred was lifted. Noach lived 600 years before the flood and he saw the earth in a completely different light compared to all those who came before him.

Noach’s birth brought monumental changes to the earth. Now, a single crop would yield enough food for 40 years.[[868]](#footnote-868)

Rabbi Wasserman comments that, “Behold it is known that before the flood, the nature of all creation was stronger and better than after the flood”. According to various Midrashim, antediluvial man sowed once every forty years (after the birth of Noach). In addition, the atmosphere during the entire year was comparable to the springtime between Pesach and Shavuot. Because of this, the fruits were superior both in terms of taste and quality.

However, the Flood changed the nature of the atmosphere. The air deteriorated and damaged the human organism, dramatically reducing lifespans. Man didn’t change but his environment did. Even after the Flood, specific righteous individuals merited longer lives but nothing like the pre-Flood lifespans.[[869]](#footnote-869)

The Midrash Tanchuma says that when Noach was born, the world reverted to a state of functioning: “Before Noach was born, they would plant wheat and harvest thorns and thistles. Once Noach was born, the world reverted to the way it was, in which people reaped what the planted: they would plant wheat and harvest wheat”.

One can deduce that the antediluvian world had the interesting ability for the wheat to ripens as quickly as it is put into the land. We can deduce this from what Solomon said:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9-10*** *The thing which has been, is that which will be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, “See, this is new?” It has already been in ancient times before us.*

***Amos 9:13*** *Behold, the days come, saith HaShem, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.*

The Midrash goes on to elaborate on the above pesukim:

**Midrash PESIQTA deRAB KAHANA, Pisqa Seven, VII:X** What is the meaning of, *and the asses feeding beside them*? ‎Said R. Hama, “A model of the order of the world to come was made for him, in line with this verse: *Behold, the days are coming, says HaShem, when ‎the one who ploughs will overtake the one who reaps*.[[870]](#footnote-870) [Mendelbaum: That is, corn will ripen within moments after the seed is planted, so ‎that browing animals will follow in the tracks of the plowing animals.]”

Thus we can deduce that that in the antediluvian world the wheat ripened as quickly as it was planted.

## Cain’s Curse

The archeological record suggests that there were two types of people in the early days. There were agricultural societies and hunter-gatherer societies. Cain was the agriculturist and Abel was a herder. This changed after Cain killed Abel.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:9*** *And HaShem said unto Cain: ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ And he said: ‘I know not; am I my brother’s keeper?’* ***10*** *And He said: ‘What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the land.* ***11*** *And now cursed art thou from the land, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand.* ***12*** *When thou tillest the land, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth.’*

An adjunct to Adam’s curse, Cain’s curse makes working the land impossible. It seems that Cain is the first hunter-gatherer,[[871]](#footnote-871) though there was no hunting until after the flood.

## The Generation of the Flood

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *And that success caused them to say to God: “Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Your ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, and what profit should we have if we pray unto Him”.[[872]](#footnote-872) The members of the generation of the flood said: Do we need Him for anything, even for the drop of rain that He causes to fall? We have rivers and springs from which we take our supply of water; we do not fear Him. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: With the goodness that I bestowed upon them, with that they infuriate Me and with it I will sentence them, as it is stated: “And behold I will bring the flood of water”.[[873]](#footnote-873)*

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *Thee members of the generation of the flood have no share in the World-to-Come and will not stand in judgment at the end of days, as it is stated: “My soul shall not abide [yadon] in man forever”;[[874]](#footnote-874) neither will they stand in judgment [din] nor shall their souls be restored to them.*

The generations of Noach produced 70 nations. The number seventy signifies a primary way of establishing an elevated connection, of building a community.

The number 70 forms a bookend, alluded to at the beginning and the end of the Five Books of Moshe.

The first time the number 70 appears is in the lists of genealogy following the flood. Genesis chapter 10 enumerates exactly 70 descendants of Noach. According to the commentator Rabbenu Bachya, “We learn from this verse that the world comprises 70 nations, each with its own language”.

From Genesis, the Torah proceeds to tell the story of the formation of the Jewish people. However, we return to the universal number 70 at the close of the Chumash.

As the People of Israel prepare to enter the Land of Israel, Moshe instructs the nation to gather large stones, cover them with plaster and inscribe “every word of this teaching most distinctly [be’er hetev]” (Deuteronomy 27:8). The Talmud explains that “be’er hetev” means Moshe translated the Torah into 70 languages. It was not enough that “this teaching” be understood by Israel, Moshe wanted it to be shared with all the 70 nations in their own language.

70 in Israel = Tree of Life.

70 descendants of Noach = Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil

On Sukkot, we prepare ourselves and the 70 nations to herald in this new era. We thereby offer 70 oxen during this 7 day holiday on behalf of the nations. While Shemini Atzeret culminates with a single ox being offered. The time is also known as Hag HaAsif; the time of the gathering. When under the united rule of Mashiach, the 70 nations will gather ‐ initially passing through the stones set up at the entrance to the Land of Israel upon which the Torah was written in the 70 languages.[[875]](#footnote-875)

Note that the flood lasted a full solar year and the normal lifespan of some species is less than that. This implies that “time” did not pass in the natural manner for the occupants of the Ark.

## Lot was Like Noach

The descendents of Canaan, Ham’s fourth born son, follow in the ways of their father: “Bring them [the visiting angels] out to us, that we may know them”,[[876]](#footnote-876) they demand of Lot. Lot’s offer of his two daughters in lieu of the guests is not acceptable to them. They prefer sexual immorality that is conducted for its own sake, not for the purpose of procreation, nor even to satisfy their desires. They regard the exposure and viewing of nakedness as an ideal in its own right. God sees that their wickedness is great and their sin grave, and He decides to annihilate them. The entire area is destroyed, the cities, their inhabitants, and even the plants growing in the ground. Fire and brimstone are “rained down” upon the ground,[[877]](#footnote-877) a local flood of fire and brimstone, recalling the Flood of water that rained down upon the entire world in the days of Noach. Only Lot and his family are saved, since God has mercy upon him. And like Noach, his ancestor, Lot too becomes inebriated immediately after his deliverance, by drinking wine, and his nakedness is revealed in the cave, once again, in the presence of his offspring.[[878]](#footnote-878)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Coincidence** | **Noach** | **Lot** |
| Righteousness | Noach was righteous.[[879]](#footnote-879) | Lo was righteous.[[880]](#footnote-880) |
| Hospitality | To all the animals.[[881]](#footnote-881) | To two angels.[[882]](#footnote-882) Wife is inhospitable. |
| Gan Eden like | Walked with God.[[883]](#footnote-883) | Like the Garden of HaShem.[[884]](#footnote-884) |
| Inhabitants | Wickedness of man was great in the earth.[[885]](#footnote-885) | Men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against HaShem.[[886]](#footnote-886) |
| Who shut the door | HaShem[[887]](#footnote-887) | Angels[[888]](#footnote-888) |
| Protection | Wild animals[[889]](#footnote-889) | Angels[[890]](#footnote-890) |
| Destroyer | HaShem[[891]](#footnote-891) | HaShem[[892]](#footnote-892) |
| Miraculous Deliverance | Teiba (Ark)[[893]](#footnote-893) | Angels[[894]](#footnote-894) |
| Destructive Method | The Flood[[895]](#footnote-895) | Fire and Brimstone[[896]](#footnote-896) |
| Distruction by heat | Boiling water;[[897]](#footnote-897) *“He obliterated all existence”. The Torah here includes all living creatures on earth as having been killed by the boiling waters which covered the earth.[[898]](#footnote-898)* | Fire and Brimstone[[899]](#footnote-899) |
| Reluctance to leave | Noach was reluctant to get in the ark. [[900]](#footnote-900) | Lot lingered.[[901]](#footnote-901) |
| Shelter | Ark[[902]](#footnote-902) | Cave[[903]](#footnote-903) |
| Who was delivered. | Noach, his wife, and his sons and their wives.[[904]](#footnote-904) | Lot and his two daughters. Wanted to save his wife and two more daughters and their husbands (total of 10 people).[[905]](#footnote-905) |
| Mysterious wine | Vines from Gan Eden.[[906]](#footnote-906) | From who knows where.[[907]](#footnote-907) |
| Wine | Noach planted grapes, made wine, and got drunk while wanting to multiply and fill the earth.[[908]](#footnote-908) | Daughters made Lot drunk in order to multiply and fill the earth.[[909]](#footnote-909) |
| Nakedness and sex | Noach uncovered for sex with his wife.[[910]](#footnote-910) | Lot was uncovered for sex with his daughters.[[911]](#footnote-911) |
| Progeny deal with nakedness. | Noach’s two sons covered his nakedness.[[912]](#footnote-912) | Lot’s two daughters uncovered Lot and made him naked.[[913]](#footnote-913) |
| Awareness | Noach was aware of what his youngest son did to him.[[914]](#footnote-914) | Lot was unaware of what his two daughters did to him.[[915]](#footnote-915) |
| Repopulating | Be fruitful and multiply.[[916]](#footnote-916) | That we may preserve seed from our father.[[917]](#footnote-917) |
| Progeny | Noach cursed Canaan and had no further progeny.[[918]](#footnote-918) | Lot’s two daughters both had progeny.[[919]](#footnote-919) |
| Messianic line | Noach’s son, Shem was the male antecedent.[[920]](#footnote-920) | Lot’s two daughters were the female antecedents.[[921]](#footnote-921) |

***The Altar***

After defining the guide­lines pertinent to the construction of the Beit HaMikdash as a whole in the first chapter of Hilchot Beit HaBechirah, the Rambam devotes the second chapter to the description of the altar. He begins with two halachot referring to the altar’s site:

*1. The altar [is to be constructed] in a very precise location; it may never be changed; as it is written,[[922]](#footnote-922) “This is the altar for the burnt offerings of Israel”.*

*Yitzchak our Patriarch was prepared to be sacrificed on [the future site of the Beit] HaMikdash; as it is written,[[923]](#footnote-923) “Go to the land of Moriah”, and it is written in Divrei HaYamim:[[924]](#footnote-924) “And Shlomo began building God’s house in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, where [God] appeared to David his father, in the place where David prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite”.*

*2. It is universally accepted that the site on which David and Solomon built the altar on the threshing floor of Ornan, is the location on which Avraham built the altar on which he prepared Yitzchak for sacrifice.*

*On this location, Noach built [an altar] when he emerged from the ark. On this location, Cain and Abel offered [their] sacrifices. And Adam, the first man, offered a sacrifice on this location after he was created. [Indeed,] he was created from this very spot; as our Sages said,[[925]](#footnote-925) “Adam was created from the place from which he [would be granted] atonement”.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-22*** *Noach erected an altar and took from every clean animal and every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. God smelled the pleasing aroma, and God said in His heart: “I will not continue to curse again the land because of man, since the imagery of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again continue to smite every living being, as I have done. Continuously, all the days of the earth, seedtime[[926]](#footnote-926) and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.*

The location of the altar [in the Holy Temple] is very exactly defined, and is never to be changed. It is a commonly held tradition that the place where David and Solomon built the altar, on the threshing floor of Arunah, is the very place where Abraham built an altar and bound Isaac upon it; this is where Noach built [an altar] when he came out from the ark;[[927]](#footnote-927) this is where Cain and Abel brought their offerings;[[928]](#footnote-928) this is where Adam HaRishon[[929]](#footnote-929) offered burnt-offerings when he was created, and it is from [the earth of] this place that he was created. Thus the sages have said: Man was formed from the place of his atonement.[[930]](#footnote-930)

***Pirke D’Rabbi Eleazer 23*** *Noach sat and mused in his heart, saying: The Holy One, blessed be He, delivered me from the waters of the Flood, and brought me forth from that prison, and am I not obliged to bring before Thee a sacrifice and burnt offerings?[[931]](#footnote-931) What did Noach do? He took from the clean[[932]](#footnote-932) animals an ox and a sheep,[[933]](#footnote-933) and from all the clean birds, a turtle-dove and pigeons; and he built up the first altar upon which Cain and Abel[[934]](#footnote-934) had brought offerings, and he brought four burnt offerings, as it is said, “And Noach builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every[[935]](#footnote-935) clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and he offered burnt offerings on the altar”.[[936]](#footnote-936) It is written here only, “and he offered burnt offerings on the altar”, and the sweet savour ascended before the Holy One, blessed be He, and[[937]](#footnote-937) it was pleasing to Him, as it is said, “And the Lord smelled the sweet savour”.[[938]](#footnote-938)*

This teaches us that Noach re-created Adam’s altar and this same altar was used a few hundred years later for the Akeida, the binding of Yitzchak. This act by Noach takes the world back, in a sense, to the creation of the world.

The Sacrifices

To appreciate the significance of sacrifices, we must familiarize ourselves with a Divine Manifestation known as the Shechinah - שכינה. Shechinah is derived from the word shochen שכן, “to dwell within”. The Shechinah is God as God is dwelling within. Sometimes we translate Shechinah as “The Divine Presence”.

The source of man’s soul, or Neshama, is located in a spiritual realm much higher than the physical world known as Atzilut. All the Neshamot, souls, that were ever sent down to the world, considered together, are known as Knesset Israel, literally the Congregation of Israel. But they are also referred to as the Shechinah, one of the names of HaShem.[[939]](#footnote-939)

There is a point where this congregate human soul is still part of the Divinity and has not yet separated from HaShem. At this point, from man’s perspective this congregate soul is called Knesset Israel, whereas HaShem refers to it as the Shechinah, a part of Himself:

*Adam appeared and the Shechinah came down with him, and rested in him; when he sinned, the Shechinah left him. Noach appeared and brought the Shechinah down to earth again; the flood generation sinned and drove Her from the world again; Abraham appeared and brought Her down again; the people of Sodom drove Her from the world again.[[940]](#footnote-940)*

Rakanti[[941]](#footnote-941) explains the significance of Noach’s burnt offering in terms of this Zohar. The word for sacrifice in Hebrew is korban, meaning to bring close. The sacrifice of animals to God is to be regarded as a symbolic act, representing man’s desire to connect his neshama with the congregate neshama and with the Shechinah. The sacrifice of Noach was a way to connect his individual soul with Knesset Israel, which connects with the Shechinah. Through the korban, the individual soul of Noach forms a bond with the Shechinah.

## Adam’s Altar

According to the plain sense of Scripture, there is no explicit reference to any service through which Adam worshipped God over the course of his life – neither before nor after his sin, or to the form of worship, if it existed. However, Midrashic literature addresses this issue at length.

Targum Yonatan comments that Adam built the altar when he was banished from the Garden of Eden in the aftermath of his sin. This accords with the idea that the altar is essentially the site of repair and atonement and with the words of Chazalthat Adam was created from the site of his atonement, and it alludes to the essence and the character of a sacrifice.

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan To genesis 8:20 -*** *And Noah built the altar before the LORD; that altar which Adam had built in the time when he was cast forth from the garden of Eden and had offered an oblation upon it; and upon it had Kain and Habel offered their oblations. But when the waters of the deluge descended, it was destroyed, and Noah rebuilt it; and he took of all clean cattle, and of all clean fowl, and sacrificed four upon that altar. And the LORD accepted his oblation with favour:*

One can clearly understand the Midrash’s desire to show that from the very beginning of creation, man wanted to draw close to God through the offering of sacrifices, and that it was Adam, the firstborn of the world, who began the sacrificial service while wearing the priestly garments that were then handed down from one generation to the next.

Chazal state that it was from the Even Shetiya, the Foundation Stone, located on Har Habayit, that the world expanded into its present form, and it was from Mount Moriah that God gathered dust to create the first man, Adam.[[942]](#footnote-942)

Man was formed from a place of his atonement, the ground, as we are taught that the Altar is made from the ground. The idea that Man receives atonement from burial in the ground points to his lofty nature. Just as his non-physical soul returns in purity to the place from which it originated, so too the physical “ground” of body returns to a place of purity from which it was originally formed.[[943]](#footnote-943)

According to Chazal, after his expulsion from the Garden of Eden, Adam built an altar on the Temple Mount.

“And Noach built an altar to the Lord”[[944]](#footnote-944)… R. Eliezer ben Yaakov says: On the great altar in Jerusalem, where Adam sacrificed, as it is stated: “And it shall please the Lord better than an ox, or a bullock that has a horn and hoofs”[[945]](#footnote-945).[[946]](#footnote-946)

The ox which Adam sacrificed had one horn in its forehead.[[947]](#footnote-947)

“Adam was the firstborn of the world, and when he offered his sacrifice, as it is stated, “And it shall please the Lord better than an ox, or a bullock that has a horn and hoofs”,[[948]](#footnote-948) he wore the garments of the High Priest. When Adam died, he passed them to Shet; Shet passed them to Metushelach. When Metushelach died, he passed them to Noach. Noach stood and offered a sacrifice, as it is stated: “And he took of every clean beast”.[[949]](#footnote-949) Noach died and passed them to Shem… Know that Shem offered sacrifices, as it is stated: “And Malki-Tzedek, king of Shalem, etc”.[[950]](#footnote-950) … since he offered sacrifices with priests. Shem died and passed them to Avraham… and he offered sacrifices, as it is stated: “And he offered it up for a burnt-offering in place of his son”.[[951]](#footnote-951) Avraham died and passed them to Yitzchak. Yitzchak stood and passed them to Yaaqob… When Yaaqob took the birthright, he began to offer sacrifices, as it is stated: “And God said to Yaaqob: Arise, go up to Bet-El, and dwell there; and make there an altar to God”.[[952]](#footnote-952) And similarly, when Moshe offered sacrifices at Sinai, it was the firstborns who offered them, as it is stated: “And he sent the young men of the children of Israel, etc”.[[953]](#footnote-953) … And when Israel committed the act [the sin of the golden calf], they said: Let the firstborns come and offer sacrifices before Him… God said to them: I remove the firstborns and bring in the sons of Levi”.

## Cain’s & Abel’s Altar

The Midrash[[954]](#footnote-954) also picks up on the fact that the Torah says that Avraham built “the altar”, before the Akedah, which the Midrash takes as a reference to a pre-existing altar, where Noach offered sacrifices, and where Cain and Abel did.

The first account of the bringing of an offering is found in the story of Cain and Abel. Here too, the Torah says nothing about the building of an altar or about the offering of a sacrifice, but speaks only about the bringing of an offering:

***Bereishit (Genesis) 4:3-4*** *And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the land an offering to HaShem. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat parts thereof. And HaShem had respect to Abel and to his offering.*

In Bereshit Rabba, it says that Hevel offered his sacrifice without removing the hide and cutting it into pieces, but later sacrifices were brought with the hide removed and the animal cut into pieces.[[955]](#footnote-955)

The first sacrifices were by Cain and Abel. These are called “mincha”, that is, a gift.[[956]](#footnote-956) The word mincha wherever it is found in the Bible means a gift, something presented to one who is distinguished in stature or power (other gifts are called “maset” or “matana”).

## Noach’s Altar

The first altar explicitly mentioned in the Torah is the altar built by Noach after leaving the ark at the end of the flood, and not the altars built by Adam, Cain, and Abel.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-21*** *And Noach built an altar to the Lord and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And HaShem smelled the sweet savor, and HaShem said in his heart, I will not again curse the land any more for man’s sake; for the impulse of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.*

After the Flood was finished, and all the animal species returned to living “in their families” each with its own kind rather than all together in the ark, Noach saw fit to bring an offering to thank God for His kindness in restoring the world to its order. He saw a clue indicating his obligation to do this in the fact that God had commanded him to take many more clean animals than necessary either for the survival of the species or for his own consumption, since meat-eating was not yet permitted.

The essence and purpose of Noach’s sacrifice is that it was a thanksgiving offering for his rescue.[[957]](#footnote-957) Although a thanksgiving offering is generally a peace-offering, here Noach offers burnt-offerings as an expression of the absolute elevation of the world. Noach thanks HaShem for the fact that together with the destruction of the world, He also renewed the creation with the rescue of the ark. For this reason, he keeps no part of the sacrifice for himself.

Our Sages[[958]](#footnote-958) liken this offering to the one brought by the first man celebrating the creation of the world, taking their cue for this comparison from the Torah’s use of the definite article, “the altar”,[[959]](#footnote-959) as opposed to “an altar”, indicating that Noach brought his offering on the same altar as had Adam, and for a similar purpose.[[960]](#footnote-960)

Maimonides, in his discussion of the site of the Temple in the Hilkhot Beit HaBechira section of his Mishneh Torah,[[961]](#footnote-961) cites a rabbinic tradition that Noach constructed the altar on the site that later become the site of the Temple:

Rambam said[[962]](#footnote-962) that “It is a well known tradition that the place that David and Solomon built the altar in Goren Arauna,[[963]](#footnote-963) was the same place that Abraham built the altar upon which he sacrificed Isaac, and it was the same place which **Noach built an altar when he left the ark**,[[964]](#footnote-964) and that was the altar which Cain and Abel sacrificed upon, and **Adam brought a sacrifice there when he was created**…and he was created there. The Rabbis say man was created from the place of his ‘kapara’, his atonement.[[965]](#footnote-965) This suggests that Noach’s altar was in Jerusalem, just as Adam’s altar and Solomon’s altar were.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-21*** *And Noach built an altar to God; and he took of every pure animal and from every pure bird, and he brought burnt-offerings upon the altar. And God smelled the pleasing aroma, and God said in His heart: “I will not continue to curse the land again because of man, since the impulse of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I continue to smite all life again as I have done.*

The Torah, above, tells us that Noach built an altar when he came out of the Ark, for burnt-offerings of some of the “pure” animals and birds. The Midrash[[966]](#footnote-966) quotes R. Elazar b. Ya’akov that this was on the great altar in Jerusalem, where Adam offered his sacrifices.

Now, this suggests that either the “mountains of Ararat” are in the immediate vacinity of Jerusalem, or else Noach had “Kefitzat HaDerech[[967]](#footnote-967) - קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ”.

## Abraham’s altar - Akeidat Yitzchak

The Midrash[[968]](#footnote-968) also picks up on the fact that the Torah says that Avraham built “*the* altar”, [[969]](#footnote-969) before the Akedah, which the Midrash takes as a reference to a pre-existing altar, where Noach offered sacrifices, and where Cain and Abel did.

The Ramban, in his commentary on Parshat Vayeira,[[970]](#footnote-970) quotes the Midrash[[971]](#footnote-971) commenting on the verse, “They came to the place that God had told him and there Avraham built the altar, המזבח, and he set up the wood there, bound Yitzchak his son, and placed him on the altar above the wood”.[[972]](#footnote-972) The Midrash says, “The Holy One, blessed be He, showed Avraham Avinu the altar with His finger, and said to him, ‘This is the altar. This is the altar upon which Adam Harishon offered, the same altar upon which Cain and Abel offered, the same altar upon which Noach and his sons offered’. For the Torah does not merely say that Avraham built an altar, but *the* altar, the same altar upon which the earlier ones offered”.

## Yaaqob’s Ladder

Yaakov’s dream of the ladder took place on the Temple Mount.[[973]](#footnote-973)

## Solomon’s altar

The location where Shlomo Hamelech built the Temple is called “Mount Moriah”[[974]](#footnote-974) and the place where the Akeidah took place was the “land of Moriah”.[[975]](#footnote-975) The name Moriah appears nowhere else in Tanach; thus, it is clear that the site where the Temple was built (Aravnah’s threshing floor) is the site where the Akeidah occurred.[[976]](#footnote-976) Hermeneutics based on the name Moriah led Chazal to conclude that multiple other events of significance took place at that site.

***Midrash Tanchuma, Noach 11:7*** *You find that from that time until Solomon erected the Temple, it rained continuously for forty days each year as a reminder of the waters of the flood that lasted forty days. After Solomon completed the Temple, he pleaded for mercy on behalf of [Israel], and the continuous rains ceased, as it says: “And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul[[977]](#footnote-977)“ (I Kings 6:38).*

As an interesting related side-note: Avraham stayed for awhile with Terach, his father, in Harran. This Harran - חרן is in turkey very close to the Armenian plateau / Ararat where Noach’s ark came to rest.

## The Place

The following concept will help us understand why these altars were all in the same place; the Hebrew word *Makom* - מקם is normally translated as *place*.

*Makom* is a word that we use rather lightly in the English speaking world. In the Hebrew world it is never taken or used lightly. You see, *HaMakom* (The Place) -המקם is one of HaShem’s names! By referring to HaShem as *The Place* we are saying that HaShem is not in the world; rather, the world is in HaShem. HaMakom asserts that HaShem is everywhere and everything: physical and spiritual, matter and energy. All of this makes up the oneness of HaShem. HaShem makes a place for the world. He provides a place for the world to exist.

***Bereshit Rabbah 68:9*** *HaShem encompasses the world; the world does not encompass Him[[978]](#footnote-978).*

The Land of Israel is also *HaMakom*, the place on earth set aside by HaShem as the Holy Land.

The Torah calls Mt. Moriah, HaMakom:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 22:4-5*** *Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place (HaMakom) afar off. And they came to the place (HaMakom) which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 22:9*** *And they came to the place (HaMakom) which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 22:14*** *And Abraham called the name of that place (Makom) Adonai-Yireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of HaShem it shall be seen.*

The Midrash reiterates the significance of *HaMakom*:

**Midrash Tehillim Psalm 90** R. Huna said in the name of R. Ammi: Why is the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, called “place?” Because He is the place of the world, as is said, “*Behold, there is a place by Me.* Abraham called Him *‘place’”,* as is said “*And Abraham called the name of that place Adonai-Yireh”*.[[979]](#footnote-979) Jacob called Him *‘place’,* as is said “*How full of awe is this place”*.[[980]](#footnote-980) Moshe called Him *‘place’,* as is said “*Behold, there is a place by Me”*.[[981]](#footnote-981)

Many of the items found in the Bet HaMikdash did not have fixed places. For example, the menorah had a position relative to the Holy Ark, specifically, southeast of the Ark, but it did not have an absolute place in the Temple. In contrast, the Mizbeach, the altar, had an absolute place, and if it was not in that place, the obligation of performing the Temple service was not fulfilled. Why? Because, says the Rambam, the *place* of the altar is the *place* from which man himself was created!

We feel homesick when we have been away from our home (the place) for a protracted period of time. No matter how humble, we long for our place of origin. We long for our home, our place. Thus we learn that our soul longs to return to HaShem, it’s origin, it’s source. Homesickness was given to us as a mashal to help us understand that our soul longs to return to it’s home with HaShem.

Thus we can understand that *makom*, place, is very significant. It is a name of HaShem, it is where HaShem focuses His attention, it is a place we will ultimately call home.

## The Ark of the Covenant

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 59b*** *R. Eleazar said: ‘The term “These are”, as we have learnt, always implies that something spoken of before in the text is now of no account. Now it is written above in the account of the Creation [Tr. note: Where also we find the expression ‘these are the generations,.[[982]](#footnote-982)] that “A river went out from Eden to water the garden and from thence it was parted, etc”..[[983]](#footnote-983) That stream which flows perennially entered the Garden to water it from the supernal waters, and brought gladness to it, making it produce fruit and seed for the universal content; and so the stream gladdened the Garden, as it is written, “And he rested on the seventh day”. Thus the words “these are the generations” imply that this brought forth products and no other. So it was with Noah in the lower world. Noah was the sacred covenant below corresponding to that above, and hence is called “Man of the earth”. The inner meaning which we learn from this is that Noah had need of an ark with which to become united in order thereby to preserve the seed of all species, as it is written, “To preserve seed”. This ark is the Ark of the Covenant, and Noah with the ark below corresponded to a similar union above. The word “covenant” is used in connection with Noah, as it is written, “And I will establish my covenant with thee”, and before the covenant was established with him he did not enter the ark, as it is written, “And I will establish my covenant with thee and thou shalt come into the ark”. Thus his ark represented the Ark of the Covenant, and Noah and the ark together were a symbol of the supernal pattern. And since this covenant above brought forth products, so Noah below also bore generations. Hence it says, “These are the generations of Noah”.*

Connections between the Ark of the Covenant (aron) and Noach’s ark (Teiba[[984]](#footnote-984)),our world vs. God’s world.:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Edges - קֵץ  Faces - מִפְּנֵיהֶם [[985]](#footnote-985) |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Cover - וְכָפַרְתָּ [[986]](#footnote-986) |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Inside - מִבַּיִת and outside - וּמִחוּץ [[987]](#footnote-987) |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | Length, Width, and Height[[988]](#footnote-988) |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | Shape will become clear[[989]](#footnote-989) |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 40 days/40 nights - וַתָּרָם [[990]](#footnote-990) |
|  |  |  |  |  | 40 days/40 nights - תְּרוּמָה [[991]](#footnote-991) |
|  |  |  |  | Shape will become clear[[992]](#footnote-992) |  |
|  |  |  | Length, width, and Height[[993]](#footnote-993) |  |  |
|  |  | Inside - מִבַּיִת and Outside - וּמִחוּץ [[994]](#footnote-994) |  |  |  |
|  | Cover - כַפֹּרֶת [[995]](#footnote-995) |  |  |  |  |
| Edges - מִקָּצָה  Faces[[996]](#footnote-996) |  |  |  |  |  |

***Zohar Noach: Verse 6*** *RABBI ELAZAR ASKS: What is the ark? AND HE ANSWERS: It is the ark, WHICH IS MALCHUT, of the covenant AFTER SHE RECEIVES YESOD, WHICH IS CALLED THE COVENANT WITHIN HER. And Noach and the ark below were like YESOD AND MALCHUT above, BECAUSE the covenant is mentioned in relation to Noach, as it is written: “And I will establish My Covenant with you”.[[997]](#footnote-997) As long as the covenant was not established in Noach, he did not enter the ark, as it is written: “And I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark”. Only then does the ark become the Ark of the Covenant, MEANING THAT AFTER THE ARK RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED NOACH THE RIGHTEOUS, WHO IS THE COVENANT, IT BECAME THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.*

## The Dove Rested

This section was written by Daniel Pinner.

The Ba’al ha-Turim (Rabbi Ya’akov ben Asher, Germany and Spain, c.1275-1343), commenting on Bereshit (Genesis) 8:2, notes that the word va-yikkaleh (“desisted”) occurs only twice in the entire Tanach. The first time is when The Flood began to subside, “va-yikkaleh – and the rain from Heaven desisted”.[[998]](#footnote-998) The second time was in the Sinai Desert, after the sin of the golden calf, when the people were so generous with the gifts they brought for the Tabernacle, that Moshe had to tell them not to bring any more, “va-yikkaleh, and the nation desisted from bringing”.[[999]](#footnote-999) Says the Ba’al ha-Turim, “This teaches that in the merit of Israel the rain [of the Flood] desisted”.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:2*** *the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven desisted, and the rain from heaven was restrained.*

And the Midrash explicitly sees the end of the Flood as the harbinger of Israel’s redemption. It picks up on Noach’s sending forth the dove; “and the dove did not find any resting-place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him, to the Ark”.[[1000]](#footnote-1000)

The Midrash cites Rabbi Yehudah ben Nachman who quoted Rabbi Shimon: “Had she found a resting-place she would not have returned. Similarly, ‘she [Israel] dwells among the nations, she did not find any resting-place’.[[1001]](#footnote-1001) Had they [Israel] found any resting-place, they would not have returned [to the Land of Israel]”.[[1002]](#footnote-1002)

Similarly, even when we returned to part of our homeland, had we found rest we would not have returned to the rest of it. But nineteen years to the day after independence, eleven Arab and Moslem states (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, and Pakistan) began their preparations to attack Israel, to exterminate the country and all its inhabitants (the Jewish ones, that is).

The Arab mobilisation, which began on Israel’s nineteenth Independence Day,[[1003]](#footnote-1003) would explode into total war three weeks later on Monday 26th of Iyar (5th June).

It was a war that Israel was desperate to avoid. But so implacable was the Arab and Moslem hatred that there was no alternative. We found no rest, even though on the Monday morning, an hour after the war with Egypt began, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol sent a message to King Hussein of Jordan via the offices of General Odd Bull, chief of the United Nations observers: “We shall not initiate any action whatsoever against Jordan”.

Faced with a two-front war with Egypt and Syria, the last thing Israel wanted was a third front against Jordan.

But at 11:00 that morning Jordanian artillery batteries within Jerusalem launched a barrage against Israel. Jerusalem was within range of small-arms fire, while Ramat David and Tel Aviv were pounded by long-range canon, and the Royal Jordanian Air Force bombed Netanya, Kfar Saba, and certain strategic road junctions.

The result was all-out war against Jordan.

And so, in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, on the 27th of Iyar, the same date that the earth became dry at the end of the Flood according to Rabbi Yehoshua, the Israeli Army began advancing towards historic Jerusalem, and the next day, the 28th of Iyar, they captured all of Jerusalem, Hevron, Jericho, Shechem, and the rest of the areas west of the River Jordan which had been under Arab occupation for nineteen years.

Like the dove which Noach had sent forth, had we found rest we would not have returned to all these places.

But God had other plans for His nation and His Land. We are destined, all Jews, whether they or the nations of the world like it or not, to return to the Jewish homeland. And the entire Land of Israel, again, whether Israel or the nations of the world like it or not, is destined to return to its true masters and sons, the nation of Israel.

What we have witnessed in the last several decades is but the beginning of the final redemption.

## Elijah the Tishbite

***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:7****And he sent forth a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up -* יְבֹשֶׁת *from off the earth.*

Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:7 - **until the waters dried up:** The simple explanation is its apparent meaning, but the Midrash Aggadah[[1004]](#footnote-1004) [explains that] the raven was destined for another errand during the lack of rain in the time of Elijah, as it is said:[[1005]](#footnote-1005) “and the ravens brought him bread and meat.”

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 33:5*** *R. Akiba preached in Ginzak on the theme of the Flood, and the audience did not weep, but when he mentioned the story of the raven they wept.[[1006]](#footnote-1006) He then quoted this verse: The womb (rehem) forgetteth him; the worm feedeth sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and unrighteousness is broken as a tree.[[1007]](#footnote-1007) ’Rehem forgetteth’: They [the generation of the Flood] forgot to be merciful to their fellow men,[[1008]](#footnote-1008) therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, made His mercy forget them.*

There is a fascinating Baal HaTurim that reads an allusion to this Medrash into the above pasuk, “And he sent out the raven and it went back and forth until the water dried up [ad yevoshes hamayim] from upon the land”. The Baal HaTurim points out that the word yevoshes [dried up] has the same letters as the word ‘Tishbi - ’ which refers to Eliyahu who was known as the ‘Tishbi’. This allusion hints at God’s admonition to Noach not to be so hard on the raven, since the raven will be needed when there is a drought in the time of Eliyahu the Tishbi.

The Midrash is expounding an extra word in the above pasuk. It should have said that the raven kept circling the ark until the earth dried - עַד-יְבֹשֶׁת הָאָרֶץ. The phrase עַד-יְבֹשֶׁת הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ, until the drying of the waters from upon the earth, implies: until the *future* drying of the waters.[[1009]](#footnote-1009)

Rabbeinu Bachya adds that the word יְבֹשֶׁת is an allusion to Eliyahu because when you read the letters backwards they spell Tishbi (תִּשְׁבִּי). Eliyahu HaNavi is sometimes called Eliyahu HaTishbi as we see in:

***Melachim alef (1 Kings) 17:1*** *Eliyahu Ha-Tishbi, an inhabitant of Gilad, said to Achav: As the Lord lives, the God of Israel whom I serve, these years will have no dew or rain except at my word.*

However, the question needs to be asked, why did God choose the ravens from among all other birds or creatures to sustain Eliyahu? If, in fact, ravens have a reputation of being cruel creatures, and if, in fact, the raven was the only creature to violate the rule of no relations during the time in the ark, why were the ravens specifically chosen to be the ‘angels of mercy’ for Eliyahu?

The Succat David answers that God was trying to teach a lesson to Eliyahu by specifically using this ‘delivery service’. The lesson was that good things can even come out of ravens, and so too good things may even emerge out of wicked people. Eliyahu the prophet was the penultimate zealot (kanai). He railed against the Jewish people and declared them to be worthless “for they have nullified Thy Covenant”.[[1010]](#footnote-1010) Eliyahu said that they were beyond redemption and they should all die. God is hinting to Eliyahu that it this not true. They are not that bad. Even from the wicked amongst them, good things happen.

We know that at every Brit (circumcision) there is an area set aside as the “Chair of Eliyahu”. Eliyahu is, as it were, the honored guest who appears at every Brit Milah. The Shalo”h sees this symbolism as a form of “punishment” for Eliyahu. Since he uttered the words “they have abandoned Thy Covenant, he is summoned to appear at every Brit in the future to witness the fact that he was wrong, that Jews are still keeping the Covenant! His stinging and ringing indictment that the Jews nullified the Covenant was uncalled for!

This was the message of the ravens delivering Eliyahu his food. No wicked individual is beyond hope. He can always come back and prove himself a worthwhile member of society, even the raven! This especially applies to the Jewish people. They may have done terrible things, they may have worshipped idolatry in the time of Ahab, but do not write them off.

# HaShem vs. Elohim

The following section was written by Rav Yoel Bin Nun:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Elohim** (General Name - Objective) | **HaShem** (Personal Name) |
|  |  |
| ***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9-22*** *These are the generations of Noach:*  *Noach was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noach walked with God (****Elohim****).*  *And Noach had three sons: Shem, Cham, and Yefet.*  *The earth also was corrupt before God (****Elohim****), and the earth was filled with violence.*  *And God (****Elohim****) looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*  *And God (****Elohim****) said to Noach, “The end of all flesh is come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*  *Make yourself an ark of gofer wood; rooms shall you make in the ark, and shall pitch it within and without with pitch.*  *And this is the fashion of which you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*  *A window shall you make for the ark, and to a cubit shall you finish it above, and the door of the ark shall you set in its side; with lower, second, and third stories shall you make it.*  *And behold, I will bring the flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is on the earth shall die.*  *But with you will I establish My covenant, and you shall come into the ark – you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you.*  *And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shall you bring into the ark, to keep them alive with you;*  *They shall be male and female.*  *Of birds after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind; two of every sort shall come to you, to keep them alive.*  *And take you for yourself all food that is eaten, and gather it to you that it may be for food for you, and for them.”*  *So Noach did according to all that God (****Elohim****) commanded him; thus he did.* | ***Bereshit (Genesis) 6:1-8*** *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born to them, that the distinguished men saw that the daughters of men were fair, and they took them wives of all whom they chose.*  *And* ***HaShem*** *said, “My spirit shall not always strive on account of man, for that he also is flesh, and his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.”*  *There were Nefilim in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the distinguished men came into the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, the same were mighty men of old, men of renown.*  *And* ***HaShem*** *saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that all the impulse of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And* ***HaShem*** *repented that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And* ***HaShem*** *said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and creeping things, and the birds of the air, for I repent that I have made them.”*  *But Noach found favor in the eyes of* ***HaShem****.* |
|  | ***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:1-5*** *And* ***HaShem*** *said to Noach: “Come you and all your house into the ark,*  *For you have I seen righteous before Me in this generation.*  *Of every clean beast you shall take to you by sevens, male and female;*  *And of beasts that are not clean by twos, male and female.*  *Of birds of the air, also by sevens, the male and the female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.*  *For in another seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.”*  *And Noach did according to all that* ***HaShem*** *commanded him.* |
|  |  |
| The story of the Flood starts twice, just like the story of Creation recorded in Parashat Bereishit. As in the case of the story of Creation, one account uses the name “Elokim,” while the other uses God’s holy Name (the Tetragrammaton).[[1011]](#footnote-1011) The main difference between these Names is the linguistic distinction between a general name and a personal name,[[1012]](#footnote-1012) a distinction that precedes the distinction between the “attribute of justice” and “attribute of mercy”.[[1013]](#footnote-1013) The name “**Elokim**” is a general, objective name indicating authority (and hence, “the attribute of justice”): “For God (**Elokim**) is in the heavens, while you are upon the earth; therefore let your words be few” (Kohelet 5:1). The **Tetragrammaton** is a personal name that expresses a direct and personal connection (and hence “the attribute of mercy”). **HaShem** (referred to by the **Tetragrammaton**) first speaks to man in the Garden of Eden. | |
|  |  |
|  | In the description of the background to the flood using the **Tetragrammaton**, there is emotion; there is lust after beautiful women and exploitation of power and authority, and there is unmediated contact between God and man, with God contemplating the failure of His Creation and “repenting” His work. |
|  |  |
| At the beginning of Parashat Noach (the “objective perspective”), he is described as a perfectly righteous man in his generations and as walking with God. | The description at the end of Parashat Bereshit (the “**personal** perspective”) tells us that “Noach found favor” in God’s eyes. |
| The beginning of the **objective** description (at the beginning of Parashat Noach) notes the corruption of the earth in objective and general terms: “And the earth was corrupt before God.” No primal, sexual drives are mentioned here, nor any direct relationship between God and man. The description of Noach is likewise different. |  |
| From the perspective of “**Elokim**,” however, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” Here the text makes no mention of the lust after beautiful women. | The sin is also described in two different ways. From the perspective of the **Tetragrammaton**, we find, “And they took them wives of all whom they chose” – a combination of sexual immorality and violence, for they snatched women from their husbands. The description speaks to the world of emotions, desires, and urges. |
| In the **objective** description, the ark is described with all its details and measurements | In the earlier account, at the end of Parashat Bereshit, in which the **Tetragrammaton** is used, mention is made only of the ark itself, with no details. |
| Ramban writes (commentary on 6:19) that the ark had to contain every type of living creature in the world, as well as food for every different species for a year, and from a natural perspective this would be impossible. But if the ark contained all its cargo in a miraculous manner, why does the Torah specify its measurements and other practical details of its construction? Ramban explains that a basic principle in Divine service is that whatever can be done through natural means, according to natural laws and in accordance with the objective perspective, should be done. A person may not say, “I’ll just make a small ark, and somehow, by some miracle, it will hold everything.” Miracles are not meant to replace nature, but rather to take over or complement our efforts where and whenever the limitations of nature would stop us.  This insight of the Ramban explains the duality in the description of the ark. In the **objective** description of the animals that are to be brought in, Noach is told to take a male and female of each species. This reflects the basic principle of survival and preservation, and later on, the text notes that the animals indeed arrived – on their own initiative – two by two, in order to survive the flood and be saved: “And they went in to Noach into the ark, two by two of all flesh in which is the breath of life” (7:15). | In the description using the **Tetragrammaton**, in contrast, Noach is told to take seven of each of the pure animals and of the pure birds. In nature, there is nothing “pure” or “impure;” it is only by virtue of God’s manifestation in the world, through His holy Name, that something can be “pure” or “impure.” The “pure animals” are not a natural phenomenon; Divine service, comprising prayer and sacrifice, does not belong to nature. |
| The raven and the dove (8:7-12) dispatched by Noach are appropriate reflections of the two sides of the story. The raven sets out, going “to and fro,” in the natural sense. | The dove, which is a pure bird (mentioned in the Torah as a **sacrifice**), leaves from Noach’s hand and eventually returns with an olive leaf as a symbol of salvation. |
| In the Torah, there are no sacrifices to “**Elokim**”,[[1014]](#footnote-1014) nor would this be appropriate, since in the natural order there is only natural birth and death. | After the flood, upon leaving the ark, Noach offers **sacrifices** to **HaShem**, “of every clean beast, and of every clean bird” (8:20). |
| From the **objective** perspective (third person, “I-it”), Noach is a righteous man, perfect in his generation… | But the **Tetragrammaton** indicates the unmediated, “I-Thou” relationship: “You have I seen righteous before Me.” When we speak of questions of faith in the general sense, we can speak of **HaShem** only in the general sense and in the third person. |
|  | The **Tegragrammaton** is in fact a form of a verb, expressing an active presence,[[1015]](#footnote-1015) both harming (“Behold, the hand of **HaShem** is [hoya] upon your cattle which is in the field… a very grievous plague” – Shemot 9:3) and delivering (“For I shall be [ehyeh] with you… Ehyeh asher ehyeh” – Shemot 3:12-14 and Rashi ad loc.). Therefore, **HaShem** addresses us and we address Him in the second person: “And **HaShem** said to Noach: ‘Come, you and all your house, into the ark, for you have I seen righteous before Me in this generation’” (7:1). |
| The description that uses the name “**Elokim**” gives rise to fear of God (**Elohim**). | The description using the **Tetragrammaton** leads to love of **HaShem**. |
|  |  |
| There is one single verse in the entire story of the flood in which the two Names converge, the general merging with the personal:  And they went in to Noach, into the ark, two by two of all flesh in which is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God (**Elohim**) had commanded him; and **HaShem** shut him in.” (7:15-16)  The first part of this description is objective. Noach did not need to gather “two by two of all flesh,” since the animals themselves sensed the danger and made their way to the ark; the survival instinct is inherent to the nature of Creation. But sealing the opening is something that Noach cannot do. It is a difficult operation – technically, since he is inside, but principally psychologically. God must intervene personally and seal the ark; without this intervention, the ark is of no value. Noach is not capable of sealing the ark, as this act represents a death sentence for the entire world that remains outside. He has no right to do this, and so “**HaShem** shut him in”.[[1016]](#footnote-1016) | |
| And God (**Elokim**) spoke to Noach and to his sons with him, saying, “And behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, of the birds, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you, from all that came out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish My covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the water of the flood, neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth.” And God (**Elokim**) said, “This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I have set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember My covenant…” (9:8-17) | And Noach built an altar to **HaShem** [**Tetragrammaton**] and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And **HaShem** smelled the sweet savor and **HaShem** said in His heart, “I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake, for the impulse of man’s heart is evil from his youth, neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.” (8:20-21) |
| On the other hand, the rainbow is part of the natural world, a Divine creation, a sign of a covenant testifying that there will be no more “flood to destroy the earth.” The covenant of the rainbow is given using the name “**Elokim**,” as a continuation of the natural Creation and the general belief in a single God (**Elohim**) Who created everything. | The duality of the story of the flood is carried through to the dual covenant. On the one hand, there is **HaShem’s** promise to Noach not to smite all living things and to maintain the world and its natural rhythms, by virtue of the sacrifice offered to **HaShem** – a religious act of worship on the part of man. This, of course, is a continuation of the pure animals and pure birds which **HaShem** had commanded Noach to take into the ark, seven of each. |
|  | |

# Flood Calendars

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Solar (yearly)** | **Lunar (monthly)** |
|  |  |
| The story of the flood is recounted in dual format, and there are two aspects to the periods of time as well. Dates give an “objective” description, while groups of days have conceptual, spiritual significance. Seven days and forty days point to the connection between Noach and Moshe. The forty days of rain correspond to the forty days that Moshe spent atop Mount Sinai. | |
|  |  |
| This sits well with the seasonal calendar that appears in the conclusion: “While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (8:22). For an entire year of seeding and harvesting and cold and heat and summer and winter, everything rested; for one complete year, the system ceased to function, and then everything returned to its place. | The table of dates presents us with a complete year.[[1017]](#footnote-1017) This is how Rashi understands the text, following Chazal’s teachings, and it is in fact clear from the dates themselves: From the 17th of the second month until the 27th of the second month is a year, since the months counted in the Torah are lunar months, and the discrepancy between 12 lunar months (354 days +/- 1) and a solar year (365 days + slightly less than ¼ day) is about 11 days, which is the time between the 17th of the second month and the 27th of the second month a year later. In other words, the dual calendar – the lunar monthly calendar adapted to match the solar calendar, which is the calendar of the festivals of the Torah – is also the calendar of Parashat Noach. |

# The Rainbow

The *rainbow* is first mentioned in the Torah when Noach emerges and sees the newly recreated earth. God declares that the *rainbow* is a sign of the covenant between God and the entire earth, that God will never again destroy the earth with a cataclysmic flood.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:12-17*** *And God said: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I have set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the cloud, 15 that I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.’ 17 And God said unto Noach: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.’*

Were there not *rainbow* s before the Flood? How did the *rainbow* suddenly become a symbol of protection from Divine punishment?

In truth, the *rainbow* was created immediately before the Sabbath of creation, as we shall see. Before the Flood, however, the *rainbow* could not be seen. It was a Keshet Be’Anan, a *rainbow* in the clouds. The thickness and opacity of the clouds, a metaphor for the world’s dense physicality, obscured the *rainbow*. Only after the Flood, in a world of diluted physical strength, did the *rainbow* finally become visible.[[1018]](#footnote-1018)

Curiously, Creation and the *rainbow* are intrinsically connected by our Sages:

***Avot 5:6*** *Ten things were created on the eve of the Sabbath at* ***twilight****, and these are they:*

*[1] the mouth of the earth,*

*[2] the mouth of the well,*

*[3] the mouth of the donkey,*

*[4] the rainbow,*

*[5] the manna,*

*[6] the staff [of Moshe],*

*[7] the shamir,*

*[8] the letters,*

*[9] the writing,*

*[10] and the tablets.*

*And some say: also the demons,*

*the grave of Moshe, and*

*the ram of Abraham, our father. And some say: and also tongs, made with tongs.*

All ten things created at that time are part of the attribute of kingdom. Kingdom is connected to the mouth, and hence, the list of ten things begins with three mouths: the mouth of the earth, the mouth of the well, and the mouth of the donkey.

The idea that the *rainbow* was created during this twilight period highlights the fact that the *rainbow* represents the idea that no matter how much of a dissonance there may be between spirituality and the way humankind is running the world, there will never be a total break that will cause God to destroy the world.

The Mishna’s list of things created “on the Chava of Shabbat, at twilight” is basically one of supernatural phenomena. The Maharal says that the twilight period before the first Shabbat has a dual quality. It is still Friday, so it is still a day of creation, but it is Shabbat, a day above creation. So the things created at that time are of a miraculous and not of the natural order, but are still creations of God.

Abarbanel, a fifteenth century biblical commentator, explains from a scientific vantage point that people were able to see the *rainbow* only after the Flood because of changes in cosmic conditions.

This Abarbanel is beautifully expounded on by HaRav Yisroel Belsky zt”l, previous Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath and senior halachic consultant for the OU.[[1019]](#footnote-1019) Rav Belsky explains changes in the quality of light following the Flood based on the Talmud in Berachot. The Talmud describes how when God wanted to bring the Flood, He took two stars from Kimah (a constellation) and brought rainwaters onto the world. When God wanted to close the gap in Kimah to end the Flood, He took two stars from Ayish (another constellation) and closed up the gap.[[1020]](#footnote-1020) Based on his vast knowledge of science and astronomy Rabbi Belsky writes that Ayish is the Pleiades, “a small bright cluster of stars midway between the horizon…boast[ing] a dozen bright young stars enveloped in a fluffy patch of nebula”. This cluster of stars can be understood as a scar from when God removed stars from Ayish to fill the gap in Kima. This explains a physical change in the cosmos that resulted following Noach’s Flood, and this change in cosmos altered the quality of light. Rav Belsky writes, “the intensity and quality of light in the world before the Flood was such that it was not subject to the process of refraction [and] thus *rainbow*s could not have existed at that time”. Yet he adds that “with the removal of two stars from the firmament, the level of light was weakened, thus making light refractable”.[[1021]](#footnote-1021) This explanation resolves certain commentaries, such as Ibn Ezra, who say the *rainbow* did not exist until after Noach’s flood and shows how this approach can be considered consistent with nature.

Thus we learn that even though the *rainbow* first appears after the flood, it was created at twilight on the sixth day of creation.

We learned that there is a special blessing one says when he sees a rainbow. The Shulchan Aruch, immediately after mentioning the blessing, says that it is not permissible to look at the rainbow for a prolonged period of time.

**Question:**Why can't you look at a rainbow longer than it takes to say the blessing?

**Answer:**The Gemara[[1022]](#footnote-1022) mentions this amongst other things that a person shouldn't look at (for a prolonged period). The two other things are the Cohanim (while they are blessing Yisrael) and the Nasi. The Gemara explains that these things are representative of the Shechina, and therefore one shouldn't look at them. Maharsha explains that one who looks at the Shechina dies, and being representative of the Shechina, one shouldn't look at these three things.

The following ATBaSH[[1023]](#footnote-1023) (chiasm) demonstrates that the *rainbow* covenant text is set up to force us to see the critical information at thematic center:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bereshit (Genesis) 9:9-17** | **Structure** |
| **9** ‘As for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you; **10** and with every living creature that is with you, the fowl, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. | Covenant that I *am establishing* with all flesh. |
| **11** And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth.’ | I’ll establish a covenant that there will never again be another flood to destroy all life. |
| **12** And God said: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: | Showing *Noach* the sign of an everlasting covenant between God and all flesh. |
| **13** **I have set My bow in the cloud**, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. | I *set* my bow in the clouds. |
| **13** I have set My bow in the cloud, **and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth**. | It shall be a covenant between me and the earth whenever I bring clouds over the earth… **(thematic center)** |
| **14** And it shall come to pass, when I bring clouds over the earth, and **the bow is seen in the cloud**, |
| **14** **And it shall come to pass, when I bring clouds over the earth**, and the bow is seen in the cloud, | The bow [I set] in the clouds *will be seen*. |
| **16** And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.’ | God will show Himself the sign of an everlasting covenant between God and all flesh. |
| **15** that I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. | I’ll remember a covenant that there will never again be another flood to destroy all life. |
| **17** And God said unto Noach: ‘This is the token of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.’ | A covenant that I *established* with all flesh. |

Significant numbers in the chiasm:

7 times ‘covenant’ is used. Center number is 4 – numeric center.

7 times ‘earth’ is used. Center number is 4 – numeric center.

5 times ‘cloud’ is used. Center number is 3 – numeric center.

3 times ‘token’ or ‘sign’ is used. Center number is 2 – numeric center.

Next, we have a chiasm which will help us to identify the focal point of Noach’s awakening. This imperfect chiasm has some elements out of order while still preserving the overall structure.

In Judaism, the phenomenon of seeing a *rainbow* is considered a special, amazing event, thus ensuing the need to recite a blessing upon seeing one. *rainbow*s are regarded highly as they serve as a reminder to the covenant that God made with Noach after destroying all living creatures with the flood.

A tradition associated with this blessing is to only glance at the *rainbow* very briefly. This comes from the belief that the colors of a *rainbow* exemplify the Lord’s divine glory, and therefore it should not be stared at directly. The ideology surrounding this blessing stems from the Talmud, where the following was interpreted by Rabbi Yehuda:

***Chagigah 16a*** *Whoever looks at the following three things, his eyes will grow dim: One who looks at a rainbow, at a Nasi, and at the priests. At a rainbow, as it is written: ‘As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about, this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.’*

The Talmud uses this verse to warn us against inappropriately staring at a *rainbow*. The Talmud took this principle from a verse in Ezekiel that states:

***Ezekiel 1:28*** *Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.*

According to the Zohar, the *rainbow* is identified with the Shechinah, the indwelling, feminine divine presence. She shared her *rainbow* colored garment with Moshe[[1024]](#footnote-1024) when he ascended Mount Sinai and the cloud covered the mountain.[[1025]](#footnote-1025) The seven colors of the *rainbow* reflect the seven lower sefirot[[1026]](#footnote-1026) through which the God interfaces with creation. So whenever we see a *rainbow* we are reminded of Divine glory.

*Rainbow*s serve as a beautiful sign of God’s faithfulness to His creation throughout the generations. Reciting the blessing upon seeing a *rainbow* is a unique way to remember and thank the Lord for His eternal glory. Below is the traditional blessing in both Hebrew and English:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלהֵינוּ מֶלֶך הָעולָם זוכֵר הַבְּרִית וְנֶאֱמָן בִּבְרִיתו וְקַיָּם בְּמַאֲמָרו.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, zocher habrit v’ne’eman biv’reetoh v’kayam b’ma’amarav.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who remembers the covenant, and is faithful to His covenant, and keeps His promise.[[1027]](#footnote-1027)

The blessing for a *rainbow* echoes components of the Noach story in Genesis 9. In verse 16, God promises, “When the *rainbow* is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures, all flesh that is on earth”. We heard this same promise of remembering the covenant in the musaf on Rosh Hashana, when in the Zichronot section, we blessed God for remembering the covenant, zocher hab’rit. Each time we see a *rainbow* and make that blessing, we hear echoes of the High Holiday liturgy.

The revelation of the hidden light of the Torah and Mashiach is like the revelation of the colors in the *rainbow*.

The Zohar[[1028]](#footnote-1028) tells us that before the coming of the Mashiach, an especially bright *rainbow* will appear in the sky, heralding the coming redemption.[[1029]](#footnote-1029) The Zohar explain that at present the *rainbow* appears in dull colors since it is only designed as a reminder that there shall be no return of the flood as there was in the days of Noach. At the time of the redemption, however, it will appear in its full panoply of colors as a reflection of the everlasting covenant God made with His people.

The blessing to recite when one sees a *rainbow*, the natural phenomenon selected by God to serve as the symbol of this oath:

Blessed are You, God..... Who remembers the covenant, is trustworthy in His covenant, and fulfills His word.

Avudraham explains the blessing; when you see a *rainbow* you know that the world should really be destroyed owing to the preponderance of human iniquities; the fact that it is not being destroyed is entirely due to the oath God made to Noach.

The possibility of a future “flood of fire” is mentioned by Chazal. In the Tosefta[[1030]](#footnote-1030) it says that although the flood of water was in the past and we can be certain that it will not reoccur, a flood of fire is still possible:

***Tosefta Taanit 2:11****…We are certain that God will not bring (another) flood to the world, as it is said: “and the waters shall no more become a flood…”;[[1031]](#footnote-1031) “For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me; for as I have sworn (that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth)”.[[1032]](#footnote-1032) Rabbi Meir says: “A flood of water (indeed) there will not be, but a flood of fire and of sulfur there can be, in the manner in which He brought upon the Sodomites, as it is said: “Then the Lord caused to rain upon Sodom (and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire)”.[[1033]](#footnote-1033)*

## Mashiach

Is there a way back to Gan Eden, to the relationship we once had with HaShem? Is there a way back to God’s world? Is there a way back to that world? Are we always consigned to live in this diminished world in which Noach got himself drunk? Is there a way back? That’s a question I want to leave you thinking about. But the thing that I would leave you to think about is, especially in terms of religion and the Messianic notions of religion, if the real meaning of Messianism might not be a return to that world? A return to God’s world. A return to living as a guest in God’s world.

I believe that HaShem has given us an answer that should give us hope.

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9*** *That which hath been is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun.*

This pasuk says that What Adam enjoyed in the garden with HaShem, this will be the final result. That said, there is a very rough patch[[1034]](#footnote-1034) that we will need to traverse between where we are now and that future with HaShem.

Now, The coming of Mashiach will be similar to the time of Noach and the Flood.

***Matityahu (Matthew) 24:37-38*** *But as the days of Noach were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the* ***flood*** *they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noach entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the* ***flood*** *came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

Who was “taken” in the days of Noach? Surely you must say that “all of the wicked” were taken way i.e. died. Only Noach and his family remained on Earth. We can see that in the days of Noach, and in the days of the return of the Mashiach, that the wicked will be taken and the righteous will remain on earth. If there is a rapture, the only ones raptured will be the wicked. In the days of Noah we see the righteous preserved in the midst of the tribulation which killed the wicked. They were not removed from it.

***Luqas (Luke) 17:26-27*** *And as it was in the days of Noach, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. 27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noach entered into the ark, and the* ***flood*** *came, and destroyed them all.*

In Matthew 24:39 Yeshua is saying that the flood *took them all away*. Now in Luke speaking of the same flood event Yeshua says :

***Luke 17:26-27*** *And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. 27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.*

By comparing Matthew 24:39-41 with Luke 17:26-27 we understand that the word *took* or *taken* actually means to ***destroy***.

All of Creation was blotted out from upon the earth, and even Noach did not remain on the earth, but rather floated in the Ark. Like Chanok,[[1035]](#footnote-1035) who, when his time came, was taken up by HaShem, Noach is taken up from the earth. He joins the spirit of God that hovers, as in the beginning, over the face of the water, over the face of the earth which is covered in water, which has returned to its primordial state of void and chaos from prior to the six days of Creation. All other humans, the wicked who corrupted the earth, were *taken* from the earth and destroyed.

The end of days before the Mashiach comes will be just like the days before The Flood. If we want to understand the end of days, then we need to understand the days of Noach.

The destruction of the wicked who corrupted themselves is a pattern for the future when those who have corrupted themselves will again be removed from the earth.

What characteristics are the same?

Right before the generation of The Flood, humanity was, as now, at the lowest level of defilement, corruption, immorality so that HaShem decided to destroy the world and press the “restart button”.

HaShem did not deny humanity free will to engage in corrupt and immoral behavior, restrict the measure of evil they could do. Their free will was not restrained. But God destroyed them and took an oath not to do so again, indicating that He would not allow the world to descend to such an abominable level where free will could not function, so corrupted would they be by their environment. There must be the possibility to choose good.

We are in this exact predicament now. The world is at that tipping point as described, at that mem-tet Sha’arei tumah, 49th level of defilement. We’re down to the wire, often described as the “birth pangs of the Mashiach” likened to the embryo surrounded by darkness and pain. We are about to transition to a totally different reality and its precursor is a demented world. Defund the police? No security? Gender fluidity? Gender reassignment surgery, before puberty?

The Flood was to have been a downpour of messianic Light rather than its analogue, water. God wanted to bring the Mashiach after ten generations,[[1036]](#footnote-1036) to Noach’s generation but, instead of that happening, the world become irredeemably evil. What we learn from this is that, before the Light of utter truth can be seen, a test takes place in which civilization breaks down. We experience Light’s opposite.

Our Rabbis tell us that Noach’s tebah, his ark, was like the time of Mashiach. When Mashiach comes, lions, tigers, and other wild animals will live together with the sheep and goats, just as they did in Noach’s tebah. When Noach left the tebah, his job was to take that spirit with him, and make not only the ark, but the entire world ready for Mashiach.[[1037]](#footnote-1037)

The Ark is compared to the future Messianic Age when the entire world will experience total peace and unity. This phenomenon, in miniature form, existed in the Ark. The creatures and eight humans that populated the Ark coexisted peacefully. Consequently, the Ark should therefore not be viewed solely as a reminder of the destruction caused by the flood but primarily as a reminder of how perfect the world could and will be.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the *rainbow* is intimately connected with Mashiach, according to the Zohar:

***Zohar, Bereshit, 1:72b*** *R. Judah said, ‘This is assuredly so, but the rainbow that appears in the sky has a profound mystic significance, and when Israel will go forth from exile that rainbow is destined to be decked out in all the finery of its colors, like a bride who adorns herself for her husband.’ The Judean said to him, ‘This is what my father said to me when he was on the point of departing this world: “Do not expect the coming of the Messiah until the* *rainbow will appear decked out in resplendent colors which will illumine the world. Only then expect the Messiah”. We learn this from the words, “And I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant”.[[1038]](#footnote-1038) That is, at present the rainbow* *appears in dull colours, since it is only designed as a reminder that there shall be no return of the Flood; but at that time it will appear in its full panoply of colours as a bride does for her husband, and that will be “to remember the everlasting covenant”’ The Holy One, blessed be He, will remember the covenant which is in exile and He will raise her from the dust, as it is written, “and they will seek the Lord their God and David their king”;[[1039]](#footnote-1039) also, “But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise unto them”,[[1040]](#footnote-1040) i.e. raise from the dust, in accordance with the text: “I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen”.[[1041]](#footnote-1041) The “everlasting covenant” will thus be remembered to be raised from the dust. My father also said that it is for that reason that in Scripture the redemption of Israel and the remembrance of the rainbow* *are mentioned together, as it is written: “For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee”.’[[1042]](#footnote-1042)*

Before the coming of Mashiach, a very special *rainbow* will appear. This ***rainbow*** will be so bright that all *rainbow*s that have appeared on earth will seem very dim and weak in comparison. The bright strong colors of this ***rainbow*** are a sign that the redemption is about to come. It is this ***rainbow***, the Zohar tells us, that God was speaking about when He said to Noach:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:16*** *I will look at it to recall the eternal promise.*

Rabbi Shimon told his son Rabbi Elazar, “My son, do not expect the coming of Mashiach until you see the self-illuminated ***rainbow***”.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 40:7*** *Grass withers, flowers fade When the breath of HaShem blows on them. Indeed, man is but grass:*

The Malbim, explained this verse, noting that Man is similar to wheat, i.e. grass, that must be dried out before being harvested. He explains that this indicates a dry season will precede the Final Redemption.

In the days of Mashiach, “Kefitzat HaDerech[[1043]](#footnote-1043) - קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ”. Will be the standard mode of transport just as it was in the antediluvian world. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkO4BdtvxOs>

A piece of rabbinic literature [written 2000 years ago] known as the Yalkut Shimoni touches on many future scenarios both for the nation of Israel and for the world. In its section on the biblical Book of Isaiah and the prophecies contained therein, a rabbi cited by the Yalkut Shimoni[[1044]](#footnote-1044) states:

*“That the year the Messiah will arrive when all the nations of the world will antagonize each other and threaten with war. The king of Persia (Iran) antagonizes the King of Arabia (Saudi Arabia) with war. The King of Arabia goes to Edom (The Western Countries, headed by USA) for advice. Then the King of Persia destroys the world (and since that cannot be done with conventional weapons it must mean nuclear which can destroy most of the world). And all the nations of the world begin to panic and are afraid, and Israel too is afraid as to how to defend from this. G-d then says to them “Do not fear for everything that I have done is for your benefit, to destroy the evil kingdom of Edom and eradicate evil from this world so that the Messiah can come, your time of redemption is now”.*

Chazal teach, as we saw above, that there will be a special rainbow which comes *before* Mashiach. This suggests that the world will go in the reverse order as the tikkun, the correction. In other words, just as the rainbow came *after* Noach, it will come *before* Mashiach. The order will be reversed. When things reverse their order it means that there is a correction being applied.

Pleiades**[[1045]](#footnote-1045)**



It is interesting to note what Rashi writes that *Kimah-Pleiades*, also known as ‘the Seven Sisters’, is at the tail of mazal *Teleh-*Aries, whilst, in the non-Jewish world, it is counted as being part of the neighboring Zodiacal sign, mazal *Shor*-Taurus.

***Rosh Hashana 12a*** *Because they perverted their ways, the Holy One, blessed be He, changed for them the work of creation, and caused the constellation of Pleiades to rise at daybreak and took away two stars [from it] and brought a flood on the world…*

*At the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to bring a flood upon the world, He took two stars from Kimah (Pleiades) and brought a flood upon the world.[[1046]](#footnote-1046)*



Seder Olam

The following excerpt is from: **Seder Olam**: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology, translated and with commentary by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer

***Chapter 4:*** *The Flood was all of twelve months since it is said:[[1047]](#footnote-1047) “In the year 600 of Noach’s life, on the 17th of the second month, on that exact day, there broke open all sources of the great deep and the sluices of heaven were opened”. Its generation will not partake of the Future World and will not be judged as it is said:[[1048]](#footnote-1048) “My spirit shall not judge this mankind forever”. Rebbi Jehoshua says, the 17th of the second month that is the 17th of Iyar, second to Nisan in which the world was created and in which the Pleiades[[1049]](#footnote-1049) disappear but since they perverted their ways the Holy One, praise to Him, perverted nature for them4. Rebbi Eliezer says, the 17th of the second month that is the 17th of Marcheshvan, second to Tishre in which the world was created and in which the Pleiades appear, and it was the start of the winter rains. The sages accept the words of R. Eliezer for the Flood but the words of R. Jehoshua for the computation of seasons.*

1. This chapter is the continuation of the previous one, detailing the 12 months of the Flood . By comparison of Gen. 7:11 and 8:14 it follows that the Flood continued for 12 lunar months and 11 days, i.e., a full solar year.

2. The statement about the exclusion of the generation of the Flood from future life is a Mishnah (Sanhedrin 10:3); that they will not be judged means they will not be judged in the future but they were totally punished during the Flood , in that their souls were extinguished as souls of evildoers, and their bodies destroyed at the same time. The Mishnah in the Jerusalem Talmud (fol. 29b) expresses this as follows: “The generation of the Flood have no part in the World to Come and will not see the future”.

3. The discussion of R. Jehoshua and R. Eliezer is reported in detail in the Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah llb-12a. The Talmud of Jerusalem follows R. Eliezer in everything; it is stated (Ja’aniot 1:3, fol. 64a): “Rabbi Abba Mari the brother of Rebbi Yose: All are agreed that the 17th is the time of disappearance of the Pleiades, at that time the Flood started”. The Rebbi Yose mentioned here is not R. Yose bar Halaphta, the Tanna and collector of the material for Seder ,Olam, but an amora of the fourth generation, about 100 years after R. Yose bar Halaphta. He always appears without a mention of his father’s name, but the complicated appellation of his brother, X brother of Y, means that the brother, who is of minor importance in the Talmud, cannot be called by his father’s name. Hence, the father’s name must have been Abba Mari and the tradent was a posthumous child. Because of the tragedy involved in a name “X son of X”, the Talmidim go to great lengths to avoid such names.

Seder Olam and the Babylonian Talmud accept the statement of R. Jehoshua that the world was created in Nissan and follow R. Eliezer only in counting years, which is a matter of convention and common usage. Rashi (Rosh Hashanah 12a, s.v. “the sages of Israel”) comments: “The sages of Israel count the Flood according to R. Eliezer, i.e., they are counting the years of Noach, the years from the Creation, and the generations, following R. Eliezer, they start the count of years from the first of Tishre, not because they believe that the world was created in Tishre but that New Year’s Day was accepted as the start of the year; the world was created in Nisan as we have been taught ‘the words of R. Jehoshua for the computation of seasons’, for the computation of equinoxes and solstices we start from Nisan because that was when they were created and the sun started shining at the start of the night of the Fourth Day of Creation, hence a (Julianic) equinox can fall only on a quarter of the day since there is exactly one and a quarter day difference between the (Julianic) equinox of one year and the next one, and in the same way the New Moon is computed from the first New Moon in the night of the Fourth Day at 9 hours 742 parts”. For Jewish astronomical computations, the (mean) hour is divided into 1080 parts. The details of the computation of the Jewish calendar according to Rashi is given in the *Addendum to Mahzor Vitry* #78,[[1050]](#footnote-1050) it is based on rules for the New Moon of Nisan and is equivalent to our current method based on rules for the day of the New Year, following R. Hiyya, the Prince of Barcelona, and Maimonides. It seems that Rashi’s method is the original Babylonian one which places the New Moon of Creation on the Fourth Day, as against the current method that starts the count of time on the Second Day, 5 hours and 204 parts.

The Jerusalem Talmud[[1051]](#footnote-1051) mentions only R. Eliezer. In, Abodah Zarah[[1052]](#footnote-1052), in a discussion of Creation, they note simply: “one opinion holds for Tishre, one opinion holds for Nisan”, without mentioning any names. Also the Galilean midrash[[1053]](#footnote-1053) quotes only the opinion of R. Eliezer. It follows that the opinion of R. Eliezer was received in Galilee but that in Babylonia the majority accepted the opinion of R. Jehoshua. It follows not only that Seder ,Olam is a Babylonian compilation but also that the prayer for the New Year’s Day, “this is the day of the beginning of Your work”, known as “shofar blowing in the house of Rab”, is not a composition of Rab in Babylonia but a Galilean prayer. [From what we know of the prayer rites in the school of Rab it followed Galilean practice in most ways, e.g., accepting poetic insertions (piyyutim) in standard prayers.]

4. In Antiquity, summer was defined as the time of visibility of the Pleiades; it was the time when navigation in the Mediterranean was considered safe. Hence, the opinion of R. Eliezer seems the more natural. In the Babylonian Talmud (Berachot 58b), the **Pleiades** represent cosmic frost, combatting Orion’s cosmic heat, and the “sluices of heaven” mentioned in the story of the Flood were opened by pulling two stars from the Pleiades. This is what R. Jehoshua means by “perverting nature”, that the beginning of summer started a full year of winter.

The entire piece is close to a Baraita quoted in the Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah lib: “In Noach’s 600th year, on the 17th day of the second month. R. Jehoshua says, this was the 17th of Iyar, a day when the sign of kimah[[1054]](#footnote-1054) (Pleiades[[1055]](#footnote-1055)) disappears during daytime and the springs diminish but, since they perverted their deeds, the Holy One, praise to Him, perverted nature and let the sign of kimah[[1056]](#footnote-1056) appear during daytime, removed two stars from kimah and brought the Flood over the world. R. Eliezer says, this was the 17th of Marcheshvan, a day when the sign of kimah (Pleiades) appears during daytime and the springs increase but, since they perverted their deeds, the Holy One, praise to Him, perverted nature and let the sign of kimah appear during daytime, removed two stars from kimah and brought the Flood over the world. The teachers have stated: the sages of Israel count from the Flood like R. Eliezer and for the calendar like R. Jehoshua, the sages of the Gentiles count in everything like R. Jehoshua”.

It seems that the language of the Seder Olam is original and that of the Talmud an elaboration and a deviation from straight astronomical facts. (This is also Rashi’s opinion in his commentary on the Talmud.) The one difference is that instead of כימה the Talmud speaks of מזל כימה. Now a מזל is a sign of the Zodiac and the **Pleiades** are in Taurus, so מזל כימה is Taurus. In geocentric astronomy, the sun passes through each one of the 12 houses of the Zodiac once in a year (not taking into account the precession of the equinoxes), and the sun is in Aries in Nisan, in Taurus in Iyar. However, one should not correct the text of Seder Olam by the text of the Talmud. The more concise text of Seder Olam is the more correct one.



One has to note that the identification of Hebrew כימה with Greek Pleiades (also for the occurrence of the word in the book of Job 9:9) is a tradition accepted both by Rashi and Ibn Janah. However, Ibn Ezra (und R. David Qimhi, s.v. כים) quote older authorities to the effect that kimah is a group of seven stars at the end of Aries that look like six. In Ibn Ezra’s own opinion, **kimah** is a single, large star known as Taurus’s left eye. From the text of Ibn Ezra and a Geonic remark in Rashi’s explanation of the Talmud it seems that they identify kimah with the last three stars in Aries [numbers 8,9,10 in Ptolemy’s star catalogue as given in Ptolemaus, Handbuch der Astronomie. Deutsche Ubersetzung von K. Manitius. Teubner, Leipzig 1963; vol. 2, p. 44. The last of these stars is at (27°, 1°50’), the first star of Taurus at (26°20’, -6°).] Gentile astronomers follow Ptolemy in starting the year approximately at the beginning March (similar to old Roman practice), the start of the reign of the Assyrian king Nabonassar, the first one from whom we have systematic astronomical observations. This agrees more or less with the opinion of R. Jehoshua.

Reference[[1057]](#footnote-1057)

The passage in Seder Olam deals with the beginning of the Flood. According to R. ‘Eliezer, the Flood began in Marcheshvan when Kimah sets (or rises[[1058]](#footnote-1058)) and rain falls, and according to R. Yehoshua the flood began in Iyar when Kimah rises (or sets) and rain does not fall, but God changed the “order of the world”.[[1059]](#footnote-1059) It is evident from the passage that the astral body Kimah was coupled with the coming of the rain and this gave rise to its association with the beginning of the Flood.

If one examines the available evidence regarding astral bodies whose risings and settings were noted, one receives the overwhelming impression that it was the setting of the Pleiades which was most often coupled with the coming of the rain. In the Near East the role of harbinger of the rains is almost exclusively attached to the Pleiades; comparative material can also be adduced from the general Mediterranean area and from traditional cultures the world over.

G. Dalman, in his Arbeit und Sitte in Palastina, cites several examples of Bedouin sayings associating the setting of the Pleiades and the coming of the rain.[[1060]](#footnote-1060) Indeed, in certain places the first important rainfall is called after the Arabic name for the Pleiades.[[1061]](#footnote-1061) Josephus, in his account of Antiochus VII’s siege of John Hyrcanus, tells of the “great downpour of rain which came with the setting of the Pleiades”.[[1062]](#footnote-1062) Similarly in Greece: Hesiod tells us of the storms which rage when the Pleiades set, and the Geoponica discusses the exact relationship between the setting of the Pleiades and the beginning of the rain.[[1063]](#footnote-1063) There was even a popular notion that the setting of the Pleiades in the autumn was the cause of the rains which followed.[[1064]](#footnote-1064)

Since the rise of ethnography and comparative folklore a great deal of ethnographic data concerning star-lore has been collected. From this material it is clear that:

1) the Pleiades are far and above the most important astral body used for indications of seasonal change; and

2) of the numerous statements concerning the Pleiades noted in the literature, very many expressly connect them to the coming of the rain.[[1065]](#footnote-1065)

The Talmud also speaks of the flood and provides a different perspective from Seder Olam.

***Rosh HaShana 11b*** *R. Joshua and R. Eliezer are herein consistent [with views expressed by them elsewhere], as it has been taught: ‘In the sixth hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month.[[1066]](#footnote-1066) R. Joshua said: That day was the seventeenth day of Iyar,[[1067]](#footnote-1067) when the constellation of Pleiades sets at daybreak and the fountains begin to dry up, and because they [mankind] perverted their ways, the Holy One, blessed be He, changed for them the work of creation and made the constellation of Pleiades rise at daybreak and* ***took two stars from the Pleiades and brought a flood on the world****. R. Eliezer said: That day was the seventeenth of Marcheshvan, a day on which the constellation of Pleiades rises at daybreak, and [the season] when the fountains begin to fill, and because they perverted their ways, the Holy One, blessed be He, changed for them the work of creation, and caused the constellation of Pleiades to rise at daybreak and took away two stars [from it] and brought a flood on the world’.[[1068]](#footnote-1068) Now accepting the view of R. Joshua, we can understand why the word ‘second’ is used;[[1069]](#footnote-1069) but on R. Eliezer’s view, what is meant by ‘second’? — [It means], the second to [the day of] judgment.[[1070]](#footnote-1070) Again, on R. Joshua’s view we see what change there was in the work of creation; but on R. Eliezer’s view what change was there?[[1071]](#footnote-1071) — The answer is found in the dictum of R. Hisda; for R. Hisda said: With hot liquid they sinned and with hot liquid they were punished. ‘With hot liquid they sinned’, namely, in [sexual] transgression. ‘With hot liquid they were punished’: it is written here,[[1072]](#footnote-1072) and the waters assuaged,[[1073]](#footnote-1073) and it is written elsewhere, and the wrath of the king was assuaged.[[1074]](#footnote-1074)*

*Our Rabbis taught: ‘The wise men of Israel follow R. Eliezer in dating the Flood[[1075]](#footnote-1075) and R. Joshua in dating the annual cycles,[[1076]](#footnote-1076) while the scholars of other peoples follow R. Joshua in dating the Flood also’.*

|  |
| --- |
| **Marcheshvan**: Kimah (Pleiades) sets.  **Iyar**: Kimah rises. |
| Flood naturally expected in **Marcheshvan.** |
| Flood naturally expected when Kimah sets. |

The word “star” is used generically in Torah literature to describe any number of celestial objects. Dr. Melamed[[1077]](#footnote-1077) opines that these two “stars”, in fact “impacted areas near the equator”:

*The first star superficially hit the west of the primordial super-continent [Pangaea], and caused it to fracture into huge plates, splitting it from the earth’s crust to a depth of five kilometers. Within twenty-four hours, these plates drifted to the positions where they remained as the continents that we know today. This magnetic star, mostly made of iron and nickel, lies in the Bermuda Triangle and, it seems, is responsible for the magnetic distortions and mysterious phenomena that have occurred there.*

***Berachot 58b*** *The paths of Heaven are clear to me as the paths of Nehardea; except for a Kochav d’shavit of which I am ignorant. Shmuel contrasted. It is written He makes Ash Kesil and Kima,[[1078]](#footnote-1078) but it is written: He makes Kima and Kesil.[[1079]](#footnote-1079) How so? Were it not for the heat of Kesil, the world would not survive due to the cold of Kima; and were it not for the cold of Kima, the world would not survive due to the heat of Kesil.*

Kesil is generally taken to be Orion, whose heliacal rising occurs in the summer.

Kimah and the Great Flood

The term Kimah (כימה) appears three times in the Bible. Here they are, along with the JPS translation.

***Amos 5:8*** *Him that maketh the Pleiades* (כִימָה ) *and Orion, And bringeth on the shadow of death in the morning, And darkeneth the day into night.*

***Iyov (Job) 9:9*** *Who maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades* (וְכִימָה)*, And the chambers of the south.*

***Iyov (Job) 38:31*** *Canst thou bind the chains of the Pleiades* (כִּימָה)*, Or loose the bands of Orion?*

The Kimah constellation is the body mentioned most often in Jewish sources after the sun and the moon. Kimah is mentioned three times in the Bible,[[1080]](#footnote-1080) three times in the Babylonian Talmud,[[1081]](#footnote-1081) once in the Jerusalem Talmud, once in the Tannaitic book of Seder Olam Rabba, and in many Midrashim and Piyyutim.

There have been many attempts to answer the question of what is Kima, which star or constellation does Kimah designate and where is it located on the map of the sky.

Throughout the generations, many have attempted to determine this location. The most prominent suggestions include:

* Aldebaran (Taurus) – Ibn Ezra[[1082]](#footnote-1082), Saadia Gaon
* Sirius (Canis Major) – George Hoffman, Professor M. A. Stern
* Arcturus (Bootes) – Septuaginta of Job,[[1083]](#footnote-1083) Vulgate of Amos.[[1084]](#footnote-1084)
* Draco – Marcus Jastrow[[1085]](#footnote-1085)
* Scorpio – Maharsha,[[1086]](#footnote-1086)the Vilna Gaon,[[1087]](#footnote-1087) and the Shir[[1088]](#footnote-1088)
* Pleiades (Taurus) – Vulgate, Septuaginta, Hakalir, Rashi, Baalei HaTosefot
* Pharkdan (Ursa minor) – Ibn Janach[[1089]](#footnote-1089)
* Hyadas (Taurus) – Vulgate in Job

Rashi and most of the Jewish commentators and researchers claim that the zodiac sign Kimah is the star cluster known among astronomers as Pleiades, or M45 (Messier object 45).[[1090]](#footnote-1090) Chazal referred to it as “Aries tail”, because of its location between the zodiac signs[[1091]](#footnote-1091) of Aries and Taurus.

This essay does not propose to review everything that was written about Kimah in the various sources over the generations, but rather to focus on the astronomic aspect of the passage in tractate Berachot 59a. This passage in the Babylonian Talmud deals with the Kimah and the great flood.

***Berachoth 59a*** *What is meant by Kimah[[1092]](#footnote-1092) [Pleiades]?[[1093]](#footnote-1093) Samuel said: About a hundred [ke’me-ah] stars. Some say they are close together; others say that they are scattered. What is meant by ‘‘Ash [the Bear]’?[[1094]](#footnote-1094) — Rab Judah said: Jutha. What is Jutha? — Some say it is the tail of the Ram; others say it is the hand of the Calf.[[1095]](#footnote-1095) The one who says it is the tail of the Ram is more probably right, since it says: ‘Ayish will be comforted for her children.[[1096]](#footnote-1096) This shows that it lacks something, and in fact it looks like a piece torn off;[[1097]](#footnote-1097) and the reason why she follows her is because she is saying to her: Give me my children.* ***For at the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to bring a flood upon the world, He took two stars from Kimah and brought a flood upon the world.******And when He wanted to stop it, He took two stars from ‘Ayish and stopped it.*** *But why did He not put the other two back? A pit cannot be filled with its own clods; or another reason is, the accuser cannot become advocate. Then He should have created two other stars for it? There is nothing new under the sun.[[1098]](#footnote-1098) R. Nahman said: The Holy one, blessed be He, will one day restore them to her, as it says: and ‘Ayish will be comforted for her children.[[1099]](#footnote-1099)*

# Dating Assumptions

Evolution and carbon dating

Rav Avigdor Miller demonstrated clearly and lucidly the inaccuracies of scientists in the fields of origins...

Carbon dating works, but things were created pre-aged. We can see this when we look at the fully grown trees which were bearing fruit on the first day. Adam and Chava were created as walking and talking adults. The Torah says that there were rivers coming from Gan Eden, and a river takes a great while to be carved out (proof: we don’t see rivers spontaneously appearing, rather slowly getting deeper).

Rav Avigdor Miller pointed out the circular reasoning logic fallacy inherent in many deep-time dependent radio-metric conclusions lack of isotopes deep-time / deep-time lack of isotopes. If the universe is 5783 years old created in mature stature in one week, what would the items radio-metric date be after 1 month? Answer: old or off the charts (over 70K years old if carbon dated).[[1100]](#footnote-1100)

Carbon dating is only good for organic material, not sediment layers...

But one can use argon dating on rocks.

There is another issue that Rav Avigdor Miller brings up. The dating methods all assume certain parent-daughter ratios for their calculations but they have no proof that these ratios existed at the beginning of time... And all ratios changed by the same factor. Even when the radioactive isotope is the lighter of the two, or the heavier.

Theory of relativity states that time is not constant, and depends on the speed of the object in space. Because we don’t know what the flow of time was “in the beginning”, scientists cannot know how old the world is historically, because the flow of time could have been (and probably was,) warped.

The more I learn, the more I understand that men have only been on the earth for 5783 years. That said, we know that the earth was created with apparent age. Adam (and Eve) were created in the form of mature, twenty-year old adults.[[1101]](#footnote-1101)

Just as Adam and Chava were created as adults, mature trees were created with fruit, Animals were full grown, and the geology of the earth also had apparent age. The earth was created with rivers and river beds, rocks, layers of earth, and Mt. Ararat was created as a mountain. So, an unlearned person could easily believe that the earth was very old. In fact, the Torah teaches that the earth was created with an apparent age of about 5 billion years. Thus we understand that an unwary geologist might be fooled into thinking that men, animals, and vegetation have been around much longer than their actual age. It is also worth noting that Noach’s flood made monumental changes to the earth that might cause the unwary to misinterpret geologic structures by assuming that the processes we see today are the same processes that existed in the past. This includes different radiation, atmospheric conditions, and process - these were all different in the past.

***Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 63a*** *R. Hiya and R. Jose in the course of their travels came to the mountains of Kurdistan, and observed there some deep ravines which had been left from the Flood. Said R. Hiya: ‘These ravines are vestiges of the days of the Flood, and the Holy One, blessed be He, has left them throughout the generations so that the sins of the wicked should not be blotted out from before Him. For just as God causes the memory of those who do His will to endure on high and here below from generation to generation, so He ordains that the evil memory of the sins of the wicked who have not obeyed Him shall not pass away but remain for all generations, as it is written, “The stain of thine iniquity remains before me”.’[[1102]](#footnote-1102)*



This map portrays much lower sea levels and continents in different positions than we see today. If one would understand that mariners, explorers and scientists, in the past, all were as accurate as they could be, then we are faced with the facts as I have outlined them.

Finally, why do some *assume* that science is automatically right? Why not ask, how to reconcile *science* with the Torah?

# The Ice Age

With over six hundred ancient legends from around the world about the global flood, often similar to the story in the book of Genesis about Noach, when considered that the mountain ranges rose at the close of the global flood as the water slid off into then deepening ocean basins of the world, the obviously sound hydrological deduction is that Noach’s Flood was the historic event which caused the heating of the ocean for the Ice Age to follow, it’s hydrology 101, really not debatable once the efficacy of the global flood model is established.

Published in 1531,[[1103]](#footnote-1103) the Oronteus Finaeus map unveils a captivating depiction of Antarctica, predating its official “discovery”, showcasing the icy expanse in a remarkably ice-free state. This extraordinary map unveils a wealth of geographical features, including continent-spanning rivers, lush valleys, and intricate coastlines. It even offers an approximate placement of the southern pole, along with accurately depicted longitudinal coordinates. The Oronteus Finaeus map serves as a fascinating historical artifact that challenges our conventional understanding of Antarctica’s past and beckons us to explore the mysteries it holds.



I believe this map proves that the antediluvian people were well traveled, very knowledgeable, and were able to document what post-diluvian man would not be able to do several millennia. They mapped the world as it existed before, or just after the mabul. It shows the world before the flood as depicted by our Sages. It shows a tropical world – world-wide. After HaShe tilted our world and arranged for it to have very cold regions, then we we lost a tropical Antarctica to a mile thick sheet of ice.

This map also shows that Pangea is breaking up at a much faster rate than is commonly understood by so-called scientists. It also depicts a much lower ocean level with much less

What caused the Ice Age? The common wisdom is that it was colder back then, but the Arctic and Antarctic are already deserts because of the intense cold, so why the ice age snowpacks which covered almost entire continents? Obviously, what caused that expansive and dense cloud cover for all that snow and much more rain in the middle latitudes worldwide must have been by greater evaporation off the oceans of the world, heated from below, like a pot of water on a low burner.

The Mabul was the cause and effect for the onset of The ice age.[[1104]](#footnote-1104)

# Ancient Civilizations

He flood brought enormous changes to the earth and its atmosphere. Among other changes, the flood erased all (almost all?) evidence of previous civilizations. This suggests that whatever ruins we find of old civilizations, must be post flood. However, these ruins, such as the great pyramid in Giza, suggest a knowledge of technology which we have not yet re-attained.

All megalithic structures, those on the ground as well as those under the water, were built by **postdiluvian** civilizations.

Another technology that has been lost is the ability to make accurate maps of our world. The *Piri Reis* chart and the *Reinal* chart showed us the world as it was before ice covered much of it. The technology used to create the predecessor maps were as good or better that the technology we have today. The maps were made as though from the air high above. This resulted in extremely accurate maps. This knowledge has been lost.

What happened to this knowledge? Why have we lost it?

\* \* \*

They have found in the depths of the earth four [different] strata, one above the other, and each one containing different [sedimentary] material. Within each of the strata are the fossilized remains of creatures, from which they have deduced that the earth has been destroyed and redeveloped four times.

Similarly, it is evident that the perfection of the beauty embodied in the structure of those creatures who occupy a higher stratum exceeds that of the strata below. . . . From all of the above, the truth of all of the teachings of the Kabbalists of so many hundreds of years ago is clearly evident. A world once existed and was subsequently destroyed and then rebuilt. This pattern repeated itself four times. . . .[[1105]](#footnote-1105)

\* \* \*

“And every living substance was destroyed . . “.[[1106]](#footnote-1106) [The usage of the word vayimach carries with it the implication that creatures were nimcheh - dissolved]. The bodies were dissolved. The verse is precisely worded, “. . . which was upon the face of the land . . “. (ibid.) Only those that were lying upon the ground [became dissolved]. There were, however, many bodies that remained whole as much earth fell on them through the force of the water, and the bodies remained whole. These are the bones which are found by those who dig up the earth; bones of animals who no longer inhabit this world. Based on these finds, many have come to the conclusion that there existed a world before this creation, which was occupied by different creatures. The truth is that in the Midrash Bereshit Rabbah, on numerous occasions, the Midrash quotes the following explanation, (One of the times that this Midrash appears is as a commentary on the verse in Genesis 1:31, “. . . and, behold, it was very good . . “.) This teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, created worlds and destroyed them and said, “This one pleases me and this one does not”. There is a similar statement in the holy Zohar, Vayikra, on the verse (Lev. 3:1), “And if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offering, . . “.. Nevertheless, I find it difficult to say [that the creatures that were discovered were remnants of a previous world], because it is clearly stated in Shemot Rabbah, Parshah Lamed, “‘These are the generations of heaven and earth . . .’ (Gen. 2:4) What did [the verse mean to] negate by using the term ‘these’? For He would create worlds and look at them and they were not pleasing to Him and He returned them back to a state of tohu vabohu (void and empty)”. If that is the case, then absolutely nothing was left of them. It would seem, however, that these bones are the remnants of those creatures who lived before the Mabul. Even though they are found in climatic zones in which these animals don’t live, this is due to the fact that they changed their nature before the Mabul and traveled to another place.[[1107]](#footnote-1107)

\* \* \*

I am trying to understand ancient monuments and incredible architectural feats. As I was researching, I came across the following:

From: *Fingerprints of the Gods*, by Graham Hancock, page 61.

Before me was a passage from Fr. Jose de Acosta’s *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, in which the learned priest set out ‘what the Indians themselves report of their beginning’:

*They make great mention of a deluge, which happened in their country ... The Indians say that all men were drowned in the deluge, and they report that out of Lake Titicaca came one Viracocha, who stayed in Tiahuanaco[[1108]](#footnote-1108), where at this day there are to be seen the ruins of ancient and very strange buildings, and from thence came to Cuzco, and so began mankind to multiply ...1*

Making a mental note to find out more about Lake Titicaca, and the mysterious Tiahuanaco, I read the following passage summarizing a legend from the Cuzco area:

For some crime unstated the people who lived in the most ancient times were destroyed by the creator ... in a deluge. After the deluge the creator appeared in human form from Lake Titicaca. He then created the sun and moon and stars. After that he renewed the human population of the earth ...

This sounds eerily like the Torah’s description of Noach and the Mabul. In that narrative, the sun, moon, and stars ceased to shine during the flood and were repaired after the flood.[[1109]](#footnote-1109) Noach and his sons repopulated the world armed with the knowledge of the antediluvian world and learned in Noach’s six hundred year life.

Stonehenge

Giza pyramids

Petra

Chichen Itza

Tikal

Derinkuyu

Teotihuacan

# Narrative

***Tehillim (Psalms) Chapter 29*** *A Psalm of David. Ascribe unto HaShem, O ye sons of might, ascribe unto HaShem glory and strength. 2 Ascribe unto HaShem the glory due unto His name; worship HaShem in the beauty of holiness. 3 The voice of HaShem is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth, even HaShem upon many waters. 4 The voice of HaShem is powerful; the voice of HaShem is full of majesty. 5 The voice of HaShem breaketh the cedars; yea, HaShem breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild-ox. 7 The voice of HaShem heweth out flames of fire. 8 The voice of HaShem shaketh the wilderness; HaShem shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of HaShem maketh the hinds to calve, and strippeth the forests bare; and in His temple all say: ‘Glory.’ 10 HaShem sat enthroned at the flood; yea, HaShem sitteth as King for ever. 11 HaShem will give strength unto His people; HaShem will bless his people with peace.*

I am writing this towards the end of my study of Noach and The Flood. My purpose is to piece together the snippits that are scattered throughout this paper and assemble them into a coherent narrative of what I have learned.

Our world was created as a Garden of Eden. It was litearlly Heaven on earth because it was a place where HaShem could dwell with His creation. It was unimaginably perfect. Words will not be sufficient, but they are the only tool I have. All of the land was gathered together into one place. All of the water was gathered together in one place. The land was exceedingly fertile, although it was created without any of the plants poking above the surface. This plant growth took minutes, not years. Man, land, and God were in perfect harmony.

The created world was not a place like our world today. That world had ‘apparent age’. Adam was fully mature when he was created. The earth was fully mature when it was created. It had rivers, sloping geographically in order for the rivers to flow. all kinds of mineral deposites and substances such as pitch and oil, mature animals, and a mature habitat for the man and animals. If a scientist would examine the tree rings he might find the trees were 50 years or even a thousand years old. If he would drill below the surface he would find oil and gas. In short the world was created with all the maturity that would be needed to support man and the animals.

We will see that on the sixth day of creation that there were mature fruits for Adam and Chava to eat. On that same day we see a talking serpent with arms and legs. The Torah text tells us that there was gold on that sixth day. We will see, in 1500 years, that there was pitch for Noach to coat the ark on the inside and the outside, for example. In short, the world appeared, from our current perspective, to be old. The world appeared to be a mature world that had been around for awhile.

Because of this ‘apparent’ age, it is useless to depend on assumptions that assume that that the way scientific processes work today is the way that they have ‘always’ worked. Things are different today. Dating methodologies that depend on everything working, back then, as they work today, are useless. I believe that that is why Peter warned us of this problem:

***2 Peter 3:3-7*** *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as [they were] from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

Adam was created as an androgynous being who contained Chava (Eve) within him. Later God will cut Aam down the side and separate the Chava part so that they can now be independent beings with the ability to partner with God to create more human beings. In this regard, Adam and Chava went up on their marital bed and seven beings came down from that bed: Adam and Chava, Cain and his sister, Abel and his two sisters. Cain and Abel and their sisters were mature and able to function independently when they came down from the marital bed. That perfect world was far different than our world today!

Adam was eceedingly tall. The Talmud[[1110]](#footnote-1110) says that Adam was created as tall as one end of the heavens to the other (also described as from earth to the heavens).

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:32*** *For ask now regarding the early days that were before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens, whether there was anything like this great thing, or was the likes of it heard?*

Rashi to Deuteronomy 4:32 - **and from the one end of the heavens:**And also ask of all the creatures from one end [of the heavens] to the other end. This is its simple meaning, but its midrashic explanation is: [This] teaches [us] about Adam’s height, that it was from the earth to the heavens, and that this is the very same measurement as from one end of the heavens to the other end.[[1111]](#footnote-1111)

Adam was designed to live forever. He was an eternal being. His body never broke down. He was designed to never be sick, to never grow old, to never have ANY probles getting food, clothing or shelter. He was perfect and he lived in a perfect world.

When Adam was created, he looked out on a barren world and understood that it was up to him to complete this world. He immediately began to pray that God would bring all of the plants up into the air so that the plants might achieve their function. As he was praying, the land became watered, the plants sprang out of the land, and the barren world became a lush garden with every plant being edible and all parts of the plant tasting like the most luscious fruit that one could imagine. Gan Eden, the Garden of Eden had been brought forth from the land. Adam was tending the garden.

The climate in Adam’s days was absolutely ideal. The earth had no tilt to its axis, so it was spring all year round. Man wore clothing only for modesty. There was no need for winter coats, summer shorts, long underwear, or any seasonal clothing. Man had no need of a shelter, or of air conditioning or heating. The climate was perfect – all of the time!

The perfect climate meant that plants would grow and never be killed by frost or snow – there was no frost or snow. Thus, whatever you planted would grow for its normal groth cycle unimpared by the climate.

Man had no need to eat meat because the plants provided all of the nutrition he would ever need. It is likely that any plant would provide whatever nutrition was needed. A varied diet was only necessary to experience the pleasures that God had provided.

God had created a perfect world. The land was perfect, the plants were perfect, the animals were perfect, and man was perfect. This perfection was such that our imagination is unable to even conceive of its perfection. Imagine, if you will, plants whose bark and leaves tasted just like its fruit. Imagine animals that could *talk* and lived in perfect harmony with man. Adam and the animals ate the same plant foods. At the same time, everything lived in perfect harmony with The Creator. Everything was perfect… *for a few hours*.

**After The Sin**

After Adam’s sin, the perfect world could no longer exist. In order to encourage Adam to return to the perfect relationship with God he needed to have a world that constantly reminded him of what he once had. This downgraded world was designed to make Adam sad as he was constantly reminded of what he once had. The world post-sin was crafted in order to help us return to our proper relationship with The Creator. The tool that God used to remind us of what we once had was the land beneath out feet.

Chava was Adam’s field where he could plow, plant seeds, and harvest produce (a child).

The land (HaAdamah), and his wife, had been reworked by God to make obtaining our needed produce more difficult. We would now have to plow, plant seed, and then harvest with much sweat and toil, and pain. The land had been reworked to help us return to God. God REALLY wanted to have a close relationship with His creation.

Because of Adam’s transgression, God made man smaller. Rashi[[1112]](#footnote-1112) explains that when God made Adam smaller, he shrank him to 100 cubits, approximately 150 ft. This gives us the understanding that man was originally created to be MUCH taller.

**After the First Murder**

Because Cain had deprived Abel of his ‘place’ in the world, God caused Cain to lose his ‘place’ in the world. God caused to land under Abel’s feet to reject him and to constantly remind him of his sin and his distance from God.

I suspect that during this time period that men had too much work to make much progress techically. The land did not produce whet when ypou planted wheat, or it produced so little wheat that you could barely survive.

**During Noach’s life**

Agriculturally, things were markedly better during Noach’s life. The land produced what you planted in such abundance that you need plant only once every 40 years. The wheat was the size of kidneys, and the fruits and vegetables were huge compared to what we have today. We have a hint to this by seeing the size of the produce which the spies brought back from Canaan.

The significance of the Noach episode runs much deeper than providing an example of God’s treatment of ordinary, unspectacular humans, important as this may be. The story of God’s selection of Noach is the drama of the transition from *Din* to *Rachamim*, from an antediluvian world judged by absolute exacting standards of behavior to a newly recreated cosmos whose inhabitants are evaluated and held accountable only through the loving prism of divine Mercy.

Three hundred years after the flood witnessed the first human being to look old. Abraham had prayed the God would distinguish between His son, Yitzchak, and his father, Abraham. Abraham had become the first person to look old. It boggles the mind to imagine a whole world of young looking folks.

In the antediluvian world no one ever got sick. No one even died before their parents. Good health meant no need for doctors or hospitals. No need for medicines. It is amazing to think of living nearly a thousand years and never needing reading glasses, walking canes, hair dye, crutches, wheelchairs, or any other medical devices.

Antediluvian man was able to make great technical strides[[1113]](#footnote-1113) because he could live so long and build on his knowledge. Think how much time we lose learning to walk and talk. We lose years going to school before we are yet ready to start taking advantage of what we learned. We are often 50 years old before me make any significant technical contribution. Then we die when we are seventy years old. This suggests that we only have about 20 years of productivity. Now imagine being able to live another 900 years after we become productive! It also boggles the mind to think of mentoring a younger man for hundreds of years!

The technical achievements include things like accurate maps of Antartica before it was covered by ice. Flying machines and the ability to travel rapidly without machines (Kafitzit HaDerech). The ability to build the great pyramid, a feat we do not yet have the skills to do today.

1. *The Greeks in the 2nd century BC invented an analogue computer known as the Antikythera mechanism.*
2. *An ancient Hindu book gives detailed instructions for the construction of an aircraft –ages before the Wright brothers.*
3. *As early as the 6th century BC Greek philosopher Pythagoras theorized that the earth must be a sphere and in the 3rd century BC the Greek mathematician and astronomer Eratosthenes had deduced that the earth was round and computed its circumference.*
4. *Around 2500 BC, the cities of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, in today’s Pakistan, were as carefully planned as Paris or Washington. An efficient water supply, drainage, and rubbish chutes were provided. Besides public swimming pools, many homes also had private bathrooms. Until the end of the last century this was a luxury in Europe and America.*

Then God tells Noach to start building an ark. The task is gargantuan. The strange dimensions are unlike any boat ever built. The shape is like an enlongated pyramid. It has no rudder and and no deck. This was not going to be a pleasure cruise. The animals on this strange ark are going to come from the four corners of the antediluvian world. The only way that this would be possible is if the seven continents are all stuck together forming a single continent caled Pangea.

Noach will be spending the next year, feeding the animals. He and his family will not be sleeping. There are so many animals that they will be working night and day to feed them all.

Finally, this long voyage has come to an end. The ark has landed on dry land and Noach has determined that the land is dry. God bids nOach and his family to set the animals free and to go out of the ark. Because we still have a single continent, the animals are free to roam to whatever land God directs.

Noach leaves the ark and discovers that the world is fundamentally different.[[1114]](#footnote-1114) God did not bring on the flood because He suddenly realized that He had made a mistake by creating the world. Rather, the antediluvian and post-flood realities were necessary stages in the world’s development, stages that are reflected in every individual’s life. Before the flood, reality was locked into the irresistible forces of cause and effect. Every good choice reinforced goodness permanently; every bad choice reinforced evil permanently. The flood softened reality by **introducing the opportunity of repentance**. Thus, when Noach emerged from the ark, what he beheld was not a ruined, post-apocalyptic devastation, but a new, fresh, world, full of promise and free from the shackles of the past.

Noach served as the vehicle through whom the original transition from the stern, absolute standard was modified to a more lenient one. It is therefore to his saga that we turn every Rosh HaShana to request and implore God that He do the same for us on the day that creation is celebrated. The ability and necessity to forgive Man for his inevitable sins and misdemeanors is rooted in the very nature of creation since the time of Noach.[[1115]](#footnote-1115)

Noach exits the ark, in the November time frame, and discovers the the world is colder than it was when he entered the ark, again in the November time frame. When he went into the ark, it was like springtime. It was pleasant and sunny. Now, a year later, Noach enters a cloudy, cooler world. That said, several amazing, miraculous, things are occurring:

1. He plants grape vines and they produce grapes the same day. When he squeezes the grapes they produce wine the same day.

2. In less than a hundred years, the animals will have scattered to the four corners of the earth. We know this because this is the time frame when God begins dividing Pangea into seven continents.

3. This new world will no longer have dinosaurs.

4. The animals will, for a short time, NOT be eating other animals.

5. The animals will be multiplying very rapidly because very soon the animals will be eating animals.

Noach’s family will also be multiplying very rapidly.

This new world will, for the first time, be having rainbows; and for the first time it will have seasons. This suggests that the physics of this new world are radically different from the antediluvian world. This new world will never need to be destroyed because of man’s sins. It has built-in corrective measures that will provide responses to man’s sins.

The people will have a very hard time wresting produce from the land. They will no longer plant once and harvest for 40 years. Now they will plant once and harvest once. Now they will find that the soil is no longer fertile as it once was because God has removed the top 18 inches and washed it all away.

With the exception of Noach and his family, the people will now have MUCH shorter life spans. An old man will live less than 200 years, instead of slightly less than a thousand years.

As Noach left the tebah, HaShem told him that due to the sins of the dor HaMabul (the deceased generation), the glory of man had been severely diminished. His greatness over the animal kingdom had been called into question. In order to re-enforce this important theme, HaShem permitted people to eat animal flesh.

# Notes:

Thereupon God sent **Metatron** to tell Shemhazai that He had resolved to destroy the world and bring on a deluge.[[1116]](#footnote-1116)

# Conclusion

THE END GAME is, and has always been, “God will be King over the entire land, and on that day, God will be One, and His Name, One”.[[1117]](#footnote-1117) So, if it is your job to make that happen, given the world today, how would you do it? What script would you follow?

# Contact Information

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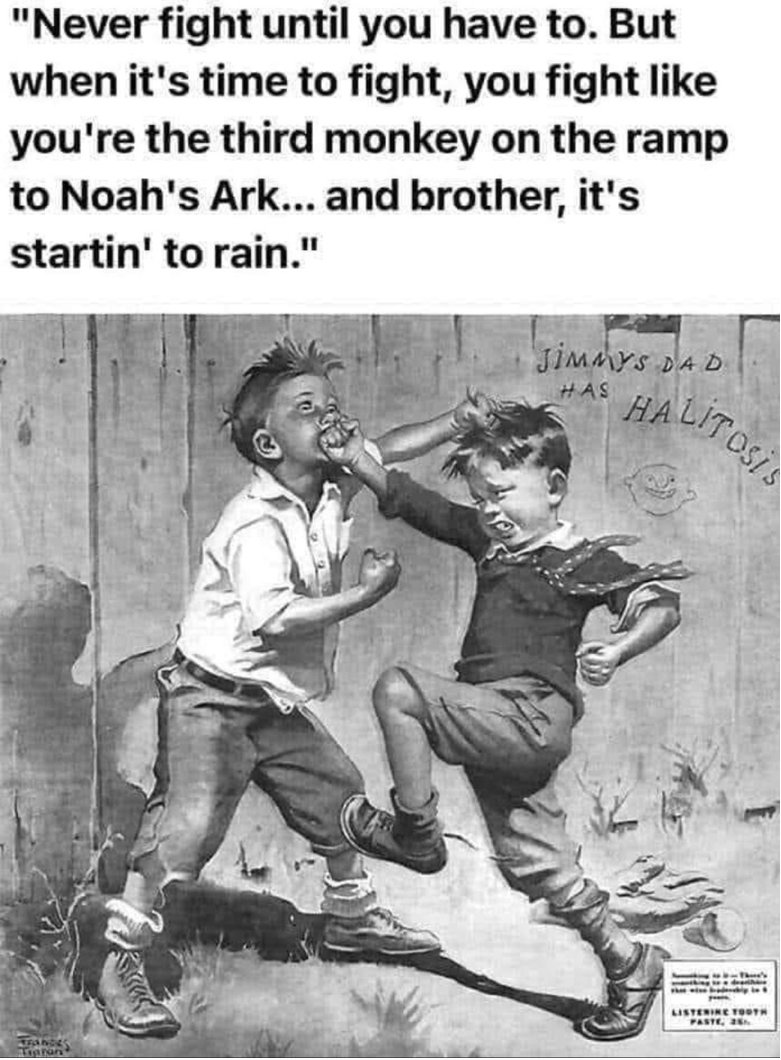
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1. Matnot Kehunah, Eitz Yosef – *The intent of Scripture is not to leave matters unspecified, but rather to clarify*. Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 21:34 **Scripture does not come to obscure but to clarify.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mishlei (Proverbs) 25:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. HaShem is how pious Jews refer to the YHVH name of God when He is exercizing the attribute of *lovingkindness*. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Chava is a translitteration of the Hebrew word normally translated as *Eve*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. God is the name that the YHVH uses when He is exercizing the attribute of *strict justice*. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Sanhedrin 38b, 58b. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 1:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ketubot 112 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Yeridat HaDorot* (“descent of the generations”), in which every successive generation is further away from the original revelation, and thus the spiritual stature of the Jewish people only diminishes with time because of our sins. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Divre Hayamin (II Chronicles) 24:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Shabbat 112b [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. HaShem: lit. “The Name” the way some pious folks refer to the YHVH name of God. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Chava = Eve [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Gan Eden = the Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The great flood - The root of Mabul is bet, lamed, lamed. The word Mabul thus means a mixing or confounding. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Bne Israel = Children of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The first Temple was destroyed in 3338AM. The second Temple was destroyed in 3829AM. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Mashiach = The Messiah [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. One of the greatest of all Kabbalists was Rabbi Moshe Cordovero. He was born in 1522 in Safed, the city that was soon to become famed as a center of Kabbalah. At a young age, he already gained a reputation as an extroardinary genius. Besides his knowledge in Kabbalah, he was a Talmudic scholar and philosopher of the highest rank, and was widely respected in these fields. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Rabbi Yitzchak Luria (1534-1572), known as the Arizal, was one of the most celebrated Kabbalists of all times, whose teachings and mode of living have left an indelible mArk on Jewish mysticism and practice. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Israel ben Eliezer or Yisroel ben Eliezer (1698[1] – 22 May 1760), known as the Baal Shem Tov or as the Besht, was a Jewish mystic and healer who is regarded as the founder of Hasidic Judaism. “Besht” is the acronym for Baal Shem Tov, which means “Master of the Good Name”, a term for a holy man who wields the secret name of God. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz, 18th -century Galicia, Midrash Pinchas, p. 82 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Cited in Marcus’ Ha-Chassidut, pp 14-15 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Orot ha-Kodesh 2, p 537 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Baal teshuva literally ‘the lord of reurn’. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Mitzvot = Torah commandments [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. A wife is where her husband plows, plants seed and reap a harvest (a child). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. The Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See Genesis Rabbah 25:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Tzadik = Righteous man [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Pareve in this context means that the plow is not evil or ‘good’ by itself, it is simply technology. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. I heard this idea from Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Malbim on Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. aka “the Netziv”, 1816-1893 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Shemot (Exodus) 9:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Melachim alef (I Kings) 15:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. darnel, also called Tare, noxious weed of the ryegrass. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12 - Not only human beings.-Hence The Flood destroyed all. Cf. Sanhedrin 108a. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. darnel, also called Tare, noxious weed of the ryegrass. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Mishna.Eduyyot 2:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. But it is stated in Sanhedrin 10:3 that they have no portion in the World to come. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Iyov (Job) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Kohelet (Ecclesastes) 9:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Infra, 33:7; Leviticus Rabbah 7:6; Ecclesiates Rabbah 9:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. By disregarding the punctuation it appears that even Noah was included. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Cf. supra, 26:6; Sanhedrin 108a. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. raison d’etre - the most important reason or purpose for someone or something’s existence. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. A ryegrass which looks much like wheat in its early stages of growth. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Noach married Naamah who was the daughter of Tzillah, the “trophy wife” taken by Lemech solely for the purpose of hedonistic pleasure. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The ancient Jewish text, Sefer HaYashar (P. Noach) explains that two years after Naamah and Noach were married, they had their first child, Yapheth. Their second son, Shem, was born three years later in 1559 BCE. Cham, their youngest son, was born three years later. This makes the oldest son Yapheth exactly 100 years old when The Flood began in the year 1656 BCE. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. The meaning of this word נִשְׁחָתָה really means ‘twisted’, though it is normally translated as ‘corrupted’. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Sanhedrin*.* 56b, 57a [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Tanchuma Noach 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Rashi to Beresit (Genesis) 6:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. This explanation was given by Rabbi Dr. Avigdor Bonchek. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Joseph Ber Soloveitchik (Yosef Dov ha-Levi Soloveychik; February 27, 1903 – April 9, 1993) was a major American Orthodox rabbi, Talmudist, and modern Jewish philosopher. He was a scion of the Lithuanian Jewish Soloveitchik rabbinic dynasty. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:11 reads “And the earth was corrupted”—va-tishaheth, root shaheth. The use of this particular root, which is the same as that used for the destruction by The Flood in verse 14, brings home the fact that this punishment was measure for measure. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Cubit = an ancient measure of length, approximately equal to the length of a forearm. It was typically about 18 inches or 44 cm, though there was a long cubit of about 21 inches or 52 cm. This suggests that the waters covered the highest mountain by about 25 feet. This also suggests that the tallest person, at this time, was less that 25 feet tall. That sais, if everyone was a giant, the the cubit could have been much longer. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Tefach = a unit of length, approximately equal to eight centimeters, or 3.2 inches. Tefachim = plural [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Thus translating the verse literally. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. The earth too being regarded as man’s nurse, as it were. Cf. supra, 28:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The phrase fifteen cubits upward surely could not be taken to mean that the fifteen cubits were measured from different levels. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Bereshit (Genesis) 18:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Shmuel bet (2 Samuel) 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Shmuel bet (2 Samuel 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 24:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. viz. Cain and Abel and Cain’s descendants. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Shmuel bet (II Samuel) 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Bereshit (Genesis) 6.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. J. Theodor and Ḥ Albeck, Genesis Rababh, Itzkowski, Berlin, 1903, 285-286; Genesis Rabbah, The Widow and Brothers Romm, Vilna, 1885–1887, 116; A. Kosman, HUCA, 73(1) (2002) 157-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Vayikra (Leviticus) 11:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. In the light of this interpretation it could not have been maintained that a mouse cannot render unclean if it fell into the sea and there came into contact with some object. Consequently the term ‘upon the earth’ must be explained with regard to species, thus only land species can render unclean but not the sea species. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Heb. שרץ might also mean to propagate, breed; cf. Exodus 1:7. Rashi, however, explains the word in the sense that the creature is the product of copulation of the sexes, which is not the case with the mouse that is generated by the earth itself. In some MSS. of Rashi this explanation is not found. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Consequently the expression ‘upon the earth’ would signify that all creatures, whether land or sea creatures, if they have fallen into the sea, cannot render anything unclean. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. 1782-1860 [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Part I p327 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Tehillim(Psalms) 104:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. The Netziv was Rosh Yeshiva of the famed Volozhin Yeshiva for almost 40 Years until it was closed by the Russian government in 1892. Founded by R. Chaim of Volozhin, the Yeshivah flourished, increasing from 100 to 400 students. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ha’amek Davar; 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ha’amek Davar to Bereshit 7:23, [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Chimera, in genetics, an organism or tissue that contains at least two different sets of DNA, most often originating from the fusion of as many different zygotes (fertilized eggs). The term is derived from the Chimera of Greek mythology, a fire-breathing monster that was part lion, part goat, and part dragon. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Rabbi Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser - March 7, 1809 – September 18, 1879. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. [For a different approach by a contemporary of the Malbim see Drush Ohr HaChayim 3 (printed at the end Nezikin vol. 1 in a standard Mishna) by Yisrael Lifschitz (1782–1860), the author of the Tiferet Yisrael commentary on the Mishnah. He refers to wooly mammoths, iguanodon, and Megalosaurus and explains that all are evidence of the 974 generations that God created and destroyed (alluded to in Shabbat 88b) before He created the current world.] [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. In Malbim commentary to Genesis 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. The name of a bird (Tartarian lArk, v. Jast.), which, according to R. Abba b. Kahana, copulates indiscriminately. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Since the leaders are in a position to stop it. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. The idea is the same: what hope is there when the leaders and guardians of religion themselves transgress? [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. As though they were divine. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. A long life was required for making the necessary observations. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Through their long life of ease they were now fully liable for all the punishment their sins merited. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Singular (טובת ) instead of toboth (טובות), plural, though it is read as plural, The idea is that one woman was taken by many men. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. An allusion to the ius primae noctis. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. They took women married to others. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Or perhaps: until they wrote marriage deeds for males and beasts- i.e. they fully legalised such practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Sexual activity involving a man and a boy or youth. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. This is the literal translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. V. supra 108a; i.e., those which had mated only with their kind. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Only such coming as fulfilled the above condition. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Bereshit Rabbah 31:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Sanhedrin 57a [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Genesis Rabbah 28:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Genesis Rabbah 28:8, p. 121. See also Sanhedrin 108b. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Bar yochni is described in the Jewish ancient literature as a giant bird see BABYLONIAN TALMUD, 1882, Bechorot 57b; Yoma 80a; Sukka 5b. On the ziz, a huge fowl see THEODOR and ALBECK, 1903, 19:4, p. 173; MARGALIOTH, 1993, 22:10, p. 523, and at length NISSAN, 1999, p. 393–400; KAPLAN, 2013, p. 33-50. On huge fishes and giant sea animals see BABYLONIAN TALMUD, 1882, Baba Batra 73b-74b. As L. Jacobs has shown in the Babylonian Talmud there is extensive use of mythological elements which were drawn from the non-Jew environment. See JACOBS, 1977, p. 1–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Another name for the bar yochni. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. On dragons in the Jewish literature see ALBECK, 1952, Avodah Zara 3:3; BABYLONIAN TALMUD, 1882, Gittin 56b-57a. On centaurs (kintorin) see THEODOR and ALBECK, 1903, 23:6, p. 227. On mythological creatures in Jewish Sages literature see at length LIEBERMAN, 1963, p. 286-287; BAR-ILAN, 1994, p. 104-113; SLIFKIN, 2007; NISSAN, 2013-2014, p. 3–63; NISSAN, 2015-2016, p. 257-294. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. ziz, a huge fowl see THEODOR and ALBECK, 1903, 19:4, p. 173; MARGALIOTH, 1993, 22:10, p. 523, and at length NISSAN, 1999, p. 393–400; KAPLAN, 2013, p. 33-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. This miraculous hybrid creature was also described in the writings of Greek and Roman sages, and this phenomenon is grounded in a broader outlook mentioned by Aristotle concerning spontaneously generating creatures. According to the Greek and Roman sages, such as Diodorus, Ovid and Pliny, the mice can be seen in the area of the Nile in Egypt, when the water that floods the fields retreats to the river‟s normal channel. According to the Amoraim the mouse is created in a valley, apparently because it is a low place where the ground is normally moist and sometimes muddy. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. The phoenix (in Hebrew off ha’hol, lit. sand bird) is a mythological fowl that appears in various cultures and religions, for instance in ancient Egyptian mythology, Greek mythology, and in the Christian faith as a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus (BLAKE, 1964). The phoenix is also mentioned in ancient Jewish sources within various genres – in the Talmud, the Midrash, and the Apocrypha (VAN DER BROEK, 1972, p. 465-468). It is described as a long-living bird associated with the sun, and there are various versions with regard to its life span (see below) (VAN DER BROEK, 1972, p. 67-70). In a cyclic process, the phoenix dies by fire and is resurrected from the ashes. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. A giant uncorn the size of a large mountain. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. The aurochs (pronounced “oar-ox”, plural aurochses or aurochsen, and also known as the urus) was a huge wild ox that is familiar to few people today, because it became extinct in 1627. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Chimera was a three-headed monster which ravaged the countryside of Lycia. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. A creature with the head, arms, and torso of a man and the body and legs of a horse. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Pegasus is a winged divine stallion, usually depicted as pure white in color. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. A beast typically depicted as having the body of a lion, the face of a man, and the sting of a scorpion. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. A cyclops (meaning ‘circle-eyed’) is a one-eyed giant**.** [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. The term most commonly refers to three sisters who are described as having hair made of living, venomous snakes and horrifying visages that turned those who beheld them to stone. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. The Aqrabuamelu, or scorpion man, is a monstrous creature that originated in ancient Mesopotamia. They are a hybrid of a scorpion and a man, with the body of a scorpion and the face, torso, and arms of a man. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. The **Minotaur** was a monster with the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. A half-human and half-goat creature. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Iyov (Job) 29:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 14:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. A gigantic water-snake-like monster with nine heads (the number varies), one of which was immortal. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:8; 14:29; 59:5; and Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 8:17. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 13:31, 34:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Sefer Chasidim, a 13th-century German text that ushered in Jewish mysticism, describes Alukah as a blood-sucking witch who can fly like a bat when her hair is let loose and shapeshift into a wolf. A seductress with two demon daughters who cry “Give, give”, Alukah will die if her supply of blood is cut off. To prevent the vampire from turning into a demon, she has to be buried with her mouth stuffed with dirt. Wait, so is she a demon, a vampire, or a witch? A true bang for your shekel, the sex-crazed Alukah is all three and more. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 26:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Revelation 9:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:28 [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Bereshit Rabbah [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Yehoshua (Joshus) 13:3; (Genesis) 15:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Yehoshua (Joshua) 2:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Pirke D’Rebbe Eliezer 10, Yalkut Shimoni Parshat Noach Remez 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Baba Batra 75A [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Chagiga 12A [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Niddah 61a [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. see Rashi, Bamidbar (Numbers) 13:33 [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Zevachim 113b [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Esther 7:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Bereshit (Genesis) 14:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Niddah 61a [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Yalkut Shimoni, Noach 55 [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Zevachim 113b [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. See Midrash Petirat Moshe, 1:128 - It is important to remember once more the old adage that one who believes that the Midrash is false is a heretic, yet one who believes that the Midrash is literally true is a fool. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. The Da’at Z’keinim Bamidbar (Numbers) 21:34 [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Zevachim 113a-b [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. This follows by contrast: since OF ALL FLESH is mentioned separately, LlVlNG THING must refer to those that have life without flesh; cf. supra, VII, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Wild ox. A fabulous animal of enormous height. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Being too high. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Which lies on the opposite side of the Lake of Tiberias. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Iyov (Job) 39:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. 1627 CE [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Zevachim 113b:7-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Which is the Re’em in Aramaic. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Vittorio [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Italian bio [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. The word “Pangaea” comes from the Greek “pan”, which means “all”, and “gaia” or “Earth”. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Note that the land resembles a fetus and its belly-button is in the center of the land-mass. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Ibn Ezra was one of the most distinguished Jewish biblical commentators and philosophers of the Middle Ages. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Midrash Bereshit Rabba 5:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Hanoka, Y. (2002). Continental drift, asteroid impacts, and The Flood. B’Or HaTorah. 13:86-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Genesis 10:25. This idea was heard from Rabbi Mordechai Neugroschel [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. **Dor Haflagah:** (lit. “the generation of the division”,) i.e., the generation who constructed the Tower of Babel and as punishment were divided and dispersed throughout the world. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Why did Moshe, at around 1500 years after The Flood, tell the people of Israel that they should check out this issue from one end of the sky to the far end of the sky? Are there people who live in the sky? Obviously not! So why did he say this? Simple: he knew that there were people living in distant lands which were not part of the known landmass of Europe-Asia-Africa… but they are all under the same sky! Now if the tectonic movements of the continental landmasses were as slow as the scientific community claims then how did Moshe, living so long before the discovery of the Americas and of Australia/New Zealand, know this? They should have been long scrubbed from memory! But Moshe tells his people know that there are other peoples living across the seas, and even if you were to meet them and to ask them if among then there is any nation with a claim that matches the claim of the children of Israel: National Revelation and living to tell the tale they will tell you “Nope! Never heard it… never will!” – Rabbi Shlomo Ben Zeev [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. The generation of the tower of Babel. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs) 7:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. I.e., the center. According to Midrashic legend the Temple was situated in the center of the world. Cf. Tanchuma, Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:23. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. אגן akin to ןגן — ‘to enclose’. Hence, shield, protect. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. סהר = moon i.e., they were seated in circular form like a moon. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. The actual number required for capital cases is twenty-three, roughly a third of seventy-one, the remaining two-thirds being for completion purposes. The Aggadists therefore compare the court to mingled wine, a mixture of one-third of wine and two-thirds of water. Cf. B M. 60a; Tanchuma. Bamidbar IV. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Tehillim (Psalms) 104 [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Most of this section is an excerpt from *The Essential Malbim*, edited by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, adapted by Rabbi Reuven Subar [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Noach was the first person born after the death of Adam. - Also see the Riva, and Hadar Zikanim. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:9  [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. The point is explicit in Bereshit Rabba (28:9) and implicit in the famous story of the lion wounding Noach in the Ark. The point is that Noach is personally unworthy of survival, but he must survive in the most minimal way possible so as to ensure the survival of the race; he is therefore wounded. Needless to say, there are also midrashim to the contrary, which view Noach as an extraordinarily righteous and unique figure. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. A classic story tells about the great Reb Zusha, who was found agitated and upset as he lay on deathbed. His students asked, “Rebbe, why are you so sad? After all the great things you have accomplished, your place in heaven is assured!” “I’m afraid!” Zusha replied, “Because when I get to heaven, God won’t ask me ‘Why weren’t you more like Moshe?’ or ‘Why weren’t you more like King David?’ God will ask ‘Zusha, why weren’t you more like Zusha?’ And then what will I say!?” [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. The identity of this wood is unclear. Among the possibilities are cypress, boxwood, teak, brazil wood, and pine (see Zohar Amar, *Tzimchei Hamikra*pp. 198-199). [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. The ark was to be made of gopher wood and coated with kopher (Genesis 6:14). Both words are similar in their Hebrew roots: gopher is written גֹפֶר and kopher is כֹּפֶר, the difference being the first letter.[1] We can assume that both materials were of course complementing each other in the same role of keeping the ark afloat and dry in the inside. But the word גֹפֶר is the root for *Sulphur*, and the word כֹּפֶר is the root for *expiation* / *atonement*. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19-20 [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:1-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Malbim to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. See Siftei Chachamim to Genesis 7:2. Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra to Genesis 6:19. Nachmanides to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. See Mizrachi on Rashi to Bereshit 7:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Tereifah is a Hebrew word that means "torn by a beast of prey". In Jewish law, it refers to a kosher animal or bird that is disqualified from being considered kosher due to pre-existing injuries or physical defects. The term was originally used only in this sense, but it came to be used for anything forbidden by the dietary laws. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. 6a, DH v'Dilma [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. The first mention of wine in the Torah is in a tragic circumstance. Noach plants a vineyard, becomes inebriated, and suffers dire consequences [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:4-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:7-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. The Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. The covenant of the previous verse: Neither will I again smite any more every living thing. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Reading the two verses together: Neither will I again smite... while the earth remaineth. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Yeshayahu (Isaiah 51:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Zecharia 11:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. I.e. none ever died young [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Lit. translation of the verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. From the context this appears to mean that they would be exposed to the depredations of birds. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 18:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. He too understood HEAT to mean a high temperature. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Zecharia 14:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Every year, a single harvest providing food for many years. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. kefitzat haderech – lit. a leaping of the land. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. This is a picture, exaggerated of course, of the extreme ease of their lives, which led to over-confidence in themselves and rebellion against God. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. This is a new passage. Since Scripture implies that henceforth there would be alternating seasons of cold and heat, how was the climate hitherto? [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. I.e. the weather of a mild spring or early summer. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Noach’s main gilgul was in Moshe Rabbeinu. Because in his life he didn’t work on bringing all the people close to God (and preventing The Flood) he had to come back and sacrifice himself to bring all Jewish people back to God, and if not, as Moshe Rabbeinu says, “erase me from Your book” (מספרך נא מחני). With the word מחני containing the letters נח מי, the waters of Noach. By saying this Moshe Rabbeinu rectified Noach completely. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Tzaddik צדיק is a form of the Hebrew verb צדק [TzDK], which carries the meaning of doing what is correct and just. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faithful obedience; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Mashiach Yeshua unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; adapted by Moshe Yaakov Wisnefsky [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Shabbat is the Hebrew word for Sabbath. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Bereshit (Genesis). 9:21. The reference is to Noach. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. Pirke DeRebbi Eliezer 23:12 - Noach found a vine which was lying there, which had come out of the garden of Eden. It had its clusters with it, and he took of its fruit and ate, and rejoiced in his heart, as it is said, “My wine, which cheereth God and man” (Judg. 9:13). He planted a vineyard with it. On the selfsame day it produced and became ripe with its fruits, as it is said, “In the day of thy planting thou dost make it grow, and in the morning thou makest thy seed to blossom” (Isa. 17:11). [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Genesis Rabbah 36:3. I.e., he should not have planted a vineyard, from which wine is produced, but other trees. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Genesis Rabbah 36:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:21 - Some mekubalim suggest that perhaps the custom to recite Kiddush on Friday night was instituted to serve as a tikkun, a correction, for the sin of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Since Adam Ha’Rishon sinned on erev Shabbat using grapes, we use the grape vine on Shabbat to show how one can act in a most responsible and most proper way by using that wine which often has led men to sin or otherwise act improperly. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Rashi on Bereshit (Genesis) 2:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:21. The reference is to Noach. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Bereshit Rabbah 15:8 and Sanhedrin 70b [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20-24. In this passage, the conversive vav occurs thirteen times, in each case followed by the yod of the imperfect. The combination vav yod, (וי) means ‘woe’ in Hebrew. Thus, there were thirteen woes: so great are the sorrows caused by drunkenness. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. The sons of Ham were Cush and Mitzrayim, and Phut and Canaan. Bereshit (Genesis) 10:7. Some say that all of Cham’s descendants were cursed by cursing Canaan. Noach cursed Canaan, his fourth son. Ibid. 9:25ff [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. I.e., by emasculating him, he deprived Noach of the possibility of a fourth son. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Bereshit (Genesis) 34:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. He both castrated and abused his father. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Jast Th. a land-worker is so called because he tills the land. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Now understood in a contemptuous sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Shemot (Exodus) 2:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 33:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. The original is difficult and the translation is only a conjecture; cur. edd. omit it altogether. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Genesis Rabbah, manuscripts, and early editions read: a fourth son [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Genesis Rabbah 36:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. From Genesis Rabbah 22:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. When the Torah presents a chiastic structure, whether in narrative or legalistic text, it does so in order to highlight the “center”. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. The Targum Yerushalmi (Genesis 9:20 – Pirke d’Rabbi Eleazer 23) states, “Noach found the vine which Adam had taken with him from Paradise when he was driven out…” [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. By Carol Meyers [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Abarbanel op.cit., page 229. The word na’im is often found in connection with song. See 2 Samuel 23:1, Psalms 146:1, 94:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. See Rashi, Bereshit (Genesis) 4:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Avot 5:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Genesis Rabbah 23:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. This name derives from the Hebrew “Na‛ămâ”, meaning “pleasantness, graciousness, loveliness”. There are two women in the bible called Naama: 1) The daughter of Lamech by his wife Zillah and sister of Tubal-Cain in the days before The Flood. 2) The ammonite wife of Solomon and mother of king Rehoboam of Judah. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Mentioned in the Torah, in Bereshit (Genesis) 4:22. A descendant of Cain, she was the only mentioned daughter of Lamech and Zillah and their youngest mentioned child; her brother was Tubal-cain, while Jabal and Jubal were her half-brothers, sons of Lamech’s other wife Adah. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. See Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Chajes “A Students Guide to the Talmud” especially chapters 11 and 12 page 172 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Three represents the concept of peace. The number three is used in the Torah to mediate between two opposing or contradictory values. The third value mediates, reconciles, and connects the two. Three is the number of truth. The Rambam also communicated the fundamental relationship of three to Torah. In the Yad HaChazaka he writes, “The Torah was given to create peace in the world.” Peace is dependent on three: two conflicting factions and a third element, which unifies and brings together the other two. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Midot Tovot [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. 3 times one hundred. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. 3 times ten. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Rabbaynu Shlomo ben Yitzchak (Rashi), Commentary on Sefer Bereshit 6:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Rabbaynu Shlomo ben Yitzchak (Rashi), Commentary on Sefer Bereshet 6:13. “Violence - chamas” The term “*chamas* worth at least a pruta” is understood as theft, and sometimes not necessarily as the act of a single criminal, but rather as theft condoned by the law. Both “Gezel – half a pruta” and “Chamas” refer to robbery, but “Chamas” is a more severe type of theft. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. The seven Noahide laws are: 1. Idolatry 2. "Blessing" of the divine name 3. Murder 4. Adultery 5. Theft and civil law 6. To establish courts system 7. A prohibition of eating a limb torn from a live animal. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Yoma 9b [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. לשנ Lashon is the Hebrew word for speech. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Commenting on Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. The Ark that carried Moshe in the Nile was also called a tebah. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Israel ben Eliezer or Yisroel ben Eliezer (1698 – 22 May 1760), known as the Baal Shem Tov or as the Besht, was a Jewish mystic and healer who is regarded as the founder of Hasidic Judaism. "Besht" is the acronym for Baal Shem Tov, which means "Master of the Good Name," a term for a holy man who wields the secret name of God. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Zohar III.256a [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Jerusalem Talmud, 1523, Ta’anit 1:6, 64d; Babylonian Talmud, 1882, Ta’anit 11a; Genesis Rabbah, 1885–1887, 31:13, p. 130 [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. The male raven passes its semen to the female from beak to beak. The punishment may be that the act involves no pleasure, and in any case, this is not a realistic phenomenon. The punishments given to the dog and to the raven follow the “measure for measure” rule (lex talionis). Since their sin was sexual they are punished with irregular sexual conduct. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Genesis Rabbah (1885–1887, Noah, 36:7, p. 149) [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Genesis Rabbah 36:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Genesis 9:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Genesis 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. According to the Rabbis he castrated him. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Sc. Canaan; V. X, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Coins bearing his own effigy. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Copulating in the Ark is compared to minting one's coinage (producing offspring in one's own image) in the King's (i.e. God's) own house. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Kohelet Rabbah, 1885–1887, 7:13, p. 39 [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Tebah is normally translated as *Ark*, but it also has the meaning of *word*. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. When the sun is bright; see Sanhedrin 108b. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Genesis Rabbah 31:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. R’ Aba bar Kahana said, “[Tzohar means] window”. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. R’ Levi said. “[Tzohar means] precious gem”. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Targum Yonatan Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. also see Hagigah 12a; Leviticus Rabbah 11:7, Genesis Rabbah 41:3 and Zohar I:31b, all homiletically based on Genesis 1:3, Psalms 97:11 and Job 38:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. Which provided light from itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. I.e. a gangway one cubit in breadth ran right round the outer side of the Ark, thus accounting for two cubits. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. V.Figures in Mah. R. Judah holds that there were four rows of thirty compartments on each of the first and second stories, but only three rows on the third, owing to its greater narrowness. But R. Nehemiah maintains that there were six rows of fifty compartments on each of the three stories. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. It tapered, hence the top storey contained only three rows. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. How could the top storey contain as many rows as the bottom ones? [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. This passage is very obscure. M.K.: R. Judah holds that the same cubit that was used in measuring the bottom of the Ark was used in measuring the top (cubits varied), and this is the meaning of the verse, viz. and by the (same) cubit thou shalt finish it above. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. I.e.the three stories were of equal breadth, and they were topped by an inward sloping roof, the thirty cubits height being exclusive of this roof. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. To get the garbage (excrements) to the bottom, this question being based on the first view. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. This follows by reading תעשה it shall make itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. From which he later released the raven, Bereshit (Genesis) 8:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Pesachim 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Hebrew tzohar - צהר. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Hebrew Tzohraim - צהרים. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. The sides being sloping, the rain would fall off it. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Ibid. [Some MSS, have the following addition: and the door of the Ark shalt thou set in the side thereof (ibid.) in order to enable the nozila (a huge animal of the antelope species that could not be accommodated in the Ark on account of its size) to put its head therein (it having been tied to the Ark behind which it ran); v. Genesis Rabba 31:13.] [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. Shemot (Exodus) 2:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. This section was written by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks.. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22; Genesis Rabba 25:2, 34:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Genesis Rabbah 31:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. This section was written by Rabbi Ozer Alport. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. In Bereshit (Genesis) 8:3-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. This section was written by Yosef Zev Silver wrote this article about Noach's Ark. Edited by Leibel Estrin. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\_cdo/aid/3862861/jewish/11-Things-You-Didnt-Know-About-Noach-and-the-Great-Flood.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Ibn Ezra’s Commentary to Genesis 7:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. The time of the day when light is at its fullest. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Hence Scripture does not tell us where it was placed. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. According to I.E. and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward applies to the top of the roof of the Ark. See Rashi. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. The width of the Ark was one-sixth the length. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. According to Luzatto, this applies only to the roof of the Ark. See Lazzaro’s commentary on the Pentateuch, p. 42. However, a literal reading of I.E. does not support this view. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Unlike other ships which are entered through the deck (Krinsky). [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. The door was on the third top of the Ark (Krinsky). [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. Hence it was able to contain representatives of all species. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. A cubit is the span from shoulder to fingertips. Since Noach was taller than we, his cubits were longer. The Ark was thus even larger than a superficial reading of Scripture indicates. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. And similarly each of the other two stories (Weiser). [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. The raven was sent by Noach forty days after the tops of the mountains were seen on the first day of Ab. (See Verses 5-6). This brings us to the tenth of Ellul. Seven days later, on the seventeenth day of Ellul, he sent forth the dove. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Verse 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. From the eighteenth of Ellul to the first of Tishri is a period of twelve days. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Above, 6:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. Ibid., Verse 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. circa 182–251 [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. The Hebrew word used for the Ark of Noach is Tebah (תבה) meaning box-shaped or chest. It is not the Hebrew term used for boat or ship, e.g. ‘onîah (אניה) in Proverbs 30:19, or (צי) in Isaiah 33:21. The word in Hebrew for Ark is “*Teiva*”*,* which also means “*word*”. Throughout the history of the Jewish People, both in times of oppression and assimilation, our only refuge has been to “*Come into the* Tebah*”;* *to come into the “word”*. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, before then, regarding the story of Noach’s Ark, scholars had been unable to read a particular word following the Hebrew phrase ‘the Ark’s tallness’, but the new scans revealed the word ‘ne’esefat’. The translation of this word from Hebrew to English means gathered, which Dr Alexey Yuditsky from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem says means that the Ark’s ribs were gathered at the top to form a shape of a **pyramid**. Mr. Sibson added: “According to Dr Yuditsky, the Septuagint also describes the Ark as **pyramid**-shaped, using a Greek verb that also has a similar meaning to ‘gathered’. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. I wonder how Noach obtained water for his family and the animals? I picture faucets built ito the side of the Ark, below the water line. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. A squashed pyramid stretched on two sides, maybe. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 The Tzohar - צֹהַר was the light for the interior of the Ark. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. The Ark took the shape of a cut off pyramid. The slope of the side walls of the Ark is 50,76°. The slope of the Pyramid of Cheops is 51, 52°. The slope of the Pyramid of Chephren is 52,2°. The slope of the Pyramid of Mycerinus is 50,47°. By Eduard Shyfrin [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. This passage is very obscure. M.K.: R. Judah holds that the same cubit that was used in measuring the bottom of the Ark was used in measuring the top (cubits varied), and this is the meaning of the verse, viz. and by the (same) cubit thou shalt finish it above. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. I.e. The three stories were of equal breadth, and they were topped by an inward sloping roof, the thirty cubits height being exclusive of this roof. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. Rabbi Eli Friedman [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. New York Post, “Incredible discovery made inside Great Pyramid of Giza”, By MArk Hodge, The Sun, July 31, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Journal of Applied Physics (2018). DOI: 10.1063/1.5026556, “Study reveals the Great Pyramid of Giza can focus electromagnetic energy”, by Anastasia Komarova, ITMO University [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Sanhedrin 108b, opinion of Rabbi Yirmiyahu [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Sanhedrin 108b, second interpretation of the opinion of Rabbi Yirmiyahu. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Old edition of Rashi [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Yalkut Shimoni #54 [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Second opinion in same Yalkut Shimoni. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. P’sikto Zut’r’so [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Pirke D’Rebbi Eliezer ch. 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. By David Sofer [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Nachmanides to Genesis 6:19. Kli Yakar to Genesis 6:21.. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. *Noach* means “rest” and “tranquility”. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. https://www.betemunah.org/place.html [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Ararat = "the curse reversed: precipitation of curse" [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. For many centuries Christians have regarded the Mount of Ararat in eastern Turkey as the final resting place of the Ark and the spot where the post-Flood civilization began. Only the Genesis account of the tragedy mentions Ararat - all other traditions are silent on this issue. This may be one of the reasons why not all archaeologists agree that the mountain we know today as Ararat is the same one mentioned in Noah’s account even though the Turkish name for the mountain means ‘Mountain of the Arl nd the Persian name for it is translated ‘Mountain of Noah’, The Babylonian legend indicates that the ship was stranded on Mount Nisir, and the Moslem world holds to the view that Mount Djudi is the location. The latter opinion, however, is hardly worth considering, as an increasing number of Islamic scholars have speculated that Mount Djudi may in reality be identical to Mount Ararat. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer, chap. 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. Tehillim (Psalms) 69:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. I.e. the word can be so read. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Tehillim (Psalms) 69:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. V. ‘A.Z. 8a, where this is referred to Adam. This interpretation is based on the def. art. THE ALTAR. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Kefitsat Haderech in the Jewish kabbalah describes a miracle wherein someone travels vast distances in short time. It is explained as the road “shrinking” or contracting so both ends are now closer, almost like a biblical wormhole that bends space. Rashi says that this is accomplished throuth the pronouncement of HaShem’s name of 42 or 87 letters. Kabbalah teaches that those episodes in which there was miraculous shortening of the distance, or “kefitzat HaDerech” in Hebrew, it was not the traveling time that was shortened but rather the distance itself. The tzaddik was suspended, so to speak, above the boundaries of time and space, so that he could move instantaneously from one place to another. The rules of nature remained in place; the tzaddik simply transcended them. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. R. Avraham b. HaGra [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. p.270 [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. Targum Sheni 9:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 21:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. See Manot HaLevi on Esther 5:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. Esther Rabbah 32; Yalkut Shimoni 1059 [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Anaf Yosef on Midrash ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Yalkut Shimoni ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Esther Raba ibid; Yalkut Shimoni ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. Yalkut Shimoni 1056 [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Haman used a beam of length 50 amma taken from Noach’s Ark to erect it as a gallows upon which to hang Mordechai the Jew (Esther 7:9). Haman’s son acquired it for him. Now get this -- Haman’s son, says the Midrash, ruled a country called Kardonia (in the Mountains of Ararat)! - Yalkut Shimoni Esther (End of Chpt. 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Tehillim (Psalms) 111:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. From Chabad - http://www.chabadnj.org/mobile/page.asp?pageID=%7BF416D5A3-CEF8-4925-A0EE-B41799D3B378%7D&displayAll=1 [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. See Esther 3:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Aurochs, (Bos primigenius), also spelled auroch, extinct wild ox of Europe, family Bovidae (order Artiodactyla), from which cattle are probably descended. The aurochs survived in central Poland until 1627. The aurochs was black, stood 1.8 metres (6 feet) high at the shoulder, and had spreading, forward-curving horns. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Zevachim 113b:7-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Reima is the singular form of Re’em. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. A huge animal, too large to enter the Ark. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. That it was able to survive The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. A Persian mile, nearly four English miles. — This passage occurs in a series of ‘tall’ stories by Rabbah b. Bar Hanah related in B. B. 73a seq., which were probably veiled allegories on the political and social conditions of the time. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Hence he needs no explanation at all. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. And this would cause the re’em to slip out and drown. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. To secure it. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. It would have been scalded. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Since its seams were caulked with pitch, why did not the pitch dissolve in the hot water and leave the Ark unseaworthy? [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. According to legend he was such a giant that he escaped from The Flood (Nid. 61b). Why wasn’t he scalded by the hot water? [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. The scriptural name of the bird is Chol and the Talmud calls it Orshina. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Rashi 3:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Maharil Diskin Parshat Bereshit, Tiferet Torah [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. After 1000 years it burns up and returns to its youth.  [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. E.V. ‘ The wild beasts’. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Tehillim (Psalms) 50:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. E.V. ‘hawk’. Here taken to be synonymous with ziz. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Iyov (Job) 39:26 - Where the sun stands during the height of day. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Bereshit Rabbah 31:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Practical application of Jewish law, i.e. how it’s actually practiced. More broadly, can simply mean “what people do”. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. In Hebrew, the word gilgul means "cycle" or "wheel" and neshamot is the plural for "souls." Souls are seen to cycle through lives or incarnations as a means whereby souls could continue their task of self-perfection, being attached to different human bodies over time. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. This idea is brought in many places: for example, it is in the Yalkut Reuveni in the beginning of Tetzaveh quoting the מגלה עמוקות, and in the Chasam Sofer's Drush for zayin Adar in 91 [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Sotah 12b [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. In The Flood saga in Bereshit (Genesis) chapters 6-9, we find the word ‘covenant’ used eight (8) times! [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. שער בת רבים - טל אורות [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. the Tabernacle in the wilderness [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Yoma 21a; Megillah 10b; Bava Batra 99a. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Tzidkat Hatzadik 107, Torah Ohr Parshat Noach [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. A mikvah (מִקְוֶה, also spelled mikveh) is a pool of water, in which Jewish people immerse to affect purity. It is most commonly used by women, as part of the niddah cycle, before she is reunited with her husband. The mikvah is also used by converts as they become Jewish. In temple times, it was used by anyone wishing to enter the Holy Temple complex or partake of sacred foods. A modern mikvah is often a beautiful facility resembling a spa. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Mitzvah 173 [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. From 5783 [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. “He was named Noach, saying this one will ease our work, and bring us rest from the toil of our hands…”. Bereshit Genesis) 5:29. Noach, meaning rest and comfort. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. Noach was born in the year 1056 (2704 BCE). Noach’s uniqueness was apparent from birth. According to Jewish tradition, he was born circumcised, which is a sign of a special covenant with God. He was also the first person to be fair-skinned. Previous generations had dArk skin as a result of the sins of Adam, Chava (Eve) and later, Cain. Furthermore, Jewish tradition relates that Noach could talk as a new-born, and that Noach was the first person to have separate fingers on his hands. For all these reasons, the wise men of the generation knew that Noach was special. [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Mabul comes from the root ‘baval’ which means ‘destruction’. This indicates that the goal of The Flood was not covering the world with water, but rather the destruction of the whole earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Since the Torah does not provide the number of months in the age of each patriarch listed from Adam to Noach, then we could add about five more years to this number. For example, Adam may have been 130 years and 10 months old when Seth [Josephus describes that Seth knew astronomy, invented the Hebrew letters, and understood how time was divided into weeks, months, and years.] was born, and Seth may have been 105 years and four months. On average, there would likely be an additional six months for each generation. The same would be true for the genealogy in Bereshit (Genesis) 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. “Charm is deceitful” (Prov 31:30); in Hebrew: ‘Sheker haHen’. The numerical value of Sheker = (שקר) 600 (שק”ר). And ‘Hen’ is “Noach” in symmetry, as stated above. So under this Light we see that “Grace is Deceitful” hints us to “the 600 of Noach”. If we follow the logic of our narrative, Noach was seen as a liar to his own generation. The Midrash says that Noach built the Ark so that his generation will have 120 years to repent and turn to God. So during the 120 years in which Noach was building the Ark, the people of his generation didn’t believe him. This is the secret found in “Sheker haHen”; Noach is a liar. Noach was Sheker, שקר (deceitful = 600) when The Floodwaters came on earth. - Tovia Behanu [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. Genesis Rabbah 32:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. As quoted in Ohev Yisroel. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. In Hebrew, ‘uman - אֹמֵן’ - as a parent raises a child [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. This section was written by By Shaul Yosef Leiter and edited by the author. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. Ravens are the cleverest birds. Ravens however are mean birds, having no mercy on their offspring. Noach used this bird as prop to implore HaShem to have mercy on mankind. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Zohar 1:56b, 66b [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. I.e., they will neither be judged, nor be granted of my spirit to enable them to share in the world to come. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. Bereshit (Gensesis) 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. Bereshit (Gensesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. I.e., their bodies; connecting Yadon, ידון with nadan נדן ‘sheath’, ‘case’. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. This phrase has become liturgical. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. Iyov (Job) 21:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. Bereshit (Gensesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. I.e., their bodies; connecting Yadon, ידון with nadan נדן ‘sheath’, ‘case’. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Iyov (Job) 36:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Iyov (Job) 21:13 – They do not suffer before death. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. This phrase has become liturgical. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. Bereshit (Gensesis) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. Tehillim (Psalms) 37:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Iyov (Job) 21:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Bereshit (Genesis) 5:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9-10 [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Tehillim (Psalms) 37:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. Bereshit (Gensesis) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. It is stated further on that hot water gushed forth from these fountains. Only three such fountains remained after The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Gadara was famous for its thermal springs; Eusebius, Jerome, and other authors of antiquity speak of its thermal waters, and it is identified with Gum Kreis — Neubauer, Geographie, p. 35. Biram, identified with Baaras near the thermal spring of Callirhoe, east of the Dead Sea. V. Neubauer, op. cit. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. In order to make his calculations work, Ramban has to assume that the 40 days of The Flood are part of the 150 days of the water’s strengthening. He also has to assume that months are 30 days long, like solar months, rather than the 29 1/2 days of the Jewish lunar calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. *Bul* is the Hebrew name for this month, (*Cheshvan* and *Marcheshvan* are the Aramaic names), calls our attention to the fact that the mabul (Flood) of Noach's generation began during this month. According to the Yalkut Shimoni, the fact that the letter Mem (of mabu[) is missing in the month's name is explained by saying that bull actually means flood, and that the letter Mem preceding it, containing the numerical value of forty, indicates that the flood lasted for forty days (lasting from the seventeenth of Marcheshvan until the twenty-seventh of Kislev). [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:10, 8:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Rabbi David Wolkenfeld [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Rabbi David Wolkenfeld [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. See Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 and 8:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. I added this entry to what was found in Meam Loez. God had indicated to Noach that the punishment of that generation would begin on a certain day, but instead it started seven days later. The Maharal of Prague explains that the sadness that everyone felt during the seven days of mourning for Methuselah was actually the beginning part of the pain that would be brought on them by The Flood. So the date of the beginning of their punishment was really not postponed. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. Bereishit (Genesis) 7:7-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:14, and 9:12-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Rainbow Day falls close to Shabbat Behar-Bechukotai, the day we read about the Shmita or Sabbatical year. Both the Rainbow covenant and Shmita teach us about our relationship with the Earth and the land. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. See Rashi to Genesis 7:11 and 8:5 & Seder Olam Rabbah, ch. 4; Rosh Hashanah 11b:6-7 [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. Nahmanides [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chief Rabbi of Efrat , Commentary on Parshat Noach, 5769.. Available online at http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/5769/noah69.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Bereshit (Genesis) 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:14, and 9:12-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. This day falls close to Shabbat Behar-Bechukotai, the day we read about the Shmita or Sabbatical year. Both the Rainbow covenant and Shmita teach us about our relationship with the Earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. The 42nd day of the Omer on which to say, “Today is Forty Two Days, that is Six Weeks for the Omer” (Malchut within Yesod ~ Majesty within Foundation). [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. <https://www.betemunah.org/tishri83.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. If you line op the first cycle of 3 ½ years with the second cycle of 3 ½ years. This is based on having the first cycle of readings, line up month by month with the readings for the second cycle. Because each cycle is 3 ½ yeards, this will naturally line the readings up in a bimodal fashion. https://www.betemunah.org/rains.html [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. God had indicated to Noach that the punishment of that generation would begin on a certain day, but instead it started seven days later. The Maharal of Prague explains that the sadness that everyone felt during the seven days of mourning for Methuselah was actually the beginning part of the pain that would be brought on them by The Flood. So the date of the beginning of their punishment was really not postponed. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 65a [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Benei Yisaskhar (R. Tzvi Elimelekh Shapira, 1783-1841, Poland), Ma’amarei Hodesh Iyar 3:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. In Pesachim 54 the rainbow is listed as one of the phenomena created at dusk immediately before the original Sabbath, seeing there has not been anything new created after the 6 days of creation. The references to the rainbow have been repeated only in order to impress upon people’s minds that it is a powerful sign of God’s covenant. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Yeshayahu (Isaiah), 55:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Shemot (Exodus) 15:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. Bava Kama 82a. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Pri Chadash 493:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. K.H.C. 493:26, based on Sha’ar HaKavanot [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Shemot 16:1-5, Seder Olam 5; Kiddushin 38a, Rashi. Chatam Sofer, Y.D. 233 [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. Tehillim (Psalms) 78:23–24 [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. Tehillim (Psalms) 78:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Steven Jacobsen, the Northwestern University professor who led the study published in *Science*, found water in subterranean ringwoodite, a deep blue mineral chemically similar to peridot, a green mineral often used in jewelry. Until a sample turned up in 2008 in a diamond coughed up from a volcano, ringwoodite had only been found in meteorites . The ringwoodite came from the “transition zone” between the upper and lower mantle, about 400 miles below the Earth’s surface, and about 1.5% of its weight turned out to be water. If a lot of this water-heavy mineral existed underground, scientists reasoned, that might be enough to explain where Earth’s oceans came from. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. If all the ringwoodite in the transition zone is as damp as the samples that Jacobsen and his team detected, that layer would hold three times as much water as all of the Earth’s oceans combined, reducing their share from 96.5% of all known water to a relatively paltry 24.8%. In other words, the ringwoodite discovery could quadruple the amount of water found on Earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Chazal = Our Sages [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. Sanhedrin 113b [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. God caused the water to boil. We know that this happened because the same word with the root yud-shin-chaf, abate, was used to describe both the end of The Flood and the end of King Achashverosh’s boiling anger (Esther 7:10). If abating implies ‘cooling’, then the waters of the great flood must have been hot. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Pirke De-Rabbi Eliezer chapter 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. ‘Water’ in God’s spiritual world, refers to ‘wisdom’. Water is also a remez to Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. Sanhedrin 108a “It is taught in the Baraita: the waters of The Flood were harsh like semen”. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. According to the Ran – see Abarbanel (7:17) who has a different interpretation. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Zevachim 113a, Pirke R. Eliezer 22, Sanhedrin 108b [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. Zohar 1:48 [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. Ramban 7:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Zohar 202 [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 53a – Note: There is such a thing as a Gehinom of cold [shel sheleg] as well as a Gehinom of heat [shel aish] – the Mabul waters contained both – Zohar ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. The Hebrew word for “Ark”, Teiba, also means “word”. “Come into the word”, says God; enter within the words of prayer and Torah study. Here you will find a sanctuary of wisdom, meaning and holiness amidst the raging floodwaters of life. - Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. Zevachim ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Kiddushin 13a, Zevachim 113a, Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Avot D’Rabbi Natan 32, Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. Yalkut Reuveni Noach [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. see Malbim 7:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Bereshit Rabbah 34 [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Niddah 23a [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Netziv in haamek davar (7:19) [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. Pirke R. Eliezer 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. Seder Olam 4 – see Ramban 8:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Tanchuma 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Dirac, Paul “The relationship between mathematics and physics”, *Proceedings of the Royal Society* (Edinburgh**)**, v. 59, pp. 122-129. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. The root of ‘mabul’ means chaos. In other words, God brought chaos to the world with the mabul, with The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. “Man as Carnivorous Being”, Rabbi Soloveitchik, pages 186-191 [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. Some sources suggest that Japheth’s wife’s name was Amoela. Quoting from what he claimed were ancient records in the possession of a Masonic order to which he belonged, Dr. Philip W. Gooch gave the following information to an unsuspecting Dr Aaron J. Smith: “There was a living witness on the ground who covered all the fine details of what went on during The Flood and after The Flood until her death in her 547th year,’ he wrote to Smith. ‘She was God’s living witness, Noach’s daughter-in-law, the wife (Amoela) of his son Japheth, a student of Methuselah, under whom she was apprenticed, and who taught her all that had preceded The Flood. She was educated in all the history of the human race up to that time. Her book - she called it her diary — is filled with things that occurred from Adam to her death, and seems to me to be the most complete record of early human history ever recorded. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. The violent rain lasted forty days corresponding to the forty days necessary to form an embryo. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Or perhaps: until they wrote marriage deeds for males and beasts- i.e. they fully legalised such practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Shabbat 113b [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. Rabbinic thought strengthens the parallel further. Berakhot 40a – “It was taught: Rabbi Meir said, The tree that the first man ate from was a vine, as there is no food that brings more curses upon man than the grape (wine)”. Sanhedrin 70a – “What is the meaning of ‘a man of the earth’? Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, to Noach, ‘You should have taken heed form what happened to the first man, whose downfall was through wine.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Malbim Amos 9:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. The Zohar explains similarly that Noach attempted (but failed) to rectify the sin of Adam by using grape wine for holy purposes. (Zohar Noach 73a). [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Genesis Rabbah 36:3. I.e., he should not have planted a vineyard, from which wine is produced, but other trees. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. Which the Zohar in Noach 307 associates with the Eitz HaDaat (The Tree of the knowledge of good and evil) from Gan Eden. [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. The Malbim in 9:20-21 touches on this and distinguishes between Adam covering his nakedness and Noach’s exposure. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. HaShem’s blessing, in Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1, caused unnatural *fecundity* which led to a very rapid diversification of humanity.  [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. on Bereshit Rabbah [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. The midrashim hint at the parallel between Adam’s sin and that of Noach by suggesting, as one opinion, that the Tree of Knowledge was in fact a grape vine. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. See R. Michael Hattin’s article “Creation and Dissolution: A Study in Contrasts?” at the VBM Introduction to Parasha archives for a discussion of how the story of The Flood serves as a thematic and literary undoing of the work of Creation. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. Tehillim (Psalms) 89:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. The Ba’al ha-Turim (Rabbi Ya’akov ben Asher, Germany and Spain, c.1275-1343), commenting on Genesis 8:2, notes that the word va-yikkaleh (“desisted”) occurs only twice in the entire Tanach. The first time is when The Flood began to subside, “va-yikkaleh – and the rain from Heaven desisted” (Genesis 8:2). The second time was in the Sinai Desert, after the sin of the golden calf, when the people were so generous with the gifts they brought for the Tabernacle, that Moshe had to tell them not to bring any more, “va-yikkaleh – and the nation desisted from bringing” (Exodus 36:6). Says the Ba’al ha-Turim, “This teaches that in the merit of Israel the rain [of The Flood] desisted”. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. **Tur HaAroch, Genesis 8:4**: *The Ark came to rest in the seventh month*... On this day the Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, for then God made a strong easterly wind blow (verse 8:1).This wind dried out the surface of the earth. (The wind accelerated the lowering of the water level dramatically.) (…) The Flooding of the earth continued at this level for 150 days. At that point God made a strong wind sweep over the earth that accounted for a sudden and substantial drop of the water level on earth as well as a drying of the atmosphere. The water level dropped so much on that day as a result of that wind that the Ark landed on top of Mount Ararat on that same day. *You will note that the Torah speaks of a wind sweeping over the earth, not over the water.* [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. Note that here, unlike the “first” creation in Bereshit (Genesis), Mankind comes before the animals. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. **Cursing the land for the sake of humanity**. God forswears destroying the land for humanity’s sake—severing the connection between people and the land that has driven the Bereshit (Genesis) story thus far. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. The “gates of wisdom above” refers to the wisdom of Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Vayikra Rabbah 30:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; adapted by Moshe Yaakov Wisnefsky [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. A 15th century Spanish commentator. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. For a detailed analysis of the correspondence, see: R. Z. Weitman, “Ha-Beri’a Ha-Chadasha”, Alon Shevut 78 (Kislev 5740), pp. 27-39; Y. Berman, “Ha-Mechadesh Be-Tuvo Ma’aseh Bereishit: Hakbalot Ve-Hevdelim bein Perek I U-Ferek VIII Bi-Bereishit”, Megadim 9 (Tishrei 5750), pp. 9-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Much of this study is based on a series of shiurim given by Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. http://www.herzog.ac.il/main/megadim/9br.html [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Targum Pseudo Yonatan says And the dove came to him at the evening time, and behold, a leaf of olive gathered, broken off, she brought in her mouth, and which she had taken from the Mount of the Messiah (Mount of Olives?). And Noach understood that the waters had lightened from being on the earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. Concerning the verse, “While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night will not cease”, Rashi writes that the sun, moon, stars, and other heavenly bodies ceased throughout the time of The Flood, and there was no distinction between day and night. His words suggest that just as the luminaries did not serve their function of distinguishing between day and night, they similarly did not serve “for signs and for seasons and for days and years” (1:14.) [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. See Zevachim 113a, Bereshit Rabbah 33:6; see also Rashi to Niddah 61a [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. See Maharsha to Niddah 61a. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. See Ramban to Bereshit 8:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. See the VBM shiurim which discuss the parallel in detail. Rav Yoni Grossman http://www.vbm-torah.org/parsha.58/02noach.htm and Rav Tamir Granot: http://www.vbm-torah.org/archive/parsha66/02-66noach.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. It was 1656AM, or -2104CE [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Melachim alef (I Kings) 8:64 [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. Zohar part I, 117a [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. i.e., in the years 5,500-5,600 in the Hebrew calendar corresponding to the years 1740-1840 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. The “gates of wisdom above” refers to the wisdom of Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Science and technology - The “fountains of knowledge below” is secular knowledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. This is the intent of the Zohar and the Vilna Gaon—the necessity to study Kabbalah integrated with worldly wisdom. Worldly wisdom should be studied only with the intent to connect it to Kabbalah because without the background of Kabbalah it cannot be done. Beneath the worldly wisdom is disguised the Oro Shel Mashiach- (the light of the Messiah) which would enhance the comprehension of Kabbalah because they complement each other. By connecting worldly wisdom to Kabbalah, one sees there is nothing but God, and there is nothing but Torah. This is your contribution as you take part in the redemption process with the intention of helping to usher in messianic consciousness, as we will explain later. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11, Parshat Vayeira, 1:116b [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. See also the Vilna Gaon’s Commentary to Isaiah 1:2 in “Likutei HaGra” p.ll, Jerusalem 1963. “One needs to know the three main areas of wisdom: metaphysics, the natural sciences and the applied sciences with applied wisdom”. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Kol HaTor Jerusalem, 1994 p. 117, paragraph # 4. See also https://www.betemunah.org/Kol-HaTor.html [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. The secular years 1740-1840 [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson Likutei Sichot, Vol. XV, p. 42. (1966) [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. Micah 7:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. “It is impossible to say that [they spent 400 years] in Egypt alone, because Kehat [the grandfather of Moshe] was of those who came with Jacob [to Egypt]. Go and figure all his years [133 years], all the years of his son Amram [137 years], and Moshe’ 80 years [at which age he led the Israelites out of Egypt]; you will not find them [to be] that many, and perforce, Kehat lived many of his years before he descended to Egypt, and many of Amram’s years are included in the years of Kehat, and many of Moshe’ years are included in Amram’s years. Hence, you will not find 400 years counting from their arrival in Egypt” – Rashi’s commentary on Exodus 12:40. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. Bereshit (Genesis) 15:13, 2 Luqas (Acts) 7:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Shemot (Exodus) 12:40–41, Bereans (Galatians) 3:16–17. In Exodus 12:40, the Torah tells us of the 430 years the Israelites spent in Egypt. Again, this cannot be taken literally (as per the calculations in footnote 2). Rather this number includes the years that the Israelites’ ancestors sojourned in other foreign lands, and also includes the thirty years between the Covenant Between the Parts and Isaac’s birth. (This is Rashi’s interpretation; other Biblical commentators offer different explanations.) [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. According to Micha (7:15), our future redemption will resemble the redemption from Egypt. Yalkut Shimoni (2:806) unequivocally states this is what Rabbi Dosa means when he mentions that the period of Mashiach will last 400 years. This corresponds to the Covenant of the Parts, in which Avraham was told his children would be in Egyptian exile for 400 years. According to Maharsha, the correlation of the Egyptian exile and future redemption is that the years of persecution will have the potential to be transformed into times of joy. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. Know that giving something a name indicates its permanence, while something that is destined to be destroyed is not worthy of having a name. Mishlei (Proverbs) 10:7, Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 55:5, Tehilim (Psalms) 72:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Vayeira 1:117a [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. This section was written by Rabbi Yosie Levine [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. Berachot 40a, Sanhedrin 70a, Bereshit Rabbah 15:8, Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 144a [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Radak on Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20 - Noach was a farmer and excelled in this vocation. Now, after the deluge, he acquired additional expertise in combining different strains of grapes and making wine out of the grapes. Up until this time people had used grapes only as a fruit to eat, and had not learned how to make intoxicating wine. When the Torah writes “began” and “planted”, this means that he began by planting grapes and ended by making wine. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. Zohar I, 36a, 267b [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat, vol. 2, Vayihyu Chayei Sarah (pages 148-149) [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. Sanhedrin 59a [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Sanhedrin 59a [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. **Swarm**. A kind of super-fertility, where the animals would reproduce as quickly as bugs. There are only two places where it is used to describe human beings, here below and in the description of how fertile the Israelites were in Egypt. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. Bereshit (Genesis) 18:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. Vayikra (Leviticus) 24:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. Shemot (Exodus) 20:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. such as Bereshit Rabbah 20:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. for example, in Sefer HaLikutim, Bereshit, ch. 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Sanhedrin 56a-b and Tosefta Avodah Zarah 9:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Iyov (Job) 21:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. I.e., their bodies; connecting Yadon, ידון with nadan נדן ‘sheath’, ‘case’. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Iyov (Job) 36:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Iyov (Job) 21:13 — they do not suffer before death. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. Iyov (Job) 21:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Li. ‘judge’. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Jerusalem Talmud, 1523, Baba Metzia 3:4, 9b; Babylonian Talmud, 1882, Orayot 13a. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. See Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12, Sforno to Genesis 8:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. Soncino Zohar, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 38a: R. Isaac said: ‘The generations which followed in the steps of Seth were all pious and righteous. Subsequently, as mankind spread and multiplied, they learnt the arts of war, which they practiced until Noach came and taught them the arts of peace and agriculture; for at first they used not to sow or reap, but afterwards they found this necessary, as it is written, “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, etc.”. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. See Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12. Seforno to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Genesis Rabbah 34:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. Glick Edition [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. on Bereshit (Genesis) 7:10; in Sanhedrin 11:116 [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. 13th century, Spain [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 25:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:10-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Insights to the Torah [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. R. Bachya, Meshech Chachmah [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Tehillim (Psalms) 104:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Commentary of Netziv to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:18,19 [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. See *Antiquities of the Jews* 1.3.6. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. **Sowing and reaping…will not stop**. Not stopping is the mArk of a world that has abandoned Eden, where creation is completed through resting or stopping. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Shik, Orach Hayyim, no. 145, contends that a literal reading of the verse which begins “all the days of the earth” would indicate that the reference is to natural phenomena rather than to human activity and, accordingly, the concluding phrase should be understood as meaning that day and night shall not cease all the days of the earth. However, comments Maharam Schick, if that were the meaning of the verse, the verse should properly read lo yishbetu. Since, however, the verse reads lo yishbotu, Maharam Schick argues that the phrase must be understood as referring to people rather than days even though people are not previously mentioned in the verse, and, accordingly, the verse must be rendered “they shall not cease [from labor]”. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. In this phrase Lo Yishbotu - the middle five letters of this phrase does spell the exact same letters as the Hebrew word for Saturn - *Shabtai*.  It seems that for some reason, the Torah wants to hint especially to this planet in its mention of the planets not ceasing from functioning.  In fact, the name *Saturday* of the day on which most of the Jewish Sabbath is observed on, is named after Saturn. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. lo yishbotu *-* לֹאיִשְׁבֹּתוּ” also means “*day and night they shall not rest*”. However, the words לא ישבתו literally mean “*they*shall not cease” (the pronoun “they” is implied by the conjugal form of the verb here). Also, the root of the verb “to cease” here is שבת, the same as the word “Shabbat”, which literally means “cessation”, as inGenesis 2:2-3. We find a similar understanding of the verse in the commentary of Rabbi Meir Leib ben Yechiel Michel (aka Malbim, 1809-1879). [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. Jewish Law [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22. ‘They’ is here made to apply to men, and ‘shall not’ is taken to mean ‘may not’. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. Eisenstein, J. E., V. p. 623. suggests that this may have been directed against the Christian Jews, who disregarded the Mosaic law yet observed the Sabbath, and quotes Maimonides who advances the following reason: ‘The principle is, one is not permitted to make innovations in religion or to create new commandments. He has the privilege to become a true proselyte by accepting the whole law.’ (Yad. Melakim, X, 9.) He also points out that ‘Deserves death’ expresses strong indignation, and is not to be taken literally; [cf. the recurring phrase. ‘He who transgresses the words of the Sages deserves death.’ Ber. 6b.] [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. The seven Noachian laws deal with things which a heathen must abstain from doing. But when we say that a heathen must not observe a day of rest, we bid him to do a positive action, viz., work. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. HilchotMelachim10:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. a ger tzedek [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. Meiri [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Shu’t Binyan Tzion #91 [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. remez 256 (on Parshat Beshalach) [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. Yalkut Shimoni, Esther, 1056. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Manot HaLevi on Esther 5:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9 What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. & Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:6-9 The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. 7The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den. 9They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1-7 [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:4 Only flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. In the creation narrative there is no mention of fear. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. Rashi on Bereshit Rabbah 34:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all wherewith the land teemeth, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. The fact that they could subsist solely on vegetation serves as evidence for this. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21 And HaShem smelled the sweet savor; and HaShem said in His heart: ‘I will not again curse the land any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Rashi Bereshit (Genesis) 1:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. The name *Noach* connotes “ease and luxury”, which his invention of the plow certainly facilitated. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Wheat, at that time grew on a tree. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. Amos 9:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. See Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12. Sforno to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22. The Sforno attributes the shorter life span to the changes of temperature throughout the year. He says that originally the earth was aligned at its poles perpendicularly to the sun and the climate and temperature were always quite steady. However, after the Mabul, HaShem changed the angle of the poles by tilting them 23 degrees. This is what gives us the change of seasons. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. The Mechilta of R’ Shimon bar Yochai and the Midrash HaGadol on Exodus 12:2 say, “‘This month is for you’ - The forefathers did not count from it”. This is similar to what the Mechilta (of R’ Yishmael) says on that verse, “‘This month is for you’ - Adam did not count from it”. In other words, the entire concept of calculating months based on the moon and starting from Nissan did not apply before the Jews left Egypt. Similarly, R’ Avraham bar Chiya HaNasi (early 12th century) writes in his Sefer HaIbbur 2:5, arguably the most important book ever written on the Jewish calendar, “Observing this commandment, that is the lunar month and the intercalation of the year, we were obligated only from the Exodus”. R’ Yitzchak HaYisraeli (14th century) writes similarly in his Yesod Olam 4:2. Indeed, the Midrash Sechel Tov on Genesis 34:25 says outright that solar months were used until G-d commanded “This month is for you”. Therefore, the use of solar months in the story of The Flood should not be a surprise at all. According to many, at that time in history all months were solar. A reference to that time period had to reflect the length of the months as they were used at that time. Only later at the Exodus did Jews start to use lunar months. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Rav Avigdor Miller in his commentary on The Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Pearlman YeC [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Rav Moshe Yitzchak Ashkenazi quotes Rav Yitzchak Chaim (Vittorio) Castiglioni, who supports the interpretation that prior to the Dor Haflaga ( “the generation of the division”), we all lived together on Pangaea, and that is when the splitting of the continents took place. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Eber was the son of Shelach, who was the son of Arpachshad, who was the son of Shem (who was the son of Noach). According to the time-line that the Torah lists clearly, this means that this event occurred around 100 years after The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. In the book of Jubilees (10:12-14) we read about Noach receiving the cures for all diseases and writing them down in the Book of Cures. Noach recorded the “Book of Medicine” from the angel Ruziel HaMaalach. (It was later hidden by King Hizkiya.) [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. Commentary of Malbim to Genesis 8:22 - Malbim, Meir Leib. The Pentateuch: Chumash with Commentary. Translated by S. Rosenbaum and J.L. Sarna. Denver: Mesorah Publications, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. Yalkut Shimoni Parshat Noach Remez 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 34:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Ramban says that all antediluvian (pre-Mabul) people lived much longer. After the Mabul there was a very negative change in the atmosphere which shortened people’s lives. Noach’s sons who were born before the Mabul, lived longer than most, as they were strengthened by living during the very healthy antediluvian era, but a bit shorter than those who lived their whole lives pre-Mabul, because they were also subject to the negative atmospheric post-Mabul effects. Along came the Dor Haflaga and the dispersion to new climates had a further negative affect, cutting down the average lifespan by fifty per cent to below two hundred years. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:3 HaShem said, “My breath shall not abide in humankind forever, since it too is flesh; let the days allowed them be one hundred and twenty years”. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. Pirke D’Rebbe Eliezer 10, Yalkut Shimoni Parshat Noach Remez 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Baba Batra 75A [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Chagiga 12A [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. Baba Batra 75A [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. Ibn Ezra’s commentary on the Book of Genesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Rav Yitzchak Chaim (Vittorio) Castiglioni.- Castiglioni, Vittorio. “The Antediluvian World”. Translated by David M. Halperin and translated from the Italian by Edward Halperin. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1929. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. Yalkut Shimoni Parshat Noach Remez 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. Many scientists theorize that the earth had only one climate during the time of prehistoric animals and plants. In those days, the ozone layer was much greater than it is today. It served to shield creatures from the aging process caused in part by ultra-violet rays. The increased atmosphere also diffused the sun equally over all the zones of the latitude. This canopy created conditions similar to those of a hot house, with a constant temperature of 72 degrees, and no winds or storms. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. See Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12. Sforno to Genesis 8:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. Ibn Ezra [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. Abarbanel [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. Malbim’s Commentary to Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. Radal [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Tosefta Sota 10:4, Avot D’Rabbi Natan 32, Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. Abarbanel: Bereshit 9:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. Bereshit Rabbah 25:2; Concerning the verse, “While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night will not cease”, Rashi writes that the sun, moon, stars, and other heavenly bodies ceased throughout the time of The Flood, and there was no distinction between day and night. His words suggest that just as the luminaries did not serve their function of distinguishing between day and night, they similarly did not serve “for signs and for seasons and for days and years” (1:14). [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. Tosefta Sota 10:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. Bava Metzia 87a a midrash comes to the simultaneously logical and fascinating conclusion that since no one in the Bible is described as old, zaken, until this point, then “there was no old age until Avraham”. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 377; Until Adam’s death in the year 930, no one had died of “natural causes”. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Commentary of Malbim to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. Commentary of Malbim to Bereshit (Genesis) 8:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 377 [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. Rabbi Wasserman comments that, “Behold it is known that before The Flood, the nature of all creation was stronger and better than after The Flood”. According to various Midrashim, antediluvial man sowed once every forty years. In addition, the atmosphere during the entire year was comparable to the springtime between Pesach and Shavuot. Because of this, the fruits were superior both in terms of taste and quality. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. The Midrash Tanchuma says that when Noach was born, the world reverted to a state of functioning: “Before Noach was born, they would plant wheat and harvest thorns and thistles. Once Noach was born, the world reverted to the way it was, in which people reaped what the planted: they would plant wheat and harvest wheat”. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Midrash Tanchuma Noach 13:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. Bereshit Rabbah 34:11. Midrash Tanchuma, Bereshit 12. Sforno to Genesis 8:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. Yalkut Shimoni Parshat Noach Remez 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 379 [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 379 [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. Soncino Zohar, Bereshit, Section 1, Page 56a: R. Eleazar said: ‘In the time of Enosh, men were skilled in magic and divination, and in the art of controlling the heavenly forces. Adam had brought with him from the Garden of Eden the knowledge of “the leaves of the tree”, but he and his wife and their children did not practice it. When Enosh came, however, he saw the advantage of these arts and how the heavenly courses could be altered by them, and he and his contemporaries studied them and practiced magic and divination. From them these arts descended to the generation of The Flood and were practiced for evil purposes by all the men of that time. Relying upon these arts, they defied Noach, saying that divine justice could never be executed upon them, since they knew a way to avert it. The practice of these arts commenced with Enosh, and hence it is said of his time, THEN WAS THE NAME OF THE LORD CALLED UPON PROFANELY. R. Isaac said: All the righteous men that were among them sought to restrain them, such as Jered, Methuselah, and Enoch, but without success, and the world became full of sinners who rebelled against their Master saying, “What is the Almighty that we should serve him?” (Job XXI, 15). This is not so foolish as it sounds, for they knew all the arts we have mentioned and all the ruling chieftains in charge of the world, and on this knowledge they relied, until at length God disabused them by restoring the earth to its primitive state… [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. PdRE 23 Whilst yet The Flood had not come, the unclean (animals) were more numerous than the clean (animals). But when the waters of The Flood came, and the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to increase the clean and to diminish the unclean (animals), He called to Noach and said to him: Take to thee into the Ark of all clean beasts seven and seven,1 the male and his female; and of the unclean beasts two and two, the male and his female, as it is said, Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female”. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Rashi to Bereshit (Genesis) 6:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. from Tanchuma Noach 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Those that mated with their kind, and did not corrupt their way, and came by themselves, and all that the Ark accepted, [i.e., the Ark repulsed the unfit animals and did not let them enter], he brought into it. — [Sanh. 108b, Tan. ad loc., Zev. 116a, Gen. Rabbah 32:8 from 7:16; Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer ch. 23 from ibid. 15; only Mid. Hagadol from this verse] [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. Sanhedrin 108a [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. Tanchuma Noach 9, Tanchuma Kadum Noach 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:4 – elevation 16,854 feet. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Mount Everest’s peak is the highest altitude above mean sea level at 29,029 feet. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 23:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Yalkut shimoni Noach remez 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Midrash Tanchuma, Noach 7:4: ​”R. Berechiah said: The men of the generation of The Flood were exceedingly strong and tall, as it is written: These same were the mighty men (Gen. 6:4), and if He had not punished them with fire that descended from above, nothing would have been able to destroy them”. - Sanhedrin 108a  [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Rav Hutner on Bereshit (Genesis) 9:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. on Bereshit Rabbah [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. This is analogous to the days after the men of the Great Assembly excised the lust of idolatry, and thus prophecy. When prophets were in the world, we did not need original Torah thinkers because the Prophet could always answer the questions. Afterwards, men arose who were able to have original Torah thoughts and could teach these concepts to expand our knowledge of Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Likkutei Sichot, vol. XV, pp. 51-54. Based on the Rebbe’s talks, Shabbat Noach 5721 (1960) 5724 (1963). Adapted from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe by Yanki Tauber. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi writes, that the 40 days of rains that flooded the earth corresponded to the 40 sa’ah of the spiritually cleansing waters of the mikvah (Torah Or Noach p. 8c.). - A Sa’ah is approximately 2.19 U.S. Gallons. Torah law mandates that a Mikvah contain a minimum of 40 sa’ah of water. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. That’s why God established the rainbow as a symbol of his covenant to never destroy the earth again (Ibid. 9:8-15). What is a rainbow? When the clear, crystal-like water droplets suspended in the atmosphere refract the light of the sun, they unleash the spectrum of colors contained in the sun’s light and a rainbow appears. The pre-flood world lacked the rainbow, because the moisture that had risen from the earth to catch the light of the sun was too coarse a substance to refract the light of the sun. The rainbow attests to the world’s new sense of refinement and spirituality in the post-flood era and hence its innate potential for recovery and rebirth (Likkutei Sichos vol. 15 pp. 51-54) [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Also see Hadar Zkainim [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. This section was written by **Rav Moshe Stav.** [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Bereshit Genesis) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. Tehillim (Psalms) 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Bereshit Genesis) 6:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. Bereshit Genesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. Bereshit Genesis) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. Bereshit Genesis) 6:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Bereshit Genesis) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. Bereshit Genesis) 8:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. Bava Batra 75a, based on Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 28:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. Bereshit Rabba 28:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. So the bones of many dead sunk in the earth; hence it is not purified. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 22:24. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. Lit., ‘indeed wonders.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. The latter had been in Eretz Israel, and cleared out, but the former were never there. [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. Esther 7:10. In both cases the root שכך is used, giving them the same meaning, and proving that the water was hot when it descended. — This heat spread to Eretz Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. Obviously all land where people lived was dry before The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. A huge animal, too large to enter the Ark. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. That it was able to survive The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. A Persian mile, nearly four English miles. — This passage occurs in a series of ‘tall’ stories by Rabbah b. Bar Hanah related in B. B. 73a seq., which were probably veiled allegories on the political and social conditions of the time. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. Hence he needs no explanation at all. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. And this would cause the reem to slip out and drown. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. To secure it. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. It would have been scalded. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Since its seams were caulked with pitch, why did not the pitch dissolve in the hot water and leave the Ark unseaworthy? [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. According to legend he was such a giant that he escaped from The Flood (Nid. 61b). Why wasn’t he scalded by the hot water? [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. According to legend he was such a giant that he escaped from The Flood (Nid. 61b). Why wasn’t he scalded by the hot water? [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. Who died there. [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. Shabbath 113b [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. Bereshit (Genesis) 13:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 30:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. Sotah 34b [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. [Identified by Klein (Beitrage, p. 184) with Kefar Hananiah in Galilee]. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. It was so small. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. Tehillim (Psalms) 107:34. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. People did not venture out on Wednesday evenings as there was a belief that demons were about. Cf. Pes. 112b. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 5:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. Shemot (Exodus) 3:8, 3:17, 13:5, 33:3, Bamidbar (Numbers) 13:27, 14:8, etc. ‘Land Flowing with Milk and Honey’ appears 14 times between Exodus and Deuteronomy, 1 time in Joshua, Twice in Jeremiah, and once in Ezekiel. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. As a parasang was four miles, this would be about eight times the extent of Zebulun’s trail. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary - JPS, 2001 [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Rabbi Yuval Cherlow, “*A Land Flowing with Milk & Honey*”, www.myjewishlearning.com [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. Shemot (Exodus) 3:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. Gan Eden = Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 7:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 47:11-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. Yerushalmi Shekalim 50a. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Ysshayahu (Isaiah) 66:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. Ketubot 112b [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. Shabbat 30b [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Numbers Rabba (Vilna ed.) 13:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 30:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. The next few paragraphs of explanation were written by Rabbi Joel Bakst. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. The Talmud (Hebrew: תַּלְמוּד Talmud “instruction, learning”, from a root LMD “teach, study”) is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. They were a circle of disciples of the Vilna Gaon led by Rabbi Benjamin ben Shlomo Zalman Rivlin (1728-1812). [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. “What was forbidden to investigate and expound upon just yesterday becomes permissible today. This is felt by every true exegete. Numerous matters whose awesome nature repelled one from even approaching in previous generations, behold, they are easily grasped today. This is because the gates of human understanding below have been opened up as a result of the steadily increasing flow of Divine revelations above”. R. Shlomo Eliyashiv, *Leshem Sh’vo V’Achlamah, Chelek HaBi’urim*, p. 21d. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. This same tradition has been handed down by an unexpected yet highly authoritative source, R. Yisrael Salanter (1810-1883), the leader of the Mussar Movement. In confirmation of the statement of the Zohar, he is said to have commented, “Prior to 1840 the study of Kabbalah was a closed book to all but the initiated”. The Kabbalist, R. Shlomo Eliyashiv, who quotes this tradition, continues, “Thus, from 1840 onwards, permission has been granted for those who truly desire to enter within. The Kabbalah is no longer the private domain of the initiated masters”. *Leshem Sh’vo VeAchlamah, Sefer De’ah* 1:5:4 (p. 76) [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. Zohar I:117a [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
802. R. Hillel of Shklov [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
803. James Clerk Maxwell (1831 – 1879) was a Scottish scientist in the field of mathematical physics. His most notable achievement was to formulate the classical theory of electromagnetic radiation, bringing together for the first time electricity, magnetism, and light as manifestations of the same phenomenon. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
804. Michael Faraday (1791 – 1867) was an English scientist who contributed to the study of electromagnetism and electrochemistry. His main discoveries include the principles underlying electromagnetic induction, diamagnetism and electrolysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
805. Ethnopharmacology is a related study of ethnic groups and their use of drugs. Ethnopharmacology is distinctly linked to plant use, ethnobotany, as this is the main delivery of pharmaceuticals. Ethnopharmacy is the interdisciplinary science that investigates the perception and use of pharmaceuticals within a given human society. Emphasis has long been on traditional medicines, although the approach also has proven useful to the study of modern pharmaceuticals. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
806. A black hole is a region of space-time exhibiting such strong gravitational effects that nothing—not even particles and electromagnetic radiation such as light—can escape from inside it. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
807. Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955) was a German-born theoretical physicist. He developed the general theory of relativity, one of the two pillars of modern physics (alongside quantum mechanics). Einstein’s work is also known for its influence on the philosophy of science. [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
808. The Unified Field Theory is a theory that describes two or more of the four interactions (electromagnetic, gravitational, weak, and strong) previously described by separate theories. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
809. Superstring theory is an attempt to explain all of the particles and fundamental forces of nature in one theory by modelling them as vibrations of tiny supersymmetric strings. [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
810. A fractal is a natural phenomenon or a mathematical set that exhibits a repeating pattern that displays at every scale. It is also known as expanding symmetry or evolving symmetry. If the replication is exactly the same at every scale, it is called a self-similar pattern. An example of this is the Menger Sponge. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
811. The branch of mathematics that deals with complex systems whose behavior is highly sensitive to slight changes in conditions, so that small alterations can give rise to strikingly great consequences. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
812. Virtual reality or virtual realities (VR), also known as immersive multimedia or computer-simulated reality, is a computer technology that replicates an environment, real or imagined, and simulates a user’s physical presence and environment to allow for user interaction. Virtual realities artificially create sensory experience, which can include sight, touch, hearing, and smell. [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
813. A computer system modeled on the human brain and nervous system. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
814. The above two paragraphs come from the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
815. Torah literally meaning “instruction” or “teachings”. [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
816. The tree in the Garden of Eden bearing the forbidden fruit that Adam and Chava disobediently ate (Gen. 2:9, 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
817. Several paragraphs and much inspiration comes from the writings of Rabbi Joel David Bakst at http://www.cityofluz.com [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
818. Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, (Hebrew: ר’ אליהו בן שלמה זלמן‎‎ Rabbi Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman) known as the Vilna Gaon or Elijah of Vilna, or by his Hebrew acronym HaGra (“HaGaon Rabbenu Eliyahu”) or Elijah Ben Solomon, (Vilnius April 23, 1720 – Vilnius October 9, 1797), was a Talmudist, halakhist, kabbalist, and the foremost leader of mitnagdic (non-hasidic) Jewry of the past few centuries. He is commonly referred to in Hebrew as ha-Gaon he-Chasid mi-Vilna, “the saintly genius from Vilnius”. [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
819. For a thorough discussion of traditional, as well as, some contemporary views of Torah and Science, see *Challenge – Torah Views on Science and its Problems*, Aryeh Carmell and Cyril Domb, editors (Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists and Feldheim Publishers, 1978). It should be noted that in the first volume of this otherwise comprehensive work only one short paragraph is quoted from *Kol HaTor*, and then almost in passing. [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
820. In Judaism, **HaShem** (lit. “ the name”) is used to refer to God, when avoiding God’s more formal title, Adonai (lit. “ My Master”) [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
821. But atheists aren’t inheriting the Earth just yet. In many parts of the world, sub-Saharan Africa in particular, religion is growing so fast that atheists’ share of the global population will actually shrink in 25 years as the world turns into what one researcher has described as “the secularizing West and the rapidly growing rest”. The other highly secular part of the world is China, where the Cultural Revolution tamped down religion for decades, while in some former Communist countries, religion is on the increase. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
822. The principle of a parallelism between the historical development of science and Kabbalah is also advanced by the contemporary Torah master, R. Dr. Chaim Zimmerman, z”l: “According to the Sages, Knowledge (whether it is Torah knowledge or secular knowledge) comes from Heaven. This means that the sum total of all knowledge that flows into the world during any one period or generation is determined by *Hashgacha* [Divine Providence] in direct correlation to the merit of the generation and of those individuals who discover it. According to this principle [of parallelism], we can verify that in a period when knowledge is revealed in the non-Torah world, the same quality of knowledge is revealed in the Torah world. When the non-Torah world had a Newton and a Leibnitz, the Torah world had the Gaon of Vilna and the *Sha’agat Aryeh*. In a generation of Einstein and Planck, the Torah world had a R. Chaim Soloveitchik and R. Abraham of Sochotchov…. In short, the more science progressively reveals the secrets of our physical world, the more the secrets of the Kabbalah become indispensable in understanding the real meaning of the Torah. The *Hashgacha* has determined that these two categories of knowledge develop and progress in parallel lines”. (R. Dr. Chaim Zimmerman, *Torah and Reason*, Hed Press, Jerusalem 1979, pp. 287, 291). [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
823. Isaac (ben Solomon) Luria Ashkenazi (1534 – July 25, 1572) (Hebrew: יִצְחָק בן שלמה לוּרְיָא אשכנזי Yitzhak Ben Shlomo Luria Ashkenazi), commonly known as “Ha’ARI” (meaning “The Lion”), “Ha’ARI Hakadosh” [the holy ARI] or “Arizal” [the ARI, Of Blessed Memory (Zikhrono Livrakha)], was a foremost rabbi and Jewish mystic in the community of Safed in the Galilee region of Ottoman Syria. He is considered the father of contemporary Kabbalah. His teachings being referred to as Lurianic Kabbalah. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
824. The Eight Gates [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
825. R. Chaim Vital was the chief student of the Arizal. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
826. Moshe Chaim Luzatto (Hebrew: משה חיים לוצאטו, also Moshe Chaim, Moshe Hayyim, also Luzatto) (1707 in Padua – 16 May 1746 in Acre (26 Iyar 5506)), also known by the Hebrew acronym Ramchal (or RaMHaL, רמח”ל), was a prominent Italian Jewish rabbi, kabbalist, and philosopher. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
827. The Hasidic movement also takes note of this passage from the *Zohar* and agrees that it is heralding new revelations in Jewish mysticism, albeit with a different venue. It is well known in the Chabad tradition that the mystic revelations of the “wisdom from above” refer to the emergence of the Hasidic movement and to the publication of classic Hasidic (Chabad) literature, which occurred at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries; see Rabbi M. M. Schneerson, *On the Essence of Chassidus*, Kehot Pub., 1974, p. 91.

     A direct tradition from the Ba’al Shem Tov himself is quoted by R. Aaron Marcus (1843-1916), a German Torah scholar who wrote on Kabbalah and Chassidut. He became a strong adherent of Hasidic teachings and maintained close relations with many Hasidic leaders in Poland and Galicia, in particular with R. Shlomo Rabinowitz of Radamsk. In his *Keset HaSofer* he writes what is almost a commentary on the Gaon’s view of the revelations of science during the period preceding the Final Redemption: We now know with certainty that the prophecy of the *Zohar* in *Parashat Vayeira* has been fulfilled in our generation. Thus, throughout the first 6 centuries of the sixth millennium (5000-5600 = 1240-1840), the spiritual quality of *Malchut*-Kingdom, which is also known as the “Lower Wisdom”, would ascend slowly. Then in the six hundredth year of the sixth millennium (5600 = 1840), “the gates of wisdom above and the wellsprings of wisdom below” began to open. This is also the prophecy of our master R. Yisrael Ba’al Shem Tov concerning the *kavanot* (meditations) while reciting Psalm 107 [during the Mincha prayer immediately preceding the onset of the Sabbath]. He interpreted the verse homiletically, “In His hand are (*mech’karei aretz*) the deep secrets of the earth and the heights of the mountains are His” (Psalm 95:4). Instead of reading *mech’karei aretz*, “deep secrets of the earth”, read *me’chakrei aretz*, “investigators of the earth”. The “Hand of God” represents here the aspect of *Malchut*-Kingdom, the last [and most manifest spiritual] level that is now operative. It is in this Hand of God that all the progress and success of the gentile investigators lies; *Keset HaSofer*, *Bereshit* 2, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
828. Kol HaTor = Voice of the Turtledove, see http://www.yedidnefesh.com/kol-hator.html [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
829. The Talmud (Hebrew: תַּלְמוּד‎ talmūd “instruction, learning”, from a root LMD “teach, study”) is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. Iit is also traditionally referred to as Shas (ש״ס‎), a Hebrew abbreviation of shisha sedarim, the “six orders”, a reference to the six orders of the Mishnah. The term “Talmud” normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the Babylonian Talmud (Talmud Bavli), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud, or Palestinian Talmud (Talmud Yerushalmi). [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
830. Jewish Law [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
831. Anno Mundi (AM). [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
832. The time appointed by G‑d for the Messianic redemption is a closely guarded secret. (Pesachim 54b; Midrash Tehillim 9:2. See Zohar Chadash, Bereshit, 8a.) Nonetheless, we are offered many hints to recognize its proximity: when certain conditions come about, await the imminent coming of Mashiach. Most of these conditions are quite disturbing, clearly displaying a situation of the very “bottom of the pit”. (Midrash Tehillim 45:3. See Ma’amarei Admur Hazaken-Ethalech, p. 103f.; and Besha’ah Shehik-dimu-5672, vol. Ip. 551; relating this to the principle (Midrash Tehillim 22:4; Zohar II:46a) that the dArkest moments of the night are immediately before daybreak. Cf. Zohar I:170a. For this analogy see also the comment of R. Elijah, the Vilna Gaon, cited in Even Shelemah, ch. 11:5.) One major source describes the world-condition in those days as follows: increase in insolence and impudence; oppressing inflation; unbridled irresponsibility on the part of authorities; centers of learning will turn into bawdy houses; wars; many destitutes begging, with none to pity them; wisdom shall be putrid; the pious shall be despised; truth will be abandoned; the young will insult the old; family-breakup with mutual recriminations; impudent leadership. (Sotah 49b) [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
833. The beginning of the redemption. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
834. The days of the messiah. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)
835. According to this paradigm, the year 5751AM (October 1990–September 1991) equates with high noon on the sixth day (the sixth millennium). The year 5751AM begins an entirely new era. Just as on Friday afternoon we begin the mad rush to prepare for the Shabbat day, so too, all the wonders you see from this year are nature’s frenzy to prepare for a time beyond time. We have entered what the ancient sages referred to as the Era of Mashiach. [↑](#footnote-ref-835)
836. Shabbat 88b [↑](#footnote-ref-836)
837. Zohar I:118a. See Zohar Chadash, Tikkunim, 96c; and Mayanei Hayeshu’ah, I:2. Cf. below, note 84. Note also Igeret Teyman, ch. 3, that prophecy shall be restored to Israel prior to the coming of Mashiach. [↑](#footnote-ref-837)
838. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-838)
839. Torah Shelemah 9:122 [↑](#footnote-ref-839)
840. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-840)
841. Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-841)
842. Yehezchel (Ezekiel) 23:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-842)
843. Amos 6:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-843)
844. from Tanchuma Buber, Noach 21 [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. By Rav Yaakov Beasley [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. see Bereshit (Genesis) 10:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Bereshit Rabbah 36:11, Rashi (v. 25) [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. Sanhedrin 70a [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. v. 22 [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer 23, Sforno (9:22), Ibn Ezra, Chizkuni alternate, Daat Zekainim, Abarbanel alternate [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:1, Bereshit Rabbah 36:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. Radak, Abarbanel [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. Sanhedrin 70a [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. Genesis Rabbah, manuscripts, and early editions read: a fourth son. [↑](#footnote-ref-854)
855. Genesis Rabbah 36:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-855)
856. from Genesis Rabbah ibid. 5, 22:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-856)
857. When it says that Yehudah took a Canaanite wife, the commentators teach that Canaanite, in this context, means a ‘merchant’. [↑](#footnote-ref-857)
858. Rashi, Bereshit 12:6, Siftei Chahamim; Otsar ishey atanakh, Shem [↑](#footnote-ref-858)
859. Mishlei (Proverbs) 11:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-859)
860. Interpreting: The offspring of Noach were his righteousness and good deeds. [↑](#footnote-ref-860)
861. Mishlei (Proverbs) 11:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-861)
862. Bereshit (Genesis) 11:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-862)
863. Bereshit (Genesis) 5:28 [↑](#footnote-ref-863)
864. Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-864)
865. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-865)
866. Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 58b [↑](#footnote-ref-866)
867. Bereshit (Genesis) 5:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-867)
868. Meam Loez, Genesis I, page 377 [↑](#footnote-ref-868)
869. Ramban [↑](#footnote-ref-869)
870. Amos 9:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-870)
871. A traditional hunter-gatherer or forager is a human living an ancestrally derived lifestyle in which most or all food is obtained by foraging, that is, by gathering food from local sources, especially edible wild plants but also insects, fungi, honey, or anything safe to eat, or by hunting game (pursuing and/or trapping and killing wild animals, including catching fish), roughly as most animal omnivores do. [↑](#footnote-ref-871)
872. Iyov (Job) 21:14–15 [↑](#footnote-ref-872)
873. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-873)
874. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-874)
875. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 27:8 ‐ Sotah 32 [↑](#footnote-ref-875)
876. Cham’s nature in this respect is also revealed in the nations which are descended from him, Mitzrayim and Cana’an: “You shall not act in the manner of the land of Egypt, in which you dwelled; nor shall you act in the manner of the land of Cana’an, to which I bring you, nor shall you follow their practices”. This verse (Vayikra 18:3) introduces the unit that lists forbidden sexual unions. [↑](#footnote-ref-876)
877. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-877)
878. In light of this exact parallel between the story of The Flood and the story of the destruction of Sedom, it would seem that the midrash that Rashi quotes on the verse, “And God shut him in” (7:16) – “He protected him so that they would not break it” – sits well with the plain meaning of the text, since the idea is taken from the story of Lot: God’s first act of protection for Lot, before delivering him from the city, was to shield him from the people of his own city, who approached “to break the door”. God’s angels save Lot: “They pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut the door”. [↑](#footnote-ref-878)
879. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-879)
880. Bereshit (Genesis) 18:23-33 [↑](#footnote-ref-880)
881. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-881)
882. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:2-3 [↑](#footnote-ref-882)
883. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-883)
884. Bereshit (Genesis) 13:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-884)
885. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-885)
886. Bereshit (Genesis) 13:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-886)
887. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-887)
888. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-888)
889. Tanchuma Buber Noach 10 - God placed lions and other ferocious animals to protect Noach and his family from the wicked who tried to keep them from the Ark. [↑](#footnote-ref-889)
890. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:10-11 [↑](#footnote-ref-890)
891. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-891)
892. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-892)
893. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-893)
894. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:15-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-894)
895. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-895)
896. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-896)
897. Rav Chisda said, ‘They sinned with heat [i.e. promiscuity], and were judged accordingly with boiling water [i.e. the waters of The Flood were scalding. Sanhedrin 108b. This suggests that the earth cracked open and the exposed magma super heated the water. [↑](#footnote-ref-897)
898. Rabbeinu Bahya on Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23:1; And Chizkuni on Genesis 8:1:2 - *“the waters subsided - the wording proves that the waters were almost boiling hot”.* [↑](#footnote-ref-898)
899. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-899)
900. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:7; Rashi & Genesis Rabbah 32:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-900)
901. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-901)
902. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-902)
903. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-903)
904. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-904)
905. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-905)
906. Bereshit Rabbah 15:8 and Sanhedrin 70b - Gen.9:21 is where we **first** find wine in the Torah. This is where wine was created! [↑](#footnote-ref-906)
907. Lot’s daughters, in an effort to repopulate the world in a perceived post apocalyptic era, seduce their father with the help of some wine that was mysteriously in the exact cave where they sought refuge. [↑](#footnote-ref-907)
908. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-908)
909. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-909)
910. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-910)
911. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-911)
912. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-912)
913. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-913)
914. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-914)
915. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:33 & 19:35 [↑](#footnote-ref-915)
916. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-916)
917. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-917)
918. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:24-25 [↑](#footnote-ref-918)
919. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:36 [↑](#footnote-ref-919)
920. Bereshit (Genesis) 10:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-920)
921. The two daughters descendents included Ruth the Moabite, the great grandmother of King David; and Naamah, who was Solomon’s wife and Rehoboam’s mother. [↑](#footnote-ref-921)
922. Divrei HaYamim bet (II Chronicles ) 22:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-922)
923. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-923)
924. Divrei HaYamim bet (II Chronicles) 3:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-924)
925. Bereshit Rabbah 14:8. [↑](#footnote-ref-925)
926. **Rashi to Genesis 8:22** - **So long as the earth exists… shall not cease:**Each of these six seasons has two months, as we learned: Half of Tishri, Marcheshvan, and half of Kislev are “seedtime.” Half of Kislev, Teveth, and half of Shevat are the “cold” season, etc. in B.M. (106b). (Other editions add: So long as the earth exists — Heb. עֹד  means “always,” like (Num. 19:13): “his uncleanness is permanently (עוֹד) upon him.”) - **cold:**is more severe than winter. - **winter:**Heb. חֹרֶף, the time for sowing barley and beans, which are early (חֲרִיפִין) to ripen quickly. The winter period is half of Shevat, Adar, and half of Nissan. - **harvest:**Half of Nissan, Iyar, and half of Sivan. - **summer:**קַיִץ. This is half of Sivan, Tamuz, and half of Av, which is the time of the gathering of the figs and the time when they dry them in the fields, and it (the dried fig) is קַיִץ, as (II Sam. 16:2): “the bread and the dried fruits (וְהַקַּיִץ) for the young men to eat.” - **heat:**That is the end of the sunny season, half of Av, Elul, and half of Tishri, when the world is hottest, as we find in Tractate Yoma (29a): The end of the summer is more severe than the summer. - **and day and night shall not cease:**From here we deduce that they ceased for the duration of the Flood: the planets did not function, and day was indistinguishable from night. — [from *Gen. Rabbah* 25:2, 34:11] - **shall not cease:**All these shall not cease to perform according to their natural course. [↑](#footnote-ref-926)
927. According to tradition, Noach’s altar was built on the site of the Temple – see Rambam, *Hilkhot Beit HaBechira* 2:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-927)
928. While we no longer have the opportunity to cling to the Shechinah through sacrifices, our Sages provided us with a substitute, our prayers; (Talmud, Berachot, 26 b) the daily prayers were established in place of the Tamid sacrifices. The world needs our prayers. [↑](#footnote-ref-928)
929. The first man. [↑](#footnote-ref-929)
930. Maimonides [↑](#footnote-ref-930)
931. See Zohar, Gen. 70a. There is considerable agreement between the Zohar and P.R.E. in this and the next chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-931)
932. See Book of Adam and Chava (ed. Malan) 111. xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-932)
933. The first editions add : “and a goat”. [↑](#footnote-ref-933)
934. Pal. Targum, Gen. viii. 20, reads: “And Noach built an altar before the Lord ; that altar which Adam had built at the time when he was cast forth from the garden of Eden, and had offered an offering upon it; and upon it had Cain and Abel offered their offerings”. Cf. also T.B. Zebachim, 115b, and Gen. Rab. xxxiv. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-934)
935. The quotation ends here in the MS. [↑](#footnote-ref-935)
936. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-936)
937. The first editions add: “ as it is said, ‘ and he offered burnt offerings on the altar’ “ (Gen. viii. 20). [↑](#footnote-ref-937)
938. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-938)
939. see Nefesh HaChayim Gt.2,17 [↑](#footnote-ref-939)
940. Zohar Chadash, Ruth 59b [↑](#footnote-ref-940)
941. Rakanti (39,d) [↑](#footnote-ref-941)
942. Targum Yonatan to Genesis 2:7; found also in Yerushalmi Nazir 7:2; Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer ch. 11, 12, 20; and Bereshit Rabbah 14:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-942)
943. Maharsha - Ketuvot 111a [↑](#footnote-ref-943)
944. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-944)
945. Tehillim (Psalms) 69:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-945)
946. Bereshit Rabba 34:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-946)
947. Shabbat 28b [↑](#footnote-ref-947)
948. Tehillim (Psalms) 69:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-948)
949. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-949)
950. Bereshit (Genesis) 14:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-950)
951. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-951)
952. Bereshit (Genesis) 35:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-952)
953. Shemot (Exodus) 24:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-953)
954. Yalkut Shimoni Vayera 101 [↑](#footnote-ref-954)
955. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-955)
956. Bereshit (Genesis) 4:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-956)
957. Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer (chap. 23), Radak, Chizkuni, and others. [↑](#footnote-ref-957)
958. Bereshit Rabbah 34:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-958)
959. The phrase “The Altar” seems perfectly justified referring to “an altar” mentioned in the beginning of the verse. Perhaps, though, the entire phrase is otherwise superfluous, thus indicating the Midrashic explanation. (Ed.) [↑](#footnote-ref-959)
960. Malbim on Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-960)
961. Mishneh Torah 2:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-961)
962. Hilchot Beit Habechira 2:1-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-962)
963. Shmuel bet (2 Samuel) 24:15-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-963)
964. Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-964)
965. Kapara – or atonement – means to say that a person can relate to God, even though he is inherently a lowly being. This is an astonishing thing, as King David states (Psalms 8:5) “What is man that You shall be mindful of him?” Man should be trapped in his mundane activities, unable to reach the metaphysical. When a person offers a sacrifice, he is recognizing his state, and the ability to bring himself to closeness with God. This explains the Rabbis’ statement: “From the pace of his atonement was man created”. It was essential to man’s creation, that there was the capacity to relate to God. If the means of attaining closeness to God was not specifically set up in his creation, man would be unable to create such a relationship; man’s existence would be worthless. This is why all of these individuals built their altar in the same place. They all desired their sacrifice to reflect the idea that a person’s ability to relate to God is only due to God’s kindness in endowing man with that capability. The events the Rambam lists were not merely personal sacrifices. Rather, each one of these sacrifices mArked the beginning of a new period in human existence. At the beginning of each period, the person brought a sacrifice to express the fact that the nature of this existence is one of “kapara”. In other words, as mankind began a new epoch in his existence, (viz, Adam upon his Creation, Noach after The Flood, etc) this new era demarcating man’s ‘renewed existence’ demanded the characterization of man’s inherent need for atonement. Man, without the notion of atonement, is a flawed view of man. “Kapara” in the forgiveness sense means the same thing; namely that even though the person sinned and should be permanently distant due to his low level. When he does teshuva HaShem allows the relationship to be reestablished. [↑](#footnote-ref-965)
966. Bereshit Rabbah Noach 34 [↑](#footnote-ref-966)
967. Kefitsat Haderech in the Jewish kabbalah describes a miracle wherein someone travels vast distances in short time. It is explained as the road “shrinking” or contracting so both ends are now closer, almost like a biblical wormhole that bends space. [↑](#footnote-ref-967)
968. Yalkut Shimoni Vayera 101 [↑](#footnote-ref-968)
969. Yitzchak, Isaac, was THE sacrifice on THE alter in THE place of the Temple: ***Bereshit (Genesis) 22:9*** *When they reached the place G-d had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.* [↑](#footnote-ref-969)
970. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-970)
971. Pirkei D’Rebbi Eliezer 31 [↑](#footnote-ref-971)
972. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-972)
973. Pesachim 88a; Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-973)
974. Divrei HaYamim bet (II Chronicles) 3:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-974)
975. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-975)
976. This tradition is mentioned in the Book of Jubilees (18:13) and Josephus (e.g., Antiquities I:13:224, 226). Rashi makes this connection as well. When Avraham names the site of the Akeidah “HaShem Yir’eh”, Rashi states, “The Lord will see: Its simple meaning is . . . God will choose and see for Himself this place, to cause His Divine Presence to rest therein and for offering sacrifices here” (Bereshit [Genesis] 22:14). [↑](#footnote-ref-976)
977. Marcheshvan [↑](#footnote-ref-977)
978. Bereshit Rabbah 68:9: Shemot Rabba 45:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-978)
979. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-979)
980. Bereshit (Genesis) 28:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-980)
981. Shemot (Exodus) 33:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-981)
982. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-982)
983. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-983)
984. The word in Hebrew for Ark is “Teiva”, which also means “word”. - Ba’al Shem Tov [↑](#footnote-ref-984)
985. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-985)
986. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-986)
987. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-987)
988. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-988)
989. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-989)
990. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:17 (lifted up) [↑](#footnote-ref-990)
991. Shemot (Exodus) 24:18 – 25:2 (Teruma literally means, ‘that which lifted up’) This caused the Ark to carry the carriers. [↑](#footnote-ref-991)
992. Shemot (Exodus) 25:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-992)
993. Shemot (Exodus) 25:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-993)
994. Shemot (Exodus) 25:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-994)
995. Shemot (Exodus) 25:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-995)
996. Shemot (Exodus) 25:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-996)
997. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-997)
998. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-998)
999. Shemot (Exodus) 36:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-999)
1000. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1000)
1001. Eikah (Lamentations) 1:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-1001)
1002. Bereshit Rabbah 33:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-1002)
1003. Yom ha-Atzma’ut 5727/1967 [↑](#footnote-ref-1003)
1004. *Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 33:5* [↑](#footnote-ref-1004)
1005. Melachim alef (I Kings) 17:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-1005)
1006. Translating: He (Noach) sent darkness, viz. the raven, which is dark- hued, and the raven found it dark-i.e. without light or hope, and so returned. [↑](#footnote-ref-1006)
1007. Iyov (Job) 24:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-1007)
1008. Lit. ‘giving him answers, refutations ‘. ' Wa-shob’ (returning) is con- nected by a play on words with hasheb, the hif'ill form, ' to answer.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1008)
1009. Yerios Shlomo [↑](#footnote-ref-1009)
1010. Melachim alef (1 Kings) 19:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-1010)
1011. In recent generations, this duality has become both a source of faith and a source of heresy, since belief in a Divinely-revealed Torah depends on explaining such duality. See, for example, R. Mordechai Breuer’s introduction to his book, Pirkei Bereishit (Alon Shvut, 5759), pp. 11-19. We shall not elaborate here. [↑](#footnote-ref-1011)
1012. A general name may be preceded by the letter heh, indicating the definite article (ha-Elokim), and may be declined (elokei, elokekha; elokeinu, etc.), while a personal name cannot be preceded by the definite article, nor can it be declined. The Tetragrammaton, by linguistic definition, is a personal name. This fundamental distinction alone already nullifies the scientific basis of the “biblical criticism” approach, since a general name and a personal name are not parallels that can replace each other, but rather distinct references that complement one another, as we find in the second account of Creation. See the work of my late father and teacher z”l, Yechiel Bin-Nun, Eretz Ha-Moriah – Pirkei Mikra Ve-Lashon (Alon Shvut, 5766), pp. 10, 43-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-1012)
1013. Herein lies the fundamental difference between the “aspects approach” developed by R. Breuer *z”l*(n. 1 above, pp. 48-72) and the “aspects” to which I refer. The aspects to which I refer are based on the linguistic distinction and may therefore be read as mutually complementary in the plain sense, as opposed to the view of this textual structure as a miraculous phenomenon beyond the capability of human speech, testifying to its Divine origin, as R. Breuer explains it.  [↑](#footnote-ref-1013)
1014. See Ramban’s commentary on Shemot 22:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-1014)
1015. See “Havaya Pe’ila Ve-Kiyumit Ba-Mikra – Perusho Ha-Leshoni shel Shem Hashem,” Megadim 5 (Nissan 5748), pp. 7-23, and www.ybn.co.il. [↑](#footnote-ref-1015)
1016. At the age of 16, Rav Yoel Bin Nun first read a book on biblical criticism, and there for the first time he saw this text read as two accounts that are joined together. He was quite astounded by the thought that the Torah could be read in this way. He checked over and over again, and he found that the text was indeed quoted accurately – until he reached this single verse, which includes both names of God. Then he saw that those who would wish to divide the story of the Flood into two separate texts were helpless when it came to the words, “the Lord shut him in,” since they did not seem to belong to either account. And thus God shut me in. [↑](#footnote-ref-1016)
1017. See further, *Zakhor Ve-Shamor – Teva Ve-Historia Nifgashim Be-Shabbat U-Ve-Luach Ha-Chagim* (Alon Shuvt, 5775), pp. 209-221. [↑](#footnote-ref-1017)
1018. Rav Kook, “Noach: Balancing the Universe” [↑](#footnote-ref-1018)
1019. Belsky, Yisroel, Einei Yisroel. Bereishis. Kiryat Sefer: Machon Simchas Hatorah, 2005. Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-1019)
1020. Berachot 59a [↑](#footnote-ref-1020)
1021. Belsky, Yisroel, Einei Yisroel. Bereishis. Kiryat Sefer: Machon Simchas Hatorah, 2005. Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-1021)
1022. Chagiga 16a [↑](#footnote-ref-1022)
1023. ATBaSH is an acronym for the four letters: alef tav bet shin. Alef is the first letter of the Hebrew alefbet and tav is the last letter. Bet is the second letter and shin is the second last letter. These letters form a repeating patter which demonstrates that the end is like the beginning and the beginning is like the end. The goal is the center where the beginning and the ending meet. [↑](#footnote-ref-1023)
1024. Soncino Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 99a [↑](#footnote-ref-1024)
1025. Shemot (Exodus) 24:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-1025)
1026. Sefirot = divine emanations/energies/qualities. [↑](#footnote-ref-1026)
1027. Hilchot Brachot 11:16,17 [↑](#footnote-ref-1027)
1028. Zohar, vol. 1, 72b. [↑](#footnote-ref-1028)
1029. See Torat Menachem, vol. 3, p. 77-78; Bne Yissachar, Iyar 3:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1029)
1030. Tosefta Ta’anit 2:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-1030)
1031. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-1031)
1032. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1032)
1033. Bereshit (Genesis) 19:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-1033)
1034. The time of “Yaaqob’s trouble”, “birth pangs of the Mashiach”, the tribulation? [↑](#footnote-ref-1034)
1035. Chanok means “dedicated”. AKA Enoch. [↑](#footnote-ref-1035)
1036. The ten generations are: 1. Adam, 2. Seth, 3. Enosh, 4. Cainan, 5. Mahalel, 6. Jared, 7. Enoch, 8. Methuselah, 9. Lemech, 10. Noach. [↑](#footnote-ref-1036)
1037. Adapted from Sichos Shabbat Parshat Noach, 5733; Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XXV, Parshat Noach [↑](#footnote-ref-1037)
1038. Bereshit (Genesis) 9:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-1038)
1039. Hoshea (Hosea) 3:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-1039)
1040. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 30:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1040)
1041. Amos 9:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-1041)
1042. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 54:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1042)
1043. Kefitzat HaDerech in the Jewish kabbalah describes a miracle wherein someone travels vast distances in short time. It is explained as the road “shrinking” or contracting so both ends are now closer, almost like a biblical wormhole that bends space. Rashi says that this is accomplished through the pronouncement of HaShem’s name of 42 or 87 letters. Magic? [↑](#footnote-ref-1043)
1044. Yalkut shimoni Noach remez 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-1044)
1045. The Pleiades star cluster – famously known as the *Seven Sisters* or, to some, *M45*, to others *Chimea* – is visible from virtually every part of the globe. [↑](#footnote-ref-1045)
1046. Berachot 59a [↑](#footnote-ref-1046)
1047. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-1047)
1048. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-1048)
1049. Pleiades means “Ladies of Plenty”. Why is Pleiades called the Seven Sisters? The seven sisters comes from Greek mythology. The Pleiades were the seven daughters of Atlas, a Titan who held up the sky, and the oceanid Pleione, protectress of sailing. The sisters have names: Alcyone, Asterope, Electra, Celaeno, Maia, Merope, and Taygete. Samuel (third-century Babylonian Amora) gives an etymology of the name Kima: like a hundred (keme’ah) stars. Though only six or seven stars are easily visible to the naked eye, the Pleiades consist of several hundred stars bunched closely together. Consequently, Samuel’s description is very applicable though it remains a question how he can have known this. [↑](#footnote-ref-1049)
1050. ed. S. Horovitz, Niirnberg 1923 [↑](#footnote-ref-1050)
1051. Rosh Hashanah 1:1, fol. 56b [↑](#footnote-ref-1051)
1052. Abodah Zarah 1:2, fol. 39c [↑](#footnote-ref-1052)
1053. Genesis Rabbah 33 (10) [↑](#footnote-ref-1053)
1054. Kimah is Aldebaran (Taurus) according to Ibn Ezra, Saadia Gaon. [↑](#footnote-ref-1054)
1055. According to Rashi, Baalei HaTosefot, and Seder Olam [↑](#footnote-ref-1055)
1056. Samuel (third-century Babylonian Amora) gives an etymology of the name ***kimah***: like a hundred (keme’ah) stars. Though only six or seven stars are easily visible to the naked eye, the Pleiades consist of several hundred stars bunched closely together. Consequently, Samuel’s description is very applicable though it remains a question how he can have known this. [↑](#footnote-ref-1056)
1057. “Kimah” and The Flood in “Seder ‘Olam” and B.T. Rosh Ha-Shana Stellar Time-Reckoning and Uranography in Rabbinic Literature Author(s): Chaim Milikowsky Source: Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research, Vol. 50 (1983), pp. 105-132 Published by: American Academy for Jewish Research [↑](#footnote-ref-1057)
1058. The constellation Kimah always comes up in the daytime during the month of Marcheshvan, and the subterranean fountains are always strengthened during that month [↑](#footnote-ref-1058)
1059. There are two possible explanations of this phrase. According to the elaboration of this passage in R.H. the change introduced in order to make the rain fall was the reversal of Kima’s position so that it conformed to the position necessary for rain to fall. From the SO passage, however, it is possible to understand the change as the bringing of rain when Kimah is in a position not naturally associated with the coming of rain. [↑](#footnote-ref-1059)
1060. 7 vols. in 8 (1928-42), 1:38-39 [↑](#footnote-ref-1060)
1061. Ibid., 1:123. [↑](#footnote-ref-1061)
1062. Antiquities 13. 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-1062)
1063. 9 Hesiod, Works and Days, 620-621; Geoponica 1. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1063)
1064. J.G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, 12 vols., third edition (London, 1935), Part 5, Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild, Vol. 1, pp. 318-319. [↑](#footnote-ref-1064)
1065. See Frazer, Golden Bough, Part 5, Vol. 1, pp. 307-319, and Nilsson, Primitive Time-Reckoning, pp.129-146. [↑](#footnote-ref-1065)
1066. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1066)
1067. Rashi, who was probably aware of both readings, has Kimah setting in Iyar and rising in Marcheshvan. [↑](#footnote-ref-1067)
1068. There seems to be some confusion in the text here. To make it astronomically correct we should read (with the Seder Olam) in the dictum of R. Joshua, ‘When Pleiades rises at daybreak’, and in the dictum of R. Eliezer, ‘sets at daybreak’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1068)
1069. Because we find Nisan called the first month in the Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-1069)
1070. Which is also recognized by Scripture as the beginning of a year in the text, ‘The eyes of the Lord are upon it (the Land of Israel) from the beginning of the year’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1070)
1071. Seeing that it was the season of rain. [↑](#footnote-ref-1071)
1072. In connection with The Flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-1072)
1073. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1073)
1074. Esther 7:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-1074)
1075. I.e., the years of Noach and the calendar from Tishri; Tishri being the New Year for years. [↑](#footnote-ref-1075)
1076. They hold that the world was created in Nisan, v. supra p. 30, n. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1076)
1077. Dr. Hadassah Melamed in her book, “The Secret of The Flood, The Bermuda Triangle, and Continental Drift” published in Hebrew in the year 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-1077)
1078. Iyov (Job) 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1078)
1079. Amos 5:8 Who made Kima and Kesil, Who turns deep dArkness into dawn and dArkens day into night, Who summons the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the earth—His name is HaShem! [↑](#footnote-ref-1079)
1080. Amos 5:6; Job 9:9; and, Job: 38:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-1080)
1081. Berachot 58b; Rosh Hashana 11b; and, Bava Metzia 106b. [↑](#footnote-ref-1081)
1082. Rabbi Avraham ben Meir ben Ezra (1093-1164). [↑](#footnote-ref-1082)
1083. The Septuagint on Job (a translation of the bible into Greek, written during the second century B.C.E.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1083)
1084. Translation of the Bible to Latin, which was done in the fourth century B.C.E. [↑](#footnote-ref-1084)
1085. Author of the Aramaic-English Dictionary (1829-1903). [↑](#footnote-ref-1085)
1086. Rabbi Samuel Eliezer Halevi Eidels (1555-1632). [↑](#footnote-ref-1086)
1087. Rabbi Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman Kramer, the Vilna Gaon (1720-1797). [↑](#footnote-ref-1087)
1088. Shlomo Yehuda Rappaport (1790-1867). [↑](#footnote-ref-1088)
1089. Rabbi Yonah Ibn Janah (Spain, 990-1050). [↑](#footnote-ref-1089)
1090. Charles Messier, French astronomer (1730-1817). [↑](#footnote-ref-1090)
1091. In this essay the term Zodiac sign means one of the 12 star constellations in the zodiac. [↑](#footnote-ref-1091)
1092. Kimah is the name of a constellation, conjectured by Jast. to be Draco, not the Pleiades. [↑](#footnote-ref-1092)
1093. Iyov (Job) 9:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1093)
1094. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-1094)
1095. This constellation follows that of the Ram. [↑](#footnote-ref-1095)
1096. Ibid. 32. E.V. ‘or canst thou guide the Bear with her sons’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1096)
1097. And then stuck on artificially. [↑](#footnote-ref-1097)
1098. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1098)
1099. Iyov (Job) 38:32. E.V. ‘or canst thou guide the Bear with her sons’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1099)
1100. Rav Aryeh Kaplan, in an address to Orthodox Jewish Scientists in 1979 suggested that using boneh olamot umacharivan, one could calculate the age of the universe at approximately 15 billion years by following the approach of 14th century Kabbalist Rav Yitzchok Mi’Akko. Rav Yitzchok Mi’Akko suggests each day of the 7,000 year cycle is really 1,000 years. Thus each cycle would last 2.56 billion years. If we are approximately 6,000 years into the seventh cycle, the universe would be approximately 15 billion years old. Many have critiqued Rav Kaplan’s approach pointing out that while there is one sefer kabbala that says we are in the seventh cycle (the Livnas Hasapir), Rav Yitzchok Mi’Akko himself said we are in the second cycle, and the Tiferes Yisrael says we are in the fourth. [↑](#footnote-ref-1100)
1101. Bereshit Rabbah 14:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-1101)
1102. Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 2:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-1102)
1103. Since the Antarctic was certainly ice-bound in 1531 – when Oronteus Finaeus made his map – Finaeus must have had access to very ancient maps indeed: maps made when Antarctica was largely free of the mile-thick ice cap that buries it today, and presumably has covered it for millennia. [↑](#footnote-ref-1103)
1104. *Moshe Emes: The YeC Recent Complex Creation Framework for Torah and Science alignment*, by Roger M. Pearlman - ***Moshe Emes: Torah and Science Alignment Framework*, by Roger M. Pearlman** [↑](#footnote-ref-1104)
1105. HaRav HaGaon R. Yisrael Lipschitz, Drush Ohr HaChayim, 1842 [↑](#footnote-ref-1105)
1106. Bereshit (Genesis) 7:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-1106)
1107. HaRav HaGaon R. Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin, Sefer HaEmek Davar, Parshat Noach (Gen. 7:23) [↑](#footnote-ref-1107)
1108. Tiwanaku (Spanish: Tiahuanaco or Tiahuanacu) is a Pre-Columbian archaeological site in western Bolivia near Lake Titicaca, about 70 kilometers from La Paz, and it is one of the largest sites in South America. Surface remains currently cover around 4 square kilometers and include decorated ceramics, monumental structures, and megalithic blocks. [↑](#footnote-ref-1108)
1109. Rashi on 8:22, below. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-1109)
1110. Chagiga 12A [↑](#footnote-ref-1110)
1111. Sanhedrin 38b [↑](#footnote-ref-1111)
1112. Baba Batra 75A [↑](#footnote-ref-1112)
1113. Sanhedrin 108b advanced technology [↑](#footnote-ref-1113)
1114. The Ramban describes the world after the flood as being newly created, and not merely repopulated, an idea supported by the many parallelisms between God’s charge to Adam after creation and to Noach after the deluge. [↑](#footnote-ref-1114)
1115. A similar paradigm shift took place in the days following the disputes between the Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel. These disputes signaled the transition between a world of strict justice and a world in which loving-kindness was layered on top of the world of strict justice. The world was created with strict justice and in the end this will be the mode, but between then and that future, HaShem gives us time to repent with His loving-kindness.

      The traveling from the east (‘m’kedem - מִקֶּדֶם), in the story of the tower of Babel, is understood as a movement away from something, as opposed to being a move towards something. They were traveling away from the “kedem”. Kedem is related to the word Kadmon and means ancient. The travel of the people was specifically their distancing themselves from God, and their attempt to remove themselves from Divinely ordained natural order. Their intent was to create an environment immune from natural law, and all its destructive powers, the likes of which was recently seen by the flood. [↑](#footnote-ref-1115)
1116. The Legends of the Jews 1:4:12, by Louis Ginzberg [1909] [↑](#footnote-ref-1116)
1117. Zechariah 14:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-1117)