**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Noach 5772**

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**Story #726**

**With All Your Might**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/21?folder=Inbox&msgNum=0000V_k0:001EYjbJ00000%5ea8&count=1317733283&randid=950495960&attachId=0&isUnDisplayableMail=yes&blockImages=0&randid=950495960##)

 Rabbi Menachum Nachum of Chernobyl would travel all over the country, visiting Jewish communities. His aim was to strengthen the practice of the mitzvot wherever possible, to increase Torah study and to lend a helping hand wherever he could.

 In the course of one of his journeys, he reached a city in the district of Podolya and, as usual, went to pay his respect to the rabbi of the city.

 "What can I do to add to the spiritual quality of life in the city?" he asked.

 The rabbi sighed, "What we really need most here is a mikveh, but building one is far beyond our means. The Jews, here, struggle for their daily bread, as is. They cannot give more than they do already."

**“Are There No Rich People in the Community?”**

 "Are there no rich people in the community?" R' Nachum asked, somewhat

surprised.

 The rabbi shook his head, then hesitated. "Well, actually, there is one rich Jew here, but he is an inveterate miser. He has never given to any charitable or worthy cause in the community, though we certainly have approached him, time and again."

 "If your need for a mikveh is so great and the means are there, there must also be some way to soften that miser's heart. I am sure that G-d intends that source to be tapped and used. He must be the solution to the problem. I tell you, some way will be found to get the miserly Jew to build the mikveh for your city! It can be done!"

 With these words, R' Nachum left the rabbi's house. He even left the city, his mind busily hatching a plan to penetrate through the miser's shell.

 R' Nachum went to a nearby town where he hired a grand coach and a liveried coachman. He gave orders to be driven to the city from which he had just come. The magnificent coach rolled through the city streets until it came to a halt in front of a spacious mansion. It was the home of the miser.

**Deeply Impressed by the Grand**

**Coach Approaching His Driveway**

 The miser, who was in at the time, could not help noticing the grand coach sweeping up his driveway and was deeply impressed. His curiosity was also tickled, for only the richest of noblemen and aristocrats rode in such splendid fashion. He rushed to the door and opened it himself to catch a glimpse of the passenger, a most distinguished-looking Jew. He did not know that this Jew was none other than R' Nachum, for he had always avoided the Rebbe when R' Nachum came to town, lest he be asked for charity.

 "Who is that sitting inside?" he asked the coachman.

 "That's R' Nachum of Chernobyl, didn't you know?" replied the coachman.

 The miser would have liked to slink away and disappear back into the house. He had always detested visitors and never welcomed anyone into his home. But he still had a sense of shame. He could not refuse this hospitality to this great rabbi who had stopped at his very threshold!

**Had No Choice But to Invite**

**The Rebbe Into His Home**

 He had no choice, but to approach R' Nachum and invite him in. As he crossed the threshold, R' Nachum confided to his host, "Do you know that I overlooked all the possible invitations and chose to stay only in your home?" The flattery was effective. The rich man's heart expanded with pride and he ushered the Rebbe into his most comfortable room with a rush of hospitality and warmth.

 It did not take long before the entire city had heard the news; the famous Chernobler Rebbe was staying at the miser's house. The prominent figures of the city rushed to pay their respects, but R' Nachum gave orders not to admit anyone. The crowds outside swelled and swelled, waiting for the Rebbe to relent and allow them to receive his blessing.

**An Unknown Emotion Suddenly Took Hold of Him**

 The rich miser sat within, viewing the great throng of people about his gate. An emotion, unknown until now, took hold of him. All those people waiting outside longed to see the famous Rebbe, but he refused to admit them. He, the rich Jew, was the only one whom the Rebbe agreed to see! What a privilege! He glowed with the thought.

 Towards evening, R' Nachum asked if his host could come into his room. When he entered, he found R' Nachum seated at a table, poring over a sefer. Somehow, this impressive Jew with his flowing beard and stately bearing put a superb finishing touch to the luxurious surroundings of the impeccably furnished room with its brocade curtains, plush carpeting, gilt-framed portraits, silk bedding and all.

 He stood there, in the doorway, taking in the perfect scene. What majesty! What a perfect blend of the spiritual and the material! The host was so overcome that he would not break the beauty of the tableau; he could not take the first step forward.

**Enthralled by the Rebbe’s**

**Aura of Majesty and Holiness**

 R' Nachum, who had not heard the door open, did not look up. His host continued to look at R' Nachum, his gaze fixed on that noble brow. He was enthralled by the aura of majesty and holiness that enveloped the Rebbe.

 "Now I understand why Jewish sages are compared to royalty," he thought. "He looks like a veritable king in his palace. Who am I, puny, inconsequential figure that I am, to enter and disturb his holy study and exalted mood?"

 He stood there, indecisive, not knowing whether to advance or retreat. Finally, he took courage and tiptoed to the table, but R' Nachum still did not look up. He was deeply enrapt in his study.

 The host quietly pulled up a chair and sat down at the same table. He marveled at the Rebbe's deep concentration; R' Nachum did not lift his eyes from the book.

**Admiring the Rebbe’s Reward in the World to Come**

 "How fortunate he is! How good is his lot!" thought the host. "He has a multitude of people waiting outside for his blessing. Our city's wealthiest, most important and dignified people have been waiting on my doorstep; and he is oblivious to all, sunk in his study. He has his reward in his own lifetime. If thus is his portion in this world, who knows what glory and grandeur await him in the World to Come?"

 "And I," he continued, spinning the thread of his thoughts, which was changing his view on life and on eternal values, "what am I compared to this great man? I can boast of possessing money. True. But of what value is that as against the everlasting wealth of the spirit which the Rebbe possesses, his serenity of spirit and the wealth that yet awaits him in olam haba?"

 When R' Nachum finally looked up and noticed his host, he jolted him from his reverie. "My dear man," he said, "it is time for prayers, I'm afraid, we must postpone our talk.'

 The rich man shook himself awake from his daydream. What had the Rebbe wanted to speak to him about, anyway? He was so curious that he asked R' Nachum to daven in his home.

 "Don't worry!" he said with a smile. "We won't lack a minyan. There are plenty of people waiting outside for you. We can let them in."

**Honors the Rich Man by**

**Agreeing to Pray in His House**

 "I do not forego praying in a synagogue all that easily," R' Nachum said, "but, for your sake, I will do so this time."

 The rich man was bathed with a special feeling of wellbeing when R' Nachum uttered these words. He felt a true spiritual pleasure at the indirect compliment. He rushed out to invite the men in to pray together with the Rebbe.

 They could hardly believe their ears. They could see that the miser was giving honor in full measure to R' Nachum. What had happened? He was known to scoff at and ridicule rabbis and chasidim. They marveled at the transformation. The Rebbe had effected this great change, merely by staying under his roof for a few hours. Wonders did not cease!

**Amazed by the Change**

**In the Host’s Behavior**

 In a daze, they entered the rich man's house and were shown to the room where the evening prayers would be held. To their greater surprise, they saw their host scurrying about in person, bringing his finest lamps to illuminate the room, giving it a semblance of a royal chamber.

 Suddenly, all was silent. The Chernobler appeared in the doorway and all eyes focused on him. Hesitantly, people edged forward to give him their greeting, among them the host himself. To look at him, one would have thought him a chasid among chasidim. No one could guess that the transformation was only hours old, that this same man had ridiculed chasidim only the day before.

**A Special Quality to the Miser’s Davening**

 There was something special about the miser's davening that evening. He found himself praying with a fire that he had never experienced. And this time, when he came to the blessing in the shemonah esreh that ends, "King Who loves charity and justice," he felt an acute pain in his heart. Many scenes floated before his mind's eye, all of them with one common denominator -- his own stinginess. Time after time, he had refused to give to the poor or to any communal cause or project.

 "Charity and Justice" had had no meaning to him, for he had not lived by them. He had practiced the opposite of charity -- miserliness. If G-d loved charity, then, He probably despises him. Woe unto him! Tears flowed from his eyes, tears of remorse and pain. And with them came a resolution to change. From this moment on, he must become a new person.

**A Resolve to Change and Improve**

 He continued to pray and to weep. Each blessing reminded him of his faults. Each blessing reinforced his resolve to change and improve. The others had all finished their silent prayer, all but two -- R' Nachum and his host. R' Nachum's exalted prayer drew along with it the host's own prayer, drew it up and out of his heart, removed the dross and purified it.

 The rest stood by, openmouthed, watching in amazement the transformation that had taken place. They had never seen the rich man so emotional before. He had always been impassive; not even the ne'ilah prayer on Yom Kippur had ever moved him, certainly not to tears. Even when the entire congregation had wept unashamedly, he had mouthed the words with a straight, unemotional, expression.

**The Rebbe Speaks to the Rich Man Alone**

 R' Nachum had burst through all the barriers in the miser's hard heart, he had broken the dam of his river of tears. When the prayer was over, the men left and the Rebbe indicated to his host that he wished to speak to him privately. They closeted themselves in a room and remained there for a long time. No one knew what was said behind those closed doors, but the result of that historic conversation became known the following day.

 R' Nachum left the city early the next morning, his mission accomplished. He was escorted by a procession of all the townsfolk, young and old alike. At their head was the host, the one-time miser. Tears of deep emotion ran down his cheeks, as he took leave of the Rebbe. People rubbed their eyes in wonder. This man, who had been so reserved, so aloof and haughty, so unapproachable, was now walking in the midst of the crowd, weeping emotionally, mingling with everyone.

**Announces Plans to Build a New Mikveh**

 But in their return to the city they were in for an even greater surprise. The rich man quickly gathered a group of laborers. When people asked him why he needed them, he replied, "To build a new mikveh! It is about time, too."

 "Unbelievable!" people whispered to one another. But, on second thought, they did not think it so strange, after all. Had not the famous Chernobler Rebbe himself visited him? Had he not talked to the man at length?

 The news flew through the city, The mikveh was going up. The curious visited the building site to see for themselves if the rich man was really keeping his promise. They could not help asking him if he really meant to foot the entire bill. He looked up and smiled, "Not only for the building costs, but even for the maintenance, after it is in use!"

**Why the Sudden Change?**

 One daring person burst out with the question that was on everyone's lips: "But why? What had caused this sudden change?"

 "Why, you ask?" The rich man fished out a sheet of paper from his pocket and said, "Here's your answer."

 Everyone crowded around, looking over his shoulder or peering around his elbow. It was a document, a bill of sale. It read: "I, Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, hereby sell my portion in the world to come to so-and-so on the condition that he build a mikveh for the people of this city from his own money and also undertake to cover its operating expenses until the community is able to do so itself."

**Had the Tzaddik Really Given Up**

**His Share in the World to Come?**

 People looked at one another with surprise. Could this be true? Had the tzadik actually transferred his share in the World to Come to this Jew? In other words, sold it for a mikveh? What unbelievable greatness!

 The rich man smiled at them. He had never swung such a successful business deal in his life!

 In Chernobel, the matter was discussed among the chasidim. They did not question their Rebbe's deeds; he was beyond question. Yet, why had the very idea occurred to him?

**The Rebbe Explains His Reasoning**

 One chasid girded himself with courage and asked the Rebbe directly. R' Nachum replied, "The question is valid. Here, then, is my answer. “I have long been puzzled by the explanation of our Sages on the verse bechol me'odecha “with all your might” (Deut. 6:5 recited several times a day in the Shema Yisrael prayer), which our Sages explain as 'with all your means'. How was I to fulfill this obligation, if I do not possess any money?

 “And, if money does come my way, it has no real value to me. How, then, was I to show my love for G-d through my possessions? Was I testifying falsely each time I recited these words in the Shema?

 “And then, the opportunity arose for me to hand over my most treasured possession to express my love of G-d -- my portion in the World to Come. Was I to hesitate at this opportunity or seize it and show my deep love? I chose to grasp it, and to fulfill this commandment willingly, eagerly, with all my heart!

 “And so, I signed the document, and, having signed it, I felt at ease. For, now, I can recite those words without any twinges of conscience. I have exhibited my love for G-d 'with all my possessions'; I have sold my most precious item of value for the love of G-d."

**Connection to Both Parshas Noach and**

**The Yahrzeit of the Chernobyler Rebbe**

 Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from "Tales of Tzaddikim" (ArtScroll) by G. MaTov]

 Connections (2): Weekly Torah portion - “the flood waters were considered like a mikveh for the world; and Seasonal -- in less than two weeks is the 224th yahrzeit of R. Nachum of Chernobyl.

 Biographic Note: Rabbi Menachem Nachum, the Maggid of Chernobyl [1730-11 Cheshvan 1787], was a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov and senior disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch. He is the author of Meor Enayim.

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**An Open Revelation of G-d’s Existence in This World**

**By Rabbi Reuven Semah**

“Two by two they came to Noah to the ark.” (Beresheet 7:9)

 As the time of the flood approached, the animals, by themselves, came to the ark. This was a special act of G-d and was part of the episode of the flood which was entirely an open act of G-d. Yet the method used was entirely in accordance with the natural behavior of living things.

 It is known that salmon swim up rivers and leap rapids to return to their original waters. Birds migrate tremendous distances and return to their precise place of origin. These creatures possess built-in clocks and direction finders, much like today’s GPS, that allow them to return to precisely the same tree or spot or cliff with pinpoint accuracy. Now when the creatures were needed for the ark, at Hashem’s command their instincts of migration and direction-finding were activated to lead them to the ark.

 Rabbi Avigdor Miller, z”l, explains that they came at the command of Hashem, and the fact that all of them arrived at that time and in the exact number (male and female) was an open miracle of the greatest magnitude. This was Hashem’s mercy on the generation to encourage them to change their ways before the flood came. It is certain that many were astonished at this marvelous phenomenon. But the leaders refused to admit, after all these years, that Noah had been right and that they misled the people, and therefore the opportunity was lost.

 This is not surprising. In our day the academicians have influenced men to ignore the miracles of plan and purpose that the Creator has demonstrated in nature to teach men about Him. Actually men today are more guilty because the discoveries of science have demonstrated today more clearly than ever before that every object and process in nature occurs with infinite cunning of plan and purpose, so that not the least excuse remains today to fail to see the hand of G-d in all of reality.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of the Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin.*

**The Truth of What Protects**

**Us – Acts of Chesed**

**By Rabbi Shmuel Choueka**

 We are all familiar with the story of the mabul, the flood which Hashem brought in the time of Noah. Because of the wickedness of the people, Hashem wanted to destroy the world and commanded Noah to build an Ark, which ultimately saved him and his family and all different species of animals, birds, etc.

 We are under the impression that what saved Noah and his family was the fact that they were in the Ark, “protected” from the elements outside. Over the last many months, we have seen that even a strong house can be meaningless in the face of a storm, let alone a wooden Ark of Noah.

 The Rabbis tell us that what protected him was the hesed, kindness, which he performed in the Tebah. For one full year he was running around with his family to provide different food for every type of creature at different feeding times. The world was being destroyed because of corruption which is based on selfishness. The salvation came about through kindness which is based on selflessness.

 In times of trouble and especially in the days leading to Mashiah, hesed, kindness, and selflessness will be the attributes which will save us from the floods of the world.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of the Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin.*

**Gold and Silver**

**By Bentzion Elisha**

*Originally told by the Bobover Rebbe, Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, at a community gathering.*

A follower of the chassidic leader Reb Mottel of Chernobyl had a particular habit which came to light when he visited Reb Mottel to request a blessing. Reb Mottel asked the visitor to recount his typical daily schedule. The young man explained that he began each day by buying goods for his business from the local landowner. Following that, he would recite the morning prayers, after which he began to sell his wares.

 “Why do you buy your merchandise before you pray in the morning?” asked Reb Mottel.

 The young man explained, “Why, if I waited until after prayers, the only goods remaining would be of inferior quality, if not sold out entirely!”

 Upon hearing that, Reb Mottel shared a story with his follower.

 There was once a teacher of Jewish studies, whose livelihood entailed traveling far from his hometown to teach Jewish children in distant cities. He was often away from his home for a year or more at a time. Meanwhile his wife and children lived the year without him, borrowing and living on credit.

 This teacher was paid for his services with coins. The wealthy gave him gold coins, the middle class paid with silver coins, and people of more modest means paid with copper or nickel coins.

 The teacher had made a belt for himself where he would hang the various bags. Each bag carried a different type of coin. He had a bag for his gold coins, a bag for his silver coins, a bag for his nickel coins and a bag for his copper coins.

 After the year of teaching was up, he headed back home. As the first Shabbat on his voyage approached, he knew he would have to remove his belt, as carrying money on Shabbat is forbidden. But he didn’t know where to hide his money bags.

 He decided to bury his earnings in the ground, and retrieve them after Shabbat. But just as he was about to finish his digging, he heard some people in the distance. Paranoia set in, and he became alarmed by the possibility that if he could hear them, they could probably see him, and his money wasn’t safe.

 Now pressed for time, he grabbed the belt with the bags of coins and ran to the local Jewish inn, where he handed the innkeeper the entire bundle in a furious hurry for safekeeping. Shabbat began, and the teacher was livid with himself. He had just given the innkeeper his entire year’s earnings without even a note or receipt mentioning the amount of money being held. It would be so easy for the innkeeper to deny safeguarding the coins, and his whole year’s pay would be lost.

 Thoughts of his wife and children flooded his mind. What would they do? How would they face the creditors? His imagination took off, leaving him worried and on edge for the entire Shabbat.

 The innkeeper sensed his guest’s troubled condition and, as soon as Shabbat departed, he recited the evening prayers very quickly, and placed the belt with the bags of coins in front of the teacher, who was still reciting the silent Amidah prayer.

 To the amazement of the innkeeper, in the middle of his supplications the teacher opened the bag of gold coins and started counting them one by one. He saw that all the coins were still there. Nevertheless, he took out the bag with the silver coins and started counting them next. All the silver coins were also still there, yet his concern and worry did not dissipate. He then started counting the nickel coins, and then the copper coins, and finally returned to his prayers. The innkeeper, who had observed the entire process, was taken aback and perplexed.

 When the teacher finished his prayers, the innkeeper confronted him. “After you saw I hadn’t taken any of your gold coins, why did you not trust that I hadn’t taken any of your silver coins, which are much less valuable? And after you counted the silver coins too, and saw I took nothing, why didn’t you trust me then? You continued to count the ridiculously less valuable nickel and copper coins.”

 Reb Mottel of Chernobyl turned to the young man before him and said, “I want to ask you the same question the innkeeper asked the teacher. Every single morning, G‑d has given you back your soul, your body, your very life—the equivalent of gold and silver coins. What makes you think he won’t also give you your livelihood—your nickel and copper coins? You should increase your trust, and believe that G‑d will give you your physical sustenance too. There is no need to rush off to buy goods before morning prayers.”

*Reprinted from this week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**A Moment with Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l**

**Why Does G-d Allow Certain Animal Species to Go Extinct?**

**QUESTION:** Why do animals become extinct?

**ANSWER:** Animals become extinct because Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants to show us that nothing in this world is forever. A tremendous lesson! Once upon a time, in the times of Adam and Meshuselach, the elephants were tremendous; much bigger than our little elephants of today. The beavers - a beaver is this big today - in those days a beaver was six foot long! It's a fact. Everything was big in those days.

|  |
| --- |
| mastadons |

 And so Hakadosh Baruch Hu showed that the great ones fall eventually. Nobody is too important to hang around a long time in this world. That's the lesson for us. Now, the ancients were expected to utilize what they saw with their eyes.

 We are not capable of utilizing too many things, so Hashem gives us a limited number of things [to benefit from]. Let us look at these things because not all these things will be around forever. Little by little, some more species will be extinct. Then we'll look back at the good old days. If we could have seen the great mastodon elephant, or the great reptiles, almost as high as a two story house, then we would see the Nifloas Haborai [G-d’s wonders of creation.]

 But today what do we have to look at? Little crocodiles! We have nothing to look at. So Hashem says look at the crocodiles, when you see a crocodile, be amazed by it. Why does it have such a thick skin? It’s an armor on it. Is it an accident? Where did it get all those teeth? Is it an accident? It's a tremendous thing that the crocodile can swim in water and he can walk on land, and you see the miracles of his constitution. So while we still have them, let’s utilize them... because nothing is forever in this world.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of “A Moment with Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l” based on his answer to a question from the audience at one of his classic Thursday night hashkafah (religious philosophical) lectures at his Flatbush shul.*

**The Power of the Rainbow**

**By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton**

 This week we read the strange story of the flood.

 The Torah tells us that after the flood G-d put a rainbow in the sky as a sign that He would never destroy the world's population again.

 At first glance this is not understood.

 First: the rainbow is a natural phenomenon. It occurs every time light is refracted through water vapor in the sky. What has it got to do with a heavenly covenant?

 Secondly: Why did G-d chose a rainbow? Why does it symbolize His decision to not destroy the world?

 To understand this here is a story.

 Little Shlomo was ten years old but he wasn't afraid, or at least that's what he kept telling himself. He sat in warm sun on the ship's deck, feeling the breeze on his cheeks, reading the small book of T'hillim (Psalms) that he brought along and tried to take his mind off the long trip that remained ahead of him.

 It was two weeks between Morocco where his parents sent him to learn Torah and his home town in Madrid Spain. Once a year before Passover, he would return home and now he was in the middle of his journey.

**Ignored by the Non-Jewish Passengers**

 The other passengers, non-Jewish merchants and travelers, rarely spoke to the boy but the few times they did the conversation got around to what god he believes in.

 It seems that all traveling merchants carry some sort of statue or good-luck charm in their pockets or around their necks which they pray and make vows to in time of need. And comparing 'gods' was a common pastime.

 But when little Shlomo answered that his G-d is invisible and rules the heavens and earth they snickered, winked at one another and said " The Jew is too cheap to buy and idol."

 Well, as fate would have it on that very day a storm broke out. Shlomo sensed that something was wrong. Early in the morning the sky and sea had been unusually beautiful and placid the sailors were scurrying about securing everything on the deck that moved and lowering all the sails and a tension filled the air.

**Suddenly the Storm Erupts**

**With a Furious Force**

 Suddenly the skies became frighteningly dark and cold winds began churning the sea into white foam. Waves began splashing across the deck of the ship and within minutes howling winds and roaring waves were smashing and tossing the ship in all directions as though there was no up or down, the sea and the sky had melted together in a wicked, black explosion of raw destruction and it seemed certain that the helpless ship and everyone on it was doomed.

 Poor Shlomo wedged himself into some corner between two railings on the deck, grabbed onto a beam for dear life while the rain and wind battered and drenched him to the bone, closed his eyes and cried.

 Suddenly he felt something tug at his pants. He opened his eyes and saw several of the other passengers. They had somehow managed to crawl over to him and were desperate. One put his mouth next to the boy's ear and screamed over the howling storm. "Pray!!! Pray!!!!"

 All of them were pointing to heaven and shouting the same thing "Pray!!! To your G-d!!! Save us!!!"

 Little Shlomo understood what they meant. They probably had tried to pray to their gods, obviously with no success, and now they were desperately turning to him.

 He pulled himself up by the pole he was hugging, the merchants tried to hold him up as they could while trying to keep themselves from being washed away and the boy prayed.

**Pleading to G-d to Demonstrate His Kingship**

 "G-d!! Save us!! Do a miracle!!! Show these people that You are the King of the Universe!! I'm scared!! I want to go home!!"

 And he fell back down to his place weeping.

 Now, usually when G-d answers prayers it takes a while, sometimes even years.. But not this time.

 In five minutes the huge waves stopped. Shortly thereafter the sea became calm and the clouds began parting. And in twenty minutes the sun was shining as though nothing had happened.

 If it weren't for the puddles of water on deck and the two broken masts one could think that it all had been a terrible dream.

**Singing and Dancing for Joy**

 The other passengers realized what had happened and they were quick to show their appreciation. They took little Shlomo on their shoulders and began to sing and dance with joy.

 But the ship had been seriously damaged and the Captain announced, to the relief of the passengers, that they would stop for repairs at a nearby island where everyone could get off onto dry land until they resumed the journey in a day or two.

 The ship reached port and the passengers eagerly filed off the ship. But as they were all on the dock suddenly someone yelled out. "Hey! Where's the boy?" "Yes" someone else asked aloud, "Where is he? Did anyone see him leave the ship."

 After a few seconds they decided to go back and see what happened to little Shlomo. Maybe he didn't have money. Maybe he was asleep and didn't know they left. In any case they would fix it up.

 But as they returned to the ship they saw him just sitting there in his usual place on the deck reading.

 "Excuse us, my little friend" said one of the merchants, "Why are you sitting here? Why don't you get off the ship and see the island? Didn't you hear the captain say that it's okay to leave the ship? We'll be here for two days. Why not get off?"

 Shlomo just looked up at the people and said. "Thank you for being so kind, but to tell you the truth . I'm afraid. After all, I'm all alone and I'm weak. I'm not big and strong like you. So I think I'll just stay here."

**A Jew is Never Alone and Weak!**

 The passengers looked incredulously at one another then back at Shlomo and said. "What! What did you say?! YOU are alone and weak??

 "Why, You are NEVER alone. Wherever you go your G-d is with you! And your G-d rules the whole world, He even stopped the storm! There is nothing stronger than that.

 If there is anyone that is alone and weak it's US!!

 And they escorted him to the island.

 This answers our question.

 But before we continue let's just ask one more question. Why did G-d decide to kill everyone just because they were having a good time? What is the Torah telling us here?

**The World Was Created**

**For a Reason and a Goal**

 The answer is it's telling us that the world was created (and is continually created) for a REASON and a GOAL; G-d wants to be revealed here.

 And when everyone did the opposite there was no reason to keep them alive. (But nowadays it's different; G-d promised Noach that He wouldn't do it again.)

 Now we can understand the rainbow. The Ramban writes that the rainbow was an indication of how much this goal; how much is G-d being revealed in the world, is being accomplished.

 Therefore, he says, before the flood there was no rainbow! The world was so evil and coarse (something like the merchants in the beginning of our story), that there was no possibility that the revelation of the Creator could permeate.

**The Rainbow After the Flood**

 But after G-d purified the world with the flood, and 'light' was able to shine through (like our passengers after the storm) the rainbow appeared.

 So that is the connection of the rainbow to G-d's covenant with Noach. It shows that the purpose of creation is being carried out, if not by man then by HaShem Himself, and therefore He will not destroy the world no matter how bad it is.

 But there is a second level of rainbow. The Talmud (Ketuvot 77b) tells us that in the generation of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochi (the author of the mystical masterpiece The Zohar) there also was no rainbow. But then it was because Rabbi Shimon HIMSELF was like the rainbow. He was G-d's sign in the world that the world is being purified.

 And there is yet a third level. The Zohar (1:72b) says "When you see the rainbow in exceptional brilliance then the Moshiach is near."

**Representing the G-dly Light**

**Permeating Creation**

 Noach's and Rabbi Shimon's rainbow represents how G-dly light permeates the creation. But Moshiach's rainbow represents how it permeates even the evil sinners. And nothing is as pleasing to G-d as the repentance (or 'return' as it is called in Judaism) of sinners

 As it says elsewhere in the Zohar that the Moshiach will cause EVERYONE to return.. (in fact even the most righteous will see that they have to
return.)

 Then there will be a different type of flood; the the entire world will be filled with the knowledge of HaShem like water fills the sea. Then this physical world will shine with the infinite splendor and joy of a new rainbow....**Moshiach NOW!**

*Reprinted from this week’s parsha email from Yeshiva Ohr Tmimim in Kfar Chabad, Israel*

**Good Shabbos Everyone.**

**Who Can Predict a**

**Monday Funeral?**

 In this week's parsha, Parshas Noach, the Torah tells us "Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations..."  (Bereishis 6:9)   The verse states that Noach "Tamim hayah b'dorosav,"  which we translated above to mean that he was "perfect in his generations..."  However, it is also possible to translate the verse in the following way:  Noach was the "Tamim" - the Gadol Hador, the great Sage of his generation.

 And why does the  Torah use the plural when stating that Noach was the perfect one of his "generations?"  Perhaps the Torah is coming to teach us an important lesson that every generation has its Tzadikim, righteous Torah leaders.  The reason why the Torah needs to teach us this lesson is that many people say, "A shame that Rav X is gone now... and these new Rabbanim (Rabbis)... Hashem just doesn't make them like He used to.."  The following amazing story from about 40 years ago illustrates the concept of believing in the Torah leaders of every generation.

**A Woman Knocks on Rav Shloima’s Door**

 The woman tried to control her tears as she knocked on Rav Shloima Poupko, zt'l's (1928-2003) door one Friday morning. Originally from New York, R' Shloima had joined the Johannesburg community in the 1950's, where he served as the Chief Rabbi and the Rav of the Sydenham Highlands North Synagogue.

 The woman, a neighbor of R' Shloima, knew that he was willing to help everyone in the Jewish community in South Africa. R' Shloima opened the door. One look at his visitor told him that something was very wrong. "I need your help. It's ... it's my nephew. David Kauder. He's just four years old, and the doctors say he's going to die on Monday."

 The woman took a deep breath, then explained. "David was hit by a car six months ago. He's been in an irreversible coma ever since. Today, the doctor came in and told us that his funeral would be on Monday." R' Shloima was taken aback. How could the doctor have spoken in such a manner?  I've never heard of anyone, let alone a doctor, speaking like that. It's barbaric to say such a thing!"

 "Can you help us?" the woman begged. There was no time to spare. R' Shloima grabbed his jacket, ran outside, and asked his driver to take him to the Florence Nightingale Nursing Home, where David was being treated.

 Less than ten minutes later, he was striding down the corridor, searching for the room that held the gravely ill David Kauder and his family. R' Shloima found a grim scenario as he peeked around the door. The boy lay motionless in bed, only the faintest rising of his chest giving any indication that he was still alive. His parents stood nearby, looking helplessly at their son. R' Shloima greeted the nurse, then quietly asked about the boy's status.

 "How is he?" The nurse slowly shook her head. "It's not good. The doctor says his funeral will be on Monday." Once again, R' Shloima was shocked by these callous words. He gave a quick glance at David, lying silently on the bed. There was a good chance that the young boy—though appearing unaware of his surroundings—could actually hear every word. How could the doctor have spoken in this way?

 "Please give that doctor a message from me," R' Shloima declared. "Tell him that no one knows whose funeral will take place on Monday!" R' Shloima returned home to find David's aunt anxiously awaiting his return. He invited her into his office. "Please sit down for a few minutes. I'll be right with you."

 R' Shloima had decided to send a telegram to the late Satmar Rav, Reb Yoel Teitelbaum of blessed memory (1887- 1979), asking him to pray on the boy's behalf. There wasn't enough time before Shabbos to write a detailed explanation, so R' Shloima simply wrote the boy's name and his mother's name, and urged the Rav to daven immediately for the child's recovery.

**Told the Aunt to Invite the Whole Family for the Shabbos Meal**

 That task done, R' Shloima returned to the aunt and told her to invite the entire family—many of whom were not religious—to come to his house for kiddush and the Shabbos meal that Friday night. "Let them know that they won't be able to drive back. They'll either have to walk, or if it's too far, we'll be happy to arrange accommodations for the night." That Friday night, over forty Kauder family members showed up at R' Shloima's house—uncles, aunts and cousins. After making kiddush, R' Shloima spoke to them about the significance of kashrus, Shabbos, family purity and Jewish education. "We all want David to have a full recovery," R' Shloima declared, "but we have to do something for Hashem to reverse the Heavenly decree."

 The family members unanimously agreed to accept these mitzvos upon themselves. "It's not that hard," they reassured each other. "We can do it—for David's sake." Early Sunday morning, R' Shloima was awakened with a call from the nursing home.

**Nurse Requests the Rabbi to Come Right Away**

 "I can't give any details on the phone," the nurse said breathlessly. "Could you please come down to the nursing home right away?" R' Shloima sat frozen, trying to fight down the surge of panic and despair that had welled up at the nurse's words. He couldn't help imagining the worst.

 Forcing himself to stand up, he immediately set out for the nursing home, ready to face whatever was coming. R' Shloima walked cautiously into David's room—to be greeted by a room full of people, including a beaming Mr. and Mrs. Kauder and a bewildered array of doctors and nurses. The source of their bewilderment was right in front of them. Little David was awake and out of bed, pulling the tubes out of his mouth and crying, "Mama, Mama!"

 One of the assisting doctors, the disbelief evident upon his face, turned to R' Shloima and exclaimed, "This is an absolute impossibility!" Like the doctors, R' Shloima could hardly believe his eyes. Yet he knew what he had to do. He immediately gave praise and thanks to Hashem for performing this open miracle for the Kauder family.

 One person was absent from the scene of the miracle. David's doctor—the one who had predicted the boy's funeral for Monday—happened to have the day off. He was tinkering with his car in front of his house, changing a tire, when a truck parked further up the hill suddenly came rolling down. The doctor didn't see it coming—until it smashed into his car a moment later. He never had a chance. His funeral was on Monday morning.

**An Unexpected Letter from the Satmar Rav**

 One year after David's miraculous recovery, R' Shloima received an unexpected letter from the Satmar Rav. "You should know that the souls of the family made a strong impression in Heaven," the Rav wrote.

 "Since you encouraged them to return and accept the mitzvos, the Heavenly Judgment was changed and their child was spared." R' Shloima was astonished. There had been no time to tell the Rav anything about the Kauder family on that hectic Friday—no time, in fact, to do much more than write David Kauder's name. Yet the Satmar Rav had known it all.  (From Visions of Greatness Volume VII, Reb Y. Weiss).

 We can be inspired by this story to believe that every generation has its righteous leaders!

*Reprinted from this week’s email of Good Shabbos Everyone.*