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DAF PARSHA

BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



TORAH תורה
MITZION מציון

KTM MONTREAL



FROM TERROR TO HARMONY

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

Reading a parasha that deals with the destruction of the world may not seem so far away after the events of the past few weeks. Thousands have been murdered and injured. So many lives and so many worlds have experienced their own *mabul*; and the Jewish world as a whole has felt like it needed Noach's ark to navigate the stormwaters.

What led to the *mabul*? What was humanity's failure? What could have been so messed-up that Hashem needed to press the re-start button on civilization? The Torah tells of the societal collapse that prevailed at the time (Bereishit 6:11-13):

וַתִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ חָמָס... כִּי הִשְׁחִית כָּל בֶּשֶׂר אֶת דְּרָכָו עַל הָאָרֶץ. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים לִנְחָךְ כִּי כָּל בֶּשֶׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי כִּי מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מִשְׁחִיתֶם אֶת הָאָרֶץ.

Now the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth became full of *hamas*... all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth. And God said to Noach, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth has become full of *hamas* ... and behold I am destroying them from the earth...'

What was the "corruption" and what does "*hamas*" mean? The Gemara (Sanhedrin 57a) comments that corruption refers to three main sins that had become pervasive: murder, sexual immorality and idolatry. But on top of that, the Torah singles-out *hamas* as the catalyst for the destruction of the world: "the end of all flesh has come before me for the earth has become full of *hamas*" (see Gemara Sanhedrin 57a and Midrash Tanchuma Noach 4). The word *hamas* can mean terror and violence, and specifically implies systematic robbery, as it says (Michah 6:11-12):

Will I merit with scales of wickedness or with a bag of deceitful weights? For the wealthy thereof are full of *hamas*, and the inhabitants thereof speak lies, and their tongue is guile in their mouth.

It is chillingly relevant to read of the world being destroyed on account of *hamas*. These are words that, in addition to being written in the Torah, have been headline news the past two weeks. But what makes robbery the catalyst of the downfall of humanity? Theft doesn't seem to compare

to immorality and idolatry, and certainly not murder – even if the former took place on a systemic level.

Sfat Emet remarks that wanton theft – *hamas* – is symptomatic of a stubborn refusal to see God in the world. The existence of God and His interaction with the world implies order, purpose and uniqueness. To believe in a divinely orchestrated world means that existence is not haphazard; there is significance to every thing and every one. Hamas is the breakdown of these paradigm's, it sees everything as an object to the fulfillment of the subject's egotistical desires. Sfat Emet notes that the phrase "the earth became full of *hamas*" stands in sharp contrast to "the whole earth is full of His glory" (Yeshayahu 6:3).

Understood as such, *hamas* expresses the rejection of divine order and purpose in the world. It is the archetype of anarchy, the source of disaccord, the violation of the divine image that shines through all existence.

Based on this, we can understand why humanity was wiped-out specifically by a flood: When the rejection of divine order became dominant, the boundaries of nature became eroded as well. We can also understand why it was a rainbow that was shown as a sign of the covenant: A rainbow appears when the perfect balance is found between diverse elements in the world, working in unison to create beauty.

Now, let's make no mistake: The application of these messages extends to current events seamlessly. But it is too easy to merely translate *hamas* to Hamas and not look at what the message demands of us. While we must single-out Hamas for the evil it is, we mustn't allow that to shift responsibility from ourselves. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to play our role in accentuating the divine order to the world and reinforcing the divine image in all. At a time when human respect and dignity have been violated, we must undertake to fill that vacuum. Then, on the backdrop of the terrible darkness, a beautiful rainbow will reflect the light of our goodness.

PARSHA NOACH
6TH CHESHVAN

CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:42 P.M.
HAVDALAH: 6:44 P.M.

THIS WEEK'S ARTICLES

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BY MICHAEL SLOMINSKY

THE DAF PARSHA, AND ALL
LEARNING AT KTM DURING
THIS TIME, IS DEDICATED TO
THE SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF
THE SITUATION IN ISRAEL, THE
RETURN OF THE CAPTIVES, THE
HEALING OF THE INJURED, &
THE PROTECTION OF OUR BRAVE
SOLDIERS. MAY HASHEM LEAD
THEM TO VICTORY, AND THEN
HOME.

THE CONTENT THIS WEEK IS
FOCUSED ON MESSAGING
REFLECTING THE CURRENT
SITUATION.

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LOVED ONE'S MEMORY -
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A MEDITATION UPON THE SITUATION

BY DANIELLE WEINBERG

These are difficult, trying days for us. Our brothers and sisters in Israel have suffered serious blows, and we are left in deep shock, gathering the pieces of our shattered hearts. Our brethren in the land of Israel are in war, some are searching for their loved ones, while others are burying their dear ones. Hearts ache, blood is spilled, and our eyes are filled with unceasing tears. Jewish blood is shed solely because we are Jews.

In such challenging times, we must remember who we are. We are Jews, a people with an eternal existence. Our people will never disappear, no matter how many adversaries seek to harm us. The history of the Jewish people is replete with our enemies' attempts

to destroy us, but Hashem always saves us from their hands.

This war is an age-old battle, I sense that it is a battle between light and darkness and I'm so proud to be on the side of those who sanctify life and not those who embrace death. In this war, as always, we will prevail, and especially in these dark times, Israel shines in all its glory. All "sinat chinam" vanished, and the entire Klal Yisrael is united. Hundreds of people have gone to provide food for the soldiers, opening their homes to those from the south and the north. Jews - Israelis non-Israelis alike - returned from all corners of the world to stand together in this difficult battle. People act selflessly, offering support and embracing their fellow Jews.

We are part of the most extraordinary people in the world. There is no other nation like us, a people defined by purity, holiness, love, and selflessness. Yes, there are some divisions, but deep inside, we are all brothers and sisters. And in times like these, I am proud to belong to this people and to this country. The essence of Israel, the embodiment of its greatness, shines forth.

Keep davening for the well-being of our beloved brothers and sisters. Am Yisrael Chai!



NOACH - THE WINDOW OF COMPASSION

BY DAVID WEINBERG

In this week's Parshah, we encounter the story of Noah and the construction of the Ark (Teiva). Amid Hashem's instructions for this monumental task, one detail stands out: "A tzohar you shall make for the Ark...". Rashi says that this tzohar can be interpreted as either a precious stone or a window.

If the tzohar were a precious stone, it would fill the Teiva with radiant light, refracting the sun's rays and bathing the interior in a multicolored glow. Conversely, if it were a window, its purpose would be to look out. But what purpose would a window have, the only thing Noah and his family would be able to see is an empty gray waterscape?

God wanted to provide Noah and his family a window on the world. This was not a mere

decoration; it was a call to see the world's destruction and feel deep compassion and pity for what lay beyond the Teiva

This message resonates profoundly in our lives. It's common to believe that as long as we are personally okay, the world is okay. However, the essence of life lies in having a window on the world, looking beyond our own circumstances, and taking up the heartaches of others.

This concept of "The Window of Compassion" transcends time. As we hear about the war in Eretz Yisrael, we should be reminded of the Teiva's window. We are called to look beyond our comfort and take up the burdens of those who are having a difficult time.

Let us be inspired by the lesson of the Teiva's window. Let us extend our compassion to

those in need, no matter where they are in the world. By doing so, we can fulfill the higher purpose of helping those who are less fortunate and promote peace in a troubled world.

May we all strive to be compassionate individuals who, like Noah, look out of our own "arks" and take up the heartaches of others, making the world a better place one act of kindness at a time. Shabbat Shalom.

PARNESS HAYOM :: CHESHVAN

7 CHESHVAN | Barbara and Bruce Mazer, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her brother, Mark Samuel z'l

13 CHESHVAN | Jeffrey Mandel, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Aaron Mandel z'l

17 CHESHVAN | The Drazin Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of Avrum Drazin z'l

18 CHESHVAN | Efraim and Reesa Kandelshein, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her father, Hyman Busgang z'l

18 CHESHVAN | Mireille Shostak, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her father, Edouard Khafif z'l

21 CHESHVAN | The Sochaczewski Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of their father, David Sochaczewski z'l

24 CHESHVAN | Sue and Kamal Gabbay, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Simha Mashaal z'l



THE GOOD NEWS

BY TIFERET DISHI

We've all read about the amazing and heartwarming stories of Am Yisrael now, like kids volunteering to make care packages for the soldiers, chasidim bringing pizzas to bases, teenagers volunteering to babysit for many families who had to leave their homes, people standing in line for countless hours to donate blood, sending letters and words of encouragement to the families and soldiers, restaurants kashering their kitchens so the soldiers can eat, soldiers from all over the world coming back to protect and fight for Israel... and the list goes on and on.

This nation is truly built from special people. Here's the story of just one of them:

Ezra Yachin was born on June 11, 1928. He and his family were living in Jerusalem during the 1929 riots and he joined the Lechi at the age of 15. For five years he was in charge of spreading communications around Jerusalem for the underground.

Ezra fought in many battles during the War of Independence. During the attempt to breach

the old city, when the fighters took cover behind a stone wall, a grenade exploded at point-blank range from them, injuring Ezra in his right eye. When another grenade exploded. Ezra received shrapnel that partially penetrated his skull, preventing him from being able to continue to fight in the battle over the Old City (which eventually fell into Jordanian hands).

Ezra was rushed to the hospital, where he underwent brain surgery. He survived the operation and made a full recovery, except for his right eye, which was blinded due to the blood flow.

Today, Ezra Yachin primarily engages in lectures. One of his main target audiences is the IDF soldiers. On November 28, 2018, he was personally promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major by the Chief Military Rabbi as a sign of honor and appreciation for his long years of service in lecturing to soldiers, and in 2021, he was recognized with the Jerusalem Prize.

This week, 95-year old Ezra Yachin volunteered to reserve duty for the IDF.

Despite his difficult childhood in Jerusalem under the British Mandate, surviving the riots where he witnessed horrifying scenes, he came to spread a message of resilience and motivation. He and his comrades succeeded in establishing the marvelous State of Israel.

The achdut in the Am is unfathomable. It is one of the most uplifting and beautiful things we can see right now, with all the sadness that surrounds us.

With all the hurt and horrible things happening there is still no doubt that we are going to get out of this.

We are going to hurt together, we are going to fight together and we will come out of this together. That's who we are, the first people you can trust to take care of each other is Am Yisrael, and that love and strength is unmatched. We need to keep on praying to Hashem and keep the Jewish spirit high –” עם ישראל לא מפחד מדרך ארוכה “



ISRAEL IN FOCUS: HAIFA

BY YAIR GREENBLUM

Just over two weeks ago, before the current war broke-out in Israel and he returned home

to join the war effort, Yair had prepared this article for what was meant to be a regular edition of the Daf Parasha. We have included Yair's contribution as planned, and have him in our minds and tefilot as he is fighting defending Israel!

Haifa is a beautiful city on the coast of Israel, next to the Mediterranean Sea. It's special because people from different backgrounds and religions live here peacefully. Haifa has one of Israel's biggest ports and is the largest city in northern Israel. However, the origin of its name, "Haifa," is a bit of a mystery. It's not mentioned in the Tanach or the Mishnah, and we only start hearing about it in later writings.

The geography of Haifa is diverse. It stretches from the flat land along the sea to the slopes and mountain top of Mount Carmel. Modern Haifa was officially established in 1761 by a Bedouin leader named Daher el-Omar. It became a city in 1834 during the time when the Ottoman Empire ruled Israel.

On Mount Carmel, an interesting story from the Tanach took place. There was a king named Achav who did bad things, and he had killed many of Israel's prophets. But one prophet, Eliyahu, escaped, along with a few others who hid in a cave. People in those times were worshipping a false god called Ba'al, and there were many fake prophets. Eliyahu challenged them to a test: They would see whose god could send down fire from the sky to accept an offering. The prophets of Baal tried, but they couldn't do it. Then, when it was Eliyahu's turn, the real God answered his prayer, sending down fire

that burned up everything, even the water. After this, the people of Israel believed in Hashem, and Eliyahu had the false prophets captured and punished.

Jews started moving to Haifa in the 18th century, and the city grew over time, becoming the third-largest in Israel. Haifa is also known for the famous Technion University, big shopping centres, cultural places, and the beautiful "Baha'i Gardens," which are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Haifa's story is one of different people living together and believing in their faith. Today, Haifa is a lively city that connects its rich history to a bright future.





THE GAZA STRIP - A PRIMER

BY MICHAEL SLOMINSKY

The Gaza Strip, a coastal land strip in southern Israel, boasts a rich historical backdrop within Israel's context.

Gaza is one of the oldest cities in the region and was inhabited about 3,500 years ago. Due to its location on the sea route, between Asia and Africa, and its value as a port city, Gaza was considered a strategic point and battles were abandoned around it throughout history.

Gaza makes its first biblical appearance in Bamidbar 34:5, signifying the southern border of the Canaanites. The city is also referenced in the books of Yehoshua, Shoftim, and Melachim, most notably associated with Shimshon and the Pelishtim.

The earliest record of Jewish rule in Gaza is found in the Book of Melachim, during King Shlomo's reign. After the First Beit Hamikdash's destruction, the Chashmona'im purportedly reclaimed Gaza. And in The

Mishnaic and Talmudic eras there was a thriving Jewish community in Gaza. Also, there is evidence pointing to Jewish settlements in Gaza from the 7th century and between the 14th and 18th centuries.

It was possible to see on a mosque in Gaza the inscription "Hananya Bar Ya'akov" written in Hebrew and above it was engraved a lamp with a shofar on one side and an Etrog on the other. This was destroyed at the beginning of the Intifada. Also, near the Gaza port, the remains of the ancient synagogue built around 508CE were discovered.

The War of Independence led to an influx of Arab into Gaza, which later became part of Egypt. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel seized control of Gaza from Egypt. In 1971, the Israeli government initiated refugee camp rehabilitation efforts to ease tensions.

During these years, several Jewish towns were established, which became known as Gush Katif. There was a booming agricultural economy and they were pioneers in drip-

hydration, a system now used around the world. For years Jews living peacefully with their Arab neighbors before attacks began against the Jews of Gush Katif.

In 1994, the Oslo Accords led to the Israel Defense Forces withdrawing from Gaza, transferring authority to the Palestinian Authority. In 2005, under the Disengagement Plan, Jewish settlements in Gaza were evacuated. Following the IDF's departure, rocket attacks from Gaza, targeting primarily Sderot and neighboring towns, escalated.

In 2006, Hamas, a designated terrorist organization, won Gaza's elections, resulting in the expulsion of their rivals from the city. Since then, the security situation has worsened, necessitating several Israeli military operations in Gaza, including the current war.

Gaza is a gorgeous strip of land with exquisite beaches. We pray for peace in the region and for the time that people can benefit from this wonderful and historical place.

