

Shabbat Times

	Ⓜ	Ⓝ	Ⓜ	Ⓝ
London	16:12	17:16	Cambridge	16:06 17:17
Manchester	16:14	17:20	Leeds	16:08 17:17
Birmingham	16:15	17:21	Liverpool	16:15 17:26
			Jerusalem	16:10 17:24



Shabbat debate

Every week we will be writing weekly debates to discuss over Shabbat. The debates will then be continued on facebook, after Shabbat.

Noach was the only righteous man of his generation, he ensured that he and his family were good people, but to do this he kept himself to himself and let the rest of world go to pieces. Is this the correct way to live?



Shevet Avichai had a Shabbaton last week where they heard about all our gap year programmes

Coming up...

- Tafkidim applications are out to apply go to bauk.org/machane/form
- Limmud is restarting this Monday at the London Bayit.
- The Mazkirut roadshow is coming soon watch this space for further information.

SHABBAT

פרשת נח
PARASHAT Noach



תנועת בני אקיוו
BNEI AKIVA UK

LASHEM שבת לה'

The most widely distributed weekly Torah periodical written by our youth in the United Kingdom.

Noach a Tzadik?

Hannah Denby

Noach and his family were the only humans saved when G-d brought the flood onto the earth. After several months of being at sea Noach needed to know if the flood had finished and he was able to return to dry land with his ark, to do this Noach sent out a dove from the ark.

"But the dove could not find a resting place for the sole of its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the water was upon the service of all the earth. So he put forth his hand and took it, and brought it to him to the ark." (Genesis 8:8-9)

When Noach sent out the dove he was hopeful that the dove would not return, signaling that it was safe for him and his family to return to dry land. However when the dove does return, Noach shows no sign of anger towards the dove, neither does he allow the dove to see his disappointment of not being able to go back to dry land. This was an uncertain time for Noach and his family however rather than showing resentment to the dove he simply "put forth his hand, and took it, and brought it back to him to the ark".

In our lives we are constantly being delivered messages both good and bad through messengers. Although often the messenger isn't the reason behind this news, if negative we almost always show some sort of frustration towards them. But Noach did the complete opposite of this, not only did he not show his disappointment, he went and embraced his messenger gently bringing him back to the ark.

This act made Noach's messenger very eager to repeat the mission a second time allowing the dove to then deliver good news. Noach is discussed as a "righteous man and perfect in his generations" (Genesis 6:9), Rashi comments on the unusual use of 'in his generations' stating that if Noach would have been in another generation such as the generation of Avraham he wouldn't be considered anything. Rashi changes the language when he discusses both views saying: was he righteous even in his generation or was he righteous only in his generation? Was Noach righteous despite his generation or was Noach righteous in spite of his generation? It could be suggested that however righteous Noach was, he was not righteous enough to fully be exempt from the pain and destruction that the flood was to bring. It seems contradictory to suggest that Noach was so righteous, as he was not told to escape to the Land of Israel which Zevachim says was protected and spared from the flood, instead being forced to build the ark and endure the flood. Therefore, it is clear that there are two opposing opinions as to how righteous Noach was. Some say that Noach was righteous 'even in his generation' such as his actions towards the message threat the dove brought. However, others believe Noach to be righteous 'only in his generation' which was why he was not completely exempt from the threat of the flood and had to endure it, albeit through the protection of the ark and Hashem.

Hannah Denby is in Shevet Lehava and was a Madricha on Isreal Machane and head cook on Bet Base Machane 5776



The Hope of Mankind

It is challenging to grasp the essence of mankind. On one hand, we are capable of the most unspeakable acts of goodness. On the other, no other species can wreak such profound destruction upon the world as man.

How could we stoop so low that we bring complete destruction upon ourselves? How could our behaviour become so corrupt that we need to perform a restart? The description of the generation of the *mabul* – flood – is shocking. Could we ever reach this level of moral abasement again?

In our *parasha* we read (Bereishit 6:5-7):

“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. And Hashem regretted that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. 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 I regret that I have made them.’”

The oral tradition – in the Gemara and Midrashim – paints a shocking picture of the period leading-up to the flood: The streets were flowing with blood of the murdered, people lived in constant fear of embezzlement and malicious robbery, and wanton sexual degradation was rampant. Society had dropped to the depths of morality, the human condition had debased itself to the point that its “divine image” was not at all perceivable. According to our tradition, even the animal and plant kingdoms became accomplices to society’s prevalent vicious perverseness.

In the story of Noah and the Flood, the Torah isn’t just describing a historical occurrence. It speaks in the present-tense. We live in a world which, on one hand, is the most wonderful to live in the history of mankind: Tolerance and inclusivity is legislated, equal rights for all people are espoused unequivocally and good deeds are widespread and practiced by so many people.

Yet at the same time we live in a world which is absurdly corrupt – perhaps more than any other time in history. Consider these facts as example: 70% of teenage girls in the United States believe “that they are not good enough or don’t measure up” and approximately 1 in every 5 teens will experience depression before adulthood. In England and Wales, 11 people (men and women) are raped every hour – that’s one rape every five minutes. Approximately 1 in 9 people globally are malnourished, including 20% of all children worldwide; approximately 3 million children die of malnutrition each year. Between 300,000-470,000 people have been killed in the civil war in Syria since 2011 (11% of the population), and some 70,000 have been killed by armed conflict globally in 2016 alone!

These facts are staggering, and must be taken to heart. We live in a beautiful world, but in this age of uncertainty are we in a process of improvement or self-destruction? Is the description of society today so different from that of society before the flood? Have we reached the stage that “*the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*”, and have we brought the world to a stage we have “*blot out man from the face of the earth*”.

If the doomsday images precluding the flood are relevant to our day-and-age, that of Noah is even more so. We so desperately need the consolation and hope Noah brought to that tragic scene. We need to become the embodiment of the hero of our *parasha*, who “shall console us in our work and in the toil of our hands” (Bereishit 5:29).

Who is Noah? Noah doesn’t have children until the age of five-hundred (5:32); this is significantly later than every other person at that time. He sees the generation he lives in, looks around at the moral devastation, and resolves that he won’t procreate. Why bring children into the world only for them to become corrupt?

But Noah undergoes a change. Noah finds inside himself the resolve to initiate the change in the world. He finds hope, and belief in the innate goodness of humanity, no matter how covert it is.

Rashi points out that grammatically, Noah’s name doesn’t correspond to its explanation: If his name means consolation then it should have been “Menachem”. He therefore explains that Noah means “comfort”, in the sense of easier functionality, this is because Noah reversed the punishment bestowed upon Adam ten generations earlier (Bereishit 3:18), and improved the quality of life of the people of his generation. He emerges from the Ark and plants seeds, that years later will be appreciated.

The consolation Noah gave to mankind was the reversal of curse and negativity. He initiated change for the positive, no matter how low mankind had fallen. Noah consoles us by believing in us, teaching us that the “toil of our hands” will pay off and we can rebuild the world. Noah teaches us that no matter how devastating the destruction, no matter how lowly our actions, inside us all there is goodness. If we plant the seeds of goodness they will bear fruits, and the world which has fallen to corruption will once again rise to its greatness.

The Week that Was..

- We had a special Shabbat Shalom for all those Chaveirim in Shevet Avichai who their last Shevet Shabbaton and learnt all about their Hachshara options in Borehamwood and Elstree Shul.
- Bnei Akiva were at the Yeshiva and Sem fair in both London and Manchester



Sviva Spotlight

Dvar Torah and Update from one of our Svivot



Leeds Bnei Akiva is the largest Sviva in the UK, outside of London and Manchester. Lead by Roshim Rafi Kleiman & Daniel Sacks, Leeds BA has made an emphatic impact on the local community, initiating novel projects such as Weekly 'BBB' Friday Night Youth Minyanim & a brand-new 'Shevet Hadracha' Leadership Programme for School Years 11-13. For further information about Leeds BA, find them on Facebook ('Leeds Bnei Akiva') or send an email at bneiakiva.leeds@gmail.com



Gematria Galore – Parashat Noah

Let’s translate the biblically-stated dimensions of Noah’s Ark into their corresponding Hebrew letters:

- 300 cubits length – **ש**
- 50 cubits width – **נ**
- 30 cubits height – **ל**

Together, we get the three letters that spell **לשן**, the Hebrew word for “tongue!” This is a beautiful illustration of how everything regarding Noah’s ark is related to speech. More specifically, this finding teaches us that an important component contributing to the energy contained within our words is that of guarding the tongue (**שמירת הלשון**), The Hebrew idiom referring to refraining from improper speech.

The order of the three dimensions of the ark in the word **לשן**, “tongue,” reflects the order in which a child’s spatial cognition develops. The first dimension that the child gains a cognitive appreciation for is height, perhaps because the baby spends its first few months lying down. The height of the ark was 30 cubits, the **ל** of **לשן**. The second dimension recognized is length, which the child begins to grasp once it can crawl and move around. The length of the ark was 300 cubits, the **ש** of **לשן**. The last dimension (which for many people never fully integrates) is width, which represents the space between left and right, and morally the difference between right and wrong. The width of the ark was 50 cubits, the **ן** of **לשן**.