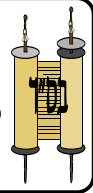




Kinder Torah



Parashas Noach

Remember

"Hashem remembered Noach and all the animals and all the cattle that were with him in the ark" (Bereshis 8:1).

"Remember . . . remember . . . I remember that verse from somewhere. Where?"
"It is from Rosh Hashanah, Avi."

"You did a good memory, Chaim. When did we mention Noach on Rosh Hashanah?"

"We remembered him in the 'Zichronos' (remembrances) section of the Mussaf prayer. We said this very posuk, 'Hashem remembered Noach...'"

"Right. Now I remember. We were speaking about how Hashem recollects all of our deeds of the past year, weighs them, and judges them on Rosh Hashanah. I remember how nervous I was at that time, Chaim."

"Why, Avi?"

"I began to recall some of the things that I did. They were not so good. I was very fearful of the judgment that I would receive."

"That is very good, Avi. That is a great way to motivate yourself to improve."

"You're not kidding, Chaim. I was very motivated on those two days. I wish that I had kept up the momentum."

"Here is your chance to renew your enthusiasm, Avi. Hashem sent you and all of us, a nice gift this Shabbos. He put a verse in the weekly parasha that reminds us of Rosh Hashanah. Now is the time to remember that the *Yom HaDin* (Day of Judgment) is coming. Now is the time to stop the *aveyros* before they start. Now is the time to keep our slates clean. Just imagine how much better we will feel next Rosh Hashanah, if we begin preparing now."

"You are so right, Chaim. We should always keep the memory of *zichronos* in the forefront of our mind. If we always remember *zichronos*, and keep our record clean, then there will be no *aveyros* for Hashem to recall."

"That is a fantastic thought to remember."

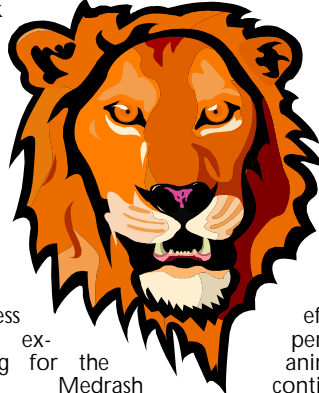
Kinderlach . . .

Do you remember the Zichronos prayer from the Rosh Hashanah Mussaf? Hashem remembers everything. Do you remember how you felt about some of the aveyros that you did, wishing that Hashem would not remember them so well? That was only a little over a month ago. Hashem gave you a nice gift this week. A reminder of the zichronos. Here we are at the beginning of a new year. Let us write good things into our books for Him to remember. Let us always remember the zichronos. Let us always keep our book clean. Let us give Him only good things to remember.

Rachmonus, Rachmonus, Rachmonus

Alone. Totally isolated. Sole survivors of a destroyed world. Haunted by the knowledge that everyone, everything, and every place that you knew, no longer exists. Stuck in a vessel that is much too small to hold the animals, food, and people crammed inside. Living among snakes, rats, and all types of creatures. Working day and night to tend to the needs of the animals - feeding and caring for them. No rest for an entire year. This was the fate of Noach and his family.

"Only Noach survived, and those with him in the ark" (Bereshis 7:24). Rashi explains that the simple meaning is that Noach (and his family) were alone. He then cites the Medrash Tanchuma that explains that Noach was groaning and weak



from the

endless efforts he expended caring for the animals. The Medrash continues

with another explanation - Noach was late feeding the lion one time, and he was bitten. On this the verse states, "A tsaddik is punished in this world" (Mishlei 11:31).

Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l entreats us to contemplate this Medrash. Noach was placed in a situation that would be considered unbearable for most people. Still, he fulfilled his obligation. He was a tremendous *rachaman* (merciful person). He had *rachmonus* on those animals by tirelessly caring for them day and night under impossible conditions. He was late for one feeding during the entire year, and he was punished with a lion bite. How much perfection can Hashem demand from a person?

The answer is that Noach was a tsaddik. A tsaddik's deeds all stem from a source of *rachmonus*. The verse states, "His mercies are on all His works" (Tehillim 145:9). Rav Yerucham darshens that someone who aspires to be a tsaddik must perform all of his deeds with *rachmonus*. Any lack of *rachmonus* is a lack of righteousness. Even a small mistake like delaying the food of the lion is enough to

create a fault in Noach's righteousness. Therefore, in order to retain his *madrayga* (spiritual level) of tsaddik, he must suffer the cleansing of a lion's bite. That is the supreme importance of *rachmonus*.

Kinderlach . . .

Rachmonus is one of the bases of Avodas Hashem. We are commanded to emulate Hashem, as the verse states, "And you shall go in His ways" (Devarim 28:9). Just as He is merciful, so too we must be merciful. Rachmonus is one of the three basic middos that identify a Jew - rachmonim (compassionate), bayshonim (modest), and gomei chassadim (kind). How do we develop rachmonus? Help people who are having a hard time. Even if you feel they do not deserve it. They may be suffering due to their own faults. However, a true rachamon will feel for them, and help them anyway. Judge people favorably. They may be doing the wrong thing. Perhaps they do not know that it is wrong. Even if they do know, perhaps they have a bad habit that they are trying hard to break. Either way, they are suffering now, or will suffer in the future for their mistakes. Have rachmonus on them and help ease their suffering. Kinderlach, don't you want rachmonus? Don't you want people to empathize with you? Hashem promises us that if we have rachmonus on others, He will have rachmonus on us. This is so important in our days. So many people need so much rachmonus. Give it to them. It is the ticket to success, happiness, and satisfaction in this world and the next. Rachmonus, rachmonus, rachmonus.

Parasha Questions:

- What other name did Sara have? Why? (Rashi 11:29)
- Why was Bavel called Bavel? (11:10)
- How deep was the ark sunk into the water? (Rashi 8:4)

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