

Awakening in the Word

By Glenn McWilliams of TK TORAH KEEPERS

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THE OVERVIEW

In this week's portion we read of the continued decline of mankind and its impact upon the world around him. We are also told of the Creator's righteous remedy for this situation. At the heart of this portion is the judgment of Elohim against the corruption and violence of humanity; as well as the calling of Noah as the means by which YHWH would weed the garden, rescue the righteous seed, and restore His name, image, and creation. The story of Noah and the ark is filled with numerous lessons for our time as the world once again slips back into corruption and violence. While this story is often taught as the Sovereign's great display of judgment upon human sin, I will suggest in our study that it is also one of the greatest revelations of YHWH'S mercy and grace.

THE OUTLINE

- Genesis 6:9-10 A description of Noah and his fruit
- Genesis 6:11 A description of the fruit of the rest of man
- Genesis 6:12-13 The Creator's judgment
- Genesis 6:14-16 The details and command to build the ark
- Genesis 6:17-18 The promise of a covenant
- Genesis 6:19-22 Seeds for a new beginning
- Genesis 7:1-11 The gracious provision for life is made
- Genesis 7:12-16 Noah enters the ark
- Genesis 7:17-24 The flood begins

SUGGESTED STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why did Noah find favor with Elohim?
2. What are Noah's firstfruits?
3. What is *Halachah*?
4. Who are the sons of Noah?
5. What is the significance of their names and birth order?
6. What corrupted the earth?
7. What is the fruit of this corruption?
8. What is the meaning of "the end of all flesh"?
9. What was Noah's purpose?
10. What is the significance of "clean" animals?
11. What is the significance of the number 40?
12. What is the significance of "pitch"?
13. Was the flood punitive?
14. Where do we see the grace and mercy of YHWH?

THE TEXT Genesis 6:9-7:24

Genesis 6:9 ¶ These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with Elohim. ¹⁰ And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹¹ ¶ The earth also was corrupt before Elohim, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And Elohim looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. ¹³ And Elohim said unto Noah, 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; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 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. ¹⁶ A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it. ¹⁷ And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. 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. ²⁰ Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive. ²¹ And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. ²² Thus did Noah; according to all that Elohim commanded him, so did he.

7:1 ¶ And YHWH said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. ² Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female. ³ Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. ⁴ For yet seven days, and 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.

⁵ And Noah did according unto all that YHWH commanded him. ⁶ ¶ And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. ⁷ And Noah 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 earth, ⁹ There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as Elohim had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. ¹¹ ¶ In the six hundredth year of Noah'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. 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; ¹⁴ They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. ¹⁵ And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life. ¹⁶ And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as Elohim had commanded him: and YHWH shut him in. ¹⁷ ¶ And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. ¹⁸ And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered. ²⁰ Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: ²² All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died. ²³ And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

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Before delving into the details of our Torah portion, I want to readdress a critical scholarly issue that often confounds and confuses the weak in faith. In our first Torah portion we addressed the fact that nearly every culture has a “creation narrative.” In many instances the details of these stories are strikingly similar. We should also recognize that there are numerous “flood” narratives circulating among the ancient cultures which likewise contain a striking number of details similar to those of the biblical account of the flood. The presence of these diverse flood narratives has led many liberal scholars to assume that the biblical narrative is just one of many variations on the theme. The liberal scholars present their argument as though the biblical writers gleaned details from the various ancient stories of the flood and redacted several threads of tradition into the single narrative that appears in the Bible.

I would suggest to you that the presence of a flood narrative in so many ancient cultures substantiates the biblical claim that there was indeed a worldwide flood. This is further substantiated by considerable archeological and geological evidence. I would also suggest that Noah and his family, who survived this catastrophic event, recounted the story to their descendants. The diversity of detail in these varying accounts of the flood is easily explained by the confusion of languages that took place after the Tower of Babel incident.

I would further suggest that as pagan religions emerged and developed, the miraculous events of the flood and the rescuing of humanity were eventually attributed to various idols and elohim. Just as a pure river picks up silt, debris, and pollution the further it flows from its source, so too these flood stories have been changed again and again throughout the various cultures, religions, and people groups they have passed through. Here we must remember that while some polluted form of the flood narrative may have existed among the ancient Hebrew people prior to Mount Sinai, the biblical account of the flood came directly from the source at Mount Sinai. The biblical account of the flood was not passed down from generation to generation and from culture to culture; it was passed down from the sovereign Creator to Moses and from Moses to the children of Israel. Therefore, while the voluminous ancient flood narratives may substantiate the fact that there was a flood, they cannot be valued as equal to the unpolluted biblical account which was given by direct revelation from the Creator. With this said, let us now turn our attention to our portion.

In the following quote the author of the letter of James has given us a wonderful, fitting, and yet subtle agricultural image that in many ways summarizes much of this week’s portion.

James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The picture that James is drawing for us is that of a seed (lust) that sprouts from the earth (sin) and brings forth fruit (death) in the end. In so many ways this is what is being described in this week’s portion. In last week’s portion we read of the mixing of the seed from the lines of Seth and Cain. Now this mixed and corrupted seed has sprouted upon the earth and is bearing its deadly fruit. The Torah’s present description of life and creation after the mixing of the seed¹ stands in stark contrast to the original description of creation prior to the fall of Adam and Chava. The declarations of the sovereign Creator concerning His creation are likewise stated in grave contrast one to the other.

¹ The “seed” referred to is the earthly line of Cain and the righteous or spiritual line of Seth.

Genesis 1:31 *And Elohim saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

Genesis 6:5-6 *And Elohim 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. ⁶And it repented YHWH that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.*

This description of the fallen state of humanity and the effects of the mixing of the righteous line of Seth with the unrighteous line of Cain are confirmed in this week's portion.

Genesis 6:11-12 *The earth also was corrupt before Elohim, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²And Elohim looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*

What follows this grievous description of the corrupted nature of creation is the Creator's declaration of the flood.

Genesis 6:17 *And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.*

Genesis 7:10 *And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.*

Genesis 7:17-23 *And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. ¹⁸And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. ²⁰Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. ²¹And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: ²²all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. ²³And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth.*

In the events of the flood we witness the sovereign Creator exercising His dominion over His creation. This catastrophic event is usually described in terms of the Holy One's harsh judgment upon the sinfulness of humanity. It is stories such as these – the expulsion of Adam and Chava from the Garden of Eden, the flood, the plagues of Egypt, as well as the condemnation and expulsion of the Canaanites from the promised land – that lead many who are young and immature in faith to understand the sovereign Creator as being an Elohim of wrath, vengeance, anger, and harsh judgment. While YHWH does indeed desire us to fear Him, it is in a sense of reverence, awe, and wonder; not terror. Though the wicked have cause to fear the presence of the Holy One, the believer should fear the absence of YHWH far more than His presence.

While the flood is clearly the outcome of the Creator's sovereign judgment upon the wickedness, corruption, and violence of man that had filled the earth, we must be careful to understand the judgments of Elohim in their proper context. As a child I brought numerous situations, challenges, and questions to my parents, asking for their consideration, opinions, and permission. I was truly blessed to have parents who would honestly listen to my thoughts and proposals and sincerely consider them. Ultimately what I was asking of my parents was for them to make a judgment. My parents were responsible for considering my hopeful yet naïve proposals and weighing them against their own wisdom, knowledge, and experience. After due consideration of my proposal, they would issue forth their judgment. While I did

not get my way in every matter, I had to trust that their judgment was, in fact, for my spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being.

I will not lie and tell you that this was how I always received it. In my ignorance, selfishness, and immaturity I sometimes felt as though my parents were mean, domineering, unfair, harsh, and uncompromising. When the judgment was against me, I would declare that my parents were out to stifle my creativity, ruin my fun, and destroy my life. In fact, however, this was just a matter of perspective and perception; it was not necessarily the truth. In reality, my parents did their best to discharge their Elohim-given duty of parenting. My parent's "No!" was never with evil intent; rather, it was always given out of love.

In the Torah portions we have studied so far, we have never witnessed "hate" or "death" as an attribute of the living and loving Elohim. In our earlier discussions on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the promise of death that would come, we stated that death had no part in the living Elohim. Death is the fruit of separation from the source of all life; thus, death does not come by the presence and actions of Elohim, but by the choices and actions of man. Death is an attribute of the fallen creation and not the Creator; thus, it was not Elohim that brought death to creation, but man.

Before He acts and fulfills His will, the loving Creator speaks to Noah and explains to him what He is about to do.

Genesis 6:13 *And Elohim said unto Noah, 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*

We see this same pattern of revelation prior to action repeated several times throughout the Scriptures.

Genesis 18:17-21 *And YHWH said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; ¹⁸seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of YHWH, to do justice and judgment; that YHWH may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him. ²⁰And YHWH said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; ²¹I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto Me; and if not, I will know.*

Exodus 3:7-8 *And YHWH said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; ⁸and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

Deuteronomy 4:26-31 *I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. ²⁷And YHWH shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither YHWH shall lead you. ²⁸And there ye shall serve elohims, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. ²⁹But if from thence thou shalt seek YHWH thy Elohim, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. ³⁰When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to YHWH thy Elohim, and shalt be obedient unto His voice; ³¹(For YHWH thy Elohim is a merciful Elohim;) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them.*

Jonah 3:4-5 *And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. ⁵ So the people of Nineveh believed Elohim, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.*

We should recognize this pattern as part of YHWH'S attribute of mercy. Like a loving father who takes the time to explain himself to his children that they may know and understand the loving intent of his actions, so YHWH reveals His will before He acts so that we may be assured of His love and His desire to be known by His creation. We may also see in this pattern YHWH'S granting His creation time to repent and prepare for the fulfillment of His will. Though the flood is clearly a judgment upon the corrupted nature of man and creation, this pattern reveals that hatred for creation is not the motive behind YHWH'S actions.

For years I had understood the phrase "*The end of all flesh has come before Me*" as a statement of the Sovereign One's determination upon the corruption of creation, including man. Like many others I connected this phrase with the Holy One's earlier statement:

Genesis 6:3 *And YHWH said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

By connecting these two separate verses I had interpreted our passage as saying, "*Time's up; all you wicked folk are going to die.*" But is this understanding consistent with a Creator who has thus far revealed Himself to be an Elohim that desires communion and intimacy with His creatures?

We must ask, therefore, what YHWH intends us to understand by His statement, "*The end of all flesh is come before Me.*" I would like to suggest that this phrase is not a determination on the part of the Sovereign One, but is instead a report of His omniscient mind. We must remember that our Creator is eternal, and therefore beyond the realm of space and time. He knows the end from the beginning; thus, what Elohim is reporting is that due to the mixing of the righteous line with the corrupt line, the whole of humanity has been corrupted, leaving no righteous ones to lead them. The fruit of this corrupt seed is perpetual wickedness, sinfulness, rebellion, and violence. Thus, what the omniscient Creator has seen is the inevitable outcome of mankind if He does not lovingly intercede. Therefore, because of the suffering, degradation, affliction, and death that all creation will suffer because of the corruption of the righteous line, YHWH will put an end to this weed by flushing it all away. It is not a cold and heartless judgment that brought on the flood, but a genuinely loving heart seeking to save and restore the object of His love to a state fitting for communion with Himself. We may draw a comparison to the action of the Sovereign One during the prophesied great tribulation.

Matthew 24:21-22 *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

YHWH will shorten the days of the great tribulation by a great and powerful judgment which will purge the world of all mixture, corruption, and violence. Again, this is not done out of hatred for the wicked, but out of love for the righteous. Once more let me remind you that YHWH does not delight in the death of the wicked.

Ezekiel 18:23 *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith Adonai YHWH: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?*

Ezekiel 18:32 *For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith Adonai YHWH: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.*

Ezekiel 33:11 *Say unto them, As I live, saith Adonai YHWH, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

1 Timothy 2:3-4 *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of Elohim our Saviour; ⁴who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

2 Peter 3:9 *YHWH is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

We should likewise recognize the love that is demonstrated in the mere fact that the Sovereign One would speak to Noah and reveal to him what His plan was and why He was going to do it. Only the most loving of parents take the time to explain their judgments to their children, in order that their loving intention may be made clear to those who would receive it.

We must be clear that the “*end of all flesh*” that came before YHWH was not caused by the flood; it was the corruption of man and creation which provoked the flood. Here we should be clear that it was the failure of the “*sons of Elohim*” to protect the righteous line that led to the complete corruption of creation.

Genesis 6:1-3 *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, ²that the sons of Elohim saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. ³And YHWH said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

Seth replaced Abel, the son of Adam, who was created in the image of Elohim. This is the calling upon all humanity. Again, I emphasize that the means by which Adam was to be in the image of Elohim was by exercising dominion over the animal realm, including his own animal nature. The “*sons of Elohim*” were those who were motivated by the spirit and not the flesh. When the spiritual line began mixing with the carnal line of Cain, there was no one to be the true image of Elohim in the world. This unequal yoking of the spiritual with the carnal led to the destruction of the righteous line. With few or no righteous men or woman left in the world, what hope would there be for restoration? Without a spiritual light in the world carnal man had driven the world into gross darkness and a state of self-destruction.

Our portion last week ended with one small spark of light and life:

Genesis 6:8 *But Noah found grace in the eyes of YHWH.*

The Hebrew word translated as “grace,” the word *chen* (*chet, nun*), may also be translated as “favor,” “kindness,” and “pleasant.” Ironically, the name Noah is made up of these same two letters – (*nun, chet*) – only reversed in order. The ancient Hebrew word pictures bring these two words to life. First let us look at the word *chen* or “grace.” The ideograph for the letter *chet* is a picture of a wall or fence. The ideograph for the letter *nun* is a picture of a sperm or seed, representing life or continuance.² Together these pictures convey the idea of a walled or fenced-in life. In other words, it is a place of continued protection, shelter, freedom, and life. From these pictures we may easily comprehend how this word came to be understood as “favor” or “grace.” The ideographs for Noah are the same, only reversed; thus, we may understand Noah to be “life fenced-in” or “life safe.” These ideographs bring to mind images of Noah safely protected inside the walls of the ark. Again, from these images we may easily understand how the name Noah came to mean “comfort” or “rest.”

There is yet another possible translation that we may draw from these ancient ideographs. Given that the whole event of the flood is based upon the corruption of the seed, we may also understand the name

² Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible, Jeff A. Benner, Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., Pg. 26

Noah to mean “seed protected.” This last understanding is not without substantiation in the text itself. The Torah is very clear as to Noah’s purpose and mission.

Genesis 7:1-3 *And YHWH said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation. ²Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. ³Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; **to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.***

If the story of Noah and the flood is truly about the “seed,” we must then ask why it was Noah and his seed that were chosen to be spared from the flood. We have already read that “*Noah found grace in the eyes of YHWH.*” The question we ask is “Why?” If we define the term *chen* or “grace” as being unmerited favor, then we may simply state that Noah was chosen for no other reason than YHWH bestowed “grace” upon him. We witness the Creator’s attribute of grace all through this story of the flood. First we note that the Creator delayed His judgment for 120 years.

Genesis 6:3 *And YHWH said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

During this time we know that Noah was preaching righteousness to the world around him in hopes of leading the world to repentance.

2 Peter 2:5 *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the unrighteous.*

We should also note that even at the end of the 120 year grace period, YHWH extended His grace by another week.

Genesis 7:4 *For yet seven days, and 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.*

Beyond this, Elohim did not bring the flood in one massive destructive wave, but incrementally. Note carefully the progressive nature of the flood as described in the final verses of our portion.

Genesis 7:17-19 *And the flood was forty days **upon the earth**; and the waters **increased**, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. ¹⁸And the waters prevailed, and were **increased greatly** upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters **prevailed exceedingly** upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.*

Thus, in numerous ways YHWH extended His grace not only to Noah, but also to the whole of humanity, giving ample opportunity for repentance. But so thorough was the corruption of man that even the rising waters were not enough to wash them clean. YHWH’S attributes of mercy, grace, and deliverance are clearly demonstrated throughout this story. But was Noah merely a random choice as the recipient of YHWH’S mercy, grace, and deliverance?

I believe that the answer to this question is found not only in the attributes of the Creator, but likewise in the description of the characters of Noah and his sons. Let me address the question of the election of Noah first, and then address the election of Noah’s sons.

Our portion begins with a powerful description of the character and walk of Noah.

Genesis 6:9 *These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with Elohim.*

The word translated as “generations” is the Hebrew word *toldot*, from the root word *toldah* (*tav, lamed, dalet, hey*). Etymologically this word is a part of a larger family of words such as *yalad*, which means “to bring forth” or “to beget offspring”; *yeled*, which means “child,” “son,” or “boy”; *yaldah*, meaning “girl” or “damsel”; *yilod*, meaning “born”; and *moledet*, meaning “kindred,” “birth,” or “offspring.”³ All the words in this family speak of that which issues forth from one’s life. The Torah has already mentioned the sons of Noah in the earlier genealogy of Adam. Let us now compare these two references.

Genesis 5:32 *And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Genesis 6:9 *These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with Elohim.*

It is interesting to note that our portion begins with the statement “*These are the generations of Noah*,” but instead of listing Noah’s sons, it first lists the attributes of Noah’s character. The Torah declares that Noah was a *tzadik* (*tzade, dalet, yud, kof*) and *tamim* (*tav, mem, yud, mem*). The Hebrew word *tzadik* comes from the root word *tzadak* (*tzade, dalet, kof*), which means “right,” “righteousness,” “justice,” or “just.” The ancient Hebrew ideograph of this word may give us some insight as to why this attribute may have caused YHWH to show favor to Noah. The ideographs of the word *tzadak* are *tzade*, a man lying on his side; *dalet*, a door; and *kof*, the back of the head. Together these pictures present a man with his side pressed to the back of a door. We may understand this to be someone who is protecting something by holding the door shut. When applied to Noah we may understand it as Noah closing the door on all the wickedness and corruption present in the world around him. Noah did not allow the corruption or mixture to contaminate him or his seed. Let us not forget that this corruption is about the mixture of the seed. Noah protected himself; he kept himself from this corruption and mixture. Noah guarded his seed; thus, Noah is described not only as a *tzadik*, but also as *tamim*, which means “pure” or “perfect.” Noah’s line was pure and righteous. Noah had not married into the line of Cain, but had bound himself to a righteous woman from the line of Seth. Therefore, it was not just Noah and his family who were being delivered, but the very hope for the “*seed of the woman*” who would deliver all creation from bondage to the death brought upon all mankind through Adam and Chava’s fall.

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

From this description of Noah’s character we may unequivocally declare that Noah was not merely a random recipient of YHWH’S grace, mercy, and deliverance, but by his diligence in making distinctions and keeping himself *tamim*, Noah presented himself as a fit vessel for the Creator’s use. This is the same criteria given later in the Torah for both the offering placed upon the altar and the *cohanim*⁴ who offered it.

Leviticus 21:21 *No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of YHWH made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his Elohim.*

Leviticus 22:21 *And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto YHWH to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.*

Deuteronomy 18:13 *Thou shalt be perfect with YHWH thy Elohim.*

Justice and purity may be described as Noah’s firstfruits. This diligence in making righteous distinctions and keeping himself protected from the world’s corruption is what is meant by the phrase “*Noah walked*

³ The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon, Hedrickson Publishers, Pp.410-411

⁴ Priests

with Elohim.” We may remember that this same expression was used of another righteous one in the line of Seth.

Genesis 5:22-24 *And Enoch walked with Elohim after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: ²³and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: ²⁴and Enoch walked with Elohim: and he was not; for Elohim took him.*

We should make careful note here that those in the righteous line would later be identified by the fact that they walked before the Holy One in His ways.

Genesis 17:1 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, YHWH appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am El Shaddai; **walk before Me, and be thou perfect.***

Genesis 48:15 *And he blessed Joseph, and said, Elohim, **before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk**, the Elohim which fed me all my life long unto this day.*

Exodus 16:4 *Then said YHWH unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, **whether they will walk in My law**, or no.*

Exodus 18:20 *And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them **the way wherein they must walk**, and the work that they must do.*

Deuteronomy 5:33 *Ye shall **walk in all the ways which YHWH your Elohim hath commanded you**, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.*

Deuteronomy 8:6 *Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of YHWH thy Elohim, **to walk in His ways**, and to fear Him.*

The instructions as to how the children of Israel are to “walk” out their faith are called *Halachah*, from the Hebrew word *halach* (*hey, lamed, khaf*), which means “walk.” Our portion repeatedly reports that Noah followed the *Halachah* or instructions for “walking” with YHWH.

Genesis 6:22 *Thus did Noah; according to all that Elohim commanded him, so did he.*

Genesis 7:5 *And Noah did according unto all that YHWH commanded him.*

Genesis 7:9 *There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as Elohim had commanded Noah.*

Genesis 7:16 *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as Elohim had commanded him: and YHWH shut him in.*

By walking in the way of YHWH, even in a corrupt world, Noah put himself in a state of being that allowed him to be used by the Creator in a very powerful way. This should be a powerful lesson for all believers who wish to present themselves as a living and acceptable sacrifice unto YHWH.⁵

These character attributes of Noah clearly justify the Creator selecting Noah for this restoration project, but what about his descendants – Shem, Ham, and Japheth? As the “seed” of Noah, we may assume that these sons of Noah are *tamim*, and therefore fit to continue the line of the righteous seed. We may assume that if Noah was walking in the *Halachah* of YHWH, then he was raising his sons to likewise walk with the Creator and do all that He commanded.

⁵ Romans 12:1

I believe that there is yet another reason for the sons of Noah being included in the rescuing of the human race. We should note that every time these sons are listed together, it is always in the same order.

Genesis 5:32 *And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Genesis 6:10 *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Genesis 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.*

Genesis 9:18 *And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.*

Genesis 10:1 *Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.*

1 Chronicles 1:4 *Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Only twice, in the expanded genealogies of the sons of Noah, does the order of the names reverse.⁶ This reversal of names is done only to accommodate the focus being placed upon the last name listed. While this listing of the sons in a consistent order may simply be an expression of their birth order, I believe that these names in this order reveal the reason why the sons of Noah were likewise chosen to join their father on the ark. To understand this we need to understand the names and their significance.

The name Shem (*shin, mem*) means “name.” The name Cham (*chet, mem*) means “heat.” The name Yaphet (*yud, fay, tav*) means “open” or “beauty.” We should remember that “naming” things was the means by which Adam manifested the image of Elohim by exercising dominion over the animal realm.

Genesis 1:26-27 *And Elohim 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. ²⁷So Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim created He him; male and female created He them.*

Genesis 2:19-20 *And out of the ground YHWH Elohim formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. ²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

We witnessed YHWH exercising this same dominion in the naming of Adam.

Genesis 5:1-2 *This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that Elohim created man, in the likeness of Elohim made He him; ²male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.*

We may associate Shem or “name” with the act of exercising dominion as a manifestation of the image of the Creator.

The name Cham or “heat” may be associated with one’s emotions, such as anger, agitation, lust, and passion.

⁶ Genesis 10:2ff; 1 Chronicles 1:5ff

Esther 1:12 *But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.*

Lamentations 2:3 *He hath cut off in His fierce anger all the horn of Israel: He hath drawn back His right hand from before the enemy, and He burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.*

1 Corinthians 7:9 *But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

Luke 24:32 *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?*

In this regard, Cham may be associated with the soul, the seat of one's intellect and emotions.

The name Yaphet means "open," but is related to the Hebrew word *yapheh* (*yud, fey, hey*), which means "fair" or "beauty." This name suggests the outward appearance, and therefore may be associated with the flesh and the senses.

Genesis 3:6 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

Genesis 6:2 *That the sons of Elohim saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*

2 Samuel 11:2 *And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.*

1 Kings 1:3 *So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.*

In these three names we see the three aspects of man: spirit, soul, and body. It is important for us not only to recognize the significance of these names, but also the consistent order in which they are listed. Shem, which represents the spirit and dominion, is always listed in the head position. Cham, which represents the soul or emotions, is always immediately beneath Shem, the spirit. Japheth, the body of man, is always listed last and immediately under Cham, the soul. This order of spirit exercising dominion over the soul, and the soul exercising dominion over the flesh is the order man was created to live in. In the original relationship between the Creator and Adam, the Spirit of the Holy One spoke to the spirit of Adam; the spirit of Adam informed the soul of Adam how to feel and think; and the soul informed the body of Adam how to interact with the world around him.

We may recall that the "fall" of Adam and Chava was precipitated by their choice to live in the mixture of knowledge gained by their senses as well as the revelation knowledge of YHWH.⁷ This mixture is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Instead of exercising dominion over their lower animal nature, which lives by the senses, Adam and Chava allowed their souls to be drawn to the flesh instead of the spirit, thus becoming carnal beings. By listing the names of the sons of Noah consistently in this sequence, the Torah is telling us that the descendants of Noah were living in the proper order; therefore, like their father, they were fitting vessels for the Creator's restoration project.

⁷ See my Torah portion Y1 P2 6008 on Bereshit 2:4-3:24

The evidence of the submission of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth to the revelation knowledge of YHWH is clearly displayed in the building of the ark to the Creator's exact specifications. There are two other important descriptions given that confirm this truth. First is the fact that Noah demonstrated his dominion over the animals by gathering the animals into the ark. The second confirming evidence is in the fact that Noah understood the distinction between animals that are declared *tahor* and those that are declared *tamei*.⁸ While this distinction is later given in regards to the diet of the children of Israel,⁹ here we must understand it only as referring to animals acceptable to offer upon the altar. We must remember that man's diet, as well as that of the animals at this time, was still a vegetarian diet,¹⁰ which would not change until after the flood.¹¹ Thus, there was no fear upon the ark of the carnivores eating the herbivores. The *tahor* animals would be used by Noah as part of the slaughtering when YHWH cut the covenant with Noah.¹² Clearly we have seen strong evidence to suggest that Noah and his sons have, by their faithfulness, presented themselves as fit instruments and vessels for YHWH'S redemptive plan.

These evidences of righteousness or fitness for service by themselves were not enough, however, to prove Noah's worth. Even after these glowing reports of Noah's character are given, we should recognize that Noah and his family would yet be tested in the ark itself. For forty days and nights the rain fell and the flood waters prevailed upon the earth. Biblically, the number forty is often associated with a period of prohibition or testing. In his book Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance, E. W. Bullinger writes:

Forty has long been universally recognized as an important number, both on account of the frequency of its occurrence, and the uniformity of its association with a period of probation, trial, and chastisement – (not judgment, like the number nine, which stands in connection with the punishment of enemies, but the chastisement of sons, and of a covenant people).¹³

Bullinger goes on to break down these periods of probation and testing in this manner:

Forty years of probation by trial:

Israel in the wilderness – Deuteronomy 8:2-5; Psalm 95:10; Acts 13:18
Israel from the crucifixion to the destruction of Jerusalem

Forty years of probation by prosperity in deliverance and rest:

Under Othniel – Judges 3:11
Under Barak – Judges 5:31
Under Gideon – Judges 8:28

Forty years of probation by prosperity in enlarged dominion:

Under David – 2 Samuel 5:4
Under Solomon – 1 Kings 11:42
Under Jeroboam II – 2 Kings 12:17, 18; 13:3, 5, 7, 22, 25; 14:12-14, 23, 28
Under Jehoash – 2 Kings 12:1

⁸ *Tahor* is generally translated as "clean," but is better understood as "acceptable" or "useful." *Tamei*, generally translated "unclean," is better understood as "unacceptable" or "useless."

⁹ Leviticus 11:1-47; Deuteronomy 14:3-21

¹⁰ Genesis 1:29-30

¹¹ Genesis 9:1-3

¹² Genesis 6:18; 8:20-21; 9:9-17

¹³ Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance, E. W. Bullinger, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, Pg. 266

Under Joash – 2 Chronicles 24:1

Forty years of probation by humiliation and servitude:

Israel under the Philistines – Judges 13:1
Israel in the time of Eli – 1 Samuel 4:18
Israel under Saul – Acts 13:21

Forty years of probation by waiting:

Moses in Egypt – Acts 7:23
Moses in Midian – Acts 7:30

Other examples of “forty” in the Scriptures are:

Moses on Mount Sinai – Exodus 24:18
Moses’ second time on Mount Sinai – Deuteronomy 9:18, 25
The spies in the land of Canaan – Numbers 13:26; 14:34
Elijah in Horeb – 1 Kings 19:8
Jonah in Nineveh – Jonah 3:4
Ezekiel lay on his right side against Judah – Ezekiel 4:5
Yeshua tested in the wilderness – Matthew 4:2
The resurrected Messiah appeared to his disciples for 40 days – Acts 1:2

It is important to realize that even the righteous and pure must still go through periods of testing. We may here recall the teaching of Yeshua Messiah concerning the vine and the branches.

***John 15:1-2** I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ²Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

Here we note that even the branches that are bearing fruit still receive pruning that they may bear yet more fruit.

While many believers in Yeshua continue to hold on to the erroneous teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture, the story of Noah in the ark contradicts this view. Instead of space-lifting Noah and his family out of the flood and destruction, the Creator kept Noah and his family safe in the flood. Thus, Noah and his family experienced the flood first-hand, but were not touched by the judgment. Here we witness YHWH’S incredible ability to keep His people safe, even in the midst of tribulating circumstances. This pattern is repeated numerous times throughout the Scriptures, in stories such as Joseph in the dry well and in prison, David before Goliath, Daniel in the lions’ den, and many other such examples. The point of all these stories is that YHWH is indeed capable of protecting and delivering His people.

One further point that should be made on this subject is a small but significant detail in the building of the ark. What kept the inhabitants of the ark safe from the waters of the flood was the fact that the ark was covered with “pitch,” both inside and out.

***Genesis 6:14** Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*

The first use of the word “pitch” in this passage is the Hebrew verb *kaphar* (*kaf, fey, resh*), which means “to cover.” This is the first appearance of this word. What is so significant about this word is that it appears over 100 times in the Scriptures, but is translated as “pitch” only once. Of the 100 plus times this word is used, it is translated 71 times as “atonement.” The ancient Hebrew ideographs help us to understand the meaning of this word. The ideograph of the letter *kaf* is a picture of an open hand; the *pey* is a picture of a mouth; while the letter *resh* is a picture of a man’s head. Together these images

convey the idea of an open hand covering the mouth of an accuser. From this we get both the idea of atonement and covering. When we think of the blood of the sacrifice or the incense making atonement, we should understand that it is making a “covering” for us. The incense in the holy of holies provided Aaron and the subsequent *Cohanim G'dolim*¹⁴ protection from the presence of the Holy One.

Leviticus 16:13 *And he shall put the incense upon the fire before YHWH, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not.*

Likewise, the blood of Messiah works in a similar prophylactic fashion to protect us from the holiness of YHWH, while at the same time silencing the mouth of our accuser.

The second use of the word “pitch” in the passage is the Hebrew noun *kopher* (*kaf, fey resh*), which means “asphalt,” “tar,” or “ransom,” “bribe,” and “redemption.” Again we should see an allusion to the redeeming work of the Messiah. Just as the ark kept Noah and his sons safe from the waters of judgment, so too does the blood of Messiah provide the ransom for our redemption.

1 Peter 1:18-19 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

Matthew 20:28 *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

1 Timothy 2:6 *Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

Finally we should realize that the pitch was applied within and without. In other words, it was not enough to simply apply it externally; it was also to be a matter of the heart. We see this same teaching again and again in the Torah

Genesis 17:11 *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you.*

Deuteronomy 10:16 *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.*

Joshua 5:4 *And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt.*

Jeremiah 4:4 *Circumcise yourselves to YHWH, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.*

Romans 2:28-29 *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: ²⁹but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of Elohim¹⁵.*

Matthew 23:28 *Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*

¹⁴ High Priests

While we are indeed to keep the Torah in our flesh, outwardly manifesting the wonderful attributes of the Creator, it is never to become mere ritual. Yeshua taught that what we do in our lives comes from what is in our hearts.

Matthew 12:35 *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.*

To keep the ritual of the Torah without the heart is no better than believing in one's heart without manifesting this belief in one's life. As James declared:

James 2:26 *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

Therefore, to avail ourselves of the favor and protection of the Holy One, we must live the Torah from the heart. We must apply the grace and mercy of YHWH both within and without.

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