

PARASHAT NOACH

WE CAN SAVE THE WORLD

There is a midrash that says Moshe Rabbeinu was greater than Noach. Noach is complete tzaddik at the beginning, but at the end of his life it says he's a "man of the earth". However, Moshe Rabbeinu starts off as an "Ish Mitzri", but by the end of his life, he's a man of G-d. The Egyptians, being one of the lowest and most disgusting nations ever and Moshe goes from being a part of that society to speaking to G-d, this shows the greatness of Moshe.

Avodat Hashem is a constant struggle being that one never stays in the same place, it is impossible to do so. If you're not going up, then you're going down. Man was designed to spiritually grow, and if he doesn't the result is depression. The Vilna Gaon said that you are either building yourself or destroying yourself. There's a certain violinist who practices 8 hours a day every single day. He says that if he doesn't practice 8 hours a day, the first day he feels it. The second day, his violin feels it. The third day, his audience feels it and that's really bad. If this is so with physical things, all the more so it is true with spirituality. Every day where you don't learn torah, miss davening, you are going down.

There was once a 14 year old boy who knew all of shas. There were lots of wealthy people trying to get him to marry their daughter. They said that they would support him for the rest of his life. So one rich man sends a guy to test out this boy so he can make a shiduch. They find out that the boy is 15 years old and not 14 and they call the shidduch off. There are many 15 year olds that knew all of shas! We all know shas. The shas in movies, sports and entertainment! It's sad because what's it worth at the end of your life? What makes something real? If it lasts. Movies, sports and entertainment are here one day and gone the next. But Torah has always been here and will always be here. You know why the 15 year olds knew all of shas? When you don't have a TV in your house and all the distractions we have today, you have a lot more room in your brain for real things.

Man is like an animal in four ways and like an angel in four ways. Man is like an animal in regards to eating, reproducing, going to the bathroom and dying. We are like angels because we see like angels. Rav Soloveitchik asks, but don't animals also see? An animal can look off to the side while looking straight. So what does this mean? Man can see with perspective while animals can't. But angels have the ultimate perspective. Angels see the light of Hashem clearly while humans-beings are somewhat blocked by the darkness of the yetzer hara.

Television has become the perspective of the world nowadays. It has become more real to people than at anytime in history. The problem is that the media is distorted and only shows things to make a good story. They take the Palestinian side to make a more interesting story. That the “big and bad” Israelis are destroying the “poor” Palestinians. The skewed view of television transmits into the minds of the viewers and *they* begin seeing things in a distorted perspective.

If Noach had the right perspective, he could have davened and saved the world, saved everything. When Noach came out of the teyva, he asked G-d, where’s your mercy? G-d said, “you foolish shepard, if you would have cried **before** the flood, you could have saved the whole world! We, like Noach, have the strength to save the world. Noach, due to his lack of self-esteem, did not realize that his prayers could have saved the world. Moshe, on the other hand, is called “the trusted shepard”, he stands up for the Jews in Egypt and saves them all. When Hashem threatens to destroy the Jews, Moshe asks him to erase his name from the torah. When you are doing things for the sake of heaven, it saves the world. There is a story about a family running out of Romania in a time where the situation was very bad for the Jews and they were being killed left and right. The family has been traveling for days, and they were about to reach the border when they have second thoughts. They begin to worry about all their possessions they left behind. All the luxuries they are going to lose. They turn back and are killed soon afterwards. We’re almost at the border! Why turn back now for useless things like luxury and pleasures? Every minute, you’re either moving towards that border and freeing yourself from the shackles of materialism, or you’re turning back in pursuit of it even though you know you may be killed. Choose wisely.