



PO Box 1076 Jerusalem 91009 \* Tel. 972-2-628-4101

# Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Torah of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner, Rosh Ha-Yeshiva

Parashat Noach 5768

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

RavAviner-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

archived at [www.ateret.org.il](http://www.ateret.org.il)

## Don't Be Like Noach

Why did Noach open the window of the ark, send out a raven, then a dove and then a dove for a second time to check if the water had receded (Bereshit 8)? Wouldn't it have been much easier to look out the window himself?

### **Text Message Responsa**

Rav Aviner answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Here is a sample:

Q: Can I have a siyyum for a Massechet of the Talmud even if I do not remember much of it?

A: Absolutely, it is natural to forget things.

Q: Is it a good thing to circle the gates of the Old City of Yerushalayim on Erev Rosh Chodesh?

A: Yes. They express yearnings for the Temple which awake us to repent.

Q: Is it permissible to use tzedakah money for giving a big tip to the waiters at an event?

A: No, tzedekah is for the poor.

I heard an explanation that Noach understood that it was forbidden for him to look, similar to Lot who was commanded not to look at the destruction (ibid. 19:17). Why wasn't he allowed to look? Lot was not so righteous, but he was saved in the merit of Avraham, as our Sages explain on the verse: "And when G-d was destroying the cities of the plain G-d remembered Avraham, and He sent Lot from the midst of the upheaval when he overturned the cities in which Lot had lived" (Berachot 54b on Bereshit 19:29). This means – do not look at the people being consumed in the destruction as if you are here and they are there, since in truth you are there, and you would have been consumed with them if it were not for Avraham. Do not raise yourself above them. Do not place a partition between yourself and them. You could have been there.

Noach, however, was not forbidden to look, but he understood it on his own. He was righteous, "Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generation, Noach walked with G-d" (ibid. 6:9). Here, however, there was something else to consider. The Master of the Universe commanded Noach to build an ark one hundred and twenty years before the flood (ibid. 6:3), in order for people to see him involved in the

project. They would ask him about it, he would then have an opportunity to talk with them and help them to repent. How many people did Noach help repent during this incredibly long period? – No one! He therefore felt that it was not right for him to look at those being consumed – there were people who could have been with him in the ark if he would have helped them repent. He did not say: I am here and they are there. He did not raise himself above them nor did he place a partition between himself and them, because he understood that they could have been in the ark with him.

And similarly, you, dear reader: Do not be like Lot, because maybe you are here in the merits of others, and you could have been there. Do not be like Noach, who did not save others with him. Rather, be like Avraham, who went from place to place and called out in the Name of Hashem. [Yemei Teshuvah pp. 294-295]

## **Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi**

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

### Blowing up the Iraqi Nuclear Reactor

When Tzahal blew up the Nuclear Reactor in Iraq in the year 5741 (28 years ago), our Rabbi said in a voice trembling from excitement: "Did you hear! All of the non-Jews are shaking and scared from what the Jews did. Did you hear! Did you hear!" And he could not calm down. At that moment, a pregnant woman came in and requested a blessing for an easy pregnancy. Our Rabbi warmly blessed her, and then returned to saying: "Did you hear! Did you hear!" Klal u-ferat u-klal – the community, the individual, the community. (from Efrat Bedichi)

### Our Rabbi and the Satmar Rebbe

Even though the Satmar Rebbe had a completely different outlook than our Rabbi, he never scorned or denigrated him. Once Ha-Gaon Rav Moshe Feinstein ztz"l issued a ruling regarding the height of a mechitzah between men and women in a shul, that in pressing situations it is permissible to be lenient in a particular issue. The Satmar Rebbe came out against him. Our Rabbi said: "It is known that our paths are separate and different, but in this issue he is correct." Even though they were polar opposites regarding the Redemption of Israel and Klal Yisrael (the entirety of Israel), our Rabbi never said one negative word about him.

### Every Letter in the Torah is a Jewish Soul

The Baal Shem Tov hugged every Jew because he saw one letter of the Torah in him. Our Rabbi learned Torah because he saw in every letter a spark of the Jewish soul. (Rav Aviner in Be-Ahava U-Be-Emuna - ParashatVayeshev 5766)

## **Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law**

Each day at the end of lunch in the yeshiva, Rav Aviner delivers a talk. Here's a taste:

### The Power of Uninterrupted Torah Learning

There are many sources which highlight the importance of Torah learning without interruption. Torah learning should be long and deep.

1. The gemara in Shabbat (11a) says that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his colleagues did not daven. They constantly learned Torah without any breaks. Since they never stopped, they were exempt from praying. We take all sorts of breaks to do this and that, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 106:2) therefore says that we also stop to daven. Nonetheless, we see the ideal of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his colleagues.
2. The gemara in Berachot (8a) relates that Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi davened in the place where they learned Torah, even if there was no minyan. The Rama in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 90:18) rules that we do not act this way so that the unknowledgeable do not follow this practice. They did not go to shul so that they would not take up the time to go back and forth. They could immediately return to learning after praying.
3. The midrash (Ketubot 62b-63a) explains how Rabbi Akiva went to learn in yeshiva for twelve years. When he returned, he overheard someone saying to his wife, "How long will you be like a widow waiting for him?" She replied that she would prefer that he learn for another 12 years! Rabbi Akiva turned around and went back to the yeshiva for another 12 years. Rav Chaim Shmulevitz in "Sichot Musar" asks, why didn't Rabbi Akiva come in to say shalom or have a cup of coffee with his wife? Answer: Because 12 years plus 12 years of Torah learning is not the same as 24 continuous years.
4. There was a secret society established in the Volozhin Yeshiva called "Nes Tziona," with the purpose of spreading the idea of settling the Land of Israel among the Nation. A group of students signed a document describing its activities. Rav Kook's signature did not appear on it even though he was learning there at the time. Someone once asked our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah, why Rav Kook was not part of it? He asked, "He was learning Torah" (see Tal Ha-Re'eiya, p. 68).

## **Jonathan Pollard Count: 7992 Days in Jail**



**Free Pollard Now!**

To learn more: [www.jonathanpollard.org](http://www.jonathanpollard.org)