

Agudas Yisroel Anshei Kielce

Weekly Bulletin

פרשת נח



We all know the story of the flood. The world was bad - very bad. Hashem was enraged. He decided to destroy the whole world except for a tiny righteous family, the Noachs. But what was the actual bad that did the world in? After all, something had to have gone mighty awry for the Almighty to destroy his handiwork and begin anew.

And so, the Torah tells us, "Now the earth had become corrupt before G-d; and the earth had become filled with robbery. And G-d saw the earth and behold it was perverse, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. G-d said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with robbery through them; and behold, I am about to destroy them from the earth" (Bereshis 6:11-13).

It seems that there were two main crimes, corruption and robbery. Robbery is self-explanatory, and the meforshim explain corruption as lewdness and licentiousness in addition to idolatry. In fact, it was so bad that "all flesh had corrupted its way"; not only did mankind cavort in adulterous behavior, even cattle, beasts, and fowl did not consort with their own species" (Rashi ibid.) But what sealed their fate? There seems to be two defining offenses. The Torah introduces Hashem's words to Noah with the statement, "And G-d saw the earth and behold it was perverse, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth." Yet what he tells Noah is "The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with robbery." So what was it that brought the Almighty to the fateful decision, robbery or perversion?

Rashi declares in one pasuk, "wherever you find lewdness and idolatry, punishment of an indiscriminate character comes upon the world, killing good and bad alike." Yet, later, when the Torah states the sin of robbery, Rashi explains that "their fate was sealed only on account of their sin of robbery."

How did these two very different evils forge together to force the end of the world? In addition, what lesson can we take from it?

According to the "What It's Worth" department of a popular news broadcast, this story actually occurred. In the late 1980s a robber walked into a bank in Oceanside, California, with a gun and a note. He strode up to the teller that looked the easiest target a woman in her fifties with a gentle, grandmotherly appearance. He handed her the note that demanded the money. "Give me all your money or I will blow your ... head off" or something to that affect.

She reached for the cash drawer to oblige. Then she looked back down at the note and her teeth clenched. She squeezed her hands into tight fists and turned red. Suddenly, in flash

she pulled out the metal drawer entirely. She did not give it to him instead she flung it at him.

The she bashed him over the head with it. She hit him once, and again, and again. She began yelling at him in a rage. The money was flying all over the bank. The patrons ran for cover. The dazed thief retreated in fear. Then he ran. Police nearby caught him hiding under a nearby bush.

And then they figured out what spurred the heroics of the grandmotherly teller. She was chasing him out of the bank screaming, "Don't you ever use such a foul word again!" Many meforshim explain a difference between judgment and wrath. They are separate issues. Judgment was meted because of the sin of thievery. But that merits judgment, and payback. Perhaps there could have been repentance. Maybe only certain acts would have been judged. It is strong enough to warrant strict judgment. But to a point. Thievery alone, even wanton brazenness is not enough to destroy a world. Alone, it would not have produced such wrath. But when the desire to gain someone else's property is compounded with the arrogance of lewd licentiousness, depraved morality, and debasing the norms of civilization, then the judgment is meted with wrath.

Often people sin. They even steal. Those crimes have to be dealt with even judged strongly. But when unprovoked vices become integrated with the selfishness of theft and greed, then a wake-up call is imperative. Even if it can ruin your entire world.

Good Shabbos

Adapted from Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Zmanim

Mincha/Kabbalas Shabbos: 6:35 pm

Shachris: 8:45 am

Mincha/Shalosh Seudos: 6:20 pm

Candle Lighting: 6:35 pm

Zman Kriyas Shema: 10:13 am

Maariv/Motzei Shabbos: 7:36 pm

This week's Kiddush is sponsored by Alexander and Irena Warner in honor of a yahzheit.

Mazel Tov to Sholom Horowitz on the birth of a grandson in Baltimore.

To sponsor a Kiddush or Shalosh Seudos please email kiddush@agudahsouth.com or contact Leon Jakubovic.

All those wish to submit names to the cholim list can email gabbai@agudahsouth.com or contact one of the gabbaim.

**Have a Simcha to announce?
Email announcements to mailings@agudahsouth.com**