



I am Creation: Prepared for Greatness

Week #2 - From Noah to the Tower of Babel

Think about our world today.

What would you change?

Genesis 6:9

אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרוֹתָיו אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֵּךְ־נֹחַ:
 Ayleh toldot Noach Noach
 eesh tzadik tamim hayat
 b'dorotav et-ha'Elohim
 hitalech Noach.

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was in his generations a man righteous and wholehearted; Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6:13, 17-18 - God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with lawlessness because of them: I am about to destroy them with the earth...“For My part, I am about to bring the Flood—waters upon the earth—to destroy all flesh under the sky

in which there is breath of life; everything on earth shall perish. But I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall enter the ark, with your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives.

Genesis 7:1 - Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, with all your household, for you alone have I found righteous before Me in this generation.

Genesis 9:1, 3-10 - God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fertile and increase, and fill the earth... Every creature that lives shall be yours to eat; as with the green grasses, I give you all these. You must not, however, eat flesh with its life-blood in it. But for your own life-blood I will require a reckoning: I will require it of every beast; of man, too, will I require a reckoning for human life, of every man

for that of his fellow man! Whoever sheds the blood of man, By man shall his blood be shed; For in His image Did God make man. **Be fertile, then, and increase; abound on the earth and increase on it.**” And God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “I now establish **My covenant** with you and your offspring to come, and with every living thing that is with you—birds, cattle, and every wild beast as well—all that have come out of the ark, every living thing on earth.

Genesis 1:26-28 - (26) And God said: ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, the cattle, and over all the

earth, and all the creeping things that creep upon the earth.’ (27) **And God created man in God’s own image**, in the image of God created him; male and female God created them. (28) And God blessed them; and God said unto them: **‘Be fruitful, and multiply, fill the earth and master it;** and rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and over all the living things that creep upon the earth.’

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God is starting over with Noah

What is similar? What is different?

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks: After the Flood, He taught Noah and through him all humanity, that we should think, *not of ourselves but of the human other* as in the image of God. That is the only way to save ourselves from violence and self-destruction. This really is a life-changing idea. It means that the greatest religious challenge is: Can I see God’s image in one who is not in my image – whose colour, class, culture or creed is different from mine?

There is a strange blessing we say after eating or drinking something over which we make the blessing *shehakol*. It goes: *borei nefashot rabbot vechesronam*. God “creates many souls and their deficiencies.” Understood literally, it is almost incomprehensible. Why should we praise God who creates deficiencies?

Who created deficiencies? What is this about?

Genesis 11:4

וַיֹּאמְרוּ הִבֵּה | נִבְנֶה לָנוּ
עִיר וּמִגְדָּל בְּשָׁמַיִם
וְנַעֲשֶׂה לָנוּ שֵׁם פֶּן-נִפְּוֹץ
עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ:
Vayomer havah niv'neh-
lanu eer u'migdal v'rosho
va'shamayim v'na'aseh
lanu shem pen-nafutz al-
p'nei chol-ha'aretz.

(And they said, “Come, let us build us a city, and a tower with its top in the sky, to make a name for ourselves; else we shall be scattered all over the world.”)

Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 11:4:4 - Looking at this story from a rational point of view, the words “and let us make a name for ourselves,” must be understood thus: the people of that generation were very advanced in matters of philosophy and even technology. However, they used their intelligence in a sinful manner. They constructed the city and tower to protect themselves against a deluge of fire, seeing that God had promised not to again bring a deluge of water...They tried to isolate and tame the power of fire in order to neutralize its deadly effect so that it could not engulf their city, as we have found also in our generation that some scholars [scientists] know how to harness some of the strength of lightning. [Editorial note by translator, R. Eliyahu Munk (1998): This is know in our time as "lightning rod," and we can find a mention of this also in Tosefta Shabbat, Chapter 7.]

“I AM CREATION” Action Items:
