



# Kinder Torah®



*For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table  
Parshas Noach*

Dedicated in Loving Memory of Shmuel ben Yaakov Yitzchak z"l  
Mr. Sidney Shlian ♦ By his loving Children and Grandchildren

## Say It Nicely

Hashem commanded Noah and his family to enter the ark. Along with them, seven of each type of *tahorah* (pure) animal and two of each type of animal which is *annenah tahorah* (not pure) (Bereshis 7:8). The Gemora (Pesachim 3a) explains that the Torah could have used the word *tamei* (impure) and thereby used eight fewer letters. We all know that the Torah does not waste one word or even one single letter. Why, therefore did the Torah use extra letters and words to describe these impure animals? To teach us the importance of speaking nicely. Rebbe Yehoshua Ben Levi says, "A person should never let a displeasing word pass his lips. Behold, the Torah added eight extra letters in order to avoid using a displeasing word."

Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev zt"l explains how many aspects of Noah's *teivah* were related to speech. The word *teivah* can mean ark, or it can mean word. Noah's *teivah* was 300 *amos* (cubits) long, 50 *amos* wide and 30 *amos* high. Before a person speaks even one word (*teivah*), he should ponder the majesty of the Creator, which corresponds to the height of the ark (*teivah*). He should think about the breadth of his love and fear of the Creator, which corresponds to the width of the ark. And he should contemplate the tremendous pleasure that the Creator bestows upon the world, which corresponds to the length of the ark. Rav Levi Yitzchok is telling us that every word is very important, and should be carefully considered before it is spoken.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*Before you speak, think about what you are about to say. Is there a nicer way to say it? Instead of saying, "You are wrong," try saying, "Perhaps there is another way to look at it. Let's examine the facts together and see if this is really so." Instead of saying, "Ow! You hurt me," try saying "I'm sure you didn't realize but you bumped into me." Instead of saying, "You're always oversleeping," try saying, "It's time to get up. Can I help you with something?" Sweet words are like sugar on the lips and soothing to the soul. Speak nicely. People will always be anxious to hear what you have to say.*

## Powerful Influence

"And Hashem saw the earth and behold it was corrupted, for all flesh had corrupted its way its way upon the earth" (Bereshis 6:12). Because of this terrible corruption, all living creatures, even animals had to die. Why were the animals punished? They had no free will to decide to do right or wrong. The Beis HaLevi relates that the sins of man were so powerful, that they even influenced the animals. Once the animals behavior changed, the atmosphere of immorality became so strong that it could not be changed. The only solution was to destroy the entire world. Thus, we see the power of the influence of sin. It can corrupt the whole world.

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*Don't underestimate your power. When you do something wrong, it affects everyone. You may think that you are not hurting anyone. Or perhaps you are hurting only yourself. You are a part of Hashem's world and what you do affects us all. Similarly, when you do a mitzvah, you benefit the whole world. Keep doing those mitzvos kinderlach. We are all depending upon you.*

## Kindness Saved Them

The end of all flesh has come before Me because the earth is filled with *chamas* (robbery)" (Bereshis 6:13). Rav Eliyahu Dessler zt"l explains that the flood which destroyed the entire world was the verdict handed down by Hashem for the crime of *chamas* (robbery). Why did the world receive such a severe punishment for robbery? Theft is the result of the desire to take. People who are only interested in themselves, thereby taking what does not belong to them will destroy themselves and their entire society. What is the antidote? Giving. We find Noah and his family, who survived the flood, were totally occupied with giving during the entire year that they were enclosed within the ark.

The Gemora (Sanhedrin 108b) relates a conversation between Shem, the son of Noah and Eliezer the servant of Abraham about life in the ark. "How did you manage to care

for all of those animals in the ark?" asked Eliezer. "It was very difficult," Shem replied. "We had to feed each animal at its eating time -- day and night. We had to figure out what food each animal ate. One time my father was late feeding the lion. He let out such a roar that all of the animals in the ark were terrified. My father went to him and the lion bit him, crippling him for life. None of us slept a wink the entire year. We were too busy caring for all of the animals, giving each one his individual food at the proper time."

**Kinderlach . . .**  
*Chamas was the sin of Noah's generation. It is the same sin as chamasnu (We took things against people's will). Do you remember that from the viduy (confession) on Yom Kippur? We all felt so badly when we thought about those sins. Now is our chance to make sure we don't repeat them. "Me first. I only got two candies and everyone else got three. I want more time on the swing even though there are many others waiting. I want a second piece of cake even though others did not even have one piece yet." These are all actions of taking. What would Noah do? "Please go ahead before me. Two pieces of candy are plenty for me. Please, take your turn on the swing; I've had enough time. Please make sure everyone else has received a piece of cake before you give me one." Noah was a baal chessed (master of acts of kindness). Chessed saved him from destruction. Stealing, pushing, grabbing, and taking only lead to bad things. Chessed is the cure for those bad things.*

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