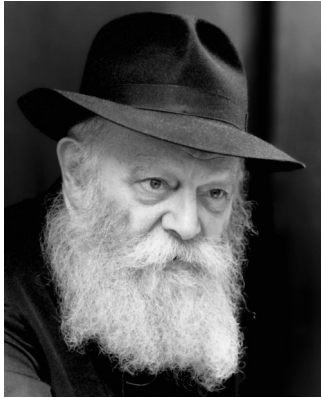




A Flood of Blessings -by Rabbi Avrohom Lipszyc

Concerning the first forty days of the flood we find a contradiction among the verses. One verse (-Genesis 6:12) states, "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." Another verse states (-ibid, 17), "And the flood was for forty days upon the earth." Rashi quotes our Sages that "When G-d had the waters descend, He descended them to begin with in compassion... lest they (the people) repent and it (the waters) will be rains of blessing, (and if) they will not repent, it will be a flood."

Simply speaking, the Sages are speaking of two different moments: (i) "To begin with," at the onset the rains were in a fashion that if the people would repent then the waters would remain "Rains of Blessings". (ii) Afterwards, when it became clear that "they will not repent," the rains changed into a flood. And this clarity and change happened right away on the first day, as the verse states, "And the flood was for forty days" (-and being that the flood waters were boiling, thus, it was not possible that they remained alive to repent). However, this explanation is problematic, being that the verse states, "rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights," and not just for part of the first day?!

Note: Were the verse to have stated, "And the rain was forty days and forty nights," but not, "upon the earth," then, based upon the teaching (-Bereishis Rabba, Portion 51:3), "no bad descends from Above," we could have explained that the waters that G-d descended from above were "Rains of Blessings". It was only when the waters arrived "upon earth," where (-Genesis 6:11-12), "And the earth was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way on earth... Behold I am destroying them from the earth," that the waters changed from rain to flood. However, the verse clearly states that the, "And the rain was upon the earth"!

The Explanation: Concerning the reason as to why (-Genesis 7:4), "I will make it rain upon the earth for forty days and forty nights," Rashi brings from our Sages (-Bereishis Rabba, Portion 32:5), "Corresponding to the (time required for the) formation of the fetus, for they sinned by burdening the One Who formed them, by fashioning mamzeirim (forms of children born from incestuous and forbidden unions)."

The first forty days of pregnancy, unlike the rest of its nine months, it is not an evolution in which every day another detail is formed (i. e. the general hand, the separation of fingers, the details of the joints within each finger, then reaching its completion with the finger nails). Rather, the first forty days is one process, a formation of the very fetus, the generality of the fetus, whether it will be a male or a female, which takes forty days. Thus, we understand that the forty days and nights of the rain --which corresponded to the forty days of the formation of a fetus-- is an one beingness, and not an evolution of details in which every day of the forty days was a separate detail of the waters. In other words, G-d's descending waters for forty days and nights of rain was a one descent of water. Thus the "He descended them to begin with compassion... rains of blessing," was a one beingness of forty days and nights of water: "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." However, when right after the descent of the Rains of Blessing (one beingness of forty days and nights of water) descended from Above, it became clear that the people Below were not going to repent, then it became, "And the flood was for forty days upon the earth."

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With this understanding of the two verses, we can understand the difference within their wording. In the first verse it states first, "the rain was upon the earth," and then, "forty days and forty nights," while in the second verse it states first, "And the flood was for forty days," and then, "upon the earth." The reason being, because the "forty days," in each verse speaks of something different. The second verse is speaking of the duration of the waters, which was forty different days. The first verse, however, is telling us that, "the rain --of blessings-- was upon the earth," teaching us that, "lest they (the people) repent and it (the waters) will be rains of blessing." The verse then ends with telling us also that this was not just of the waters of the first day (and not of the forty days), but rather, that in the very beginning ("He descended them to begin with") of this one and only beingness of waters were the waters ("Rains of Blessings") of the entire forty days!

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Question: The reason of "Corresponding to the (time required for the) formation of the fetus," is only the reason as to why "And the flood was for forty days" was to be as one unit of beingness of the "Behold I am destroying them from the earth" of the flood. However, this reasoning does not apply to the, "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights," that they too should be one beingness of forty days of rains of blessing?

The Explanation: The Interior Dimension of the flood was (-Torah Ohr 8c), "The flood came to purify the earth... For the earth was filled with injustice and it was very corrupted and it needed to be purified, and for this the flood came... as that of a mikva (ritual bath, which needs to contain,) of forty se'ah (measurement of water; approx. 575 liters) which purifies the impure." This is why the Flood Waters are called (-Isaiah 44:9) "Waters of Noach," and the name Noach means (-Bereishis Rabba, Portion 30:5), "Rest (inner-peace) for Supernal (celestial) Beings and rest (inner-peace) for Inferior (terrestrial) Beings." That which the flood was a punishment was only of the perspective of the sinful people of that generation. However, of its own accord, the Flood was Waters of Noach, an inner-peace and purification of the earth.

With this we can now say that the *Forty Days of "Rains of Blessings"* are to be understood in their simple form -(not just as *one unit* of forty days of waters)- but as that the "*Rains of Blessings*" were for the duration of forty days. And nevertheless, this is not in contradiction to the verse, "*And the flood was for forty days upon the earth,*" even though there was but one set of forty days. For the *Interior Dimension* of the *Flood Waters* was that they were "*Rains of Blessings*" to purify and bring inner-peace to the earth.

Deeper Yet: Every day of the forty days the waters were effective in two directions: (i) *Purification* of the earth, and (ii) "*Swallowed* ('*balah*'; devoured) *Everything*". Both of these concepts are hinted to in the Torah word for the flood, "*Mabul* - מַבּוּל": (i) from the word *Balah* - *Swallowed; Devoured*, and (ii) "*Mem-Bul* - מ-בּוּל", in which the word *bul* refers to "*Rains of Blessings*", as our Sages (-Tanchumah Buber, Noach Simon 17) teach upon the verse (-Kings I 6:38), "*in the month Bul,*" that it refers to the Hebrew Calendar month of *Cheshvan*, "*In the time that the earth turns into clods (bulim bulim).*" -And the letter *Mem* at the beginning of the word *M-bul* (-ibid), "*correspond with the forty days* (the Hebrew letter *mem* has the numerical value of 40) *that were cut off from the world.*"

This is the explanation that the forty days of "*Rains of Blessing*" is one-beingness, for the forty days of *Purification* of the earth are corresponding to the 40 *se'ah* of water a *mikvah* must have, which are (-Mefaneach Tzfonos, 9:6) an one-being quantity of water (and not a compilation of 40 different *se'ah*'s of water).

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This *Blessing* concept of the *Flood* that it *purified* earth, is also hinted within the very wordings of our Sages, "*When G-d had the waters descend, He descended them to begin with in compassion in order to show the world that if they repent they will be accepted... it will be rains of blessing.*"

The corruption of the world prior to the *Flood* brought the world to such a lowly level that (-*d'h Es Kashti*, 5654), "*there was no possibility of rectification.*" which is why the generation of the *Flood* did not repent. And this was the impact of the *Flood*, "*To purify the earth*", bringing the power of *Repentance* to the world: "*in order to show the world that if they repent they will be accepted.*"

So too, this is the meaning of the verse's, "*And the rain was upon the earth.*" Regardless that the people of that generation '*did not repent*,' nevertheless, the "*Rains of Blessing*" which, "*G-d had the waters descend, He descended them to begin with in compassion,*" did not just remain *Above* without any actual influence on the *Below*, but rather, the *Rains of Blessing* from *Above* had a tangible influence, "*upon the earth,*" bringing to the world the possibility of repentance! And through performing this repentance we nullify the *Flood* of *boiling waters*, and instead there descends practical and tangible "*Rains of Blessing*".

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This nullification of the *Flood* of destruction is also find in the teaching of our Sages (-Yalkut Shimoni, Kings, Remez 184), "*What is the month of bul? In the month of the Mabul (m-bul; flood). There is a missing 'Mem - n,' corresponding to* (numerical value of the Hebrew letter *mem*) *forty days. For even though the Holy One, Blessed be He, swore that, 'This is to Me 'Waters of Noach (rest; inner-peace),' there were still 40 days in every year in which those days (of the Flood) made an (negative) impression on the world until Solomon stood and built the Temple and interrupted those forty days. Therefore, it is written with the Mem - n missing, corresponding to forty days that were interrupted.*" This is why the month of *Chesvan* is called '*Month of Bul,*' without the *Mem* (*Mabul*), turning the *Mabul* into *Bul*, "*In the time that the earth turns into clods (bulim bulim),*" "*"Rains of Blessings"* in its simple and practical meaning!

The reason why the *Holy Temple* accomplished this transformation of the *Forty Days of Mabul* into the *Forty Days of Bul* - "*Rains of Blessings*" is because the windows of the *Holy Temple* were purposely built "*narrow and broad*" (The Sages taught: Typically, windows are constructed to widen toward the inside in order that the light from the outside would be dispersed throughout the room. For the Temple, G-d said, "*Make the windows narrow within and broad without, as I do not require its illumination. On the contrary, the light of the Temple is to be radiated outward*") so that the *light of the Holy Temple* would shine out into the world, nullifying the "*impression*" that remained from the *Flood*, to the point that it transformed it into "*Rains of Blessings*" - "*bul*".

When *Moshiach* comes, not only will the *Mem* be removed, creating of "*Mabul*" "*bul*", but even more than this, the letter *Mem* itself will be transformed.

Note: To understand what the Rebbe is now going to say we need to introduce: The letter *mem* has a *Final Form*, which is the *Closed Mem* (ם) used at the end of the word, and the *Open Mem* (מ) used at the beginning or middle of a word. Kabbalah explains that the *Open Mem* corresponds to *Exile*, while the *Closed Mem* corresponds to *Redemption*.

The forty (*Mem*) days of *Purifying the Earth*, which correspond to the forty *se'ah* of *Mikva Water*, are of the *Closed Mem*, and this is which shined openly in the Ark of Noach. And from this revelation the strength was given to transform the *Open Mem* of the *Mabul* -corresponding to *Exile*, into the *Closed Mem* of *Redemption*,

-[Here the Rebbe makes reference to the verse (-Isaiah 9:6), "*To Him who increases (לְרַבֵּה) -written with a Closed Mem in middle of the word!) the authority, and for peace without end,*" which refers to the *Redemption* ("peace without end").]-

with the true and complete redemption brought about through our righteous *Moshiach* speedily in our days, truly and tangibly so!