



לע"נ  
הרה"ת ר' רפאל משה הכהן ע"ה  
שפערלין  
נלב"ע י"א מר-חשון ה'תשנ"ה  
ת"נ צ"ב ה'  
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

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# RAIN OF BLESSING

The month of Cheshvan is characterized by rain. The name *Mar Cheshvan* refers to the dripping of rain, and the Gemara refers to Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan as “the beginning of the rain season.”

On Shemini Atzeres we daven that Hashem should give us “rain of *brocha*”—for blessing, life, and sustenance. We need to specify that we request rain of *brocha* because it’s possible to have the opposite type of rain, namely flooding, which causes destruction. [In fact, the greatest flood ever (the *mabul*) began in the month of Cheshvan.]

The truth is that even the *mabul* had positive results, as anything purely negative wouldn’t be mentioned in the Torah. It rained for 40 days straight, corresponding to the 40 *se’ah* of water needed to make a *mikvah*. Flooding the world cleansed it from its impurities. (In Yechezkel,<sup>1</sup> Hashem refers to Yerushalayim as “the unpurified land” because it

was not affected by the *mabul*.)

Not only did the *mabul* repair the damage wrought by those who were around at the time, it elevated the world and made it greater than before. The Alter Rebbe compares the water of the flood to the “overwhelming waters” of financial strain. “[Even] the tremendous waters cannot extinguish the [flame of Yidden’s] love [of Hashem, nor of his reciprocal love for us].”<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, we attain a greater love of Hashem when challenged. Precisely because of the pressure of monetary worries, we reach even higher.

This is analogous to the difference between *tzaddikim* and *ba’alei teshuvah*. The *tzaddik* never sinned even inadvertently, and certainly not intentionally. The *ba’al teshuvah* is motivated by his past wrongdoings to make sure to go to the other extreme, attaining a level that is even higher than that of a *tzaddik*.

Based on the parallel that the Alter

Rebbe draws between the *mabul* and economic hardship, the flood must have had an overall positive effect on the world. This change is demonstrated in the rainbow appearing for the first time only after the *mabul*. Until then, the clouds were too thick to allow direct sunlight to light up the world. Once the flood purified the world, even the clouds were “refined,” to the point that sunlight shone through.

Additionally, until the *mabul*, it was forbidden to eat meat. Refining meat is more difficult than vegetables, and it was therefore beyond the reach of the people of that time. Through the flood and its effect on the world, the world was cleansed enough that we can elevate the meat through eating it with the right intentions. **T**

(Adapted from *sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5725)

1. 22:24.
2. Shir Hashirim 8:7.