

# WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

## PARSHAT NOACH

### The Dove And The Olive Leaf

In this week's parsha, Noach, we read, that after the flood, Noach sent a dove out of the ark. It returned, "and behold, it had plucked an olive leaf with its beak," and Noach knew that the water had subsided from the earth.

Why does the verse tell us what kind of leaf it was? And why does it say that it was plucked? What about this olive leaf, told Noach, that the water had subsided from the earth, the olive tree could have been on a mountain, and the leaf could have been from the top of the tree?

Another question. Where was this leaf taken from?

One opinion is that it was taken from the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Chava were, before they ate from the tree of Knowledge. The problem with this explanation is being that it was a holy place, and the evils of the

world didn't reach there. It makes sense that it wasn't affected by the flood, and if that is the case, how would it be a sign that the water had subsided?

Another opinion is that it was taken from Israel. Now, about the Holy Land there are two opinions. Some say that it wasn't affected by the flood, and if that is the case, like the Garden of Eden, it could not serve as a proof that the water had subsided. Others say that the Holy Land was flooded as well. If this is the case, it could surely act as a sign to Noach that the

water had subsided. However we would need to clarify, why Israel, the Holy Land, would be affected by the flood?

Yet others maintain that the dove took it from a tree that was not far from the ark.

In either case, in order to be a sign that the water had subsided, it had to be taken from a place that was affected by the flood.

Why an olive leaf? Rashi explains that olives are bitter and the dove was hinting, that he would rather have bitter food from the hand of Hashem, than sweet food from the hand of man. (I say he, because Rashi derives from the grammar, that the dove was in fact male.)

Even more. Olive trees are very hardy trees, and we see that Noach knew this, as Rashi tells us, that Noach took on to the ark a "(grape) vine and a fig sapling." However, he didn't take an olive plant, because he was certain, that being a very strong tree, some would survive. Therefore, it makes sense that the dove would have found an olive tree.

Why does it say that it was plucked? This means that Noach was able to tell that it was a fresh leaf and not one that was found floating on the water. That it was a new leaf that grew after the flood.

This was also what indicated to Noach that the water had subsided from the earth. Because even if the tree was on a mountain, the fact that it had enough time to grow new foliage, indicated that it was also long enough for the water to subside.

**ACCEPT THE  
HARDSHIPS AS  
A STEP IN YOUR  
GROWTH AND YOU  
WILL LIVE HAPPIER.**



And finally, why would Israel, the Holy Land, be affected by the flood? The flood had a positive impact on the earth as well. First, it purified the earth from the evils of the generations that preceded the flood. Second, we must conclude that the flood also added a new level of holiness to the earth, because, what point would there be to send the whole flood, just to have the earth revert to its prior state. We also see this from the fact that our Haftora calls the flood, the "Waters of Noach." Noach also means, it is good, meaning that the flood had a positive side, it raised the status of the earth. This is what the Holy Land gained by having the flood, it was raised to an even higher level of holiness.

The flood is symbolic of all our troubles. Just as the flood's ultimate purpose was to raise the status of the earth, so too, every difficulty in life, is really a positive in disguise. It is a necessary hardship, which is there for your benefit, to bring you to a higher place, spiritually and physically. And if you can see it this way, life will start to become easier and happier.

It is now over two years since I had the tracheostomy, and started breathing with a ventilator. I remember how scary the whole ordeal was. Especially because at that time, I lost the use of my right hand, and with that went my ability to communicate. It was this idea, that there must be positive in what I was going through, that helped me so much. Even more than that, it helped that my wife Dina and my family were there for me. Although life is still difficult and I wish and hope to be healed, I am so grateful to be alive, watch my children grow up, have nachas from them, and have wonderful times with my wife.

I am also grateful for being able to make a difference in so many people's lives, through these Dvar Torahs and through friendship. While every day is a struggle for me and my family, we are able to make the best of it by realizing that there is a positive purpose to what we are going through.

Soon this flood too will end, Hashem will surely send healing, either through a cure, through miracles, or with the coming of Moshiach.

Either way we will not be the same as before the struggles, we will have been elevated to a higher state, both physically and spiritually. May it happen soon.

—  
*Dedicated to Devorah Schuchat, who is battling ALS and just had a tracheostomy, and to her husband Ben and children, for their strength and love.*

*"Dear Rabbi Yitzi*

*A few years ago YouTube recommended your song Shine A Little Light. Ever since, I listen to it often and it always cheers me up and gives me hope for a brighter future.*

*I am not Jewish, yet I am very interested in the Torah and I love your teachings. I love your perspective on spiritual matters.*

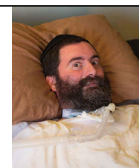
*I continue to enjoy your inspiration and wisdom which continues to teach me a new approach to my relationship with other people and with G-d. You've changed my approach to life!*

*Thank you!"*

**- Panna J, Poland**

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:  
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



IN HONOR OF THE WEDDING OF

**MENDEL LESTER  
& CHAYA WOLF**

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