

חסידות

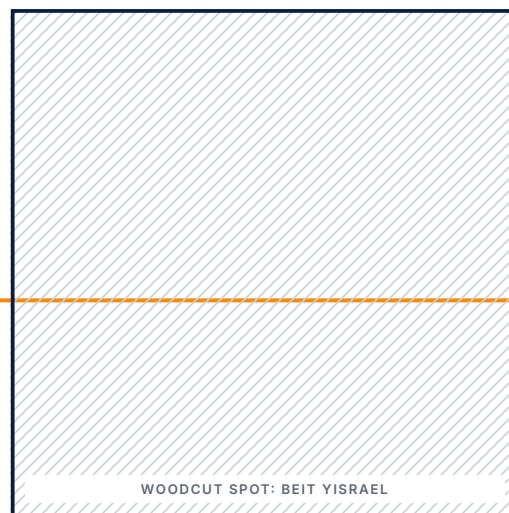
From the Chassidic Courts

RUZHIN · NOACH, BEIT YISRAEL (RUZHIN)

Wholeness means a genuinely broken heart, not self-perfection

Beit Yisrael

A genuinely broken heart — "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah" (the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit) — is the true mark of being tamim (perfect/whole): Avraham and Moshe possessed this brokenness and lowliness of their own accord, needing no external prompting, while Noach, living among a corrupt generation, could only attain it through yirah (fear/awe) brought about by HaShem, as hinted in "et HaElokim hithalech Noach" (Noach walked with God) rather than "walk before Me." The lesson for every Jew is that true wholeness comes not from seeing oneself as already perfect, but from recognizing one's own lowliness before HaShem, since prayer and study offered from a place of self-perceived perfection are flawed, while those offered from genuine humility can achieve tamim. AI SUMMARY



Parashat Noach (the Torah portion of Noach), Shabbat Rosh Chodesh (the Sabbath coinciding with the New Moon), in the year (5620) כ"ר.

I open by saying: Shabbat the Holy One, blessed be He, gave to Yisrael, and Rosh Chodesh (the New Moon) Yisrael makes for the Holy One, blessed be He. And when Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbat, then Yisrael are equal, as it were, to the Holy One, blessed be He, and then "Hashem is One and His Name is One."

"Eleh toldot Noach, Noach ish tzaddik tamim hayah bedorotav et HaElokim hithalech Noach" (These are the generations of Noach; Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations; Noach walked with God) — and Rashi, of blessed memory, explains: regarding Avraham it is written "walk before Me," and he was tamim (perfect/whole) in that he did not need support to sustain him; but regarding Noach it is written "et HaElokim hithalech

Noach" (Noach walked with God), [implying] that he needed support, etc. "Bedorotav" (in his generations) — some expound this favorably: among his generations he was righteous, but had he been in the generation of Avraham Avinu, peace be upon him, he would have been even more righteous. And some expound it unfavorably, etc.

It is written, "Zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah" (The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit) — I say: when is one called tamim? When he has "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah" — when the heart is truly broken, and one knows his own lowliness and the greatness of HaShem, blessed be He; then he is called tamim. I say that the Holy One, blessed be He, makes use of broken vessels — when a person's heart is broken, "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah," he becomes a vessel to receive from HaShem, and is called tamim.

But I ask: how is it possible to come to the level of "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah" through yirah (fear/awe)? For there is yirah and there is yirah — there is yirah ila'ah (supernal fear) and there is [a lower kind], and "HaElokim asah sheyiru milfanav" (God has made it so that they fear before Him) — but even within this there are several modes. When a person has intellect, he has a basis for fearing HaShem because HaShem punishes, and his heart is broken within him; this is "veHaElokim asah sheyiru milfanav." HaShem brings about circumstances so that a person will remember and his heart will be broken within him.

This is the meaning of what is stated: "Yirah milta zutrata legabei Moshe" (Fear was a small matter for Moshe), for regarding Moshe it is written, "veha'ish Moshe anav me'od mikol ha'adam" (and the man Moshe was very humble, more than any person), etc. Moshe himself had a heart broken within him, and he considered himself lowly beneath all; therefore yirah was "milta zutrata" (a small matter) for him, and he did not need to come to yirah in order that his heart be broken within him, since regarding Moshe it is written "veha'ish Moshe anav me'od" — he had the quality of anavah (humility), which is itself yirah. This is the meaning of "yirah milta zutrata legabei Moshe" — not, Heaven forbid, that yirah is a small thing, but rather because the man Moshe was very humble and his heart was truly broken within him, yirah was a small matter for him.

Similarly with Avraham: it is written "ve'anochi afar va'efer" (and I am dust and ashes) — he too considered himself very lowly, and his heart was truly broken, and he did not need to first come to the level of yirah. Therefore it is written regarding Avraham, "Elokim asher hithalchu avotai lefanav" (God before whom my fathers walked), for I say that Avraham walked before (lifnei) the level of Elokim, which is called the level of HaShem bringing about circumstances so that one comes to yirah and his heart becomes broken — and Avraham walked above this level. This is the meaning of "Elokim asher hithalchu avotai lefanav."

But regarding Noach it is written "et HaElokim hithalech Noach" (Noach walked with God), for I say that the generation of Noach was in great lowliness, yet it was not possible in any way for Noach himself to feel lowlier than them and for his heart to be broken of itself; therefore it was necessary that it be "et HaElokim hithalech Noach," as Rashi explains, that he needed support to sustain him — that he needed to come to the level of yirah. But regarding Avraham it is written "hithalech lefanai" (walk before Me), that he did not need support, that he did not need to come to the level of yirah, for he was, of himself, truly broken.

This is [the meaning of] "some expound it favorably and some expound it unfavorably": "in his generations he was righteous," but had he been in Avraham's generation he would have been considered nothing — for I say that because he was among his own generations, which was such a lowly generation, he was compelled to be [in the mode of] "et HaElokim hithalech Noach." But had he been in Avraham's generation he would have been considered nothing, and he himself would not have considered himself anything — his own heart would have been broken within him. And some expound it favorably: "in his generations he was righteous" — when it was such a lowly generation, he was at the level of "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah," and he was a tzaddik tamim (perfect righteous one); had he been in the generation of Avraham Avinu, peace be upon him, where there was not such a lowly generation, he would have been even more righteous — Noach would certainly have been righteous like Avraham.

And this is [the meaning of] "Eleh toldot Noach, Noach ish tzaddik tamim hayah bedorotav" — [in Yiddish:] what was it that made him tamim? Because "et HaElokim hithalech Noach" — he had yirah of HaShem and was at the level of "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah," and through this he was tamim. I say in general that every person of Yisrael must have his heart broken within him, for the principle is: when a person imagines himself to be tamim, and prays and studies [in that state], then he is possessed of a blemish; but when he prays and studies while

knowing his own lowliness, being at the level of "zivchei Elokim ruach nishbarah," he can become tamim.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

