



Carnegie Shul Chatter

October 30, 2019



Off to a... Not-So-Great Start

Last Shabbos we began the reading of the Book of Genesis by reading the first parshah, Bereishis.

According to Rabbi Ari Ankin, writing in *United With Israel*, "At the end of every day of creation, the Torah tells us '...and God saw that it was good (Ki Tov).' There are two exceptions to this: at the end of the second day of creation it does not say '...and God saw that it was good' and on the third day of creation it says '...and God saw that it was good' TWICE. Yup. Twice. It is mentioned following the 'gathering of the waters,' which divided the seas from the dry land, and then again following the sprouting of vegetation.

Use Free Will Wisely

As the first two parshahs of the Torah clearly show us, man sometimes does not make the best choices when deciding what to do with his "free will."

But even though man often falters along the way, there are many times when man does the right thing, too. Sadly, the news is so full of all the negatives that we often miss the positives.

But that doesn't mean we shouldn't always strive to do better, even if the good that we do doesn't land us a spot on the news.

Remember when people didn't think twice about opening the door for an elderly person, or helping someone who was struggling to put their groceries in the car?

Too often today we are afraid that we will be scolded for helping someone, that our good deed will be taken the wrong way.

Sad, isn't it?

When I was a Cub Scout, I was told to, "Do a good deed daily." That was a good idea then, and it still is today.

Give it a try. You will help to make this world a better place.

“Because of the fact that the third day, Tuesday, has ‘...and God saw that it was good’ twice, it is believed that Tuesdays are, well, a bit more auspicious, and a little luckier than the rest of the days of the week. That’s why many people try to get married on a Tuesday, and to otherwise begin monumental events in their lives on a Tuesday. The extra luck could certainly come in handy for such things!”

But was the sixth day really good?

On the sixth day God created man. And what did man do? He immediately disobeyed God, eating from the Tree of Knowledge, the only tree in the entire Garden of Eden from which man was not permitted to eat. And what did man do when he was caught eating the forbidden fruit by God? Well, Adam, blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. God forbid that they accepted responsibility for their own misdeeds.

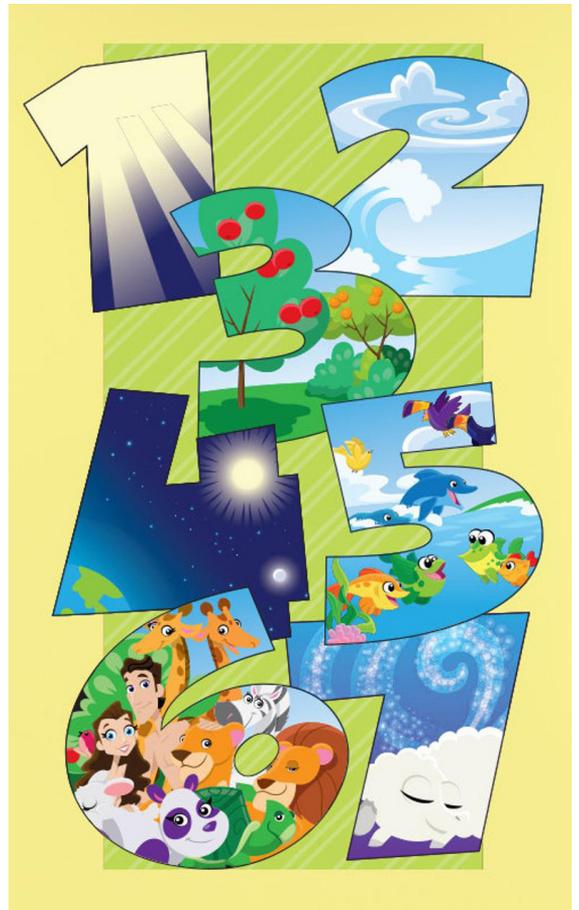
And shortly thereafter, when Eve gives birth to the first children on Earth, what happens? Cain jealously kills his brother Abel, and again, when confronted about his sin by God, refuses to accept responsibility, asking, “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

And so God’s creation of man is not looking too good, even though the Torah tells us that God saw that it was good.

And it was only to get worse.

In fact, man’s proclivity to follow his evil side rather than his Godly side became so entrenched that God finally decided that he needed a do over, and so, in this week’s parshah, Noah, God sends the great flood, wiping out all of mankind except the one remaining righteous man, Noah, and his family.

So you would think that things after the flood would quickly improve and man would become more obedient and respectful of God, wouldn’t you? But no, that was not to be the case.



Instead, as myjewishlearning.com tells us, “Noah became a man of the soil and planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk and he uncovered himself within his tent. One son, Ham saw his father’s nakedness and told his two brothers outside. His brothers Shem and Japeth took the garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backwards and covered their father’s nakedness. They faced away from him and did not see their father naked.

When Noah awoke from his wine, he learned what his small son Ham had done to him. Noah said, "Cursed be Canaan, son of Ham, a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers. Blessed be God, the God of Shem and may God extend Japeth to live in Shem's tents. And to them both, Canaan shall be a slave."

But even that is not enough. Noah's descendants remain a single people, with a single language and culture, for ten generations, but once again they forget that it is God who is the source of all that they have in this world, and they defy God by building a great tower, the Tower of Babel, to demonstrate their own invincibility.

Two parshahs full of man putting himself ahead of God.

Was the sixth day really all that good?

Honor Your Loved Ones

Commemorate a loved one by **dedicating a yahrzeit plaque** in his or her memory at the Carnegie Shul. These beautiful plaques, mounted on the sanctuary walls, are lit on the loved one's yahrzeit, Yom Kippur, and days when Yizkor is recited. The names are also read aloud from the Bimah during services on the Sabbath of the yahrzeit and on Yom Kippur.



Or **sponsor a kiddush** in honor or in memory of a loved one; your sponsorship will be announced from the bimah and in the weekly Chatter. **To purchase a plaque, for only \$175 or sponsor a kiddush for only \$36**, please email Mike Roteman at mrmike7777@yahoo.com.



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