

Good Shabbos Everyone. In this week's parsha, Parshas Noach, the Torah tells us "Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations..." (Bereishis 6:9) The verse states that Noach "Tamim hayah b'dorosav," which we translated above to mean that he was "perfect in his generations..." However, it is also possible to translate the verse in the following way: Noach was the "Tamim" - **the** Gadol Hador, the great Sage of his generation.

And why does the Torah use the plural when stating that Noach was the perfect one of his "generations?" Perhaps the Torah is coming to teach us an important lesson that every generation has its Tzadikim, righteous Torah leaders. The reason why the Torah needs to teach us this lesson is that many people say, "A shame that Rav X is gone now... and these new Rabbanim (Rabbis)... Hashem just doesn't make them like He used to.." The following amazing story from about 40 years ago, illustrates the concept of believing in the Torah leaders of every generation.

The woman tried to control her tears as she knocked on Rav Shloima Poupko, zt'l's (1928-2003) door one Friday morning. Originally from New York, R' Shloima had joined the Johannesburg community in the 1950's, where he served as the Chief Rabbi and the Rav of the Sydenham Highlands North Synagogue.

The woman, a neighbor of R' Shloima, knew that he was willing to help everyone in the Jewish community in South Africa. R' Shloima opened the door. One look at his visitor told him that something was very wrong. "I need your help. It's ... it's my nephew. David Kauder. He's just four years old, and the doctors say he's going to die on Monday."

The woman took a deep breath, then explained. "David was hit by a car six months ago. He's been in an irreversible coma ever since. Today, the doctor came in and told us that his funeral would be on Monday." R' Shloima was taken aback. How could the doctor have spoken in such a manner? I've never heard of anyone, let alone a doctor, speaking like that. It's barbaric to say such a thing!"

"Can you help us?" the woman begged. There was no time to spare. R' Shloima grabbed his jacket, ran outside, and asked his driver to take him to the Florence Nightingale Nursing Home, where David was being treated.

Less than ten minutes later, he was striding down the corridor, searching for the room that held the gravely ill David Kauder and his family. R' Shloima found a grim scenario as he peeked around the door. The boy lay motionless in bed, only the faintest rising of his chest giving any indication that he was still alive. His parents stood nearby, looking helplessly at their son. R' Shloima greeted the nurse, then quietly asked about the boy's status.

"How is he?" The nurse slowly shook her head. "It's not good. The doctor says his funeral will be on Monday." Once again, R' Shloima was shocked by these callous words. He gave a quick glance at David, lying silently on the bed. There was a good chance that the young boy—though appearing unaware of his surroundings—could actually hear every word. How could the doctor have spoken in this way?

"Please give that doctor a message from me," R' Shloima declared. "Tell him that no one knows whose funeral will take place on Monday!" R' Shloima returned home to find David's aunt anxiously awaiting his return. He invited her into his office. "Please sit down for a few minutes. I'll be right with you."

R' Shloima had decided to send a telegram to the late Satmar Rav, Reb Yoel Teitelbaum of blessed memory (1887- 1979), asking him to pray on the boy's behalf. There wasn't enough time before Shabbos to write a detailed explanation, so R' Shloima simply wrote the boy's name and his mother's name, and urged the Rav to daven immediately for the child's recovery.

That task done, R' Shloima returned to the aunt and told her to invite the entire family—many of whom were not religious—to come to his house for kiddush and the Shabbos meal that Friday night. "Let them know that they won't be able to drive back. They'll either have to walk, or if it's too far, we'll be happy to arrange accommodations for the night." That Friday night, over forty Kauder family members showed up at R' Shloima's house—uncles, aunts and cousins. After making kiddush, R' Shloima spoke to them about the significance of kashrus, Shabbos, family purity and Jewish education. "We all want David to have a full recovery," R' Shloima declared, "but we have to do something for Hashem to reverse the Heavenly decree."

The family members unanimously agreed to accept these mitzvos upon themselves. "It's not that hard," they reassured each other. "We can do it—for David's sake." Early Sunday morning, R' Shloima was awakened with a call from the nursing home.

"I can't give any details on the phone," the nurse said breathlessly. "Could you please come down to the nursing home right away?" R' Shloima sat frozen, trying to fight down the surge of panic and despair that had welled up at the nurse's words. He couldn't help imagining the worst. Forcing himself to stand up, he immediately set out for the nursing home, ready to face whatever was coming. R' Shloima walked cautiously into David's room—to be greeted by a room full of people, including a beaming Mr. and Mrs. Kauder and a bewildered array of doctors and nurses. The source of their bewilderment was right in front of them. Little David was awake and out of bed, pulling the tubes out of his mouth and crying, "Mama, Mama!"

One of the assisting doctors, the disbelief evident upon his face, turned to R' Shloima and exclaimed, "This is an absolute impossibility!" Like the doctors, R' Shloima could hardly believe his eyes. Yet he knew what he had to do. He immediately gave praise and thanks to Hashem for performing this open miracle for the Kauder family.

One person was absent from the scene of the miracle. David's doctor—the one who had predicted the boy's funeral for Monday—happened to have the day off. He was tinkering with his car in front of his house, changing a tire, when a truck parked further up the hill suddenly came rolling down. The doctor didn't see it coming—until it smashed into his car a moment later. He never had a chance. His funeral was on Monday morning. One year after David's miraculous recovery, R' Shloima received an unexpected letter from the Satmar Rav. "You should know that the souls of the family made a strong impression in Heaven," the Rav wrote. "Since you encouraged them to return and accept the mitzvos, the Heavenly Judgment was changed and their child was spared." R' Shloima was astonished. There had been no time to tell the Rav anything about the Kauder family on that hectic Friday—no time, in fact, to do much more than write David Kauder's name. Yet the Satmar Rav had known it all. (From Visions of Greatness Volume VII, Reb Y. Weiss).

We can be inspired by this story to believe that every generation has its righteous leaders! **Good Shabbos Everyone.**