

## Countering Death

A Daf Yomi Message For Parshas Noach

by Rabbi Menachem Rokeach

Any comments please email [rebecca1918@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca1918@gmail.com)

The Torah records that Noach and his family who were saved in the ark, while everyone else perished in the Flood, entered the ark B'ETZEM HAYOM HAZEH, during that very day (Braishis 7:13). Rashi translates "in broad daylight", and explains that the phrase comes to emphasize that the entrance to the ark was conspicuous and visible to all, and yet no one was able to interfere.

The phrase B'ETZEM HYOM HAZEH is also found in Devorim 32:48, where Moshe is told to ascend Mount Nebo to die there. This too says Rashi, comes to emphasize that the ascent is to be done conspicuously, so that if the Israelites would try to interfere, in order to keep Moshe alive, they will realize they cannot. (See Taz on Rashi ibid.)

Some might have tried to interfere with Moshe ascending the mountain, since his death was contingent on ascending the mountain. However, my son Tzvi, maintains that they thought of interfering against the death itself of Moshe, by the method David used to impede the angel of death, i.e., studying Torah without pause on the day designated as his last ( see Shabbos 30B ). They would thus surround Moshe with ceaseless Torah study and thwart his death sentence.

The gist of the comparison is that this method is a proven one (see discussion Sotah 21a), except that the angel of death manages to circumvent the antidote, as he managed to interrupt David's Torah study and thus cause his death.

The above is interestingly relevant to the story of Noach and the Flood. For the Almighty postponed the flood for 120 years (see Rashi Braishis 6:3), corresponding to the span of Moshe's life, in the merit of Moshe who was to descend from Noach, (see Midrash Braishis 26:6).

So powerful is Torah study, that it can REPEL death. The merit, furthermore, of the true Torah teacher Moshe even repulsed death centuries earlier during the Flood. However, this was only for as long as the years of the Rebbe in our midst.

No wonder the Torah is called "TORAS CHAYIM", Torah of LIFE. For the Torah is your life. "Ki hu chayaichem" (Devorim 32: 47)

Shabbat Shalom