



Pinpointing Priorities

After the Great Flood that destroyed the world, it was time to begin anew and rebuild. The Torah tells us, “**Vayachel** Noach *ish ha’adamah vayita karem* – And Noach **began** to be a master of the soil and he planted a vineyard.” (*Bereisheet* 9:20) Rashi notes the curious use of the word “*vayachel* – and he began,” and comments that not only does the word mean ‘and he began’ but is also connotes “*chullin*,” an element of the mundane and irreverent. “This [can be understood as] he made himself **profane**,” for he should have first engaged in planting something different. — [Gen. Rabbah 36:3. i.e., he should not have planted a vineyard, from which wine is produced, but other trees.] (Rashi)

What was so terrible about what Noach

did? After all, the Midrash teaches us that he was instructed to take every species of plant and animal into the ark so it could be used after the flood. Further, after witnessing such overwhelming devastation, did Noach not deserve to relax and find comfort in wine to recover from his ordeal? It seems overly critical to say that by planting a vineyard he desecrated himself.

The famed mashgiach of Yeshivat Mir, Rav Yerucham Levovitz *zt”l* finds two fundamental ideas embedded in Rashi’s comment. The first is that “everything follows the beginning,” meaning that a thoughtful and deliberate start guides the subsequent path. Noach was charged with the responsibility to rebuild; thus his first action was foundational.

Rav Scheinerman in *Ohel Moshe* adds, had Noach had a true understanding of the significance and magnitude of laying the groundwork for the future of civilization, he would not have planted grapes, as they carry the potential to cause destruction. Noach’s *chillul*, his debasement, was his failure to grasp the scope and purpose of his obligation to rebuild the world.

The second idea that Rav Yerucham *zt”l* offers is that one’s choices, however subconsciously driven, indicate a facet of his core character. Noach’s first choice, a vineyard, suggests a leaning toward capricious or lax behavior. We can extend this perspective to ourselves; How do we choose our primary activities? What motivates our decisions and

Protect your Family's
Health
and Finances with
Critical Private Medical
Insurance

For details send an email or WhatsApp to

normanz@shaham.co.il

054-4258671

Norman Zysblat

Licensed Insurance Professional

preferences?

Rav Simcha Wasserman זת"ל offers an additional and fascinating perspective. Noach witnessed sweeping destruction. One could think that he deserved time to mourn the loss and allow himself the distraction of wine to help ease his transition back into a cultivated world. Here, says Rav Wasserman, lay his mistake. In the aftermath of such devastation, one cannot yield or succumb to nursing wounds and mourning. Rather, one must immediately put his efforts into reconstruction and rehabilitation. Rav Wasserman was known for speaking out against the millions of dollars invested into memorials for the Holocaust instead of dedicating the money to scholarship, education and training the new generation with Jewish values and pride.

During the month of Elul and the *Yamim Nora'im*, we involve ourselves in efforts to realign our mindset and our goals for the new year. As we read *Parashat Noach* we are reminded that the choices and decisions we make lay the foundations for the year ahead. Let us choose wisely, ensuring that the foundations are strong and focused with the correct priorities. ■



SUNDAYS
9 PM IL / 2 PM EDT



TIPS FOR OLIM
28 minutes of taches

OLIM TOOLBOX TALKS
 **paveway**

Register: olimpaveway.com/all-events
   [@olimpaveway](https://www.instagram.com/olimpaveway)



THE RISE! SERIES
with Rebbetzen Tamar Taback
Beginning October 26th



Unleash the legacy of the Imahos, and Rise! into your highest feminine potential in the footsteps of Mashiach!

*"Many women should be in this school."
Rabbi Yitzchak Berkowitz shlita*

"The feminine side of the spiritual in its genuine glory..." R' Akiva Tatz

Sign up at: thenexus.org
info@thenexus.org Phone-line available

~ *First class is Free* ~

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
CHAVA Discover a cosmic blueprint to understand yourself, your relationships and your deepest potential.	SARAH Understand how to create a powerful, healthy, loving marriage or marriage-to-be (really!)	RIVKA Has prayer become another task on your checklist? Master feminine prayer and become deeply connected to Hashem.	RACHEL & LEAH You CAN balance it all! Deep learning and ruchnius merge with perfection at your kitchen stove!
 Personal mentors	 Hybrid learning model = own pace + live group coaching calls	 Like-minded community	 Sources + diagrams
<i>Rabbanit Taback is a gifted thinker, speaker, and writer who has poured her heart and soul into her teaching with an understanding that ignites a love for Torah.</i> - Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky shlita		<i>"I don't know how anyone can understand femininity, marriage and our potential without this."</i> - Faigy Pollack <i>"When people say her courses are life-changing, I didn't understand that that meant... until now."</i> - Chana	