

The 7 Laws of Noah &...

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The Seven Laws of Noah and the Non-Jews who Follow Them

By Michael Kress

Sitting at a table at Mendy's Kosher Delicatessen in New York, Jim Long pauses to say a blessing in Hebrew before biting into a massive hamburger topped with fried pastrami. "This pastrami is better than bacon," he declares in his warm voice tinged with an Arkansan accent. The 58-year-old filmmaker—who no longer permits himself bacon—is in the city with his wife Carol, who sits primly beside him. They are here to speak at several Orthodox synagogues about their documentary, *Riddles of the Exodus*, which examines the biblical account through the lens of Egyptian archaeological finds.

The Longs are an observant couple. Hebrew phrases pepper their conversation—a *b'ezrat Hashem* (with God's help) here, a *baruch Hashem* (praise God) there. Back in Arkansas, they keep a traditional Jewish home. "We've got blessings in *ivrit* [Hebrew] hanging on the walls, and menorahs on display," Long explains. Each year, they build a *sukkah* and attend a Passover *seder*. "Our oldest grandson just turned six and already knows his *aleph-bet*," Long boasts.

But despite the *baruch Hashems*, the *menorahs*, the *sukkah*, the avoidance of pork and the intimate familiarity with advanced rabbinic texts, Jim and Carol Long are not Jewish, nor do they

have any plans to convert. They are Noahides: non-Jews who accept the authority of Jewish law and focus their lives around the Jewish concept of Sheva Mitzvot B'nei Noach or the Seven Commandments for the Children of Noah. This set of laws is intended for non-Jews and, according to tradition, predate the Ten Commandments given at Mount Sinai. "I believe exactly what a Jew believes," Long tells me. "My belief system is exactly parallel to that of an Orthodox Jew. That doesn't mean I am one."

Unbeknownst to most Jews, there are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of Noahides, and most, like the Longs, are former Christians who've turned their backs on the faith. This is not the first time the world has seen a community of "Righteous Gentiles" who center their beliefs around Judaism but it is the first time in history that such a group has begun to organize as a worldwide movement. And that movement is being actively encouraged by some Orthodox Jewish groups—in particular, the Brooklyn-based Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidim.

About forty blocks north of Mendy's deli, Rabbi Yakov Cohen scurries around a second-floor office at the Schneerson Center for Jewish Life, the home of Chabad on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

The 30-something Brooklynite with a close-cropped reddish beard, rarely sits still: he devotes his copious energies to helping out with the Chabad center's core mission—classes, prayer services and other programs for Jewish residents of this tony Manhattan neighborhood.

His true passion, however, lies in reaching out to non-Jews through what are usually referred to as the "Seven Laws," which he describes as pillars of universal morality that serve as a "balm for a world of conflict and immorality." Jewish teachings say that God first gave these laws to Adam, then reaffirmed them as part of the covenant he made with Noah after the Flood. Just as the Jews have the Ten Commandments

(plus an additional 603 mitzvot), non-Jews—all of whom are technically the children of Noah—have the Seven Laws, which command them to establish a legal system and refrain from murder, blasphemy, idolatry, adultery, theft and eating the flesh of a living animal.

“The non-Jews have the full length and breadth of Torah—they just have a different role in it,” says Cohen, his rapid-fire delivery complete with a yeshiva-ish lilt. “The role of every person is to be a good person, to bring divine light, to draw down godliness, Hashem, into the world. To do it as a Jew, as a non-Jew, it doesn’t matter. It’s the same light,” he says. “It’s the same Godly energy.”

Like virtually all Chabad Hasidim, Cohen seeks counsel in the words of Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the late Lubavitch rebbe, who died at age 92 in 1994 and is still affectionately referred to simply as the “the rebbe.” “Influencing non-Jews to keep their mitzvos, the Seven Noahide Laws... will assist our task of making the world into a dwelling place for God, and help bring about the arrival of Messiah,” Schneerson said in a 1987 speech during a Purim celebration. In response to teachings like this, thousands of his followers fanned out around the globe to battle what they saw as society’s moral degeneracy, bringing yiddishkeit to non-observant Jews and seeking out and supporting interested non-Jews.

About six years ago, Cohen founded Noahide.org, a website that serves as a sort of Noahide think tank, through which he runs conferences, publishes papers and counsels non-Jews from as far away as Scandinavia. Other Chabad-associated websites such as AskNoah.org and 7for70.com (meaning, seven laws for the proverbial 70 nations of the world) likewise seek to spread Noahide values to non-Jews in English, French, Spanish and other languages. Rabbis from Shimon Cowen in Australia to Immanuel Schochet in Canada offer halachic advice to Noahides and lecture about what Jewish tradition expects of non-Jews. In Israel, Chabad emissaries visit Arab and Druze villages to

pass out literature about the Seven Laws and converse with the sometimes bewildered—but often receptive—locals. In addition to preparing the world for the Messiah, they see themselves as presenting moral values that will end the centuries-old animosities between Muslims and Jews.

“We, the Jewish people, especially frum people, have to be a light upon the nations and we have to tell them what Torah says,” says Cohen. “We have the responsibility to shed light on the world.”

Jack Saunders has a snowy white beard of biblical proportions.

Back in the 1980s he was a Baptist minister at Frazier’s Chapel Independent Baptist Church in Cohutta, Georgia, near the Tennessee border. But that was before the now 58-year-old Tennessean began to question the fundamentals of his faith and came to the conclusion that the gospel stories of Jesus and the entire New Testament are false.

“It was kind of disturbing,” he says of the experience. “But if you’re looking for truth and truth smacks you in the face, then you have to do something. You have to be able to confront it and say, ‘This is the truth’ and let go of your emotions.”

Saunders recalls how hard it was to express his doubts to his parishioners and admit that he had “been wrong for all those years.” The process was slow. For about a year and a half he preached only from the Jewish Bible, what Christians call the Old Testament. Then one Sunday morning, Saunders recalls, he stood on the pulpit and read from Isaiah 7:14, in which a young woman, interpreted by Christians to be a virgin, gives birth to Jesus. For the first time he let his parishioners know that he saw no hint of Christian prophecy in that passage. “That’s when everything, you may say, hit the fan.”

Some church-goers abandoned Saunders, but nearly half of the

congregation's 70 members were moved by the pastor's change of heart and stayed as Frazier's Chapel Independent Baptist Church removed its steeple and crosses. "At the time," Saunders says, "the only thing we knew was what we were not." After reading about the Seven Laws and studying with a rabbi, Saunders and his remaining flock became Noahides and redubbed their place of worship Frazier's Chapel B'nai Noach Study Center. "I wanted to be able to read the Hebraic sources by myself," says Saunders, who has since learned Hebrew. "I didn't want to be lied to because I'd been lied to by all those Christians."

It was Texas archaeologist Vendyl Jones who introduced Jim Long to the Seven Laws. The two met in 1993 when Jones appeared on the Dallas radio show that Long produced. A former Baptist preacher, Jones had grown dismayed with what he considered the anti-Jewish sentiments of the Gospels and sought council from rabbis, studied in Israel and became a Noahide. He is believed to have been the inspiration for the character Indiana Jones in the film *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and is the founder of the Vendyl Jones Research Institute—a nonprofit based in Grandview, Texas, devoted to Biblical archeology. Considered one of the pioneers of the modern Noahide movement, Jones fondly remembers meeting Schneerson in his Brooklyn home and the rabbi's encouraging words: "'Vendyl Jones, you are doing the most important work in the world.'"

Long found himself intrigued by Jones's spiritual journey. Having drifted from denomination to denomination until he abandoned Christianity altogether, Long "was looking for something to fill the void." Shortly after the radio interview, he began attending Torah classes and joined Jones on archeological digs in the Middle East.

For Pam Rogers, the break with Christianity was more wrenching. Rogers and her husband, Larry, who live in Tulsa, Oklahoma, were members of the Worldwide Church of God, a small Christian movement that observes the Sabbath on Saturdays,

before becoming leaders of a Messianic Jewish congregation. In the early 1990s, a Jewish man befriended them and challenged them to prove the validity of the Christian Bible. As the couple tried to defend their views, they came to believe that the New Testament distorted the teachings of the Hebrew Bible.

The decision to become a Noahide threatened to break the Rogers family apart. Pam's father, a Pentecostal preacher, refused to speak to her for four years. Larry lost his job because he refused to work on Saturdays. The couple almost divorced because Pam made the decision to build her life around the Seven Laws before Larry did. "We lose our children, our spouses, our identities," Rogers says of the sacrifices that she and other Noahides are often forced to make for their faith.

Despite what might seem an obvious trajectory, following the Seven Laws is not a path to becoming a Jew, says Yakov Cohen of the Schneerson Center. "We're not interested in membership," he says.

Rather, the Chabad sees Judaism as a "universal religion" that offers salvation to everyone without conversion.

Jews are not known for proselytizing, and most Jews believe that Judaism prohibits it. David Novak—a Conservative rabbi and leading authority on the Seven Laws and what Judaism requires of non-Jews—debunks that idea. "Find me one halachic prohibition against proselytizing," he says. The popularly accepted notion that Judaism opposes proselytizing, Novak argues, rests less on theology than on the fact that most of Jewish history has been a perpetual struggle for survival. "For most of the time, Jews couldn't do it."

Novak, who teaches at the University of Toronto, points to sporadic attempts to convert people to Judaism throughout history. The best-known effort took place during the time of the Second Temple, which stood from 515 to 70 B.C.E. Living

under the Romans, Jews actively proselytized, with great success. Some non-Jews converted, others simply took on aspects of observant Jewish life and became part of Jewish communities. Called the “God Fearers” (Yirei Adonai), they are immortalized in the Book of Psalms.

While Jewish law does not prohibit proselytization, it does not call for a world of Jewish converts, either. The traditional messianic vision, as articulated most famously in the Book of Isaiah, is of a world at peace in which everyone acknowledges one God, even if all do not adopt Judaism:

And many peoples shall go and say: ‘Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares...

Even in a text as familiar as the Aleinu prayer, Jews regularly reference a vision of Jews and non-Jews under a monotheistic ruler—to many, a clear allusion to Noahides:

All the world’s inhabitants will recognize and know that to you, every knee should bend, every tongue should swear. Before You, Lord, our God, they will bend every knee and cast themselves down and to the glory of your name they will render homage, and they will all accept upon themselves the yoke of your kingship, that you may reign over them soon and eternally.

Since the earliest days of Christianity, Jewish sages have argued over whether the Noahide commandment not to worship “false gods” is compatible with other religions.

Islam, the rabbis hold, is acceptable because of its adamantly monotheistic stance. Christianity, on the other hand, remains a subject of contention, with many arguing that belief in the Trinity is polytheistic, and therefore out of bounds under Noahide law.

Another critical debate centers around whether the Seven Laws are a set of universal moral imperatives that people intuit on their own or are precepts that Jews must actively bring to the world. The dominant halachic attitude has been that Jews are not required to spread Noahide teachings to non-Jews. Moses Maimonides, the medieval Jewish philosopher and legal authority, disagreed. In his monumental 12th-century work the *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides envisioned a society in which non-Jews would be governed by Jewish law, noting that they could choose to convert. "If they do not want to, we do not compel them to accept the Torah and the commandments. Moses did, however, command in the name of God to compel all people to accept the Noahide laws," Maimonides continued. "Compel" may seem a particularly strong word, but Maimonides's stance is clear: Jews must do what they can to teach non-Jews about the Noahide laws.

The 19th century Italian rabbi and famed Kabbalist, Elijah Benamozegh, also believed that Jews have a responsibility to guide non-Jews towards the path of righteousness. Shortly before his death in 1900, Benamozegh received a letter from Frenchman Aimé Pallière seeking advice on converting to Judaism. Benamozegh told the young man there was another way. "The religion of humanity is no other than Noahism," the rabbi wrote to Pallière. "Here is the religion preserved by Israel to be transmitted to the Gentiles. It is the path which lies open before your efforts, before mine as well, to spread the knowledge thereof, as is my duty to do so." Called the "first and last high priest of the Noahide religion," Pallière is

believed to have been the first modern Noahide. A talented writer, he learned Hebrew, lectured at the Orthodox Rabbinical School of France and urged Jews to follow Orthodox traditions.

Benamozegh believed “that mankind cannot rise to the essential principles on which society must rest unless it meet[s] with Israel. And Israel cannot fathom the depths of its own national and religious tradition, unless it meet[s] with mankind.” A half-century later, Benamozegh’s dream of a Jewish-supported Noahide worldwide movement would be seized upon by Schneerson. “Every Jew has the obligation to ensure that all the peoples of the world observe the Seven Noahide Laws” and that non-Jews, as well as Jews, “acknowledge God as Creator and ruler of the world,” Schneerson declared.

It’s a position that remains controversial. “If Jews are telling Gentiles what to do, it’s a form of imperialism,” Novak says. To him, the Seven Laws are valuable in constructing a moral foundation that enables Jews to speak out on social issues, but not as part of a religion around which non-Jews should structure their daily lives. “Why would any Gentile want to be told by Lubavitch—or any other rabbi—what to do?” Novak asks. “I am suspicious of anyone who wants to live this way.”

Novak isn’t alone in his suspicions. “With a lot of rabbis, there’s still this skepticism and fear that someone’s trying to infiltrate your shul and will end up being some sort of missionary trying to bring people to Christianity,” Jack Saunders says of the reception Noahides often receive when seeking guidance. Counseling Noahides is not the sort of subject covered in a typical rabbinical school education and rabbis tend to confront the issue only if approached personally by a non-Jew.

Barry Freundel, the author of *Contemporary Orthodox Judaism’s Response to Modernity* and rabbi of Washington, DC’s Keshet Israel, a modern Orthodox synagogue, is among the many rabbis

who have never been approached by a Noahide. Freundel doesn't share Schneerson's belief that Jews are required to spread the Noahide laws to non-Jews—but he also doesn't believe that Jews can ignore interested Noahides. "Once they are doing it, you are required to help them," he says.

Carol Long wishes there were many more rabbis who were willing to work with Noahides. "They have to know there are actually people out there looking to them for leadership and spiritual guidance and who respect what they bring to the world."

Today's Noahide movement has no prescribed ritual and liturgical life.

Even the laws themselves—six out of the seven—are prohibitions such as "don't kill" and "don't steal."

"We need to give more than 'don't, don't, don't,'" Larry Rogers says. If more people are going to become Noahide, "they have to have a life. They have to know there are life celebrations," he says. "We're trying to find our place with Hashem."

To add greater meaning to their lives, some Noahides have created a lifestyle parallel to that of Orthodox Judaism: They study Jewish texts, pray and follow some of what are known as the "positive commandments"—rituals and other mitzvot. They've adopted portions of Jewish liturgy and prayers, removing all mentions of chosenness, to make clear that this concept only applies to Jews.

But "there are so many opinions about Noahide halacha," says Pam Rogers. "It's very confusing for us Gentiles." The Noahide approach to Shabbat illustrates the difficulty of deciding which Jewish traditions to follow. Rogers and her husband try to avoid work and set aside time for a festive meal and prayer, but don't refrain from using electrical devices. Others may shun the use of electricity but go out of their way

to perform at least one activity over the course of Shabbat that distinguishes them from Jews. Jack Saunders, for example, writes a check. "I always do something that makes it known I'm not Israel," he says.

From his base in New York, Yakov Cohen is working to bring structure to this mosaic of Noahide spiritual life. He and others are creating a Noahide siddur (prayerbook) to standardize prayers, and a liturgy of lifecycle rituals, such as funerals and baby-naming ceremonies. This year, one of the first Noahide weddings was held in Buffalo, New York, under a chuppa. The officiating rabbi spoke of the Seven Laws as the marriage's foundation and sealed it with a contract modeled after the traditional ketuba. Rabbis are also working on the first-ever Noahide Shulhan Arukh—a comprehensive book of law pertaining to non-Jews, which will spell out the specifics of Noahide life, making clear which mitzvot are acceptable for them and which aren't. "We know what they can't do," says Cohen. "Let's see what they can do."

Noahides are few, dispersed, often misunderstood and they crave community.

Lucky ones, like Saunders, find likeminded souls near home with whom to gather together to study Jewish texts, pray, discuss the challenges of the Noahide life and socialize. Local groups, such as the Chavurath B'nei Noach (the Fellowship of the Children of Noah) of Ft. Worth, Texas, serve as an important source of communal life for their members. Organizations such as The Root & Branch Association, Noahide Nations, Rainbow Covenant and B'nai Noach Torah Institute provide advice and support to Noahides wherever they live, often through the Internet.

No single organization, however, is widely recognized as representative of the worldwide movement. That's partly because of the diffuse and ad hoc nature of Noahide

organizations, but it is also reflective of the nature of the movement, which is composed of independent-minded people who have rejected their traditional faith and are willing to follow a largely uncharted spiritual path. "We're very iconoclastic—we're all about taking down the idols," Jim Long says. Saunders puts it more pessimistically: "It seems like every time we try to organize, it doesn't go well."

The most recent effort to bring Noahides together comes in the form of High Council of B'nei Noah, an umbrella organization that seeks to fill the leadership vacuum. The High Council's mission is to provide support for Noahides, educate the general public, serve as a liaison with the Jewish community and standardize Noahide beliefs and practices. Last January, members of the Council—which included Saunders and Long—were inaugurated in Jerusalem, where they recited the following oath:

"I pledge my allegiance to Hashem, God of Israel, Creator and King of the Universe, to His Torah and its representatives, the developing Sanhedrin. I hereby pledge to uphold the Seven Laws of Noah in all their details, according to Oral Law of Moses under the guidance of the developing Sanhedrin."

The Noahide Council is supported by the respected Orthodox Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, best known for the edition of the Talmud that bears his name, but who's also the leader of the "developing Sanhedrin" cited in the oath. Steinsaltz's Sanhedrin is the most recent attempt to revive the Great Sanhedrin of 71 sages who met in Jerusalem until 425 C.E. to discuss matters of concern to the Jewish people and adjudicate disputes. Steinsaltz argues that both Jews and Noahides follow different parts of the same belief system and can even be considered members of the same religion. "Even from simply a utilitarian point of view, we Jews have hardly any friends in the world. B'nei Noah are by definition our closest friends," he says. "So we should reach out to them."

Already, the Council has been troubled by internal disagreements and criticism from outsiders. Some Noahides are unhappy that its members were appointed by the Sanhedrin rather than voted on, while others complain that all its members are American. Jack Saunders is among those who have left the Council, tiring of the strife though still supportive of its mission. "For me, it's a wonderful thing," he says, but cautions that "working out all the problems is going to be tough."

Steinsaltz believes the Council—and the broader Noahide community—will overcome these rifts. Long also remains optimistic. A major conference for Noahides in Jerusalem for October 2007, during Sukkot, is in the works and Long hopes it will serve as an inspiration for Noahides worldwide. "We think that we could act as a *gesher*, a bridge, between Jews and Noahides," he says.

As a child of a Jewish father, Philip Levy, a 28-year-old Noahide from the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, DC, could walk into any Reform synagogue as a full-fledged member.

But after drifting from Catholicism, his mother's religion, to evangelical Christianity, he found meaning in Orthodox Judaism. Through the Internet and guided by the local Chabad community, Levy came to self-identify as a Noahide. He takes classes and attends services as a non-Jew at a Chabad synagogue and even created a website, novanoahides.org (nova as in Northern Virginia)—in the hope of meeting other Noahides who live nearby. So far, he has only found one.

Why doesn't Levy take that last step and convert, so he can be considered Jewish according to Orthodox standards and become a full member of the community? Nearly all Noahides grapple with the conversion question, sometimes for years and without definitive conclusion. After all, they adhere to traditional

Jewish commandments more strictly than most Jews and many can quote from rabbinic texts as well as yeshiva students.

Some have become Jewish, but they are a minority. For the rest, the reasons for not converting are complicated. "I was raised on bacon and eggs," Levy jokes, "and if I had to give them up I don't know what I'd do." More seriously, he talks about an "attachment" to his "Gentileness" and his respect for his mother.

But for most Noahides the decision not to convert boils down to the fact that they find spiritual fulfillment in what they view as their role in the divine plan for the world: To follow the lead of the Jewish people—not become them. "Israel was chosen to be a nation of kings and priests and a light unto the nations," Pam Rogers explains. "We decided if everybody converted, who would Israel have to be priests to?"

They believe that they can have a greater impact as non-Jews following the Torah than as Jewish converts, both by encouraging other non-Jews to live according to Noah's laws and by calling upon Jews to observe their own traditions. "If I just converted and went out to the non-Jewish world talking about the Torah and the prophets and how great it was, then I'd just be another Jew running my mouth," says Jack Saunders.

To those who take the long view of Jewish history, like University of Toronto professor Novak, the Noahide movement is destined to peter out, as did the Second Temple-era God Fearers. Eventually, Novak reasons, Noahides will return to their original faiths or convert to Judaism. "If you want rabbis to tell you what to do, why not convert to Judaism?" he asks. "It's an untenable situation."

A couple of months after meeting the Longs at Mendy's Kosher Delicatessen, I called them at their home in Arkansas to ask how they envisioned the Noahide future, in 15, 20, or even 50 years. "There will be places in every state and nation where

people can go to study and worship,” answered Carol. No other group of Righteous Gentiles has had the tools of modern technology with which to communicate, organize effectively and dispense information. This, Jim said, not only insures the long-term sustainability, but the growth of the Noahide movement. Then he asked me a question: “Do you know what kind of world we would live in if all nations honored the Seven Laws?” He took a quick breath and answered his own query: “It would be transformational. If we were to stop killing, stop stealing, establish real courts of justice everywhere in the world, do you see what would happen? We’d have world peace.”

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Welcome to the Summit Conference. Today we will be addressing the The Role of Religious leaders for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combating Violent Extremism with Universal Noahide – UN

First, I want to thank our my fellow speakers for their outstanding leadership in this historic event: Mr Mark Donfiled and ICD Academy for Cultural Diplomacy

I also wish to thank all of you the future Ambassadors, Delegates, and distinguished guests who have taken the time out of their busy schedule to join us for this important program.

My name is Rabbi Yakov David Cohen and I serve as a Rabbi and an ECOSOC NGO Special Envoy to the UN for The Institute of Noahide Code. In my capacity as Special Envoy for the INC, my responsibilities include human rights issues in the Middle East including defending the rights of Jewish, Christian and Muslim Men, women and children.

I like to open with a story that took place with the former New York Mayor David Dinkins and the Chabad Rebbe Menachem Schneerson in 1991.. ...Mayor Dinkins went, both as the Mayor and as the representative of the black community to the Rebbe in Brooklyn, New York, and said, "We pray for the peace of our two communities". The Rebbe replied, "It is one community, under one G-d, under one administration."

One people One World under G-D

Some people wonder, can't we just get along – but everything in life that will function – and certainly function long-term must have both a foundation and a logical premise.

The only way societies – as empirically through thousands of years of human civilization proves – live together, is, if there is a higher ideal.

What can possibly be the higher ideal which unites all of mankind?

What we all have in common is three things:

1. Each and every one of us is a creation of our heavenly father G-D
2. Each and every one of us (including all species, plants, even minerals) have a cosmic goal in the tapestry and

symphony that produces the beauty and melody called humanity –

3. The Creator has specifically taught the Jewish people, passed down from Moses, a universal Noahide ethical code and by us all humbly accepting, we introduce this higher ideal.

I read a personal ad in the paper: Homeless! (JOKE)

Seeking home, will pay rent, utilities, looking to make the world a better place, will provide good company – G-D.

Each and every one of us makes a home for G-d by keeping the Universal Noahide code!

The Universal Noahide Code is one for peace.. Jewish Sages explain that a wonder of G-d's creation is that, although the face of every human being is essentially the same, no two people are identical. As facial features differ, so too, the workings of no two minds are alike. Since differences are an inherent dimension of G-d's Creation, no society should try to stifle these differences. They should not only be tolerated, but encouraged as a springboard for growth. Humankind is created in the Divine Image. Given that this House is one of peace, we must within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, attempt to promote these values not only globally, but specially, immediately in our surroundings.

The Torah message is Universal. Torah was ultimately given for peace. Peace between man and G-d, and peace between man and man. The first Five Commandments are the relationship between man and G-d, whereas the last five deal with man's relation to his fellow human being. These values are eternal, and are encompassed in the Universal Noahide Code. The truth of the matter is that before there was any formal religion there was only Noah, a man who withstood the tides/norms of his day and went against all of the trends of his time, for he

considered these to be unethical, indecent Noah took it upon himself to serve and obey the One G-d. His example was as valid today as it was then. It is critical for all of us, that we, the representatives of many different people affirm and commit publicly to the basic premise, that people respect the very core fabric of life given by the Creator. These are contained within the Seven Universal Codes of Noah, a way of life that expresses and makes the human being commit, to honoring first of all, the Creator, and ultimately, His Creation.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals envision zero hunger, no poverty, decent work and economic growth. May I propose that in the Universal Noahide Codes, the belief in one G-d, promotes equal treatment for all human beings. Humankind's unity reflects G-d's indivisibility. The respect for human life envisioned in the Noahide Codes, also promotes respect that no human being is to be deprived of food as we are seeing regrettably in Syria, in North Korea, as a means of social control, of beating people into deprivation as a means of subjugation. The respect for decent work and economic growth requires us to take into account, the right of all human beings to be remunerated properly for their work that local practices be taken into account by any multinational wishing to invest in a particular area. It is a way of balancing profit with the needs and culture and livelihoods of those either employed or impacted by business.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals also promote partnering for all the goals we wish for humanity, as well as the promotion of peace, justice and strong institutions.

May I further propose, that the Universal Noahide Codes also envision this. There is no greater partnership than the nucleus of society which is the family, the respect for human life within the family, the respect for the most vulnerable, which are the young, the weak and the infirm and the old. And although not politically popular, may I suggest that the

respect for the unborn is also a component of the first partnering of humans. A future partner of society should be respected. Everyone here present today, is here, because your right to be born was respected. May I ultimately suggest as well, is that the Universal Noahide Codes also strengthen the notion of promoting justice, because in its core, the concept of the creation of a judicial system is paramount. As is often said, there is no peace, without justice.

We have all and are all created by G-d – in fact in this sense we have something in common not only with all humans, but also with animals, vegetation and even rocks and non-living creations, with the Universe itself. We need a vigorous proactive campaign which is what I am proud my organization Institute of Noahide Code stands for, in which all people, all people, are elevated through the deep appreciation that their lives are a choice – God chose them, as He loves to see each human being bring light, love, unity and harmony to his or her surroundings, to the world at large. When we all realize we are His ambassadors, each and everyone of us, not only do we do good, but this gives us an inner feeling of worth and as we add respect to ourselves, love to the core, to reflect this to the rest of the world, by extending that to each and every person.

For us to have UNITY we need ONE AND ONLY G-D and for G-d to have UNITY HE needs us!

We had a giant in the United States, may his memory be a blessing.

Dr. Martin Luther King queried those around him: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?”

The Rebbe Menachem Schneerson also taught us that a “Little light can dispel a lot of darkness”. Not far from this concept, and in terms of love, which is the underlying theme

that humanity craves for, Dr. King added: Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that”.

But what is love based on? Love, as Jewish mysticism teaches us, is realizing that we are but one heart in many bodies, one universal mission, affirming that each one of us has been made in the image of our Maker, challenged to rise above instinctual selfish instincts and invite a Divine purpose, mission and meaning in our life. We can only achieve this objective, in the manner of respect, of establishing court systems, by creating partnerships that include the basic core of society which is the family unit, the respect for human life, through food, equitable respect for the rights, needs of others. We include in this, the environment, as well as our fellow animal creatures, His entire Creation.

Practically, by each of us dedicating our lives individually to this recognition that “I am not a biological being, born one day, to die another”, rather “I am an ambassador of our Creator to add in the goodness and kindness of this world, I take upon myself the responsibility to share this message – the message of truth, the message of empathy, the message of love”. Then and only then, can truly the vision of the U.N. be realized and speedily fulfilled, as the great prophet Isaiah expressed ‘that they will beat their swords into plowshares and no nation will make war ever again’.

Sweet New Year!!!

THANK YOU.

IDC – Chabad UES NY NY USA on 9 20, 2017
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Abortion and Jewish Law

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Abortion and Jewish Law – Partial birth abortion

By: Rabbi Yakov D. Cohen

The sanctity and infinite worth of every human being is a quintessential Jewish value, grounded in the biblical notion that man is created in the divine image and likeness to the creator. According to the Mishnah (Sanhedrin 4:5) “Whoever destroy one life is as if he destroyed a whole world”.

Abortion is permitted, and perhaps even required in cases of serious danger to the mother according to Jewish perspectives. However for convenience it is prohibited. When the majority of the fetus has emerged... the mother and the child are co-equal and you can not take one life / soul for another life / soul.

In essence abortion is judged to be the unwarranted taking of a life within a life it is the same prohibition as murder. Unless the Torah / Jewish law permits it.

One of the ultimate goals of man is the imitation of G-d. We do this in every good act, paralleling G-d's own creation of good. The most direct way that we can do this, however, is in our actions toward our fellow man.

G-d's purpose in creation could have been fulfilled with the creation of a single creature to accept His good. Such a creature, however, could never truly resemble G-d. G-d Himself is a bestower of good, and if only one creature existed, then to whom would it do good? Certainly not to G-d, for G-d has no needs. It is for this reason that G-d created the world as an arena for an entire species of man.

When G-d first created man, Adam was one. G-d then said (Genesis 2:18), "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart." As long as man was alone, he could not really be good. For to be good is to imitate G-d, the giver of good. A man alone would have no one to whom to bestow good, and therefore, could not be called "good." This is what G-d meant when He said, "It is not good for man to be alone." G-d then created woman as a counterpart of man.

Man also imitates G-d by becoming His partner in the procreation of children. Just as G-d is a Creator, so man also becomes a creator of life. Our Sages therefore teach us that there are three partners in the procreation of a child: his father, his mother and G-d. The sexual act is the vehicle through which man displays this aspect of his partnership with G-d, and this is one reason why its perversion is considered among the worst of sins (Derech Mitzvotecha by Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch).

In a spiritual sense, the good that man does also benefits every other human being. Thus, in doing good, one is at least indirectly benefiting his fellow man, even in the case of ritual laws that do not directly do so. Our Sages thus teach us that every person is morally responsible for every other. The author of Reshit Chochmah explains that all souls are bound together, as with rope, and the movement of one is reflected in every other. This is what the Torah means when it says (Numbers 16:22), "One man sins, and anger is directed against the entire community." The Midrash provides us with an

excellent example illustrating this: A number of people are sitting in a small boat. All of a sudden, one man begins to drill a hole under his seat. When the people complain, he retorts, "What complaint do you have? After all, I'm drilling the hole under my own seat." Finally, a wise man answers him, "We are all in the same boat. The hole may be under your seat, but the water that comes in will make the boat sink with all of us in it."

In a spiritual sense, we are all in the same boat. Every good thing that we do affects all mankind. In every good act that we do, we imitate G-d insofar as we ultimately bring good to all humanity. This is indeed one reason why G-d put us all in the same spiritual boat.

Of course, we do this more directly when we do good toward our fellow man. This is the archetype of all good. There is no way of imitating G-d more closely than in doing good to others.

The Talmud says that we bind ourselves to G-d by imitating His ways. But in what ways does the Talmud say that we imitate G-d? Look at its words carefully:

Just as G-d clothes the naked, so shall you. Just as G-d visits the sick, so shall you. Just as G-d comforts the bereaved, so shall you.

Elsewhere, the Talmud says that we must also imitate G-d in His mercy and compassion. The general lesson is that we resemble G-d most in our relationship with our fellow human beings.

This concept is best exemplified by the famous story of Hillel. The Talmud tells us that a non-Jew once came to Hillel and said, "I wish to convert to Judaism, but only if you teach me the entire Torah while I stand on one foot."

Hillel replied, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the core of Judaism. The rest is mere

commentary.”

Many of the commentators find this story very perplexing. The commandments dealing with our relationship toward our fellow man are certainly very important. But there are also many other important commandments that apparently have nothing at all to do with other people. How could Hillel have dismissed these as mere commentary?

What Hillel was teaching us, however, was that the main reason for all the commandments is the imitation of G-d, and that this is exemplified by our relations with our fellow human beings. We must deal with our fellows just as G-d deals with us. In doing so, we fulfill His purpose in creation. This imitation of G-d is ultimately the purpose of all the commandments.

This is also the meaning of what G-d told His prophet (Jeremiah 22:16), “He judged the cause of the poor and needy, and it was well. Is this not to know Me?” As discussed earlier, we can only know G-d by drawing close to Him through imitating Him. G-d is telling us that the main way in which we know Him is by imitating Him in doing good to others.

There is a commandment in the Torah (Leviticus 19:18), “You shall love your neighbor like yourself.” One of our foremost leaders, Rabbi Akiba, said, “This commandment is the core of the Torah.” Rabbi Akiba is teaching us the same lesson as Hillel. We imitate G-d’s love for the world through our love toward our fellow man. In this way, we draw ourselves close to G-d and fulfill His purpose in creation.

In a deeper sense, the concept of love itself is the archetype of spiritual closeness. Where a bond of love exists between two people, they are close – even though they may be separated by vast distances. On the other hand, people who hate each other are far apart, even when they are sitting right next to each other. Love and hate exist in a spiritual, rather than a

physical dimension. Love between two people implies a harmony and complementarity between them. It is this harmony that makes them close, irrespective of physical distance. In obeying G-d's commandments, we seek to bring a similar harmony and closeness between ourselves and G-d. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" is therefore indeed the prime rule of the Torah. It not only leads us to a closeness to G-d, but also teaches us the meaning of such closeness.

Following a similar line of reasoning, we can understand what our Sages mean when they teach us, "He who denies the doing of kindness (Gemilut Chassadim) is like one who denies the most fundamental principle (G-d Himself)." G-d is the ultimate bestower of kindness, and one who divorces himself from such deeds, places himself poles apart from G-d. G-d is the ultimate doer of good, and this man denies doing good. He is therefore said to be like one who divorces himself from G-d.

G-d is the source of all life, and therefore, the more one resembles G-d, the more he partakes of life. One who clings to G-d is said to be truly alive, as the Torah says (Deuteronomy 4:4), "You who have clung to G-d are all alive today." We thus find (Proverbs 10:2), "Charity saves from death." When one gives, he resembles his Creator, the source of all life.

High-Level Panel on The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive

Societies and Combating Violent Extremism

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High-Level Panel on The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combating Violent Extremism

**UN Headquarters, New York, 21 July, 15.00
-18.00**

LIST OF SPEAKERS

Co-organisers UNESCO, the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN, Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics

With the Patronage of H.E. Prof. Frederico Mayor, President, Fundacion Cultura de Paz

Keynote Speakers:

- Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO
- Mr Jehangir Khan, USG and Chairman of the Counter-terrorism Implementation Task Force
- Mr Jehangir Khan, USG and Chairman of the Counter-

terrorism Implementation Task Force

- H.E. Ambassador Kiarat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the UN
- Video Address, H.E. Frederico Mayor

Moderator: Gianni Picco, former USG

Panelists:

Panel 1 – The Call for National Legislation to Implement the Culture of Peace and Combat Violent Extremism

- MEP. Lara Comi, EU Parliament Representative (Italy)
- M.P. Saman Jafri, Member of Parliament of Pakistan
- The Honorable Diane Watson, U.S. Congress(rt) and former Ambassador
- M.P. Oezcan Mutlu, Representative from Bundestag, German
- M.P. Jalila Morsli, Member of Parliament of Morocco
- Video Address – Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini, Chairman, Italian Senate Foreign Affairs Committee

Panel 2- The Multi Track Partnership of Religious Leaders, Educators and the Media in Putting the Legislation into Action

- Dr. Lahoucide Khabid, President, Atlas Center for Diplomacy in Morocco
- Dr. Boris Pincus, President, Religions in Dialogue
- Imam Agha Jafri, Founder, American Muslim Congress
- Rabbi Y. David Cohen, President UN NGO Institute for Noahide Code
- Dr. Wafik Moustafa, Chairman, Muslim Conservative Network UK
- Rev. Thomas Del Balle-Reyes, Catholic Holy Cross Church
- Shoshana Nicole Bekerman, Director, Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics

Moderator: Mayor Martin Oliner

Affiliated Sponsors:

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- The Institute for Noahide Code, UN NGO, Atlas Center for Diplomacy

22.07.2016 – ODG

Building peace starts on the parliamentarians' benches as much as on the benches of schools



On 21 July, UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, addressed a High-Level Panel on “The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combatting Violent Extremism”, organized by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Interparliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics, at UN Headquarters in New York.

“Building peace and preventing violent extremism cannot be won with hard power only”, stated the Director-General. “We need soft power also, we need to win the battle of ideas, through education, through democratic debate, through a better understanding of each other’s cultures and religions” she continued. “Parliaments play a critical role to address the challenges of our times, when not everything can be solved at the level of Governments or United Nations Agencies alone,” said the Director-General in her opening speech highlighting that “parliamentarians have the unique power to bring solutions closer to the people, and make sure their needs and concerns are at the heart of our response.”

The event brought together parliamentarians and representatives of the diplomatic community, the United Nations system and civil society in an effort to establish a closer collaboration on the development of a culture of peace and preventing the unprecedented rise of violent extremism. It aimed at the adoption of legislation for mandatory education on culture of peace and measures to prevent terrorism and violent extremism. It also aimed at strengthening the multi-track diplomacy partnership, to engage governments, the UN system, religious, academic, and media leaders to fulfil their respective roles to implement such aligned legislation. The Director-General gave an overview of UNESCO's action worldwide to prevent and counter violent extremism stating that "this starts on the benches of school, it must start with peace education, with textbooks and curricula that teach human rights, to prepare individuals to live as responsible citizens. Ms Emilia Gatto, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, stressed that "there are no easy answers... we need to tackle the root causes of violent extremism, including marginalization, inequalities, discrimination, human rights violations, and hate speech, using the full toolbox offered by Agenda 2030". H.E. Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, urged that a long-term and comprehensive approach was needed to preventing and countering violent extremism, involving also regional and international cooperation, as a true requirement to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

In his intervention, Mr Jehangir Khan, Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, noted the key importance of dialogues with parliamentarians who represented the "citizens of the world". He argued that violent extremism was one of the great challenges of the 21st century in particular in terms of preventing and saving the young generations from engaging in violent extremism. He also recalled the UN Secretary-General's global plan of action,

developed by the entire UN system.

Ms Hanifa Mezoui, Senior Advisor of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, commended UNESCO for having issued the Organization's 2016 "Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism". Ms Mezoui presented projects of the Alliance of Civilizations, aimed at strengthening religious cooperation and working through mediation as a form of preventive diplomacy.

The keynote session concluded with an address by Federico Mayor, President of the Foundation Culture de Paz, who recalled the important role of the UN High-Level Forum on a 'culture of peace', and urged parliamentarians to be at the forefront of the fight against extremist ideologies.

From:

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Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics

The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combating Violent Extremism

November 9th Summit

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November 9th Summit

On the week of the worst terrorist attacks in recent history

in Europe, news that has shaken the international community to its core, a group of men and women, diplomats, journalists and Rabbis, Imams, and Reverends, met at the United Nations for the November 9th Summit mobilizing Cultural and Religious Ethics for Agenda 2030.

It is notable that it was the Permanent Mission of Panama to the United Nations that hosted this event, given that this small and prominent Latin American country, decades earlier, had been one of the visionaries to promote the Jewish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin and his 1948 Convention on Genocide, which was ultimately, the cornerstone for the International Criminal Court now based in The Hague.

Co-sponsored by the Institute of Noahide Code/IPCGE, the platform for this event on 9th November, was the Universal Noahide Code "UNC", setting forth to the international diplomatic and religious community what philosopher Hugo Grotius cited as the basis for the 1945 United Nations Charter and thus, the cornerstone of all international law. Grotius further pointed out that the "UNC" is the practical means, by which humanity may strive to live in unity and in peace and can thus fulfill its potential to see all the families of the earth blessed. These laws of peace and unity encompass respect for G-d, for human life, respect for the family, for other people's property, for the creation, respect for judicial systems plus respect for all creatures and the environment.

Among those participating, Her Excellency, the Ambassador Laura Flores of Panama, who was the keynote speaker and opened the event welcoming everyone. Ambassador Flores highlighted the efforts to be made now, so that future generations inherit and can enjoy a culture of peace built on respect and understanding. Peace which indeed in thought, and also in the Wall in front of the United Nations Headquarters, is prominently displayed not far from where Ambassador Flores spoke. There on the famed 1948 Isaiah Wall, we read, "They

shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Another notable speaker among many prominent participants as The Honorable H. Lincoln Douglas, Minister from Trinidad and Tobago, was Mr. Gianni Picco, former Under Secretary General of the United Nations. On the 9th November, Mr. Picco who was instrumental and actively involved in releasing numerous Western hostages in the Middle East, notably Beirut, spoke about his mediation among terrorists and then some regional tyrants, to save lives, reunite families, spare the world of more bloodshed. Moderating the events, was the Mayor of Lawrence, Long Island, Mr. Martin Oliner, where the Druze leader, Coronel (Ret.) Munib Bader spoke about how the Druze have no aspirations of becoming a country or converting anyone to their monotheistic religion or tradition, and are loyal to the people where they reside. Because 2,000,000 Druzim live in Syria, in Lebanon, and in Israel, the Druze are uniquely positioned to bring peace among these people in the region, according to Coronel Bader.

Among other prominent speakers at the United Nations, Rabbi Elie Abadie, of Yale University Center for Faith and Culture, and Chief Rabbi of Safra Synagogue in Manhattan, and Imam Shamsi Ali, spiritual leader of Jamaica Muslim Center of New York. Whereas Rabbi Abadie spoke about how religious leaders have to find a means to transmit religious values in a manner that is both positive and conducive to non violence, Imam Ali said that he has been actively pursuing the building of bridges between the different religions that stem from Abraham.

Rabbi Yakov David Cohen, founder of the Institute of the Noahide Code and accredited to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations, opened the panel of religious and cultural values. He first thanked among others, Shoshana Bekerman, without whose expert involvement, the event would

have been very difficult to organize. Furthermore, Dr. Leonard Grunstein spoke about finances and development as a means of empowering people. Rabbi Cohen also mentioned, Mrs. Judy Schaffer, who moderated a panel on development. But it was Rabbi Yakov Cohen, who reminded those present in this first UNC Summit at the UN, that the basis of the gathering were the 7 Laws of Noah, with the common thread of the memory of the destruction and despair, upon which the UN was established. The Rav reminded those present that the event was being held on the 77th anniversary of Krystallnacht, a time of darkness and desperation, which memory placed on those participants, and their constituents and congregants, the unique responsibility which humankind carries to be messengers of goodness, kindness and global change.

UNC is all about PEACE

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UNC is all about PEACE

Museum of Tolerance may 3 2015 LA CA

JOKE Political, religion leader and Rabbi on a plane ... boy Scott

ONE man two 2 shuls ..one I go one I don't...

Peace Shalom is G-d Name . the reason G-d gave the Torah is for PEACE and created the world for Him to have a Dwellings

place ...

The Institute of Noahide – UN NGO Celebrating Diversity was conceived as an opportunity to unite the world by re-echoing the belief in One G-d as the Creator of all human beings and the belief that we are all created in the Divine Image This is the true meaning of harnessing diversity among different cultures. This is a foundation for our organization's goal which to work alongside the United Nations (UN) and other partner organizations with hopes of promoting human rights and development, and protecting freedom of religion.

As the Rabbi Director of the Institute of the Noahide Code, I am heartened coming into the United Nations Headquarters with the Isaiah Wall right across the UN in which the day is mentioned that no nation will wage war against another nation, and the swords will be transformed into plowshares. The Seven Universal Laws of Noah are means by which humanity strives to live in unity and peace. These laws for peace and unity encompass respect for G-d, for human life, respect for the Family, for other people's property, the creation and respect of a judicial system, and respect for all creatures and environment.

The Laws of Noah or The Noahide laws are comprised of seven universal laws biblical binding upon all humanity... In 1991, a joint resolution of the United States congress called its principles "the bedrock of society from the dawn of civilization..." without which "the edifice of civilization stands in serious peril of returning to chaos".

We are seeking to focus on the Laws of Noah with a Global Summit in UN HQ and a Moment of Silence to promote ethical standards and provide the opportunity for all mankind to gain parity and value peace. The United Nations acknowledges human rights as well as humanity's right to freedom, including that of religion. The Global summit would be open to all races, religions and ethnicities. It would be a celebration of all

that unites us as human family that we are: our yearning for ever more light at a time that humanity hopefully emerges victorious with light over darkness, the forces of human rights and freedom successful over intolerance, and the ideals of the Noahide Laws prevailing throughout the world.

One Shul 2 Rabbi's

Sound like double trouble? Over-employment? The latest synagogue sitcom? Probably; but Jewish history is never probable.

We started that way. Moses could not, would not, lead alone; Aaron had to be there. Moses' older brother never was quite his associate rabbi. Aaron was vastly more popular. He was the nice guy: arbitrator in congregants' business disputes, mediator in spousal clashes, peacemaker in sisterly spats, and conciliator for anyone with a teenager at home. Mr. Nice.

Moses was more the patrician than the paternal. The teacher, not the counselor; the lawgiver, not the therapist. Mr. (sorry relativists and wannabe brides) Right.

Moses embodied truth; Aaron embraced peace. Truth demands integrity; peace requires compromise. Torah insists on both, hence a team was needed for the making of a people – not an individual.

Moses rarely enjoyed public support; his method, leadership qualifications, and integrity were regularly challenged, and accusations of nepotism drained him. Aaron was rarely taken to task, and then only because of his association with you-know-who.

The brothers' dichotomy did not abate with their deaths; the turnout at Aaron's funeral nearly doubled Moses's. Not surprisingly, it was only upon Moses's passing that despair threatened the people. But while Aaron's popularity earned him

a larger funeral, Moses's instruction earned him the role of leader. Aaron's passing evoked mourning; Moses's passing created a terrifying void. Leadership, like money, is appreciated when you don't have it.

We need our Aarons and we need our Moseses (including our intra-personal, internal ones). One without the other is unbalanced. If we favor the peace over truth because peace doesn't demand of us and truth does, we'll get neither. It might not play well in the sitcoms, but Jewish legacy is not a sitcom.

The 7 for 70 nations is that we all come together as one under ONE Hashem ... NOT we all become one...people do not look alike ... do not think alike ...

“ for us to have unity we need the one and only G-d Ahead not Yahid...

For G-d to have unity he needs us ... yes every one of us 8 billion people as ONE”

Dysfunctional family dynamics tend to repeat themselves generation after generation—until someone kicks the cycle. The Torah repeats the story of sibling rivalry time and again. It begins with an older brother who's jealous of a younger brother's advantage; drama ensues, and things turn ugly. Cain was rabidly envious of Abel. Ishmael boasted and taunted Isaac. Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers—nice families torn apart by jealousy.

Aaron kicks the pandemic of sibling rivalry.¹ His younger brother, Moses, is extraordinary from birth. Then G-d chose him to be the redeemer of the Jewish people. The Torah describes Moses' return to Egypt from Midian after G-d empowered him with the mission of redeeming the Jewish people. Aaron went out to meet him and he kissed him. Without the slightest tinge

of envy, Aaron embraces his role as Moses' assistant and mouthpiece.

More than a thousand years later, Aaron was still viewed as the paradigm of love and peace

If you want to learn about love and peace, watch Aaron. Love was his *modus operandi*. Later, after Aaron passed away, the Torah tells us that "the entire nation of Israel mourned for thirty days"—both the men and the women, explains Rashi. Contrast this with the Torah's description of Moses' passing: "The children of Israel wept for him"—the men only. Rashi quotes the Midrash and explains: "Because Aaron had pursued peace; he promoted love between disputing parties, and between man and his wife." Aaron's death left everyone feeling lonely.

More than a thousand years later, Aaron was still viewed as the paradigm of love and peace. Hillel, the great sage of Israel, puts out the following advice in the Mishnah: "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving the created beings and bringing them close to the Torah."²

There were three key miracles that ensured the survival of the Jews in the desert: the manna, the traveling well of water, and the "clouds of glory" that shielded them from assault. When Aaron died, the clouds of glory disappeared (temporarily). It became apparent that Aaron's merit had been fueling them. The clouds represented everything that Aaron stood for—millions of people can be shielded by the same cloud, unlike food or water, which can't be shared by even two people simultaneously. Like the clouds, Aaron protected and cherished everyone equally. He adored the most simple person in the same way as the most sophisticated. "Love the created beings," says Hillel—even if their only virtue was the fact that they were G-d's creations, Aaron loved them.

It is interesting to note that Aaron's *yahrtzeit* (anniversary of passing) is the only one mentioned in the entire Torah: "He died there . . . on the first day of the fifth month."³ Although Aaron's passing is described earlier in the book of Numbers,⁴ the date is mentioned later, in the Torah reading of Massei, which is always read within the week of his *yahrtzeit*, the first day of Av.

To understand Aaron's *yahrtzeit* is to understand Aaron's unconditional love for others.

Aaron saw through personal distinction and social placement to the place where we are all one

Importance of Noahide Laws... a Moment

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Importance of Noahide Laws... a Moment

Reasoning Behind the Seven Laws –

Why are the 7 Noahide Laws Important?

A Moment of Silence

Much is said about freedom of speech, on the right of a person to express his opinions without fear. However, have you ever thought about our freedom to be silent? Silence is the ability to stop the mad rush of life, close your eyes and stop to contemplate by one's self. Silence enables us to connect with our ability to think and imagine. This is what separates us from other life forms.

The World Is Not a Jungle

Let's take for ourselves a moment of silence: The world is full of various and conflicting cultures, peoples are still fighting for their independence and much of the world's population lives with hunger and poverty.

We don't have to go so far from our own experience. How many times have you encountered in your immediate surroundings lack of respect for others, acts that are the opposite of truth and justice and man's lack of respect for his environment. We ask ourselves, "How can it be, in a world that is so developed scientifically and human understanding has reached heights that once were unimaginable, these problems persist?"

These phenomenon have occurred in peoples who achieved the highest levels in science, philosophy and the arts. One moment of silence is enough time to come to the conclusion that the human conscience must be brought into line with a higher standard. Man made values are not enough to maintain a good and just society. Silence also allows a person to recognize something higher than himself, to understand that only the power and choice of the Creator allows the continued existence of the world.

The End of the Breakdown of Values

Mankind has already come once to a breakdown of values that led to the destruction of most of the world's population at the time of the Great Flood. Afterwards, the Creator commanded Noah and his sons, who were the kernel from which the human race continued, concerning the "Seven Noahide Laws". These seven basic laws contain the basic morals for maintaining a healthy and just civilization.

This allows for the diversity and cultural plurality of mankind while uniting in faith in the Creator and with the Seven Noahide Laws providing a common moral foundation to human existence.

Moses who received the Torah from G-d spread the message of these Seven Noahide Laws and commanded us to influence all the nations of the world to accept them. One who keeps these laws because G-d commanded Moses on Mt. Sinai merits divine reward from G-d for keeping them.

The purpose of these commandments is to make the world settled and not barren, G-d forbid. These laws assure the continued existence of the world and all its inhabitants. One who abandons these basic values forfeits in this way his right to exist because his actions bring about the opposite of settling the world.

Where does this lead?

Is it really possible for a world like this to exist? You would be amazed to hear that the answer is yes. It is a fact that the same world in which people worshipped strength and blindly followed rulers in fighting unnecessary wars has changed drastically since the middle of the 20th century. Mankind is coming to the realization that peace, social justice and freedom are the values to be championed. The cold war has ended, atomic weapons were destroyed and many people achieved their independence. There is still a long way to go

and much more effort has to be expended. The trend, however, is clear enough.

The World Unites

This didn't just randomly happen. The Bible states that the world will reach perfection at the time of the Redemption. In the days of the Messiah the nations will all be united in faith in the Creator and the performance of His commandments.

The prophet Isaiah said, "Then the peoples will speak a pure language to serve him together". This procedure will begin with the appearance of a great leader, the King Moshiach, whose deeds on behalf of education, justice, honesty and establishing faith will influence the entire world, even subconsciously. Then they will come to realize that the true strength and power are based on the statement, "In G-d we trust".

The Personality Behind the Process

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, he is the man that G-d has chosen for this task. The more than 50 years of his leadership were devoted to working for education, justice and truth for the entire world. From the east to the west.

Many leaders have expressed their appreciation of his deeds and participated in his call for education that is based on faith in the Creator of the world and his prophet Moses, who gave the world these commandments. The Rebbe, King Moshiach, has declared that our generation is the generation of the Redemption and all mankind will march to a new age. An age without war, hunger, or competition; a world of peace, mutual assistance, economic abundance and high spiritual awareness. A world where the shining figure of the Moshiach will inspire the entire world.

Keeping the Seven Noahide laws will hasten the appearance of this wonderful age and assure each individual a place in it.

One People, One World

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One People, One World

NEW YORK—The Institute of Noahide Code, a non-governmental organization with consultative status at the United Nations, hosted an event at 777 UN Plaza on Monday called “One People, One World.” The organization was conceived as an opportunity to unite the world by re-affirming the belief in the One G-d as the Creator of all human beings and the belief that we are all created in the Divine Image. The event, led by Rabbi Yakov D. Cohen, gathered people hailing from six different countries (Belgium, Canada, China, Israel, Moldova and the United States) and from all walks of life: rabbis, diplomats, students, business people, journalists and former soldiers. All attended with a commitment to securing world peace according to the Seven Laws of Noah.

Among those present were the Canadian Mission’s Counsellor for Political Affairs for the Middle East, Afghanistan and Asia, Ms. Caterina Ventura as well as Moldova’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Vlad Lupan. Canada, a founding member of the United Nations and Moldova, a newly independent country, have vastly differing histories and cultures but the presence of dignitaries from both states demonstrated the universal appeal of the Noahide Code, regardless of divisions of nationality, class or creed. As Ambassador Lupan reflected: “whenever we think of a decision,

we think through the right or wrong decision, right or wrong decision for my country and right or wrong decision for all the countries in the world.”

Also in attendance was a delegation from the Druze Community of Israel. This included Mr. Koftan Halabi, the founder and Executive Director of the Druze Veterans Association, an organization that advocates on behalf of many non-Jewish members of the Israel Defense Force as well as Israel’s former military attaché to Brazil, Colonel (Res.) Moneeb Bader, and Mr. Nadeem Ammar, former Mayor of Julis Nadeem Ammar, both of whom are board members of the DVA. Rabbi Cohen praised the Druze representatives as an exemplar of different nations working hand-in-hand to protect one another: “These are non-Jewish people, protecting the Land of Israel—which is protecting everyone, both Jews and non-Jews.”

Pursuant to the same theme, Mr. Phil Nussbaum, Chair of the Raoul Wallenberg International Movement for Humanity also placed emphasis on cooperation among the nations. Raoul Wallenberg, a Swede, saved over 100,000 Jews during the Holocaust. Despite not sharing their nationality or religion, one man—Mr. Wallenberg rescued members of the Jewish people from certain destruction. Though Wallenberg has been missing since the close of the Second World War, the Raoul Wallenberg International Movement for Humanity continues to promote the values exemplified by this humanitarian action.

Throughout the event, the Institute of Noahide Code made available print materials in several languages including Hebrew, Arabic and Mandarin. The program itself was conducted in English, French and Hebrew. Ultimately, the key to peace is in seeing internally what unites us. The Institute of Noahide Code remains dedicated to promoting world peace through the universal Seven Laws of Noah, committed to crossing linguistic and national boundaries in order to truly realize the goal of “One People, One World.” As stated on the Isaiah Wall facing the United Nations Headquarters: “They shall beat their swords

into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”



You can learn more about the Institute of Noahide Code at www.Noahide.org and view video recordings of this and other events, programs and lectures at www.youtube.com/channel/UCqLMfZw-nDl3zpMPDicTp0Q.

The Breakthrough

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The Breakthrough

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

And it came to pass on the third day, when morning came, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and the sound of the shofar exceedingly loud; and the entire people within the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with G-d, and they stood at the foot of the mountain...

And G-d came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And G-d called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses ascended.

Exodus 19:16-20

The most momentous event in history took place on Shabbat, the sixth day of the month of Sivan, in the year 2448 from creation (1313 bce). On that day, the entire people of Israel – more than 2 million men, women and children,¹ as well as the souls of all future generations of Jews – gathered at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Torah from G-d. Ever since, the event has been marked on our calendar as the festival of Shavuot, "the Time of the Giving of Our Torah."

But the Torah we received at Sinai had already been in our possession for many generations. Our ancestors had studied and fulfilled the entire Torah even before it was given, observing its every law and ordinance – including the obligation to make an eruv tavshilin when a festival falls on the eve of Shabbat.² No new document was unveiled at Sinai, and no hitherto unknown code of behavior was commanded there. What, then, was given to us at The Giving of Our Torah?

The Midrash explains the significance of the event with the

following parable:

Once there was a king who decreed: The people of Rome are forbidden to go down to Syria, and the people of Syria are forbidden to go up to Rome. Likewise, when G-d created the world He decreed and said: "The heavens are G-d's, and the earth is given to man."³ But when He wished to give the Torah to Israel, He rescinded His original decree, and declared: The lower realms may ascend to the higher realms, and the higher realms may descend to the lower realms. And I, Myself, will begin – as it is written, "And G-d descended on Mount Sinai,⁴ and then it says, "And to Moses He said: Go up to G-d."⁵ (Midrash Tanchuma, Vaeira 15; Midrash Rabbah, Shemot 12:4)

For the first twenty-five centuries of history, there existed a gezeirah – a decree and schism – which split reality into two hermetic worlds: the spiritual and the physical. The spiritual could not be truly brought down to earth – its very nature defied actualization; nor could the physical be made transcendent and divine – its very nature kept it imprisoned within the finiteness and mortality of the lower realms. So Torah, the divine wisdom and will, could have no real effect upon the physical world. It was a wholly spiritual manifesto, pertaining to the soul of man and to the spiritual reality of the heavens. While its concepts could, and were, applied to physical life, physical life could not be elevated – it could be improved and perfected to the limits of its potential, but it could not transcend its inherent coarseness and subjectivity.

At Sinai, G-d revoked the decree which had confined matter and spirit to two distinct realms. G-d came down on Mount Sinai, bringing the spirituality of the heavens down to earth. He summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, empowering physical man to raise his physical self and world to a higher state of existence. The Torah could now sanctify physical life.

This encounter between G-d and man at Sinai introduced a new

phenomenon: the cheftza shel kedushah or holy object. After Sinai, when physical man takes a physical coin, earned by his physical toil and talents, and gives it to charity; or when he bakes flour and water as unleavened bread (matzah) and eats it on the first night of Passover; or when he forms a piece of leather to a specified shape and dimensions, inserts into it parchment scrolls inscribed with specified words, and binds them to his head and arm as tefillin – the object with which he has performed his mitzvah (divine commandment) is transformed. A finite, physical thing becomes holy, as its substance and form come to embody the realization of a divine desire and command.

The mitzvot could have been, and were, performed before the revelation at Sinai. But because they had not yet been commanded by G-d, they lacked the power to bridge the great divide between matter and spirit. Only as a command of G-d, creator and delineator of both the spiritual and the physical, could the mitzvah supersede the natural definitions of these two realms. Only after Sinai could the mitzvah actualize the spiritual and sanctify the material.

[Thus we find that when Abraham required his servant Eliezer to take an oath, he told him to “place your hand under my thigh.”⁶ An oath is taken while holding a sacred object such as a Torah scroll or tefillin; here Abraham is telling Eliezer to swear on the part of his own body sanctified by the mitzvah of circumcision. But since Abraham “observed the entire Torah even before it was given” – i.e., he studied Torah, put on tefillin, affixed a mezuzah on his doorpost – it would seem that he had no shortage of sacred objects available to him. Why, then, did he have Eliezer place his hand under his thigh, contrary to all common standards of modesty and propriety? But as we said, the effects of Abraham’s pre-Sinai mitzvot were of a wholly spiritual nature. Since G-d had not commanded him to do them, they remained subject to the law that separated the supernal from the material; while they had a profound effect

on his own soul, the souls of his descendants, and the spiritual essence of creation, they had no impact on the material substance of the universe. The single exception was the mitzvah of circumcision, which G-d did command to Abraham (as related in Genesis 17), imparting to this mitzvah something of the nature of the post-Sinaitic commandments of the Torah.⁷

An Absorbent World

Therein lies the significance of a curious detail related by our sages regarding the revelation at Sinai.

The Torah tells us that G-d spoke the Ten Commandments in “a great voice, which did not cease” (Deuteronomy 5:19). The Midrash offers a number of interpretations for this description of the divine voice. One interpretation is that the divine did not confine itself to the holy tongue but reverberated in mankind’s seventy languages. A second meaning is that the voice did not cease on that particular Shabbat morning some 3300 years ago: throughout the generations, all the prophets and sages who prophesied, taught and expounded upon the wisdom of the Torah are the extension of that very voice, for they added nothing that was not already inherent in the Ten Commandments. Finally, the Midrash offers a third explanation of the voice’s “unceasing” nature: the divine voice at Sinai was unique in that it had no echo.

The first two interpretations obviously point to the universality and timelessness of Torah. But what is “great and unceasing” about a voice that has no echo? Why should the divine voice at Sinai have been distinguished in this manner from all other sounds?

In truth, however, the echoless nature of the divine communication conveys the very essence of what transpired at Sinai. An echo is created when a sound meets with a substance which resists it: instead of absorbing its waves, the

substance repels them, bouncing them back to the void. Prior to Sinai, the voice of Torah had an echo. Belonging to the spirituality of the heavens, it could not truly penetrate the physicality of the earth. The world might hear of Torah and be affected by it; but there remained a certain degree of resistance, as the Torah and the physical world each remained defined by their respective “higher” and “lower” realms. At Sinai, however, G-d rescinded the decree which had severed the heavens from the earth. The world could now fully absorb the divine voice; a physical object could now become one with its mission and role.

The Empowering Precedent

Therein lies an important lesson to us as we pursue our mission in life to implement the ethos and ideals of Torah in our world.

At Sinai we were charged to serve as “a light unto the nations” – to actualize in our own lives, and to teach all of humanity, that no matter what the conditions of a particular time, place or society may be, there is an all-transcendent, unequivocal, divinely ordained truth and moral code of behavior to which to adhere.

At times, we might be confronted with a seemingly unresponsive and even resisting world. It may appear that one or another of the Torah’s precepts does not fit in with the prevalent reality. So the Torah tells us that the voice which sounded G-d’s message to the world had no echo.

The voice of the Ten Commandments permeated every object and reality in the universe. So any resistance we may possibly meet in implementing them is superficial and temporary. For at Sinai, the essence of every created being was made consistent with, and wholly receptive to, the goodness and perfection which G-d desires of it.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; adapted by

FOOTNOTES

1. *A census taken eleven months later counted 603,550 males between the ages of 20 and 60 (excluding the tribe of Levi).*
2. *Talmud, Yoma 28b.*
3. *Psalms 115:16.*
4. *Exodus 19:20.*
5. *Ibid., 24:19*
6. *Genesis 24:2; cf. Jacob's similar administration of an oath to Joseph, Genesis 47:29.*
7. *Nevertheless, Abraham's mitzvah of circumcision was only a precedent for the divine commandments issued at Sinai, and not a full revocation of the decree dissevering heaven from earth; it was the closest thing he had to an object of holiness, but not a complete sanctification of the physical, which is possible only after Sinai. Thus Maimonides writes: "Pay attention to the major principle expressed by [the words] "It was said at Sinai" ... For everything from which we refrain or which we do today, we do only because of G-d's command to Moses at Sinai, not because of any communication by G-d to earlier prophets. For example, that which we do not eat a limb from a live animal is not because G-d forbade this to Noah, but because Moses forbade it to us by commanding at Sinai that the prohibition of eating a limb from a live animal should remain in force. Similarly, we do not circumcise ourselves because our father Abraham circumcised himself and the members of his household, but because Gd commanded us through Moses that we should circumcise ourselves as did Abraham (Maimonides' commentary on the Mishnah, Chulin 7:6)*

The 30 Mitzvot of the Bnei Noah

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The Thirty Mitzvot of the Bnei Noah

By: Rabbi L Rabinowitz

The Talmud Bavli (Chullin 92a) mentions that Bnei Noach have thirty mitzvot (laws):

‘Rav Yehuda Says: This verse (Zacharia 11:12) refers to the thirty righteous persons among the nations of the world, whose merit sustains the nations of the world.

Ulla said: This verse refers to the thirty commandments which the Noachites have accepted. But they keep only three of them. One, they do not draw up marriage contracts for homosexuals. Two, they do not merchandize (human) flesh in the marketplace. Three, they do have respect for the Torah (and for Torah scholars).’

As RASHI tells us, Chazal do not elaborate on the nature of the 30 Mitzvot, but various commentaries offer suggestions. The basic thesis with which they work is that the 30 Mitzvot are subdivisions of the seven Noachide laws.

Rabbi Menachem Azaria de Fano 1548-1620 (also known as the 'REMA mi'PANU' אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס) in his book אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס Asarah Ma'amaros, Ma'amar Chikur Din 3:21 אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס (Amsterdam 1649), enumerates the 30 laws as follows:

The REMA Mi'Panu's 30 laws in Romanised Hebrew And translated into English in the original Hebrew

1. AVODAH ZARAH / Avodat Elilim IDOLATRY:
2. Ma'avir Ba'esh Passing a child through fire in the worship of molech אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
3. Kosem Stick divination אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
4. Me'onen Divining of auspicious times אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
5. Menachesh Interpreting of omens / Superstition אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
6. Mechashef Witchcraft / Sorcery אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
7. Chover Chaver Charming / using incantations אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
8. Ov Consulting mediums אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
9. Yidoni Consulting oracles אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
10. Doresh El ha'Mesim Necromancy אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
11. GILUY ARAYOS SEXUAL SINS: אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
12. Peru * Be fruitful. אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
13. Revu * Multiply seed. אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
14. Ba Al ha'Zechur Don't draw up marriage contracts for homosexuals. אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
15. Kilayei Behemah Cross-breeding of animals אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
16. Sirius Castration אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
17. Harkavas ha'Ilan Grafting trees אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
18. SHEFICHUS DAMIM MURDER: אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
19. Soter Lo'o Shel Yisroel Striking a Jew אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
20. BIRKAS HASHEM BLASPHEMY: אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס
21. Kavod ha'Torah * Honour the Torah (and Torah scholars). אֲשָׂרָה מֵאֲמָרוֹס

22. la'Asok ba'Torah she'Nitnah Lahem * Studying relevant parts of the Torah. אסוק בתורה שניתנה להם * ללמוד חלקים רלוונטיים של התורה. אסוק בתורה
23. GEZZEL THEFT: גזל
24. Shelo la'Asok ba'Torah Shel Yisrael No to study non-relevant parts of the Torah. אסוק בתורה שיש לא ללמוד חלקים לא רלוונטיים של התורה. אסוק בתורה
25. HADINIM LEYISHUVO SHEL OLOM * ESTABLISHMENT OF A SYSTEM OF JUSTICE: אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה
26. Velo Yishbosu No to observe the Sabbath אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה
27. EIVER MIN HACHAY EATING ALL OR PART OF A LIVING CREATURE: אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה
28. Dam Min ha'Chay Blood of a living creature אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה
29. Nevelah Eating an animal that died (without slaughter). אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה
30. Basar Hames Human flesh. אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה אסוק בתורה