Class # 2 - Harvey Weinstein, Mayim Bialik and Parshat Noach

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel Z”l

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wH-eZhdjMJU>

1. Why did Harvey Weinstein get away with his sexually predatory behavior for three decades?
2. *Noach – Beraishit: 6:1-9*

Noah's Children

6:1 Man began to increase on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them. 6:2 The sons of the Judges/nobles saw that the daughters of man were good, and they took themselves wives from whomever they chose. 6:3 God said, 'My spirit will not continue to judge man forever, since he is nothing but flesh. His days shall be 120 years.' 6:4 The titans were on the earth in those days and also later. The sons of the nobles had come to the daughters of man and had fathered them. [The titans] were the mightiest ones who ever existed, men of renown.

The Decree Against Humanity

6:5 God saw that man's wickedness on earth was increasing. Every impulse of his innermost thought was only for evil, all day long. 6:6 God regretted that He had made man on earth, and He was pained to His very core. 6:7 God said, 'I will obliterate humanity that I have created from the face of the earth - man, livestock, land animals, and birds of the sky. I regret that I created them.' 6:8 But Noah found favor in God's eyes.

*Noah and his Times*

These are the chronicles of Noah: Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generation. Noah walked with God. Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham and Yefeth. The world was [corrupt](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=6#C66) before God, and the land was filled with *Chamas/robbery*. God saw the world, and it was corrupted. All flesh had perverted its way on the earth. God said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me. The world is filled with [man's] *Chamas/robbery*. I will therefore destroy them with the earth.

The Commentary of the Radak

**the sons of the judges/Nobles**, the elite of the species who are here referred to as אלוהים, just as in Exodus 22,27 אלוהים לא תקלל, “you must not curse a judge.” There are numerous similar examples in the Torah of the attribute אלוהים being applied to morally high ranking human beings. Onkelos also translates it in this vein when he speaks of בני רברביא…According to Bereshit Rabbah 26,5 Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai cursed anyone who translated the words בני האלוהים as “the sons of G’d.” He added that when the elite of the people are themselves guilty of the sins they want the common man to refrain from, their efforts are doomed to start with. Another reason offered why these people were referred to as בני האלוהים, …….

את בנות האדם, the daughters of the weaker specimen of the human race. The women were unable to resist the physically superior specimen referred to as בני האלוהים, and as a result if fancied by the latter, they would be taken by them as wives or concubines against their will, and the will of even their husbands. [The Torah describes the first time the law of the “survival of the fittest” was practiced by the human race. The result was the deluge. Ed.] The term אדם next to the term אלוהים simply compares the weak to the strong In the Sifri¸ (Behaalotcha 86) the point is made that when ordinary individuals observed that the judges took the law into their own hands, they reasoned that they themselves would most certainly be able to get away with the same thing, seeing that the judges are supposed to set a good example…..

כי טובות הנה, Rabbi Yudan, noting the defective spelling of the word טובות as טבת claims that this is a transitive form of the verb, and that the judges when handing over the virgin bride to her prospective husband would first sleep with her. The missing letters ו in the word טבת refer to these girls having been deprived of their hymen.

1. Rashi’s commentary:

Verse 2 **from whomever they chose:** Even a married woman, even males and animals (Gen. Rabbah ad loc.).

Verse 11 - **was corrupt:** Heb. וַתִּשָּׁחֵת is an expression of immorality and idolatry. (other editions add: immorality, “for all flesh had corrupted (הִשְׁחִית) its way,” and idolatry), as in (Deut. 4:16): “Lest you deal corruptly (תַּשְׁחִיתוּן).” - [Sanh. 56b, 57a]

**and the earth became full of robbery:** Heb. חָמָס, robbery. (other editions add: as it is said (Jonah 3:8): “and of the dishonest gain (הֶחָמָס) which is in their hands.”) - [Sanh. 108a]

Verse 13 **- The end of all flesh:** Wherever you find promiscuity (and idolatry), a chaos comes upon the world and kills both good and bad alike. — [from Gen. Rabbah 26:5]

**for the earth has become full of robbery:** Their verdict was sealed only because of robbery. — [from Sanh. 108a]

Question:

1. According to Rashi, what were the stages of the descent of the people?
2. What is meant by, “Wherever you find promiscuity (and idolatry), a chaos comes upon the world and kills both good and bad alike.”
3. Why was the “Their verdict was sealed only because of robbery.”?

Mayim Bialik writes an op-ed in the NYT and gets slammed

JTA - Actress Mayim Bialik has drawn criticism for an op-ed she wrote for The New York Times in response to the allegations of sexual assault and harassment against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein. Although she wrote Saturday that she was “shocked and disgusted” by the accusations, critics charged that Bialik had suggested dressing and acting modestly is protection against the kind of behavior Weinstein is accused of. I have decided that my sexual self is best reserved for private situations with those I am most intimate with,” she wrote. “I dress modestly. I don’t act flirtatiously with men as a policy.”

Bialik, who is an observant Jew and the divorced mother of two young sons, added that while “absolutely nothing” excuses men’s sexual assault or abuse of women, “we can’t be naive about the culture we live in.” She noted that she took a long break from Hollywood to get a doctorate in neuroscience and admonished young women that “having others celebrate your physical beauty is not the way to lead a meaningful life.”

The backlash was swift.

Mashable internet reporter Chloe Bryan [said](http://mashable.com/2017/10/14/mayim-bialik-new-york-times/#AlGqR3.GiaqU) that Bialik was insinuating she had evaded harm because of her choices, and that this was “irresponsible and dangerous.”

“Contrary to Bialik’s implications, it’s not just ‘doe-eyed’ women with personal trainers who experience harassment,” Bryan wrote Sunday. “It’s all of us.”

**Rambam, Laws of Forbidden sexual relations, CH.22,Law 19-20**

Our Sages said:[43](javascript:doFootnote('43a960670');) A person's soul desires and craves theft and forbidden sexual relations. You will never find a community that does not have some people who are promiscuous regarding forbidden relationships and prohibited sexual conduct. Moreover, our Sages said:[44](javascript:doFootnote('44a960670');) Most people trespass with regard to theft; a minority with regard to forbidden sexual conduct, and all with regard to indirect gossip.[45](javascript:doFootnote('45a960670');)

Therefore, it is proper for a person to subjugate his natural inclination with regard to this matter and train himself in extra holiness, pure thought, and proper character traits so that he will be guarded against them.

He should be very careful with regard to entering into privacy with a woman, for this is a great cause [of transgression].