

1. Proverbs 11:30-31

³⁰The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and one who is wise takes souls.

³¹Yes, the righteous will be paid back in the land; also, the wicked and the sinner.

2. Midrash, Genesis Rabbah 30:6

⁶"These are the generations of Noach (Genesis 6:9)"-

Thus it is written (in Proverbs 11:30):

- "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" – What are the fruits of the righteous? Mitzvot and good deeds.
- "And one who is wise takes souls" – For he fed and supported for all twelve months in the ark.

And after all of this praise (it is written in Proverbs 11:31):

- "Yes, the righteous will be paid back in the land" – He went to leave and was paid back. This is remarkable! As Rav Huna said, citing Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosi haGlili: When Noach was leaving the ark, a lion bit him and broke his bones. Noach was now unsuited to bring offerings, and his son Shem brought in his place.
- How much more so, "Also the wicked and the sinner" – the generation of the flood.

3. Genesis 6:9-10

⁹And these are the descendants of Noach; Noach was a righteous man, complete in his generations; Noach walked with Gd. ¹⁰And Noach produced three sons: Shem, Cham and Yefet.

4. Genesis 7:23

And He destroyed all that lived upon the face of the land, from man to beast to crawling creature to bird of the heavens, and they were destroyed from the earth. And only Noach, and those with him in the boat, remained.

5. Midrash Tanchuma Noach 14

Rabbi Levi said: For all twelve months that Noach was in the boat, he did not sleep, neither him nor his children, for they needed to feed the beasts... Rabbi Yochanan said, citing Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosi haGlili: Once Noach delayed feeding the lion, and the lion bit him, and he left the boat limping, as Genesis 7:23 says...

6. Genesis 8:20

And Noach built an altar to Gd, and he took from all of the kosher beasts and from all of the kosher birds, and he brought burnt offerings on the altar.

The Ideas Behind the Text

7. Proverbs 12:10

A righteous person knows the soul of his beast, and the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

8. Talmud, Bava Metzia 32b

Rava taught: We see that the prohibition against painning animals is biblical.

9. Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein (19th-20th century Lithuania), Aruch haShulchan, Choshen Mishpat 272:2

We do not say that the owner obligated himself to unload it when he put on too great a burden; although that is true, the Torah obligates the passerby because the owner may have done this by accident, and because there is still the issue of the animal's pain. Most authorities agree that the prohibition against painning animals is biblical.

10. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16th century Cracow), Code of Jewish Law, Even haEzer 5:14

For medical benefit or other benefit, there is no problem of painning animals. Therefore, one may pluck a live goose's feather [to use as a quill] without concern for painning animals - but we do not do this, for it is cruel.

11. Psalms 145:9

Gd is good to all, and His mercy is upon all of His creations.

12. Talmud, Yevamot 79a

There are three traits associated with this nation - they are merciful, modest and generous.

13. Talmud, Bava Metzia 85a

A calf being brought for slaughter hid its head under Rebbe's garment. It was crying. Rebbe said, "Go; you were created for this." In Heaven they said, "Since he does not have mercy, let suffering befall him."

One day, Rebbe's maid was sweeping out the house. She swept out some rodents. Rebbe said to her, "Leave them be, for it is written, 'His mercy is upon all of His creations.'" In Heaven they said, "Since he displayed mercy, We will have mercy upon him."

14. Talmud, Berachot 40a

Rav Yehudah taught, citing Rav: One may not eat until he has first given food to his animal; it is written (Deut. 11), "And I will put grass in your field for your animal," and then, "And you shall eat and be sated."

15. Rabbi Yosef Caro (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim 167:7

One may not speak between the blessing [on food] and eating; one who speaks must repeat the blessing, unless the speech was about items relevant for that regarding which he had blessed. For example, one who blessed for bread, and then, before eating, said, "Bring salt," or "Bring condiments" or "Give so-and-so some to eat" or "Give to the animal" and the like, need not recite a new blessing.

16. Genesis 24:19

And she finished giving him to drink, and she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they finish drinking."

17. Malachi 1:8

Bring it now to your [human] ruler! Would he be satisfied, would he show favour to you?

18. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (12th century Egypt), Guide of the Perplexed 3:32

Many prophetic books contain rebukes of people for their great efforts and attachment to bringing offerings... Samuel said, "Does Gd want offerings as He wants people to listen to the Divine Voice?" Isaiah said, "Why would I want your masses of offerings?" Jeremiah said, "I did not speak to your ancestors and I did not command them, on the day I took them out of Egypt, regarding offerings. I instructed them this: Listen to My voice and I will be your Gd and you will be My nation."... The primary intent is for you to perceive Me and not serve others, and I will be your Gd and you will be My nation. This was the goal of the command to bring offerings and focus upon the House... and you came and cancelled the ends and attached yourselves to the means.

19. Talmud, Ketuvot 66b-67a

But wasn't Nakdimon ben Gurion philanthropic? We have learned, "They said regarding Nakdimon ben Gurion that when he left his home for the study hall, they spread silks beneath him, and then paupers would come and fold them up [and take them]!" If you want, one could suggest that he did it for his own honour. Alternatively, he didn't do as much as was expected from him. As people say: According to the camel, the burden.

20. Talmud Yevamot 121b

Gd is precise with those who surround Him, to the width of a hair.

21. Midrash, Genesis Rabbah 31:5b, defining the biblical "chamas"

And so the generation of the Flood did: One of them would put out his box filled with beans, and another would come take less than a *perutah's* worth, and another would come and take less than a *perutah's* worth, to the point that the owner could not claim it from him in court.