

Setting up the question

1. Yechezkel 7:10-11 (translation based on Radak)

(י) הַיּוֹם הַיּוֹם הַבֹּאֵה יִצְאֶה הַצִּפּוֹרֶה צֵץ הַמִּטָּה פָּרַח הַנְּדוֹן:

(יא) הַחֶמֶס קָם לְמִטָּה־רָשָׁע לֹא־מֵהֶם וְלֹא מֵהַמּוֹנֵם וְלֹא מֵהַמְּהִימִים וְלֹא־נֶהְבְּהֶם:

¹⁰Behold, the day comes, it has arrived, the morning has come, the rod has blossomed, the villain has flowered.

¹¹*Chamas* has arisen to become a wicked rod. Not of them, and not of their masses, and not of their noise, and the wailing [*noah*] is not of them.

Our midrash, Part 1

2. Midrash, Bereishit Rabbah 31:1, Part 1

א"י אומר אלקים לנח קץ כל בשר וגו'

"(יחזקאל ז) "החמס קם למטה רשע"

- "החמס קם"? אתמהא! ח"ו, אינו קם, ואם קם "למטה רשע" לחיובו של רשע.
- ו"לא מהם ולא מהמונם ולא מהמהם", לא מינהון ולא מממונם ולא מן תמהתהון.
- למה? "לא נה בהם", לא היה לשום בריה נחת רוח מהם, ולא היה להקב"ה נחת רוח מהם.

"And Gd said to Noah: The end of all flesh, etc."

"*Chamas* has arisen to become a wicked rod"

- "*Chamas* has arisen"? This is shocking! Gd forbid, it cannot rise. But if it rises, it is "a rod for wickedness", to punish the wicked.
- And "not of them, and not of their masses, and not of their noise," there was naught from them, and there was naught from their wealth, and there was naught from their desolation.
- Why? "The *noah* is not of them", no creature had satisfaction from them, Gd had no satisfaction from them.

3. Talmud, Sanhedrin 108a

וכתיב "החמס קם למטה רשע לא מהם ולא מהמונם ולא מהמהם ולא נה בהם", אמר רבי אלעזר: מלמד שזקף עצמו כמקל, ועמד לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא, ואמר לפניו: רבונו של עולם, לא מהם ולא מהמונם ולא מהמהם ולא נה בהם. תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: אף על נח נחתך גזר דין, אלא שמצא חן בעיני ד', שנאמר נחמתי כי עשיתם ונח מצא חן בעיני ד'.

It is written, "*Chamas* has arisen to become a wicked rod. Not of them, and not of their masses, and not of their noise, and the wailing [*noah*] is not of them."

- Rabbi Elazar said: This teaches that *chamas* stood up as a rod and stood before Gd and said, "Master of the Universe! Not of them, and not of their masses, and not of their noise, and the wailing is not of them."
- They taught in the yeshiva of Rabbi Yishmael: The decree was also upon Noah, but he found favour in the eyes of Gd, as it is written, "I regret having created them, and Noah found favour in the eyes of Gd."

Our midrash, Part 2

4. Bereishit 6:7-8

(ז) וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֲמַתָּה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָאתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נַחֲמַתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתָם:
(ח) וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי ד':

⁷And Gd said: I will destroy the Man I have created from the face of the earth, from man to beast to crawling creature to bird of the heavens, for I regret having created them.

⁸And Noah found favour in the eyes of Gd.

5. Midrash, Bereishit Rabbah 31:1, Part 2

"לא נה בהם" כההיא דא"ר אבא בר כהנא: "כי נחמתי כי עשיתם ונח" - אפ"ל נח שנשתייר מהם אינו כדאי, אלא שמצא חן, "ונח מצא חן".

ולפי שהיו שטופים בזימה נמוחו מן העולם.

[Alternatively] "The *noah* is not of them", as Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said: "For I regret having created them, and Noah." Even the Noah who remained of them is not worthy, but he found favour, "And Noah found favour."

And because they were flooded in immorality, they were wiped from the world.

6. Bereishit 6:2

וַיִּרְאוּ... אֶת־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ

And [they] saw the attractiveness of the daughters of Man, and they took women for themselves, from all they chose.

Summary

Message: The first of four explanations of "the land was full of חמס" – Entirely so, and therefore Gd acted with חמס against them

Methods:

- Our verses shed light on Yechezkel 7
- The play on "noah", encouraged by the word "chamas"
- The analysis of the ו in ונח ("And Noach") in the start of 6:8.
- The contradiction of 30:3 regarding why Noach was saved

Moral: Wickedness will punish the wicked.