

And also afterward when the sons of the rulers would consort with the daughters of man. (6:4)

The nephillim, giants, had apparently been around for some time. Thoroughly evil, they were given the title nephillim, a derivative of nafal, to fall, because they had fallen and caused others to fall. The Midrash Rabba explains their iniquity, saying, “The latter did not learn (a lesson) from its predecessors.” The generation of the Flood did not derive mussar, an ethical lesson, from the generation of Enosh when one third of the world was flooded. Likewise, the generation of the Dispersion did not derive a lesson from the generation of the Flood. While it is certainly important to learn from the lessons of the past, it is essential that there be some sort of corollary between the past and the present. It is understandable that the nephillim should have taken heed after what had occurred during the time of Enosh and Kayin, but what does the generation of the Dispersion have to do with the generation of the Flood? Their sins were in total contrast with one another.

The generation of the Flood stole from one another. They had no respect for one another. The generation of the Dispersion seemed to get along too well – exactly the opposite of their predecessors. Why does the Midrash posit that the sin of the Dor Haflagah, generation of the Dispersion, resulted from their not taking a lesson from the Dor Ha'Mabul, generation of the Flood?

Horav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi, Shlita, explains that although the individual sins of these two generations seem to be in direct contrast of each other, they nonetheless both share the same source for their iniquity. What is the root of the insidious sin of theft? It comes from a lack of respect for another person. No one means anything to me: I want; I need; I take. The other person's feelings have no bearing on my desire. Everything branches out from the ani, the “I.”

Is this not what Communism and its various offshoots were all about? The “I,” the “me.” They even made an ideal out of corruption, a philosophy for the nullification of the individual's rights to anything. The individual no longer counted. He was part of a collective group. His identity was gone. He became a number that did not count. It all started with satisfying the “I” and resulted in the destruction of the “they.” There is no room for “me” and “you” – only for “me,” because “you” no longer count. “You” are here to serve “me.” It goes so far that the “I” is willing to forego

what is “mine,” just as long as “you” do not have what is “yours.” Once again it all revolves around “me.” I do not have, but neither do you. I can live with that!

We see now how the Dor Haflagah was an extension of the Dor Ha'Mabul. The generation of the Flood negated the distinctiveness of the individual. He no longer had an identity. This led to wholesale theft. After all, why not? It does not really belong to “anybody.” The person from whom I am stealing is not an entity. He is a nothing. This ideal mushrooms when the following generation continues along this path of evil, making it a philosophy of life.

If a person allows the evil of the previous generation to fester and germinate, unfortunately it is adopted into his line of thinking, granting him license to justify the most heinous iniquity. Had the generation of the Dispersion given some thought to the actions of the generation of the Flood, had they delved into the source of their perfidious behavior, they would have realized that in effect they were replicating them.

Had they only learned from the lessons of the past. It is no different from one who plants a field. He must first weed out the plants and exterminate the bugs, so that the fresh seeds he plants in the ground will have the optimum conditions for prodigious growth.