



October 3 - 9, 2021 כ"ז תשרי - ג' מרחשון תשפ"ב



מה בפֶּרַשַׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ♦ The world becomes wicked, so God decides to destroy the world, and God commands Noah to build a תֵּיבָה (teivah, ark).
- ♦ Noah is told to get himself and his family, two of every non-kosher animal, and fourteen of every kosher animal on the teivah.
- ♦ It rains for 40 days and nights, creating a flood that destroys everything.
- ♦ The flood lasts for 150 days.
- ♦ Noah sends out a raven, then a dove to see if the water has gone away. The dove returns with an olive branch in its mouth.
- ♦ God tells Noah to leave the teivah and repopulate the earth.
- ♦ God promises never to destroy the world through a flood again, and makes a rainbow the sign of that promise.
- ♦ The people of the world all speak the same language, and begin to build a מִגְדָּל (migdal, tower).
- ♦ God confuses the people with different languages, so the place is called בָּבֶל (bavel, confusion), and God scatters them over the earth.





מִדְרָש • Midrash

The beginning of Parashat Noah tells us that the world was full of wickedness, and that God decided to destroy it all, saving only Noah, his family, and some of every species. But the Torah does not tell us whether God gave the world a chance to do *teshuvah* (repentance) first. This leaves us with the question: would God really take such drastic action without first giving people a chance to correct their behavior and do better?

This midrash suggests that God *did* warn the world to do *teshuvah*.

There are often gaps in the Torah's telling of the story and there are also phrases that are curious and draw our attention. Midrash tries to fill in gaps in the story while also answering questions or resolving difficulties. You can think of midrash as where the text and an idea meet.

Midrash Tanhuma Noah 5

For 120 years, God warned the generation of the flood, so that they might do *teshuvah*. Since they refused, God told Noah to build a *teivah* (ark) of gopher-wood. Then Noah arose, repented his sins, and planted cedar trees. They asked him: "What are these cedars for?" "God intends to bring a flood on the earth, and instructed me to build a *teivah* so that I and my family might escape," he replied. They laughed at him and ridiculed his words.

מדרש תנחומא נח ה

מָאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה הָיָה מִתְרָה
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּדוֹר הַמַּבּוּל, שָׁמָּה
יַעֲשֵׂה תְשׁוּבָה. כִּיּוֹן שְׁלֹא עָשׂוּ תְשׁוּבָה,
אָמַר לוֹ: עֲשֵׂה לָךְ תֵּיבַת עֲצֵי גִפְרִי.
עָמַד נֹחַ וַעֲשֵׂה תְשׁוּבָה וְנָטַע אֲרָזִים.
וְהָיוּ אוֹמְרִין לוֹ, אֲרָזִים אֵלֶּיךָ לָמָּה?
אָמַר לָהֶם, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְבַקֵּשׁ
לְהַבִּיא מַבּוּל לְעוֹלָם, וְאָמַר לִי לַעֲשׂוֹת
תֵּיבָה, כְּדִי שְׁאֲמַלֵּט בָּהּ אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי. וְהָיוּ
מִשְׁחַקִּין מִמֶּנּוּ וּמַלְעִיגִין בְּדַבָּרֵיו.

According to this midrash, God tried to warn the world to do *teshuvah* for 120 years! But the people refused to listen. Still, God gave them another chance. By telling Noah to build a *teivah*, God provided an opportunity for people to be curious about what Noah was doing. They would then ask Noah why he was doing all that work, and Noah would warn them that God would destroy the world unless they did *teshuvah*. Instead of taking that warning seriously, though, they just laughed at Noah.



- ◆ How does this midrash change the way you understand our parashah?
- ◆ This midrash teaches that even Noah did teshuvah before building the teivah. Why is it important for the person teaching about teshuvah to first do teshuvah himself?
- ◆ Is it ever fair to punish someone without warning them first?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

At the beginning of our parashah, we are told that Noah is a very good person. But the way the Torah tells this to us is a little confusing, because it says Noah is righteous "in his generations."

Bereishit 6:9

This is the story of Noah: Noah was a righteous, pure person in his generations; Noah walked with God.

בראשית ו:ט

אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים
הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו אֶת־הָאֱלֹקִים הִתְהַלָּךְ־נֹחַ:

But what does it mean that Noah is a "righteous, pure person," specifically "in his generations"? Why is that important to say? Is it meant to increase our appreciation for Noah's character, or is it meant as a criticism?

In the Talmud, two Sages disagree about how to understand those words.

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 108a

Rabbi Yohanan said: In his generation, but not in other generations.

But Reish Lakish said: In his generation, all the more so in other generations.

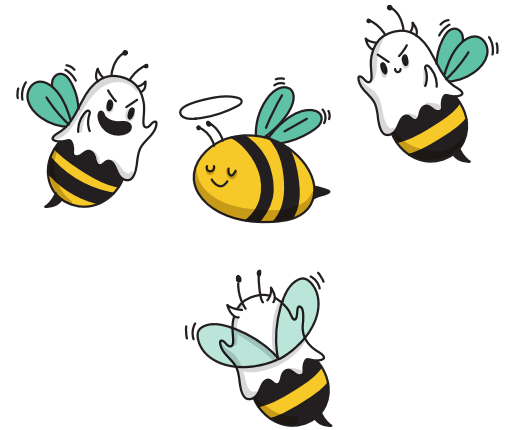
תלמוד בבלי סנהדרין קח.

א"ר יוחנן בְּדֹרֹתָיו וְלֹא בְּדֹרֹת אֲחֵרִים

וְרִישׁ לְקִישׁ אָמַר בְּדֹרֹתָיו כָּל שָׂכָן
בְּדֹרֹת אֲחֵרִים

According to Rabbi Yohanan, this pasuk means that Noah was considered righteous only "in his generations" because the people around him were terrible, and, by comparison, Noah seemed righteous. But if Noah had lived at a time when more righteous people were alive, perhaps Noah would not have stood out as a special person. He only seemed righteous because he lived during a time when everyone else was so bad.

Reish Lakish, however, reads this verse differently, as praise for Noah. According to him, the Torah is telling us that Noah lived righteously *despite* living during a time of widespread wickedness. Even though Noah was surrounded by bad people, and had no one to encourage or support him, he still found a way to behave righteously without being influenced negatively by those around him.



- ♦ What evidence is there for each position in the parashah?
- ♦ How can we make sure not to be negatively affected by those around us?
- ♦ Can you describe a situation where you faced a challenge because of the way people near you were behaving?



הלכה • Halakhah

After Noah emerges from the תִּיבָה (teivah, ark), God promises never to destroy the world through a flood again. God shows Noah a rainbow as a sign for this promise.



Bereishit 9:11-13

"And I will establish My בְּרִית (brit, covenant) with you, and never again will all flesh be cut off by the flood waters, and there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said: "This is the sign of the brit, which I am placing between Me and between you, and between every living thing that is with you, for everlasting generations. My rainbow I have placed in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of a brit between Myself and the earth."

בראשית ט:יא-יג

וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת כָּל־בֶּשָׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל וְלֹא־יְהִיָּה עוֹד מַבּוּל לְשַׁחֵת הָאָרֶץ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים זֹאת אוֹת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם לְדֹרֹת עוֹלָם: אֶת־קִשְׁתִּי נָתַתִּי בָּעָנָן וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ:



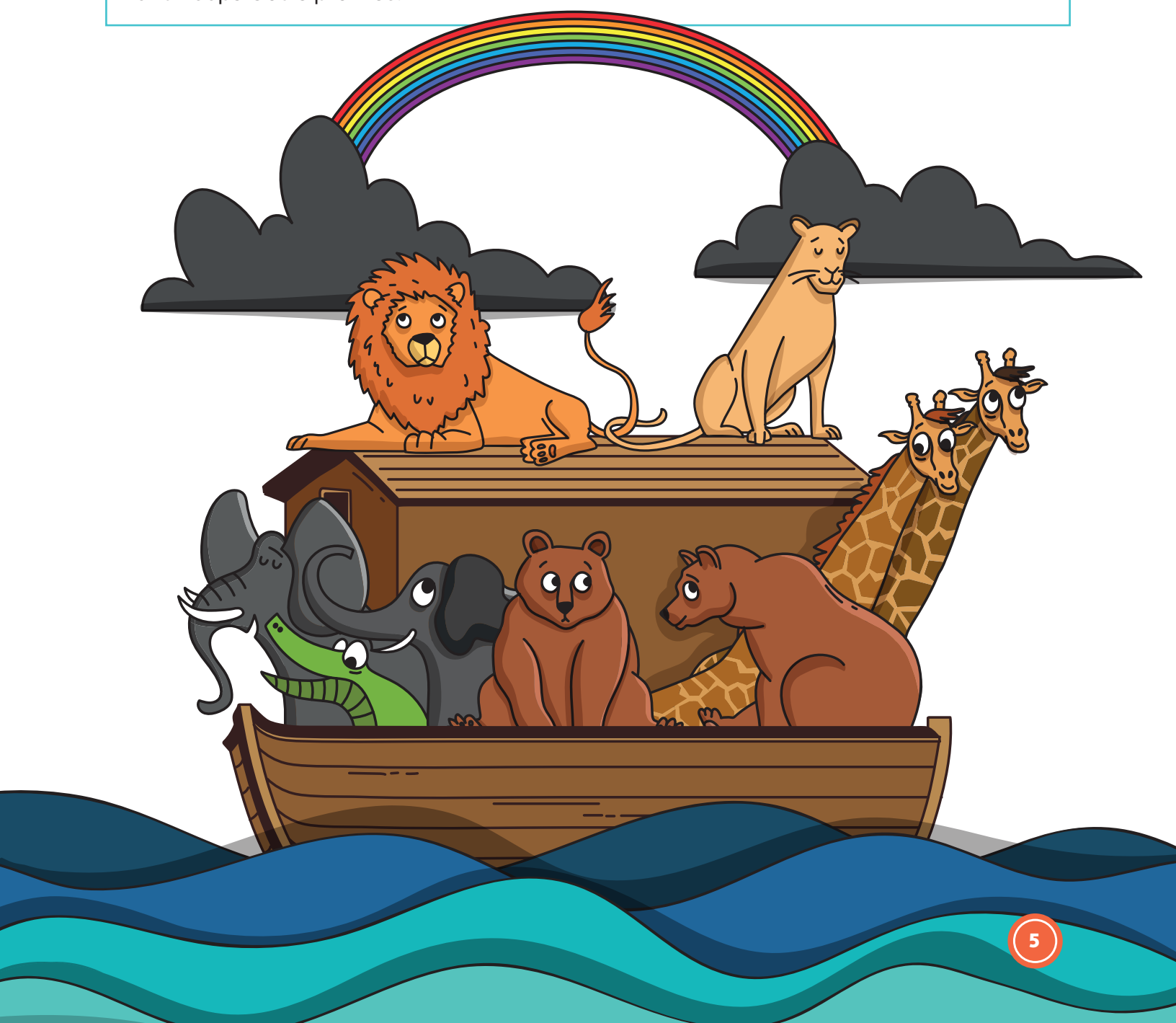
The Talmud (Berakhot 59a) teaches that, based on this text, one should make a blessing upon seeing a rainbow to thank God for the promise to not destroy the world through a flood anymore. But, there are different options presented for what the words of the blessing should be. This version of the blessing is accepted as the halakhah in the Shulhan Arukh and remains the blessing one makes to this day:

Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 229:1

One who sees a rainbow says, "Blessed are You, God our Lord, Ruler of the universe, who remembers the brit, and is faithful to God's brit, and keeps God's promise."

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים רכט:א

הַרְוָאָה הַקִּשָּׁת אוֹמֵר בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם זֹכֵר הַבְּרִית
נֶאֱמָן בְּבְרִיתוֹ וְקִיָּם בְּמַאֲמָרוֹ



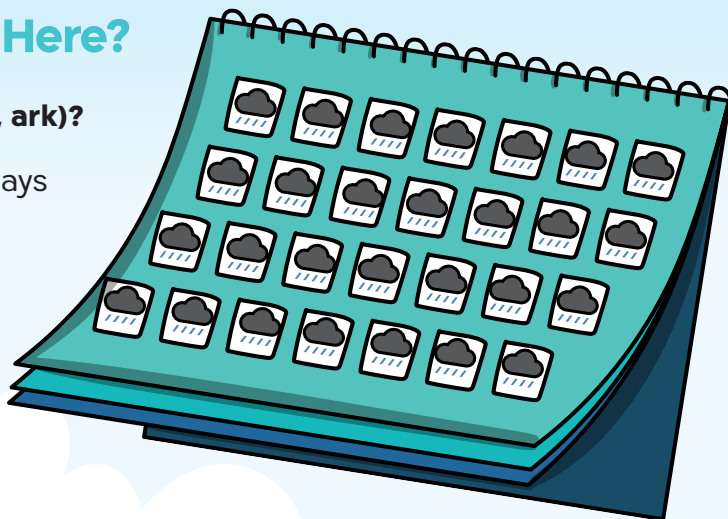


מה קרה • What's Going On Here?

How long was Noah on the תִּיבָה (teivah, ark)?

The flood was famously caused by 40 days and 40 nights of rain, but Noah and his family were on the teivah for much longer than that!

- ♦ For 40 days and 40 nights, it rained heavily (Bereishit 7:12).
- ♦ 110 days later, the water began to recede and the teivah came to a rest (Bereishit 8:3).
- ♦ 40 days later, Noah opened the window and sent out a raven and then a dove (Bereishit 8:6).
- ♦ 7 days later, Noah sent out the dove again and it returned with an olive branch in its mouth (Bereishit 8:10).
- ♦ 7 days later, Noah sent out the dove and it did not return (Bereishit 8:12).
- ♦ Finally, on the 27th day of the 2nd month (Bereishit 8:14), Noah and his family left the teivah—one year and ten days after the flood began!



רגע של עברית • A Moment of Hebrew

Bereishit 6:21

For your part, take of everything that is eaten and **store it away**, to serve as food for you and for them.

בראשית ו:כא

ואתה קח־לך מכל־מאכל אֲשֶׁר יֹאכַל וְאִסְפֶּתָּ אֵלֶיךָ וְהָיָה לָךְ וּלְהֵם לְאֹכֶלָה:

לָאָסַף (שׁוֹרֵשׁ א.ס.פ.)

To gather or collect



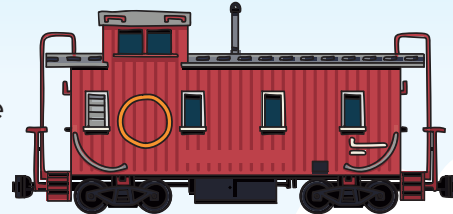
אָסָף = Collection



מֵאַסָף = Rear, the person or people who are at the end of the group



קָרוֹן מֵאַסָף = Caboose



Find the Word!

There is a Jewish holiday called חַג הָאָסִיף (Hag ha-Asif, the Holiday of Ingathering) because it occurs at a time when crops are gathered in. Which holiday is it? (Hint: look at Shemot 34:22!)



דִּבְקָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

How to play:

Here is a topic for debate along with some suggested arguments, but feel free to come up with your own.

- ♦ Assign people to the "true" or "false" sides.
- ♦ Each side gets 30 seconds to make their case.
- ♦ At the end, the group votes on a winner.

Debate: It was fun to be on the תֵּיבָה (teivah, ark).

♦ True:

- ♦ Who doesn't love a boat ride?
- ♦ Better to be on the inside than left on the outside during the flood...

♦ False:

- ♦ Can you imagine being stuck on a boat for a year with all those animals?! Sounds loud and stinky!
- ♦ Just think of how seasick you would be in that storm!





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to the last three are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah.

Good luck!

1 How long was the תִּיבָה (teivah, ark)?



2 What is the usual opposite for the word טְהוֹרָה (tehorah, pure)? What words does the Torah use here instead to say "impure"?

3 What two types of birds does Noah send out of the teivah?

4 When they come out of the teivah, what is the one thing that God forbids Noah and his children from eating?

5 What promise does the rainbow signify?

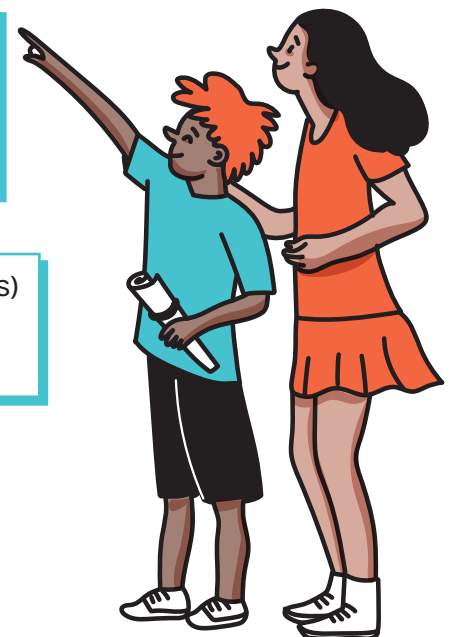
6 Who was such a great hunter that his name became an expression for saying how great a hunter someone was?

7 Who was the father of Shelah?

8 How long does the flood last, as measured from the first drop of rain until the land totally dries out?

9 When Avraham is born (as Avram), how many of the people on the list of Shem's descendants are still alive?

10 How many אַמּוֹת (amot, cubits) above the ground did the water rise during the flood?





Darga דַּגָּא



Quick Facts

1

How many times does it appear in the Torah?



1,091 **Common**
(Approximately every 6 pesukim)

2

Does it end a phrase?



No

3

Is it above or below the word?



Below

4

Does it fall on the accent?



Yes (so the word is pronounced with emphasis where the darga appears)

Σ This week's note is דָּרְגָא (darga), which looks like a backwards letter "Z." It has a kind of sound that comes down in steps, just like its shape, and its name means "step." Darga almost always begins one of two musical patterns. Here is an example of each pattern from our parashah:

Bereishit 6:12

בראשית ו:יב

Because all flesh **became corrupt**

כִּי־הִשְׁחִית כָּל־בָּשָׂר

Darga followed by tevir



Bereishit 6:15

בראשית ו:טו

Three-hundred cubits

שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אַמָּה

Darga followed by munah-revi'i



Listen for the darga's special sound as you follow along to this week's Torah reading!





מי היו חכמינו • Who Were Our Sages?

This week's Parshanut Section (p. 3) features a disagreement between **Rabbi Yohanan** and **Reish Lakish** (his full name is Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish). They are two of the most important Amoraim who lived in Eretz Yisrael in the 3rd century CE. Records of their debates can be found throughout our tradition, and both of them had many students to carry on their teachings.

According to the Talmud (Bava Metzia 84a), they were not only friends and study partners, but family: Reish Lakish married Rabbi Yohanan's sister. When Reish Lakish was young, he was actually a bandit! One day, though, he met Rabbi Yohanan bathing in a river, and was so struck by him that he decided to do תשובה (teshuvah, repentance) and take on a life of Torah as a rabbi. After that, they developed a special friendship, and they studied Torah together for the rest of their lives. When Reish Lakish tragically died, Rabbi Yohanan was so heartbroken that he refused to learn with anyone else and eventually died from grief.





Shabbat Shalom!

~ שבת שלום ~



Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. 300 amot (about 450 feet—the length of 1.5 football fields!)
2. טְמֵאָה (temei'ah, impure)—instead, here, the Torah says "אֲשֶׁר לֹא טְהֵרָה" or "אֲשֶׁר אֵינָהּ טְהֵרָה" (that were not pure)
3. עֹרֵב (orev, raven) and יוֹנָה (yonah, dove)
4. בָּשָׂר בְּנֶפֶשׁוֹ דָּמוֹ (basar be-nafsho damo, meat with blood in it)—limbs of live animals
5. That there will never again be a flood
6. Nimrod
7. Arpakhshad
8. From the 17th day of the second month until the 27th of the second month the following year—a lunar year of 12 months plus 10 days, which is just about a full solar year!
9. All of them! If you do the math, you will see that Avram is born 390 years after Shem. Everyone on that list lives beyond that point!
10. 15



Devash is a weekly parashah magazine that makes Torah learning sweet. By engaging directly with texts and taking kids seriously as Jews, Devash helps children and grownups discover new ideas, values, and sweet morsels in the weekly Torah portion. Devash is designed for kids aged 7-11 to read independently, or together with families and teachers.



**This publication contains words of Torah,
so please treat it with appropriate reverence**

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