

Rabbi Kacev

**PARSHAT NOACH
WHAT'S IN A NAME?**

**for 1 Nov 08
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So much of these first parshiyot focuses on the concept of names. Hashem gives names to the basics of creation and then brings all creatures before Adam. Whatever he would call them would be the essence of what they were. Families develop and children are named. Noach gives names to his children and one of them is even called “**shem**” meaning “name”.

One gets a sense that the world was battling with the concept of a name. Some people *hope* wanting to make a name for themselves while others want to call out in the name of Hashem. The builders of the tower of Babel hoped to unite and make a name for themselves while Avraham would build altars and call out in the name of Hashem. The Torah could be telling us that the rise or fall of man, mankind, etc will revolve around this challenge *of* names!

In a world of self centeredness individuals will strive to further themselves and will show concern for increasing their fame and importance in the eyes of others. This may be, at times, at the expense of others, yet driven by ego they will insanely pursue this even to the point of destruction. *In* reality, a humble person strives to enhance Hashem's glory seeing themselves as an agent for G-dliness in the world. Interestingly Avraham is promised “I will make your name great”. He did not request this, yet he receives such a blessing because he cared for and promoted something far greater than himself.

Our Sages acknowledge (Pirkei Avot) that a name is important, “A good name is better than good oil” yet the way to achieve this blessing is not in self promotion but rather in **correct behaviour** and promoting the greatest name, that of Hashem. As we say every Yom Tov..” May all create a unity to do your will. And enhance your awesome name over all of what You created”

Shabbat Shalom

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