



Ask The Rabbi...



December 5, 1993 Issue #2

This edition contains:

1. Why to be "fruitful and multiply" is not a Noachide Law.
2. Clarification for Chanukah candles and the International Date Line.

AT&T Bell Laboratories, in Columbus, Ohio asks:

In Parshat Vayishlach, you wrote that "There are only three mitzvot in Sefer Bereishit. The first mitzvah, to be fruitful and multiply, is essential to the survival of all of Mankind..." And yet, on the surface, "p'ru ur'vu" is not one of the commandments for the Bnei Noach. Why not?

Dear AT&T,

There are 7 commandments from Hashem for the Bnei Noach to govern their behavior. They are:

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| 1. Prohibition against idolatry. | 5. Prohibition against adultery. |
| 2. Prohibition against blasphemy. | 6. Prohibition against eating a limb of a live animal. |
| 3. Prohibition against murder. | 7. The commandment to establish courts of law. |
| 4. Prohibition against theft. | |

The *Sefer HaChinuch* lists the three *mitzvot* taught in the Book of Bereishit, and writes that they apply only to the Jewish People.

1. "Be fruitful and multiply" in Parshat Bereishit.
2. "Brit mila" in Parshat Lech Lecha.
3. "Don't eat the *gid hanashe*" in Vayishlach.

Brit mila is a covenant "between Me and you [Avraham] and your seed after you" (Bereishit 17:10). Thus, the Bnei Noach are excluded from this *mitzvah*.

In Vayishlach, the Torah states "The children of Israel shall not eat the *gid hanashe*" (Bereishit 31:33). Once again the Bnei Noach are exempted.

The *mitzvah* to be fruitful and multiply was given to the first Man (Bereishit 1:28) and repeated to Noach (Bereishit 9:1). It would appear equally incumbent upon all Mankind. Yet, this is *not* one of the 7 Noachide Laws.

The Talmud explains that:

*"All mitzvot that were given to the Bnei Noach and *repeated* at Sinai, apply to both Jews and non-Jews. Those mitzvot that were given to the Bnei Noach but *not* repeated at Sinai were given only to the Jews."*

"P'ru ur'vu" was not repeated at Sinai. So, even though Adam and Noach had been personally commanded to reproduce, the *mitzvah* did not become one of the 7 Noachide Laws.

It should be noted, however, that there is a special obligation to ensure that the world is fully populated, and that this obligation is equally applicable to Jew and Gentile. It is derived from a verse in the writings of the Prophets which calls upon Mankind inhabit as much of the Creation as possible:

"He [Hashem] did not create the world to be desolate; [rather] to be settled he formed it."

Sources:

- Tractate Sanhedrin, 59a.
- Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Melachim ch. 9.
- Sefer HaChinuch.
- The Path of the Righteous Gentile, by Chaim Clorfene and Yakov Regalsky (Targum Press).
- Isaiah 45.

A Clarification:

Stuart@lovelace previously asked:

I will be traveling from LA, California to Melbourne Australia. I leave at 7:10pm on Monday 13 December and arrive in Melbourne at 1:00pm on Wednesday 15 December. I can light candles for the 6th night of Chanukah before I leave. The question is where do I light candles for the 7th night? I do not know if it will be light or dark when I cross the IDL.

Our previous answer dealt with assigning an agent to light the menorah at home on behalf of the traveler.

This answer is for a person who travels all night on and won't be able to light. But your case involves crossing the IDL, and it is considerably more complex.

Since it is likely that you will cross both the International Dateline and the "Jewish Dateline" after daybreak of the 7th day, it is possible that you will not experience the 7th night of Chanukah at all, thus not having the opportunity to perform the *mitzvah*. Therefore, if your agent should light your menorah for you without a *bracha* (the agent should of course recite the *brachot* when lighting in his own home.)

Recommended reading:
"Halachos of Chanukah", Rabbi Shimon Eider.

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