

SEDER OLAM RABBAH

~~~ Part 4 ~~~

The Flood lasted an entire 12 months [period] as it is said: (Genesis 7:11) *In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, etc.*⁶⁴ And his generation will not be in the next world and will not abide as it is said: (Genesis 6:3) *And the Lord said: 'My spirit shall not abide'* etc. Rabbi Yehoshua said: (Genesis 7:11) *In the 2nd month, in the 17th day of the month, this is Iyar (and thus the world was created on the 2nd of Nisan) and then the Pleiades went down,*⁶⁵ but as they changed their roles before their place, [Hashem] changed the order of the Creation. And (Genesis 7:11) *On the same day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up etc.* And (Genesis 7:12) *And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.* Or, Rabbi Eliezer [said], (Genesis 7:11) *In the 2nd month, in the 17th day of the month, this is Marcheshvan (and thus the world was created on the 2nd of Tishri) and the Pleiades rose,*⁶⁶ and this was the time of famine. And the sages follow Rabbi Eliezer for the Flood and Rabbi Yehoshua for the periods.⁶⁷

(Genesis 7:12) *And the rain was etc.* Until when? (Genesis 7:12) *40 days and 40 nights.* Until the 27 of Kislev.⁶⁸

(Genesis 7:24) *And the waters prevailed upon the earth 150 days.* Until when 150 days? Until the 1st of Sivan.⁶⁹ And the waters were standing and bleeding while the wicked were judged in them one after the other according to their deeds, from the 27th of Kislev until the 1st of Sivan.

(Genesis 8:3) *And the waters decreased at the end of 150 days.* From the 1st of Sivan the waters started to decrease as it is said: (Genesis 8:5) *And the waters were going and decreasing until the 10th month, in the 10th month on the 1st [day] of the 10th month to the diminution of the rains, it is Av,*⁷⁰ from the start of the month until the end.

| Month | Number of days |
|-------------|----------------|
| Marcheshvan | 29 |
| Kislev | 30 |
| Tevet | 29 |
| Shevat | 30 |
| Adar | 29 |
| Nisan | 30 |
| Iyar | 29 |
| Sivan | 30 |
| Tammuz | 29 |
| Av | 30 |
| Elul | 29 |
| Tishri | 30 |

⁶⁴ The Flood started in the 2nd month of the 600th year of Noah and ended in the 1st month of his 601st year (Genesis 8:13), thus covered every month of the 12 months period.

⁶⁵ In the Northern hemisphere, the Pleiades cluster of stars disappear behind the horizon in spring time.

⁶⁶ In the Northern hemisphere, the Pleiades cluster of stars rises again in fall time.

⁶⁷ It means that they followed R. Eliezer for the chronology and R. Yehoshua for the religious festivals; this divergence is because the historical/chronological calendar takes Tishri as the first month, while the religious calendar (for the festivals cycle) starts with Nisan.

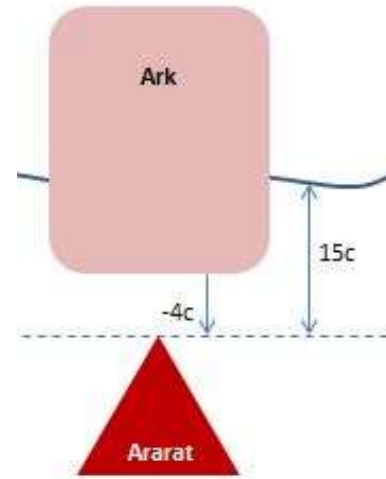
⁶⁸ According to Rabbi Yehoshua who considered that the Flood started on the 17 of Marcheshvan.; the rest of the calculation of the Seder Olam follows Rabbi Yehoshua's assumption that ends the Flood period in Tishri.

⁶⁹ For the Seder Olam, the 150 days are counted from the 27th of Kislev, meaning not counting the first 40 days period, which brings the chronology to the 1st of Sivan because of: 3 days in Kislev, then the months of Tevet, Shevat, Adar, Nisan and Iyar, adding 29, 30, 29, 30, 29 days respectively; thus the total is 150 days; but if we count the 150 days from the start of the Flood on the 17th of Marcheshvan, meaning that the first 40 days of rain were included in the total 150 days of rain, then the 150 days period ends on the 19th of Nisan.

⁷⁰ This is because the 10th month is counted here from the start of the Flood (Marcheshvan being the 1st month of the Flood).

The waters were higher above the earth 15 cubits. And for the total 60 days,⁷¹ [they decreased by] one cubit every 4 days, thus one palm and a half every day.⁷²

(Genesis 8:4) *And the ark rested in the 7th month, on the 17th of the month*, etc. This is the month of Sivan,⁷³ and when you start to note from [the time] when the rains stopped to increase until they started to decrease, you find that the Ark rested 16 days. Then by how much they were above the earth? by 4 cubits;⁷⁴ and how much [the ark] was submerged in the waters? by 11 cubits.⁷⁵



(Genesis 8:6) *And it came to pass at the end of 40 days*, at the end when the waters started to recede, on the 10th of Tammuz, (Genesis 8:6) *and Noah opened the window of the Ark, and he sent the raven* etc. which is another 7 days. (Genesis 8:8) *And again he sent the dove* etc. which is another 7 days. (Genesis 8:12) *And he sent the dove and it no longer returned*, it went and rested on top of the mountain.

(Genesis 8:5) *On the 10th [month] on the 1st [day] of the month, the peaks of the mountains were visible*, this is Av because you need to start the count from the time the waters started to recede. From the 1st of Av until the 1st of Tishri, the waters disappeared and (Genesis 8:13) *in the 601st year, on the 1st* etc. from the start of the month until its end, we learn that as soon as the 1st of a month starts, we count the entire month, and when a month starts, we count the entire year.

(Genesis 8:13) *And the waters dried up over the earth*, the waters that came down from above were fixed by the breath [of God], and the waters that went from below upwards disappeared [back] to their place, and the earth was still moist and made like a magma [so] they waited and did not sow until [fresh] rains fell upon them because the waters of the Flood were a sign of curse and there is no possible blessing [that comes] from a curse.

And what does *the waters dried up* mean? That not all [of them] dried up and there was a clay mud on top [of the earth] from the 1st of Tishri until the 27th of Marcheshvan.

(Genesis 8:14) *And in the 2nd month on the 27th of the month, the earth was dry*. This [month] was Marcheshvan, and the dry season came. But [there is] 12 complete [lunar] months and 11 days

⁷¹ The peaks of the mountains (Ararat was the mountain seen from the Ark) were first visible from the 1st of Av, which is 60 days from the time the waters started to recede, on the 1st of Sivan.

⁷² If the waters recede by 15 cubits in 60 days uniformly, it translates into 1 cubit every 4 days, and a corresponding fraction of a cubit per day.

⁷³ The Seder Olam assumes that the 7th month means the 7th month from the start of the diminution of the waters; as it started in Marcheshvan, the 1st (completed) month was Kislev and thus the 7th month was Sivan; but if we assume a normal chronology, keeping the numbering of the months as they are indicated in the Biblical text, the 7th month means Nisan, the same way that the 2nd month, when the Flood started, meant Marcheshvan.

⁷⁴ The rate of the decrease being 1 cubit every 4 days, therefore the waters had decreased by 4 cubits after 16 days.

⁷⁵ The Ark was of 300 cubits long, 50 wide and 30 high (Genesis 6:15); it touched the peak of Ararat after 16 days, when waters decreased by 4 cubits; thus, as the depth of the waters was of 15 cubits, it means that the submerged part of the Ark was of 11 cubits (4+11=15).

difference,⁷⁶ what do you understand [from this]? It teaches that the days of the Sun are in excess of 11 days above the days of the Moon.⁷⁷

Rabbi Eleazar said: And then His covenant started for the years of the world, the days of the Sun [with] a difference of 11 days with the days of the Moon were created for 15 full [days], and it came out [from this] 4 [days] ahead,⁷⁸ so 11 [days were left as a difference]. They told him and since the first intercalation passed, the Moon arrived to the Sun. He told them [the Moon] returns and [the difference] comes back.⁷⁹

Rabbi Shimon ben Gamaliel says the one who wants to know the sign that the solar days have a difference of 11 days with the lunar days must mark a cut⁸⁰ in the period of Tammuz,⁸¹ and the following year [the Sun] will not arrive there until 11 days and then you know that the days of the Sun have a difference of 11 days with the days of the Moon.

⁷⁶ The Flood lasted a complete solar year, but started on the 17th of the 2nd month and ended on the 27th of the 2nd month, so there was a total of 12 lunar months and 11 days completed to make up one entire solar year.

⁷⁷ The solar year is of 365 days while the lunar year, made of 12 lunar months, is of 354 days.

⁷⁸ Because the great luminaries were only created on the 4th day of the Creation, so these are the 4 days ahead mentioned here.

⁷⁹ Meaning the difference of 11 days is found again the following solar year.

⁸⁰ To mark the point of the rising Sun on a wall, for example on the Kotel.

⁸¹ Because the Sun is the highest in the sky in that period, of the Summer Solstice, thus making this measurement more obvious.