

Parsha Ponders

Noach | October 29, 2019 | 1 Marcheshvan 5780

*Children of good deeds*¹

אלה תולדות נח נח איש צדיק תמים היה בדרתיו את-האלקים התהלך-נח

These are the offspring of Noach – Noach was perfectly righteous in his generation; Noach walked with Hashem ²

This week's *parsha* begins by introducing Noach and his family. However, when the Torah starts to list Noach's offspring, it immediately changes topic and sings his praises. The Torah tells us that Noach was perfectly righteous, and walked with G-d. Only afterwards³ are his children's names mentioned. Why did the Torah introduce these praises by saying "These are the offspring of Noach"? Rashi explains⁴ that "the main offspring of the righteous are their good deeds". Rashi didn't fully explain himself. Why indeed are good deeds called "offspring"?

Perhaps we can say that the Torah referred to good deeds as offspring to teach us how to relate to our good deeds. People inherently love their children. No matter how difficult they are to put up with, the love never wanes. So too a person's good deeds. A person shouldn't perform good deeds because they have to. They shouldn't approach them as something difficult. They should love their good deeds and performing them like they love their children.

As well, a person shouldn't have regrets with their good deeds. They shouldn't focus on their defects. They shouldn't think that they weren't so good, that they could have been better. A person loves their children, no matter how "great" they are. Even a child that is objectively not as good as they could be receives the same level of love from their parents. A person should feel the same way towards their good deeds.

The same is true for good deed opportunities that come our way. We should try our best to avoid any deficiencies in their performance, whether they're big deeds or small⁵. A person goes to great lengths to educate their children such that they are their very best. We try to inspire them to be as good as they can be, as smart as they can be. The same effort should be put in *mitzvos*, such that their performance be as beautiful and nice as possible.

Good Shabbos

¹ Based on [Darash Moshe](#) to [Genesis](#) 6:9

² [Genesis](#) *loc. cit.*

³ [Ibid](#) v. 10

⁴ [Ibid](#) v. 9, quoting [Bereishis Rabbah](#) 30:6. See the former for another explanation

⁵ [Rav Moshe](#) invokes [Avos](#) 2:1