

The MABUL began in BUL

*"And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the House finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he (Shlomo HaMelech) seven years in building it."
- Melachim Alef 6:38*

The Navi identifies BUL as the eighth month, which is MARCHESHVAN. The name BUL is linked to MABUL, the Flood, which began and ended in the second month, Marcheshvan.

Wait. Marcheshvan is the eighth month, not the second. Well, actually, if you count from Rosh HaShana, Tishrei is the first month of the year and Marcheshvan follows, as the second month.

Yes, but we count Nissan as the first month of the year, as Sh'mot 12:2 states - HACHODESH HAZEH LACHEM ROSH CHODASHIM...

True enough. But commentaries explain that the MABUL was before Y'tzi'at Mitzrayim and Matan Torah, so the second month mentioned in Parshat No'ach, was probably the month we have just begun - Marcheshvan.

Confusing? Yes. And not all commentaries accept that it is Marcheshvan that is identified as the second month, in Parshat No'ach -

"In the six hundredth year of No'ach's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day, the wellsprings of the great deep were split and the windows of the heavens were opened" (B'reishit 7:11).

and (B'reishit 8:14)

"And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh of the month, the earth was dry."

And here is the dispute recorded in the gemara, upon which commentaries take sides.

Rabbi Eliezer said, "This is the month Marcheshvan"; Rabbi Yehoshua said, "This is the month Iyar" (Rosh HaShana 11b).

Let's go with the MABUL having begun and ended in Marcheshvan.

The matches with Marcheshvan being the beginning of the rainy season.

Let's add one more point and then put it all together.

The Mishna in Taanit says that if it hasn't yet rained by the 17th of Marcheshvan, then individuals would accept upon themselves to fast and

intensify their prayers for beneficial rainfall.

So, what we have is three "rain situations" associated with the month of Marcheshvan:

Bad, destructive rain,

no rain (also potentially destructive),

and good blessed rain, as in

V'TEIN TAL UMATAR LIVRACHA

which we start saying next Tuesday night, the eve of the 7th of Marcheshvan (October 12th).

This month of BUL reminds us that rain is 'serious business, indeed.'

We have been describing HaShem as the **MASHIV HARU'ACH UMORID HAGESHEM** - the One Who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall, since Shmini Atzeret (a.k.a. Simchat Torah, here in Israel). And we will begin to ask in earnest for beneficial rain, next week. (Outside of Israel, they don't ask for rain until December 5th - but that's another story.)

Bottom line, every single time we say **MASHIV HARU'ACH UMORID HAGESHEM**, and every single time we will say **V'TEIN TAL UMATAR LIVRACHA**, we should understand that petitioning HKB"H for good, plentiful rain during the coming months, and

we should say these t'filot with heartfelt kavana.

May our prayers be answered favorably by the **SHOMEI'A T'FILA** - the One Who hears our prayers.