

# **The Daily Portion**

## **- Sivan Rahav Meir**

### **The breakdown is not only in the social networks**

*Translation by Yehoshua Siskin*

Starting from yesterday evening, with the worldwide breakdown of the social networks, we experienced Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel up close. These are the two main subjects of this week's Torah portion, and both of them teach us something deep about the nature of human beings.

In the story of the Tower of Babel, humanity is united and the technology of that time becomes a form of idolatry. A tower is built that is meant to be the tallest and most sophisticated on Earth, but the people become enslaved to it. They forget that technology is only a tool, not an end in itself and not a divine force. In a race toward ever greater

innovation and development, they lose their sensitivity and their humanity. Does this sound familiar? Tonight we discovered the depth of our addiction and a profound question arose: Are we using these networks or are they using us?

Noah's Ark is also a subject in this week's parsha and it is described in great detail. Many commentators say that each of us, in our generation, needs a personal "Noah's Ark". They explain that today we must contend with a "flood" of disturbances, distractions, and noise. And each and every one of us needs to persevere in order to find a quiet and protected space. The stillness and the tranquility that suddenly entered our lives last night demonstrated how vital it is to find such shelter. Must we wait for worldwide breakdowns like the one that just occurred to appreciate what Noah's Ark is really all about?