

Gd's Modus Operandi

Afterthoughts by Yocheved Bienenfeld

I noticed that there are certain similarities in the episodes described in the Parashot of B'reishit and No'ach, which - as usual - I had not noticed before. Specifically, I am referring to the sin of Adam and the sin of DOR HAFLAGA:

SIN

Adam - sins against Gd by not listening to the one command he had. The lure of the sin was "to be like Gd" - VIH-YITEM KEILOKIM

Dor Haflaga - sins against Gd by challenging His authority; wanting to fight Him. They want to be like Gd (or greater).

INGRATITUDE

Adam - shows ingratitude when he responds to Gd's question by blaming Chava: HA'ISHA ASHER NATATA IMADI, as if it were Gd's fault, chas v'chalila, for having given him Chava to begin with.

Dor Haflaga - shows ingratitude in their "attack" on Gd, ignoring the fact that He promised not to bring a flood upon them.

PUNISHMENT

Adam - Gd prevents Adam from eating from Etz HaChayim: - lest he become too

powerful with his 'knowledge of good and evil' by living forever - and He expels him from Gan Eden.

Dor Haflaga - Gd's response seems similar: - the same concern over Man's overstepping his boundaries and becoming too powerful. And he punishes them by confusing their language which leads to His scattering them out from there all over the earth. They, too, are displaced.

The punishments put Man in a position where he is weaker (as opposed to his desire for power) and, perhaps, this is meant to make him feel his dependence upon Gd even more (as opposed to becoming Gd-like).

When compared to the other two major catastrophes, in terms of punishment, that appear in B'reishit, these consequences are different.

1) The world was destroyed by flood - not because people challenged Gd's power - but because they didn't care about each other and wronged each other.

2) S'dom and Amora, too, were totally destroyed, again - not because they challenged Gd's power - but because their behavior towards other people was despicable. One must conclude that Gd cares more - "feels" more strongly about, and will not tolerate humans hurting each other - than about any "threat" to Himself by Man.