Noah: The "Good Enough" Hero

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1. **Bereishit 5: 28-29**

וַיִּקְרָ֧א אֶת־שְׁמ֛וֹ נֹ֖חַ לֵאמֹ֑ר זֶ֣֠ה **יְנַחֲמֵ֤נוּ** מִֽמַּעֲשֵׂ֙נוּ֙ וּ**מֵעִצְּב֣וֹן** יָדֵ֔ינוּ מִן־הָ֣אֲדָמָ֔ה אֲשֶׁ֥ר **אֵֽרְרָ֖הּ** יְקֹוָֽק׃

He [Lemech] named him Noah, saying, "This one will **comfort us** from our work and from the **pain** of our hands, out of the soil which the Lord **cursed**.

2. **Bereishit 3: 17**
   וּלְאָדָ֣ם אָמַ֗ר כִּֽי־שָׁמַעְתָּ֮ לְק֣וֹל אִשְׁתֶּךָ֒ וַתֹּ֙אכַל֙ מִן־הָעֵ֔ץ אֲשֶׁ֤ר צִוִּיתִ֙יךָ֙ לֵאמֹ֔ר לֹ֥א תֹאכַ֖ל מִמֶּ֑נּוּ **אֲרוּרָ֤ה** הָֽאֲדָמָה֙ בַּֽעֲבוּרֶ֔ךָ בְּ**עִצָּבוֹן֙** תֹּֽאכֲלֶ֔נָּה כֹּ֖ל יְמֵ֥י חַיֶּֽיךָ׃

To Adam [God] said, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife… **cursed** is the soil on your account, with **painstaking** labor shall you eat from it, all the days of your life…

3. **Bereishit 6: 8**

וְנֹ֕חַ מָ֥צָא חֵ֖ן בְּעֵינֵ֥י יְקֹוָֽק׃

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

4. **Bereishit 6: 5**

וַיַּ֣רְא יְקֹוָ֔ק כִּ֥י רַבָּ֛ה רָעַ֥ת הָאָדָ֖ם בָּאָ֑רֶץ וְכָל־יֵ֙צֶר֙ מַחְשְׁבֹ֣ת לִבּ֔וֹ רַ֥ק רַ֖ע כָּל־הַיּֽוֹם׃

The Lord saw that humanity's evil on earth was great, and every form of their heart's planning was only evil all the day.

5. **Bereishit 6: 6**

וַיִּנָּ֣חֶם יְקֹוָ֔ק כִּֽי־עָשָׂ֥ה אֶת־הָֽאָדָ֖ם בָּאָ֑רֶץ **וַיִּתְעַצֵּ֖ב** אֶל־לִבּֽוֹ׃
The Lord **regretted** having made humankind on earth, and it **pained** His heart.

6. **Bereishit 6: 9**

אֵ֚לֶּה תּוֹלְדֹ֣ת נֹ֔חַ נֹ֗חַ אִ֥ישׁ צַדִּ֛יק תָּמִ֥ים הָיָ֖ה **בְּדֹֽרֹתָ֑יו** אֶת־הָֽאֱלֹהִ֖ים הִֽתְהַלֶּךְ־נֹֽחַ׃

This is the line of Noah—Noah was a righteous man; he was blameless **in his generations**; Noah walked with God.

Rashi

יֵשׁ מֵרַבּוֹתֵינוּ דּוֹרְשִׁים אוֹתוֹ לְשֶׁבַח... וְיֵשׁ שֶׁדּוֹרְשִׁים אוֹתוֹ לִגְנַאי לְפִי דוֹרוֹ הָיָה צַדִּיק וְאִלּוּ הָיָה בְדוֹרוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם לֹא הָיָה נֶחְשָׁב לִכְלוּם:

There are those among our Rabbis who interpret this as praise… and there are those who interpret this as an insult—in his generation he was righteous, but had he been in the generation of **Abraham,** he would have been considered as nothing.

7. **Genesis 7**

כִּי לְיָמִים עוֹד שִׁבְעָה אָנֹכִי מַמְטִיר עַל הָאָרֶץ...וּמָחִיתִי אֶת כָּל הַיְקוּם...<u>וַיַּעַשׂ נֹחַ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ יְהוָה</u>

"For in seven days time I will make it rain upon the earth and I will blot out from the earth all existence that I created." Noah did so; just as God commanded him, so he did.

8. **Genesis 18**

<u>אוּלַי</u> יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צַדִּיקִם בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר... <u>אוּלַי</u> יַחְסְרוּן חֲמִשִּׁים הַצַּדִּיקִם חֲמִשָּׁה... וַיֹּאמֶר <u>אוּלַי</u> יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים... וַיֹּאמֶר אַל נָא יִחַר לַאדֹנָי וַאֲדַבֵּרָה <u>אוּלַי</u> יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים... וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא הוֹאַלְתִּי לְדַבֵּר אֶל אֲדֹנָי <u>אוּלַי</u> יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם עֶשְׂרִים... <u>אוּלַי</u> יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם עֲשָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַשְׁחִית בַּעֲבוּר הָעֲשָׂרָה...

Perhaps *(ulai)* there are fifty righteous people in the city…**Perhaps** (*ulai*) the innocent fifty should lack five…"**Perhaps** *(ulai)* there are to be found forty… Let my Master not be angry… **perhaps** (*ulai)* there are thirty… And he said, "… **perhaps** (*ulai)* there are twenty… **Perhaps** (*ulai)* there are to be found ten…

9. **Bereishit 18**

כִּי יְדַעְתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יְצַוֶּה אֶת בָּנָיו וְאֶת בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דֶּרֶךְ יְקֹוָק לַעֲשׂוֹת **צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט**

I have singled him out in order that he will command his children and his posterity after him, so that they will keep the way of the Lord, doing what is right and just…

10. **Bereishit 19**

חָלִלָה לְּךָ מֵעֲשֹׂת כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְהָמִית **צַדִּיק** עִם רָשָׁע וְהָיָה כַצַּדִּיק כָּרָשָׁע חָלִלָה לָּךְ <u>**הֲשֹׁפֵט**</u> <u>**כָּל הָאָרֶץ לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט:**</u>

Far be it from You to do such a thing, to kill the innocent with the guilty… Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice?