

LAMPLIGHTER

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Parshas
Noach
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion, Noach, after the Torah relates how the world was almost completely wiped out by the Flood, it states: "And only Noah remained." The word "only" seems superfluous, as by then we already know the fate of the rest of civilization. Rashi, however, explains that the use of the word "only" connotes that something was lacking or less than perfect about Noah when he exited the ark.

According to Rashi, the literal meaning of the verse is that only Noah remained alive out of everyone of his generation. Yet he goes on to cite two additional explanations from the Midrash: 1) Noah "was groaning and faint from the exertion of taking care of all the animals"; and 2) he "delayed feeding the lion, and was bitten." Thus according to the Midrash, Noah was either sick and exhausted from overwork or physically injured when he first stepped out of the ark.

But why would G-d allow Noah to be bitten by the lion? Out of all the lions that lived prior to the Flood, G-d chose that particular one (and its mate) to go into the ark. Why would He permit it to attack Noah just because its food was delayed on one occasion?

Rashi answers his own question with a quote from Proverbs: "Behold, the righteous man is rewarded on earth." When a righteous person commits even the tiniest misdeed, his punishment is meted out in this world to preserve his reward for the World to Come. Being bitten by the lion was actually to Noah's benefit, for it expiated whatever sin he would have been punished for later.

This contains an important lesson for our generation: Like Noah, the sole survivor of the Flood, we are "the firebrand snatched from the fire" that consumed the Jewish people only a generation ago. And just as Noah was entrusted with a special mission to nurture and sustain G-d's creations in the ark, so too have we been charged with providing spiritual sustenance to our Jewish brethren all over the world.

It is not a simple mission. Indeed, it is fraught with difficulties and obstacles, and an occasional threatening "lion." Yet we must not be frightened or become discouraged. Like Noah, we too must forge ahead despite the daunting nature of the task.

In truth, the fact that we have personally merited to fulfill G-d's mission is cause for great happiness and joy. That we have merited to be alive when so many of our righteous brethren perished should alone inspire us.

Furthermore, learning from Noah's example, we must always strive to ensure that the sustenance we provide is never "delayed." Rather, we must go out of our way to help our fellow Jews both materially and spiritually.

Sinking or Soaring

By Chaim G.

Boats are fascinating. In a flood, without one, you run the risk of drowning. Yet with one, you rise above the water, higher even than where you'd been previously. A boat rises calmly above the water and keeps you from harm's way.

The great flood which wiped out the entire world save Noah happened thousands of years ago. Yet, in reality, those tumultuous flood waters rage as powerfully now as they did then. The waters we face, are waters which threaten to drown our spirituality and love for G-d. Disguised as the concerns to make a livelihood, these waters slowly fill our minds and consciousness, till we have no feeling left for G-d. The stresses of making money, dealing with the bank, and the credit card company, all come together, creating a tidal wave of nerves and worry which tower above us, ready to devour. We feel like we're drowning and are incapable of breaking out. These waters threaten to annihilate us spiritually, a death deeper and more tragic even than the flood waters of Noah, which only destroyed man's physical body.

However, the verse assures us "Many waters cannot extinguish the love and rivers cannot wash it away." The indomitable Jewish soul, which is literally a piece of G-d, can never be completely dulled. Just as a child, separated from his parents for many years, retains that essential bond, so too us Jews. Each Jew is united with G-d, even more than a child to his parents. Therefore, just like a child's connection to his parents is eternal, so too, the embers of our love and feeling for G-d always remain burning within us, waiting to be fanned. And thus, however oppressive and overbearing our physical concerns seem, they can never completely drown our essential oneness with G-d.

Cocooned in the Teivah (ark) which G-d commanded him to build, not only was Noah not overwhelmed by the water, he actually rose above them. Noah navigated the flood so, that while everyone was sinking, he was soaring. By means of a boat (ark), he manipulated the negative elements, and utilized them to become elevated.

We too, must build boats for ourselves. The Baal Shem Tov explains that the hebrew word "Teivah", "ark", can also mean "word". When G-d told Noah, "go into the Teivah", He was also saying, "enter the word" - the words of Torah and Tefillah (prayer). To navigate the flood waters of material concerns, we must fortify ourselves with words of Torah, creating a boat. And when the waters hit, secure in our boat, we will calmly soar high above them. Instead of being destroyed, our bond with the A-mighty will only deepen it as we realize that G-d, much like a loving father, is with us even in our struggles.

Slice of LIFE

Finding My Jewish Roots

by Harry Flaster

This is a story about how I found my own tribe after passing through many different tribal territories. Or, perhaps more accurately, how my tribe found me. In July of 2008 I decided to pack my bag and head southeast from Lusaka, Zambia, to Mozambique. I looked forward to long bus rides, hitching on questionable vehicles, and empty, tropical beaches in Mozambique. I anticipated seeing many different tribes and hearing many different languages. I did not anticipate, however, meeting two wonderful, generous, Chabad rabbinical students my age. I did not anticipate davening (praying) in a Shul (synagogue) at the end of my journey. Yet when I returned to Lusaka two weeks later, it was to the sound of Hebrew, not Zulu, Xhosa, Portuguese, Chewa, Nyanja, Shona, Bemba, or English.

In Lusaka I worked for the Center for Infectious Disease Research Zambia on a HIV prevention project. My role in the project would soon be over, so before the last month of work I decided to travel. I picked an unexplored overland route through the Bush that, if all went well, would take a few days to reach Beira on the Indian Ocean. If it all didn't go well, I could be stranded for a while in the middle of nowhere sub-Saharan Africa.

The trip began beautifully. The bus only left three hours late from Lusaka, and I made it to Katete without any problems other than an overly enthusiastic preacher who grabbed the bus microphone, which dutifully amplified his all ready loud, raspy, high-pitched voice to our captive ears. At the border with Mozambique I was lucky to find a vehicle, which only required some minor repairs. Fortuitously, it kept moving through that evening and well into the night. We rode across hundreds of miles of beautiful emptiness, punctuated by small villages. The clear

night sky was littered with stars, and when we stopped I had a few minutes to explore the local villages as we exchanged passengers and goods. We had the good fortune of passing through during a local ceremony of the Chewa people, the dance of the Ne'u. The Ne'u were out that dusk, running around the village covered in straw and billowing chalk, scaring the children and causing the women to giggle and run. Later that night, the sounds of the Ne'u dance and drums could be heard under the vaulted stars.

The Chewa were just one of the many tribes I would encounter that trip. In Lusaka, where my journey began, there is a mix of many different tribes, languages, cultures, and traditions. The most predominant tribes are the Bemba, followed by the Chewa and the Tonga. When we left the city, we traveled through Chewa territory, which continued into Mozambique. The Chewa language is the root language of the urban Nyanja language, so I was able to speak a little with the people. By the time we reached Tete, in Mozambique, we had left Chewa territory, and I was no longer aware of the tribal identities of the people around me.

It was towards the end of my journey, in Maputo, Mozambique, that I met two Chabad Rabbinical students, Shraga Putter and Pinni Goodman. I met them on a bus ride from Maputo to Johannesburg, South Africa, where I would catch my flight back to Lusaka. At the time I was exhausted and worried about how I would spend ten hours alone in Johannesburg. I had never been to Johannesburg before, and I knew little about it except that it is a very dangerous city. I had missed the first bus that morning in Vilanculus, and been unlucky in choosing buses since, so by the time I saw Shraga and Pinni I had been traveling for almost 24 hours without rest.

With their black coats, yarmulkas and tufts of beard they really stood out, even more than a large white backpacker. While I waited for the bus to leave, I approached the one who had a yarmulka with the words "Tucson, Arizona" written on it. As a native Arizonan myself, it was a natural conversation starter.

After we started talking it wasn't long before they asked me if I was Jewish. When I told them I was, they immediately asked what I would be doing in Johannesburg. Did I want to stay for Shabbos? Did I have a place to stay? Did I want a guided tour of the city?

I had a question for them as well. What were they doing in Mozambique? Shraga and Pinni had gone to Mozambique to build a Jewish community. They only had one loose contact; an Israeli businessman who offered to put them up in a hotel while they made their rounds. So, after arriving in bustling Maputo, they met the businessman who gave them the addresses of a few Jews he knew. The trip started off well and they reported remarkable success in assembling the beginnings of a Jewish community. Progress was halted when, during a meeting in the office of a Jewish lawyer in Maputo, they were robbed at gunpoint. Almost everything was taken - Shraga's wallet, the keys to the rental car, the rental car itself, everything except for Pinni's wallet, which he had accidentally left at the Hotel that day. With their remaining money they were traveling back to Johannesburg to regroup.

But they weren't intimidated at all. They were still excited about the progress they had made in Maputo, about the number of Jews they had met and the prospects for returning to further build a Jewish community. They were young men on a mission to bring the joy of Judaism and a Jewish community to Jews in Maputo. And so even after being robbed in a strange city, they didn't hesitate to invite a disheveled stranger into their home and into their Shul.

In Johannesburg we went to Pinni's house, where I had my first shower in days and some-thing to eat. Then we went to the Chabad Shul to daven Shacharis (the morning service). Finally, they dropped me off at the mall so that I could do some shopping before the flight back to Lusaka.

After traveling hundreds of miles, exploring different countries, cultures and languages, it was two courageous Jews who brought me home.

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ISSUE 1268

MOSHIACH MATTERS

We are living in an era when, as the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe stated, everything necessary to bring the Redemption has been completed. We must be aware that we are "ready to receive Moshiach." There is no explanation why his coming is being delayed. Therefore, even if there is a particular dimension of service that is lacking and is delaying the Redemption, this does not diminish the fact that as a whole, our service is complete and we are ready. This fact makes it easier for us to complete all the individual elements and to do so with happiness.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

The Power of Youth

Youth has special qualities of untapped reserves of energy and enthusiasm. In addition, being still on the threshold of life, youth has a greater measure of goodness and purity, not having had too much contact with the negative aspects of life. All these qualities of youth are extremely important in all youth activities, especially with regard to the education of growing children. Youth responds more readily to youth, as it is more readily influenced intuitively than through the medium of reason. Consequently, the character, feeling and idealistic approach of the instructors and teachers is a decisive factor in the children's education.

I wish you to use all your youthful energies in this most important cause in human life — the upbringing of a new generation on firm and proper foundations.

I send you my prayerful wishes and blessing that your enthusiasm and efforts be crowned with unqualified success.

The Power of a Congregation is the Youth

I trust that special attention will be given to the children and youth of the congregation, which has always been of vital importance, especially in the present day and age. Needless to say, the young generation is not only the future of our people, but also the future of every congregation.

It is also well to bear in mind the favorable impact that the foundation of a Torah-true congregation and Talmud Torah [Jewish day school] has in showing a practical example what a relatively small group of dedicated Jews can do when they take up such a challenge with real devotion and enthusiasm, which is bound to inspire many others to follow their example.

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report about your steady advancement from strength to strength.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

Tattoos

Question: Why does Judaism forbid tattoos?

Answer: The source of this prohibition is Leviticus 19:28: "You shall not etch a tattoo on yourselves." This prohibition applies to all tattoos besides those made for medical purposes, such as to guide a surgeon making an incision.

Although some of the commentaries seem to believe that this is one of the Torah's chukim, the commandments whose rationales transcend the ken of human intellect, other commentators do offer several explanations for this prohibition:

1. The human body is G-d's creation, and it is therefore unbefitting to mutilate G-d's handiwork. It is especially unbefitting for members of G-d's chosen nation to mutilate their bodies. One must believe that G-d, the greatest artisan of all, formed him or her in the most fitting way, and one must not change this form. Changing one's body (unless it is for health reasons) is tantamount to insulting G-d's handiwork.
2. In ancient times, it was customary for idol-worshippers to tattoo themselves as a sign of commitment to their deity—much like an animal that is branded by its owner. On many occasions the Torah forbids practices that emulate pagan customs, considering that following their traditions is the first step towards subscribing to their idolatrous beliefs and services. The covenant of circumcision is unique in its being a sign in our bodies of our relationship with G-d. Making other signs in one's body would weaken and cheapen this special sign.

A WORD

from the Director

We have now begun the Jewish month of Cheshvan, referred to as Mar-Cheshvan, "bitter Cheshvan," as it is a month bereft of holidays.

With the arrival of the month of Cheshvan we enter a new phase in the Jewish year, representing a transition from a month of festivals to the ordinary service of the year. In the month of Elul we prepared ourselves for the Days of Awe. During Tishrei we welcomed the new year and stood before G-d in judgement, which was followed by the joyous days of Sukkot. But now Cheshvan has arrived and our mission is to carry the holiness of the month of Tishrei with us as we reenter the "real world."

Chasidic thought describes this mission as "V'Yaakov halach l'darko - and Yaakov went on his way." The name Yaakov [Jacob] represents the entire Jewish nation. Just as Jacob had to leave the house of his father, his source of spirituality, so too do we have to leave the spiritual and festive month of Tishrei. And just as Jacob was able to not only take with him the lessons of his father's house, but utilize his travels to further his spiritual growth, we too have to take with us all that we have gained during the holidays. And as the year progresses, we should continue to attain higher goals of spiritual growth.

May we travel through the year 5777 always reaching higher, striving further, until we have achieved our ultimate goal, the coming of Moshiach.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED



The Baal Shem Tov sent Avraham, one of his disciples, on a trip. The ship on which Avraham was traveling encountered a terrible storm and capsized. Avraham was thrown into the tempestuous ocean and the next thing he knew, he was on the beach of a small island. Neither the wreckage of the ship nor the other passengers were anywhere in sight.

Avraham explored the island in the hope of finding someone who could help him. When Thursday arrived, Avraham went the deepest into the island he had gone yet. He found a little village that was eerily still, perfectly silent.

Avraham explored the entire village which was comprised of a synagogue and a few dozen houses. He was astonished to see that the village was empty, yet each home was immaculately clean; not even a thin speck of dust was on any of the furnishings. The village was truly a mystery.

Avraham decided to return to the deserted village on Friday and spend Shabbat there, albeit by himself. Friday morning, Avraham made his way to the village. But now the village was packed with people, all busy preparing for Shabbat. He grabbed one of the villagers excitedly and asked, "Where did all of you come from? I was here just yesterday and no one was anywhere in sight. It is as if you materialized out of thin air!" Avraham concluded.

Politely but firmly, the villager responded, "Excuse me, but I am very busy preparing for Shabbat. Go to the synagogue this evening. There you will find our rabbi who will certainly tell you everything you want to know." Avraham did as he was told and after the evening services asked the rabbi for an explanation. The rabbi responded: "Be my guest this Shabbat and we will discuss this topic as well as many more interesting subjects."

That Shabbat in the rabbi's home was the most sublime, the most exalted, the holiest Shabbat he had ever experienced in his life. Avraham felt as if the Garden of Eden had been opened to him and he was partaking of the same Shabbat that the souls there experience. In fact, so unique was this Shabbat that Avraham forgot to ask the rabbi the question.

As the end of Shabbat approached, the villagers gathered in the synagogue. The rabbi recited the special prayer (Havdala) separating Shabbat from the rest of the week. The rabbi and the villagers then dipped their fingertips into the wine of Havdala and passed their fingers over their eyes. And then, they all... vanished. Before Avraham even realized what had happened, everyone was gone. The entire village was deserted as before.

Avraham waited in the village the entire week for the holy Shabbat to arrive. When he awoke Friday morning, he smelled challah baking and chicken roasting. The village was once more busy with preparations for Shabbat. And once more, when Avraham tried to ask anyone where they had been the entire week, he received a polite but firm rebuff.

Shabbat arrived and what a beautiful, magnificent, holy Shabbat it was. Avraham once more was the guest at the house of the rabbi. And once more, Avraham forgot to ask his question.

But, when Shabbat ended this time, Avraham suddenly remembered that he must find out the village's story. When the rabbi had finished reciting Havdala, Avraham grabbed hold of his hand. "I will not let go of you until you unravel the mystery of your village for me," Avraham said.

The rabbi had no choice and told Avraham this story: "Everyone in this village was a resident of a small town outside of Jerusalem when the Holy Temple stood. Shabbat was the favorite mitzva (commandment) of our town and we celebrated it gloriously. When the Holy Temple was destroyed our town was also destroyed and all of its inhabitants were killed.

"When we went to Heaven, we all approached the Divine Throne, united as one, as we had always been united in our love for and observance of Shabbat. We protested: 'Heaven is totally spiritual and not a just reward for our community. Our true love has always been to uphold and celebrate the holy Shabbat which we cannot do in Heaven. Let us return to the world each week, on the eve of Shabbat, celebrate Shabbat there, and then we will return to Heaven.' G-d agreed and since that time, for these thousands of years, each Shabbat eve we return to the world and celebrate Shabbat."

The rabbi then took a piece of parchment and wrote upon it various combinations of the letters of G-d's Name. He told Avraham to take this parchment to the ocean. Avraham was to close his eyes and begin walking into the ocean, all the while holding the parchment in his hand above the water. When he felt he could walk no further, Avraham was to throw the parchment into the air and he would find himself on the shores of the water near his home. The rabbi then passed his fingers over his eyes and vanished.

Avraham made his way to the shore and did as the rabbi had instructed him. When the water was almost covering his nose he pulled back his arm to throw the parchment. But then he felt a hand grab hold of his arm. Avraham opened his eyes to find himself near his home. The Baal Shem Tov was holding his arm. "This is why I sent you on the mission," the Baal Shem Tov explained to Avraham. "I will be able to use the kabbalistic formula written upon this parchment to arrive instantly (k'fitzat haderech) anywhere in the world. I will be able to help Jews wherever they are and further spread the teachings of Chasidism which will hasten the coming of Moshiach."

Thoughts THAT COUNT

And the earth was corrupt before G-d, and the earth was filled with violence (Gen 6:11)

It is a mistake to think that man can exist without faith and fear of G-d, while fulfilling the commandments between man and his fellow man. When the point of "and the earth was corrupt before G-d" is reached, when the yoke of Heaven is thrown off and the people begin to sin against G-d, the immediate result is "and the earth was filled with violence."

(Or HaTorah)

And the whole earth was of one language (Gen. 11:1)

The generation that was alive at the time of the Flood was thoroughly steeped in robbery and dishonesty, and therefore was thoroughly destroyed. But the generation of the Tower of Babel had at least the merit of loving their fellow man and getting along with each other, as it says, "and the whole earth was of one language." Therefore, they were not all destroyed.

(Bereishit Rabba)

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just, perfect man in his generation (Gen. 6:9)

Rashi comments: This verse teaches us that the most important legacy of a righteous person is his good deeds. A righteous person is not defined by his lineage or by his noble ancestry, but by his actions.

(Divrei Yisrael)

Noah's perfection was that he followed G-d's will completely and with all of his being throughout the day, not just when he learned and prayed, but with mundane matters as well.

(Lubavitcher Rebbe)

CANDLE LIGHTING



	Shabbos 4-5 November	
	Begins	Ends
Melbourne	7:40	8:42
Adelaide	7:30	8:30
Brisbane	5:51	6:46
Darwin	6:30	7:21
Gold Coast	5:50	6:46
Perth	6:36	7:24
Sydney	7:08	8:07
Canberra	7:18	8:19
Launceston	7:39	8:43
Auckland	7:39	8:40
Wellington	7:48	8:52
Hobart	7:41	8:47
Byron Bay	6:50	7:46

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS NOACH • 3 CHESHVAN • 4 NOVEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:40 PM
	MINCHA:	7:45 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:10 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:34 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	7:35 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:42 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	8:00/9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:35 PM
	MAARIV:	8:25 PM