



# L'Chaim

The Yeshiva Centre – Chabad NSW Headquarters  
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## Living with the Rebbe



This week's Torah portion, Noach, begins with G-d's description of Noach [Noah]: "Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generation." Even though Noach lived in a generation of sinful individuals, he nonetheless merited to receive this praiseworthy description from G-d.

Noach was the only member of his generation who behaved properly; the conduct of everyone else living at that time was depraved. But Noach was not ashamed of acting differently. He served G-d in an open manner.

In the merit of his exemplary behavior, Noach and his family survived the Great Flood while all others perished. Indeed, it was Noach and his children who re-populated the world and through whom humankind continues to exist. An entirely "new world" was established by Noach, as it were.

In truth, Noach's conduct contains a valuable teaching for every Jew. It sometimes happens that a Jew may want to do a particular mitzva (commandment), but the yetzer hara (evil inclination) whispers: "Take a good look around! Do you see anyone else doing this mitzva? You shouldn't do it, either."

Or, one might want to study Torah with diligence, but the yetzer hara intervenes. "Look around you," the yetzer hara stops him. "No one else takes his studies so seriously. Why must you be different from everyone else? Better you should close your books and do something else."

There are many instances in which the evil inclination tries to stop a Jew from doing a mitzva. Why, the entire world is filled with millions of people, and most of them are behaving in an entirely different fashion! How can you, a single and solitary individual, announce to the entire world (by doing that mitzva) that all of creation belongs to G-d? Why should you be different and recite a verse from Torah stating that "In the beginning G-d created the heavens and the earth"?

The arguments of the evil inclination must be answered by following Noach's example.

Just as Noach disregarded his surroundings, so too must every Jew pay no attention to the conduct of friends and colleagues when it is not in accordance with the teachings of the Torah. And just as Noach succeeded in his path, which was different from the rest of society's, so too, will every Jew succeed in conquering his yetzer hara, allowing him to learn Torah and observe mitzvot even in a hostile environment.

After the Flood, Noach merited to establish a new world. Similarly, every Jew has the power to save an entire world and bring redemption with "Moshiach Now!" *Based on an address of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Tzivos Hashem 5743*

## Leash the Dog

Perhaps you've had this experience: You're walking along, absorbed in your own thoughts, when some guy comes jogging towards you. But he's not alone. He's got a dog. Unleashed.

Or maybe you're in the park with your kids. From out of nowhere streaks a dog, its owner yelling frantically - maybe trying to get it to chase a frisbee instead of your kid.

Or you're walking your own dog - which of course you keep leashed - when, another dog, bigger, faster, comes flying in from nowhere, making a direct line for your more restrained, less aggressive pet.

Now in all three scenarios, one of two things can happen: the unleashed dog can be as friendly as its owner says it is. Or, despite the helpless protestations of the owner, the dog goes into attack mode.

In the first case, the unleashed dog just wants to play. With you. With its dirty paws all over you.

Or with your child, who's scared out of her mind, because the dog's bigger, faster and knocking her down or running over her.

In the last scenario, you probably don't want your dog trying to run off with the stranger's dog.

So except in designated doggy areas, leash the dog.

There's a spiritual parallel to this, of course, because we all have our "inner dogs." The animal within us - the animal soul - can take many metaphoric forms, but surely it can be a bit dog-like.

What does that mean? All dogs share two traits: they're loyal and they're undisciplined - impulsive, if you prefer.

Our inner dog is the same way: it's loyal, it's the inner emotional response that justifies our mood. Did someone "stroke" us? Do we see a game we'd like to join? Or has someone entered our space? Is someone else getting attention? That awakens our inner attack dog.

And our inner dog - the animal part of ourselves that we pamper (it's okay not to exercise, it's all right to skimp on a mitzva) or allow to sic (so what if I embarrassed him, who cares if the candy might not be kosher) - acts impulsively.

Our "inner dog" can't help itself any more than a real one. But we can help it. Because there's one other critical trait dogs have: they can be trained. And they can be leashed.

We can do the same with our "inner dog." We can train it. You put a coin in a pushka (charity box) before your morning coffee. You look for the kosher symbol on the product before you buy it. You read the weekly Torah thought that the rabbi sends you before you delete it.

But even when we've trained ourselves, gotten our "inner dog" disciplined, we have to remember that by nature it's impulsive. It'll forget all that training in an instant to chase a squirrel or dig up the yard. In other words, we might let our enthusiasm for "dog things" run wild. We might become energized by chasing cars or scaring children, thinking both are forms of play.

That's why our "inner master," our rational soul, has to keep our "inner dog" on a leash. We have to discipline ourselves, train ourselves, restrain ourselves.

Then we can take our "inner dog" for a walk, among people and other dogs. We might even be able to enter it into a spiritual dog show - where it could be a real prize winner.

## Aliyot Summary

**General Overview:** In this week's reading, *Noach*, Noah and his family, along with at least one pair of each living creature, survive the Flood by taking refuge in an Ark. The erection of the Tower of Babel angers G-d, and leads to the dispersal of Noah's descendants. Abraham and Sarah are born.

**First Aliyah:** While society as a whole descended into a state of anarchy and utter corruption, only Noah remained righteous and faithful to G-d's ways. Noah was informed by G-d that a *mabul* ("flood") will soon destroy all of civilization, and only Noah and his immediate family would survive in a *teivah* ("ark," boat) that he was to build. G-d gave Noah the exact dimensions of the *teivah* he was to build, and commanded Noah to bring along into the *teivah* specimens of every species of animal and bird to repopulate the world after the *mabul*, and to stock the boat with food to feed all its inhabitants.

**Second Aliyah:** Of kosher animals and birds, Noah was commanded to take seven pairs of each species (as opposed to one pair of all other species). Noah, his family, and the required animals boarded the *teivah* and the *mabul* began: "The springs of the great depths burst forth and the windows of the heavens opened."

**Third Aliyah:** The torrential rains lasted for forty days and nights. The waters rose to great heights and covered even the highest mountains, killing all humans and animals; everything died aside for Noah and the other occupants of the *teivah*. After the waters raged on the earth another 150 days, G-d caused the waters to subside. The *teivah* eventually rested on the Ararat Mountains, and shortly thereafter the mountain peaks came into view. Noah opened the window of the *teivah* and dispatched birds to see whether it was time to leave the *teivah*. First he sent a raven, which refused to execute its mission and just circled the ark. He then sent out a dove. On its second attempt the dove went and did not return, signaling that the earth was once again habitable. After one full year in the *teivah*, the earth had dried.

**Fourth Aliyah:** G-d commanded Noah to leave the *teivah*, along with all his fellow *teivah*-mates. Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices. This pleased G-d, who then promised to never again curse the earth as He had just done. Instead, the regular seasons (which had not functioned during the year of the *mabul*) would continue perpetually. G-d then blessed Noah and his sons: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." G-d allowed mankind to eat meat, but prohibited murder, suicide, and the consumption of a limb ripped from a living animal.

**Fifth Aliyah:** G-d told Noah that he is establishing a covenant to never again bring a flood to destroy the world. G-d designated the rainbow as the sign of this covenant: "And it shall come to pass, when I cause clouds to come upon the earth, that the rainbow will appear in the cloud. And I will remember My covenant..."

**Sixth Aliyah:** Noah planted a vineyard, made wine, became drunk and fell into a deep drunken slumber -- while naked. Noah's son, Ham, saw his father naked, assaulted him, and informed his two brothers of their father's state. The brothers, Shem and Japheth, modestly approached their father and covered him. When Noah awakened, he cursed Cham's son, Canaan, and blessed Shem and Japheth. This section then names Noah's seventy grandsons and great-grandsons, the antecedents of the "seventy nations," and their adopted homelands.

**Seventh Aliyah:** This section recounts the story of the Tower of Babel. Noah's descendants gathered in the Babylonian valley and started building a tower, in an attempt to reach the heavens and battle G-d. G-d disrupted their "plan" by causing them each to speak a different language, thus destroying their communications. This caused them to disperse and settle in different lands. The Torah then lists the ten generations of Shem's descendants. The tenth generation is Abram (later to be known as Abraham), who married Sarai (later to be known as Sarah).

## Thoughts that Count

And G-d said to Noah, "Come with all your household into the teiva (ark)" (Gen. 7:1)

Teiva also means "a word." The Baal Shem Tov interprets this phrase as an exhortation to "enter" the words of Torah and prayer. When one brings his children into the protective "ark" of the words of Torah, and sets limitations for their behavior according to the standards of Torah conduct, then those youngsters are saved from the stormy flood waters of the negative influences of the environment.

I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh (Gen. 6:17)

Why did G-d choose a flood with which to punish mankind? Could he not have chosen another method to destroy the wicked? Another purpose of the flood, however, was to purify the world which had become unclean and defiled by its inhabitants. This is alluded to in the duration of the flood, forty days, and the requirement that a purifying mikva contain at least forty sa'a (a measure) of water. (*Rabbi Shneur Zalman*)

And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives into the ark (Gen. 7:7)

A person should not content himself with his own entrance into the "ark" - the holy letters of prayer and of the Torah, but should always seek to bring others with him as well, not only members of his family but every fellow Jew. Just as G-d helped Noah by closing the door of the ark after all were safely inside, so, too, is every Jew assisted by G-d when he comes to the aid of his fellow man. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN AND SPIRITUAL LEADER



This week's Torah portion is Noach. Therefore, this is the perfect opportunity to consider the implications of the Rebbe's campaign to disseminate, among non-Jews, the knowledge and observance of the Seven Noachide Laws.

The nations of the world were given a Divine code of conduct, the Seven Noachide Laws, which consist of six prohibitions against murder, robbery, idolatry, adultery, blasphemy, cruelty to animals - and one positive command, to establish a judicial system.

The Rebbe has encouraged his emissaries around the world to meet with government officials and heads of state to sign proclamations encouraging the study and observance of the Seven Noachide laws.

The Rambam (Rabbi Moses Maimonides) states that an important part of the Jew's task is to see to it that all people, not just Jews, acknowledge G-d as Creator and Ruler of the world and to therefore conduct themselves according to the Seven Noachide Laws. Each and every Jew has an important role to play in this task. But how can this be accomplished?

When a Jew conducts himself properly in all areas of his life - business, recreation, family, and religious - he will automatically influence the people around him. When the nations of the world see Jews acknowledging G-d as Ruler of the world, through prayer and by following His commandments, they, too, will come to realize the importance and truth of G-d's omnipotence.

*Pinchus Feldman*

Rabbi Pinchus Feldman OAM

## Smile its Friday

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the director, "What is the criterion that defines a patient to be institutionalized?" "Well..." said the director, "we fill up a bathtub, and we offer a teaspoon, a teacup, and a bucket to the patient and ask him to empty the bathtub." "Oh, I understand," said the visitor. "A normal person would choose the bucket as it is larger than the spoon or the teacup." "Noooooooo!" answered the director. "A normal person would pull the plug."

## by Hana Levi Julian

When Sara Elise and Rebecca Paul were planning their Bat Mitzvah in Yardley, Pennsylvania last year, they and their parents spent weeks trying to figure out what kind of ceremony would be meaningful and yet different from the usual run-of-the-mill "big bash."

The Pauls opted for an innovative program created by Chabad-Lubavitch of the Dead Sea called the "Masada Experience."

The idea is to breathe a little life into a female event that brings a young girl into womanhood. Often a girl's passage into Jewish adulthood moves quietly, with the modesty that is associated with traditional Jewish womanhood.

This, says Chabad emissary Rabbi Shimon Elharar, does not have to mean the event is not vital, exuberant and memorable. A man of his word, Elharar himself appears inexhaustible, striding up the dusty path from the entrance to the site straight to the chamber with nary a misstep. The man simply never stops moving.

"We begin the Bat Mitzvah ceremony with reading of the Shema and reciting of the chapters of psalms and selected prayers and sacred texts," explains Elharar. "This is followed by a speech delivered by the Bat Mitzvah, who is then in turn blessed by her father, who pronounces the traditional blessing upon his daughters."

This first part of the celebration concludes with an award ceremony in which the Bat Mitzvah girls receive special certificates, which include a special blessing for them and their family. Rabbi Elharar then describes the history and importance of Masada, past and present.

Following the ceremony in the ancient synagogue, the family moves to a nearby stone room which, in centuries past, served as living quarters for the Jews who rebelled against Rome.

Dressed in "Biblical" costume, a Jewish woman patiently awaits the female members of the Bat Mitzvah girls' family and group of friends. An enormous bowl of swelling challah (Sabbath bread) dough sits on a table with the other items needed to prepare the festive loaves seen at every Jewish celebration.

This is where the ceremony truly separates the men and the boys. The male members of the group are waved off to the side as they enter the chamber; welcomed, yes, but clearly participants only in the sense of being the audience as the young women-to-be take center stage next to the enormous challah bowl.

Sara Elise and Rebecca's father, his face wreathed in smiles, moves to the corner of the chamber, his video camera at the ready to record the occasion. The rabbi also stands back.

All eyes are on Sara Elise and Rebecca, their mother, grandmother and the friends who came along for the life-changing event.

"Here on Masada," gently intones the Biblical re-enacter, "women baked bread for their families just as you are about to do now. Two thousand years ago, they kneaded the dough in exactly the same way, every day ...."

She goes on to explain the commandment involved in separating out the small piece of dough that symbolically represents the portion that was once set aside for the priestly class. But, she adds, it is essential to continue to observe this commandment so that "when the Third Temple is rebuilt, we will not have forgotten, and will know what to do" once again.

Smiling, after assisting each Bat Mitzvah through her first performance of the commandment, to the applause of her family, the baker informs them, "now together we will make new Sabbath loaves in this room and thus we will repair and renew the links in the chain that were broken here at Masada two thousand years ago."

Each woman and girl gets enough dough to make a small challah, which is carefully placed on the baking sheet. Within minutes, Masada's heat has inspired the yeast to expand the loaves enough for them to be placed in the waiting oven.

The seminal rite of passage in which a Jewish girl legally enters womanhood,

says Rabbi Elharar, reminds the parents of their place in the House of Israel in which "they are united with all others as one under Heaven, participating in the acceptance of Torah Commandments and their place among the Jewish People." This especially happens, he adds, "in a place which also bequeaths to one a history replete with personal sacrifice, such as occurred at Masada."

From a Jewish legal perspective, there is no particular action required for a girl to take in order to declare her entry into womanhood, as there is for a boy, who dons tefillin (phylacteries) and goes up to the Torah as part of a minyan (quorum) for the first time.

But it is equally important today, says Elharar, for a girl to understand that her passage into adulthood carries with it equal significance, and with that, responsibility under Jewish law as well.

Although Judaism does not provide for any specific ceremony to mark that passage, he adds, "There is no reason not to create a way for a girl to celebrate that event. It is so pivotal; every girl should be able to point to that time in her life, and say, 'Yes - this is how I celebrated my becoming a Jewish woman.'"

For the Pauls, the fragrant loaves that emerged from the small after they were shaped by Sara Elise and Rebecca and the women of their family and her friends were not nearly as important as the journey they took to get to them.

But as they munched on the warm challahs and drank the ice cold water provided by Rabbi Elharar in the sweltering Judean heat of Masada, Sara Elise and Rebecca's father reflected on the compulsion he had felt to bring his daughters to Masada for their Bat Mitzvah. He had been dragged back by his roots back to his Jewish homeland, he observed, "as surely as the Zealots were tied to the land and willing to die, rather than leave."

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## What's New

### New Emissaries

Rabbi Yossi and Racheli Halperin recently arrived in Sofia, Bulgaria, together with their three young children. They will be living in the capital, Sofia, where they will be bolstering activities of Chabad-Lubavitch in Bulgaria that was established eight years ago.

Rabbi and Mrs. Yochanon Monssouri will soon be moving to Lake Encino, California, where they will establish a new Chabad House serving the needs of the local Jewish Community.

Rabbi Shraga and Chani Marzel arrived recently in Prague, Czech Republic. They are establishing a rabbinical college in the city that was historically known for its great Jewish scholars. The yeshiva will be based in the new Maharal Institute building.

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# Moshiaich

The animals lived peaceably in Noah's ark and so, too, will all the world when Moshiaich comes, as prophesized by Isaiah (11:6-9), "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the young goat together with the calf, the young lion and the ox; and a little child will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together; the lion will eat straw like an ox. The nursing child will play on the hole of the snake, the weaned child will stretch his hand over the den of the viper. They shall do no evil nor shall they destroy... for the earth will be full of the knowledge of G-d, as the waters cover the sea."

# It Happened Once

One Friday afternoon, the Baal Shem Tov came to a small town to spend the holy Shabbat there. On his usual visits, it was his habit to stay in the home of a wealthy householder who prized the honor of hosting the Baal Shem Tov. This time, to the consternation of all, the Baal Shem Tov announced that he would be spending the entire Shabbat in the shul (synagogue).

When he arrived in shul, the Baal Shem Tov prayed at great length, all the while weeping copious tears. The whole congregation joined him in the emotional prayers, and they wept too, although they didn't know the reason for their tears.

The Baal Shem Tov recited Psalms and enjoined the others to do the same. When services came to an end, he sent the congregants home to enjoy their Shabbat meal, instructing them to return and continue reciting Psalms.

The next morning, the Baal Shem Tov followed his usual custom and immersed himself before prayer. When he returned to the shul, he announced in a hearty voice that he would be joining his usual host for the Shabbat meal. The people were relieved, and a large crowd gathered at the wealthy man's home, hoping to understand the meaning of the day's events.

The Baal Shem Tov sat at the table in a happy mood, singing one Shabbat melody after another. Suddenly a gentile walked into the room. The Baal Shem Tov beckoned to the Russian to enter and join him at the table.

"Offer him some liquor," the Baal Shem Tov called out, and suddenly glasses and bottles appeared in front of them. The Russian was pleased to down one glass after another, and soon he was quite tipsy. Then the Baal Shem Tov asked him, "Well, now, tell me what happened over there."

"Last night, the poritz (wealthy landowner) called in all his local fellows. He was very angry at the Jews for not buying his grains, and ruining his income. He had to put all his merchandise into storage and he lost a fortune when it began to rot. So, he decided to get them back, those Jews. All the local fellows gathered at the poritz's manor and got good and drunk, while the poritz incited them against the Jews. They were told that tonight was the night to attack the Jews - not only in town, but wherever they could be found. Whatever they could grab would be theirs.

"All of a sudden a man walked into the house, and the poritz stood up to greet him. They embraced like long-lost brothers and went into another room where they stayed for a few hours, while the crowd of hooligans drank more and more. It turns out that the visitor was none other than the poritz's best

school chum, whom he hadn't seen in a dozen years. They sat together talking and reminiscing, and in the course of their conversation, the poritz told his friend about his plan to punish the Jews for destroying his business. 'How can you think such a crazy thing?' asked the friend. 'Can't you see that you're being led around by the nose by the enemies of the Jews? Listen to me: of all your local people, it's only the Jews you can really trust not to cheat you. Remember my old estate manager, Moshke? If not for him I would have been bankrupt more times than I care to count!' Their conversation continued in that vein, and when he came out of the room, the poritz had been completely convinced not to harm the Jews. In fact, he now felt that they were his best friends. Who could figure that one out? He paid off the drunken peasants and sent them on their way."

The Russian thanked the Baal Shem Tov for the fine liquor and left. Everyone in the room was perplexed and waited for an explanation. The Baal Shem Tov was obviously pleased at what the gentile had told him, and he explained to the crowd, "I saw from Mezhibozh that there was a great danger hanging over this community and therefore I came to spend Shabbat here. As you know, the poritz had raised his grain prices to the point that no one wanted to buy from him. As a consequence, he suffered a tremendous loss, and the local priest and his cronies took the opportunity to slander the Jews.

"The poritz was convinced that the Jews were conspiring against him, and he devised a plan to destroy them. I knew that there was only one person who could persuade him otherwise, and that was his old friend. The only problem was that he had passed away years ago. I was forced to bring him back into this world to avert this terrible tragedy. Thank G-d, I had success."

The people now understood the heartfelt prayers and the night of reciting Psalms. They were both shocked and relieved at what the Baal Shem Tov had related to them. Then, one of them turned to the Baal Shem Tov and asked, "One thing I don't understand: Why did you have to come here to perform the miracle? Surely you could have done it from Mezhibozh and spared the journey."

The Baal Shem Tov nodded. But then he went on to explain that if, G-d forbid, his intervention had not been successful, he had desired to be together with his fellow Jews in the time of their great ordeal. The people saw the depth of the love the Baal Shem Tov had for them and the extent of self-sacrifice that the tzadik of the generation has for every Jew.



## Candle Lighting Times Friday 31 October 2008

City	In	Out
Sydney	7:04pm	8:03pm
Brisbane	5:48pm	6:43pm
Surfers Par	5:47pm	6:42pm
Melbourne	7:36pm	8:37pm

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