

Parasha Meditation Noach

Bereishit 6:9-11:32

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Building our Personal Sacred Space

Introduction:

Our Personal Ark of Protection

The great flood of Noach teaches us that no matter how greatly people mess up, there is always a way out of total destruction. Hashem imbues within us the power of protection, no matter how much we may sin G-d forbid, there will never again be total destruction like the great flood.¹ Moreover, we will always have our personal ark – a corner of purity – where we can escape all matters of corruption.

The Protection of the Holy Shabbat

The Zohar teaches that Noach alludes to the holy Shabbat.² “Noach found grace”³ – by means of keeping the holy Shabbat, a Jew has the power to overcome all kinds of negative influence in the world. Whoever keeps Shabbat according to its Halachot (Jewish laws) is forgiven even if he worshipped idols.⁴ The power of Shabbat protects us even from the worst situation. The holy Shabbat corresponds to Noach’s ark which protects from the water of the deluge.⁵

The Power of Torah Keeps Impurity from Entering

Noach’s ark also alludes to the holy Torah, which provides us with protection. “I have created the *yetzer hara*, (evil inclination) I have created the Torah its antidote.”⁶ The Torah is the power of protection from the corruption of the generation of the flood. The matter of Noach’s ark is to detain the powers of impurity from spreading, and prevent them from entering the ark, by means of the power of the Torah.

Holding on to the Rope of Our Holy Spark

Whenever we feel down and low, when we feel that our personal world is at the verge of collapse, then it is the time to “Make for yourself an ark.”⁷ – Seek refuge in your personal

¹ Bereishit 9:15.

² Tikunei Zohar 138b.

³ Bereishit 6:8.

⁴ Yalkut Shimoni, Yesha’yahu, chapter 56, allusion 485.

⁵ Netivat Shalom, Parashat Noach, p. 51.

⁶ Babylonian Talmud, Kedushin 30b.

⁷ Bereishit 6:14.

sacred space – the spark of life from which we have the ability to rebuild our broken spiritual world. This ark is built by means of the one mitzvah that each and every Jew keeps to perfection, in any situation, no matter how much resistance we experience. This spark of life gives us otherworldly powers to overcome the nature of even the fiercest storm. “For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be.”⁸ The little spark within us, where there is no wickedness, this is our personal ark that saves us from all corruption. This can be compared to a person who is drowning in the sea. Someone throws him a rope that he can hold on to. Whenever we hold on to the rope we can live. Drowning in the sea symbolizes the darkest feeling of despair, and the rope is the little spark within us, elevating us above our desperate situation, empowering us to return to our source – our sacred space of the ark.⁹

Come to the Word

The word in Hebrew for ark תִּבְיָה – “teivah” also means “word.” “Come to the word”¹⁰ of Torah and *tefilah* (prayer) G-d is telling us. This is true all year long, but especially now, right after the holidays when we have been earnestly working on ourselves. If we practice now doing things right, it will be easier all year long!¹¹

Meditation:

Sit comfortably in your chair, close your eyes and take deep breaths several times. Breathe deeply and feel completely relaxed in all of the limbs of your body.

1. After several minutes of relaxed breathing, imagine that you face the turbulent sea. There are bright shining threatening waves, as far as the eye can see.
2. Each stormy wave of “the waters of Noach” represents another one of your worries. Worries about your place in the world, about *parnassah* (money), your health, your children your future...Visualize how each worry is whisking over you, almost drowning you, making you pant for breath.
3. Within the sea of your worries, there is a light – a small light of peace. You hear a Heavenly Voice softly whispering into your ear “*Come to the ark.*” – בֵּא אֶל הַתִּבְיָה – “*Come to the ark.*” – בֵּא אֶל הַתִּבְיָה.

⁸ *Tehillim* 37:10.

⁹ *Netivat Shalom, Parashat Noach*, p. 52-53.

¹⁰ *Bereishit* 7:1.

¹¹ Based on Rabbi Shaul Yosef Leiter, *Ascent of Safed*, w:0659/*Noach*.

4. Listen to the voice and enter into your personal ark. Now you can float safely above the waves of your worries. You are neither cold nor wet, just floating.... You are floating...floating allowing Hashem to steer the course.

5. Breathe deeply and relax even more, knowing that all your worries will evaporate in your trusting that Hashem will steer you to secure shores.

6. From within your ark, feel the waves of the flood above and below you, while you are being safe – safe inside of your *teivah* – your word of Torah and *Tefilah* – (prayer).

7. Pray to Hashem, “Hashem please save me!!!! Without you I will drown and perish.”

8. Feel Hashem’s presence and experience how the waters purify the world and yourself. Imagine how each foamy wave washes over you and cleanses you from all of your worries.

9. Remember When the flood of worries tries to engulf you, have faith in G-d. Instead of drowning, you will be lifted above the water by the *teivah* – words of prayer and learning.

10. Feel *b’Noach* – at rest, in complete peace with yourself. Take a breath in, as you imagine the sound “No.” Breathe out while you imagine the sound “Ach.” Repeat five times then open your eyes.

Notes:

Worries mundane matters are sometimes referred to as “the waters of Noach.” In addition to the destruction, the flood also purified the world, and brought rest – *noach* – to G-d. So also there is inner purpose to the worries we experience that flood our lives. The worries are meant to force us into prayer and strengthen our faith in G-d.

The story of the flood can be a positive one. The solitude, quiet and relative security on the ark guided totally by G-d’s hand can provide comfort. An ark differs from a boat in that it has no steering mechanisms. The word *teivah*, ark, is only used in the Torah in reference to Noah’s vessel and to the basket in which baby Moses was sent off onto the Nile. In both cases, the hope of humanity was set afloat with G-d alone to steer the course.



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About Us



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Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work. For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's

spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

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or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

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