



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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There is a fascinating teaching in the *Zohar HaChadash* that offers an interesting take on the narrative of *Noach*. Upon emerging from the *teiva* and witnessing the destruction in the world following the flood, *Noach* began to weep, and then called out to *Hashem*- questioning how could it be that the world was decimated. *Hashem*, according to this teaching, answers *Noach*, calling him a foolish servant- I told you that you were righteous before me, and that the world was destined for destruction, and you did nothing! You had the capacity to *daven* and intercede, and you did nothing to convince me that the world was worth protecting!

The great Chasidic Master **Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev**, *zy'a* points out something interesting in this teaching. In not advocating at all, by not making any effort whatsoever to show concern for others, *Noach* was not simply selling others short, but rather was selling **himself** short! *Noach* simply did not understand or believe that he, as a righteous person, had the ability to both advocate for or influence others! He simply didn't understand that he, like each of us, can indeed make a

difference-that we are all given the gift of *koach hatefila*, the power of *tefila* to transform ourselves, and transform the world!

Reb Levi Yitzchak teaches us so powerfully that each of us should reflect on this powerful lesson, that we should appreciate the capacity each of us has been endowed with, that our actions and *tefilot* do have the ability to impact others, and to lift up the entire world.

This idea is reflected in a powerful short teaching from the *Tzidkat HaTzadik*, *Reb Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin*: *K'sheim She'Adam Tzarich L'Haamin B'Hashem Yitbarach, kach tzarich achar kach l'haamin b'atzmo-just as a person must believe and be faithful to Hashem, so too one must believe and have faith in oneself!*

Hashem bestows each of us with incredible capabilities-each of us must look inward with confidence and ask ourselves-how can I contribute to making the world a better place?

May each of us take to heart these two powerful ideas, and *B'ezrat Hashem*, may we merit both to channel those inner strengths, and collectively bring about a transformation of the entire world. ■

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