



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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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 it could 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 Beit Yaakov of Ishbitz zy'a, similarly points out that there is a familiar *pasuk* in *Yeshaya* which refers to the flood as the **Mei Noach**- the waters of *Noach*. The Rebbe explains, since *Noach* did not advocate for the salvation of others before the flood, the flood's destruction is subsequently referred to as the waters of *Noach*.

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 important 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 **Reb Tzadok HaKohein MiLublin zy'a**, in his work *Tzidkat HaTzadik*, **Reb Tzadok** taught:

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?

Each year, we read the story of *Noach*, just a few short days after we emerge from

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the proverbial *teiva* of the experience of the days of *Elul*, and the *chagim* of *Tishrei*. As we begin to settle into a more consistent routine, each of us must ask ourselves-how can we begin to bring the inspiration and growth we experienced these past many weeks, and actualize our innate individual strengths to make our mark in improving the world?

Yehi Ratzon, may we be blessed to take to heart each of these meaningful insights, and may we each merit to channel those inner strengths, and collectively bring about a transformation of the entire world. ■

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