



IT HAPPENED ONCE

The great Sage Reish Lakish had once lived among the wild people called Loddites. Known for his bravery and prowess, the Loddites wanted him to be the leader of one of their fierce robber bands. Reish Lakish, however, was destined for greater things. He fled from those wicked people and changed his life completely, becoming a great baal teshuva and dedicating his tremendous intellect and power to the study of Torah.

He married the sister of Rabbi Yochanan, the greatest Sage of the time, and excelled so much at his learning that he was appointed to a high position in the yeshiva at Tiberias.

Although Reish Lakish now spent all his days and nights in the study hall, he had lost none of his fire and strength. He feared no one but G-d, and would stand up to deceit or corruption whenever he encountered it, no matter what danger he had to face.

One morning, as Rabbi Yochanan walked to the Study Hall, he was attacked by a band of robbers who stole all his money. When he finally arrived at the Study Hall he was very shaken by the incident, and, although he tried to lead the class as usual, he was unable to concentrate on the questions his students posed. It became obvious that the great Sage was troubled by something.

Noticing that his teacher was deeply troubled, Reish Lakish pressed Rabbi Yochanan for an explanation. "What is wrong? Has something happened to you?" Rabbi Yochanan answered by way of a hint, saying, "The whole body depends on the heart, but the heart depends on the pocket." Reish Lakish didn't understand his teacher's allusion, and he repeated his question.

This time Rabbi Yochanan explained clearly, "I can't gather my thoughts because as I was coming to study today, I was set upon by a band of robbers. I was carrying a great deal of money, and they stole it all. Now I will have to spend my energy trying to support myself and my family, and I'm afraid I won't be able to learn Torah as I did before."

Reish Lakish was outraged. "Where did they attack you and which way did they go?" he demanded to know. They went out to the road and Rabbi Yochanan pointed to the location of the attack. Not bothering to bring any weapons, Reish Lakish set out to find the robbers.

He found them in a nearby forest and he shouted in a booming voice, "Stop where you are!" The robbers were so surprised by his temerity they meekly waited for him to approach. When he reached them, he faced the band and bellowed, "How dare you steal from the greatest Sage of the Jewish people! The entire world is sustained by the holy words he utters, and you, low creatures that you are, have dared to rob him!" The hardened criminals were moved by his words. "We had no idea who he was. We'll return half the money to him."

But Resh Lakish had no intention of making a deal.

"Absolutely not!" he cried. "You won't keep even one penny of his money!" And Reish Lakish grabbed his teacher's purse from their clutches.

In a similar display of bravery, Reish Lakish once rescued another great Jewish Sage.

Once, as a group of rabbis was walking down a deserted road, Rabbi Ammi was captured by a roving band of robbers. So ruthless and cruel were these outlaws, that once captured, no one ever escaped from them.

Everyone fled; only Reish Lakish refused to abandon Rabbi Ammi.

Risking his life, Reish Lakish pursued the robbers, and, using his experience with brigands, he cleverly managed to obtain Rabbi Ammi's release.

The robber chief, however, demanded to know what kind of reward he would receive for having freed the well-known rabbi.

Reish Lakish thought quickly. Certainly such a cut-throat deserved nothing better than the end of a rope, but he replied, "Come with me to our greatest Sage, Rabbi Yochanan, and he will bless you and pray for you."

This answer pleased the chief, and he and Reish Lakish proceeded to the study hall of Rabbi Yochanan. "We have been promised that the Rabbi will bless us, since we returned your comrade to you. We never meant him any harm, and now we want you to pray for us," announced the robber chief.

Rabbi Yochanan understood Reish Lakish's object in bringing the brigand to him. He looked the robber chief in the eye and said, "Since your intentions were so noble, I bless you that whatever were your plans for this man, G-d should repay you in the same way." True to Rabbi Yochanan's words, the robber band was attacked in the forest and killed to the last man.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the Weekly Torah Portion

And he sent forth a dove (Gen. 8:8)

Where did it fly? To the land of Israel, which had not been inundated by the great Flood. The Jewish people is likened to a dove. Banished and exiled over the face of the earth, the Jew's heart is nonetheless always drawn to the Holy Land, the land of Israel. (*Be'er Mayim Chaim*)

Go forth from the ark (Gen. 8:16)

"Your whole approach is wrong," G-d told Noah. "A person should not remain isolated from the world, safe and secure within the 'four cubits of Torah.' It is not right to think only about yourself. 'Go forth from the ark' -- go out into the marketplace and mingle with the crowd, where you can influence them for good." (*Peninei Torah*)

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life... all the fountains of the great deep were opened and the windows of heaven were opened (Gen. 7:11)

According to the Zohar, this refers to the six hundredth year of the sixth millennium (5600 -- corresponding to the civil year of 1840), when the gates of wisdom above (G-dly knowledge, specifically the inner, mystical teachings of the Torah) and the fountains of wisdom below (science and technology) were opened in preparation for the Messianic era, when "The whole earth shall be full with the knowledge of G-d."



5:44 Candle Lighting Time
NY Metro Area
2 Cheshvan / October 24
Torah Portion *Noach*
Shabbat ends **6:42 PM**

L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim L'Chaim

בס"ד

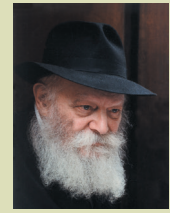
1895

2 Cheshvan, 5786
October 24, 2025

The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

ניסד תור ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson
"Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth" (Psalms 124:8)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

The first two portions of the Torah, Bereishis and Noach, share an essential connection, as both pertain to the creation and existence of the world. Bereishis, read last week, describes the actual creation, while in Noach, this week's reading, G-d promises that He will sustain the world and never bring another flood.

Symbolically, these two portions represent two different levels of the perfection of creation.

Bereishis represents the world's perfection as it is created by G-d, without man's input or interaction. Noach represents a level of perfection that can only be attained by man's efforts, i.e., the service of teshuva, returning to G-d in repentance.

From the perspective of the first level, there is no possibility for disobeying G-d's will. Were man to disobey G-d, he would automatically lose his right to exist. This is indeed what occurred at the end of last week's portion, when "G-d saw that the evil of man was great... and G-d said, 'I will destroy the man whom I have created.'"

This week, however, we see that man has been given the power to refine himself, and to reach an even higher level of perfection than before his sin. This ability is alluded to by the rainbow, symbolic of G-d's covenant with Noah and G-d's great joy when His children bring the world to even higher levels of perfection through their own actions.

This concept is also reflected in the particular Names of G-d which are used to describe the act of creation and in regard to Noah. According to the Torah, the world was created by G-d using the Name "Elokim"; likewise, "Elokim" is used an additional 32 times in reference to creation. The Name used in reference to Noah, however, is the ineffable name of G-d which cannot be pronounced.

Elokim, the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for "nature," represents a level of holiness that is limited, whereas the Tetragrammaton represents a level which is above all limitations.

We learn from this that the world, as it was created and without man's contribution, has the potential for only a limited revelation of G-dliness; it is solely through the service of man that the higher, infinite and unlimited revelation of G-dliness is achieved.

This idea is further expressed by the months in which these Torah portions are read.

Bereishis is read in Tishrei, the month of holidays; moreover, at least some of the days corresponding to the week in which Bereishis is read are themselves holidays.

Noach, however, is read in the month of Cheshvan, all of whose weekdays are ordinary days. For as symbolized by Noah, man's essential task in this world is to elevate even the most mundane aspects of life and reveal the unlimited potential for G-dliness contained therein.

Adapted from Sefer HaSichot of the Rebbe, 5752, Vol. I

My Kind of Hero

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

The world loves a hero. Every season, Hollywood has to invent new heroes and superheroes to fill the box office coffers. And it works. Why? Well, that's for another sermon. Today, I choose to talk about Who is a Hero and, more specifically, Who is My Kind of Hero.

Superheroes are fantastic. But you've got to admit, they're over the top, rather otherworldly and, realistically speaking, beyond our reach. We can fantasize about flying through the skies in our capes, climbing skyscrapers with our webs and rescuing damsels in distress, but at the end of the day, it is nothing more than wistful daydreaming. What bearing does it have on me and my life, me and my problems? The answer is, not much.

That's why Noah always appealed to me. He comes across as a real live hero, real in the sense of being human rather than superhuman and, therefore, realistically possible to emulate.

Rashi describes Noah as a man of "small faith" who had doubts whether the flood would actually happen. In fact, according to the great commentator's understanding, he didn't enter the Ark until the rains actually started and the floodwaters pushed him in. That explains why many people look down on Noah, especially when they compare him to other Biblical superheroes, people of the stature of Abraham or Moses.

Personally, this is precisely what makes Noah my kind of hero. He's real. He's human. He has doubts, just like you and me. I know we are

supposed to say, "When will my actions match those of the great patriarchs of old?" but I confess, for me that's a tall order. Noah, on the other hand, is a regular guy. He is plagued by doubts and struggles with his faith. But at the end of the day, Noah does the job. He builds the ark, shleps in all the animals, saves civilization and goes on to rebuild a shattered world. Doubts, shmouts, he did what had to be done.

There is an old Yiddish proverb, Fun a kasha shtarbt men nit-- "Nobody ever died of a question." It's not the end of the world if you didn't get an answer to all your questions. We can live with unanswered questions. The main thing is not to allow ourselves to become paralyzed by our doubts. We can still do what has to be done, despite our doubts.

Of course, I'd love to be able to answer every question every single one of my congregants ever has. But the chances are that I will not be able to solve every single person's doubts and dilemmas. And, frankly speaking, I am less concerned about their doubts than about their deeds. From a question nobody ever died. It's how we behave that matters most.

So Noah, the reluctant hero, reminds us that you don't have to be fearless to get involved. You don't have to be a tzaddik to do a mitzvah. You don't have to be holy to keep kosher, nor do you have to be a professor to come to a Torah class.

Perhaps his faith was a bit wobbly in the knees, but he got the job done. My kind of hero.

SLICE OF LIFE

A Rabbi's Mission to Create Jewish Homes



Rabbi Yitzchak Neria heads the "Torah MiTzion" yeshiva in Jerusalem

Two years ago, Rabbi Yitzchak Neria received an unexpected request that would transform his already full life. "Someone approached me and asked me to help reduce the phenomenon of late singlehood in the religious community," recalls the 51-year-old Jerusalem native who serves as a community rabbi in Mercaz Shapira and heads the "Torah MiTzion" yeshiva in Jerusalem.

"I asked myself: I have a community, a yeshiva, why should I get involved in this?" he reflects. "On second thought, I said to myself: if G-d sent him to me, it's a sign that I should deal with this too." After consultations and deep reflection, he launched the "Ba'im B'Tov" (Coming with Good) initiative.

The organization began by analyzing the phenomenon of late singlehood, seeking to understand its underlying

causes. "We discovered that late singlehood carries spiritual challenges," Rabbi Neria explains. They developed a comprehensive work plan implementing a dual approach—both supporting singles directly and mobilizing married couples to take responsibility for matchmaking through their personal networks. After two years of dedicated activity, they've created significant momentum and facilitated numerous successful matches.

The initiative took on profound new meaning after the October 7th tragedy. "In the Simchat Torah massacre, we lost our dear cousin, David-Chaim Meir of blessed memory, an officer in the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit, who fell while fighting to save Jews in Kibbutz Be'eri," Rabbi Neria shares with emotion. "He married at a relatively late age, and on their wedding day, his wife, the new bride, asked to pray for all singles, widowers, and widows, that they merit to establish a faithful Jewish home. This motivated us to intensify our activities. The terrorists wanted to dismantle and destroy, and we, with G-d's help, will build more and more Jewish homes."

One of their compelling slogans is "Two, Three, Match!"—a creative play on the military radio call "Two, Three, Dispatch!" used during aerial operations in the war. "Especially now, we're calling on people to take responsibility and matchmake. Everyone has acquaintances, family, and everyone can help establish another Jewish home. Just recently,

we've celebrated twenty-four more matches of older singles."

The organization's comprehensive website offers expert advice developed by specialists in the field. "We provide scholarships to matchmakers, raise awareness through campaigns, organize events, accompany people, collaborate with organizations that provide matchmaking aids, and more." They've published a practical toolkit for aspiring matchmakers and collaborate with professionals who donate their expertise. They even utilize artificial intelligence to match people based on detailed questionnaire responses.

"One of the special matches we made during the height of the war was between a 69-year-old widower and a 65-year-old widow," Rabbi Neria shares with evident pride. "Both were greatly influenced by our campaign and decided to establish a Jewish home."

His message to singles everywhere rings with hope and encouragement: "Don't despair, take initiative, and with G-d's help, it will happen."

As the organization continues its sacred work, Rabbi Neria sees each new match as not merely a personal blessing for the couple involved, but as a profound response to those who seek to destroy the Jewish people. In the face of tragedy, "Ba'im B'Tov" offers a powerful affirmation: building new Jewish homes is perhaps the most meaningful answer to those who sought to tear them down.

Adapted from Sichat Shavua Magazine

CUSTOMS

WHAT ARE "SHEVA BRACHOT"?

There are seven blessings which are recited over wine during and after a wedding ceremony. When a minyan is present the sheva brachot are also recited at meals during the week following the wedding. It has become customary to prepare a marriage feast for each of the seven days after the wedding and they are commonly referred to as "Sheva Brachot."

The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

LIKE ONE BODY

From a letter of the Rebbe
7 Marcheshvan, 5737

We have concluded the month of Tishrei, which is designated in our sacred texts as a "comprehensive month" for the entire year, and which is filled with a variety of festive days and experiences embracing all areas of a Jew's spiritual life throughout the whole year.

The month begins with awe and submission to the Heavenly Reign, the main point of Rosh Hashana: teshuva [repentance], the essence of the Ten Days of Return, and Yom Kippur; the performance of mitzvot with diligence and joy, culminating with the highest expression of joy with the Torah -- the essential aspects of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah.

It is time to recall the custom that was prevalent in many communities to announce at the termination of Simchat Torah: "And Jacob went on his way."

The point of this custom was to call attention to the fact that, inasmuch as the time has come to return to the routine of the daily life ("his way"), it behooves a Jew to know that he is Jacob, a Jew, and that he has his own way, a way that originates in Simchat Torah and is guided by the joy of Torah and mitzvot.

This means that whatever a Jew undertakes, even his ordinary day to day affairs, must always be conducted in the spirit of "All your actions should be for the sake of Heaven" and "Know Him (and serve Him) in all your ways."

The month of Tishrei is a "comprehensive month" also in the sense that in this month the Jew acquires "goods" for the whole year.

Immediately afterwards one must begin to "unpack" and draw from one's stock according to the needs of each day in all details.

One cannot consider himself free from further obligation on the basis of the

accomplishments of the comprehensive month.

Similarly, there are also "comprehensive mitzvot," although each and all mitzvot have to be fulfilled with the fullest measure of diligence and excellence. A comprehensive mitzva should be performed with still greater excellence and still greater diligence, for its performance is of greater concern to all Jews and the Jewish people as a whole.

One of the main comprehensive mitzvot is the mitzva of ahavat Yisrael (love of a fellow-Jew).

Of this mitzva it has been said that it is a "great principle of the Torah," and the "basis of the entire Torah."

The basis of this mitzva is the fact that all Jews constitute one entity, like one body, so much so that every Jew sees every other Jew as "his own flesh and blood."

Herein is also the explanation why the fulfillment of a mitzva by every individual Jew affects the whole Jewish people; how much more so the fulfillment of comprehensive mitzvot...

May G-d grant that all the good wishes which Jews wished one another for the new year should be fulfilled, that it be a good and sweet year in every respect, with the realization of the above-mentioned pattern of Jewish conduct:

"And Jacob" -- an appellation that includes all Jews, not only those who have already attained the higher status of "Israel" and "Jeshurun";

"Went" -- in accordance with the true concept of motion, namely, moving away from the previous state to a higher state; (for however satisfactory a state is, one should always strive to advance to an every higher state in all matters of Holiness);

"On his way" -- that "his way," even in non-obligatory matters, becomes a G-dly way, as stated immediately after:

"And G-d's angels met him" -- in keeping with every Jew's purpose in life to be an "angel" messenger -- of G-d, to make for Him an "abode" in this earthly world.

May all the above be done with joy, derived from Simchat Torah, and Jacob "will sing (and praise) the G-d of Jacob," and merit the speedy fulfillment of the continuation of the verse, "The glory and strength of the tzadik will be uplifted," the coming of our righteous Moshiach.

that it was good."

This teaches us that G-d yearned for Moshiach and Moshiach's deeds even before He created the world and hid this light for Moshiach and his generation under his Divine throne.

(Pesikta Rabbatei, ch. 36)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'Chaim Publication.

From the Archives

This week we read the Torah portion of Noach in which we find G-d's promise that the world will continue to exist forever; it will never end.

"The end is near." What does this phrase mean? Certainly not the end of the world but the end of the bitter days of exile. The end of oppression and hatred, poverty and sickness, war and crime.

Why should we be afraid that the end is approaching? Should that thought truly place fear in our hearts? Or should we not be excited that "the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean."

Fear is not necessarily the appropriate feeling. Rather, possibly a sense of regret, as the Rebbe stated, "When Moshiach comes, then we will long for the days of exile" Why? Because at that time we will look back at a replay of our lives and see all of the instances when we could have done more good, more mitzvot, judged less harshly, been more generous. Thus, we might look toward the imminently approaching days of Moshiach with a little anxiety. But the positive anticipation should far outweigh our trepidation.

Would the Jews, from our greatest leaders to the simplest person, have looked forward to, longed for, prayed, begged and beseeched G-d for 2,000 years if the Redemption would not be good for everyone? In fact, we are told that this redemption for which we wait anxiously is called the "geula ha-amitiit v'hashleima" -- the true and complete redemption -- because every single Jew, as well as all righteous gentiles, have a portion in the Redemption.

Let us take one more lesson from this week's Torah portion and relate it to the topic of Redemption as well.

Noach was a tzadik, a righteous person. But he had one major failing. He was commanded by G-d to build an ark, which he did obediently and gladly. But he did not actively seek to help the people of his generation return to G-d. He was content to save himself and his family.

Let us all make sure not only to prepare ourselves and to feel positive and anxious about the imminent redemption. Let us make sure to influence those in our surroundings as well.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



Published by
Lubavitch Youth Organization
1408 President St, Brooklyn, NY, 11213
phone 718 778 6000

Chairman
Director
Publishing Director
Program Director
Secretary
Administrator
Layout
Associate Editor
Chairman Editorial Comm.
Rebbe photo

Rabbi David Raskin
Rabbi Shmuel Butman
Rabbi Yosef Y. Butman
Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Rabbi Moshe P. Goldman
Rabbi Shlomo Friedman
Rivky Laufer
David Y. B. Kaufmann
Rabbi Nissen Mangel
S. Roumani

L'Chaim contains words from sacred literature. Please do not deface or discard.
All contents © 2025 by L.Y.O. ISSN 1050 0480
L'Chaim Subscriptions
For a one year regular or gift subscription, send \$55, payable to LYO (\$60 elsewhere) to: L'Chaim, 1408 President St, Bklyn, NY, 11213
Please call our office before sending in any subscriptions.
Learn about Moshiah
Visit www.moshiah.com or call (718) 953 6100