

# CHAYUS

## *A Shabbos Stimulus*

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ע"ה And Tzvi Daniel ע"ה ben ע"ה David Ainsworth ש"י

Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

Erev Shabbos Parshas Noach, 5782 – October 8, 2021

ערב שבת פרשת נח, ב' חשוון, ה'תשפ"ב

כתר שם טוב

### PORTIONS OF LIGHT

Keter Shem Tov

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#### Preparing for Prayer

Some people find that they need to fortify themselves in advance of their prayers, in order to maintain proper concentration during prayer, enabling them to at least avoid distracting thoughts, or better yet, to attach themselves to G-d appropriately while praying. They achieve this by reciting Tehillim or studying Torah before praying. They then stand and pray while their minds are filled with Torah and receptive to intense concentration. On the other hand, others find that if they recite Tehillim or study for too long, they exhaust their mental energies and have no concentration left for their prayers.

Our Sages state regarding the large offerings of

the wealthy and the meager offerings of paupers, that “whether one increase or decreases, the main thing is that they focus their hearts to heaven,” meaning that they are truly sincere in their offering. The same is true of prayer: the personal decision whether to increase in Torah and Tehillim before prayer or to decrease must depend on the ultimate goal of focusing one’s heart to heaven during the actual prayers.

**Focus:** Ask yourself: What is my best route to enter the ark of prayer with the best mindset?

לקוטי שיחות

### A SICHA

By: [ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org](http://ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org)

Adapted from the works of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

#### The Ark’s Construction & Purpose

**The Midrash:** Noach preoccupied himself with building the ark for one hundred and twenty years. (*Lekach Tov, Noach*)

**The Question:** Why did Noach procrastinate in fulfilling G-d’s command and not build the ark immediately?

**The Explanation:** The command to build the ark can be understood in two ways.

- It is a purely utilitarian project whose purpose is to provide protection for Noach and his family. The construction itself is not significant, the end result is.
- The process of building is significant and an end in and of itself.

Rashi, in his commentary, aligns with the second explanation:

“*Make for yourself an ark* — why did G-d trouble Noach with this construction? So that the people of the Generation of the Flood should see him busy with the ark for a hundred and twenty years and ask him, “of what use is this to you?” He would say to them, “In the future, the Holy One, Blessed is He, is going to bring a flood upon the world.” Thus, they might repent.”

Meaning, the prolonged construction of the ark itself was purposeful, for it might inspire humanity to repent.

How does Rashi conclude that the construction itself was purposeful?

In the passage detailing G-d’s command to Noach, G-d first tells Noach about the general deterioration of society, “The end of all flesh has come before me... I am

about to destroy them from the earth....” (*Bereishis* 6:13) In the following verse, G-d commands Noach, “Make for yourself an ark....” Only after conveying the details of the ark’s construction does G-d first make mention of the flood that is to come, “And as for Me—Behold, I am about to bring the flood-waters....” (*Ibid*, 17)

By placing the command to build the ark before even mentioning the flood, but after pronouncing G-d’s intention to “destroy...the earth,” the Torah implies that the construction of the ark is not a mere practical response to the flood, but rather, also a purposeful activity aimed at inspiring the people to repentance.

Based on this observation, the phrase, “make for yourself an ark” can be understood literally: Because the construction of the ark had an intended purpose, G-d wanted Noach to single-handedly build the ark so that the spectacle would arouse even greater curiosity. “Make for yourself” thus means, “make by yourself.”

Thus, from the placement of the command to build the ark, and from the phrase “make for yourself,” Rashi concluded that Noach himself built the ark in order to arouse humanity to repentance.

We can now appreciate why Noach’s lengthy construction was not procrastination but actually quite zealous: building an ark of those dimensions entirely alone is a near impossible task.

**The Sukkah Connection:** The Rogatchover offers another meaning of the phrase “make for yourself:” the ark had to be made from Noach’s own possessions. What is the thematic connection between these two meanings

of “for yourself ”—that Noach built it alone, and from his own possessions?

The same phrase is used regarding the building of a Sukkah, “The holiday of Sukkos, make for yourself.” And there are several parallels between Noach’s ark and the Sukkah:

- a) The construction of the Sukkah is itself a *mitzvah*.
- b) The Sukkah must belong to you, it cannot be stolen.
- c) The Sukkah serves as protection against the elements.

Where these two projects differ is that Noach built the ark alone, but one person can build a Sukkah for someone else. And Noach’s ark was for his family alone, yet a person can fulfill his obligation with someone else’s Sukkah.

The reason for these distinctions is as follows: Noach was primarily concerned about his own well-being. He did not pray for his generation (*Zohar*, I:67b). He only passively encouraged them to repent (through his construction) because of G-d’s command. Therefore, this attitude is reflected in his ark which was a) built by himself, b) with his own possession, and c) for him and his family.

After the Giving of the Torah, however, every Jew is responsible for every other Jew. Therefore, the actions of one can be attributed to another—one person’s Sukkah can theoretically be used by every other Jew to fulfill their *mitzvah*.

## The Rainbow Bride

G-d told Noach that the rainbow is a sign that He will never again destroy the world with a flood. He then told Noach that the rainbow is a sign of an everlasting covenant. These are not the same. At present, rainbows appear faint, their colors are dimmed. These are reminders that the Flood will not be repeated. When the time of Redemption arrives, a different kind of rainbow will appear. That

rainbow will be bright and vivid. It will adorn itself with its colors like a bride adorned for her wedding. It will beam down brightly onto the earth and signal Moshiach’s imminent arrival. G-d will then recall the covenant that languishes in exile and restore it to its glory with the Redemption.

*Zohar*

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## Second Thoughts

*G-d said to Noah: Come, you and your household, into the ark* (Bereishis 8:21)

The ‘wiseguy’ nestled in the left chamber of the heart of man—wrote Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch to a chassid—comes in many guises. At times he may even appear in a silk caftan and *sh-treiml*... Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok goes on to make his point with the following story:

It is known that Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl was very poor and forever hard-pressed to feed his household. One day a chassid came and brought him a gift of 300 rubles.

Both the Rebbe’s family and the head secretary who served the Rebbe and managed his affairs were extremely relieved. Now they would finally enjoy a respite from the heavy debts owed for bread, meat, fish and other pressing household necessities.

After the gift-bearing chassid left the Rebbe’s room, the Rebbe continued to receive his chassidim, until he broke for the *minchah* and *maariv* prayers. After *maariv* the Rebbe secluded himself in his room, preoccupied with some personal matter. After a long while, he finally opened his door and requested that a certain chassid—one of those whom he had received earlier—be summoned back. When this chassid had left, the Rebbe continued to receive his visitors late into the night.

When the last audience-seeker had gone, the Rebbe’s head secretary came to request funds for the needed expenditures. Knowing of the 300 rubles received and confident of his ability to now settle at least part of the debts, he had already made a detailed list of how much to give to each creditor.

Rabbi Menachem Nachum opened the drawer in which he would place the money which chassidim would bring him to cover his personal expenses (the *maamad* funds). (Money brought to him and earmarked for charity—the *pidyon* funds—were kept in a separate drawer to prevent any possibility of their intermixing.) The Rebbe’s secretary saw a drawer full of copper coins with a scant smattering of silver coins mixed in. Much to his dismay, there were no ruble-notes.

The Rebbe told him to take the contents of the *maamad* drawer. The secretary counted the silver and copper, among which were also discovered

three golden coins. They added up to close to 100 rubles.

The secretary just stood there, unable to say a word. He did not wish to bring up the matter of the 300 rubles, but the fact that he would be unable to at least partially settle the Rebbe’s debts pained his heart.

The Rebbe noticed his distress and said to him: “Why are you so upset? Thank G-d that He who provides bread to all flesh has, in His great kindness, sent us an undeserved gift. From far and wide, many of our brethren—may they live—have labored and toiled to earn and bring us such a sum.”

Now the secretary was indeed a man worthy to be the intimate of the Rebbe of Chernobyl. Nevertheless, he could no longer contain himself. The heavy debts and the terrible poverty which prevailed in the Rebbe’s home so deeply distressed him. As if of their own accord, the words tore themselves from an anguished heart: “But where are the 300 rubles that so-and-so brought? With that, together with what we have here, we would be able to pay off part of what is owed...”

“True,” said the Rebbe, “I was brought 300 rubles. At the moment I received them I wondered: why do I deserve such a large amount? Then I was filled with pleasure at the thought that I had found favor in the eyes of the Almighty so that He chose to provide sustenance for myself and for my household in such a generous and honorable manner. But when I thought further, I was greatly distressed: perhaps I am receiving this money in the place of some spiritual gift?

“Later in the day, one of the chassidim who came to see me poured out his troubled heart: for the past year he has been unable to pay his children’s teacher of his children, a very poor but G-d-fearing man who continues to teach the children in the hope that he will some day be paid. This man already owes eight months’ rent for the mill and inn which he leases, and soon the landowner is sure to evict him. And to top it all off, he has arranged a match for his eldest daughter and has nothing with which to marry her off.

“When I heard this, it occurred to me that per-

haps the Almighty has granted me the privilege of being an administrator of charity. Perhaps this large amount was entrusted to me so that I may merit such great mitzvahs as educating a child, saving the livelihood of an entire family and marrying off a Jewish bride. I asked the chassid how much his debts and marriage needs added up to, and I found that it matches the sum exactly—300 rubles!

“However, as soon as I decided to give the 300 rubles to this chassid, another thought entered my mind: Is it proper to give the entire sum to a single individual? Why, with such an amount, one could support, at the very least, six entire families!

“I entered into a dilemma, since both these options - a) to give the entire sum to the said chassid, and b) to divide it between several needy families—seemed righteous and correct. I couldn’t decide between them, so I locked my door in order to contemplate the matter and reach a decision.

“Upon contemplation, I came to recognize that these two opinions are coming from the two ‘judges’ within me, the ‘Good Inclination’ and the ‘Evil Inclination’, and that the argument to divide the sum among several families is definitely not

coming from my ‘Good Inclination.’ For were this indeed my Good Inclination speaking, why didn’t he speak up immediately? As soon as I received the money, he should have said: “Nachum, 300 rubles were brought to you. Take the money and divide it into six parts, distribute five parts to needy families and take the sixth for yourself.” But no, this voice spoke within me only after I had decided to give away the entire sum.

“This gave him away. When at first I had assumed that the entire sum was meant for me, he was silent. No wonder: he was perfectly satisfied with my decision. Only after the Almighty had privileged me to realize why I had been given this money did he wake up. Obviously, he did not say “Keep the money!”—oh no, he is far too experienced at his craft for that—he knew that I would recognize the source of such a desire and reject it immediately. So along he comes, this master of cunning, with an utterly pious and logical suggestion—anything to prevent me from acting on the role which Divine Providence so clearly designated for me to play in the delivery of a family from distress.

“So I called back the chassid and gave him the 300 rubles.”

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

## SHABBOS CHITAS / RAMBAM GUIDE

BOOK	SECTION
Chumash – Rashi*	Noach, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 18 – 22
Tanya*	Igeres Hakodesh, Ch. 25 עמ' קמב- אמרי פי.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #145 and Negative Mitzvah #110
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Avoda, – Hilchos K'lei Hamikdash V'Ha'Ovdim Bo, Chapter 9
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Kedusha – Hilchos Arachin V'Charomin Chapter 5 – 7

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