



"GO OUT OF YOUR ARK"

Sicha to guests – 30 Tishrei, 5749-1988

What is the lesson and content of the section of the Torah, for Wednesday in the portion of Noach?

It gives us a clear directive. During the week of Noach, every Jew is told: "Go out of the ark." Not only you alone, but "you and your wife, your sons and their wives," as well as "all of the animals" which are in the ark.

The Torah continues: It may be that the animals will not want to leave the ark. If so, instructs the Torah, "take them out with you"; force them out of the ark, and bring them back into the material world.

The world had just undergone the trauma of the Great Flood, and needed G-d's promise that "the seasons would not be disrupted, that there would be peace in the world.

Yet, he was instructed not to worry about all of these questions and doubts, but rather to take them out of the ark and bring them into the world.

A person, and especially a Jew who recognizes that "I was created to serve my Master," may be bothered by a disturbing question: "I was created to serve my Master." Never before had Noach experienced a better time serve the creator, as the time he spent in the ark!

So too, is the situation now: The best time in the year to serve G-d is during the month of Tishrei.

It is "filled with festivals": The very first day of the month of Tishrei begins with accepting G-d's reign and accepting the yoke of Mitzvot, and with the sounding of the Shofar.

We blow the Shofar to remind the entire world, "let us bow down and prostrate ourselves before the Lord our G-d," we are crowning G-d as "King of Israel" and "King of the whole world." After Rosh Hashana we do not busy ourselves with mundane matters, but rather with the Ten Days of Return, and then the four days between Yom Kippur and Sukkot, followed by Sukkot itself, Shemini Atzeret, and especially Simchat Torah, and then the concluding days of Tishrei.

This is especially true of this group; who of their own good will chose to come here, where they would not be at all involved in regular, weekday matters, since they traveled to a different country and different circumstances for these holy and auspicious days.

Thus, one may ask: G-d gave me an opportunity, similar to the one He gave Noach; He placed me in "an ark." This is especially true according to the teaching of the Ba'al Shem Tov: "Come into the ark" can also be read as "Come into the words."



פרשת צח

In our Divine service this means that we “enter into” the words of prayer and Torah. These words act as an ark to protect us from the “stormy waters” of the world, and ensure that we are protected by G-d’s blessings, similar to Noach in the ark –he had all his needs provided and was protected, and so he could serve G-d all day and night.

Indeed, the Midrash relates that Noach spent his time carrying out his Divine mission to protect, support, and nurture all of the creatures that were with him in the ark.

Yet G-d tells Noach, that when the Flood was over, as soon as the waters dried from upon the land, he should not wait any longer –indeed, he may not tarry in the ark any more. He must immediately go out into the world, which had just dried up from the waters of the flood.

There he should busy himself with reestablishing civilization, “fill the land,” so that it is not left as a barren land, but rather becomes once again a world filled with G-d’s creations.

The same is true for us as we reach the end of Tishrei, especially for those people who spent the month here: You chose for yourselves the best portion.

You “traveled to a center of Torah” and a center of prayer –to the synagogue of the leader of our generation, my father-in-law, the Rebbe.

You spent an entire month here, a month filled with general Mitzvot, which affect the entire year.

Each of you feels this energy yourselves, and certainly will utilize it fully upon returning home to your regular weekday lives.

A Jew’s mundane life is also permeated with holiness. Thus, he takes of the “holiness” with which he was surrounded on Rosh Hashana, and which he has with every Shabbat, and which he had during the month of Tishrei, and makes his weekdays attain that same purity and holiness.

Certainly Shabbat during the year, as well as Rosh Chodesh of the mid-year months, not just Rosh Chodesh Tishrei or Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, but also Rosh Chodesh of the other months.

Remember that this is a “complete year,” and make sure to bring into it an even greater completeness and perfection, making one complete whole –united with the month of Tishrei which you spent in the synagogue of the Rebbe my father-in-law, permeated with Torah, prayer, and Tzedakah.

When this period of time –the month of Tishrei– is over, you must know that now you must reach even higher levels of holiness, and attain even stronger and higher levels of Divine service.



