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שבת..... *for Friday nights* .....קדש

Friday 28 October 2011 - New Moon of Cheshvan 5772  
 Sedra Noah

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### IMAGES OF PEACE

**N** OAH'S ARK PRESENTS THE IDEA OF THE SURVIVAL OF LIFE at a time of otherwise total destruction. The Sedra<sup>1</sup> describes how the Flood covered the entire world, but Noah, his family and the thousands of animals sheltering in the Ark were saved.

Another image expressed by the Sages is that of Peace. In the Ark there was an atmosphere of peace. Diverse species of animal, which would usually battle together or devour each other, dwelt calmly together. The Ark is described as having the spiritual quality of the World to Come, where all is in unity and all conflict is dissolved away.

This aspect of the Ark links also to the theme of the Succah, the hut with its roof of branches and leaves which was the focus of the Succot festival less than a fortnight ago. In Chassidic teachings, the Ark and the Succah are compared to each other as a realm of peace<sup>2</sup>.

Now, although the Succot festival has ended, the image of the Succah as a source of peace continues. Thus every week in the Friday evening prayers we ask G-d to "spread over us the Succah of Your peace". We are asking G-d that the spiritual peace of the Succah, like that of Noah's Ark in the Sedra, be spread over each of us as individuals, and over the Jewish people.



Dedicated by Mrs Tzipora Sufrin ח"י , to the memory and merit of her father k"z ihætk rgcus hfsrn ור װ ן j "vrv

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However, it is not enough that there should be peace only for the Jewish people. There actually has to be peace for the entire world. The remarkable power of Jewish teaching is that potentially there is always a dual effect in everything we do: whether in Torah study, prayer or observance of the Mitzvot, there is one aspect which connects the person to G-d, and there is also a complementary aspect which draws G-dliness into the world<sup>3</sup>. In all aspects of Jewish life we are seeking both spiritual fulfilment for ourselves, and also “to perfect the world under the sovereignty of G-d”<sup>4</sup>.

Similarly, one aspect of Noah’s Ark is that it represented spirituality, holiness and ultimate peace for Noah and his family who were inside it. Another is that once the Flood came to an end and they left the Ark, their task was to express these qualities in the world as a whole.

This meant keeping the Seven Noahide Laws, the Divine instructions to Noah and his descendants. The Noahide Laws constitute seven general rules of goodness for all humanity, including respect for the sanctity of life. Yet at the centre of global society is the spot where, the Sages tell us, Noah offered sacrifices to G-d when he left the Ark at the end of the Flood<sup>5</sup>. This is the site of the Temple in Jerusalem. Here is the focal point where the Jewish people join themselves to the Divine and at the same time, as described above, bring blessing into the world.

Ultimately this will lead to awareness of G-d’s Presence throughout existence. “The world will be filled with knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9) - an image which itself links with that of the waters of the Flood, yet in a purely positive mode. For indeed, in the time of the Messiah, all bad will change to good, and all conflict will be transformed to peace...

1. Genesis 6:9-11:32.2. See the sources in *Sefer HaMamarim Melukat* vol.1 p.177 n. 31. 3. See *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. 35, p.10. 4. Text of the *Aleinu* prayer. 5.Gen.8:20, Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Temple 2:2.

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*SEDRA NOAH*

**FEEDING THE ANIMALS**

“Chavi, did you remember to feed your budgies today?” Chavi had just poured the milk over her Shreddies and was happily settling down in front of it with her latest birdwatching magazine. “No but don’t worry Mummy - I’ll do it as soon as I finish eating. I don’t want my cereal to get soggy.”

The five brightly coloured budgies, in a roomy cage, had been a birthday present from her grandparents, indulging her new hobby of wildlife. Her room was now filled with posters of birds and animals books of nature facts, binoculars for birdwatching and other paraphernalia - when Chavi did something, she did it thoroughly.

As she ate her cereal, she remembered she was supposed to write a summary of the previous day’s Sedra lesson. Oh no! She will have to try to fit that in between having breakfast and going to school. As she ate, she tried to remember what the Sedra was about.

That’s it! It was all about Noah and how G-d was going to bring a flood upon the earth because the people were so wicked - all except for Noah and wife Naama, and their children Shem Ham and Japeth

G-d commanded Noah to build an Ark, and to bring all the different animals into it.

Wow, it must have been fun, Chavi thought. A bit like living in London Zoo. But it must have been hard work for Noah and his family, looking after all those animals. Just taking care of her budgies took up so much time - seeing they had water and seed, cleaning their cage.

Her teacher had told them that Noah made sure all the animals were fed before he thought of eating himself. There's a Mitzva that we're not allowed to be cruel to animals. Also, in the second paragraph of the Shema, it says that G-d will give you grass in the field for your animals, and then it says that you will eat and be satisfied.

So that means you should feed the animals first, their teacher had explained. Noah was very careful about this and he put the needs of his animals before his own.

As she thought about this, Chavi began to feel guilty. It must have taken a long time for Noah to feed all those animals - even with his sons helping him. They probably didn't get to eat breakfast till really late. And here she was - not even taking the five minutes needed to feed her budgies before she ate breakfast.

Chavi put down her spoon and rushed to her room where the large new aviary awaited her.

"Sorry!" she told the budgies, as she poured seed into the little troughs and checked to see they had enough water.

"From now on I'll be like Noah - you'll get to eat even before me."

Then, quickly, she began writing the summary of the lesson to give in to the teacher at school...

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