



NOAH, THE ARK & THE RAVEN

A Beginning...

According to the Kabbalistic tradition, the master keys to unlocking the secrets of Creation are **connection** and **compassion**. And this book is my way of sharing these keys with you.

I was inspired to put these ideas into writing after a moment born out of connection and compassion.

During the autumn, every year right after the Jewish high holidays, we begin the Torah-reading cycle over again, starting with the account of creation and the story of Adam and Eve. No matter how many times I learn it through (and I've learned it countless times), that narrative always makes me think about life at a deeper level. Every year—*every* year!—my curiosity about certain basic questions wakes up all over again.

So I went back to the beginning, and as the weeks went by I was filled with questions that weren't new, but I was experiencing them in a new way.

What is man's role in Creation? Why did there have to be a flood? What was unique about Noah? And then, one day, I got stuck on the image of the raven.

Yes, the raven. The biblical bird in Noah's ark. The first bird sent out to seek dry land, but which went "to and fro" until another bird, a dove, was chosen for the mission in its place. That image of the raven, flapping its wings and vacillating, instead of flying off to carry out its task—stuck in a useless cycle—struck me.

I thought about all the ways that people get caught up in negative cycles, caught up in rigid thinking and self-defeating behaviors. I realized that if I looked deeper, the raven would provide important lessons.

I delved into the words of the sages—you'd be surprised how much the ancient texts have to say about one bird! I explored mystical texts that were already familiar, but that now opened up for me in a new way.

And I found my way back to a teaching of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, one of the great Chassidic masters.



It was a teaching about the raven—about *raven-states of mind*. It was a teaching I'd shared countless times with students over the years, but now somehow it was different. It was deeper. I was *feeling* it, not just learning it. Something had changed.

At the same time that my thoughts were in motion about the raven, I met Sam—the son of a friend of mine—while I was visiting the States. He was in terrible shape—depressed, apathetic, and tortured by thoughts about traumatic events in his past. I literally pulled him out of bed and brought him back to Israel with me, holding his hand on the plane.

Sam was so grateful I'd connected with him, that I felt compassion for him. Finally, someone cared enough to step into his suffering to help him out of it.

For years, Sam had spent the better part of his day in bed; now, freshly arrived in Israel, he was getting up early to meet me where I go to pray in the mornings. We'd sit down afterward and have a cup of coffee together, and he started to share his feelings with me. He'd really despaired of ever being free of his negative thoughts. He was convinced he had no hope of real and lasting change.

Sam was such a prisoner of his past, so locked into his negative thinking, that he would repeat his story over and over again to anyone who would listen.

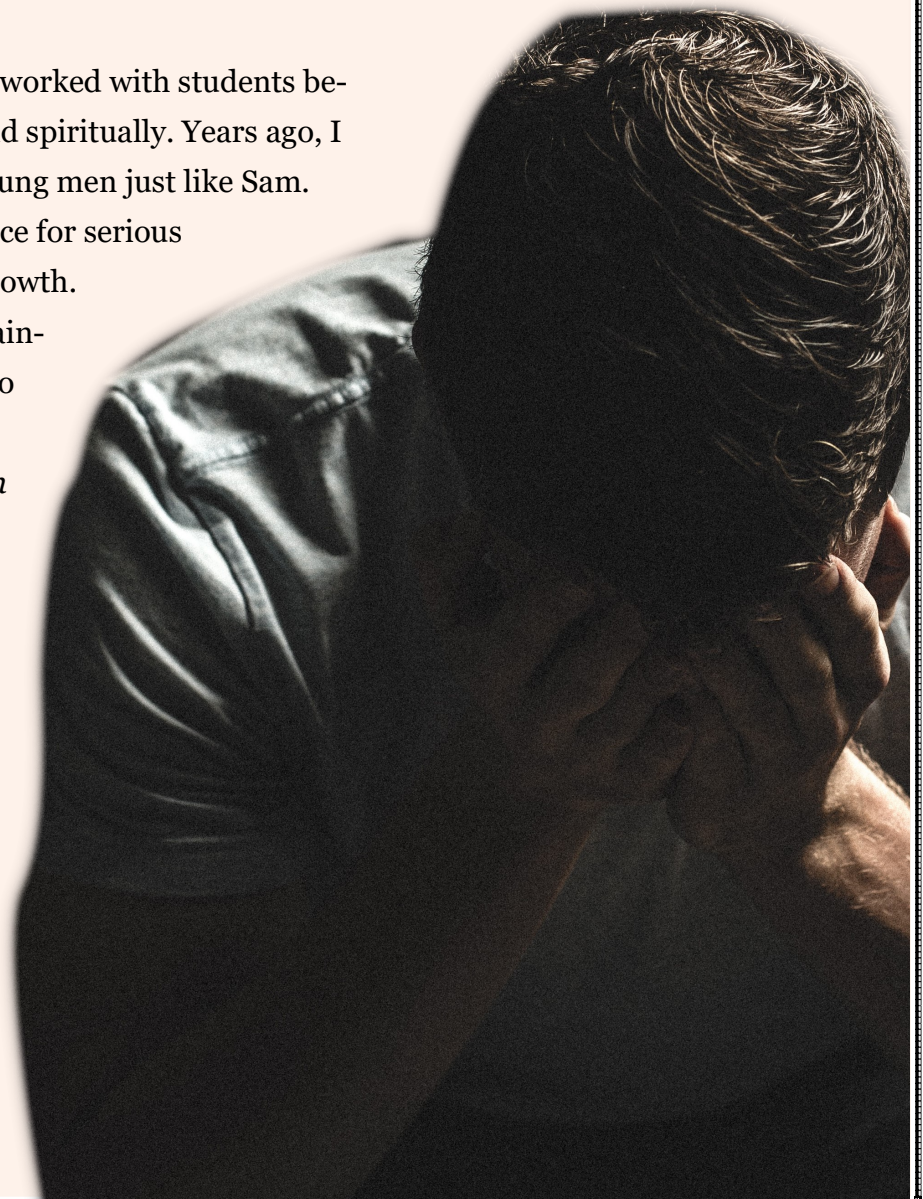
I wanted so badly to help him.

Now, it's not as though I'd never worked with students to help them find their way emotionally and spiritually. Years ago, I ran a yeshiva for Torah study—a yeshiva—to help young men just like Sam. The uniqueness lay in it being not only a space for serious study, but an accelerator for personal growth.

At a certain point, however, sustaining and maintaining the center started to outweigh my focus on the students. *The cause had become more important than those it was designed to serve.* My intentions were right, but in meeting the daily demands of running an institution, I'd stopped being present in the moment with the students. Eventually, the center closed.

Now, my reconnection with Sam was operating on a different level.

I wasn't the director of any institution; I was just listening and paying close attention to the way his mind worked.



It was an education for me. It made me an expert in what I like to call “constricted consciousness”—tight and unproductive modes of thinking. By just being present and observing without judgment the trend of his thoughts, I learned a lot about how certain mental habits sabotage life and health.

And then I got an education about myself, as well. Was I really so different from Sam? Sure I was healthier and fully functional, but didn’t I also succumb to his way of thinking and feeling, even if to a lesser degree?

Weren’t we both sometimes like that raven in the ark, batting back and forth, unable to let go and set out on his mission?

Stuck...
Isolated...
Afraid...
Suspicious...

Again, I was flooded with compassion for Sam. I started to search within and without, through every teaching I found, for tools to help him.

And then things finally began to change.

I’m sure the channels opened up because I wanted so badly to help Sam. A fresh, very relevant Torah awoke within me, and I started to share it with him and then with others. I began to live it myself. The more I spoke about it with students and friends, the deeper it took root within me. More powerful insights revealed themselves all the time, and they shed new light on so much I’d already learned, clarifying it in an absolutely new way; it seemed that all the understanding I’d acquired before just paled in comparison.

That is the essence of this book. It’s where it began, and this is its purpose.

We only achieve true growth and change by letting go of the self. We do it by connecting with others, by opening up our wellsprings of compassion and reaching out.

*The desire to connect with another arouses compassion.
Together, they bring growth, unity, and inner peace.*

So in a way I owe everything to my dear friend, Sam. I’ve told him many times just how his eyes called out to me for love and connection when I was on that trip to the States. I’m so grateful to him for waking me up to a new life. And as I’ve continued this journey of discovery and change, I’ve been blessed with many teachers, students, and friends, who have opened new gateways of perception and insight.

THE BALANCED MAN

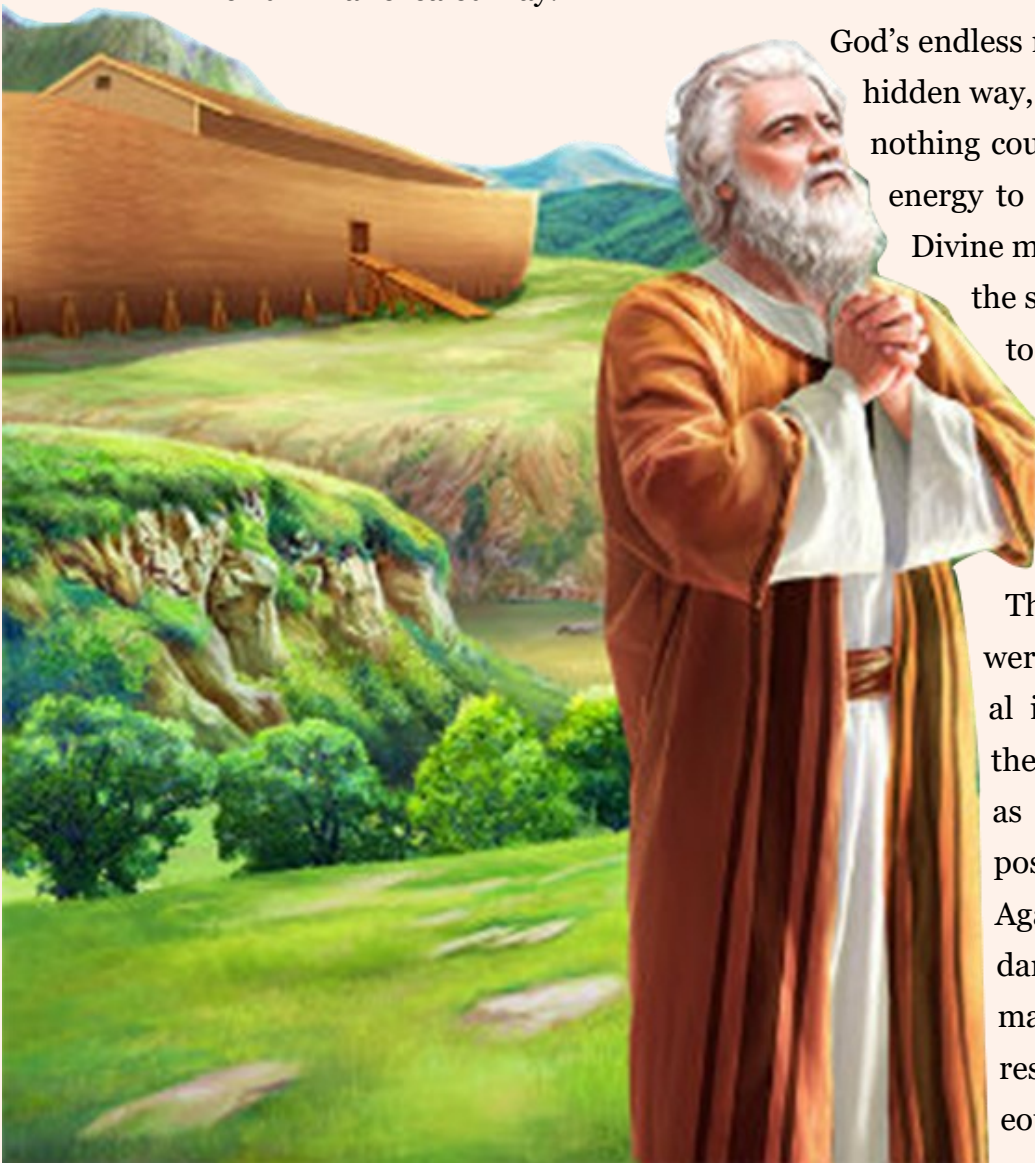
Ten generations after Adam, a new soul descended to the world—Noah. His name teaches us about the role he played in the progression of history. Noah, really *No'ach*, stems from the Hebrew root *nach* (the letters *nun-chet*), meaning rest, ease, and comfort. And when the letters of his name are reversed (to become *chet-nun*) they spell *chein*—grace that is the outward expression of inner balance.

The Torah tells us, “Noah found *chein*—grace—in the eyes of God.” And why did Noah find favor in the Creator’s eyes? Because Noah unified the two qualities represented by the letters **chet** and **nun** of *chein*. **Chet** symbolizes the expansive force of wisdom or *chochmah*; **nun** symbolizes the “kingly” or “controlling” point of restraint. His generation desperately lacked the capacity for self-restraint, and the counterpoint force of receptivity to Divine wisdom.

Noah found mercy in God’s eyes, and reflected the Creator’s own mercy right back into the Divine Eye. By doing so, he opened a channel for God’s endless mercy to begin to flow again to the world—in a revealed way.

God’s endless mercy is always flowing in a hidden way, though. It has to, otherwise nothing could exist; there would be no energy to keep the universe running. Divine mercy is always there, behind the scenes. But it’s not supposed to be hidden; it was meant to be brought into our awareness, developed and expanded. And that requires our participation.

The people of Noah’s time were steeped in theft and sexual immorality, and Noah was the only person who stood up as an example of the very opposite—charity and justice. Again, we return to our basic dance steps of Creation—making space through self-restraint (justice) and righteous giving (charity).



In a time when corruption was woven into the fabric of society, when no one could trust anyone else and no one was safe from being exploited by anyone else, Noah was a giver. In a time when the untamed sexual impulse was destroying the world around him—even the animals had begun to defy their natures and mate outside their species—Noah lived a life of purity and simplicity with his wife. And each of their three sons followed in their parents' way and held to their spouses in an increasingly unstable world.

During their year inside the ark, all four couples refrained from intimacy; while the world is in the process of being destroyed, you can't be focused on your own pleasure. That's just confirmation of the righteousness of that family. When it was time to act with self-restraint, they did. They spent that year, instead, devoted to the care of the creatures in their traveling biosphere—a year of selfless attention to the needs of every form of life, from tending the deer to cultivating the kind of grass on which it feeds best. Again, those two dance steps, justice and mercy,

The flood teaches us that human immorality can corrupt all of Creation; Noah teaches us that a single individual can realign Creation with its purpose. Righteous individuals who perfect and live with a balance of these two qualities act as eternal bridges to the Divine. God's pact with Noah will *never* be broken; in the merit of one man, no flood like that will ever return.

A *tzaddik* is like a laser beam; he cuts through the externals of every situation to its inner, Divine workings. He connects with the unified truth at the heart of everything he encounters. This is the grace Noah found in God's eyes. Noah saved the world and he saved himself, but he couldn't save the people of his time. At Noah's stage of the progression, not enough work had been done to get all of humanity back into alignment. That would require the efforts of other spiritual masters over the course of history...

THE ARK

Noah's uprightness, his being tuned in to the Divine Will, and his desire to serve as a conduit for the revelation of the Divine Will, transformed him into a kind of receiver. Noah made himself "available" to the Creator, Who shared with Noah His vision

to ensure the future: **the ark.**

The ark would transport Noah, his family, and their Divine gene-bank out of a world of destruction and limitation into a pristine, new world so that humanity could have another chance to realign itself.

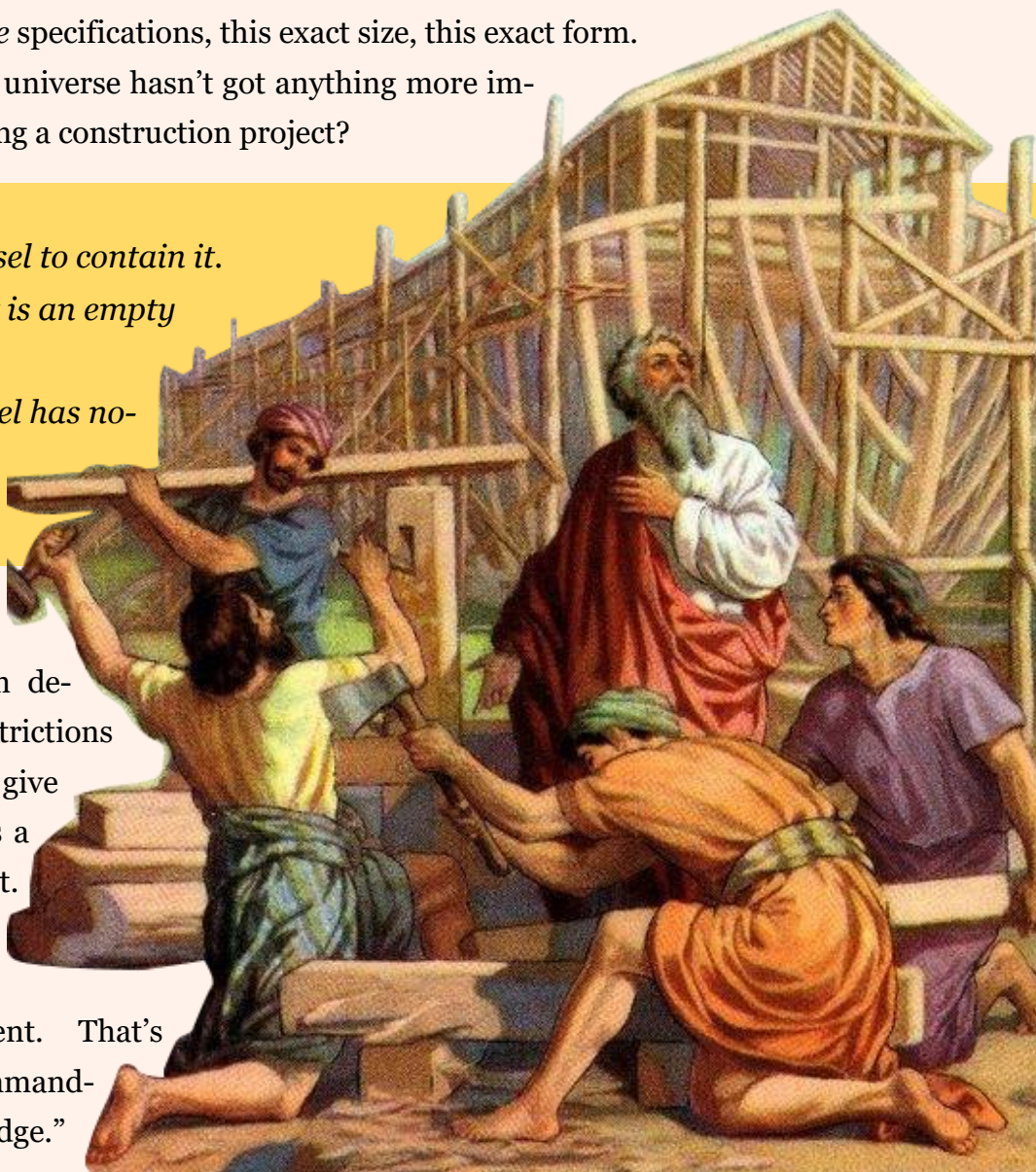
The ark was meant to be a traveling biosphere that ran on lovingkindness, so the reborn world could begin from this ideal starting point. It was going to be really hard work. It demanded constant selfless attention to the needs of other creatures, for the sake of a future hanging by a thread. The ark isn't really a boat; it's a bridge, a conduit for channeling Divine mercy into the world. The person willing to serve as that channel cannot allow self-interest to get in the way.

When we look at God's instructions for building the ark, we immediately notice how detailed they are. *These materials, these specifications, this exact size, this exact form.*

The Creator of the universe hasn't got anything more important to do than planning a construction project?

*Light needs a vessel to contain it.
A vessel without light is an empty
shell,
but light without a vessel has no-
where to dwell.*

The command to build the ark came with detailed specs—the constrictions and measurements that give it form so it can serve as a vessel for the Divine light. The ark is actually the prototype of every *mitzvah*, Torah commandment. That's because every Torah commandment is a "connection-bridge."



And just like the ark, every *mitzvah* has its definition, its materials, its time and place in which it applies. Each *mitzvah* is a fully formed vessel with its own structural integrity.

We learned earlier that contraction had to come before Creation. The Infinite One's first act of Creation was making a space in which reality could come to be. To make that space, God contracted Himself and withdrew, and then drew a channel of Divine light into it to provide it with vitality. This paradigm is at the root of the structure of all *mitzvot*. *Mitzvot* are light-containers, and like all well-engineered vessels, they're extremely precise in their construction.

Let's bring this down to earth by looking at a very detail-grounded *mitzvah* like *tefillin*. These are the black boxes I bind onto my head and left arm every day, which contain parchments from the Torah. In the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*, we see this perfect joining of vessel and light.

For years I worked as a scribe, inking the ancient scripts the exact same way Jews have done for thousands of years. The particulars are super specific: boxes are made of leather, not of gold; text written on parchment, not paper; four specific paragraphs from the Torah belong in them, and no others; every letter precisely formed, every space just this size. And to properly carry out the *mitzvah* of writing the texts for *tefillin*, you must give it your complete focus. That includes restraining yourself from doing anything else at the time.

All these strictures and structures are only to ensure the integrity of the vessel so it can fulfill its purpose. The vessel is a conduit—like the ark—designed to carry the flow of Divine light and mercy.

And the flow isn't only meant for you; it's meant for the whole world.

You dance with the Divine—you follow particular steps to stay aligned—and the Divine energy just flows. It flows into you and through you, and reveals Godliness throughout the world.

Do you remember our friend from the Introduction, the raven? Who gets stuck in his unproductive patterns and can't get himself loose? As we learn more about Noah's role in catalyzing a shift in the history of spiritual consciousness, we need to get better acquainted with that raven. He has a lot to teach us about ourselves...and we're grateful to him for it.

THE RAVEN

The first time we meet the raven in the Bible, it's just as the floodwaters begin to subside. Remember, every animal that made it onto the ark got there because it felt a natural pull toward the aligned path of the *tzaddik*, Noah. So the raven is far from a villain, and it's important to remember that as the story unfolds.

Noah sent out the raven to look for a sign of life; he tapped the bird on the shoulder, so to speak, and said, "Have I got a mission for you!" The sages taught, though, that the raven was—unfortunately—suspicious of Noah's offer. It fluttered around the ark instead, refusing to set out on the search for dry land.

Again, we find that seed of doubt that goes back to Adam and the serpent: *"You don't really mean that this mission is for me, Noah. You're really out for yourself and just loading your burdens onto my feathered shoulders. Well, who says I'm interested? What's in it for me? And who's going to keep an eye on my mate while I'm gone?"*

Noah was giving the raven—the bird of self and ego—an opportunity to be a player, to be a participant and a giver, for the benefit of everyone. But the raven didn't want to take up the challenge, so all we see in the Bible is that Noah sends the raven away and then hands the mission over to the dove, who was willing.

We said the raven has a lot to teach us about ourselves.

Here's one of those teachings: Every day, we get the same chance the raven did. Every day, my Creator taps me on the shoulder and says, "Have I got a mission for you!" And I have to believe that the mission, which might appear to be a narrow channel, will actually help me transcend my limitations and access all the infinite goodness within that mission.

The raven only sees the limitation—he can't see the opportunity.

We can learn from the raven's mistakes. Learn to look beyond the limitation, and see the opportunity. To recognize what it feels like when the Creator is tapping us on the shoulder. To trust the Creator's missions.



*Opportunities to bond with the Infinite One
arrive in packages that are defined and limited.*

The universe is filled with billions of people, endless objects and forces, and my day is only a microcosm of that. Just as all of that multiplicity is only a mask for the Creator's unity, so is my day with all of the forces that drive right through it. Each day has many portals to infinity hiding within it, if our minds and hearts are focused. If we can leave our raven-minds behind.

By the way, I don't want to sound negatively disposed to ravens; they're beautiful, majestic birds, but ancient tradition depicts them as having a cruel nature. Maybe it's the blackness of their plumage, or the fact that they're uncannily clever scavengers, but they remain the symbol of selfishness.

The Talmud states that ravens withhold food from their young, leaving them to fend for themselves. And poor Edgar Allan Poe, getting tortured by that big bird croaking, "*Nevermore*." Even that has something to teach us:

*The raven is the symbol of "never more" ...
absolute limit, end of story,
don't look for mercy or another chance here.
We all have a raven inside of us.*

During the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, the prophet Elijah was sent to the royal couple with a message of Divine displeasure. After delivering it, the Infinite One sent Elijah into hiding to escape the king and queen's fury, to a desolate place far from civilization where he would have access to water but not food. God promised Elijah, "*And I will send the ravens to feed you,*" and they arrived right on schedule. But they didn't just bring him bits and crumbs scavenged from the fields and towns. They brought him bread and meat straight from the king's table—feasts delivered to the prophet, morning and evening.

But why would the Creator send the food through ravens? Why not peaceful birds like doves? Or powerful and lordly birds like eagles? Why would God send Elijah his sustenance—for several years—through birds that are the mascots of cruel self-interest?

The Infinite One made it clear that when you align with the Divine Will—like Elijah the Prophet did—even the least likely agent can be the emissary of boundless kindness.

The great Chassidic master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, used this image of the raven—and how even the raven’s nature can change—to express the ways in which it’s possible for us to break out of our ingrained habits and tendencies. We’re all ravens, stuck in various “nevermore” modes—tight, ungenerous, cruel, self-focused. But we don’t have to stay stuck there. We can break out of the “raven haven”—the mindset of limitation and lack. To do that, however, we need to understand the raven-mind really well.

Here’s a great example of someone who really understood the raven-mind:

Rabbi Usher Freund, a *tzaddik* who lived in Jerusalem until not long ago, devoted his life to helping the poor and disenfranchised. His home was open to all.

During the late afternoon meal of Shabbos, the spiritual pinnacle of the holy day, it’s customary for *tzaddikim* to share words of Torah at their gatherings. Yet Reb Usher, as he was known, would instead sit at the head of the table and ask each guest (and there were often dozens of them) exactly what he wanted to eat. He would spoon out spreads and salads onto each person’s plate, just as they ordered, and by the time he was finished there was never any time for him to teach.

Once, a prominent rabbi came to join him for the meal, and when it was over he asked Reb Usher why he had spent such precious time doling out food instead of Torah.

Reb Usher answered, “By nature, I’m not a giver. Every spoonful of *tahini* is deep spiritual work for me—I must overcome my tendency to withhold. *So my highest moments are best spent giving out food to the hungry.*”

THE RAVEN HAVEN

Most people live in fear whether they realize it or not. They fear sickness. They fear poverty. They fear rejection and loss, and, more than anything, they fear death. That primary fear of our own mortality affects us all. But we only begin to really live after we accept the reality of death. People afraid of dying are in a state of conscious or un-

conscious fear every moment of every day of their lives. But the Infinite One didn't create us to exist in chronic fear. That's not the way we're meant to live.

Imagine a group of children sitting and playing on the floor. There are all kinds of kids there, but one of them is really uptight because he knows that Mommy said, "At three p.m., the game is over." So even though it's only one p.m. right now, all this child can think of is that soon the game will be over. So even though he sits and plays along with the rest for those two hours, he's not really enjoying himself. Knowing it'll be over soon ruins all his pleasure.

All of our fears are grounded in the seeming hard limits of physical reality—there's only so much time, only so many resources, only so much space. But physical reality isn't all there is. There's a spiritual plane of existence, unbounded by time and space, and we align with the spiritual plane every time we transcend the natural boundaries of our own natures and fears.



We don't really talk about heaven too much; the Torah tradition speaks instead of "The World to Come." But even that's a pretty poor translation for the original Hebrew, *olam ha'ba*, better translated as "The World That Is Constantly Coming." *Olam ha'ba* is a spiritual future of absolute vitality and revealed Godliness, and it is the innermost soul of our physical universe.

There aren't really two worlds—This One and The Next One—any more than there are two of you, a physical you and a spiritual you. There's only one world, but just like the body asserts its presence far more than the soul does in the physical world, this world's physical nature is far more apparent than its inner, spiritual nature.

Nonetheless, the innermost essence is in a state of constant and increasing manifestation. Our highest purpose is to help that process unfold. How can we help that process?

Through activating our own hidden spiritual nature. We'll be learning a lot more about this idea later on, in the section called, "Beyond Time." But we've already seen that the key to that activation is through giving.

When the Torah speaks of the natural human tendency to be tight, to remain in the realm of physical limitations, we find that it warns against the "*selfish thought in your heart*"—that's your raven-voice telling you to withhold your assistance from your brother who needs it.

But: "*You shall give to him and **don't feel badly about it when you do**; God will bless you in all that you do **because** of your giving.*" Through the transformative act of radical giving, you'll bring yourself into alignment—and experience Divine blessing.

Don't be afraid. Just keep giving.

But we also learn that, "*The poor will never cease from the land...*" Does a kind and omnipotent God really tell the world to expect poverty to remain forever? Shouldn't we look forward to the end of poverty? I, for one, would really love to live in a world where everyone has exactly what they need. So, why did God create pockets of darkness in the world?

"...Therefore, I command you, to open your hand to your brother, your poor, to the destitute among you."

When we participate in drawing abundance into those dark spaces, we reveal an even higher degree of Divine mercy. It isn't only the Infinite One Who is merciful; the Godly spark in every one of us is capable of mercy and compassion. Sure, the Creator could eliminate poverty all by Himself; He could have kept it from existing in the first place. But it's when the sparks of the Infinite within us are mobilized to alleviate suffering that the infinite nature of His mercy is revealed.

TRANSFORM YOUR RAVE

When we talk about giving, there are layers and levels. Opportunities for giving are infinite, and the general guideline is to follow your heart's desire. The form of compassionate action that resonates with you—with your nature, your resources, and your circumstances—is the best place to begin. But when we talk about the heart's desire, we're leaving out another important element of giving—**transformative giving**. They're not always the same thing.

If a stranger stops you on the street and asks for money for food and you pull \$5 out of your pocket, you've fulfilled the obligation of giving charity. But although you've given, you haven't necessarily done the spiritual work, the transformative work that makes you a *giver*.

You've given, but you haven't yet received the gift of transformation.

What's the difference between handing out money, and the kind of giving that alters you as a human being?



spiritual work of giving.

Everyone has their own unique nature, and our task is to stretch the boundaries—gently, intelligently, and in a healthy way—so that we participate in *becoming* our ideal self.

So for example, when you're a kind person by nature—and the word *nature* here is very significant—then giving comes...naturally. That's great—it means that helping other people comes more easily and you can accomplish beautiful things in the world. But the act of giving, when it's coming naturally, isn't a transformative act *for the giver*. It's not the giving charity, even though it's a generous act of kindness.

Good people—and thankfully, that's a lot of us—have giving natures and that's great. But there's nothing spiritually dynamic in that kind of giving. When we get static in our giving—when there's no real internal movement there—it's a bigger missed opportunity than most of us realize.

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I’m not talking about giving until it hurts, so far above and beyond your comfort zone that it’s unnatural and painful. It doesn’t have to be that way. But stretching our limits and breaking out of our raven-nature (even when we’re pretty generous naturally) is the key that opens all doors of spiritual growth and change. It is *the* transformative act. It is the beginning of all beginnings.

No matter how much of a natural giver you are, you still have the raven inside of you. Everybody has their lines of demarcation, your usual limits of to whom you want to give, what to give, how much to give, when to give, and in what way you’re most comfortable giving. “I’m willing to go so far for another person, but not an inch further.” It’s healthy to have boundaries, but if we really want to change and grow, those boundaries need to expand. And they don’t expand on their own. Going past our usual limits in giving in any of these ways is our gateway to a new, higher self, but the first act of transformative giving—the stretch—will always be a challenge.

In the basic dance-move of existence, first there’s a contraction, then there’s creation. First is the darkness, then the light. “*And it was evening, and it was morning...one day.*” To grow into the possible you, you’re going to go through contractions—but as laboring women know, those contractions are really expansions.

When we really *know* that the feeling of pressure and constriction is actually the gateway to life, it no longer fills us with fear. Rather, it gives us energy to dance through the darkness.

CHANNEL THE BLESSING

We've seen so far that the goal is to trigger the flow of Divine abundance by breaking through our fears. Nothing is lacking—nothing is even scarce—because the One is Infinite and has more than enough for everyone. The only place we find lack is where there's an obstruction in the flow. How do we remove that obstruction? The main way to open the pathways of blessing is through openhearted giving.

We are created in the image of God, and we have free will rooted in the absolute freedom of the Divine Will. Everything we do, say, think, believe, and want powerfully impacts the degree of vitality flowing through the system. Our channels, our spiritual mechanisms, are patterned after the Divine model; that's what it means to be created in God's image. And when we change ourselves, we change the entire system.

If you want to experience the flow of Godly vitality through you, you have to make yourself into a channel that can carry it. **If you want to experience Divine blessing...you have to be a Divine blessing.**

Think about the difference between a pipeline and a vessel. If you take a cylinder of wood, you can drill all the way through and make it into a conduit. If you only drill most of the way through, it becomes a vessel.

The vessel can receive, but it's just a cup—it keeps the flow for itself, and once it's full no more can get in.

The conduit, on the other hand, is open-ended. It isn't concerned with holding on to what comes into it; that's how the flow keeps moving.

Now imagine we're talking about a conduit that's alive, like your intestines. Their energy comes to them by way of the nourishment that flows through them; if they get blocked, however, not only would the whole system suffer, but the vessels wouldn't survive either. *When that which was designed to be a pipeline chooses instead to be a vessel, an end-user, it suffers along with those whose nourishment was dependent on it.*



So how do we transform our “end-user” selves into pipelines? If we want to flow with Divine blessing we need to overcome our natural fear of scarcity—our raven, remember him?—and share, share, share. We have to become less grasping, and stop holding on so tightly because we’re scared that if we let go, we’ll lose out. *We need to realize that in giving, we’re exactly in tune with the flow of goodness...and we’ll never suffer for letting go of that frightened, tightened grip.*

This world isn’t naturally the place of abundance—*it’s the place where our natural tendency to restriction has to be transformed into abundance.*

It’s not naturally the place of goodness—*it’s the place where our natural tendency to evil must be transformed into good.*

It’s not the place of light—*it’s where we can transform the pervasive darkness within ourselves into light.*

Now that we better understand the nature of mercy and the ways of the raven-mind, it's time to return to Noah.

We all know Noah was a righteous man who saved the planet and a sampling of all its life, but Noah didn't draw down enough mercy to save the rest of the world. Not even close. *Noah's ark of connection was enough to save him...but it wasn't nearly broad enough to preserve everyone else.*

NOAH'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The mystical text of the *Zohar* lets us peek behind the scenes to learn a little more about what happened when Noah emerged with his family from the ark. When he saw a glorious world reduced to mud, Noah cried out, "God of mercy, where was Your mercy?" How could You, a loving God, have destroyed Your world and everything in it? *Where was Your quality of mercy when the world really needed it?*

The Infinite One answered, "Noah, where was *your* mercy?" I warned you that the world was in danger, but you only saved yourself and your family. You might have been right that the people of your time were beyond your reach...*but why didn't you pray that I would forgive them and let them live?*

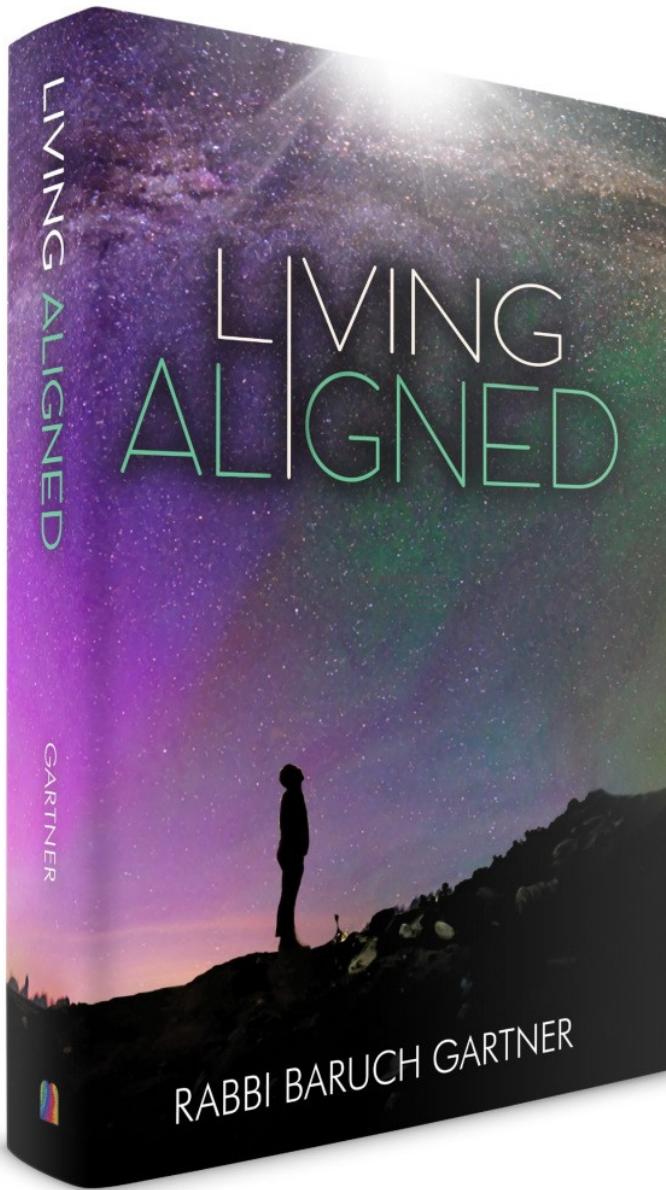
Yes, Noah saved the world. He built an ark, a bridge, an eternal connection with the Divine that lives on even now...but it's a narrow bridge. It was a self-contained vessel. Noah's ark was wondrous, and in building it and entering into it with his small world, he is our model of a person who chooses to align with the *inner purpose* of life. But Noah didn't manage to translate his inner connection into a pathway *out in the world* that others could follow. His ark was a Tree of Life, a connected and thriving space, but it wasn't big enough to encompass the entire world. He drew down Divine mercy, but not enough to save the undeserving. It was a thin stream of Divine mercy, just enough for himself and those upright and deserving few...like him.

There was still a long way to go.

The next stop on the progression would be the individual the Infinite One called "Little Sister"—Abraham. In Hebrew, the word for sister is *achot*, from the same root as the word for mending and repair.

Abraham would begin to mend the original tear in Creation that Adam had caused. And although Noah's business was left unfinished, without Noah there could never have been an Abraham. Yes, Noah's bridge needed broadening, but without that narrow bridge, Abraham wouldn't have had a foundation on which to work.

You see? It's a progression.



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