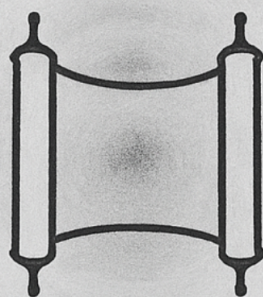


בס"ד

**Rabbi Menachem Mendel  
of Horodak  
Parshas Noach**



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# Menachem Mendel of Horodak

## Pri Ha'Eretz

### Parshas Noach

#### Introduction

In this Maamer, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok explores the inner drama of Parshas Noach as a map of the soul's spiritual renewal. The Flood, he explains, represents the chaos of emotional turbulence and worldly distraction that threatens to drown divine awareness. The *teivah*—the “ark”—is the refuge of sacred speech, the words of Torah and prayer that elevate one's consciousness above the waters. Through these words, one can transform judgment into compassion and exile into serenity.

The Rebbe reveals how Noach's mission mirrors the avodah of every Jew: to sweeten the harshness of life by restoring each fragment of creation to its Divine root. Even the simplest human expression, when purified and uplifted, becomes a channel for infinite light. The journey from storm to stillness, from *din* to *rachamim*, is the very path through which the world finds its “menuchah” — its true rest — in the awareness of Hashem's presence everywhere.

From the book Chesed L'Avraham by Rabbi Avraham the Angel:

מספר "חסד לאברהם" לרבי אברהם המלאך

“And the dove came to him at evening, and behold, an olive leaf plucked in her mouth.” Behold, it is known that prayer must be from the depths of the heart, meaning one must elevate the speech to its root in Binah, from which judgments are aroused.

ותבא אליו היונה לעת ערב והנה עלה זית טרף בפיה. כי הנה ידוע שהתפלה צריכה להיות מקירות הלב, פרוש – שצריך להעלות הדיבור לשרשו, לבניה, דמנה דינן מתעדין.

And this is what is meant by “the walls of the heart” — Binah is the heart. This is called “Beis HaKnesses,” the house of gathering, for there all the middos assemble. Then one's prayer is heard and all the attributes are elevated.

וזהו “קירות הלב” – בינה ליבא. וזה נקרא בית הכנסת ששם מתכנסים כל המדות. ואז תפלתו נשמעת, ואז נתעלו כל המדות.

And this is “My soul yearns and also faints for the courtyards of Hashem” — meaning the speech yearns to ascend to its root, to the intellect, Chochmah and Binah, called “the courtyards of Hashem,” for Hashem dwells in them as it is written, “Hashem by wisdom founded the earth.”

וזהו “נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי לחצרות ה'” – פרוש, הדיבור נכסף לעלות לשרשם למשפילים שהם חכמה ובינה שנקראים “חצרות ה'”, שהשם יתברך “נשאה בהם כמשמעו” ה' בחכמה יסד ארץ.

Then all the lower attributes are elevated, as it is said in the Zohar, “All are refined through wisdom” — meaning that when they rise to their root in Chochmah, the holy sparks within them are uplifted and the evil falls away.

ואז נתעלו כל המדות שבמדרגות התחתונות כמשמעו בזהר “הכל בחכמה אתברירו”, פרוש – כשבאים לשרשם לחכמה נתעלו הנצוצות קדושה שבהם והרע נופל.

And this is “My heart and my flesh sing out to the living God” — meaning that even my flesh, which represents the lower levels, is uplifted and sings to the Living God.

וזהו “לבי ובשרי ירגנו אל אל חי” – פרוש, אף בשרי שהיא מדרגות תחתונות “ירגנו אל אל חי” – פרוש, נתעלו.

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And this is [the meaning of the verse] “And God caused a wind to pass over the earth” — that the attribute of mercy was aroused, which is the “ruach” (spirit) corresponding to the attribute of Yaakov, as it is written, “And the spirit of Yaakov was revived” (Bereishis 45:27). This refers to the lower levels that are bound in earthliness — and this is “over the earth,” for “He shall not cast away any that are His” (II Shmuel 14:14).

“And the waters subsided” — the meaning is as the Gemara states that they were judged with boiling water. The interpretation: the waters, which are *chasadim* (kindnesses) from which the generation of the Flood had been receiving, were transformed into *gevurot* (severities) — this is “boiling,” and then they no longer had a source from which to receive vitality, and they were therefore destroyed.

But afterwards, when mercy was aroused through Noach — the righteous one, the foundation of the world — who elevated everything to its source in *Chochmah*, which is *Ko'ach Mah* (the power of “What”), meaning that he raised the twenty-eight times (*ko'ach etim*) to their source, by virtue of his being in the aspect of *Mah*, which has nothing of its own, as King David said: “Yours, Hashem, is the greatness...” (I Divrei HaYamim 29:11).

And when he subdues all the attributes before Hashem, then divine comprehension is brought into the world, and “a fire goes before Him” (Tehillim 97:3), and all the sparks are elevated and sweetened in their source. This is the meaning of “And God caused a wind to pass” — that all severities fell away because a spirit of mercy was aroused over the earth through Noach, bringing revelation of divinity into the world, and then “a fire goes before Him,” as above.

And this is [the meaning of the verse] “Ten generations from Adam to Noach.” The interpretation: the generation of the Flood had perverted all ten attributes into judgment through their evil deeds, and therefore they had no source from which to receive vitality. But Noach rectified everything, and this is [the meaning of] “Make for yourself an ark,” meaning that one must elevate speech to its source — “lower, second, and third levels shall you make it.”

וזהו "ויעבר אלקים רוח על הארץ" — שנתעורר מדת רחמים שהוא רוח מדת יעקב, כמשמעו "ותחי רוח יעקב" על מדרגות תחתונות שבארציות, וזהו "על הארץ", כי "לא ידח ממנו נדח".

וישכו המים — פרוש, דאיתא בגמרא דברותיהן נדונו. פרוש, שהמים שהם החסדים שהיו דור המבול מקבלים מהם נהפכו לגבורות, וזהו רותחין, ואז לא היה להם ממי לקבל חיות וממילא הם כלים.

אבל אחר כך בשנתעורר רחמים על ידי נח, צדיק יסוד עולם, שהעלה הכל לשרשם להכמה שהיא כ"ח מ"ה, פרוש שהעלה על הכ"ח עתים לשרשם, על ידי שהיה במדרגות מ"ה דלית ליה מגרמיה בלום, כמשמעו דהמלה דוד, "לה ה' הגדולה" וכו'.

וכשמכניע כל המדות לה' יתברך, אז מביא השגת אלקות בעולם, ואז "אש לפניו תלה" וכו', וכל הנצוצות נתעלו ונמתקים בשרשם, וזהו "ויעבר אלקים" — פרוש, שנפלו כל הגבורות על ידי שהיה רוח שנתעורר רחמים על הארץ על ידי נח, והביא התגלות אלקות בעולם ואז "אש לפניו תלה" וכו' כנ"ל.

וזהו "עשרה דורות מאדם עד נח", פרוש, שדור המבול היו מהפכים כל הי' מדות לדין על-ידי מעשיהם הרעים, לכן לא היה להם ממי לקבל חיות, ונח תקן הכל, וזהו "עשה לה תבת", פרוש, שתעלה "הדיבור לשרשו" תחתיים שניים ושלשים תעשה.

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The meaning is that in speech there are three levels: lowly speech of sin — this is the “lower level” made for refuse; speech of the permissible — this is the “second level” for dwelling, for this is how ordinary people speak; and speech of mitzvah, in awe and love — these are the “wings” through which speech ascends to its root.

This is “upper levels for man,” meaning that he should raise the speech, through its wings, to *Chochmah*, which is *Ko'ach Mah* (the power of “What”), the numerical value of *Adam*. Yet even in the lowly words, there must be some trace of one of the seven holy attributes, though it has fallen into *kelipah*.

And the righteous person, by subduing all attributes before Hashem, elevates all the attributes from the lower levels to God. Noach rectified this, as Hashem commanded him, and the speech was elevated — and this is [the meaning of] “and it was lifted above the earth,” that the speech was raised from earthliness.

And this is [the meaning of] “These are the offspring of Noach,” for the main offspring of the righteous are good deeds. What were Noach’s offspring? That he brought rest (*menuchah*) and wholeness into the world by elevating all attributes to their source — to the place of rest and completion, where there are no judgments at all.

And then they are sweetened in their source, and the evil falls away, and the sparks are elevated. This is [the meaning of] “A righteous man, perfect” — he connected all the attributes to perfection; *tzaddik* means connection, and *tamim* means completeness. Then all the attributes that had been in lowly states of judgment were transformed into mercy, and they could receive vitality from all the attributes.

And this is “*Es* the combinations,” which are called *Es* because it includes from Alef to Tav — the *Elokim* that were in judgment were transformed into mercy and became a flow of divine energy. This is “walked” (*his'halech*) — meaning motion and drawing down. And all this was accomplished by elevating all the attributes to rest (*menuchah*).

פרוש, בדיבור יש שלשה מדרגות – דיבורים שפלים של עבירה, וזהו “תחתנים לזבל”, דיבורים של רשות, זהו “שניים לדור”, פרוש, כל בני אדם מדברים כך, ודיבורים של מצוה בדחילו ורחימו, ושהם כנפים שבהם נתעלה הדיבור לשורש.

זהו “עליונים לאדם”, פרוש, שיעלה הדיבור על-ידי הכנפים לתקומה שהיא כ”ח מ”ה מספר אדם, אבל אף בדיבורים השפלים צריך להיות שם איזו מדה מז’ מדות הקדושות, אבל שנתעלה בקליפה.

והצדיק על-ידי שמכניע כל המדות לה’ יתברך, מעלה כל המדות שבמדרגות תחתונות לה’, ונח תקן באשר צוה ה’, ונתעלה הדיבור, וזהו “ותרם” (התבה) מעל הארץ”, שנתעלה הדיבור מארציות.

וזהו “אלה תולדות נח”, לפי שעקר תולדותיהם של צדיקים מעשים טובים, ומה היו תולדות נח, פרוש, שהיה מביא מנוחה ושלמות בעולם על-ידי שהיה מעלה כל המדות לשורשן למקום מנוחה ושלמות, ששם אין דינין כלל.

ואז נמתקים בשרשם והרע נופל והנצוצות נתעלו, וזהו “איש צדיק תמים”, שהיה מקושר כל המדות לשלמות, צדיק לשון התקשרות, תמים לשון שלמות, ואז כל המדות שהיו במדרגות שפלות בדינין נהפכו לרחמים, והיו יכולים לקבל חיות מכל המדות.

וזהו “את הצירופים” שנקראים את, לפי שהוא מאגף ועד תיו, “האלקים” שהיו בדינים נהפך לרחמים ונעשה המשכה, וזהו “התהלך” לשון הליכה והמשכה, והכל היה על-ידי שהיה מעלה כל המדות לקנוחה.

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And this is [the meaning of] “And the dove came to him” — that the speech was elevated, for the righteous one would bring the speech, called the *yonah* (dove), to Hashem. And how did he elevate the speech? By subduing all the attributes before Hashem, breaking the *kelipos* (husks), and elevating the sparks that were within the *kelipah*.

וְזֶהוּ "וַתָּבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה" – פְּרוּשׁ, שְׁנִתְעַלָּה הַדִּיבּוּר, וַתָּבֵא הַצַּדִּיק הָיָה מְבִיא הַדִּיבּוּר, שֶׁנִּקְרָא יוֹנָה לֵה', וְאִיךָ הָיָה מְעַלָּה הַדִּיבּוּר – עַל־יְדֵי שְׁהִיָּה מְכַנִּיעַ כָּל הַמַּדּוּת לֵה' וְהָיָה מְשַׁבֵּר הַקְּלִיפּוֹת וּמְעַלָּה הַנִּצּוּצוֹת שֶׁהָיוּ בַּקְּלִיפָה.

And this is [the meaning of] “And behold, an olive leaf” — for it is said in the Gemara that olive oil is good for memory. The meaning: oil represents *Chochmah*, which is above the combinations, and there is no judgment there at all. This is “good for memory,” for there, there is no forgetfulness, since forgetfulness stems from the side of judgment.

וְזֶהוּ "וַהֲנִיחַ עֵלֶּה זֵית" כִּי אֵיתָא בַּגְמָרָא שֶׁשֶּׁמֶן זֵית יָפֵה לְזַכְרוֹן, פְּרוּשׁ, שֶׁשֶּׁמֶן נִקְרָא חֲכָמָה שֶׁהִיא לְמַעַלָּה מִן הַצִּיּוּרִים, וְשֶׁם אֵין דִּין כָּלֵל. וְזֶהוּ "יָפֵה לְזַכְרוֹן" שֶׁשֶּׁם אֵין שְׂכָחָה, שֶׁהִיא מְסֻטָּרָה דְּדִינָא.

But the olive itself causes forgetfulness, meaning that when *Chochmah* is still within the *kelipos*, there is yet judgment. Therefore it causes forgetfulness. One must therefore beat the olive, breaking the *kelipah* to release the oil — the sparks — and raise them to their source.

אַבָּל הַזֵּית עַצְמוֹ קוֹשֶׁה לְשִׁכְחָה, פְּרוּשׁ, כְּשֶׁהַחֲכָמָה עֲדִין בַּקְּלִיפּוֹת, יֵשׁ שָׁם עֲדִין דִּין, לְפִיכָךְ קוֹשֶׁה לְשִׁכְחָה, לְפִיכָךְ צָרִיךְ לַחְבוֹט אֶת הַזֵּית, צָרִיךְ לְשַׁבֵּר הַקְּלִיפָה וְלְהוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם הַשֶּׁמֶן שֶׁהֵם הַנִּצּוּצוֹת וְלַהֲעֵלוֹת לְשָׁרְשָׁם.

And this was accomplished through speech in Torah and prayer with awe and love — and this is [the meaning of] “in her mouth,” *bephiha*, “in her mouth,” meaning through the speech of Hashem, “by the word of Hashem,” through the five outlets of the mouth. In this way he would elevate everything to its source — and this was the rectification of Noach.

עַל־יְדֵי שְׁהִיָּה מְדַבֵּר דִּיבּוּרִים בַּתּוֹרָה וּבַתְּפִלָּה בִּירְאָה וְאַהֲבָה, וְזֶהוּ "בְּפִיהָ", "בְּפִי" – בַּדִּיבּוּר ה', "עַל־יְדֵי ה' מוֹצֵאוֹת הַפֶּה", בְּזֶה הָיָה מְעַלָּה הַכָּל לְשָׁרְשָׁם, וְזֶהוּ הָיָה תִּיקוּן נֹחַ.

### [NOTE Summary

The Maamer of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok opens with the understanding that all of creation was designed for the tzaddik to “rule over the night.” Night here symbolizes concealment, confusion, and constriction — and the tzaddik’s task is to transform this darkness into light. When the tzaddik rises at “midnight” to serve Hashem, he divides the night — shattering the forces of concealment — and in so doing, he reveals that the world’s apparent distance from the Divine is itself an expression of Hashem’s infinite compassion.

The discourse continues to explain that “day” and “night” represent two states of Divine revelation. The “great luminary” (sun) and “small luminary” (moon) signify the flow of Divine light into the worlds. The tzaddik’s avodah is to “divide the night,” drawing illumination even into the darkest realms, where the concealment of Hashem’s presence once reigned. When a Jew studies Torah at night, Hashem “draws upon him a thread of kindness by day,” for the tzaddik reveals that the constrictions themselves were motivated by boundless mercy — that “He does not cast away any soul.”

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The creation of the world, “And Hashem Elokim planted a garden in Eden,” is reinterpreted as a process of Divine tzimtzum. “Hashem Elokim” — the combination of the names Havayah and Elokim — symbolizes the joining of compassion and judgment. Through this union, the infinite delight of Eden was channeled into the finite structure of a garden — a world in which Divine pleasure could be experienced and cultivated through human effort.

Noach’s role then emerges as a reflection of this same theme. The “wind that passed over the earth” represents the awakening of the attribute of mercy — the spirit of Yaakov — which revives even the lowest aspects of existence. The waters of the Flood, originally manifestations of corrupted chesed turned into harsh judgment, subside only when the tzaddik, embodying the attribute of Yesod, raises everything back to its source in Chochmah, the “power of what” (ko’ach mah). By his humility, Noach reestablishes the balance of creation: judgments are sweetened, sparks are elevated, and Divine vitality once again flows into the world.

Speech, the “word” of man, is presented as the central vessel of rectification. “Make for yourself an ark (teivah)” — the Baal Shem Tov taught that “teivah” means “word.” Through holy speech — Torah, prayer, and words of kindness — one constructs an inner ark that shelters the soul from the flood of coarse desires and worldly distractions. There are “lower, second, and third levels” of speech: sinful speech that descends into impurity, permissible speech that sustains daily life, and holy speech that ascends through awe and love. The tzaddik elevates even the lowest words by uncovering the hidden spark of holiness within them, lifting them back to their Divine source. This elevation of speech — from earthliness to heavenliness — is what transforms chaos into harmony, judgment into compassion.

The discourse culminates in Noach’s perfection: “A righteous man, perfect in his generations.” The tzaddik binds all the middos together in unity, sweetening severities and channeling life into every level of creation. The dove that returns to Noach symbolizes the ascent of holy speech (“the dove is the word”), bringing an olive leaf — wisdom — in her mouth. Oil, the essence of wisdom, is “good for memory,” because in the realm of Chochmah there is no forgetfulness or judgment, only clarity and unity. The olive itself, however, causes forgetfulness when enclosed within the husk of impurity; therefore it must be beaten — the kelipah shattered — to release the oil, the inner Divine spark.

Thus, Noach’s ultimate tikkun was to subdue all attributes before Hashem, to raise every spark of creation to its proper place, and to reveal the essential rest and perfection at the heart of existence — a world restored to Divine consciousness, where “evil falls away and the sparks rise.”

### Practical Takeaway

The Maamer teaches that every person contains “speech” that can be either coarse, neutral, or holy. The task of life is to transform all words into teivos — vessels of holiness — by speaking with awareness, love, and awe of Hashem. When one learns Torah, prays, or even speaks kindly to another, those words lift the world itself. Even the “earthly” or “fallen” words of daily life can become elevated when guided by intention and humility. In

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doing so, a person imitates Noach — turning the floods of distraction into rivers of blessing, revealing that all concealment was always part of Divine mercy.

**Chassidic Story**

Once, a chassid came to Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok, complaining that his prayers felt empty, that his words had no life. The Rebbe told him to spend three days in silence, saying no word that did not serve a holy purpose. After three days, the chassid returned, trembling. “Rebbe,” he said, “I heard my own words echo inside me. I realized how heavy and careless they had been.” The Rebbe smiled. “Now begin to build your teivah. Every word must become a vessel. Speak as Noach built — with care, with love, with faith — and your words will carry you above every flood.” **END NOTE]**