

JOIN THE VOICES IN THE ARK

by Rabbi Label Lam

And HASHEM saw that the evil of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of his heart was only evil all the time. And HASHEM regretted that He had made man upon the earth, and He became grieved in His heart. And HASHEM said, "I will blot out man, whom I created, from upon the face of the earth, from man to cattle to creeping thing, to the fowl of the heavens, for I regret that I made them." But Noach found (CHEIN) favor in the eyes of the Lord. (Breishis 5:5-8)

How did Noach find (Chein) in the eyes of HASHEM? I'm certain it wasn't because he was tall or had a nice mustache. There must have been some key characteristics that made him a special antenna for Divine attention. I know I'm not the first one to ask the question.

Actually, the Ramchal in Derech Etz Chaim writes, "Behold, a man, most of his years, are spent in thinking thoughts on his businesses, business of this temporary world. Why does he not put to heart even one hour also on thinking these other things, "What is he? Why did he come to this world? Or what does the King of kings seek from him? What will be the end of his matter?"

This is the biggest and most powerful medicine that one can find against the yetzer. It is easy and its effects are great. Its fruit is many, in that a man should stand each day for at least an hour, free from all other thoughts, and to think only on this matter that I've said. And he should seek in his heart: What did the early ones, the fathers of the world that G-d desired in them?

What did Moshe Rabeinu do? What did David, the Moshiach (chosen of) HASHEM do? And all the Gedolim (great men) who lived before us? And he should put to his mind: What is good for a man all the days of his life in order that he should also do "the good"? Then he should explore with his thoughts to know what is his situation that he is in and that he stands in relative to that which is wanted [by G-d], in the path which was trodden by these men of G-d before him.

Those are excellent questions? Where do we find the answers? The help just may come from the most primary of sources, Chumash. The verses tell us that the world had become hopeless addicted to wickedness, to the point that HASHEM even regretted having created humanity. However, Noach, he found (Chein) because he was different somehow. How was he different? What was his specialty? He remained innocent and pure from all of the external influences. He specialized in "turning away from bad", even at the expense of "doing good". He withdrew and maintained his purity and innocence.

Who finds grace in our fleshy eyes? Little babies are the recipients of seeming endless undeserved

and unearned adoration. Why? The Chovos HaLevavos explains that to the decree that they are helpless that is the extent to which we have been spiritually programmed to be magnanimous. To the extent that they mature and can begin to help themselves, our instinct to be generous subsides.

Helplessness is one factor but it is not sufficient to be worthy of Chein-grace-favor! I was in Manhattan one early morn at an ATM machine withdrawing \$20 dollars for the day. A fellow approached me and asked for money for food. I asked him, "You are hungry? You want food?" I reached into my bag and handed him, like two decks of cards, my whole wheat crackers. It was my lunch. He took them look at them and threw them on the floor. He insisted I give him money. I said, "I thought you were hungry! In one fell swoop he lost favor in my eyes! Sure he acted helpless but he was not innocent.

Today a boy came to seek to enter the Yeshiva in the 1st grade. The class is full! He was sitting outside in a wheel chair watching the other children play. One person told me he offered to open the door even though he could not reach it. I went out to see him myself. I was immediately charmed. We accepted him without any testing. That was a first. He found favor because although he seemed helpless, he was doing everything he could and he was sweet and pure enough then to be invited to **join the voices in the the ark**. DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](https://torah.org).