THANK YOU HASHEM!

THE NEKUDA TOVA

ISSUE #102 | OCTOBER 17, 2026 | ו' חשון תשפ"ז

לזכות עלקא דבורה בת מרים רבקה חנה



One Hundred and Two



Rabbi Tzachi Diamond

Mazel Tov, TYH Nation, on this incredible milestone!!! 102 issues of Nekuda Tova!!! But wait, didn't we just celebrate issue 100 two weeks ago? What's so special about issue 102? The answer is quite simple — 102 is the *gematria* (numerical value) of the word *emunah*! Let's explore the avodah of 102.

The Torah says in this week's parsha that Noach was a big tzadik™. The *meforshim* discuss various aspects of Noach's tzadik-ness, but I'd like to point out what Reb Yitzchok Vorki says. The *pasuk (Bereishis 7:7)* tells us: **ויבא נח ובניו ואשתו ונשי בניו אתו אל התבה מפני מי המבול**

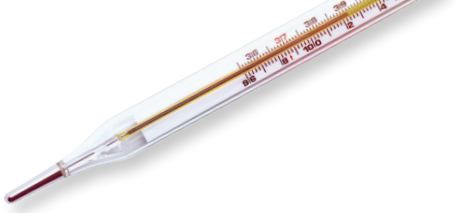
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– "Noach, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives came with him into the teivah because of the waters of the flood."

Rashi explains that the words "because of the waters of the flood" mean that Noach waited until the waters literally pushed him into the *teivah*. In Rashi's words, Noach was amongst "those of little faith." The words of Rashi are: **אף נח מקטני אמנה היה, מאמין ואינו מאמין שיבא המבול, ולא נכנס לתבה עד שדחקוהו המים** — *Noach was one of those of little faith; he believed and did not believe that the Flood would come, and he would not enter the teivah until the waters forced him to do so.*

However, the *heilige* Vorki Rebbe explains Rashi a little differently. He reads it as follows: Of course, Noach had *emunah*. But he also believed in those who had a lower level of *emunah* than him. Therefore, he waited until the last second, giving everyone a chance to also make it into the *teivah*! Noach believed in the *katnei emunah*, waiting until the last possible second to give them a chance!

There is a *machlokes (Kiddushin 36a)* between Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Meir in terms of our status in Hashem's eyes. Rabbi Yehuda says that when we are doing well and serving Hashem properly, we are considered *banim*, children of Hashem. However, when we are not acting properly, we are considered *avadim*, servants of Hashem. Rabbi Meir, on the other hand, says that no matter what, whether we are serving Hashem well or not, we are always considered *banim*, Hashem's children. Many sources indicate that the "halacha" in this dispute



goes according to Rabbi Meir. How beautiful is it that the *gematria* of the word *banim* — **בנים** — is also 102, the same as *emunah*! No matter what, a Yid is always connected to Hashem because we have a level of built-in *emunah*!

Emunah is one of those things we keep working on. The more we keep it in our minds, the more we build it up in our hearts. If you are looking for *emunah*, seeking to find Hashem everywhere, you are strengthening your *emunah*. The Kotzker Rebbe used to say, "Where is Hashem to be found? Wherever you let Him in." All we need to do is **look** for Hashem, and when we do, we will start to see Him everywhere.

Even just by knowing the *gematria*, keeping that number 102 in our minds as a number that always links straight to Hashem, we are already thinking about the concept. And we can use that as a tool to find *emunah* in our day-to-day lives.



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THE 102 HUNT

HASHEM IS HIDING EVERYWHERE!

How many hidden 102's can you find throughout this issue of Nekuda Tova?

Send the number of 102's you found to kids@tyhnation.com for a chance to win a $102 gift card to TYH.org plus a special prize from 102forall.com

When we see 102 on a license plate, or on a receipt, or in an address, we can use it to draw us back to our *avodah* of *emunah*! So keep your eyes open to find 102 anywhere and everywhere!

Most mitzvos have very clear ways of being fulfilled. If we need to shake *lulav* and *esrog*, we know what to do — once we've done the physical acts of shaking them, we're *yotzei*. When you put money in the *pushke*, you have completed the mitzvah of giving *tzedaka*. But how does one fulfill the mitzvah of *emunah*? The Sabba Kadisha of Lechovitz explains the answer based on the words in Tehillim 116:10, *"he'emanti ki adaber,"* which can be translated as, "I believe because I speak." The way to fulfill the mitzvah of *emunah* is to talk about *emunah*! So let us get used to discussing and talking about *emunah* and keep growing until the highest *madreigos*. And keep looking for that holy number 102, and call it out wherever you see it. Hashem, we see You hiding everywhere!

Rabbi Tzachi Diamond is a rebbe at SKA high school for girls. His passion is spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit through original and creative approaches. He can be reached at 102forall@gmail.com. To get a hold of some 102 swag go to 102forall.com.



Published and distributed by TYH Nation
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The Gift of Chatzos

What If We've Been Preparing for Shabbos All Wrong?

How one child's bold statement sparked a revitalization of an age-old concept, and connected me to a Bubby I never met.

Sara Faygie Berkowitz

Twenty years ago, a superwoman named Azriella Jaffe — a mom, wife, college professor, author of more than two dozen books, business owner, and seminary teacher — was told by one of her children, "I hate Shabbos."

It's every Jewish mother's worst nightmare.

Thankfully, Azriella soon realized her daughter didn't hate Shabbos at all. She hated Fridays, the lead-in to Shabbos. She hated the chaos, the time pressure, and the stress in her home on what should have been a calm, joy-filled day anticipating the arrival of Shabbos. So Azriella changed the way it had always been done.

She began implementing the concept of being ready in time for *chatzos* on Erev Shabbos, referred to as making a "Chatzos Shabbos." She did this by spreading preparations throughout the week and leaving very little for Friday afternoon. The change in her home was so dramatic that she started writing about it and sharing what she had learned with others. People were enthusiastic to try it and, after some time, a website was launched to answer questions and provide information. She created a chat group for peer support and encouragement, and sent out emails with stories, practical ideas, and inspiration.

Shabbos is a destination, not a finish line.

People who made an effort to be mostly ready for Shabbos by midday Friday noticed all sorts of unexpected changes. Improved "indoor air quality" was perhaps the most notable. Friday afternoons felt calmer. Adults and children experienced Erev Shabbos differently.

People asked the newly dubbed "Chatzos Lady" every imaginable question. Can you do *melachah* on Friday afternoon? (Yes, of course.) What if I work on Fridays? (Then you need this more than anyone.) How do I serve fresh food? (Season or marinade ahead of time, bake it on Friday.)

Little by little, people figured out what worked for their own homes. They shared their struggles, celebrated their accomplishments, and reassured each other that pulling a dessert out of the freezer once in a while was not, in fact, a sign of spiritual failure.

Several years later, while working on Atlanta's Shabbat Project, I stumbled across Azriella's website. "What a concept," I thought. Like many women, I was convinced that if I did not run myself ragged on Friday, work up until (or maybe into) the 18 minutes, and add one more dish when we had more than enough, it was not proper Shabbos preparation. This took a toll, it was not the ideal way to greet Shabbos, and deep down I knew it. I started with one commitment: no more adding something to the menu on Friday afternoon. Then I began shifting tasks a little earlier in the week. It was not just calmer Fridays I was after, there are also *brachos* and *yeshuos* associated with being more prepared for Shabbos.

This concept was so simple and yet so groundbreaking and life changing that I had to tell everyone I knew. I started an email group where I shared time-saving ideas, practical tips, *divrei Torah*, and encouragement. When the Chatzos Lady was ready to step back from her mission, I stepped forward happily, knowing this concept was changing lives.

It's Not Just About Time Management

Lest you misunderstand — this is not just about when you do what, and being more organized. "Chatzos Shabbos" is about *kavana*, putting meaning into what we do, and giving ourselves room to breathe on Friday so we can anticipate Shabbos instead of simply making it to candle lighting in one piece.

continued on next page

In a recent Zoom meeting for 'chatzosers', Yaffa Palti summed it up beautifully: "Shabbos is a destination, not a finish line." That sentence had a huge impact on all who heard it. How often do we spend Friday trying to cross everything off the list, only to arrive at candle lighting physically present, but mentally somewhere between the load that was left in the washer and wondering if the chicken is fully baked?

We prepared Shabbos, but did we prepare ourselves for Shabbos?

To quote Yaffa again, "We prepared Shabbos, but did we prepare ourselves for Shabbos?"

When we shift even a few tasks earlier in the week, something much deeper happens than simply becoming more organized. We create space. That breathing room allows us to feel the transition into calm on Friday afternoon. To sit with a cup of coffee before candle lighting and spend time with someone special in our lives. To feel excited about the arrival of Shabbos, and grateful that it comes every week to give us a true rest. That's what Chatzos Shabbos is about.

The Family Weighs In

I'll share an ironic story which may not be the best marketing, but it was a good reality check for Me. After I became a chatzoser, Friday afternoons looked very different in our home. No more counters cluttered with small appliances and people reaching over one another to finish cooking. Instead, it was quiet, calm, clean, and the kitchen was relatively empty. I was pretty proud of this accomplishment. (I may even have stood in the kitchen a little longer than necessary admiring all that clean, visible counter space.)

A few weeks later, one of my teenage daughters came to me."Mommy," she said, "I miss the frantic rush. It was so much fun when we were all in the kitchen together, the music was playing, and things were flying everywhere. I'm not sure I like this quiet Erev Shabbos." Well. That was not the response I was expecting.

But it taught me something nuanced. The goal is not just to remove the chaos. It is to replace it with something even better. So we talked about what Friday afternoons could look like instead. Music? Definitely staying. We could sit and chat, exercise, take a walk somewhere pretty, or call a relative. Sometimes we would simply enjoy the novelty of doing light prep tasks for Shabbos, like making salad or setting lights, without feeling rushed. We are all still figuring it out.

Chatzos Shabbos is not a *halachic* requirment, and it does not look the same in every home. The goal is not perfection. It's bringing more *kavod* to Shabbos while reducing the unnecessary pressure that so many of us have come to accept as normal. For many households, that means setting the table on Thursday so everyone sees that beautiful visual when they walk into the dining room. For others, it may mean making one less side dish or doubling a recipe on Tuesday so there is something in the freezer for a busy week. For someone else, it means moving shopping one day earlier and deciding that no new projects begin after *chatzos* on Friday. Small changes have a way of changing much bigger things.

A Growing Movement

It has been just over a year since I launched Gift of Chatzos as a nonprofit, and the growth and impact has been incredible. What started as a local Atlanta chat with 25 women is now a global community of more than 400 women — all ages and backgrounds, all stages of life, supporting each other in this initiative. Thousands of homes have been introduced to Chatzos Shabbos through social media, word of mouth, fireside chats, and community programs. Businessmen and women are limiting their Friday work hours, and some have made the bold move to stop working and close their businesses at *chatzos*.

The beauty of this initiative is that it is customizable. No one method works in every home. Some people discover Chatzos Shabbos and seem to master it almost immediately. Most of us take on one commitment at a time and move on only after we have mastered that step. Regardless of how many

What does it mean to make Chatzos Shabbos?

The goal is to have a calm and more peaceful Friday, maybe even to light candles a few minutes early —and to be dressed and ready for candlelighting instead of being a frantic mess. Start by divvying up tasks to spread Shabbos prep through the week in small increments, which can look something like this:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Bake challah, make a Shabbos menu. Shop for non-perishables.	Bake and freeze dessert (double up for a busy week).	Make two dressings or marinades.

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Prep veggies for soup and entrees, order/buy meat, chicken, fish, prepare dips.	Cook side dishes and soup, marinade (or actually cook) proteins, set Shabbos table.	Put up cholent/soup, cook pre-marinated proteins, make salads.

As you prepare, say, "I am doing this to get ready for *Shabbos kodesh*." While you cook, knead dough, spice your food, or anything else, you can pray for those who will be eating your food, and infuse it with physical and spiritual nutrients!

steps you have taken, Fridays very quickly begin to feel very different.

A Legacy Rediscovered

Shortly after the conversation with my daughter, I called my mother to excitedly share this new initiative I had taken on. Her response? "My mother was always ready by *chatzos*!" Wait, really?

My maternal Bubby, whom I never knew because she passed away at just forty years old, was a Chatzoser?

That realization deepened my commitment to continue her legacy — and the legacy of so many of our ancestors — by helping bring the calm, the *bracha*, and the anticipation of Shabbos back into Jewish homes around the world.

Final Thoughts

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is a calmer, more meaningful Erev Shabbos. You can do it to lessen the chaos, to bring more *bracha* and *shalom bayis* into your home, or to merit the *yeshuos* that many *tzadikim* associate with honoring Erev Shabbos and being ready early to anticipate its arrival.

You can start today! Regardless of what day it is, there is always something small you can do to prepare for Shabbos. Even if Shabbos just ended — as soon as you have recited *havdalah*, do one small task for the upcoming Shabbos, like setting up the candles. Then enjoy *melava malka* to hold onto Shabbos and nourish your *luz* bone. Taking that first step is what counts. May each small step we take bring us closer to the day that will be *yom shekulo Shabbos*.

Reprinted from the TYH Nashim Tzidkaniyos Tishrei magazine, available at TYH.org

Sarah Faygie Berkowitz is the founder and director of Gift of Chatzos, an educational nonprofit that helps individuals and families thrive through the concept of "Chatzos Shabbos." A speaker, editor, and nonprofit leader, she spent two decades in publishing, communications, and marketing before launching the organization in 2025. You can learn more at www.GiftofChatzos.org, or email info@giftofchatzos.org.

Yahrtzeit next
Thursday, Oct. 22

CONNECTING WITH OUR TZADIKIM



Rav Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, zy"a

LIVED	229TH YAHRTZEIT	BURIED
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Rav Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, also known as the "Meor Einayim" after the sefer he wrote, was the first Rebbe of the famous Chernobyl dynasty of Rebbes. He was among the younger talmidim of the Baal Shem Tov and later became a talmid of the Maggid of Mezritch. The ideas he teaches in the Meor Einayim have become central ideas amongst all chassidim and his style of writing is known as unique and powerful. Rav Menachem Nachum was a lso famous for collecting money to redeem Yidden who had been thrown into prison by antisemitic leaders, for no good reason, just because they were Yidden.

STORY Rav Menachem Nachum would often travel to faraway towns where the Yidden knew very little about Yiddishkeit, in order to teach them the basics, and inspire them with a fiery desire for more. He once heard about a distant town situated high in the mountains, where many very simple Yidden lived. The journey would be very difficult, but he was determined to go, and with great effort, he made his way up the mountain and arrived in the simple town.

When he arrived, he asked for directions to the mikvah. The locals were embarrassed, but had to admit that there was no mikvah in the entire town! They explained that because they lived high in the mountains, building a mikvah would be extremely expensive. It would cost 300 gold coins, and the townspeople simply could not afford it. The Rebbe was horrified that a Jewish town did not have a mikvah.

He asked his host to tell every member of the community to gather in shul for Shacharis the next day. Everyone had to be there, without exception! Although these Yidden had never heard of the Rav Menachem Nachum or his sefer, they knew he was a tzaddik, and they had strong emunas chachamim. Therefore, as requested, they all showed up. After Shacharis, Rav Menachem Nachum stood at the bimah and, to everyone's surprise, began speaking about his own greatness. For some time, he described what a great tzaddik he was. The townspeople were completely puzzled by this behavior.

Rav Menachem Nachum then announced, "I am ready to sell all the reward that I will get for these great deeds for cash." The room became silent. From the back, a voice called out, "One hundred gold coins!" The offer came from the wealthiest man in town (although even he was far from wealthy). "No," said Rav Menachem Nachum, "I won't take less than three hundred gold coins!" "But that is all of my savings!" the wealthy man exclaimed. "Well," replied the Rebbe, "this is all of my ruchniyus savings as well."

In the end, the Yid agreed to the deal, and with the money, Rav Menachem Nachum built a mikvah for the town. Tzaddikim later said that through this incredible mesirus nefesh, Rav Menachem Nachum earned a whole new olam haba which was greater than everything he had earned until then.

I WANNA BE LIKE ...



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Noach

Did you know?



Blue rainbows!?

The *parsha* tells us that Hashem brought the first rainbow to the world after the flood. He did this as a sign of his promise to never destroy the world through another *mabul*. Rav Yonason Einbshitz *ztz'l* taught that the rainbow Hashem put in the sky then was not the same as the regular rainbow that we're familiar with. That type of rainbow, which has many colors, is what naturally happens when the sun shines over water. But the rainbow that shows Hashem's promise is made entirely out of *t'cheles*. It was a fully blue rainbow!

One language for all.

It's brought down in the Moshav Zekeinim that before the *dor ha'flaga*, everyone spoke only *lashon hakodesh*. And it wasn't just the people. The animals and the birds also spoke in *lashon hakodesh*! It was only after Hashem dispersed that generation that the birds started chirping, the dogs started barking, and so on.



STORY

There was a certain Rav who had studied under the great Maggid of Mezritch. After his children were all married and out of the house, he decided that he wanted to move to Eretz Yisroel. However, he didn't tell the Maggid about his plan, being afraid that he would object and talk him out of the idea.

Together with his wife, he boarded a boat headed for Constantinople. The city wasn't one where Yidden would generally be, and when this Rov got there, he started feeling very lonely. This feeling led to him second guessing his decision. He started thinking about all the wonderful things he had back home — his friends, his community, all the familiar faces. He also thought about his job and salary, and how hard it would be to make a living in Eretz Yisroel. He probably wouldn't have much time to learn anymore.

As he was lost in thought, he bumped into a Yid, and they started up a conversation. He was pleasantly surprised to hear that this Yid was also a *talmid* of the Maggid. In fact, he had spent the previous Shabbos with the Maggid and wanted to share some words of Torah he had just heard from him.

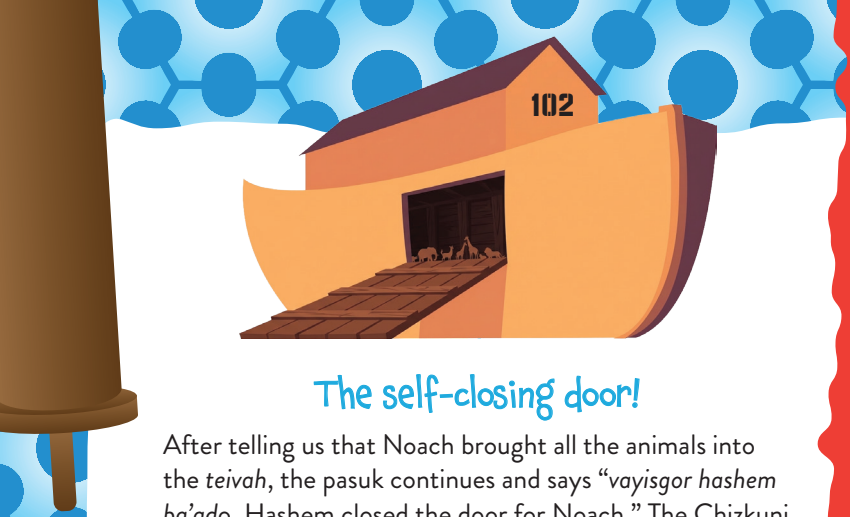
The Maggid quoted the pasuk from Parshas Noach *(B'reishis 11:31)*: *"And Terach took Avram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Avram his son, and they went out together from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Canaan, and they came as far as Charan and settled there."*

The Maggid asked as follows: "The verse says they were on their way to Canaan. So why did they stop early and stay in Charan? Also, Avraham had already left to go to Canaan, so why did Hashem now tell him to go there? And thirdly, why did Avraham decide to go to Canaan anyway? Back home, he had so many talmidim who he was bringing closer to Hashem. Who knows if he would have been able to continue doing that in Canaan?"

The Maggid answered: "Terach" is a *remez* to the *yetzer hora*. The *yetzer hora* saw how Avraham was bringing so many Yidden close to Hashem and couldn't stand it. Therefore, he told Avraham to go to Canaan. But really, once had left his hometown, the *yetzer hora* was fine settling for Avraham living in Charan, as he couldn't continue helping Yidden there either. This is why Hashem then told him to go all the way to Canaan, as if to say, "up until now it was the *yetzer hora* pushing you, but now, I am telling you to go there, and you will have *hatzlacha*!"

The Rav heard this and understood that the Rebbe had sent him direct *chizuk*, and that he should continue on his journey and he would be successful!

Answers: Parsha Pix: For answer look in ויהי בימי אמרפל ג' ויהי ויהי ג' ויהי בימי



The self-closing door!

After telling us that Noach brought all the animals into the *teivah*, the pasuk continues and says "*vayisgor hashem ba'ado*, Hashem closed the door for Noach." The Chizkuni (one of the *meforshim* on chumash) says that it works as follows: Noach had to just leave the door open. He didn't know all the species of animal that were in the world, so he had no way of knowing when the animals had finished coming into the *teivah*. Hashem, therefore, made a miracle of sorts, that when all the species of animals had successfuly made it onto the *teivah*, the door just closed by itself."

A Touch of Pnimiyus

Noach is described as *"ish tzadik tamim haya bdorosov*, a righteous person; he was wholesome in his generation." The sefer Maor Vashamesh points out that the word "*haya* — he was" seems to be extra. It could have just said "*tamim bdorosov*, wholesome in his generation." What does that extra word teach us?

He answers as follows. The correct way to serve Hashem is with total *simcha*. We shouldn't let any sadness come through. But the truth is, anyone who truly wants to serve Hashem will feel some sadness, because he'll often feel he's not doing enough or not on the *madreiga* he should be on. He'll also be saddened by seeing people around him not serving Hashem.

Such a person has to be *mechazek* himself and be *b'simcha* anyways, and this is what the word *"hayah"* is teaching us." Chazal teach that *"v'haya"* is always a word used when there is happiness *(B'reishis Rabbah 42:3)*. Even though Noach was in a generation where people weren't serving Hashem, he managed to strengthen himself and was still always *b'simcha*!



By R' Eli Perlman

What does this picture have to do with the parsha?

answers on bottom of previous page



TYH JUNIOR
It's geshmak to be a kid!

By the Tzadik's Command

R' Pinchos Birnbaum

The great Tzaddik, Reb Menachem Nachum of Shtefinesht, had a chossid who had been waiting to be blessed with a child for many years. He davened and gave his brocha, and within a year, the couple was blessed with a baby boy. They wanted to bring the baby to the Rebbe to get a brocha, but it was freezing cold outside. After much thought they decided to cover the baby in lots of blankets and put him in a closed part of the wagon and travel to the Rebbe.

When they got to an inn, they opened the carriage to check on their baby, and to their utmost horror the baby was gone! They figured he must have fallen out when the carriage turned a corner. They looked back at the road they had traveled – a dark, windy trail, through a forest filled with dangerous animals. They knew the odds of finding their beloved baby alive were slim, but they had to try.

With little hope, they began backtracking. After some time, they saw two wolves hovering over their little baby! Of course, they feared the worst, but as they got closer, they realized the wolves weren't harming their child – they were breathing directly over him to keep him warm! When the wolves saw them coming, they promptly walked away. The parents quickly picked up the warm baby and continued on their way to the Rebbe.

As they walked into the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe asked them, "nu, what did you think of the wolves I sent!?"

The pasuk tells us in this week's parsha (Breishis 9:2) "u'mora'achem v'chit'chem yih'yeh al kol chayas ha'aretz, your fear and dread will be on all the animals of the earth." Hashem made it that, by nature, animals are afraid of people. But for some tzadikim, not only were the animals afraid of them, they would even obey their commands!