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**Limtzo Manoach: 'Finding Peace'**  
Narrative Script



## #1 INTRODUCTION AND GETTING READY (10 MINUTES)

[Begin with this video clip]

After the world was created and God saw that it was good, the earth became corrupt.

The violence that began with Cain and Abel had so consumed the Earth that God chooses to destroy God's creation rather than repair it. This is the origin of the world we live in, not the story of the seven-day creation but a world built from the ashes of another world. A world and a people destroyed, except for Noah.

So, what can we learn from the Noah narrative? What can we learn from his behavior, act of survival, and the way he cared for himself and the others on ship? And what can we take from the ways in which he emerged from the Ark?

We are going to go through an exploration of the story of Noach leaving the ark – the teiva – as a metaphor for us leaving the teiva that we were in over the course of Corona, and to see what we can gauge from this powerful story about where we are now. We will use this story to consider how we have and still are managing to navigate our way through a very chaotic time by exploring the value of Manoach. Manoach, a word that is used only 5 times in the Torah, refers to a resting place that the dove had difficulty finding. The dove was seeking a place to rest his feet, to find comfort, to become grounded. We've been looking for something similar.

Have we reached a place of manoach – a state of being where we feel settled and at peace after a tumultuous journey? Are we on our way to finding one? Is it a permanent state or a momentary one? You've likely sent out your raven and checked for solid ground a couple times. Some of you may have found it quickly while it may have taken time for others. And there are certainly those among us who aren't yet there. Regardless, we're hoping this week will bring you one step closer to reaching a state of Manoach.

Over the next hour and a half, we will offer you a series of exercises and prompts that will unpack different layers of manoach, and you'll each have a chance to relate to the idea.

We're doing this because we believe that values can be a powerful anchor in helping people make meaning of the world around them. As part of our exploration, we will consider what we hold on to and what we discard in the face of imminent change. We'll focus on what helps us stay grounded during tumultuous moments, and try to identify signposts that indicate when it is time to emerge from a difficult experience. And finally, we'll plan for what happens once we find solid ground.

To accompany you on your journey, we have packed you a bag with all the necessary supplies. As we travel together, we will tell you when it's time to unpack certain items.

Before we begin, you will notice a luggage tag on your bag. Please remove it and write something that you would like to check at the door before going on this trip. What is something that is weighing you down, that you would like to leave behind, or get rid of before we turn our attention to revisit your experience over the past year and a half? It can be anything. We don't charge extra for overweight luggage.

We will take your luggage for now and happy to return it to you at the end of this.

[Collect luggage tags in a little basket]



## #2 PLANTING TREES (10 MINUTES)

God told Noah to “make for yourself an ark built of gopher wood.” A Midrash tells that when Noah heard this, he stood up, repented and began planting trees. The people said to him, ‘What are these trees for?’ ‘God seeks to bring a flood upon the world and he told me to make an ark to which my family and I will take refuge,’ He replied.

The people laughed at him and mocked his words.

Noah tended to his trees. He watered them and watched them grow. The people asked him again, ‘What are you doing?’ He answered in a similar manner as before, and they continued laughing at him. After a while he cut down the trees and started making them into planks, and the people asked, ‘What are you doing now?’

And since the people did not repent, God swiftly brought a flood upon them.

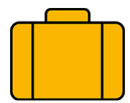
Noah listened to the voice above him and did what he needed to do to prepare for what was coming. Although others around him laughed, he continued on.

When you initially heard about COVID-19, were you like Noah, who anticipated the destruction or were you like the people, who didn’t believe that it could happen?

We’re going to do a quick pulse check activity. Open your luggage and in it, you will find a spectrum card. Mark for yourself where you were. Were you on the left, like the people who didn’t see or believe that destruction was coming or were you more to the right, like Noah, who planted trees and understood the severity of the situation from the beginning? Or were you somewhere in the middle?

Turn to one person next to you and for a couple minutes, discuss:

- When was the moment that you realized it was time to prepare?
- What helped you feel grounded during those moments?



### #3 PACKING LIST (10 MINUTES)

God instructs Noah to bring with him his wife, his children and their family and two of every kind of species. He took with him what was deemed as most precious onto the Ark. There were certainly other prized possessions that he had that didn't make it, which he was forced to leave behind.

What did you pack with you? What were you so glad that you had and what were you missing? Open your box and take out your post its. On each post it, write something down that you brought with you from the different categories. Use your key card for reference.

QUOTE BOX: Mantras or text that kept you going

STRAWBERRY: The food that nourished you

SHIRT: The clothing that became your staple

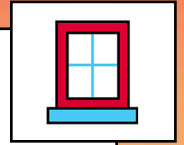
PEOPLE: The people that you kept close

BOOKS: The words that you were reading

Find a partner that you are sitting next to and debrief one of these questions:

- What did you originally forget that you then went back out to retrieve? What did you realize you were missing that you wish you had?
- In reviewing your list, what are you realizing that you prioritized?

Now that you are done sharing, place your stick note alongside on the posterboard to see what else people brought with them.



## #4 BUILDING YOUR ARK (15 MINUTES)

God instructs Noah to build a teiva. He brought with him his wife, his children and their families and two of every kind of species that exist on land and in the sky. The Teiva was their protection from the raging storm that ultimately obliterated the world.

In the instructions of how to build the Ark, God tells Noah to build a tzohar, a window, an opening for daylight in the teiva.

It was also a way for Noah to look outside. As the world was crumbling around him, he was safe inside, preserving what was most precious to him while watching the destruction that was happening through his tzohar.

But why did God command him to build a tzohar? Why was it important for Noah to have a window to the outside world? Imagine his helplessness, his hopelessness. Imagine what it must have felt like for a Tzadik, a righteous man to look outside and see all that was being uprooted without being able to act.

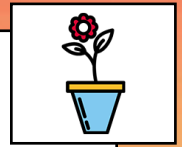
Once you found safety in your teiva, whether it be your physical space or your emotional safekeeping, how were you relating to what you saw outside your tzohar? Did you want to run out and help? Or, did you want to stay nestled inside.

In your luggage you will find two scratch cards. One has a rainbow and one is grey. On the rainbow one, draw a moment where you wanted to prioritize safety over risk. And on the grey one, draw where you wanted to prioritize risk over safety.

This activity will be done alone. We will play a song and once the song is over, find a partner to share your drawings with.

*FACILITATOR NOTE: Collect the images and create a tzohar with all of what they saw from within their teivot.*





## #5 PRESERVING THE BEST OF WHAT WAS (15 MINUTES)

Biblical Scholar, Aviva Zornberg wonders about life on the boat:

[The] Zohar imagines very beautifully that Noah spends his whole time, morning and night, feeding the animals. That's an expression of his desire to preserve the world."

Zornberg imagines that Noah was trying as hard as possible to safeguard what was precious on that boat. That is what he prioritized. It was what he could control.

Noah's commitment to feed the animals was an act of hope. While destruction was happening around him, he was hopeful that a new day will rise.

What has kept you going? What has given you hope? What is something that you held on to and nurtured that helped keep you grounded and gave you comfort? This could be a belief, a value, a relationship, a physical object or something else entirely. And what is something that became less of a priority to you, since there just wasn't enough space in your teiva for?

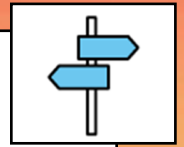
Over the past 2 years, we have been stretched in new ways and discovered a range of emotions that we didn't even know existed. We are tired, yet find the strength to continue; we are sleepy and also more awake than ever; we are jaded and find faith in the small acts of others; we are in pain and find glory in the beauty around us. As you think about the past few years, what values have you prized and which have become less of a priority to you?

Form groups of three and take out a set of value cards from one person's bag. Select the two values that has helped you find hope over the course of this time and choose another value that has become less of a priority for you, for any and all reasons under the sun. Once each person has selected their values, go around and share them with the group.

Once you are done discussing them as a group, you will see values posters hanging around the room. Take your rainbow sticker and place it on the 2 values that became present for you and take the cloud and place it on the one value that became less of a priority.

As you share:

- What surprised you about the values that became dear to you?
- What values did you reconsider or adapt, professionally or personally?



## #6 IS IT TIME? (15 MINUTES)

Noah sent forth the raven to see if it was time to emerge. It wasn't. Noah then sent forth the dove. But the dove couldn't find a resting place, a manoach, for its feet and returned defeated to the ark. Still, it wasn't time. The dove could not find solid ground. The bird couldn't find a resting place, so Noah stayed in sea. The bird was his emissary.

Throughout the past 2 years, we have had ups and downs. We have thought it was time to emerge from our Teiva, but then couldn't find solid ground. We have had many stops and starts and some of us have been waiting for a clear sign that it is safe to come out, while others just decided to emerge on their own. But how could we know when it's time to emerge?

What sign posts have you been looking for? Who and what have helped you navigate the choppy waters?

Open your luggage one last time. In your bag, you'll find a fortune cookie. Read your fortune and consider how it relates to how you have been feeling about reentering. Does it align with the advice were you looking for and hoping to receive? Or did you have something completely different in mind?

In your box, you'll also find a prism. On it, there is a string tied with a blank space for you to write your own wish, or fortune, for someone else. What fortune would you like to offer someone as they are seeking a state of Manoach – of inner comfort and peace?

Find a partner to discuss the fortune that you were handed, and to share what you wrote on your string.

*FACILITATOR NOTE: Collect the prisms. We can hang them around the room and at the end of the seminar, each person can take one.*



## #7 REENTRY (15 MINUTES)

Seven days later, the dove went back out into the world. The dove came back towards evening carrying an olive leaf. But Noah still waited. He wanted to know for certain that it was time. He wasn't ready to leave. So, he sent the dove again and this time it didn't return. That was Noah's final indication that it was time to emerge.

That moment of leaving the ark couldn't have been easy. It must have been scary. How did he actually know it was time?

In Elie Weisel's poetic Midrash of Noah, Sages and Dreamers he describes the following:

"Imagine what he must have felt as he walked ashore and discovered the empty, devastated land. He must have looked for familiar ground, vantage points, cities of light and life, dwelling places and their sounds. He knew that they had vanished, still he went on looking for them.

Then he was confronted by a choice: anger or gratitude. He chose gratitude. He offered thanks to heaven... As a survivor, the first, he chose gratitude rather than bitterness: the special gratitude of the survivor. He or she knows that every moment means grace, for he or she could have been in another's place, another who is gone."

Noah was at a crossroads. He emerged to a world of loss. He could have chosen to be angry, to run away. He could have returned to his teiva for safekeeping. But he didn't. He chose gratitude.

After so much work, worrying, anticipation and disappointment, we have managed to emerge from our teiva, at least for this moment, and be here now. So, let us follow in the footsteps of Noah and offer our gratitude.

It is an M<sup>2</sup> practice to take time at the end of each day and offer gratitude- hakarat hatov. Gratitude is an additional way of finding our manoach- to help us find solid ground in the present moment.

For the next 3 minutes, we are going to play a song. Walk around when the song is playing and contemplate who or what you are grateful for. When the song stops, we are going to prompt you to pair up with whoever you're standing next to and share gratitude about a particular prompt.

- Prompt 1: Find a person and share with them someone that you are feeling grateful for in this moment.
- Prompt 2: Find a person and share with them an object or item that you are feeling grateful for in this moment.
- Prompt 3: Find a person and share with them why you are feeling grateful to yourself in this moment.





## CLOSING

As we wind down our experience, there's one more part of the story which is so powerful. When Noah saw the rainbow and understood that God would build again, he immediately planted a vineyard. The text never tells us that Noah found Manoach, but we know that he immediately gets his hands dirty. He can't erase the pain or sorrow that he may have experienced, but he can broaden his perspective by gently settling his attention on something positive. Something that he can watch grow.

Is that what Manoach means? Does Manoach mean finding enough solid ground to be able to look forward? Is it feeling sturdy enough to stand in place? As a final prompt, consider for yourself what Manoach means to you. Is it a state of mind or being that you've reached? Are you on your way to achieve it? Or does it seem so far out of reach?

May we all be blessed to continue finding moments of manoach that allow for our own planting- for our own cultivations and visioning. And may your time here at SEC, be part of what contributes to your sense of Manoach.

## PACKING LIST

**All materials are hyperlinked in this document.**

**Each person gets a box filled with the following items:**

- Sticker on the inside lid of each box
- Cloud Sticker (1)
- Rainbow sticker (2)
- The following sticky pads in each:  
strawberry, thought bubble, shirts, people,  
books (1-2 of each)
- Post it Key Card
- Spectrum Card
- Sticker with definition of Manoah
- Luggage tag tied to the outside of the box
- Crystal prism
- Custom fortune cookies with the  
personalized fortunes
- Values Cards
- Rainbow scratch Card
- Grey Scratch Card
- Stylus