



SCHECHTER

Searching

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Have you ever had a period in your life when you were searching for something? Maybe it's something small, like car keys. Maybe it's something greater, like a spouse.

For the past week I have been searching for a topic for this D'var Torah. At points, I thought I had the answer. In fact this is the third D'var Torah that I have attempted to write this week alone.

Searches take on different purposes and ultimately have different outcomes. Sometimes we don't even know what we are searching for. We look for signs to point us in different directions and often what we have been searching for is right in front of us.

I'm a big baseball fan. I like to study the history of the game, stats of different players and I always enjoy watching, or even listening to a great game (often hard to find on Cleveland radio). On Wednesday night, I felt a part of history as I listened to Roy Halladay throw a no-hitter (only the second in the history of Major League baseball to happen in the post season – the other was Don Larson's perfect game). Though I have no connection to Roy Halladay or the team that he plays for (the Phillies), I got a chill in my bones as the final out was recorded. After the game I was speaking with a friend, who saw my enthusiasm for the history of baseball. He suggested that I read a book called Miracle Ball: My Hunt for the Shot Heard 'Round the World, by Brian Biegel.

The book focuses on a man's search for a lost treasure of baseball's history. In 1951, the most famous homerun ever hit, occurred at the Polo Grounds as the Dodgers were playing the Giants for the chance to play the Yankees in the World Series. Bobby Thomson, with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning, with two runners on base, down by 2, on an 0-1 pitch, hit a homerun into the left field stands to win the game 5-4.

As euphoria broke out – the ball was never found. For over 50 years, people have been searching for the ball. Miracle Ball, is Brian Biegel's search story.

For thousands of years another search has gone on. Archaeologists and Treasure hunters have been searching for Noah's Ark. Believed to be resting somewhere on or around Mt. Ararat in Turkey, organizations fund expeditions to find the relics. Last year I remember watching an episode of Into the Unknown, with Josh Bernstein on the Discovery channel. In this episode, Josh takes the viewers on an adventure in which we meet a group of people who have a "relic" from Noah's Ark.

Still, searchers are trying to uncover the entire Ark, a find that could lead to remarkable resolutions for theologians, philosophers and perhaps all of mankind.

Johan Huibers, a Dutch contractor, does not feel that we need to find the actual Ark to believe in the power of the story. He created a [replica](#) of Noah's Ark and invites travelers to board the ship and learn about Noah, the building process and the enormity of the project that Noah undertook.

Other searches might be less tangible. In the end of this week's Parsha, Noach, we read the story of the Tower of Babel. In this story a group of six hundred thousand men, attempt to build a tower that would reach the heavens. Their search was a search for God.

During this past week's episode of Glee, my wife and I watched as the characters did some soul searching. It was not the usual goofy episode of the show that we have come to love, it was a deep episode – one which explored faith and religion.

Each character's search was spurred by one of the members of the Glee Club, Kurt, whose father lay unconscious in a hospital, having suffered a heart attack. Kurt did not feel the power of prayer. He did not feel that prayers were answered, that anyone was listening, that God even existed.

For many of us – we need proof. We need to hold the baseball. We need to see the Ark. Yet, how do we get proof of God? Do we need to see, touch, smell, hear from God? Can't our proof be found a different way?

The line that stood out the most to me, in this week's episode of Glee, was that of Mercedes, one of Kurt's friends and Glee Club co-member. She said to Kurt – show me proof that there is no God.

Sometimes what is unseen, what is intangible can be more powerful.

So here's what my own search has yielded – we don't need to search at all, we need to look at what is right in front of us.

AS A FAMILY:

- Learn more about Noah's Ark - <http://www.jr.co.il/t/noach.htm>
- Watch this week's episode of [Glee](#) (parents should watch the episode first in order to make sure that it is age appropriate for their children)
- Watch [Into the Unknown](#) with Josh Bernstein
- Try to name all of the animals that Noah brought into his ark (in alphabetical order).

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS WEEK'S PARSHA, ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

1. What are the dimensions of the Ark?
2. Who does Noah bring onto the Ark (people and animals)?
3. How old is Noah?
4. How long does it rain?
5. How long is Noah on the Ark?

6. How does Noah know when to leave the Ark?
7. What is the symbol of God's covenant with Noah?
8. Why does Noah curse Ham's descendants?