

Parashat Noach

Parashat Noach is the 2nd torah story in the Book of Genesis. The Book of Genesis is first of the five books of Moses, our Torah. In Noach, we learn of the great flood. Noah was a good person who lived among many evil people. G-d wanted to save Noah, his family and the creatures on the earth so G-d instructed Noah to build an ark and to place within it himself, his family, food and a male and female of seven of the animals. It took a long time for Noah to build an ark. G-d was hoping that the evil people would change in that time so they would not have to be destroyed. The flood lasted for 40 days and 40 nights. Once the flood subsided, Noah sends out two birds, first a raven and next a dove, neither one found a dry place to rest and both returned to the ark. After seven days, Noah sent the dove out again and it returned with an olive branch. Noah waits an additional seven days and sent the dove out again; it does not return. Noah takes this as a sign that it is now safe to leave the ark. Noah and his family along with all the animals return to live on the earth. G-d promises that never again will the earth be destroyed by flood and the sign of this promise is the rainbow. Noah escaping death offers a sacrifice of thanks. Noah, the first *tzaddik*, righteous human being, immediately acknowledges G-d.

Noah could have been evil like the others. He chose not to be. Noah could have chosen the easy way out by saying let someone else build the ark. He chose not to. He heard G-d's call to re-create the world with good. Do we hear G-d? How can we be like Noah and be there for G-d, and help to repair the world? How can we work together to be a community for the good of G-d's world? It's up to each and every one of us.