



SHABBAT ZEST

Parshat Noach 4th Tishrei 5777

Torah Reading / Haftara:

Artscroll – p.30/1131

Living Torah – p.26/1054

SHABBAT TIMES:

Candle Lighting:
6:08pm

Kabbalat Shabbat
Davening: 7:00pm

Shabbat Morning
Davening: 9:15am

Mincha: After Kiddush

Shabbat Ends 5:18pm

NEXT SHABBAT
LECH LECHA

CANDLE LIGHTING
@ 3:56 PM

This week the
Haftorah will be
read by ...

Parsha In a Nutshell

Genesis 6:9-11:32

G-d instructs Noah—the only righteous man in a world consumed by violence and corruption—to build a large wooden teivah (“ark”), coated within and without with pitch. A great deluge, says G-d, will wipe out all life from the face of the earth; but the ark will float upon the water, sheltering Noah and his family, and two members (male and female) of each animal species.

Rain falls for 40 days and nights, and the waters churn for 150 days more before calming and beginning to recede. The ark settles on Mount Ararat, and from its window Noah dispatches a raven, and then a series of doves, “to see if the waters were abated from the face of the earth.” When the ground dries completely—exactly one solar year (365 days) after the onset of the Flood—G-d commands Noah to exit the teivah and repopulate the earth.

Noah builds an altar and offers sacrifices to G-d. G-d swears never again to destroy all of mankind because of their deeds, and sets the rainbow as a testimony of His new covenant with man. G-d also commands Noah regarding the sacredness of life: murder is deemed a capital offense, and while man is permitted to eat the meat of animals, he is forbidden to eat flesh or blood taken from a living animal.

Noah plants a vineyard and becomes drunk on its produce. Two of Noah’s sons, Shem and Japheth, are blessed for covering up their father’s nakedness, while his third son, Ham, is punished for taking advantage of his debasement.

The descendants of Noah remain a single people, with a single language and culture, for ten generations. Then they defy their Creator by building a great tower to symbolize their own invincibility; G-d confuses their language so that “one does not comprehend the tongue of the other,” causing them to abandon their project and disperse across the face of the earth, splitting into seventy nations.

The Parshah of Noach concludes with a chronology of the ten generations from Noah to Abram (later Abraham), and the latter’s journey from his birthplace of Ur Casdim to Charan, on the way to the land of Canaan.

Haftorah

Isaiah 54:1-55:3

Forsaken Jerusalem is likened to a barren woman devoid of children. G-d enjoins her to rejoice, for the time will soon come when the Jewish nation will return and proliferate, repopulating Israel's once desolate cities. The prophet assures the Jewish people that G-d has not forsaken them. Although He has momentarily hid His countenance from them, He will gather them from their exiles with great mercy. The Haftorah compares the final Redemption to the pact G-d made with Noah in this week's Torah reading. Just as G-d promised to never bring a flood over the entire earth, so too He will never again be angry at the Jewish people.

UPCOMING EVENTS

5th-20th November – 20th
International Jewish Film
Festival at Odeon South
Woodford

11th & 12th November -
Shabbat UK. Do not miss
out!!! This is an extremely
popular event so book fast!!!
Reserve Seats/Tables with the
Office now.

29th January 2017 - The
return of Shir. The fabulous
klezmer band are coming back
for an encore. Reserve Tickets
with the Office now.

Recurring Events

Cheder OPEN

Mummy and Me
Relaunches 9th November

Yahrzeits for the coming
week 4th to 10th Cheshvan:

- 5. Josephine Bermange – Mother
- 5. Carol Joseph – Husband
- 5. Paul Joseph – Father
- 5. Norman Segal – Mother
- 6. Marilyn Michaels – Father
- 7. Lois Cohen – Father
- 8. Clive Wiseman – Brother
- 10. Madalyn Ward – Mother

A Little Deeper – Communal Responsibility

What was the terrible sin of Noah's generation that G-d sought to destroy them? The Talmud (Sanhedrin 57a) tells us that the world was immersed in jealousy, greed, theft, violence, lying, intolerance, deception and fraud. The worst of all transgressions? Explain the great commentators Rashi and Ibn Ezra: People exploited each other sexually.

Before G-d sends the Flood, Noah spends 120 years building an Ark. (They lived long in those days.) This was no ordinary boat. It measured larger than a football field and contained over a million cubic feet of space! It was outfitted with three separate levels: The top for Noah and his family, the middle for the animals, and the bottom for the garbage.

But there are obviously many ways by which G-d could have saved Noah. So why did Noah have to bother building an ark? And why did it take him 120 years?!

The Midrash says that G-d specifically wanted Noah to undertake a strange and unusual project, to arouse people's curiosity. G-d accentuated the oddity of it all by having Noah construct this huge boat — not at the sea shore — but on a mountain--- top! This way people would ask Noah — "What the heck are you doing?!" — and Noah could engage them in discussion about the global crisis, and how catastrophe could be avoided if people would change their ways. Well, 120 years is a long time, and you would think that Noah would have convinced a lot of people to get back on track. But alas, instead of reaching out to influence others, Noah saw the Ark as his own ticket to survival — a chance to build a big wall and insulate himself from the evils of society.

In one sense it is true that we have to protect ourselves and our families. Maimonides warns us about the danger of living next to neighbours who don't share our system of values. Where there's corruption, the good frequently get swept up with the bad. And we have to guard against this. It's like the story of the community where everyone was employed as chimney---sweeps. Each day they went to work and got very dirty. But they had one rule: One person from the group had to stay at home each day — so that when the others would return and see his clean face, they'd be able to gauge how dirty they'd become. In a spiritual sense as well, a home has to stand as a safe haven, to rejuvenate and clean oneself up.

But there's a second side to this. The "Ark" cannot be completely insulated; it must be porous as well. We have to reach out and try to make a difference in the world. The Chasidic writings compare this to a wealthy person who needs to warm himself in the winter. He could build a fire, in which case everyone in the room would benefit. But imagine instead that he warms only himself with a heavy coat and blankets. In both cases he's warmed; the only question is to what degree he's concerned about others. Even if we aren't willing to fix things out of altruistic love for others, then at least we should do so for ourselves. Because the reality is that no matter how hard we try, some "bad" does seep in. And in the end it will get us as well.

The hole in the ozone layer does not discriminate. Drugs and theft and violence have no boundaries. Ignoring this reality was Noah's tragic mistake. He believed that he could lock himself inside the Ark, and escape from it all.

Noah's failure to try and influence his generation is why the Flood is called "the waters of Noah" (Isaiah 54:9). Don't think the problem isn't affecting you. Because it is. Let's commit to taking responsibility — for ourselves, our family, our community, our world, physically but also spiritually.

Wishing you all a good Shabbos