

Parashat Noah

Genesis 6:9-11:32

NOVEMBER 1, 2019



SUMMARY

In this week's Torah *parasha* G'd notices that the world has become filled with violence. G'd tells *Noah* to build an ark to save every species of animal on earth as well as *Noah*'s own family from a worldwide flood. It rains for forty days and forty nights. *Noah* sends a raven and then a dove to find signs that dry land has reappeared.

When the ark rests on dry land, G'd sends a rainbow as a sign of a promise to all human beings not to destroy the world again by flood. G'd reveals seven basic rules for all people to follow. *Noah* plants a vineyard when he comes off the ark.

Later in the *parasha* we read that many years later a group of people, who spoke one language, worked together to build a city and a very tall tower--the Tower of Babel. G'd foiled their attempt by causing everyone to speak different languages, making it difficult for them to communicate with one another and to work together.

From Our Commentators:

ונהדרין ק"ח א"ז-ח'

ת"ר דור המבול לא נתגאו אלא בשביל טובה שהשפיע להם הקב"ה... אמרו כלום צריכין אנו לו אלא לטיפה של גשמים יש לנו נהרות ומעינות שאנו מסתפקין מהן אמר הקב"ה בטובה שהשפעת לי להן בה מכעיסין אותי ובה אני דן אותם שנאמר (בראשית ו, יז) "ואני הנני מביא את המבול מים"

Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 108a:7-8

The generation of the flood became haughty and sinned due only to the excessive goodness that the Holy Blessed One, bestowed upon them.... The members of the generation of the flood **said: Do we need G*d for anything, even for a drop of rain that He causes to fall? We have rivers and springs from which we take our supply of water; we do not fear Him. The Blessed Holy One, said: With the goodness that I bestowed upon them, with that they infuriate Me and with it I will sentence them, as it is stated: "And behold I will bring the flood of water."** *Genesis 6:17*

FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1) When G'd sees that the land is filled with violence, G'd tells *Noah* to build an ark and gather animals because G'd will make it rain, and flood the Earth, and destroy everything on it. Why do you think G'd would choose to use water to destroy the Earth in response to violence?
- 2) When he gets off the ark *Noah* plants a vineyard--a bunch of grape vines--but grape vines take a long time to grow fruit. Why do you think *Noah* might have planted a vineyard as one of the first things he did?
- 3) This week's *parasha* contrasts with the first *parasha* of Torah which we read last week. Last week we read about the creation of the world. This week we read two different stories about destruction. What might be the significance of these stories appearing here in our Torah? When do you think destruction can be useful?