

NOACH { נֹחַ } (Noah - rest)

Genesis 6:9-11:32, Isaiah 54:1-55:5, Isaiah 66:1-24; Matthew 24:36-46

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“This is the account of Noah and his family.” (Genesis 6:9)

In last week's Torah portion (parashah), we began our weekly study of the Word of God from the very beginning with the study by the same name, 'Breisheet' (In the Beginning). What began as a beautiful, perfect creation in the Garden of Eden ended up being cursed because of the sin of Adam and Chava (Eve).

At the conclusion of this parashah, however, we read about a man named Noah, who would somehow bring comfort. This is a Hebrew word play on the name Noah נֹחַ, which means 'comfortable'.



Noah's Ark (1846 painting by [Edward Hicks](#)) Wikipedia

“Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, ‘This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.’” (Genesis 5:28-29)

Noah was the only righteous man of his generation; He walked with God in a time when all others had turned away from godliness and righteousness.

“Noah was in his generations a man righteous and whole-hearted; Noah walked with God.” (Genesis 6:9)

Noah (called Noach in Hebrew) is the only Biblical character to have a whole parashah (Torah portion) dedicated solely to his life as a witness to and survivor of the apocalypse of the planet through a flood. From all things 'bright and beautiful' in the Garden of Eden, such a hopeful and hope-filled beginning (Genesis), all had descended into corruption and violence. Does this sound somewhat like our world today?

The Giant Nephilim

After Adam and Chava were exiled from the Garden of Eden, they became fruitful and multiplied; but the wickedness of mankind also increased upon the earth. In those days, as is now, the earth was filled with every kind of sin, vulgarity and violence.

This descent into darkness may have been caused by the union of daughters of Adam with fallen angels (called ‘nephilim’ from the Hebrew root word ‘nafal’ which mean ‘fallen’). The children created from these unions were giants (anakim) upon the earth.



“The Nephilim הנפילים were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:4)

Immediately following this Scripture, we are told of a marked rise in wickedness of mankind – especially in his thoughts. **“And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”** (Genesis 6:5)

It was so terrible that God was sorry he ever created humankind. He decided to send a Great Flood upon the earth that would destroy every living thing He had created and cleanse the world from evil.

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with *violence*. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” (Genesis 6:11-12)

Hamas Means Violence



The Hebrew word for violence in these scriptures is ‘**Hamas**’. This is the name for one of the terrorist organizations in the Middle East which has vowed to destroy Israel through violence. It was because of this *hamas* חָמָס (violence) that God decided to destroy every living thing from the face of the earth except Noah and his family.

“And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence (Hamas חָמָס) through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” (Genesis 6:13)

Some may want to perceive Hamas or other Islamic terrorist organizations as simply engaged in a political battle to ‘liberate’ their rightful territory from the Israeli ‘occupiers’. Some of the Christian Church even agrees with this viewpoint; but nothing could be further than the truth.

The Word of God clearly reveals the truth about the Arab-Israeli conflict, if we only have eyes to see. We must not fear calling Hamas what it is – a violent force of darkness whose goal is to bring death and destruction to God’s people everywhere.

Our hope is found in the prophetic promise that one day, violence (*hamas*) will no longer be heard in our land: **“Violence חָמָס shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation (Yeshuah) יְשׁוּעָה , and your gates Praise (Tehillah) תְּהִלָּה.”** (Isaiah 60:18)

But amidst all the violence and corruption of Noah’s day, God found this one man worth saving. Noah was in his generation the only **‘ish tzadik’** (righteous man). We don’t have to follow the crowd to do evil. Noah tells us that we and our children do not need to conform ourselves to the immorality and corruption of the world all around us.

The Word of God tells us that in the last days, the wickedness of man will again flourish and increase upon the earth:

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves (selfish), lovers of money (greedy), boasters, proud (arrogant), blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Every time we come to this study of Noah, I try to encourage my kids through the godly example of Noah. It’s okay to be different than our peers; it’s more important to be righteous before God than to be popular with friends.

The Hebrew Scriptures describe Noah as tzadik (righteous) צַדִּיק and tamim תָּמִים (pure, innocent, complete and faultless). He was one of only two Biblical men to ‘hithalech’ (walk) with God, the other being Enoch.

Noah had three sons: Shem שֵׁם, Hum חָם, and Yafet יָפֶת. God instructed Noah to build an ark (Tevat Noah) to save himself, his family, and a pair of each species of the world’s animal population from the coming deluge.



The book of Hebrews includes Noah in its list of the heroes of our faith since he obeyed God in building an ark for the saving of himself and his household, even though he could see no evidence of the coming downpour.

Building the Ark (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

“By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”
(Hebrews 11:7)

Although we don’t know if Noah’s wife and family were righteous as well; they were also saved for Noah’s sake. This may give us hope that if even one member of a family is redeemed and righteous, walking with God; then this may cause the rest of their family members to be saved from the coming destruction.

“For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.” (1 Corinthians 7:14)

It may be noted, however, that the ark guaranteed only Noah and his family’s physical salvation, not their spiritual destiny. Just like the Israelites in Egypt, we can be delivered; but we must each determine our own entry into the Promised Land. Tragically, most of the children of Israel perished in the wilderness due to their evil hearts of unbelief. Only two men of faith, Caleb and Joshua, who walked with God wholeheartedly, were given the privilege of entering the land. We must have faith to enter into the Kingdom of God.

NOACH נח MEANS REST

It is not a coincidence that the name **Noach נח means rest**. Spelled backwards, his name would mean ‘*grace or favor*’ (chen **חן**): **“But Noah found grace (חן נח) in the eyes of יהוה.”** (Genesis 6:8) Noah had truly entered into a place of blessed rest through his absolute faith in God which led to his obedience. He was not a man who ‘leaned on his own understanding’ of the situation but he trusted wholeheartedly in the Word of the Lord and simply obeyed.

We will also come to this place of peace and rest when we learn to simply trust and obey God at His word instead of trying to reason everything out and make sure something makes sense or agrees with our theology before complying with God’s commands. We are, each of us, saved not through works, but by the grace of God through faith. And faith means **resting in the Lord** through believing.

Rest isn’t merely an optional Scriptural suggestion; Rest is one of the Ten Commandments – right up there with ‘Thou shalt not have any idols or any other gods....’. The One who created our dust-fragile frames knows our need of rest.

Some of us treat rest as a shameful four-letter word; and we feel guilty for being non-productive or just ‘goofing off’ as we may call it. Of course we are also commanded to work for six days, but the seventh day is holy and to be devoted entirely to rest. For most of us, however, the rest we truly need is not a physical rest; for not many of us these days engage in back-breaking physical labour. No, the rest that most of us need is a true rest for our weary heart and soul.

We can be perpetually worried and upset about so many things - a condition that leaves us chronically tired. When we feel weary to the bone, we need to cast all our cares on Adonai and simply rest in Him: **“Rest in YHVH יהוה and wait patiently for Him. Do not fret ...”** (Psalm 37:7) Resting in the Lord requires an attitude of faith that knows God is fighting our battles for us. Rather than panicking when we face a challenge or feel the hot breath of the enemy at our backs, we are commanded to fear not – **“Be still and know that He is God.”** (Psalm 46:10)

It is only through faith leading to obedience that we may enter into God's rest. **Unbelief will rob us of the rest of God. "And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."** (Hebrews 3:18-19)

Moving with Godly Fear

It was Noah's great faith that led him to move in obedience with Godly fear to build an ark for the saving of his family. Everything that God commanded, Noah obeyed.

"Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he." (Genesis 6:22)

God instructed Noah to build a great ark (called a teivah תִּיבָה in Hebrew), and to seal it inside and out with pitch (tar) in order that it would float on the water and keep everything dry within. A terrible deluge of water was about to come, God warned Noah, which would wipe out every living thing on earth except for those saved on the ark.

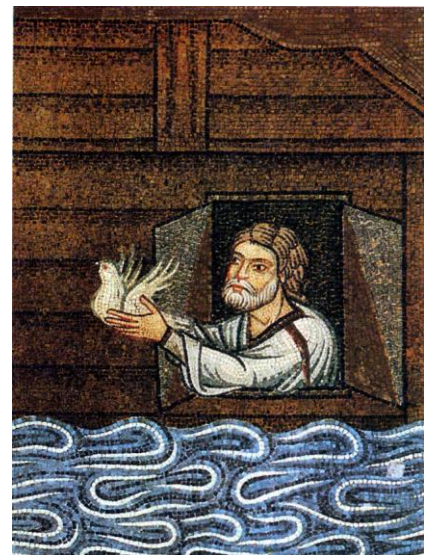


The Building of Noah's Ark (painting by a French master of 1675)

"And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is in the earth shall perish." (Genesis 6:17)

So unbearable was God's grief over the corruption of mankind, that He chose to wipe the slate clean and start over again with only Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives, as well as a male-female pair of each kind of animal. God promised to make a covenant with Noah, **"But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, and your sons, and your wife, your sons' wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shall you bring into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female."** (Genesis 6:17-18)

After forty days and forty nights, the rain stopped; but another one hundred and fifty days needed to pass before the waters receded and the ark finally came to rest on Mount Ararat. Noah sent out a raven and then a dove to see if the waters had dried up upon the earth.



Noah and the Dove (mosaic circa 12th–13th century in [St Mark's Basilica, Venice](#))

Finally, when the dove returned with an olive branch in its beak, Noah knew that it was safe to come out. From this account of Noah and the dove, the olive branch has thereafter been commonly regarded as a symbol of peace.



After Noah emerged from the ark, he sacrificed an offering to the Lord from the animals that had been brought for this purpose. God then promised never again to curse the earth because of the wickedness of man; and never again to destroy every living, breathing creature on earth as He had done in the flood.

“And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.” (Genesis 8:21)



Landscape with Noah's Thank Offering (painting circa 1803 by Joseph Anton Koch)

God instituted the death penalty for murder, reminding them that man has been created in God’s image and therefore the life of every human being is very precious. When we look at others, we must also remember that they have been created in the image and likeness of the Almighty God.

“Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.” (Genesis 9:6)

God set a rainbow in the sky as a sign of the covenant (‘ot habrit’ אֹת הַבְּרִית in Hebrew) with all people of the earth:

“I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.” (Genesis 9:13)



Other covenants followed; and each one came with its own sign (ot אֵימָנָה). The sign of the Abrahamic covenant is the circumcision of all male infants on the eighth day. The sign of the Mosaic covenant is the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath as a holy day of rest. And the sign of the New Covenant (Brit Chadashah) through Yeshua, is a new heart and new spirit – the Torah is not to be abolished but rather written in our mind and our heart.

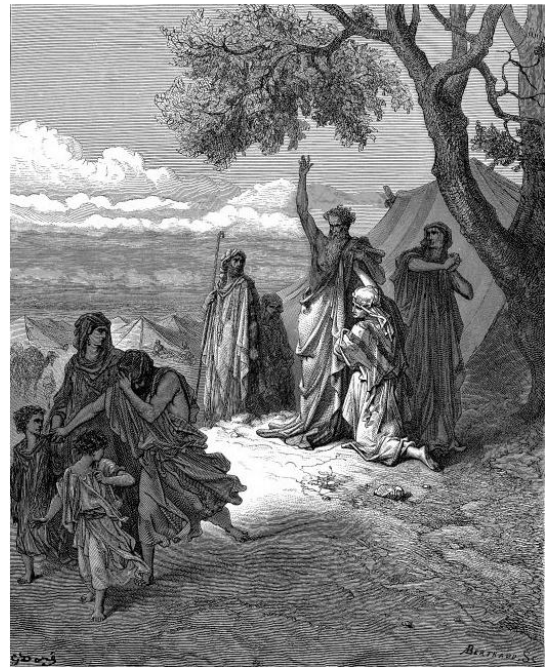
“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant (Brit Chadashah) with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... I will put My Torah in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (Jeremiah 31:31,33)

LOVE COVERS

After being saved from physical destruction, Noah and his family began the hard work of rebuilding their lives after the flood; but we see that even Noah, the only righteous man on the face of the earth was still not perfect.

One day, Noah got drunk on wine from the grapes and passed out, naked, in his tent. One of Noah’s sons, Ham, disrespected his father by reporting his deplorable state to his other two brothers. For this lack of honour towards his father, Ham’s descendants were cursed.

What was the response of Noah’s other two sons – Shem and Yaphet?



Noah cursing Canaan (illustration by Gustave Doré from the 1865 *La Sainte Bible*)

Despite their father’s faults, they still showed honour (kavod) to him, as is commanded, **“Honour your mother and father that it may go well with you...”** (Exodus 20:12)

Shem and Yaphet held a coat over their shoulders to **cover** their father’s nakedness. These two brothers even walked in backwards so that they would not see their father in his state of drunkenness and nakedness. For this act of respect they were blessed.

Love does not expose people’s sins; **Love covers** a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

This is a strong object lesson for children, usually not found as one of the stories in our Children’s Bibles, but one which should be told. Although no parent is perfect, and sometimes we even do things which might be cause for our children to laugh at us or point the finger, children must be taught to always respect their parents.

In Israel, some of us ‘first generation Israelis’ who have immigrated from foreign lands as adults, struggle with acquiring the Hebrew language, while our children, immersed in

Hebrew schools, and with younger, quicker minds, often pick up the Hebrew easily and are soon speaking fluently.

Our foibles and fumbles with speaking Hebrew should never cause our children to laugh or to point out our mistakes or funny accents but instead; our children may try to cover our weaknesses, out of love and respect.

One day, I was riding the bus home from school and my middle son, Timothy, was riding with me. An older man sat next to me and engaged me in conversation. We conversed back and forth in Hebrew and all of a sudden I heard Timothy pipe up, “*Imah (Mom), you’re really improving in your Hebrew!*” I beamed with pride. A child who honours his parents will be blessed by the Almighty.

This curse over Ham did not end with him, but carried on down the generations. We may unknowingly also carry curses upon our lives from generational sins. The atoning blood of Yeshua which paid the price for all our sins has the power to break these curses, but we must receive and proclaim our freedom in the Son.

BAVEL MEANS CONFUSION

One of Ham’s sons was Cush; Cush begot Nimrod, who began his kingdom in Bavel (modern day Iraq). Nimrod also built the wicked city of Nineveh, to which God sent Jonah to preach repentance. The name Nimrod means ‘to rebel’.

The **tower of Babel (Bavel)** was built in the land of Shinar which is in Babylon (Iraq). The people of the world unified in their goal of building the tower of Babel, but their motives were not godly. Therefore, God was forced to bring confusion to their languages to destroy their works. Bavel בבל in Hebrew means confusion. It is from this word that we derive the English term ‘to babble’.



The Tower of Babel by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1563)

In everything we do, we must examine our motives to see if we are attempting to ‘*build a name for ourselves*’ or working to build the Kingdom of God. All that is built with impure motives will be destroyed on the Day of Judgment.

“And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; *let us make a name for ourselves*, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” (Genesis 11:4)

It is ironic that the very thing they feared – to be scattered and divided across all the earth – is exactly what happened to them when they attempted to accomplish something without God. **“So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.”** (Genesis 11:8)

There is a principle here, however, that we must not miss – when the people came into unity of heart, mind, and purpose – nothing would be impossible for them!

“And the LORD said, “Indeed the people *are* one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.” (Genesis 11:6)

This demonstrates the powerful force of unity (which is why the enemy works overtime to cause division in churches, families and marriages). When we get out of unity with one another and get into strife, the enemy can cause confusion and every evil work. (James 3:16)

It is upon unity that God commands His blessing: **“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!... For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.”** (Psalm 133:1,3)

What was it that created such unity amongst the people of Babel? It was their ability to communicate – they were of one speech and one language. All it took to stop the building of the tower of babel was to confuse their languages so that communication became difficult if not impossible.

God used the weapon of division to stop their ungodly building project: **“Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.”** (Genesis 11:7)

When communication stops, so does progress - whether in an organization, a business, a ministry, a family, or a marriage. In order to build the Kingdom of God, a business, a family, or any worthy enterprise, we must stay in unity, keep strife out, and keep the lines of communication open.

There has been a lot of discussion about ‘love languages’ in recent years since the publication of a book on the subject; but it is true that in order to maintain unity amongst us as Believers, we must be of one mind, one heart, and one spirit. We must be able to communicate clearly with one another - to speak with clarity and to listen with compassion.

FLEE BABYLON

Today, the world is uniting in their goal of fighting a ‘*war against terrorism*’. But behind the veneer, we may discern some possible impure motives. Many world leaders’ attitudes towards Israel remains anti-biblical (and even illogical) – demanding of Israel terms to which they themselves would never agree. The demand that Israel gives away portions of their God-given land and to negotiate with terrorists. And so their true motives are unmasked - to usher in what has been termed the “*New World Order*.”

In the end, we will have a united world, but initially not under the leadership of the Lord, Yeshua, in truth, justice and righteousness; but under the leadership of the anti-Christ who attempts to usurp the authority and throne of the Messiah. We see these things transpiring before our very eyes, and yet the whole world seems deceived into joining in the work of building the modern day Tower of Babel.

The Word of God prophecies utter destruction upon Babylon, therefore God gives an urgent plea to His people, “*Get out of her, My people, flee Babylon!*” ¹Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “**Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;**” (Revelation 18:4)

May the people of God wake up to the truth and be saved from the judgements to come upon the earth.

Haftarah - the Waters of Noah

The haftarah (prophetic portion) of Parashat Noah is one of Divine forgiveness, redemption and restoration. An exiled Israel, punished for her sins, will one day be forgiven, redeemed and returned to her Land. God gives His solemn oath to Israel to have everlasting compassion upon her:

“For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord that has compassion on you.” (Isaiah 54:10)

Although in His divine providence, God must turn His face from her ‘for a small moment’, as He also turned from Yeshua on the cross, He will again have compassion upon Israel and save her: **“For a little moment I left you, and with great mercies I will gather you up”** (Isaiah 54:7)

God gives reassurance that although He sent her away to live in pain and humiliation, the time of punishment will one day come to an end and she will not be harmed again.

The reference to the ‘Waters of Noah’ connects the parashah and haftarah.

¹ See book by the author, [Come out of her My People, Flee Babylon](http://www.voiceforisrael.net), www.voiceforisrael.net

“For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.” (Isaiah 54:9)

How must the people have felt on the ark, tossed about on the waves? Perhaps like we feel at times in our life, **“Storm-tossed, suffering one, not comforted...”** (Isaiah 54:11)

We sometimes wonder if these storms of life will ever come to an end. Is there no one who can comfort us in our affliction? Even Yeshua’s disciples, caught in the middle of a terrible storm, and seeing that he was asleep in the boat said, **“Master don’t you care that we are perishing!?”** (Mark 4:38) We can be assured that Yeshua does care and He can and will stand up and speak ‘sheket!’ (quiet!) to the wind and waves who obey Him.

In the midst of their relief at being saved, Noah and his family may also have experienced *“survivor guilt”* - horror at the terrible loss of life – that no one else was saved except their family.

Did they feel guilty that they could not convey the seriousness of the situation to anyone? Did they feel inadequate that no one would listen to them?

Sometimes we feel this way when people do not want to listen to the gospel message – do not want to come under the covering of ‘the ark’, the blood of the Lamb; do not take seriously the message that God’s judgment is coming....



The Deluge (illustration by [Gustave Doré](#) from the 1865 *La Sainte Bible*)

Comfort My People

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is that of ‘comforter’. The Holy Spirit comforts survivors of the storms of life and refugees who are still adrift, trying to find a place to settle.

God’s covenant through Yeshua is for all those who will come in faith – and His covenant of peace will never be removed. We can comfort one another with these words. With the same comfort we have received, we can offer comfort to other storm-tossed survivors of life’s floods.

Parashat Noach encourages us to move beyond our guilt and shame, real or imagined – and accept the covenant of Noah –the unconditional love of God. **“Fear not; you shall not be put to shame.”** (Isaiah 54:4)

Everlasting Covenant of Peace

Does the rainbow still appear in the sky? Then we know that God will never ever forsake us, but will show kindness to us and establish an everlasting covenant of peace with us. No weapon that is formed against us will prosper and whoever gathers against us shall fall.

This goes for whoever is attacking or gathering against Israel – they will fall just as surely as did Haman before Mordechai the Jew. This is our heritage and our reward as the servants of the Lord.



When we see the rainbow, we can know that we deserve to rebuild our lives out of the destruction of the flood. We are called to rebuild even when all has been lost or swept away.

We can overcome our fears of yet another failure, another disappointment. The waters that caused death can now become a source of life and hope. **”All you who are thirsty, go out for water,”** (Isaiah 55:1)

We can re-discover hope even after being overwhelmed by loss and sorrow. This is the message of Noah. God is present even at the flood, even in the darkest of moments.

“Adonai sits enthroned over the flood; Adonai is enthroned as King forever.”
(Psalms 29:10)

Because of Covenant; because of His tender mercies, new life is possible. And abandoned, barren life can become fruitful and joyful. When hope is restored, we can begin to form new relationships with others which is a first step to rebuilding our future.

The word of God says, **“Come unto Me; Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.”** (Isaiah 55:3)

God sealed this everlasting covenant with the blood of Yeshua, who said, **“Come unto Me, all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.”** (Matthew 11:28)

God beckons all who are thirsty to come for water, and for food that cannot be bought with money.² Yeshua offered all who thirst the living water and the bread of life that comes down from heaven – the ‘real manna’. If we eat of this bread and drink of this water, we will be filled with His Spirit and will live and never perish. It is a free gift, and yet so many refuse this gift of life.

² Isaiah 55:1

Your Husband is Your Maker

Through Haftarat Noach, our image of God can be transformed from raging, punishing Judge, to a loving, attentive spouse who partners with us to renew, rebuild and restore our lives after loss.

"For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts (Yehovah Tzeva'ot); and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth." (Isaiah 54:5)

Haftarat Noach is a reminder that in spite of our brokenness, failures, losses and disappointments, we can re-discover hope in God to rebuild even after the harshest of storms. Where hope reigns, all things are possible.

This haftorah ends with God's promise to give a *'witness, a prince, a commander'* to the peoples. *"And the Gentiles will run to Him."* Indeed, Yeshua was given as a light and a covenant not only to Israel, but to the goyim (Gentile nations) that they would enter into this everlasting covenant with God through Yeshua and also find salvation and life.³

It is ironic that while Gentiles the world over love Yeshua, His own nation, Israel, continues to despise Him and refuses to honour him. But just as in the story of Joseph, his brothers also adamantly vowed that they would never bow down to him; but we see that one day, they did bow. Yeshua's brothers, the Jewish people, will also one day bow to Him and find healing, peace, forgiveness and salvation. In the end, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Yeshua is the Lord (Adonai).

NEW TESTAMENT PORTION: AS IN THE DAYS OF NOACH



Noah's Ark floats in the background while people struggle to escape the rising water of the Flood (fresco circa 1508–1512 by [Michelangelo](#) in the [Sistine Chapel](#))

Most of us know that a great judgement and destruction is coming upon the world. But many people still continue on with life as usual, completely unaware of what is coming, just as was in the days of Noah before the flood.

³ Isaiah 49:22

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away,

So also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken; and the other left.” (Matthew 24:36-41)



The Deluge (late 19th Century painting by [Léon Comerre](#))

In a popular Christian movie series and book series, those ‘left behind’ are those who were not ‘raptured’ with the saints but left on earth to endure the tribulation under the anti-Christ. But we can see in these passages as well as others the truth that those taken away are those who are, as in the flood, taken away to destruction, not to glory.

When will Yeshua return? After (not before) the tribulation. (Matthew 24:29) When will the Lord gather us to be with Him? When he returns after the tribulation. (Matthew 24:31) This is clearly written for all to know the truth.

Instead of waiting to be *raptured*, we must be about the business of diligently preparing for this time of tribulation which is coming upon us. One of the ways we can prepare is to store up treasure in heaven, by giving to the poor and God’s purposes rather than in earthly possessions.

Our relationship with God must be securely founded upon the rock, or we will not endure to the end and be saved. But if we ask, God is faithful, and He will prepare us and see us through. Just as Joseph acted in Divine wisdom to prepare for a time of famine in Egypt, and Noah was divinely warned of things not yet seen to prepare an ark for the saving of his household God, will also warn us and give us wisdom if we will ask.

We must keep our ears open to the voice of His Spirit. We cannot be complacent or asleep, going about ‘*life as usual*’; but we must be about our Father’s business and work while there is yet light.

“Watch, therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:36)

We are living in perilous times, when the nations of the earth are being hit with terrible floods, fires, hurricanes, tsunamis, famines and earthquakes - one natural disaster after another, as Yeshua prophesied would happen in the last days before his second coming:

“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.” (Matthew 24:7)

These are all signs that we are in the end times. Yeshua likened this to a woman in the throes of giving birth. He called this period ‘the beginning of birth pains.’ (Matthew 24:8)

Isaiah also used this analogy to prophesy the birth of the nation of Israel – in a day!

“Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son. Who has ever heard of such things? Who has ever seen things like this? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.” (Isaiah 66:7-8)

The most amazing aspect of this prophecy is that it has been fulfilled in our very day! So let us rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad.

“Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.” (Isaiah 66:10)

God yet has a glorious destiny and future for the holy city of Jerusalem. We will one day see peace (shalom) and prosperity in this city: “I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream,” (Isaiah 66:12)

And yet before this day that we so long to see, God will first cleanse the earth of all evil and wickedness. He will come with fire, the sword and judgment upon the earth and many will be slain who rebel against the Lord.

“See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For with fire and with his sword the LORD will execute judgment on all people, and many will be those slain by the LORD.” (Isaiah 66:15-16)

The people who display their rebellion towards the God of Israel by disobeying His commandments as written in the Torah (such as the Biblical dietary laws that forbid the eating of the flesh of swine and other unclean things) will meet their terrible end together.

“Those who consecrate and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one who is among those who eat the flesh of pigs, rats and other unclean things—they will meet their end together with the one they follow,” declares the LORD.” (Isaiah 66:17)

But those who are faithful to the One True God will see His glory displayed in the new heavens and the new earth:

“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure. From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD.” (Isaiah 66:22)

The faithful remnant will bring their offerings to Jerusalem and some will be chosen as priests and Levites. They will look upon the bodies of those who rebelled against Adonai:

“And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.” (Isaiah 66:24)

In the end times, judgement will come suddenly, just like the flood in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:36-41); but we need not fear, for the Lord will provide a safe shelter, an ark (a teivah), from the raging storm of tribulation for us just as He provided the ark for Noah and his family.

The prophet Isaiah wrote,

“Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past.” (Isaiah 26:20)

May we emerge from the ark to establish the new heavens and the new earth of peace and righteousness and justice under the rule of the Messiah, Yeshua.

May Adonai bless you and keep you; may He shine His countenance upon you and be gracious unto you. May He lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Shabbat Shalom!

About the Author:

Hannah Nesher grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching Christians about the Jewish roots of their faith.



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