



## Noach

*Beresheet* (Genesis) 6:9 - 11:32

*Noah is a righteous individual, unusual in his generation.* Our Rabbis devoted a great deal of commentary to this opening statement of the *Parshah*, wondering if Noah was to be considered righteous only by the low standards of the time, or would he have been considered righteous by other generations as well. The rest of humanity, however, is corrupt and G-d decides to destroy it. G-d commands Noah to build an ark and to bring into it seven pairs (male and female) of all clean animals and one pair of all unclean animals found on earth. Noah also takes along his wife, their three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their sons' wives. A great flood, lasting 40 days and nights, covers the earth, destroying all living creatures save Noah, his family, and the paired animals on the ark. Once the flood subsides, Noah and his family inhabit the earth and multiply. G-d's promise to not destroy the earth again becomes a covenant with the people and is symbolized by the rainbow.

Another important event in this *Parshah* is the story of the tower of Babel. When all the inhabitants of the earth spoke the same language, they decided to build a city and a tower which would reach to the sky in order to make a name for themselves. It was another challenge to G-d's authority. In response, G-d confounds their speech and scatters them all over the earth.

The portion ends with Terach, his son Abram, daughter-in-law Sarai, and grandson Lot settling in Haran.



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