

SHABBAT SHALOM---NOACH---2011

While we normally consider Noach and his generation to be a prime example of how a society can so easily lose it all, there are additional and highly significant lessons and applications very relevant to our times.

We are now still feeling the effects of the 'chamas', 'the 'me first' philosophy, which led to the unscrupulous practices by so many, all too long, especially in the financial world. The ongoing grassroots 'social protests' for no special reason, which have spread across North America, are reason enough for concern. The decay from the top has had a ripple effect onto so many other areas including the normalcy of our daily lives. Not only are we living day to day with the anxiety and fears projected by the ongoing daily economic ups and downs, but even more foreboding is the fact that we are unable to project when this flood of economic chaos will end. It's the uncertainty of 'how low is low' that causes all too many anxious days and sleepless nights.

We seek some sort of escape and so Noah's Ark takes on a new sort of attraction. The Noah and his Ark story project a new dimension as we try to navigate the troubled waters. Rather than pitying Noah being isolated in an Ark for days, there is one aspect that might cause us to in fact, even envy Noah. Some might envy the opportunity to duplicate the Noah Ark Experience.

G-d speaks to Noach and instructs him to build an Ark as the whole world is about to self-destruct. Noach and family are instructed to build an Ark where they will be safe and secure. They are able to isolate and distance themselves from the destructive forces inundating the world. So far, it sounds pretty good, that is if you can put the rest of humanity out of your mind and concern. If offered the chance to build an Ark for yourself and your immediate family and sail off, leaving the 'Tzaros' behind, nowadays we might not discount it out of hand.

Put into contemporary terms, this appears to be an attractive alternative-isolation from the comings and goings of society; a bit of a 'time out'. I suggest that it is not only attractive, the 'Noach's Ark' experience, it is highly suggested, realistic and yes, very possible.

It's not an Ark of wood or even plastic I have in mind but a concept, a concept that already exists but is somehow under appreciated. It's called SHABBAT- one day a week when we separate ourselves from the normal course of things; when we isolate ourselves and create a special Ark of time with very limited entry as to who and what comes in. For 25 hours we create peace and quiet amidst the tumult that normally surrounds us. This special day of SHABBAT has been our safety net and escape hatch for generations.

But unlike Noach, we do not isolate ourselves constantly. Six days a week we are front and center in the world trying to make a difference. Often frustrating, especially in these trying times, but such is the Jewish human condition. We are out there doing our thing never knowing when one of our actions, one of our words or simply our presence makes a profound difference in someone's life.

It is only on Shabbat that we withdraw from our daily creating and instead create a TEMPLE of TIME so as to take stock of our blessings and our accomplishments and create some 'time out' to gain strength for the next round of human encounters certain to come in the coming week.

With Shabbat comes the realization of the promise of the rainbow. It is G-d's promise never again to subject us to a flood. Shabbat is the reminder that we can suspend the flood of anxiety and despair and celebrate the gift of life and love.

We even have our own personal rainbow each week and it comes in many shapes and colors. There are candles and Kiddush, some Challah and a special family meal which makes for a great start. We can continue the rainbow with some Shul and by keeping the rest of the day special and different. You can be sure that something even more worthwhile than a pot of gold awaits you at the end the day. The price of gold fluctuates; the rewards of Shabbat are always on the rise.

Yes, Shabbat is Havdalah, making a difference as to how we face the coming week. And so, yes, build an Ark called Shabbat. Enjoy the rainbow of experiences and the payoff will be a better week.

Noach with his special Ark was the launching pad for the development of the family of Abraham and Sarah. Let us build an Ark together and keep that Mishpacha alive.

SHABBAT SHALOM
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JUST A REMINDER...

RAFFLE - *Just a few days to go - Nov.2nd... Still 1000 tickets to be handed in and with a LITTLE HELP from our FRIENDS WE CAN SELL OUT! DO IT; SELL, BUY, SHARE...HAND IN THOSE TICKETS. WE THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR SUPPORT.*

BAZAAR....*Merchandise and help with set up needed Monday to Thursday -7-9 PM JOIN THE BAZAAR TEAM*

*Beth Tikvah Youth—**ANNUAL FAMILY BREAKFAST****—SUNDAY—NOV. 6TH—10 AM***