

חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

KARLIN · NOACH, BEIT AHARON

Why did Noah need an ark instead of just being saved

Beit Aharon

Noah, despite finding favor in G-d's eyes, still required the rectification of the flood just as the rest of his generation did, and only through being confined to the teivah (ark) for one hundred and twenty years was he spared while simultaneously undergoing the same necessary purification, emerging afterward as a new creation. This explains why the midrash has Noah declare that tzaddikim (righteous ones) will be crowned through him — for his salvation came not by bypassing the flood's rectification but by being enclosed within it and transformed through it. AI SUMMARY



The midrash states: "Bring my soul out of confinement" (Psalms 142:8) — this refers to Noah, who was shut up in the teivah (ark), etc. "To give thanks to Your Name" — to give acknowledgment to Your Name. "Tzaddikim (righteous ones) will crown themselves through me" — the tzaddikim will be adorned through me, "for You dealt bountifully with me" — for You dealt bountifully with me and said to me, "Go out from the teivah." End of the words of the midrash.

We can say this according to the simple [reading of the text]. For at first glance it is puzzling: when the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to save Noah from the flood, why did He need to burden him with building an ark? And it is stated that the building of the ark took one hundred and twenty years. Surely He had many [other] means of salvation available to Him. And especially since it is stated that in Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel) there was no flood — He could simply have sent him to Eretz Yisrael.

But in truth we can say that Noah needed the flood just like the rest of his generation, who could only be rectified through the flood — as is hinted in the verse, "for the Lord God had not caused rain to fall upon the earth, and there was no man to work [the land]..." So too Noah and his sons likewise needed to be rectified through the flood; only that he found favor in His eyes, and so He enclosed him within the ark, and he was rectified in the manner that was necessary for them.

For this reason, some interpret this favorably concerning him, and some interpret it unfavorably. And this is why he said: "May the tzaddikim (righteous ones) be crowned through me, for what You have bestowed upon me" — for I too needed to be swept away within the waters of the flood like the rest of the generation, yet I found favor in Your eyes. And this is why it is written, "For this is to Me like the waters of Noah... that the waters of Noah shall no more pass over the earth" — for Noah also

needed the flood, and [yet] found favor, and was rectified through the ark, and afterward became a new creation.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)

