

### Holy Temple on Water

Tucked away in the beautiful writings of *Chazal*, one can find a deliberate connection being established between the *teiva* of *Noach* and the *Beit HaMikdash*. The *Midrash Rabbah* (*Bereishit Rabbah* 26:2) homiletically interprets the verse in *Sefer Tehillim* (92:14) that describes the righteous *tzaddik* being planted in the house of *Hashem*, 'שתולים בבית ה'. The *Midrash* explains that this *tzaddik* is none other than *Noach*, who was planted in the ark he was commanded to build. As is clear from many sources (see *Melachim* 2, 25:9, and *Megillah* 27a), the paradigmatic term of 'בית ה' refers to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

The *Beit HaLevi* explicates a similar comparison. He quotes a *Midrash* which cites the famous verse from *Tehillim perek* 5 that we recite every day upon entry into the *Beit HaKnesset*. ואני ברב ביתך אבוא, as for me, in your abundant kindness, I will enter **Your house**. The *Midrash* again homiletically explains that this is a reference to *Noach* being allowed to enter the *teiva*, the house of *Hashem*. In addition, the *Zohar* reports that the *teiva* possessed the sanctity of the *mishkan* of *Hashem*.

In what way was the *teiva* similar to the *Beit HaMikdash*? The *Beit HaLevi* explains that the *Mikdash* was a purified and rarefied spiritual environment that was immune to spiritual contamination. It served as a bulwark against corrupting influences from outside its walls. The intense *kedusha* that was deliberately limited in scope and contained within the walls of the *Har HaBayit* (and Jerusalem by extension) represented an environment set apart from the surrounding world. This is exactly what *Noach* required in his *teiva*. With the growing spiritual corruption that could slowly permeate and influence himself and his family, *Noach* was commanded to build a separate environment. God imbued this structure with heavenly sanctity to create a bulwark in which *Noach* could purify all of creation. All humans and animals that entered into this rarefied spiritual ark in a cleansed state.

However, the role of the *mikdash* was not just to defend the sanctity within; its principle role was to radiate that intense sanctity to the entire world. Jerusalem is referred to as אורו של עולם, the light of the world. The windows of the holy temple grew wider towards the outside, reflecting a sense that the temple was providing illumination to the rest of the world and not the other way around. While there were clear boundaries established as to who was allowed to enter where and when, Jerusalem opened (and will open) her doors to all the nations so that they can ascend towards *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. The "*teiva*" of the *Beit HaMikdash* is intended to save all of humanity, not just coddle those lucky enough to sit within its walls.

This relates to the foolishness of the nations of the world in destroying, or preventing the construction of the *Beit HaMikdash* in Jerusalem. "*Rebbe Yochanan* said, "woe is to the nations that lost and don't even know what they lost?" (*Sukkah* 55b). In the times of the *mikdash*, they achieved atonement through the seventy bulls of the *Chag HaSukkot*, but now nothing stands to help them. And yet, they foolishly and persistently attempt to prevent *Klal Yisrael* from building the ultimate source of light in this world.

May we speedily witness the days in which the zealously guarded sanctity of the *mikdash* spreads its light onto the entire world.