**\*Miller’s Musings נֹחַ** **פרשת\***

**\*Faith in the Rain\***

It is a well-known fact of the construction trade, that any building project takes longer than at first anticipated. Nevertheless, the one hundred and twenty years it took Noach to assemble the ark is still bordering on the ridiculous by any standards!  Rashi tells us that this enormous length of time was to give the opportunity for all that generation to enquire of Noach what he was doing, thereby allowing them the prospect of repentance once they hear of the impending flood.  By the time the waters began to come crashing down upon the earth, Noach had spent one hundred and twenty years predicting its arrival and forewarning of the devastation it would bring.  Yet we are informed by Rashi that Noach only actually entered the safety of the ark once the deluge had actually begun and he was forced to do so, thereby labelling him as “one of the small ones of faith”.  This seems somewhat incomprehensible given his life’s work up until this point as the harbinger and sole believer in the imminent advent of G-d’s destruction.

As a prophet in direct communication with Hashem, there could be no one better placed than Noach to understand the truth of G-d’s existence.  It is therefore clear that the lack of faith could not be due to a lack of awareness of the reality of G-d, but rather was perhaps owing to this knowledge and that of Hashem’s infinite goodness.  Noach knew that despite Hashem’s warnings, there was always a possibility of redemption for mankind, and therefore until there was no other option, believed wholeheartedly that the mercy of G-d would prevail and that He would find some way to save mankind from itself and avert the world’s annihilation.  On Noach’s supremely high level, this displayed a certain lack of belief in the absolute goodness of Hashem, even in the world’s darkest hours, even when it was so hard to perceive that this is what was best for the world at this time.  He should have seen even the flood as a manifestation of G-d’s perfection and therefore relied on the message given of its looming arrival.

To believe in Hashem and recognise His goodness when times are good is the easy part of faith.  To not allow the anguish found in moments of misfortune and tragedy to break our belief, is the true test of our convictions. Seeing terrible things happening to those far from us, or within the pages of history, rarely causes us to question G-d’s ultimate goodness.  Yet despite logic demanding that there be no difference in where suffering lands, when the adversity is found within our own lives, we are no longer able to reconcile our Creator’s benevolence with the pain He has seemed to cause us.  We can no longer make the leap of faith required to see His kindness within the moments that so deeply obscure His love.  It is of course a tremendous challenge for all who face it, but if we can look for the glimpses of sunshine, even within the gloom of the rain, we will be able to hold on to that light until the darkness dissipates and we finally see clearly His glorious radiance.

\*May the light of Shabbos illuminate our every journey\*

לעילוי נשמת לאה בת אברהם