

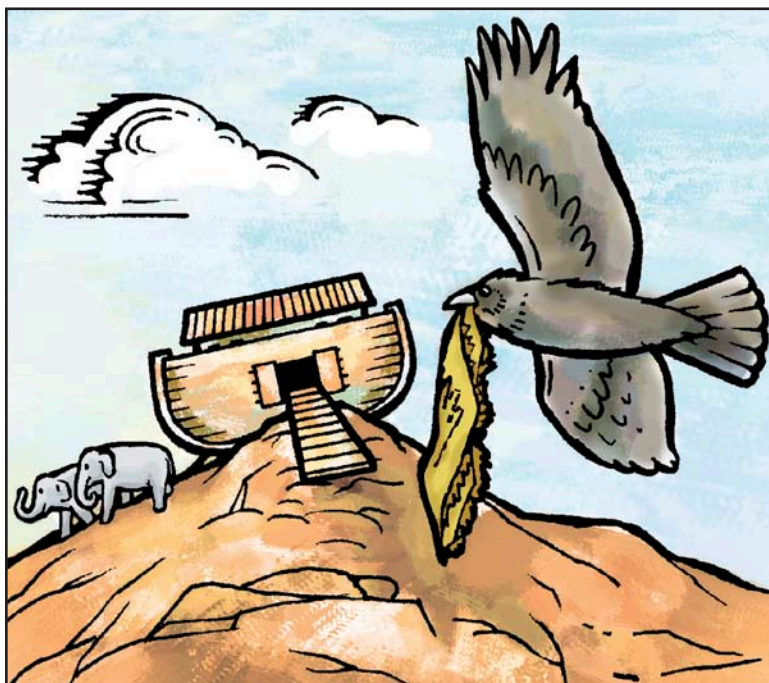
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Raven and the Flood

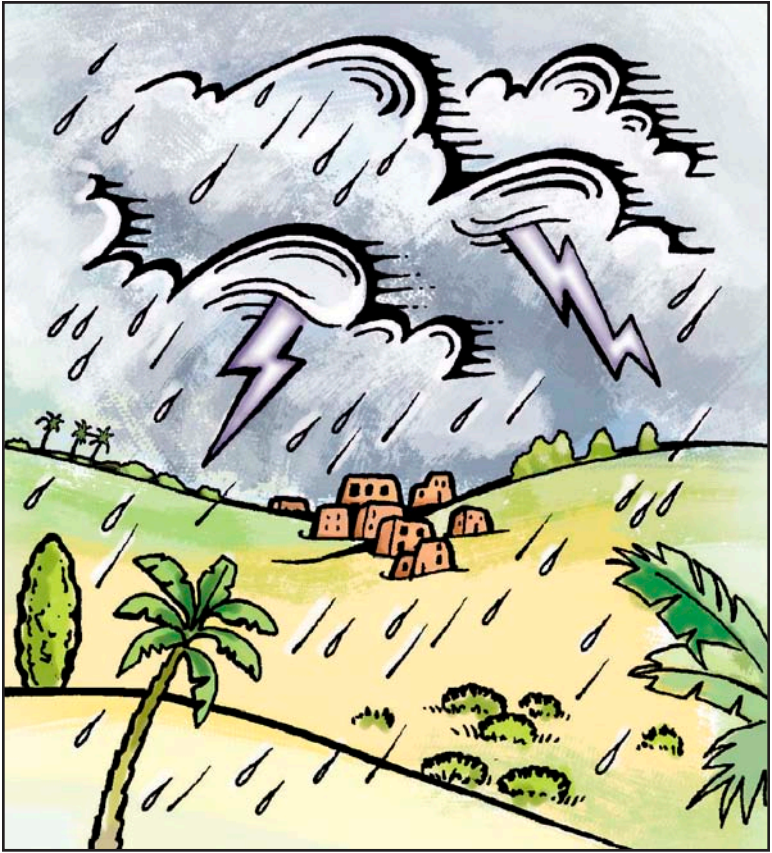


Written by William Harryman
Illustrated by Terry Herman

Raven and the Flood



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A long time ago, before the world was as we know it now, there was a great storm. Blades of lightning cut through the sky. Thunder shook the ground. The rain fell, and kept falling, for eighty days and eighty nights.

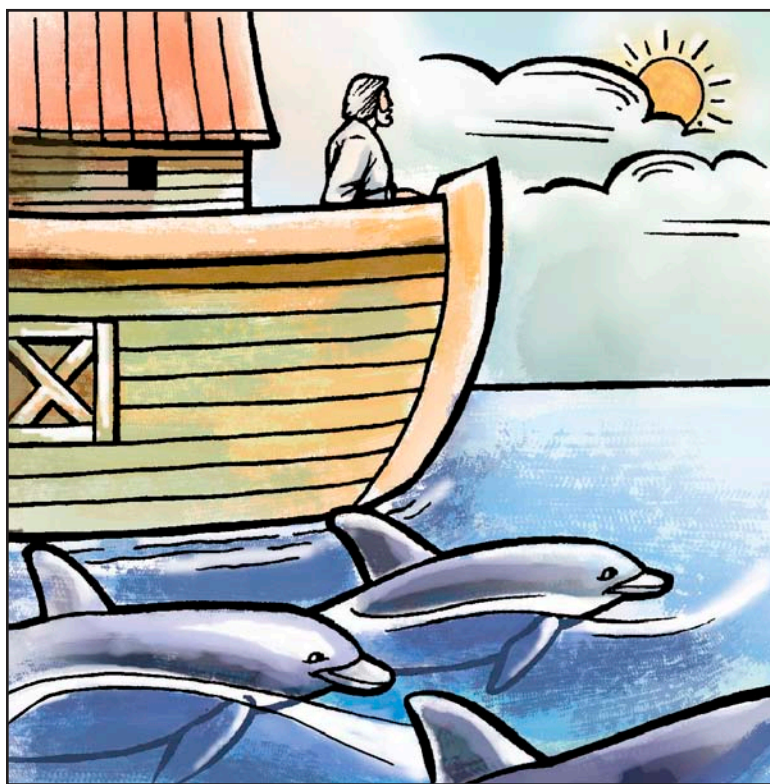


As rain fell day and night, the water kept rising. Rivers flowed over their banks. Lakes rose and drove people from their homes. The ocean swelled, and large waves flooded the small towns near the coast. People feared that if the rain did not stop, there would be no land left.

A wise sea captain with a very large boat took action. He collected his crew and invited their families onto his boat. Before lifting anchor, the captain and his crew gathered one male and one female of each animal. They wanted to be sure that every kind of creature survived the storm.



When the rain finally stopped, not one patch of ground was visible anywhere. The captain and his crew stood on deck, amazed by all the water. A pod of dolphins swam alongside the giant boat. In the distance, the clouds parted to reveal a blue sky.





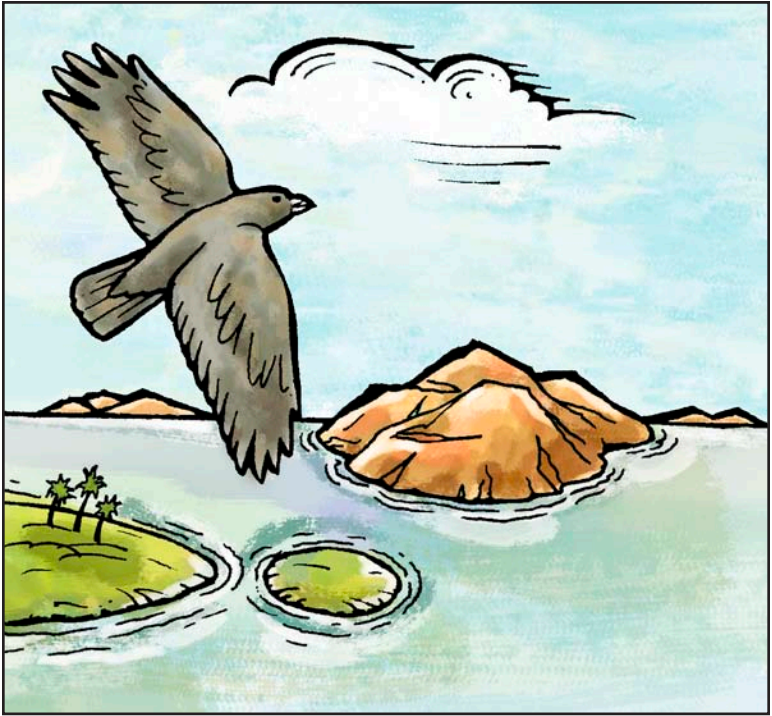
The captain knew they could not live on the boat forever. So he found Raven, the smartest of all the birds.

“Mr. Raven,” the captain said, “I need to talk with you.” The captain spoke to Raven with respect because what he wanted Raven to do was serious.

“I need you to leave the boat and fly until you find dry ground. When you do, bring back a tree branch so that I know you have found land. The place we come to rest will become our new home.”

“Caw, caw,” said Raven, agreeing to do this dangerous and important job.





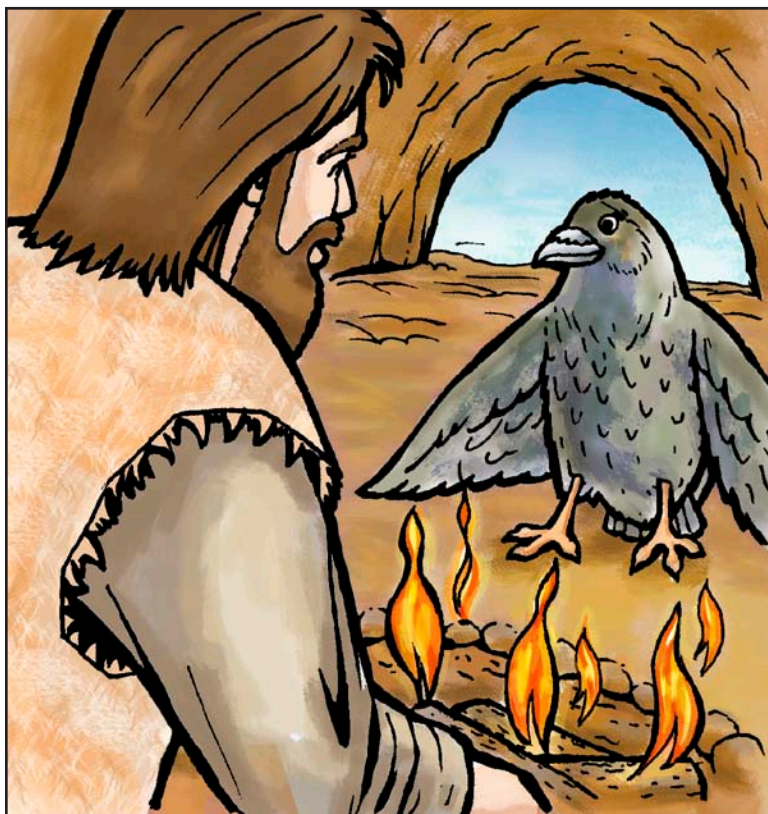
For days, Raven flew over the water, but he found no land. By the fifth day, he noticed the water was going down. Below him he saw the first small patch of dry ground. On the seventh day, Raven saw a large mountain rising from the water and flew toward it. He was very tired by now and wanted to rest.



When he landed, he found a cave in the side of the mountain. Raven was a curious bird so he hopped quietly, from spot to spot, until he was inside. In the darkness he saw a group of people huddled around a small fire.

A man saw him and offered,
“Raven, come here, share our fire.
We have stored plenty of wood.
You are welcome to join me and
my family.”

Raven hopped to the fire. He spread
his tired wings to the warmth.





“Tell us, Raven,” said the man,
“where have you come from?”

“Caw, cahaw, caaaw, ca, ca, caw,”
said Raven, eager to share his story.
The people around the fire just
stared at him, unable to understand.

But the man nodded. He was a
wise healer and knew the language
of animals.

“When you have rested, take this deerskin to your master. He must know others have survived the storm.” The man took a piece of charcoal from the fire and traced the outline of his hand onto the deerskin. “When he sees this, he will know you found us.”

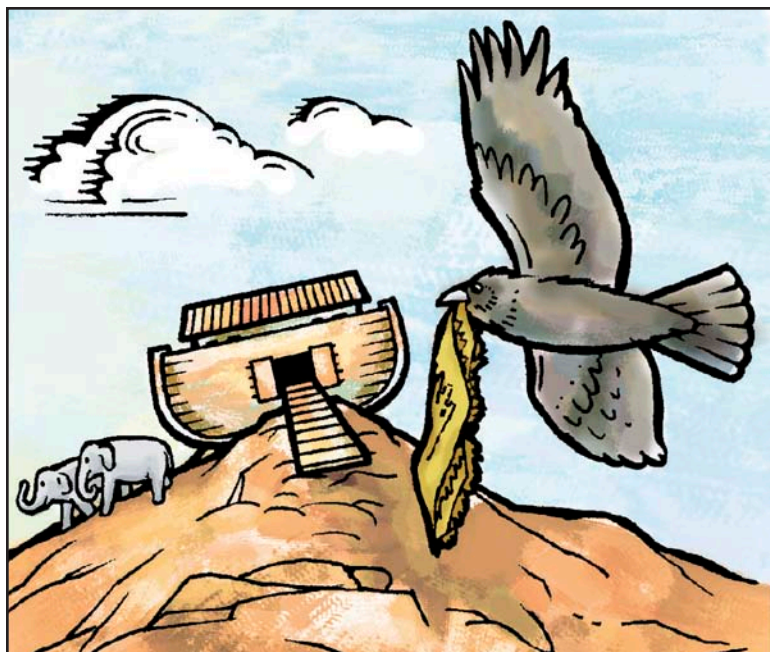




After a short nap, Raven began the long trip back to the boat. He was excited to share his news. For seven days he flew, as the sun continued to dry the waters from the Earth.

When Raven had been away for a week, the captain decided to send Dove out to find land. He feared that Raven might not return. The bare tips of many mountains were now visible, but he saw no place to land the large boat. Three days later, Dove returned with an olive twig. They had found a new home.





Raven finally found the boat, and he was very tired. The boat had come to rest on the rocks of a big mountain, far from where Raven had been. As the water formed into lakes and rivers, the land below became a fertile valley. The animals all had wobbly legs from being on the boat so long. They were happily wobbling onto the dry land.

“Caw, cahaw,” said Raven.

He dropped the deerskin at the captain’s feet.

“You crazy bird,” said the captain,

“Dove found a new home for us four days ago. Where have you been?”



The captain bent down to pick up the deerskin. He saw the freshly drawn outline of a hand.

“We are not alone,” the captain whispered to himself. He danced in a circle. “We are not alone!”



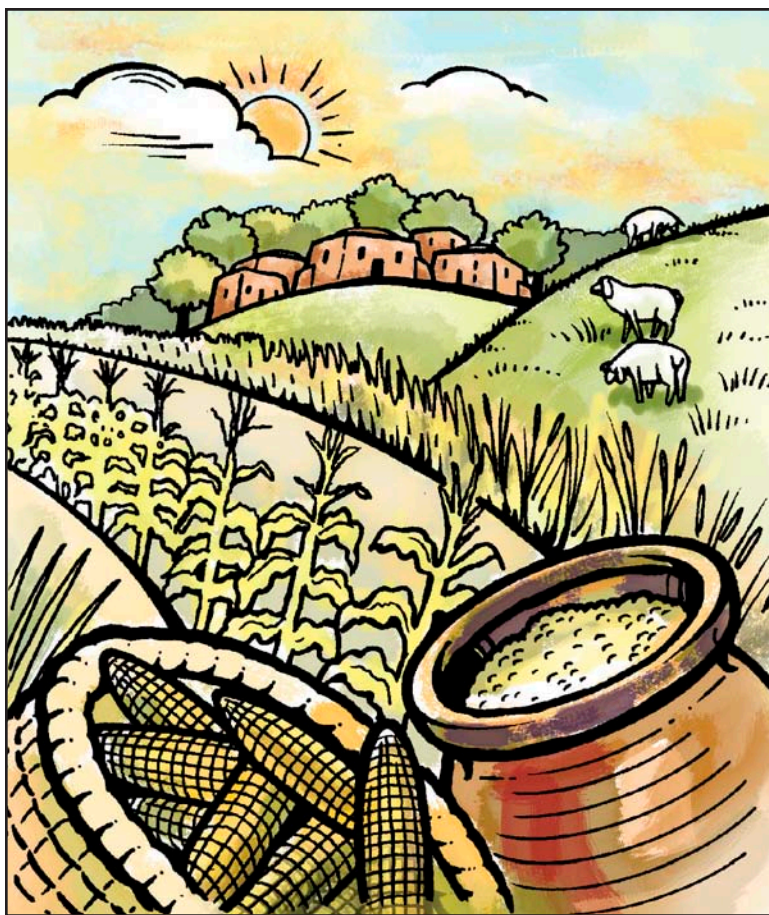


The captain bent down to Raven and whispered, “Thank you, wise bird. But this must remain our secret. If the others know, they will want to leave to find these other people. I am too tired to travel farther. And this is our new home. I can feel it. We must stay here.”



Raven knew the captain was a very wise man. “Caw, caw,” said Raven, agreeing.

So the captain and his crew, each with a wife and children, settled the new land. Their crops grew, and the harvest was plentiful. The animals multiplied and filled the land. Everyone was happy.





Raven kept his promise, and the secret. He talked of Dove as the hero who discovered their new home. But, in his heart, Raven knew they were not alone. He knew his discovery was also very special.

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Level N Leveled Book
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