

Ashura

The Day of Ashura is on the 10th day of Muharram in the Islamic calendar and marks the climax of the Festival of Muharram, but not the Islamic month. For Shi'a Muslims, it reminds them of the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali (the grandson of Muhammad), at the Battle of Karbala in the year 61 AH (AD 680). It is a day for mourning.

Ashurah is also commemorated by Muslims as the traditional date on which Noah's ark came to rest, the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) was born and the Kaa'ba was built in Mecca. Ashurah corresponds to the Jewish Yom Kippur, which was held by the Jews of Medina. It was adopted by Muslims as a recommended fast, in respect to the tribulations of Musa (Moses).

The word Ashurah means simply 'tenth' in Arabic; hence the festival's name, literally translated, means "the tenth day".



- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
What part of the story did you like and why?
Which pictures did you like or didn't you like and why?
Why do you think Noah was saved?
Why do you think he had to take all the animals with him?
- ③ Look at pictures of floods around the world that have happened this year. Why are people sad?
- ④ Talk to the children about the special lesson that the story of Noah teaches us today.

The Story of Noah's Ark



God was very upset at all the bad things that were happening in the world, so he decided to flood the earth.



After everyone had entered the ark, rain fell for 40 days and 40 nights.



**After 40 days Noah
sent out a raven, but
the bird could not find
any land, so it returned
to the ark.**



A week later Noah sent out a dove that brought back a branch. This showed that the floods were going down.



Later when Noah sent the dove out again and it did not return, this showed Noah that the waters had gone, and it was safe to leave the ark. God set a rainbow in the sky to remind us that he would never flood the earth again.



The Kaaba Stone in Mecca reminds Muslims they must perform good deeds.