



The Epistle

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God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations. I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

Genesis 9:12-13

Dear Friends,

Just like most four year old boys, our son John is big into dinosaurs. Last week he begged me to get a used kid's dinosaur DVD at our favorite thrift shop. When we got home we watched the story of lost, vegetarian-looking, baby dinosaurs on their epic quest to reunite with their families after being separated by a volcanic eruption. Beside molten lava, the villain was, of course, a Tyrannosaurus Rex. He knocked down boulders and trees, he roared and chased the baby dinosaurs for two hours, gnashing his enormous and terrible teeth.

When I was tucking John in that night, I said something about how glad I was that the baby dinosaurs didn't get eaten by the T-Rex, but John surprised me. He pleaded the carnivore's case: "*Momma,*" he said, "*The T-Rex tried and tried to be happy. He just couldn't.*"

John would know. John turns into a Tyrannosaurus Rex, as most four year olds do, when his schedule is changed, his Lego city falls down, or he doesn't like the looks of his dinner. When this happens, my partner, Rosemary, and I do our best to help him turn back into a little boy instead of sending him immediately to the "time out" couch. We try because we know that at the same time John is tantruming he is also pleading: "Somebody stop me!"

This Sunday, using a felt board, I told the children at the Kid's Service about Noah. It's possible that Noah has always been a kid's story. St. John's kids understood immediately that the tale is not about divine vengeance or "The Flood". Rather, the story is really about "The Ark": about God doing anything, anything God can, to save us from ourselves, to salvage our relationship with the Creator and the creation. If you were there, you must have heard the gasp of delight the children let out when they saw the rainbow

