

**PEER
LEADER**
INTERNATIONAL

**ARCHE NOAH
RELOADED**



**CLIMATE
CYCLE
TOUR**

WE CAN ONLY STOP CLIMATE CHANGE IF MORE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND IF MORE PEOPLE TRY TO HANDLE IT. PEER-LEADER KNOW THAT YOUNG PEOPLE CAN DO IT!

Noah's Ark reloaded **(Before the great rain)**

1

Voice from the background: *".....on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And the rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. {...} Every living thing that moved on land perished – birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. {...} Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark."* That's what it says in the Bible. There are similar parts in the Koran and the Torah. There are also myths and stories about a flood in other religions and cultures. Or about other natural disasters. From the Icelanders to the Aborigines, from ancient China to the Mayas. Seldom does such a disaster happen „out of the blue“. Normally it's a divine punishment. A punishment for bad behaviour. In other words: The humans themselves are to blame.

Today is the ... (*Date of the day*). The great rain hasn't come.

The Flood is just a story.

A myth.

A fairy tale.

Fantasy.

In spite of this it will come, but in a different way.

Faster.

Slower.

Less visible.

With rain ...

... and without rain.

And without the Ark

Without Noah.

But with us.

With people and animals.

That means:

Climate change concerns us all.

That means:

Climate change knows no winners, only losers.

That means:

When the water rises, we will all drown.

But that is a lie.

In Miami Beach/USA the expensive properties near the beach fall in value, because the water rises. But flooded streets are pretty normal, no exception anymore. ---- The people who live there have a problem – but they also have a solution. They move to higher places, a few hundred metres away from the sea. So, the rents for properties in once unpopular boroughs rise. The residents there can't afford them anymore and have to move. Now they have the problem. But do they have a solution? There is no more room for them in Miami Beach. They have to leave. They are the losers and the house owners in the areas becoming more expensive are the winners.

There are heaps of other examples – and it's the same everywhere: The ones with money have the possibility to bring themselves into safety. And where it becomes a bit tight, they defend themselves and their privileges with fences and walls.

... and if necessary, with weapons.

The ones who have all these possibilities, ...

... or the fences ...

... or the walls ...

... or the weapons ...

... even make money out of such disasters.

But the ones who own very little and have nothing to do with climate change ...

... who have never owned a car and have never boarded a plane, ...

... suffer. And those who cannot be heard will suffer first. We wonder how you feel about all this. How do the people, whose voices we don't understand or whose shouts we don't hear, feel?

What would they say?

What advice would they give us?

Would they accuse us?

4

I live in the Arctic. Here... Still. I am an ice bear. One of many. But for you I am just a number. Statistics. There are between 20,000 and 25,000 ice bears today. But the numbers are decreasing fast. In other words: We are dying. Because our habitat is melting away under us. Because the pack ice near the coasts, our hunting platform is becoming less. And thinner. Winds and currents carry thinner ice floes into the open sea ...

... and force us to swim. We are good swimmers. But even the best swimmer has to give up at some point.

Our food...

Seals, walruses, whales and fish

...is getting less and less. Not to mention oil pollution and other poisons in our environment. But back to the ice. When it melts, we die. But you also have a problem. Maybe not now, but soon.

No, it isn't the pack ice floating in the sea, which causes the sea level to rise, when it melts. The sea level doesn't change that much because ice has a greater expansion than water. But there is other ice. The ice which is on the mainland. More than four fifths of Greenland are covered by ice. Still. Now the surface of the ice sheet is thawing. Okay, the glaciers have been on the move for thousands of years. It's natural for them, but now they have picked up speed and are slipping into the sea more quickly. In June of this year the island lost 2 billion tons of ice per day. And that is just the beginning. If the whole of Greenland's inland ice melted, the sea level would rise 7.4 metres worldwide. And the Antarctic in the southern hemisphere is a continent totally covered by ice. And there it's creaking and shaking in an alarming way. And if all that flows into the sea, not only will we be up to our necks in water. Admittedly that will take a bit of time. But if the sea level rises by only one meter, for example, the greatest part of East Friesland would be under water.

Bangladesh, this flat land in Asia would lose a fifth of its area, and this would result in millions of people becoming

homeless. Okay, you can build dikes. In East Friesland you could probably stop the worst happening with them. But dikes are expensive. And Bangladesh is poor. Things look different there. Besides the people there will have another problem: their drinking water comes from the Himalayas – amongst other sources, from glaciers. About two thirds of the human beings get their drinking water from the Himalayas. When the glaciers there melt away, then it's „Good Night “. That's enough about the ice on the mainland. Our melting pack ice also causes you problems. Everybody knows that dark surfaces heat up more quickly than light surfaces when there is solar radiation. - because the majority of light surfaces reflect light and heat. Ice is lighter than water... Much lighter. When the surface of the ice on the sea becomes smaller, the water will heat up much more quickly – and the ice will melt even faster. A self-reinforcing process will be set in action and it will be difficult to stop. Every year the sea ice around the North Pole diminishes. In the 2030s the Arctic could be ice free in the summer. And warm water has a greater expansion than cold water – when the seas become warmer, then the sea level will

certainly rise. On land there is a similar process: The permafrost ground, the permanently frozen ground of Alaska and Siberia, melts. Then the CO₂ stored there and above all, methane, which has an even stronger effect on climate change, are released. Thaw-methane is released – thaw continues- more methane is released – this is also a process that once began, just goes on and on...

Because of that here in the Arctic the temperatures rise twice as fast as on the rest of the Earth. And much faster than was assumed....

And what do you do? You are happy about being able to get to the oil and gas fields there much more easily and instead of an ark, you build cruise ships, so that you, as tourists, can look at the glaciers falling into the sea near Greenland – the heralds of your own downfall. Especially cruise ships – which have a much worse carbon footprint than planes. Now that's not our problem. We'll probably soon be extinct or be leading a miserable existence in your zoos. There you can stare at us - after all you don't have to board a cruise ship to do that.

I live in the moderate regions of the northern hemisphere. Here... Still. I am a bumblebee, in Latin *Bombus*. That sounds rather fat, a bit like a bomb. And I am rather fat. For a long time, you thought I was too heavy to fly – and you were rather surprised that I do fly. But if at one point I don't fly anymore, then you will be even more surprised. My habitat is also becoming smaller due to climate change. The more southern regions, where I used to feel more comfortable, have become too hot for me. But up in the north it is still too cold. The corridor in which I can move, is shrinking. If that continues, there will soon be no more room for me. Then you have a problem, a really big one. Your nutrition is dependent on us. If we don't fly from blossom to blossom and pollinate your plants, you will have no fruit, for example. A greater part of the production of food worldwide depends directly on us pollinators. Considering yield and quality, even more than three quarters. Okay, it's not only dependent on us bumble bees. There are also bees, wasps and other insects. But they are also disappearing.

And even if we don't become extinct, but just decrease in numbers. Can a single bee pollinate a whole meadow? A single bumblebee a whole field? The Bible tells that back then the people laughed at Noah. And when it began to rain, they put up their umbrellas and thought: We'll cope with that bit of rain, won't we? It will stop some time and then the water will drain away. That has always been the case. What comes from above, drains away below. And if it doesn't then we will invent something, so that it drains away. And when we have been up to our necks in it, we have always found a way out. But then the water came from below, too. It poured out of all the cracks – and the people were up to their necks in water. But they had no ideas. And today? You have confidence in your technology, your reason – all the means which caused this problem in the first place. Again, the only thing, you can think of, is that an idea will come to you. Looking the other way, suppressing things – you are really masters of that.

I live in South Asia. To be more exact on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. Well, here... Still. I am an orang-utan. It's certainly nothing new for me that the trees in the jungle around me are being cut down. But the destruction of my habitat really started with the change in climate – to be more exact, with a *countermeasure*... Yes correct. You wanted to stop climate change and because you just have to go on as you always have, you have achieved the opposite. But to start again. The keyword is biofuel. The basic idea was when using oil in your cars causes climate change, but you don't want to do without your cars, then you have to find another fuel. One which releases less CO₂. Best of all would be a regenerative fuel, which would never run out. And that's when you had the idea of biofuel. Fuel which is produced from field plants – like rape, for example, which grows in Europe. Or what about palm oil That's a much more productive vegetable oil and consequently, the better choice.

And as plants use photosynthesis and during growth change just as much CO₂ into oxygen as the CO₂ they develop when they burn, then they are climate neutral. - Great isn't it? There is just one mistake. The rape or palm trees must grow somewhere – and you can't pump your Earth up or extend it or double it to get more ground to plant on. So, you have changed the fields, where crops for food were planted, into fields for biofuel- preferably in the regions where people have little to eat anyway. Or you have cleared forests. Heaps of them. For example, on Sumatra – our home. Forests, which have produced much more oxygen than the few palm tree plantations which grow there now. Forests where CO₂ and other greenhouse gases stored in the layers of soil have now been released due to this clearance. Cutting down forests for the protection of the climate. What an idea. And the ones who profit from this still present it as the solution to all problems.

At the moment you are making the same mistake with the electric cars. A few electric cars do work and are perhaps a help. But if all your petrol driven cars become electric, there will not be enough electricity to go round – and not to forget

the raw materials used for the batteries. And what about us? Our habitat has shrunk and been cut up into pieces. In some areas where we are tolerated as if in a large open-air zoo, the climate is changing now. It rains even more in the rainy season and in the dry season even less. On the one hand that means floods and landslides and on the other hand droughts and forest fires. We move very slowly. And that means really a lot of us die in forest fires. But maybe burning to death in our habitat is a better option to squatting in a zoo and watching you heating up our planet.

7

I live in Eurasia, at least in the summer. Here... You can find me nearly everywhere from western Europe to Japan. Still. I am a cuckoo, the bird that's a bit lazy when it comes to brooding, the bird that had the first song battle in history with the donkey. Known from songs and German sayings: „Go to the cuckoo “and „to the cuckoo “, meaning „Jeepers “, „you're joking “or „go to hell “for example. In former times, when people heard me for the first time in the year, they

put their hands in their pockets to see how much money was there. You would then always have this amount for the rest of the year. Nothing in your pocket, then...

Bad luck.

Or you asked me the question: „Cuckoo, Cuckoo, tell me how long I have to live? “- and then you counted my calls. If I stopped calling at once...

Bad luck.

Now I must ask *you* the question: „How long do *I* have to live? “

Why?

Because of the change in the climate, many of the migratory bird fly south later in the autumn- and come back earlier in spring. I have missed this change. When I come back to Germany at the end of April, most of the birds have brooded and it's too late to lay a cuckoo's egg into their nest. Yes, this time it's *me* who has...

Bad luck.

But there are also other unlucky birds: My migratory friend the pied flycatcher normally comes back in the spring, when there are the most insects. But now the insects are

here earlier, he comes too late and doesn't find enough to eat anymore. Likewise, ...

Bad luck.

And we are not the only ones: the warmer it is, the sooner the dormice end their winter nap. Then they look in deserted caves and nesting boxes for a place for their babies. But as they wake up a month too early, the birds are still busy with brooding and raising their young. For the dormice this is a lovely spring breakfast. And the birds -
Exactly:

Bad luck.

That's the way it goes: there are losers...

... and winners.

Predatory competition is in full swing. If you want to survive climate change, you have to adapt or evade. That applies to the species...

... and every individual.

In our animal world...

... and with you humans.

Some of you won't be able to sleep so well anymore because it's too hot.

Others - who have problems with their circulation – the old and the very young will maybe not survive this hot period. Whole regions will be uninhabitable because of temperatures over 50 degrees Celsius. The people who live there will have to flee. Today nearly one in a hundred is on the run. It's often wars that cause them to flee. When living space becomes smaller, new wars will begin. There will be a flow of war and climate refugees ...

... compared to the 70 million who are now on the run, this may seem harmless. Our problem maybe seems unimportant. It's only the problem of a few „dickybirds “. But it's the same problem. And the only ones who can solve it are you.

I live in the sea, especially in the tropical belt. Here... Still. I am a coral. I am a cnidarian that likes to live in colonies. That means, I don't like being alone. I am one of many. The part of me that you normally know is really only the skeleton of my colony – as if you would mistake a person for the town in which he lives. Soon only a few of these skeletons will be there – because when the temperature rises by two degrees, 99% of us will probably be gone. We can neither come to terms with a rise in sea temperature nor with the acidification of the seas, which develops because the oceans already absorb part of the CO₂ caused by you. But if that all remained in the air, global warming would be much more advanced. I know it's unfair to measure everyone by the same yardstick. I know you are not all the same. Some of you even try to protect us. They build national parks in the seas and try to create artificial coral reefs made of hollow concrete balls and to retain dying reefs. But as long as the temperatures continue to rise, this is of no use.

If the water is too warm, a great underground is useless. And sometimes a good idea backfires. The old car tyres, which some of you sank into the sea near Florida in order to create an artificial reef, have caused more harm than good. They were unsuitable for us, released themselves from their anchorage and seriously damaged natural reefs. And let's not talk about the toxins which are slowly being released by them. Everything depends on everything else. You are not the masters over nature, you are a part of it. But if you see that differently, if you don't observe the relationships....

The Flood wasn't a problem for us - ...

... for you it was though.

What consoles us is the fact you will miss us. Not because we are so beautiful, when we wave gently in the current, or when we hang around your necks as gemstones. Maybe not even because we provide a habitat for about a quarter of all the known fish in the sea.

No, you will miss us, because together with the mangrove forests we protect your coasts from the sea. From erosion through waves, storms and everything else which threatens

you. When the sea level rises and the whirlwinds increase, you'll need us more than ever. – ...
... but we won't be there anymore.

9

I live in the western part of North America. Here... I stretch my branches up in the air from Alaska to north California. I am a giant cedar. In Latin *Thuja gigantea* – you have given me a beautiful name. I am strong and I am useful to you. That's why I will not become extinct too soon, because you keep on planting me, after you have cut me down somewhere else or destroyed my habitat. People used to build canoes and totem poles from me, today it's guitars, shingles, shoe trees and cigar boxes. Times just change. I used to live on the *Athabasca River* in the Canadian Province *Alberta*, too. But nothing grows there anymore. Why? Because now there isn't enough of the „normal oil“, which you used before. You now have to get the oil which is connected to a lot of sand from the ground. For this you clear whole areas and contaminate the ground water, use

your energy and release CO₂. You need five litres of water to extract one litre of oil from the sand in Canada. Water, which is then just mud, contaminated with heavy metals and hydrocarbons. You store this sludge in giant contaminated lakes, if it doesn't seep into the ground water and the neighbouring rivers first. The number of cases of cancer is already increasing in the surrounding places. Even the workers, who mostly come from other regions, see their time in these areas as a „lucrative prison sentence “and regard the ground there as another planet, in order to carry out their contract without any psychological problems. The mining of this oil sand alone releases three to five times more CO₂ than conventional oil production. And that, although in the account books of the oil firms much more appears than what you are allowed to produce if you want to keep your self-defined climate goals. Why do you do that? Why don't you strike? Sometimes I imagine us striking. We, the trees. Why not, if you don't want to do that. And we would be just the beginning. The bushes and flowers, the creepers and the algae....

... all the plants would strike. They would refuse to do their service. Stop photosynthesis! You'd see then how fast your oxygen would run out, how fast there would be no air to breath. I imagine you grasping your throats, ...

... gasping for breath, ...

... falling to the ground...

But we plants will not strike. We are patient. We are masters at putting up with things. Therefore, you will have no air to breath, if you destroy the planet yourselves.

Do you know this one?

One planet meets another. One complains:

„I don't feel well. “

„Why not? “

„I've got homo sapiens. “

The other one consoles him:

„Oh, that will pass. “

The Earth doesn't need you.

But you need the Earth.

We could give our voices to countless animals and plants. From krill to the whales. From the elks to the elephants. Animals, which are still alive...

... and others, which are already extinct. But one day is not sufficient for that. The Bible speaks about the Flood as a punishment for „sin “or „*sinful life* “. Really very general. You could think that the Christian God didn't like the people cheating on each other. But perhaps that's just translated wrongly. It is expressed more clearly in other myths. The story of the Flood is also told in the Epic of Atra-ḫasis from the 19th century before Christ. There it says:

“flee the house, build a boat, forsake possessions and save life.”

It is even clearer in the Epic of Gilgamesh from the 18th century before Christ:

„abandon possessions and look for life. Despise worldly goods and save your soul alive. “

We know that.

We have known what is important for thousands of years.

What is really important.

But we've forgotten it.

As we said already: we are masters of suppression

11

I live nearly everywhere. Here... Still. I am a human being.

In Latin *homo sapiens*, which means as much as „one who understands, advisor or „wise, clever, intelligent, reasonable person “. I am the one who causes climate change and at the same time the one who will fall victim to it. The one, who urgently needs pure air, clean drinking water, food in sufficient amounts and safety in our respective habitats – ...

... but the one who sacrifices all that here and now for a bit of comfort. The one who is not concerned about the world in which his descendants will live.

I myself am to blame.

God, send us another flood.

We honestly deserve it.

Let it rain!

Yes, let it rain! But let sense rain down from the heavens!

So, everybody realizes that it's not too late.

I am not Noah – and I wouldn't like the same thing to happen to us as did to Noah in the story of the Flood.

Listen to us!

Take us seriously!

And above all: Do something at last!

We don't want to be the ones who prove right when the world goes downhill.

I am not Noah – but I use my bike instead of a car.

Trains instead of planes.

I stay at home if necessary.

I use things a long time.

I repair them when they are damaged.

I don't eat meat.

Or just a little.

I am vegan.

But all that will not be enough!

Not enough, if I am the only one who does these things for myself and my conscience.

And that's why I demonstrate.

That's why I kick the politicians in the ass.

And the economy.

And the banks.

So that something does finally change.

On a small scale

... *and* on a large scale.

No, I am not Noah.

None of us is.

But we are all part of the Ark.



CLIMATE CYCLE TOUR

**I AM THE ONE WHO CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE AND
AT THE SAME TIME THE ONE WHO WILL FALL VICTIM
TO IT... THE ONE WHO SACRIFICES EVERYTHING
JUST FOR A BIT OF COMFORT.**



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