

## Worksheet: The Story of Og (Uj)

There are many versions of the story of Og. This one is from a book called *Lives of the Prophets* (c. 1000).

It is related that in the time of the Flood, Og came to Noah and said to him, "Carry me with you in your ship." But Noah said to him, "Go, enemy of God, for I have not been given orders regarding you." The waters covered the earth from plain to mountain, but did not reach beyond Og's knees. Og lived for three thousand years until God destroyed him through Moses.

The Midrash (Jewish commentary on the Bible) gives a different version of the Og/Noah story: "As the floodwaters swelled, Og, king of Bashan, sat himself on one of the rungs of the ark's ladders and swore to Noah and to his sons that he would be their slave forever. What did Noah do? He punched a hole in the ark, and through it he handed out food to Og every day" (www: Gluskin).

Og survives the Flood but meets his end at the hands of Moses and a flock of birds:

The camp of the Israelites stretched four miles long and four miles wide. Og came and looked at them. He then went to a mountain, cut out a rock from it as large as the army, and carried it to cover them with it. But God sent the wise hoopoe-bird and others with him, and they began to peck with their beaks until the rock was cut up and full of holes. It fell on Og's neck encircling it and throwing him down.

The hoopoe is mentioned in the Qur'an as the messenger of King Solomon. In Iran it is thought to be wise and a symbol of virtue.

Moses was fourteen feet tall and the length of his staff was also fourteen feet. He jumped fourteen feet into the air and could only reach Og's heel bone after Og had been thrown to the ground. Moses killed him and he fell on the Nile and covered it for a year (Adapted from Brinner 2002: 399-400).

"He fell on the Nile" means he was so tall that his body reached all the way to the Nile River some three hundred miles away.

### Questions

1. Why is this story important to both Judaism and Islam?
2. How does this story compare to that of David and Goliath?
3. What words would you use to describe the mood of this painting?  
In your opinion, does the mood fit the story? Why or why not?