

"OUR AWESOME BIBLE"

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GENESIS 6-9 – NOAH'S ARK, THE FLOOD, AND THE RAINBOW

In the last Bible study, we covered the time from Abel all the way to Noah's day. Now we will study the reasons the Bible gives for the coming of the great Flood. As we will see, these factors are now generally present in our society. Jesus prophesied, ***"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of man be"*** (Mt. 24:37).

Characteristics of Noah's day

The first characteristic was ***the population explosion*** in those days. The *Living Bible* version brings out this point: "Now ***a population explosion*** took place upon the earth" (Genesis 6:1). This constant crowding led to fighting for more space.

The second characteristic was the perversion of God's way of life on the earth. Especially when ***marriages between converted and unconverted*** people became the norm. The lineage of godly men began to marry--not godly women--but carnal, worldly, although very attractive, women. In a matter of time, only Noah's family remained godly and uncorrupted. God was forced to intervene.

The third factor was the ***increased violence*** on the earth, in part due to powerful and enormous men, called giants, that ruled the day. There was no stopping the havoc they and others were causing.

This all led to the fourth and more deadly result--***total, abject immorality***. "And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

Are these descriptions of the pre-Flood society only recorded in the Bible? No, other nations have similar accounts and support the Bible's accuracy. The Greeks recorded in their ancient writings, such as those of Hesiod, similar events:

Parallels between the Bible and Greek writings		
1	Original Creation	Original creation
2	Fallen angels vs. God	Titans vs. God
3	Cast into tartaroo	Cast into tartaroo
4	Giants corrupt society	Giants rebel
5	Humanity & giants die in the Flood except Noah and family	Giants destroyed in Flood except Deucalion & wife
6	After the Flood, Tower of Babel is overthrown by God	After the Flood, giant's tower is destroyed by Zeus

Amazing facts about Noah's Ark

Because of the universal corruption, God is forced to start mankind again with Noah's family. He tells Noah: "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits" (Gen. 6:13-15).

Are these dimensions fit for a seaworthy ship? A cubit was the length from the tip of the hand to the elbow, some 24 inches long. The ark would then be some 400 feet long, 70 feet wide, and 40 feet deep. It would have the capacity of about 2000 cattle or box cars.

British scientist Frederick Filby made the calculations and mentioned the biblical proportions of the ark were astoundingly modern for a ship of this size that had a ratio of 6 to 1. For instance, the steam liner, *The Great Britain*, built in 1844, was 300 ft. by 50 ft. by 30 ft. and gives the same ratio as the ark. The ship's designer, I. K. Brunel could avail himself of all the accumulated knowledge of generations of ship-building. But the ark was the first of its kind with no previous model, and yet, had the ideal proportions for its purposes. Was Noah that intelligent? No--clearly he had the divine knowledge and help at his disposal and that was why the ship carried out its mission without a hitch.

What about carrying all the animals God ordered Noah to bring into the ark? Prof. Gleason Archer explains, "At the present time, there are only 290 main species of land animals larger in size than sheep. There are 757 more species ranging in size from sheep to rats, and there are 1,358 species smaller than rats. Two individuals of each of these species would fit very comfortably into two thousand cattle cars, with plenty of room for fodder" (*Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, 1982, p. 84). So there was plenty of room in the ark for Noah's family and the animals. In the darkness, most animals begin to hibernate and would need little food, water, and attention. Also remember, fishes and amphibians are aquatic creatures that can breathe underwater and can survive the Flood.

Geological evidence for the Flood

The whole Flood event lasted less than a year, and it took just a few months to reach its peak and then quickly descend again. So the idea there has to be great geological evidence for the Flood is false. Archer points out: "Perhaps the most striking evidences of the violence of the Deluge throughout the earth are to be found in the amazing profusion of Pleistocene (Recent) animals whose bones have been discovered in a violently separated state in several ossiferous fissures that have been excavated in various locations in Europe and North America...Since no skeleton is complete, it is safe to conclude that none of these animals (mammoth, bears, wolves, oxen, hyenas, rhinoceros, deer, and many smaller mammals) fell into these fissures alive, nor were they rolled there by streams. Yet because of the calcite cementing of these heterogeneous bones together, they must necessarily have been deposited *under water*...This is just exactly the kind of evidence that *a brief but violent episode* of this sort would be expected to show within the short span of one year. Of course there would be *little sedimentary precipitation* possible for such a short period of time" (p. 82-83).

Was the Flood local or worldwide?

What about the contention that the Flood might have been a local and not a worldwide event? Genesis 7:19-21 states, "And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved on the earth." Archer explains, "Now the most elementary knowledge of physical law leads to the observation that water seeks its own level...If the water level rose thirty thousand feet so as to submerge the peak of Mount Everest, the world's tallest mountain, it must have reached that level everywhere else on earth...Therefore we must conclude that the Flood was indeed *universal*, or else that the biblical record was grievously in error" (op. cit., p. 82).

Do we have scientific evidence for the Flood being universal and not local? Yes, we do.

- (1) In the 1960's and 70's, two American oceanographic vessels removed from the sea floor of the Gulf of Mexico several long core samples of sediment containing shells from plankton called foraminifera. While alive, they leave in their shells traces of the chemical composition of the water

temperature and salinity. When they reproduce, the shells are discarded and fall to the bottom. A cross-section of that bottom, carries a record of climates that may go back more than 100 million years. Every inch of core may represent as much as 1000 years of the earth's past. What scientists found left them astounded. Several thousand years ago, the shells registered a sudden great drop in the salinity of the water. Dr. Emiliani says, "The northern polar ice cap suffered a sudden collapse, and followed by a great thaw. An immense amount of fresh water poured into the Gulf of Mexico and elevated the sea level around the world with the velocity of a great tidal wave...We know this, because the oxygen proportion in the foraminifera shells reveals a substantial temporary drop in the salinity of the sea water in the Gulf of Mexico. *There is no question that there was a flood*, and there is no question *that it was a universal flood*" ("Noah, the Flood, the Facts," *Reader's Digest*, Sept. 1977, p. 133).

- (2) Now there is an additional proof with the recent discovery that the enormous Black Sea was created by a great flood with the equivalent of 200 Niagaras all rushing in from the Mediterranean Sea. Oceanographers William Ryan and Walter Pitman found the sides and the sea bottom contained fossils of sediments of the same period, and not a gradual accumulation, as the scientists expected. Again, since water seeks its own level, if the huge torrent of water created the Black Sea, it must have been a universal phenomenon.
- (3) In Mesopotamia, archaeologist Leonard Woolley found a nine foot level of clean clay between the different civilizations of the ancient city of Ur. "About sixteen feet below a brick pavement," noted Woolley, "which could with reasonable certainty date about 2700 B.C. we were among the ruins of the Ur which had existed before the Flood" (*The Bible as History*, pp. 27) "Microscopic analysis showed that the thick layer of clean silt had indeed been deposited by flood waters, a deluge extensive enough

to wash away the earlier Sumerian civilization. Here then was indisputable geologic evidence to go with the literary tradition of the great Flood..." (*Reader's Digest*, 1977, p. 132).

- (4) In regard to the Flood traditions, Keller writes, "Dr. Aaron Smith of Greensborough, an expert on the Flood, as a result of years of work he has collected a complete history of the literature on Noah's Ark. There are **80,000 works in 72 languages about the Flood**, of which 70,000 mention the legendary wreckage of the Ark" (*The Bible as History*, p. 38). Does this sound like the Flood was local? No!

Other Flood accounts

Some believe perhaps the Bible records a later account of the Flood and that it was taken from more ancient Babylonian records. Archaeologist Alfred Hoerth discounts this and explains: "Both accounts derive from the same source—the actual event. There was a flood, and both the Bible and the Gilgamesh Epic record it. As the descendants of Noah drifted apart and away from God, there must have been a long parade of human corruptions and polytheistic encrustations on the original and actual event" (*Archaeology and the Old Testament*, p. 196).

Is Noah's Ark still in Mount Ararat?

After almost a year after the rains began, the ark settles in the "mountains of Ararat," (Genesis 8:4) an extensive area in eastern Turkey. What happened to the ark since then? There is much interest in this subject, for if the ark is discovered again, it would be a powerful testimony to the world that the Flood truly existed, that there was a judgment once before by God to stem growing moral corruption in the world and that prophecy was fulfilled. This is why many don't want the Ark to be discovered.

Mount Ararat, in eastern Turkey, actually has two peaks, one of 17,000 ft. and the other of 14,000 ft—and they are some 15 miles apart! That is a lot of territory to try to find the Ark. These peaks are separated by a huge, dark gorge called the Agora Gorge that is covered with a permanent ice cap. Only in the warmest seasons is there a partial melting of the ice, and explorers can then get a better glimpse of what is below.

The historical record of those who have either seen the Ark there or who have heard witnesses is the following:

- (1) Berosus, the Babylonian historian (275 BC), records he could still go up and scrape the tar from the surface of the Ark. Those pieces of tar were then made into talismans for good luck.
- (2) Josephus, the Jewish historian, mentions, "The Armenian people call the area, 'the place of descent.' And the Ark was preserved there and people still are shown its remains until this day."
- (3) Marco Polo, in his chronicles, mentions the existence of the Ark and describes Mount Ararat.
- (4) In 1902, a young Turk, George Hagopian, went up Mt. Ararat with his uncle and actually climbed up. This is his story: "It took us almost eight days from the time we left our village Van to the moment we got to the place on the holy mountain where both my grandfather and my uncle had said the holy ship had come to rest. I guess my uncle took me there that year because it was a year without much snow—a 'smooth year' we called it. There's one of those about every 20 years. And then we visited the ark. My uncle dropped his pack, and together we began to haul stones to the side of the ship. Within a short time we had stacked a high pile of rocks against the side of the ship...When he reached the top, his hands grabbed my ankles and he began to push me up...I stood straight up and looked all over the ship. It was long. The height was about 40 feet...On the roof, besides one large hole, there must have been at least fifty of them. My uncle told me these holes were for air...I remember my uncle took his gun and shot into the side of the ark, but the bullet wouldn't penetrate. He then chipped a piece from the side of the ark with his knife. Then we went down the mountainside and returned to Van" (*The Incredible Discovery of Noah's Ark* (p. 191). George Hagopian later

came to the U.S. and has taken several lie detector tests and passed them all.

- (5) A Russian pilot passed over Mt. Ararat and saw the Ark. He reported it to his superiors and a search party was mounted in 1917. Some of the surviving Russian soldiers record they found the Ark. They said it was an immense thing that had cages—some with metal on them. The ark was pitched within and without with some kind of lacquer and was just as good as the day it had been built” (op. cit. p. 199).
- (6) Oil and pipeline engineer George Jefferson Green was on a business trip in Turkey when he flew over the northeastern flanks of Mount Ararat in a helicopter. He was shocked to see a wooden ship protruding from the ice and rocks below. He took photos of the ship and went back to the U.S. to form an expedition. Disheartened by the lack of interest, he went to British Guyana, and was murdered. His photos of the ark mysteriously disappeared.
- (7) Several U.S. pilots, flying over Mt. Ararat, testified they had seen and photographed the Ark. In 1974, a pilot of an F-4 fighter said, “The film was turned over to the Air Force and classified as ‘Top Secret.’ I don’t know what they did with it, but I can tell you what I saw with my own eyes. It was a dark, black foreign object about two thirds of the way up the mountain near a gorge. It was oblong and partially buried in ice, overhanging a cliff” (op. cit. p. 210).
- (8) French explorer Ferdinand Navarra took several expeditions from 1952-1955 up to Mt. Ararat and found the Ark. He actually climbed down into it and pulled several pieces of wood, that tested some 5,000 years old (p. 231).
- (9) In 1986, a Dutch TV station sent a film crew to Mt. Ararat and photographed a picture with a huge wooden object protruding from the ice.
- (10) Satellite imaging photos have revealed there is a rectangular object on Mt. Ararat. The problem in the last years is that with the Kurds fighting a civil war with the Turks, most expeditions have been

suspended. This last year, a large expedition with an Italian television crew was halted because Turkish authorities did not give the permission. But everything seems to point to something being up there. Only God knows if it is His plans to reveal this possible “trump card” to humanity. It would be a very powerful witness, although it is not conclusive that the ark has survived—only time—and God’s plans—will tell. (To know more about expeditions on Mt. Ararat, if you have Internet, see the web site: www.noahsarksearch.com).

Noah and his family leave the ark

Once Noah’s family and all the animals disembark from the ship, a new covenant begins with God. He gives more of His laws to prevent barbarity from again taking over and destroying society (Genesis 9:5-6). Civilization begins anew, but now based on God’s laws given by Noah. But also the past technologies are retained by Noah’s descendants. That is why pre-Flood and post-Flood artifacts, writing and construction methods are so similar. Some of this evidence survived for a long time. Halley notes, “An Egyptian Pharaoh mentioned he loved to read the writings of the times before the Flood.” Ashur-banipal, the great Assyrian king who founded a great library spoke of “writings from the time before the Flood.”

As a witness that God would never again bring another Flood upon mankind, He creates the beautiful rainbow (Genesis 9:13-15). Amazingly, it is a physical phenomenon that does not alter any other of the physical laws of nature already established. The rainbow can only be seen at an angle of 42°. In 1672, Sir Isaac Newton was the one who solved the riddle of how it is formed. It is produced by two refractions and one reflection of the sun’s rays as they pass through the drops of rain. The raindrops inadvertently act as wonderful prisms that split the light into its different colors.