

20. What About Noah and the Flood?

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MANY people ask about the Bible story of Noah and his great ship, the ark, some five hundred feet long and seventy-five feet wide, tossing on a shoreless ocean. Is the story of the Flood true or untrue, reality or myth, fact or fancy?

The settled views of some modern scientists and theologians would eliminate this story from the book of facts. They would make quick settlement of the whole question by saying, "The Flood story is myth. It belongs to the pages of childish fables."

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

What does Moses, author of the book of Genesis, say? In Genesis 7:4 God says, I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." Verses 19 and 20 state: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." That is the story as given by the first Bible writer. Now let us turn the pages to the writings of the apostle Peter, penned in New Testament times some fifteen hundred years later. In 2 Peter 3:3-6 he says: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of [or forget], that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Peter not only testifies to his belief in the Flood but prophesied that in the last days men would arise who would willingly, forget the story of the Flood. Furthermore, he calls such persons scoffers." It is impossible for us' in the light of these verses, to believe that Peter, in speaking of the Flood, was referring to some story he considered a fable.

What did the Son of God have to say regarding this question? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. . . . But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Without question Christ conceded the fact of the Flood, and said that as people in that day disbelieved and were lost, so at the time of His Second Coming men would refuse to believe, and thus be lost. To answer let us read Matthew 24:35-37:

THE POPULAR PRESENT-DAY THEORY

The popular scientific dogma of the present day is that no worldwide catastrophe or destruction, such as the Flood, ever takes place. Nature, it is said, works uniformly, except for more or less small capricious outbreaks, as earthquakes, violent storms, and so forth. There never was any direct creation, nor was there any sudden destructive Flood as the Bible says, according to the decree of popular science. "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation"-so Peter prophesied that they would say. And that is what they are saying. They subject God to the laws of nature, which He has set in operation, and say that He can never change them. However, since the discovery of atomic explosion men are not quite so certain as they used to be that the future of man is safe in his own hands. Notwithstanding, they wish no hand of God to intervene in the laws of nature.

They are like two woodpeckers someone wrote about, which built their nest in a telegraph pole on the railroad right of way. At a certain time every day a train went by. The woodpeckers nested there season after season, and the train kept up a regular schedule. They reasoned to themselves, it is said, that that train

had gone by their home each day at a given time, and that therefore it always would.

But one day the train did not come. The next day it did not come. In fact, it never did come any more. What had happened? Simply this: The management of the railroad had decided that the line would be discontinued. What had always been and what would always be, according to woodpecker thinking, discontinued.

The God of the universe may operate a long time on a given plan, but He is not limited to that plan. The Bible represents God as sending the Flood upon the world of the ungodly in a time of overwhelming wickedness. He either did or did not. Let us look now for evidence outside the Bible!

EVIDENCE FROM OUTSIDE THE BIBLE

Here is a quotation from Francois Lenormant, once professor of archeology at the National Library of France: "The lengthy review of the subject in which we have just been engaged leaves us in a position to affirm that the account of the deluge is a universal tradition in all branches of the human family, with the sole exception of the black race. And a tradition everywhere so exact and so concordant cannot possibly be referred to as an imaginary myth. No religious or cosmogonic myth possesses this character of universality. It must necessarily be the reminiscence of an actual and terrible event, which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it." - *The Beginnings of History*, pp. 486, 487.

FISHES AND THE FLOOD

In John M. MacFarlane's *Fishes the Source of Petroleum* we read: "It can be definitely said that, through all of the geologic formations in which fish remains occur, a large proportion of the remains consists of entire fishes or of sections in which every scale is still in position; every fin is extended as in life attitude. The bones of the head, though often crushed in and broken through subsequent diastrophic strains, still retain almost normal positions; while near them may be coprolites of the same or some other types of fish in a practically entire state. All of this conclusively proves that when millions of such fishes were simultaneously killed their bodies were deposited or stranded within a few hours or a few days at most after death, so that the flesh, the liver, the alimentary canal and other soft parts were unquestionably enclosed and intact, when sediment sealed them up." Page 400. Copyright, 1923. Used by permission of The Macmillan Co.

Not only do we find millions of fish, killed and buried at the same time, and so quickly as to preserve them perfectly; but frequently the deep-sea specimens of life are found buried in this fashion, mixed with shore species and land plants. It is common knowledge that the deep floor of the ocean is so calm as never to have its ooze disturbed by the most violent surface storm. Only some violent upheaval such as the Bible Flood, in which "the fountains of the great deep [were] broken up" (Genesis 7:11), would explain this mixture of the deep-sea specimens with those of shore and land, all covered and preserved by sudden destruction and burial.

FROZEN MAMMOTHS IN SIBERIA

Let us go to faraway and cold Siberia, where the ground is always frozen to a depth of a hundred feet or more-nature's refrigerator.

From this frozen depth men dig up the great Siberian mammoths, the tusks of which have been sold on the world market for a thousand years. Some of these beasts have been found with their flesh so well preserved as to be eaten by the explorers' dogs. In some instances the mammoths had undigested food in their stomachs and unchewed grass in their mouths.

It is indeed apparent that while hordes of these tropical animals were quietly feeding thousands of years ago, some mighty catastrophe overtook them, and buried them alive. And they have been preserved in cold storage to testify in these times to the truthfulness of the Bible story, and to deny the teaching of a slow, uniform procedure of nature at all times, as the modern dogma would require. The Manager of the universe sometimes does things differently.

Over an area of some ten thousand square miles the bodies of these mammoths are found. These tropical animals were thus caught in a catastrophe and frozen. James D. Dana says the climate must have

“become suddenly extreme as of a single winter’s night.” Quoted in *The Phantom of Organic Evolution*, by George McCready Price, p. 51. God warned Noah of “things not seen as yet” (Hebrews 11:7), and he believed to his salvation. God’s Word is true.

THE DINOSAURS

Take the mighty dinosaurs for another example—those giant animals, some about two hundred feet long, which roamed the Earth long ago, and now are gone. R. S. Lull says, “One of the most inexplicable of events is the dramatic extinction of this mighty race.” - *Ibid.*, p. 58. Had he believed in the Flood, the extinction would not be inexplicable. Henry Fairfield Osborn said that “the cutting off of this giant dinosaur dynasty was nearly if not quite simultaneous the world over.”-*Ibid.*, p. 59.

Great mammoths, mastodons, dinosaurs, and other antediluvian animals perished suddenly in a worldwide watery catastrophe. Their remains are still being discovered.

We read from Oliver P. Hay: “Genera and families, even orders, were wiped out of existence, and these included some of the noblest animals that have graced the face of the earth, the elephants, the mastodons, tapirs, many species of bison, horses saber tooth cats, huge tigers, and gigantic wolves.”-*The Pleistocene of North America and Its Vertebrate Animals*, p. 5.

The simple truth is that the most reasonable explanation of these things is the Flood. Christ said, “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:37. What Noah preached the people did not believe in his day, or believing, did not act upon the belief. Today the entire account is questioned as Peter said it would be. Jesus adds these significant words: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Verse 35.

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21. How to Understand the Bible

SOMEONE has said that “light travels at remarkable speed until it meets the human mind.”

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105. When this light strikes natural human minds it is ineffective, because “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them.” 2 Corinthians 4:4. How then can the darkened mind of man understand and receive the heavenly light of God’s divine Book?

There are five simple steps, five rungs to the ladder, that assuredly lead to ever-increasing understanding of the Word of God.

1. PRAY FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE

Any responsible person can pray. He may not be able to read or write or even see, but he can utter a prayer, a soul cry, a heart longing for God’s light. Prayer is a simple thing, and sincere prayer is likely to be simply stated. Here is one both simple and beautiful: “O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me.” Psalm 43:3.

Here is the one reason why we should pray before studying the Bible. This Book was inspired by the Spirit of God, yet “the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. Therefore we need that Spirit to enlighten us. Paul says:

“Now we have received ... the Spirit of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Verse 12. The thing to remember is that we receive the Holy Spirit through prayer. Said Jesus:

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” Luke 11:13.

God has warned us that if we walk in the light of our own fire and the sparks of our own kindling, we shall lie down in sorrow (Isaiah 50:11). But if our blind eyes are opened, we shall with the psalmist