

191009-4 Doctrine Series, The World-Wide Flood-CThurman

61. The World-Wide Flood*

God sent a world-wide flood in the days of Noah, when he commanded Noah to build an ark for the salvation of his house. All the mountains of all the earth were covered with water; fifteen cubits and upward did the waters prevail above the mountains. Every land-dwelling creature on the earth died. Only Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives were spared in the Ark and from them the earth has been repopulated.

Genesis chapters 6-9; Lk.17:26, 27; He.11:7; 1Pe.3:20; 2Pe.2.5.

**This is an added article not in the 1644 COF.*

The topics under article #59, 'God Created All Things' and article 61, 'The World-Wide Flood,' are what should be two of the most commonly received doctrines among those that profess faith in Christ. The word of God is so clear and so simple to understand on these points that there ought to be harmony throughout Christendom, but that isn't the case because there are differing views about how these should be interpreted. One view is a literal interpretation; that these are accurate, historical accounts of the truth. The other is a typical interpretation; that these only represent some other, greater truth.

How the word of God is handled affects one's faith and practice. Doctrine directs the life of the child of God. Without doctrine he shall be *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive ...* (Eph 4:14) The word of God says so many things so clearly that he should become a man of deep and abiding conviction. Strong convictions like:

Everlasting life means life everlasting – Eternal punishment means punishment for ever – Hell and the lake of fire are real places – The new heaven and the new earth is a real place – Jesus Christ is the Son of God come in human flesh – He came to die for the sins of a certain people – He raised bodily from the dead and is presently seated at the right hand of the Father – There is a literal Satan – There are literal, spiritual creatures called angels, seraphim, cherubim and devils – The church is only a local body, with its own discipline, government, members, officers, work, and

judgment before the Lord – The Lord’s Supper is only a symbolic memorial ordinance – Baptism is a watery grave – God is sovereign – God elected to save some before the foundation of the world – All others were reprobated, passed by – There will be a one-world order – There will come a leader of that one-world order, the Antichrist – There is a literal second coming of Jesus Christ – There is a first resurrection – There will be a millennial reign of Jesus Christ on this earth – There is a last resurrection – There is a new heaven and earth where the redeemed shall spend eternity with God & His blessed Son – etc.

Whether we study the history of the Bible, the history of the church, theology, ecclesiology, eschatology, pneumatology, soteriology, etc., every claim that we make must be validated by the word of God. There are many highly intelligent, powerful, influential, charismatic men nestled in every field of study, biblical studies not excepted. It is not that we must be more intelligent than they. It is that we must faithfully resort to the word of God. *Christ is our wisdom!* There are in the Scriptures some things that are *hard to understand*, meaning *misunderstood*. Peter said that of some of what the apostle Paul had written. (cf. 2Pe.3.16)

hard to be understood, δυσνόητα, nom. pl. neut. of δυσνόητος, & only this once in the N.T. Scriptures; see directly below, means *difficult to understand or misunderstood*.

δυσ an separable particle conveying the notions of untowardness, like *hard, ill, unfortunate, dangerous*; like the English prefixes, *un-, mis-*; opposite to the Greek εὖ-, well + νοητός, Liddell & Scott, *perceptible, intelligible*; the verb νοέω, *to understand, perceive, consider*.

Everything is subject to being misunderstood for a number of reasons: unbelief – ignorance – poor or bad instruction – personal & religious bias. But most things in the word of God are easy to understand. (cf. He.6.1)

In the application of the science of ^{*}hermeneutics the goal is to obtain the exact ideas being communicated in the Bible.

*interpretation; cf. the noun, 1Co.12.10; 14.26; the verb, Jn.1.38, 42; 9.7; He.7.2

We practice the science of hermeneutics as we read the Bible and draw conclusions from those things being communicated in it. In effect, we interpret the Bible. A correct interpretation depends on several considerations, the Spirit of God being our helper. Some consideration must be given to: who the writer is, the purpose for writing, from where was the writing, when was the writing, and to whom is the writing address. Another major consideration concerns whether what we are reading is to be interpreted literally or figuratively.

For example, the two ordinances of the church, baptism and the Lord's Supper are pictorial ordinances.

Ro.6.3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Baptism is a type, it represents the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this type we died and rose with Christ.

1Co 11:24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial ordinance. It is a supper which has in it two *typical* elements in it to remind us of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for us.

Unless there is some indication that a text of Scripture is a figure, a picture, a metaphor, a simile, or a type, it is to be interpreted literally.

Some apply to great portions of Scriptures a figurative, interpretive rule. This is also called *spiritualizing* Scripture. Necessarily they arrive to different conclusions than those who interpret the text literally. There are particular texts that are subject to the abuse of the figurative rule: the Genesis creation account, the Noahic flood, the person of Satan, the person of the Antichrist, the second coming of the person of Jesus Christ, much of the eschatology of the O.T. prophets, the apocalyptic portions of the gospels (Mt.24, Mk.13, Lk.17, 21) and the book of Revelation.

Our Lord Jesus referred to God creating creation, to Noah and the flood, and to a real creature called Satan.

Mr 13:19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

Lu 17:26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

Mt 24:39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Lu 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Now consider Article #61, The World-wide Flood.

First, the Bible never gives another sense but literal to the person of Noah or to the event of the flood. Moses and Christ literally referred to Noah and the flood (Ge.6.17, **Moses**; Mt.24.39, **Christ**):

Ge.6.17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

Mt.24.38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (cf. Lk.3.36; 17.26, 27)

So also does Job, the prophets Isaiah & Ezekiel, and the apostles Peter & Paul. (Job 22.15, 16, **Job**; Is.54.9, **Isaiah**; Ez.14.14, 20, **Ezekiel**; He.11.7, **Paul**; 1Pe.3.6, 20; 2Pe.2.5; 3.5, 6, **Peter**)

Job 22.15 ¶ Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?

16 Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood:

17 Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?

Is.54.8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

9 For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

Ez.14.13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

...

19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:

20 Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

He.11.7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

1Pe.3.18 ¶ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

2Pe.2.4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly ...

2Pe.3.5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

Second, while there is an oral tradition (called a *flood myth*) that has been passed down from generation to generation, the truth of it is only found in the Bible.

The flood myth motif is found among many cultures as seen in the Mesopotamian flood stories, Deucalion and Pyrrha in Greek mythology, the Genesis flood narrative, Pralaya in Hinduism, the Gun-Yu in Chinese mythology, Bergelmir in Norse mythology, in the arrival of the first

inhabitants of Ireland with Cessair in Irish mythology, in the lore of the K'iche' and Maya peoples in Mesoamerica, the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa tribe of Native Americans in North America, the Muisca, and Cañari Confederation, in South America, Africa, and some Aboriginal tribes in Australia.

Moses was not contemporary with Noah. Noah was born about 1,056 since creation. The flood took place about the year 1,656 since creation, 600 yrs later. Moses was born about 712 years after the flood, in the year 2,368 since creation and the LORD didn't reveal these things to Moses about 80 years later during Israel's wilderness sojourn to the land of Canaan. We either believe God or by rejecting it we say God is a liar.

Third, the facts of Scripture concern a real, historical figure. Noah had a father. His father's name was Lamech. Lamech lived 182 years of age and begat a son named Noah.

Ge.5.28 ¶ And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son:

29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. (Noah means rest. The Hebrew, נֹחַ, No-ach; cf. נַח, nu-ach, rest; also combined with מַנּוּחַ, ma-no-ach)

Is there anything indicating that this is not literal? Is there anything that indicates that we are reading fable or fiction? No. The genealogical account of Genesis chapter 5 is understood as the other genealogies in the Bible, literally. From Genesis chapter 5 we know that Noah was born 1,056 years from the time of the creation of Adam. He was also the 10th generation from Adam.

Fourth, consider the extensiveness of the flood. It was on a scale that would never be duplicated. The entire surface of the earth was immersed in a watery judgment. Because the whole race of men on this earth had so thoroughly corrupted the way of the LORD, He determined to wipe the earth clean of him in a moment.

Ge 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 ¶ And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth ...

...

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all (kinds of) flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Everything that depended on the soil to live, that breathed air, both man, beast, creeping thing, and fowls of the air ... everything shall die. Even the duration of the flooding and the depth of the water is given.

Ge.6.17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. (7.22, water dwelling, air-breathing creatures exempted)

Ge.7.4 For yet seven days, and 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. (7.22, understanding, that breathes air and dwells on the land.)

...

17 ¶ And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

This is the first instance when mountains are mentioned in Scripture. There is good reason to believe that the mountains were a direct result of the LORD's upturning of great land masses in this

destruction. The water rose to at least 22½' above the highest mountain on the earth.

21 ¶ *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:*

22 *All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.*

23 *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.*

24 *And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.*

The highest mountain was submerged in water. All the earth that was *under the whole heaven* was covered with water. (Ge.7.19) All of the families of the earth were removed by this great destruction, but for eight souls.

Ge.6.8 ¶ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Ge.7.1 ¶ And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

...

7 *And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.*

...

15 *And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.*

16 *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.*

1Pe 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

Fifth, apart from the Biblical evidence declaring the world-wide flood, there is also plenty of visible evidence in the earth.

The formation of glaciers all over the earth (which have been melting ever since).

The sequence of rock strata broken up world-wide. (This indicates a global, catastrophic event.)

The discovery of animal and plant life in the permafrost.

The fossils.

The great deposits of fossil fuels all around the earth. Coal, gasoline, oil, and natural gas are all evidence of great masses of earth's crust upturned in the flood.

All of the mountain ranges. (Mountains are not referenced in Scripture until the time of the great flood.)

The Grand Canyon, etc., etc., etc.

Sixth, rejecting the literal, Biblical account of the world-wide flood in favor of a regional flood creates a contradiction. The LORD promised that there would be no flood like this again.

Ge 9:11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

Yet we know that there have been many, many regional floods since that time. The conclusion is that God preserved for us the truth. Anyone that says otherwise is a liar.

In closing, Christians do not have to be geologists and scientists to understand the truth. All they need is to believe the word of God. There are things that we cannot explain. Not everything is revealed to us in Scripture.

De 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

The children of God can and should approach to the Scriptures from a believing viewpoint. Reverence the word of God and believe that record. The Bible teaches a literal creation week and a literal world-wide flood. Those that reject these events as literal and historical will have more difficulty with other great truths of God's word:

The miracles – Everlasting life – Eternal punishment – A literal hell – A bodily resurrection – Satan – Spirits, etc.

Unless there is something indicating that a text is a simile, parable, type, figure, symbol, or an example it must be interpreted literally.

But what about this flood account? It is given as proof that there is coming a day when the whole earth shall once again come under the judgment of God, but next time not with water. And as surely as that flood came then is as surely as the next judgment will come.

2Pe.3.5 For this they (the scoffers that reject the revelation of God's word through the holy Scriptures) willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

...

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

...

12 ... the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

The Christian should look for a literal coming of our Lord Jesus Christ from glory. He should look for a millennial reign of Christ on this earth. He should look for a literal coming fiery judgment that shall burn up this whole earth. He should look for look for a literal new heaven and a new earth. I am, because the Bible says so.