

Science, the Bible and the Flood that Changed the World (Genesis 7:6-12_
Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on April 12, 2009
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This evening we continue our series on Science and the Bible, part 2 – the flood that changed the world. No event since this chapter in world history has had a bigger impact on our planet as we know it than what we find in Genesis 7, changing the world as it once was. And the closest parallel to this catastrophic judgment will not again occur again on this planet till the end of time, which is why this study is so important: not only that we understand the past rightly but that we understand the future of our planet and all of history. Both events are literally true exactly how God’s Word describes.

If you take the beginning and end of the Bible equally seriously, I don’t believe environmentalism should be our primary concern – at least it doesn’t seem to be a major concern to God. God did tell Adam and Eve to subdue the earth (Gen. 1, i.e., use it for your benefit, harness its resources) but we are nowhere to exalt the earth or its creatures. Creation is designed for us to focus on the Creator. Much of the modern environmental movement is not about being good stewards, but is focusing on and exalting creation over the Creator and the far greater concerns of His Word. The Creator-God, by the way, in His Word as we’ll see tonight was not hesitant to destroy the entire world and all life because of sin. God Himself destroys the earth, its environment, ecology, everything.

Genesis 6:13 (NASB95) ¹³ Then God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me; for **the earth** is filled with violence because of them; and behold, **I am about to destroy them with the earth.** [*note the earth is included*]
¹⁷ “Behold, **I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth,** to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; **everything that is on the earth shall perish.**

Genesis 7:4 “... I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made”

Unfathomable judgment and untold destruction of the original earth and environment because of sin, and God is not shy to take responsibility for carrying out His righteous judgment on a sinful world. God doesn’t need us to get Him off the hook of judgment, on earth or eternally, and He doesn’t want us to. Sin is so serious to God that in Genesis 3 as Adam and Eve fell, the entire world was impacted with death and disease ever since. If we struggle with how seriously God takes sin and deals with sin, it’s because we don’t take it seriously enough, but the fact that we are still alive is actually (or should be) an astonishing evidence of amazing grace!

God is so holy and concerned with sin and the spiritual far more than the physical, that His entire world that He created and originally called “very good” is totally drowned and deluged and destroyed here by God Himself, as 2 Peter refers to it as the world that perished. God destroyed the world once and He will do it again – the 2 Peter 3 “global warming” our world should really be afraid of. Not only our planet but the universe will dissolve in fervent heat as God melts His original creation and makes a new creation of a new heavens and new earth that we should focus on. This temporary world is not our home, we are citizens of heaven, looking for a better country and land, as the Bible explains.

Man cannot and will not destroy this planet and man cannot and will not save this planet. We can be good stewards and try not to waste God-given blessings, but God can and will destroy this earth at the appropriate time no matter how many billions of dollars or Euros are spent by the radical left on globalism agendas and environmentalism, and God alone can save the world *spiritually*.

John 3:16-18 ¹⁶“For God so loved the world [*not the physical planet, but the souls of sinners He died for*], that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. [*this world will perish and so will we, but Christ gives eternal life in a new heavens and earth*] ¹⁷“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world [*sinners who trust Christ*] might be saved through Him. ¹⁸“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

I wanted to put that in perspective, that the spiritual is far more important than the physical to God, even though we will discuss some physical and even scientific and geological implications of the world-destroying and world-transforming Flood in Genesis 7. *We don't need science to prove Scripture, but we also don't need to be intimidated into thinking true science has disproved any part of Scripture.* We began to look at and answer some of the more common mocking and scoffing from scientific and skeptic sources last week on Genesis 7:1-5, and this evening we want to continue our study through this chapter by looking at the details in verses 6-12, which I hope will build strength in our faith even where our opponents want to shake our faith. There has been a lot of good research in recent centuries on the flood that this passage records, but not many studies have looked at each section carefully at a time in a verse-by-verse fashion. I want to read vs. 6-12 and seek to expound what God inspired in this text and then seek to also discuss some of the implications and questions that arise here.

Genesis 7:6-12 (NASB95) ⁶Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. ⁷Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. ⁸Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰It came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth. ¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. ¹²The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

FORTY DAYS – it's an interesting study in Scripture to see how numbers were used in Scripture. The phrase “40 days and 40 nights” in particular was used with 3 other key individuals at critical times in redemptive history, each signifying a new age:

Moses (Ex. 24:18): 40 days on Mount Sinai in wilderness

Elijah (1 Kings 19:8): also in wilderness sustained 40 days on journey to Horeb, another mount (“mount of God”)

Jesus – initiated His ministry after being sustained 40 days in the wilderness (Mt 4), then later went to another mountain and gave Great Commission (Mt 28:16-20) and ascended 40 days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3), which initiated a new age for the church of Jesus Christ.

It's interesting to me that these 3 individuals appeared together on another mount, the Mount of Transfiguration; Moses, Elijah, Jesus.

- Moses represents the Law, Elijah represents the prophets, and Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets.
- The “law and prophets” were short-hand to refer to OT revelation, but Christ is the final revelation of God, which is one reason why God said on the Mount of Transfiguration “this is my Beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased. Listen to Him.” (and the other 2 then vanish)
- The final book of the Bible is Revelation, which is the “revelation of Jesus Christ.” He is God’s final revelation, and we are not to add to that finished revelation, the book closes with. We don’t need new revelations. It’s sufficient.
- We don’t even need science or supernatural miracles for people to believe God’s Word. It is still a matter of faith – evolutionists have faith in their religion, too. I think it takes more faith to believe naturalism and evolution accounts for the incredibly intelligently designed creation that tells the glory of God, but both still are by faith. The facts of science are interpreted through one’s presuppositions / worldview.

VERSE 6 - compare Genesis 5:32 – the chapter ends with Noah at age 500 and then chapter 6 describes the sinful world that moved God to judgment. This informs us that as much as 100 years had passed since God told Noah to build the ark. In our studies of Genesis 5 if you weren’t here, you can get that message to look further into why they used to live so long, but there’s evidence not only from Scripture but from other ancient cultures of much longer lifespans before the flood (we’ll discuss later how interesting it is that essentially every culture on the globe has a flood story). It may be that Genesis 6:3 indicates God Himself began to decrease how long sinful man could live (you can get that past message to study)

When the time came it was only Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives that came aboard the ark, which is a sad note that for all those years of preaching, they didn’t believe him and only his family was saved. Jesus said they kept marrying and being given in marriage and living life as usual with no concern for the judgment to come and Jesus said it will be the same way for many when He returns. And those who are not in Him on that day, the door of opportunity will eventually be closed by God, and it will be too late then to escape God’s wrath.

The NT calls Noah a preacher of righteousness and the Bible consistently considers Noah one of the most faithful men to ever live. Jewish tradition and literature tells us that Noah repeatedly preached warnings of judgment, with the supposed very words he used (not inspired so we don’t know his exact words, but we do know the exact people that heeded and came aboard, only 8 -- all relatives). This is very instructive that Noah is repeatedly commended in other parts of the OT & NT as a faithful man, even though the numerical fruit or growth of his ministry was very small, by the standards of the world. Modern preaching strategists would consider Noah’s preaching a failure, or not very successful and would say he should change his ministry / message / methods.

“100 years of preaching and all they did was mock you the whole time and only your family came aboard?” But God defines success differently. How does God define success? *Being faithful*. We don’t need to change the message or the methods God has given: preach righteousness, preach repentance, preach the real Word of God, and leave results *to God*. What He requires of us is *be faithful*

⁸Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.

This further explains what we discussed last time; Noah didn't have to gather the animals from all around the world. God Himself made them all come to Him, as verse 9 reiterates "went into the ark *to Noah* by twos" – not entirely unlike the kids song "they came, they came in by twosies, twosies, elephants and kangaroosies, children of the Lord ... it rained and poured for forty day-sies ..."

I promised last week we'd look at how the kangaroos-ies got to Australia after the flood, and we'll look at that a little later.

¹⁰It came about after the 7 days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth.

This is exactly what God promised in v. 4 seven days earlier, and it happened exactly the way God said it would as it always does.

FLOOD – unlike English, the biblical language has more specific terms for flood. This is a special term that first appeared in 6:17:

¹⁷"Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy ...

'There is strong emphasis, missed in [some translations], on the opening pronoun: the whole design of judgment and covenant is the Lord's. Psalm 29:10 reiterates His sovereignty over the flood.'¹

Ps 29:10 The LORD sat *as King* at the flood; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever

That's the only other passage outside of the Genesis flood account that uses this Hebrew word "flood" and it refers to this same event. Other smaller or local floods have other words in the original language; this is *the* flood of floods, unique in all history. The Heb. *mabbul* has been described as related to an Assyrian word meaning "destruction" and this "flood of waters" has been translated as "the hydraulic cataclysm." The NT uniquely uses the Greek word *kataklysmos* for the Genesis flood (Matthew 24:39; Luke 17:27; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6) instead of the usual Greek word for "flood."

I trust it's easy to see why our world doesn't want to admit the flood of the Bible – because then you have to consider the Bible may be true about judgment and sin. So man suppresses the truth. Secular scientists are of course not opposed to the idea of local floods on this planet, maybe even a big flood in the Black Sea area or other regions, but the idea of a flood covering the earth as described in the Bible they reject. If they can show that the biblical flood is scientifically impossible and not to be taken seriously, they don't have to take seriously what's in the 65 other books of the Bible. "Surely no one still believes that Noah's Ark flood story other than some backwards Bible-thumping fundamentalists?"

Washington Times article and ABC News poll: '61 percent of Americans believe the account of creation in the Bible's book of Genesis is "literally true" rather than a story meant as a "lesson."

Sixty percent believe in the story of Noah's ark and a global flood ... The poll, with a margin of error of 3 percentage points, was conducted Feb. 6 to 10 [2004] among 1,011 adults.²

Of course not even all Christian schools believe God created the world in 6 literal days (percentages undoubtedly far smaller in Christian academic world – one survey suggested only 5% of Christian colleges take a stand in their doctrinal statement / faculty position that God created the world in 6 literal days).

What about secular scholars who have given their life to study the Hebrew language? Is it the grammar or syntax or lexical meanings of words that would lead scholars to disbelieve Genesis 1-11?

It's not actually the Scriptural message that makes liberal scholars reject the teaching of Genesis; it's liberal, skeptical and scientific presuppositions. As I said last week, the biblical story of Noah and his family in an ark made of gopher wood that housed every kind of animal surviving on earth through a worldwide flood seems to make critics of the Bible come out of the gopher woodwork.

One of the criticisms that first bothered me when I first heard it:

“There's no way even 40 days and nights of rain could flood the world. If you took all of the rain in all the clouds and in our atmosphere and dumped it on the earth at the same time, you could only flood the earth about 1 inch.”

Where did all the water come from? Where did it go afterwards? Those are good questions I had, too. Let's look at the text carefully

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened.

The Bible is being very precise here historically - to the year and day (some 4,500 or so years ago based on OT chronologies) and notice what it says “on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open.” That Heb. word “burst open” is translated in other places as breaking through / open / out, cleaving open, ripping open, splitting open, even as the earth opened up to swallow unbelievers on one occasion. Genesis 2 describes the original creation as having a great subterranean water source under the land and here it all comes out. Gen. 1:6-8 suggests there may have been more water in the atmosphere initially (v. 11 says “the floodgates of the sky were opened”) but most creation scientists today agree that most of the water must have come from below.

Scientists know of artesian wells and aquifers today underground. Apparently the original “great deep” had great depths of water within, at least enough to call them a “great deep.” The expression could also refer to fountains even in the oceans, maybe even underwater springs, volcanoes, etc. Whatever the “fountains of the great deep” included in v. 11, look at it: all of them, and all at the same time on the same day, fountains all over the earth, geysers, probably also land volcanoes (which I've read can erupt with up to 70% water, super-heated of course), all are broken open by God.

The language supports all kinds of sources – whatever was holding back fountains or fissures or fluids below in the initial hydrology of this planet all breaks apart on the same day, perhaps as a chain reaction springing all these leaks, including liquid, lava, layers or sprayers, all of it laid open and let loose; lakes and oceans soon flowing onto land that may have sunk down, natural levees that may have held back waters were broken through, and who knows what leveling or lowering or land-raising land was taking place during all the volcanic tectonic oceanic catastrophic events.

SEE SLIDES ONLINE AT GCBC WEBSITE

¹ Kidner, 89.

² Jennifer Harper, “Most Americans Take Bible Stories Literally,” *Washington Times* 2/17/2004
<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20040216-113955-2061r.htm>