



THE GLOBAL FLOOD

Genesis 7:1–8:14

The extent of the great flood and its destruction bears testimony to the extent of human depravity. The flood speaks of God’s righteousness in the judgment of sinners. The ark that rode on the flood testifies to His grace and mercy to those sinners who turn to Him in faith.

When we left Noah at the conclusion of our last study, the ark was completed and the animals had arrived miraculously in pairs, male and female, and walked up the gangplank into that massive three-story ark.

Now if the arrival of all these animals didn’t get the neighbors’ attention, nothing would. The truth is, for 120 years, as Noah built that ark, he would periodically pause and preach a message of warning about the coming judgment of water flooding the earth (2 Peter 2:5).

Crowds probably gathered in the early years to mock him, but my guess is, after 120 years, the world was ignoring him. In fact, the only people who responded to his invitation to join him on the ark were his three sons, their wives, and his own wife. Not one other person believed the message he preached.

Not many churches today would invite Noah to preach evangelistic services. I don’t think the average church today would even want to hear a message of judgment and a call for repentance from sin. But Noah was faithful; and that’s all God requires of His messengers—to stay the course and deliver the truth in love.

Now, Genesis chapter 7:2-3 informs us that clean



Tablet containing the Sumerian flood story with its hero, Ziusudra.

animals were being gathered in larger groups of seven—presumably because they’ll be used for food and then later for sacrifices.

After all the animals have entered, along with Noah’s family, moving all their suitcases inside the ark, I imagine Noah pausing and turning to the crowd that no doubt had gathered at this strange sight. And I can hear him asking them one final time if anybody



wants to join them and be saved from the coming judgment. But, of course, Scripture makes it clear that not one person ran up that gangplank to safety.

Verse 7 tells us, “And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood.”

Then down at verse 10 we read, “And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.”

Now wait a second. They get into the ark, and God personally shuts the door (verse 16). Then what happens? Nothing.

For seven days, not one drop of rain—nothing but sunshine. After about the fifth day of clear skies, I imagine the crowd outside starting to celebrate. There’s no rain to be seen.

By now the neighbors have started a volleyball tournament and fired up the barbecue grills there under the shade of the ark. They’re having a great time! “God isn’t going to judge anybody. Pass me some more potato salad; we’re all going to be just fine.”

We don’t know why God waited seven days. We’re never told that God explained the delay to Noah either. He usually doesn’t explain His delays to you either.

Maybe this was God’s way of showing His mercy is long-suffering. But after the seventh day, the picnic turns into a panic. Verses 11-12 read:

On that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

Where I live, if it rains hard for an hour, water fills the drainage ditches; if it rains hard for a day, streets start flooding; if it rains hard for three or four days, rivers start overflowing.

Well, here it rains for forty days and forty nights; and added to that, we’re told that great underground res-

ervoirs explode like volcanic eruptions. In less than six weeks, the earth’s surface is covered with water.

The Bible says over in verse 17. “The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.”

Verse 19 reads: “The waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.” And verse 20 says, “The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.” That’s twenty-five feet higher than the mountaintops!

God states in the clearest way possible that this was a global flood.

Now look at verse 21:

And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind.

Notice that repeated word “all”? Let me give you the literal meaning of the Hebrew word for “all”—it means “all.”

And in case you have any doubts, look at verses 23-24:

[God] blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was



left, and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

God states here in the clearest way possible that this was a *global* flood. This wasn't a local flood or a regional flood but a *worldwide* flood.

We're told in Genesis 8:4 that "the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat."

Many people I talk to think the flood was a local flood and Noah got into a boat and floated around for a few weeks and then bumped into Mount Ararat. Well, Mount Ararat is 17,000 feet high, and God tells us in verse 5 that it took several months for the floodwater to run off before "the tops of the mountains were seen."

That's a lot of water running off to form the oceans and rivers and lakes, and to refill many of those underground reservoirs with water.

Most people don't realize that Noah and his family are on this ark for slightly over one year. This wasn't a little weekend trip out in their sailboat.

Finally, in verse 6, Noah sends out a raven, but it can't find a place to land. Then he sends out a dove in verse 8, and the dove can't find a resting place. Why? Verse 9 tells us "the waters were still on the face of the whole earth."

Noah waits another seven days to send out that dove again. It amazes me that Noah waits another week to send out the dove. He's been in that ark for nearly a year! I would've been sending out a dove every thirty minutes until I ran out of birds.

For people to believe that this was not a global flood, they have to ignore the record of Scripture.

If the flood was local, the animals, along with a lot

of people, simply could have migrated to higher ground. If the flood was regional, God's word becomes untrustworthy because He repeats that the waters covered the *whole* earth. And God's promise over in Genesis 9:11 becomes a lie, because He tells Noah He will never send another flood like this one again. I don't know if you watch the news, but every year regions of our world experience floods.

So, if God was promising that another *local* or *regional* flood would never occur again, His promise has been broken over and over again.

By the way, Jesus will use the global flood as an illustration of future, worldwide judgment. In Matthew 24:37, the Lord says, "For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." The Lord's return isn't going to impact some small region of the earth but the entire world. The apostle Peter said that the early world perished by water, but a future judgment of fire will fall on all who do not believe in Christ (2 Peter 3:6-7).

My friend, the people of Noah's generation ignored the warning, and judgment came. Let me invite you to believe God's warning of a future judgment. Ask the Lord right now to save you from that final judgment of fire. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Make sure you're safe from God's coming judgment.

How would you measure your faithfulness to God, and how can you develop more consistent faithfulness?

Why is it important to affirm that the flood was global in extent? How is this truth tied to God's character?

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