



## THE RAINBOW

Genesis 8:15–9:17

The global flood of Noah’s day not only brought divine judgment upon the sinful world; it also brought about some significant changes to our world that are still evident today. Moreover, the flood gave rise to some wonderful promises of God to all humanity.

Following the worldwide flood, a number of things changed.

First, the earth’s topography was dramatically changed. We’re told in Genesis 7:11, “The fountains of the deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.” Down in verse 19 we’re told, “The waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.”

In verse 20 we’re told the water was at least twenty-five feet higher than the tallest mountain. And that answers the question as to how marine fossils are

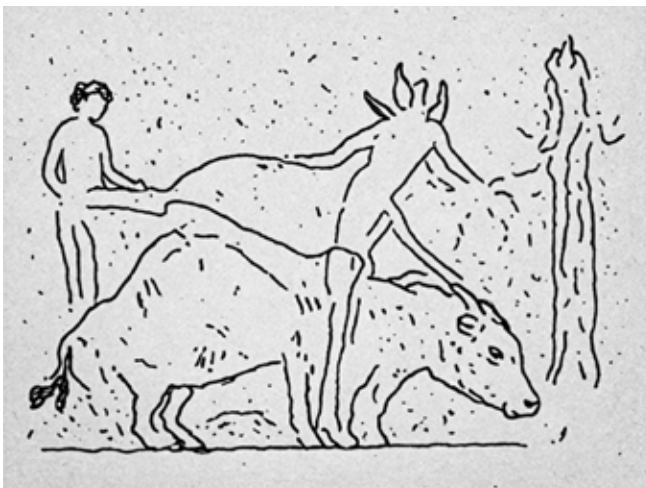
found on the summits of our tallest mountains. The flood deposited them there.

And then we’re told in chapter 8 and verse 3 that it took five months for all that water to recede, which would have created tremendous changes through sudden erosion.

If it pours rain for a couple of hours, the water creates gullies and little avalanches and miniature waterfalls in my backyard. It picks up my mulch and moves it twenty feet down the driveway.

People tell me, “Stephen, the earth has to be millions of years old, because it would take millions of years to erode those canyons and river valleys.” Normally, yes. But this global catastrophe wasn’t normal. There was immense pressure from water, volcanic lava, rock and ice flows, the bursting of underground rivers, and the pushing up of the earth’s crust. When the rain stopped, there was nearly a year of receding, rushing water forming and filling the oceans and canyons and lakes. Can you imagine the erosion?

We know that one wave in a storm can pick up a boulder weighing six thousand pounds and toss it around like a baseball. Imagine boulders crashing around in the floodwaters, carving and sculpting the planet’s surface.



Painting from the tomb of Ity depicting the sacrifice of an ox.



Today the earth looks millions of years old, with breathtaking rock formations and waterfalls and canyons, and islands formed from volcanic eruptions, all of which would have taken millions of years to form under normal conditions. But according to God's Word, it was all shaped in a matter of months during the flood.

Now, there's another change following the flood, and it relates to the weather.

The Bible tells us that in the early days of creation—all the way up to the time of Noah—it had never rained (Genesis 2:5). The earth had been watered with heavy dew, from evaporation and condensation, along with underground springs and rivers of water.

During the flood, we're told, the underground reservoirs exploded, producing the water that then filled the ocean basins and water systems that literally cover 71 percent of the earth's surface.

Due to the flood and volcanic ash blocking out the light of the sun for quite some time, as well as intense evaporation of so much water, there was indeed an ice age that followed. Conservative estimates consider the ice age lasting several hundred years, not the millions of years promoted by evolutionists.<sup>1</sup>

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Now, God gives Noah and his family a wonderful covenant promise, as they leave the ark. And I think if you asked most Christians what that promise was, they would immediately refer to the rainbow. But there's another promise that comes first, and it's just as significant as the one associated with the rainbow.

As Noah and his family are leaving the ark, where they've spent the past year, God promises them:

*While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.* (Genesis 8:22)

This promise means that the earth isn't going to burn up or dry up. The sun's not going to fizzle out, and we won't run out of food or water as long as the earth remains.

And the Bible tells us the earth will remain until God destroys it at the end of human history. The apostle Peter writes about this event in 2 Peter 3:10:

*The heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be [burned up].*

So, the earth is going to remain until the final judgment, the Bible tells us, which will take place at the end of the millennial kingdom, in Revelation chapter 20.

Back here in Genesis 8 we have this promise that answers everybody who wonders if the planet is going to run out of trees or be destroyed by climate change or fried by some solar flare.

Listen to God's promise to Noah again here in Genesis 8:

*While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.*

So, you can go to sleep tonight and pillow your head on the promise of God that you're not going to have



to save the planet. After all, this is God’s planet, not yours. Now, don’t pollute it. Take care of it, and be a good steward of it; but just remember, God has already planned for the creation of a new universe and a brand-new earth for His redeemed to enjoy and explore forever. John the apostle writes in Revelation 21:1: “Then I saw a new heaven [universe] and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”

There’s another change following the flood, and this involves the relationship between animals and humans. In chapter 9 God tells Noah that He’s going to place within animals a natural fear of mankind.

The Bible says in verse 2:

*The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea.*

Now that’s going to protect the human race from some pretty big animals. And that’s not a bad thing for the animals either, because God tells Noah in verse 3, “Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you.”

God allows humans to eat whatever animals will taste good—and chickens haven’t been safe since! Now you’re not *commanded* to eat meat, and you might not want to eat meat for personal reasons; but remember that people like me have God’s full permission to eat a cheeseburger every once in a while.

Here’s the greater principle: God has given dominion of the animal kingdom to mankind for the benefit and support of mankind, and for food, according to God’s Word.

But when somebody denies God as Creator and the

Word of God as a guidebook, what happens? The rights of animals often increase while the rights of humans decrease.

In America today it’s a federal offense to crush the egg of an unborn eagle, but a doctor can crush an unborn human baby without being prosecuted. Whenever God’s Word is denied, human value decreases, and animal value frequently increases. I’ve seen starving children in the streets in India while a cow lay in the shade chewing its cud. Why don’t they barbecue that cow and feed those kids? Well, because they believe that a cow is more valuable than a child.

Now that doesn’t mean we can go around mistreating animals. A godly man takes care of the needs of his animals—including his cows (Proverbs 12:10). But the time may come when he’ll butcher that cow and feed his family, because his family is more important than a cow.

Now there’s one more promise from God, and this is the one you’ve been expecting. In verse 11 God promises He will never again cover the earth with a flood. And He establishes the rainbow as the permanent sign of this promise in verse 13.

And God has kept this promise. There have been local and regional floods, but a worldwide flood has never taken place again—and never will.

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How would you summarize the biblical view of animals? Why is it important to understand and maintain this viewpoint?

How do God’s promises in Genesis 8 and 9 shape your thinking and attitudes toward the earth and its future?

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<sup>1</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Baker Book House, 1976), 215; Jonathan D. Sarfati, *The Genesis Account* (Creation Book Publishers, 2015), 587

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