

Flood

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[0 : 00] I want you guys to open up your copy of the scriptures to Genesis chapter 7. We're going to read all of Genesis chapter 7 Genesis writes, And every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.

And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him. Noah was 600 years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. 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.

Of clean animals and of animals that are not cleaned, and of birds and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the 17th day of the month, 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.

On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark. They and every beast according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, every winged creature.

[2 : 08] They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh, in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him, and the Lord shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters.

And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved on the earth.

Birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind, everything on the dry land, in whose nostrils was the breath of life, died.

He 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.

[3 : 14] And the waters prevailed on the earth, 150 days. Father, by your spirit, take your word now, and work it into our hearts and minds, so that we are challenged by it, and changed by it.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. You guys take a seat. The story of Noah and the flood. Noah's ark.

It's probably one of, if not the most well-known story from the Old Testament today. I mean, if you talk to the average person on the street and ask them to name as many stories as they can from the Bible, there's no doubt that those that can name some stories in the Bible will probably cite the story of Noah, and the ark, and the flood, and all that happened to it.

We paint murals in children's rooms and in nurseries of a giant boat with animals streaming into it. There's a movie coming out in just a couple of weeks about the flood, and about Noah, and about all of these events that took place.

So this is a well-known story. Most of you probably know at least some of the details of the story. And yet, because it's such a well-known story, it's also become a target.

[4 : 31] A target for ridicule. A target for those who want to attack the truthfulness of the Bible. Attack the historical accuracy of the Bible. Saying things like, well, that's impossible.

You can't have a flood that's that large. Or, you can't fit all those animals onto a boat. And on and on and on go the criticisms of this particular biblical story.

And so this morning, as we're looking at the account of the flood, having already looked in chapter 6 at the cause of the flood, which is God's anger towards human sin.

I told you last week that the response of a righteous, just, and holy God to sin is always anger and wrath.

Even when that wrath is targeted at His own Son who bears the penalty for our sins so that we might receive forgiveness. Sin never gets a pass from God.

[5 : 27] It cannot because He's holy. Because He is just. And so we saw the cause of the flood. And now, in chapter 7, we're looking at a number of the details surrounding the event itself.

And so, I just want us to ask three basic, simple questions about the story that we can get some help from from chapter 7 of Genesis this morning. And that is, number one, what was the flood like? What kind of flood are we talking about? What's the nature of the flood? And then number two, could such an event have actually occurred? I mean, is it plausible? Is it possible?

Or do critics rightly target this story as a place where they can ridicule and assault the Bible? And then lastly, why does it matter? I mean, at the end of the day, why should it matter to us whether or not this took place?

Why should it matter to us whether or not these chapters record actual historical events that happened? So we'll start off with the nature of the flood. But if you look first at this chapter, it's very neatly arranged so that you can kind of remember the details of what's happening.

[6 : 35] The first five verses, just to recall God's commands to Noah. So that he tells Noah, you're going to get on the ark, you're going to take these kind of animals. And then in verse 5, we see Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

So we begin in verse 1, the Lord said to Noah, go into the ark, get to verse 5, Noah did it. He did everything that God told him to do. And then verses 6, all the way down through verse 16, give us details about how Noah obeyed those commands.

About how all the animals got onto the ark. About which animals were on the ark. How many of them were there and all those sorts of things. We get all the details in those verses so that we begin with verse 6, Noah was 600 years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth.

And then you turn down to verse 16, and those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him and the Lord shut him in. So you have the commands and then you have them actually obeying the commands and getting on the ark.

And then the rest of the chapter tells us the details about the flood. Verse 17, the flood continued 40 days on the earth. Verse 24, the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

[7 : 45] So that's the outline of chapter 7. That's it. Fix it in your brain. Commands, details of how those commands are obeyed, and then details about the flood itself, how long it lasted, and how big the flood was.

That's the outline of the story. So the first question we need to ask here and deal with is, what was this flood like? What kind of flood was it? Because you will find a number of people, you'll see this on the Discovery Channel or the History Channel or A&E;, anytime they're doing some of those, the real story behind the Bible type documentaries, right?

And you will find them often saying, well, there's a little bit of truth behind the story of Noah and the flood because we've discovered in this region there was a local flood that covered this large area of land about this time.

And so you have to ask the question, does that kind of picture fit with the details of the Bible? Does the picture of maybe a very large but local flood in a particular region, will that fit with the details that we find here?

And the answer is, no, it won't. Because when we ask, what kind of flood was this? We can sum it up by saying, it was universal. It was worldwide.

[8 : 58] Just in its extent, just in the area that was covered by water, it was universal. It was worldwide. Take a look all the way down in verse 19. We are told that the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.

The waters prevailed above the mountains covering them 15 cubits deep. That's roughly 22 or 23 feet. So the water, according to this passage, rose over 20 feet above the highest mountain peaks.

Now you guys know how water works, right? It just follows gravity. Pour a cup of water on the floor in your house and you'll see if your house is level. Not on the carpet though because it'll just soak it up and then it'll start to smell later.

Alright? On the concrete or on the tile. Water just follows gravity. It's always going to go to the lowest point. So that if the water here covers the highest point, that means that it covered the entire world.

There's no land left in sight on the entire globe. You cannot find it. This is a universal worldwide flood in its expanse.

[10:09] But it's also universal in that all the people other than Noah and his family, all of them died. It's worldwide in terms of its effects upon humanity.

Now we don't know exactly how many people lived in the world then. Several weeks ago when we were in, oh I think it was chapter 4, looking at the story of Cain and Abel, I shared with you some figures that I had run on how many people could have possibly lived and how quickly could they have procreated.

And by the time of Noah and the flood, you're dealing with the potential of hundreds of millions of people upon the earth. Perhaps even more than that. Lots of people upon the earth by this time. If you just do the math, if you just look at the numbers given in Genesis, you just calculate up the ages, and you just figure out how many kids they probably had, it was a lot.

Alright? So we're dealing with millions and millions of people and only eight people survived the flood. Only those who were in the ark.

[11:14] Verse 23. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man, and, listen to this, and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, they were blotted out from the earth.

So it's universal in it that covers the entire world. It's universal in it that it kills all the people in the world, but it's also universal in that it kills all the animals in the world.

Whether they be sheep or goats or cattle or birds or anything else, if it doesn't live in the water, it's dead at this point. It's universal.

It's worldwide. The only survivors are those that are on the ark in this boxy boat that Noah himself had built.

This is massive. This changes everything in the world. Everything. This means that not only do you have to account for the starting over of these living creatures after the flood, you also have to account for a vastly different world before the flood and after the flood.

[12:27] I mean, just listen to the description of the flood itself in verse 17. The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark. The waters prevailed and increased.

This is massive. These waters are everywhere and they are covering and in the process destroying everything in their path. For a hundred and fifty days we're told that the waters prevailed.

In other words, from the time that it started raining until the water finally starts to recede and we get the account of that in chapter 8, from that day to that day is one hundred fifty days.

That's a long time for everything to be covered in water. That's a long time for water to be surging all over the world. But it's not even, it's not just the rain.

Because we're told earlier in the chapter in verse 11, we're told that on that day all the fountains of the deep, of the great deep burst forth and the windows of the heavens were opened.

[13:26] So the picture that we're getting here in terms of the nature of the flood is not just rain from the sky. Which, forty straight days of a torrential downpour is a lot of water. But we're dealing with far more than that because we're told that these fountains of the great deep burst open.

Now we don't know exactly what the fountains of the great deep would have consisted of. They would have probably been far, far more than the aquifers that we have underneath the ground today where we get most of our fresh drinking water from.

They've been far larger than that then. If you recall way back in Genesis chapter 2 we were told that there was no rain prior to the flood. In the original sort of creation the earth wasn't watered by rain.

The earth was watered by mist or we don't know how to translate that word but basically some form of water that came up from the ground. So you're talking about a world that is inundated with water beneath the ground and now the fountains of the great deep burst open.

This massive amount of water comes out to begin to cover the earth combined with water that comes from above. Which means that the shape of the world before the flood would have been vastly different than the shape of the world today after the flood.

[14 : 43] Vastly vastly different. We're talking about the moving of continents. We're talking about the bursting forth of ocean floors. These are not small events.

This is earth shattering. which is significant because when you begin to ask the second question is it possible? Is it even possible for an event like this to take place?

One of the first criticisms that you'll hear from those who deny the accuracy of the biblical account is that there's not enough water to cover the world. There's just not enough water to do it.

You can run the numbers. You can calculate all the water in the atmosphere, all the water in the oceans, all the water in the rivers and streams and lakes and aquifers and everywhere else and there's not enough water to go past Mount Everest.

There's just not enough to do it. It doesn't exist. To which I would reply there's not enough water to cover the mountains that exist now.

[15 : 43] Mountains formed when the world was fundamentally reshaped by a giant flood that moved the earth.

You see what I'm saying here? You have to assume that the flood did not happen and that the world looked back then the way it looks now in order to argue that there's not enough water to cover the existing mountains now.

It's circular. You just go around in a circle. Well, the flood didn't happen so the world looked the same back then and if the world looked the same back then you couldn't have covered the mountains. But the flood did happen which means that the world didn't look the same and so the highest mountains back then were, we don't know, much smaller.

The amount of water contained in these aquifers in these underground springs could have been enough to cover. Could it have happened?

Is it simply just feasible just on the level of is there enough water? Would the amount of water required a sign to say would it have completely crushed the earth?

[16 : 50] No, because it was a different world. It wouldn't have taken the volume of water that it would take today to cover the earth. And in fact when you begin to look around the world when you begin to look in the deserts and on the mountaintops and valleys and plains when you begin to look around the world today you cannot find any place in the world where you do not find evidence of marine life having been there at one time.

Everywhere. Go to the mountaintops you'll find seashells. Go anywhere you want to go you'll find evidence of marine life. The physical evidence is there.

The issue is how do you interpret the physical evidence? That's the issue entirely. If somebody says to you well you know science has proven that this could not have taken place that's not actually true.

What it means is that one person's interpretation of the evidence leads them away from the biblical text. But you might interpret the evidence in another way. I could just as easily say those shells arrived on those mountaintops in a worldwide flood as I could say millions and millions of years ago that mountain was beneath the water because it was slowly rose above the earth over years. I could say either and either conclusion can be derived from seashells on top of a mountain. Could it have happened?

[18 : 23] Is there any evidence at all that it may have happened? Yes it could have happened. Yes there's evidence that could be interpreted along those lines in the physical world around us.

But maybe more importantly than just finding seashells on mountains is the fact that when you look at the history of various cultures around the world if you begin to look at the stories that they tell you will find in almost every single culture in the world whether they be in China whether they be in Southeast Asia or India or the Middle East or Northern Europe or Central Europe or Southern Europe or South America or North America or the Pacific Islands it doesn't matter.

If you look at their stories almost all of them have an old old story about a flood that killed everybody all of them now the closer the closer physically you get to Israel so say the stories from Babylon or Assyria not too far from Israel in the ancient world the closer you get to ancient Israel the more the stories resemble the story that we find in the Bible the further away you get the more the details diverge from the story that we find in the Bible but you find flood stories everywhere and that makes

perfect sense because the further away a story is passed the further away people move the further they travel the less contact they have with others who are more closely aligned with the events themselves the less likely they are to have an accurate version of the story it's perfectly logical it doesn't it's not surprising and yet despite all of those differences in all of these flood stories there are shocking similarities among them we're talking about groups of people that have no contact today and have not had contact today have not had a contact in any part of written human history at times in fact

I started to read a number of these flood stories this week I got through about half a dozen of them and I got bored and so I decided to find if someone else had done what I was doing and read several of them and they did in fact I came across one particular scholar who read 200 of these various flood stories from different cultures around the world and he just compiled some statistics that I'm going to share with you and out of these 200 stories of a flood in 88% of them there was a chosen favored family that survived the flood in 88% of them in 66% of them those chosen people were warned before the flood would come that it was in fact coming in 66% of them so that's two thirds again the flood came because of the wickedness of human beings interesting in 95% of these stories the flood was universal it was global it was worldwide in only 5% of them was it a local flood so you have all these stories around the world about a global worldwide flood most of which have a family chosen out warned about the flood that survives the flood in 70% of those stories the people who survived survived on a boat in 67% of the stories they put animals on the boat in 57% this is shocking in 57% that means just add it up that's 114 out of 200 stories so in 114 of these 200 stories from around the world the boat that the survivors were on landed on a mountain huh that's what happened to Noah that's weird alright in 35% that's 70 out of 200 stories that's pretty good at the end of the flood they sent out birds to find out if there was dry land that's a weird detail to have in that many stories around the world it's a weird detail if they're all making up stories on their own isolated from one another in 7% it's not a high number but that's 14 total of these ancient stories in 7% there's a rainbow mentioned after the flood in 13% so 26 out of 200 stories in 13% of them after they got off the boat they offered a sacrifice which is what

Doa does and then this is remarkable in 9% so that's in 18 of these 200 stories in 9% only 8 people survived the flood according to Genesis it was Noah his wife his 3 sons and their wives 8 people is there any evidence that this event really really took place yeah there's a lot of evidence that this event really really took place that is often conveniently ignored but more importantly than all of that more importantly than seashells on mountaintops and stories spread around the world about a global flood more important than that is the testimony of Jesus himself and of the apostles because people today love to dismiss the vast majority of the bible and yet say but I like

[24 : 00] Jesus I don't like the old testament too much killing going on there too much weird stuff happening there I don't particularly like the apostle Paul all that much he seems anti-woman or something like that I don't like Paul much but Jesus I'm okay with Jesus everybody seems to be okay with Jesus so we'll see what Jesus says hold your place in Genesis turn over to Matthew chapter 24 Matthew chapter 24 is in the midst of this long teaching lesson that Jesus is giving called Mount Olivet teaching and he says this though he's talking about his second coming here towards the end of chapter 4 and he says this in verse 37 as were the days of Noah so will be the coming of the son of man that's how he refers to himself I'm coming back here's what it's going to be like just like it was back in Noah's day alright for as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking marrying and giving in marriage until the day when

Noah entered the ark and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away so will be the coming of the son of man Jesus says they weren't ready for the flood in Noah's day they weren't ready they didn't believe Noah they didn't believe the flood was coming they were carrying on with life marrying getting married eating and drinking they were just carrying on with everyday life and the flood swept them away and he says when I come back it's going to be the same life will be carrying on everybody will be doing what they normally do and you won't expect it and I'll be there I'll sweep away those who have not trusted in me Jesus assumes that the flood is as real as his coming back to the earth it's a real event for Jesus never enters his mind that it may not be that it might be some sort of allegory or some sort of myth or fable aimed to teach us a moral lesson never occurs to Jesus he just assumes that's what happened and in the same way that that happened

I'm going to come back and it's going to be really similar the apostles teach the same things turn over to 2nd Peter it's kind of hard to find but it's toward the back of your New Testament in 2nd Peter chapter 3 Peter is also talking about when Jesus is going to come back but Peter now is several decades removed from when Jesus originally said that he was going to come back and by this time there have been a few people who have begun to say I don't think he's coming back it's not going to happen I mean you keep saying he's going to come back and I know you say that he said he was going to come back but everything I mean it doesn't look like it I mean everything's just continuing on the way it has been so I think you might be wrong Peter I don't think he's coming back so Peter has something to say about that in 2nd Peter chapter 3 he says verse 4 talking about the people he says they will say where is the promise of his coming for ever since the fathers fell asleep all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation so Peter's opponents are saying look the world operates the same way it always has there's no sign that it's about to end everything's always been this way ever since

God made the world to which Peter says they forgot about something he says in verse 5 they deliberately overlooked this fact that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God Genesis chapter 1 and that by means of these the water that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished you see he's saying exactly what Genesis chapter 7 said yeah sure God made the world but the world that God made was covered over it was destroyed by the flood you think that we still live in the world that God originally created and it's no different it's been radically altered Peter says that world was deluged and you've forgotten just as just as the world was changed fundamentally changed by the flood

Peter says so also he is coming back and he is going to fundamentally change the way that this world operates see there's always a connection there in the New Testament between the flood and the judgment of Noah's day and the return of Christ and the judgment that will come on that day and that connection assumes that the flood of Noah really happened you cannot have your Jesus without your Old Testament you can't have it because Jesus will not be had without the word of God he assumes that it's real so yeah there's evidence in the world around us there's evidence in the ground and on the mountaintops there's evidence in the history and the stories that have been passed down generation to generation among ancient cultures but more important than anything else Jesus said it happened he said it happened the apostles said that it happened so it happened it really happened there was a worldwide flood and Noah and his family and a bunch of animals got on a big giant boat that

[29 : 44] Noah built and they were rescued it happened it's real it's plausible it can occur it did occur so who cares why would I devote a whole sermon talking about this sort of stuff because I didn't do a whole lot of arguing for creation when we did Genesis chapter one I just kind of preached through it I didn't do a whole lot of arguing for why I'm going to pause right now and argue for the reality of this event why am I going to argue that it was in fact worldwide and not some local small flood why am I saying that because it matters whether or not you have confidence in this book if the flood didn't happen there's no reason to trust anything else in these pages and I want you to trust in this book I want you to know that contained in this book is truth the disciples said to

Jesus where else are we going to go Jesus you have the words of life and contained in this book are the words of life that come to us through Christ this whole book Jesus himself tells us in Luke 24 this whole book is ultimately about him and so if you want to know Jesus you need to know this book but to know this book you've got to have confidence that the information that you get from this book is real and true and accurate and so I want you to know that it is I want you to know that this earth shattering world changing event really did take place there's plenty of evidence for it it's real it happened I want you to trust in the word of of God but more than that I want you to know that just as Jesus said that just as Peter said the world will face another judgment the flood was not the final word from

God on wrath and anger against human sin it was not the final word there will come a day when Christ comes back and all of those whose sins have not been punished on the cross of Christ through faith in Jesus they will face judgment on that day and the Bible tells us it will not be a judgment of water it will not be another flood it will be a judgment of fire and it will last forever we will continue on with our lives right now we will be eating and drinking and people will be getting married and kids will be born and things will be happening and it will feel like life just goes on and

on if you're young enough it will feel like it just goes on we all assume we're going to live long enough to see our children grow up to see them have kids and then our kids will live long enough to see their kids have kids and we all assume that things are just going to go on and maybe those things will happen maybe yet another thousand years maybe yet another five thousand years before

Jesus returns! but what we know is he will return when nobody's expecting it life will go on and he will return and there will be no time left to reassess your thinking about Jesus on that day trust in this word now and trust in the one that this word is about now let's pray father it's a good thing to have a book like this a book that doesn't merely reflect the stories of a particular ancient culture a book that doesn't merely reflect the opinions of men who lived a long time ago but that a book that contains your revelation of yourself to us a book that shows us who you are a book that points us toward the way to salvation and

I pray father that our confidence in this word would be bolstered as we consider the reality of the flood but more than that I pray that everybody here would trust in Jesus and have no reason to worry about the coming judgment that we would trust in him to be our ark our boat who delivers us safely through the judgment!

[34 : 53] God God I pray Father that for those who are here who may not trust in Jesus that they would lay aside their objections and their doubts under the weight of your word and repent and believe I pray this in Christ's name Amen God