

A Study of the Book of Genesis

A Worldwide Flood

Moses makes it clear when writing Genesis that the flood was a *global* flood. He describes the waters in terms like 'prevailed', 'everywhere', 'covered' and 'all'. He leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that this was not a local event, but rather the flood waters covered the *entire* earth. If it were a local event, then there would be no need to collect all the animals. It's a ridiculous assertion by skeptics that deny the global event. This is important because deniers of scripture basically say what the serpent said back in Genesis 3:1, "Has God really said...?"

Acceptable Worship

Genesis 8:1 tells us that "God remembered Noah". This is an interesting phrase because it isn't that God forgot about Noah in the boat and then suddenly he came to mind. "Remember" is actually a Hebraism for "began to act on behalf of". In other words, the flood was over - and the restoration of the earth had begun. First, the wind came over the earth to begin the drying process (evaporation). The water began to recede, which would form canyons and valleys. Trees and bushes began to grow again (fresh olive leaves in 8:11!).

In Genesis 8:16, God instructed Noah to "go out of the ark". Remember, God was in the ark with Noah, his family and the animals (7:16). If God were not still in the ark, He would have used a different command.

Noah's first act upon exiting the ark was to build an altar for worship. His actions of sacrifice *after* the flood could not have happened without his actions *before* the flood. Acceptable worship begins with preparation. Noah knew how reproduction worked. He only needed one female and one male of each of the animals, but God told him to take more. In his full obedience, Noah took the seven clean animals likely knowing that they would be used for sacrifice over a year from when they boarded the ark.

God provided what Noah and his family needed for worship. Noah followed through with obedience, enduring the rigors and hardships of caring for the animals until it was time to slay them all. Noah built an altar to sacrifice every clean animal and every clean bird. Think about how many animals and birds this would have been, and how large this altar would have to be! He just spent 120 years building an ark, 13 months floating in it and now he would build a huge altar. Noah likely dismantled some of the ark to use the wood to build the altar and for the fire itself (in doing so, he demonstrated his full belief in God's covenant mentioned in 6:18 and expounded upon 9:8-17). All of Noah's preparations were part of the worship. And if God smelled the sacrifice and considered it to be soothing, Noah's actions must have been from a glad



and willing heart. There is no evidence of grumbling. No evidence of discouragement. No evidence of doubt or unbelief. Remember Noah walked with God. God was IN the ark. Thirteen months of close fellowship with God while the earth is convulsing on the outside of the ship.

The Covenant

God's promise to Noah was more than "I'll never flood the whole earth again". This promise has embedded within it His commitment to dispense grace! God's preface to the covenant is a reminder that man is made in God's image and that there will be a severe consequence this time for murder. Then the Lord proceeds re-issue an old command to "be fruitful and multiply". After the "first things first" talk, God explained the covenant in 9:11 (all flesh would never be destroyed again by a global flood) and what the sign of the covenant would be in 9:13-17 (a beautiful rainbow).

A rainbow is caused by light refracting through rain drops that act as a sort of prism. A stream of light bends as it enters the prism. Inside the prism, the light separates, or refracts, into seven primary colors (red, orange, yellow, blue, indigo and violet). The color spectrum is created because the various colors bend at different angles. Red has the longest wavelength, while violet has the shortest.

When the separated light hits the back of the raindrop, it reflects internally, and then refracts again when it exits the raindrop. Due to the dispersion of the light and the internal reflection, you see the different colors in the sky in the form of a rainbow.

The term "bow" in Hebrew is properly translated as "war bow". Psalm 7:11-13 and 21:12 explain what God does with His war bow. It's as if God put His war bow in the sky, without the arrow pointed at mankind, as a beautiful gesture to give His people confidence in His promise. Sinclair Ferguson summarizes it this way: *"Think about the rainbow as God's military bow transformed into an ornament of great beauty that hostility has ceased, and that there is no arrow in the bow"*.

A rainbow is something you can see but cannot touch because it is light. It is just like a promise. You cannot touch a promise physically, but you see a promise in action, especially in its fulfillment.

Where else in the Bible do we find a rainbow? Revelation 4:3 says, *"And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance"*. A full rainbow encircles God's throne in heaven!

Thoughts that are too lofty for our comprehension:

- The rainbow existed in the mind of God way before rain ever existed on earth.
- God has given us a glimpse on earth of something that adorns His very throne from where He reigns.

The Vineyard and the Wine

The story of Noah seems to end on the sour note of disappointment and disgrace. How could Noah, who was declared blameless and righteous... who walked with God and obedient in every way, be found drunk and naked? There are many views of what happened here. He was depressed. He was

traumatized. He was trying to 'escape' by looking elsewhere for joy and fulfillment. None of these explanations are specifically stated in the Bible. Maybe we've been reading this wrong all along.

Noah planted a vineyard in a post-flood environment that was quite different than he was used to before the flood. It is possible that he was not aware of the change in how fermentation worked. There are so many variables involved in alcohol content in wine-making, like temperature, time, sugar, yeast, grape skin damage, etc. Is it possible that Noah got drunk by accident? An honest mistake?

If it's true that Noah did not sin, then Ham seized the moment to embarrass a truly blameless and righteous man. As a result, the line of Ham through his son Canaan, reaped the consequences of Noah's curses. Shem and Japheth on the other hand, honored their father by covering his nakedness.

What Are the 'Types' in the Account of Noah?

- Noah is a type of Christ, the head of a new creation.
- The ark is a type representing the means of deliverance.
- Clean animals typified the sacrifice of Jesus as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).
- The flood itself is a foreshadowing of the future judgment coming upon the whole world (see Matthew 24:29-25:46).

Did Noah Provide Rest?

Back in Genesis 5, Lamech named his son Noah, which means 'rest' or 'consolation'. His hope was that Noah would be the one to ease the hardships and toil that sin had inflicted upon the world. Did Noah live up to this expectation? No he did not! In fact, due to the nature of the flood, day-to-day living may have actually gotten tougher.

However, this all points forward to the day when Jesus would come, who said, "Come to me you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28 NASB).

THE WORD OF GOD

Standing on the Promises 271

He has given us His very great and precious promises. 2 Pet. 1:4

1. Stand-ing on the prom - is - es of Christ my King, Thro' e - ter - nal a - ges
 2. Stand-ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail, When the howl-ing storms of
 3. Stand-ing on the prom - is - es of Christ the Lord, Bound to Him e - ter - nal
 4. Stand-ing on the prom - is - es I can - not fall, Lis-t'ning ev - ery mo-ment

let His prais - es ring; Glo - ry in the high - est, I will shout and sing,
 doubt and fear as - sail, By the liv - ing Word of God I shall pre - vail,
 ly by love's strong cord, O - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,
 to the Spir - it's call, Rest - ing in my Sav - ior as my all in all,

Refrain

Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God. Stand - ing, stand - ing,
 stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God my Sav - ior; Stand - ing,

stand - ing, I'm stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
 stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

TEXT and MUSIC: R. Kelso Carter

PROMISES
11.11.11.9. with Refrain