

# A WORLDWIDE FLOOD?

Thousands of years ago Moses, under the inspiration of the Spirit (2 Tim 3:16), took a pen and wrote the story of a man called Noah and the flood. This story is recorded in Genesis 6:9 to 9:17, and the amount of space given to it in the Bible indicates the importance we should attribute to it.

The three main elements that make up the basic theme in this portion of scripture are as follows. Firstly, God is going to judge the world for transgressing his law, as is indicated by the abhorrent wickedness of the day. Secondly, God is going to save a man called Noah and members of his family by having them go into an Ark, and thirdly God sends a flood that apparently destroys the rest of the world. However, before we begin to look at whether or not the flood really happened, or whether it was a world-wide flood, we could ask another question: *Does it really matter anyway?* We would say 'yes' for the following reasons.

Firstly the story of the flood shows that there is a God who has already judged the world in history, yet at the same time reveals Himself as a God who is *interested in helping man*. Yet man has to accept that help if he is going to benefit from it.

*“Through the flood story, then, Genesis paints a completely different portrait of God from the standard ancient theology. Most obviously, there is only one God. This means that all power belongs to him: it is not shared out unequally among different members of a pantheon. But just as important is the character of the divinity revealed by the flood story. He is still personal: anthropomorphic language is freely used to describe God’s thoughts and attitudes.....God is not fearful, ignorant, greedy, or jealous. He is not annoyed by man’s rowdiness, but by his depravity. Not partiality but justice dictates the salvation of Noah.”*

Prof Gordon Wenham, Genesis, page 165.

Secondly, in addressing the subject of the flood we will see that problems evolutionists encounter and cannot answer concerning the geological column, are not present when one takes a worldwide flood into consideration. At the very least this should make us question the time lines that evolutionists have to produce in order for their theories to seem plausible.

One of the problems with evolution is that it does not provide an adequate framework to live by, as our 'anything goes' society reveals where such things as absolute truth and morality are often denied. Under the evolutionary teaching of today people have also lost sight of the fact that they are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' and have great value and worth which *is not* based upon looks, background, wealth, intellect or personal achievement.

Yet how can a short paper on the flood challenge the theory that life evolved over millions of years? The answer to this question will be seen when we look at the geological column, but before doing so we look at evidence for a world-

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wide flood from the Bible before moving to historical facts outside of the Bible, and then moving into the area of geology.

## The Biblical Picture.

Scripture informs us that the flood is part of God's judgement on fallen humanity.

*"Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth."*

Genesis 6:9-11

In the above verses we see that God's purpose was not to destroy a nation, but to put an end to all people, and the earth *in its present state*. From this we see that man *is* accountable to God whether he likes it or not. The world has an owner, and that owner did not create man to be autonomous. The fruit of wanting to live under the authority of self rather than God is clearly seen throughout history in the wars, suffering, pride and evil that abounds. Reading through the story of the flood we find scripture informing us that *only* Noah and his family were saved (6:17-18; 7:1), this again pointing to a universal flood. But why was Noah and his family saved? Were they sinless?

Noah was not saved because he was not a sinner, but because he was righteous (Hebrews 11:7), and this righteousness is emphasised over and over again in scripture (eg: Gen 5:29; Ezekiel 14:14,20). Yet the prophet Isaiah tells us that standing in our own righteousness is of no value because all our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Paul also tells us that 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,' (Romans 3:23) so how could Noah be a righteous man? Firstly because Noah desired to do what was right, and was a man who stood by God's promises and not his own efforts. He stood in the righteousness that is of God from beginning to end.

If the flood had only been local in nature then we would have to say that there were others who were righteous, since not everyone would have been destroyed. Yet scripture clearly speaks of how evil pre-flood people were (eg Genesis 6:1-6; Luke 17:26-27; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5 and Jude 14-15). As Luke 17:26 and Matthew 24:39 indicate the flood destroyed everything: -

*"For in the days of the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be on the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mil; one will be taken and the other left."*

Matthew 24:39ff

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Finally, in looking at the dimensions of the ark mentioned in Genesis chapter six (450ft long, 75ft wide and 45 feet high) we find that the proportions mentioned would be unnecessary for a local flood. Apart from this the question begs as to why would Noah would spend a century building such a huge boat if there was going to be another means of escape? It would also have been unnecessary to accommodate so many animals, brought to the Ark by God, had it been possible for them to just escape to higher ground.

*“.....The average size of a mammal has been estimated to be about the size of a sheep and about 35,000 animals had to be accommodated. The volume of the Ark was sufficient to take some seven times this number, giving each animal plenty of room.”*

Dr M. Bowden. True Science Agrees With the Bible, page 230.

## Historical evidence of a flood.

As we delve into the pages of history we find that there are many written records of flood stories from a whole variety of different cultures. For example, Dr C Mitchell writing about Mesopotamian texts that speak of a flood says: -

*“There are two Mesopotamian texts about the Flood dating from the first half of the second millennium BC. The Atrahasis Epic is named after the human hero who was the Babylonian Noah...Versions exist from several periods, showing that it was copied and recopied over the centuries. The most complete version dates from the seventeenth century BC and it is probable that the original was 100-200 years earlier than this. It includes multiple gods, the chief of who was Enlil who destroys humans by a flood because they disturb his sleep. Atrahasis builds a boat, loads it with goods and animals, and escapes.”*

Dr C. Mitchell, Creationism Revisited, page 182.

Continuing to write, Dr Mitchell speaks of evidence that he has collated from across the world. The overwhelming inferences from all this is that there was a worldwide flood.

The story of this flood may well have travelled across the world with the different people groups that were dispersed from Babel. At Babel we find that man was already reinterpreting God's commands to suit his own means and build a name for self. Therefore it should hardly come as a surprise that, as we read records of the flood, we find variations on the story.

Evidence of flood stories in different cultures is so great that anthropologists cannot easily dismiss the stories as being no more than a local myth, since local myths rarely travel outside of their own locality. There is also another point of interest we must note: although one would agree that many cultures create amazing stories, which point to the greatness of *their own* culture, or

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*their* superiority over others, this is not the case concerning flood stories. To put it simply, the story of the flood does not fit into the framework of a myth or a legend, which rarely travels outside of its community and usually elevates a particular person or people-group over others. Instead it points to man transgressing the ways of a God, or gods.

Looking at historical records we find that there are fifty-nine flood legends from the people groups of North America. Forty-six from Central and South America (from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego), twenty- one from Europe (from Greece, to Ireland and Iceland), seventeen from the Middle East, twenty-three from Asia, and Thirty-seven from the South Sea islands, Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Fredk Filby, writing of flood stories contained in the 'sacred' Vedas from the sixth century says: -

*"In one of these we are told that the demon Hayagriva having stolen the Vedas from Brahma, caused the human race to become wicked with the exceptions of Satyavrata, prince of Dravidia, and the seven Rishis. While the prince was washing in the river, Vishnu appeared to him as a small fish and warned him that the world would be flooded in seven days' time. Satyavrata was commanded to take food, and pairs of animals and together with the seven holy men and their wives enter a vessel which would be provided."*

Dr Fredk Filby in *The Flood Reconsidered*, page 49.

Another record of a flood story from a different culture and time period is the report of Berossus, a Chaldean priest contemporary with Alexander the Great. He reported that the Flood occurred in the reign of the tenth king of Babylon, 'a recognisable analogy with the Bible record of ten antediluvian patriarchs,' (according to Dr Mitchell in *Creationism Revisited*, page 183). In this particular version of the flood story the god Chronos warned the king of Babylon to build a ship to save his family, friends and animals. In yet another story, (this time from Manetho (c 280BC)), a High Priest of a temple on the Delta wrote of a Greek legend in which Zeus destroyed all living things because of human wickedness. The survivor was a righteous man, Deucalion, who with his wife Pyrha, was saved in a ship. After the waters abated they were said to have offered sacrifice and then asked Zeus how they were to continue the human race.

Yet another story containing similar parallels to the above, is recorded by Dr Filby in 'The Flood Reconsidered.' Filby, speaking of sagas and legends that tribes brought to the North of Europe and Iceland, writes: -

*"No-one now knows when they were originally put together but they tell of huge struggles between the gods, the Aesir, and the Fire and Frost Giants. They tell of a flood either by sea or by the blood of a giant and of the escape of Bergelmir and his wife in a ship. The Norse god Odin was also the god of the dead and besides having the two raven-messengers, Huginn and*

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*Munninn, was a so-called 'Raven-god'. The raven long remained as a sign on Viking Ships. Remains of a flood story are found in Lithuania, Finland and Lapland."*

Dr Filby The Flood Reconsidered, page 55.

Having taken but a brief foray into the field of historical records, we find that there is so much evidence across the world for the flood, (albeit in its different variations, due to local interpretation/ additions), that it would be hard to hold to a view that the flood was merely a local event.

There are those who would say that each culture simply copied the records of others, yet this does not fit the picture. As already mentioned, ancient people groups often wrote stories that *benefited their own culture* and *elevated man*. None of the flood stories do this, and more logically point to a single event, which was interpreted in different ways by those dispersed at Babel.

Continuing along the line of a Universal flood we move into a different area and introduce information concerning dinosaur graveyards found all across the world, which again point to a world-wide flood. We begin by noting the words of Dr G Chapman, writing in Geological Fallacies: -

*"In the Karroo formation in Africa there are estimated to be 800 billion skeletons of vertebrate animals. In the Miocene shales of California more than a billion fish are fossilised on four square miles of bay bottom...The jumbled bones of thousands of animals, including those of the rhinoceros, camel, giant boar, and numerous exotic animals are buried together in Agate Springs, Nebraska. There are a number of 'dinosaur graveyards,' such as those in Colorado and Utah, containing the fossilised remains of hundreds of those giant reptiles."*

Dr G. Chapman, Geological Fallacies, page 2.

The evidence of dinosaur graveyards points yet again to the flood as being of a universal nature, since the graveyards are not limited to one area and often contain thousands upon thousands of skeletons. For example, just outside Edinburgh we have a huge graveyard of both herbivores and carnivores. This graveyard, like all others, is situated on high ground, as if the animals were seeking to escape rising water.

As one looks out across the world, one finds caves and fissures where there is the same indiscriminate mixing of the bones of animals which points to them having been forced together by some cataclysmic event such as a flood. For example, in the fissure at Soutenay in France we find the remains of wolves, bears, rhinoceroses, horses, elephants, reindeer, hyenas, mammoth and other animals. All these skeletons are three hundred metres up on a mountainside with precipitous sides. The place where they were found suggests that there was a huge amount of water that suddenly washed them into the crevice.

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Evidence in another part of the world that points to the likelihood of a worldwide flood is found in Siberia, where we find perfectly frozen mammoths. Most of these animals were found to have died quickly since half chewed food has been found in their mouths and half-digested food is found in the stomach. The only way such huge creatures could have been preserved in such a way is if there was a sudden change in climatic conditions, which have persisted ever since. This accords with the sudden devastation caused by a high flood where millions of tonnes of debris were moved around like pieces of grass blown in the wind. Captain Bernard Acworth, speaking of the sudden death of these and other animals, writes -

*“We may conclude that these herds of Siberian elephants and rhinoceroses and other animals such as musk oxen and wild horses, were living and thriving across the whole continent where their frozen and perfectly preserved bodies have since been found, when a world-wide cataclysm effulged and extinguished them. Of such colossal magnitude, it caused a sudden change from the genial temperature in which they and their southern congeners were equally thriving, into the Arctic waters in which they have ever since been preserved, leaving a physical proof of a global disaster such as has never since occurred.”*

B. Acworth, in *Mammoth and the Flood*, page 2.

## **Geology.**

In this section we simply present four points to get people thinking a little. They are not in any particular order.

### **(1)**

Creationists point out that such things as the formation of coal comes about, not as originally thought, through ‘peat-bog’ formation over millions of years, but as a result of catastrophic formation. This is because no peat-bog theory can account for the way many coal layers, (one on top of another, and with some as thin as a sheet of paper), are spread out in horizontal and parallel layers over areas covering many thousands of square miles such as in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Only a flood-like action can produce this, and coal deposits of this nature are found across the world.

### **(2)**

Dr Geof Chapman, writing in *Geological Fallacies*, quotes Charles Darwin, who said *“Why do we not find innumerable transitional forms embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated chain; and this, perhaps, is the most serious objection which can be urged against my theory.”* Dr Chapman goes on to say that 130 years of searching, and the discovery and documentation of millions of fossils have not altered the situation. All the links are still missing! (Geof Chapman, *Geological Fallacies*, page 7).

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This article continues to speak of the numerous examples of living organisms, which have not changed at all during the time since they were fossilised. For example, Horse-Shoe Crabs are still alive and well today, and exactly the same as fossils dated at supposedly 500 million years old.

It is also well known that insects are often found preserved in hardened tree resin, and show no sign of evolutionary change when compared with modern types despite apparently being millions of years old!. Ants are also identical to modern ants, and so it goes on. If we move across into the plant kingdom, we see that the same is also true: there are many cases of non-evolution.

For example we have the Cuycad tree that is unchanged for an alleged 350 million years, and the Gingko tree, still alive and well today, and identical to fossils that are dated at 200 millions years. This has great bearing on our subject of a world- wide flood. When we look at the laying down of different strata, during a worldwide flood, we see that the issue of 'living fossils' is not perplexing at all. The so-called geological table came about over a period of months, or years, rather than millions of years. Plants and animals are not evolving, but continuing in accordance with the original blueprint placed in them by our Creator. The very fact that the above living fossils are present today, and yet were supposedly (concerning the Cuycad and Gingko trees) around 200-350 million years ago, but without any record of them between that (supposed) time and this, presents a problem for the evolutionist yet not for the creationist, who do not accept the ages specified in the geological column.

### 3.

Many evolutionists believe in a geological column spanning back millions of years. The idea goes something along the lines of simpler life forms are found the further down the rock formation one travels, therefore the rock formation must be older because it contains simpler life forms. As can be appreciated this is a circular argument that doesn't really get us anywhere. But what is the alternative, and is there any evidence for an alternative view?

Those who believe in a world-wide flood believe that, Instead of layers being put down over millions of years, it is possible that these layers arrived through huge cataclysmic changes produced by the flood. In developing this view, we look at two areas. Firstly we look at the supposed geological column, and see anomalies that cannot be explained by evolutionists, yet easily fit into a worldwide flood theory, and then, secondly, we look at a modern day occurrence that reveals how supposed millions of years worth of rock formations can come about in just a handful of years.

In dealing with our first point it is necessary to see what the geological column is supposed to prove: -

**SYSTEM**

**MAJOR EVENTS**

**BEGAN (mill years ago)**

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Recent	Modern man appeared	0.01
Pleistocene	Ice age – woolly mammoths	1.8
<b>T</b> Pliocene	‘Ape-man’ appeared, large mammals died out.	11.0
<b>E</b> Miocene	Apes, hoofed mammals, spreading grasslands.	25.0
<b>R</b> Oligocene	Modern mammals and whales evolved	38.0
<b>T</b> Eocene	First horses & elephants. Modern Plants	55.0
<b>I</b> Palaeocene	Most reptiles died out, mammals spread rapidly	65.0
<b>A</b>		
<b>R</b>		
<b>Y</b>		
Cretaceous	Dinosaurs died out. First flowering Plants.	141
Jurassic	Dinosaurs ruled the earth; flying reptiles, First Birds.	195
Triassic	First dinosaurs & large sea reptiles. First mammals.	230
Permian	Reptiles increased. Modern insects, first conifers.	280
Carboniferous	Amphibians evolved into reptiles. Coal-swamps.	345
Devonian	First amphibians; Fish abundant.	395
Silurian	First land plants. Large armoured fishes.	435
Ordovician	First Vertebrates (fish). Abundant sea life.	500
Cambrian	‘Primitive’ sea creatures, ie Trilobites, shellfish.	570
PRE-CAMBRIAN:	Algae, micro-organisms.	4,600 M.

In our chart we see that trilobites are supposedly among the earliest living creatures since they are abundant in the Cambrian rocks – and so Cambrian rocks were classified as the lowest in the column apart from Pre-Cambrian. We also see the gradual evolution ‘up through the ages’ until man, this being based upon simplicity of being and also position in the ‘geological column.’ However, it is much more likely that these so called layers are the earths deposits moved around by the power of the flood, and that the ‘older’ and ‘simpler’ life forms are little more than creatures who were first affected by the flood waters. For example, large beds of Trilobites have been found at Field in British Columbia yet are at the very top of Rocky Mountains. If one sticks rigidly to the ‘geological’ column there is no possible answer as to why this is so. Yet if one accepts a worldwide flood then everything falls into place. Although most would have been caught up in the first cataclysmic deposits, others, swirling around in the debris and water, ended up at the top of the Rocky Mountains.

A worldwide flood also accounts for the progression of lower to higher forms of life in higher rock strata, as Dr Burke indicates in ‘Creation and Evolution.’ -

*“One of the main concerns of flood geology is to account for the fossil record. The distribution of fossils indicates a general progression from lower to higher forms of life in successively higher rock strata; this is interpreted as the result of the successive annihilation of animal communities as the floodwater rose. The more advanced animals were able to escape more readily to higher*

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*ground; consequently they dominate the upper strata. Some kind of hydro-dynamic sorting of the organisms is also believed to have contributed to the sequence of fossils.”*

Creation and Evolution, Edited by D. Burke, page 33.

According to the geological column man did not arrive on the scene until 0.1 million years ago, and yet human artefacts have regularly been found in rocks which supposedly date millions of years further back than this: -

*“An iron pot with its impression in coal was found in Oklahoma, an incised steel cube in coal in Austria, and artificially pointed sticks in a lignite in Germany. The Oklahoma and Austrian coals were estimated to be 300 million years old, and the German lignite Tertiary, and so between 2 and 70 million years old. Both of these antedate the presumed origin of man on earth...another nail was found in Cretaceous rock in Britain. These items appear to be genuinely in-situ and show no sign of having been later inserted into their positions...”*

Dr Colin Mitchell, Creationism Revisited, page 180

There are those who would say that some sort of eruption or earthquake must have caused artefacts and fossils to be moved from one area of the geological column to the other. However, with modern technology we find no evidence of either one area of rock being pushed through another in this way, or earthquake/volcanic eruption. According to the Bible the whole of the so-called geological column was laid down over a very short period of time a few thousand years ago. Creationists do not believe the column can be used as evidence of an old earth.

(4)

*“In the Baltic region, Pleistocene clays – almost the highest in the column – rest directly upon Cambrian clays containing trilobites. Between the two, not less than 13 geological systems are missing – representing almost 500 million years! So we have the second ‘highest’ resting on the ‘lowest’ rocks. With no trace of erosion, surely those ‘missing’ 500 million years never existed?”*

E.M. Spieker, Bulletin, American Assn. Of Petroleum Geologists, p 1805.

In Glarus in the Alps we find Permian, Jurassic and Eocene rocks on top of each other which is the total opposite order of the geological column, whilst in the Empire Mountains of Arizona 280 million year-old Permian rock is sitting upon 141 million year old Cretaceous rock. Again there is no explanation as to why this is so, unless one acknowledges that the cataclysmic effects of a worldwide flood deposited all different rock formations. Yet is there any modern day event, which proves that such layers can be laid down in a matter of months or years, as opposed to centuries? The answer is ‘yes’.

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On May 18<sup>th</sup> 1980 Mount St Helens Volcano blew its top off with an estimated total energy output equal to 20,000 Hiroshima-size atomic bombs. Within a few days gullies had been eroded by the action of mudflows and steam explosions, and on March 19<sup>th</sup> 1982 a canyon up to 43 metres deep was eroded in the headwaters of the North Fork of the Toutle River Valley. The Canyon that appeared so suddenly is so similar to the Grand Canyon, although on a smaller scale, that many geologists now recognise that the Grand Canyon could itself have been formed by similar processes in a short space of time, rather than over the millions of years that many have believed. Dr S. Austin, in an article in 'Creation and Science' (no 157) gives us a picture of a 25 feet deep layer of sediment that was formed in less than one day, and shows that there is undisputable evidence that within seven years of the eruption, 185 metres of sedimentary strata had been laid down. According to uniformitarian assumptions this should have taken about half a million years!

Dr Austin also goes on to reveal evidence that fossilised forests, such as those in Yellowstone National Park, (which are said to have been formed over millions of years), could well have been formed over a handful of years. This conclusion is based on observable facts, where a steam blast eruption from Mt St Helens felled 150 square miles of forest in six minutes and half-a-cubic mile of rock was misplaced. Many of the tree trunks settled upright in Spirit Lake, with several feet of sediment around them! The result looked like something that took thousands of years, yet was observed from beginning to end by scientists. But what about dating methods used by scientists to ascertain the age of rocks? Doesn't the primary method used for dating the age of the world (radioisotope dating) prove that some rocks must be millions of years old? In answering this question we note two points -

Firstly Dr Austin used radioisotope dating on rocks from the newly formed 1986 lava dome from Mt St Helens. The rocks gave ages of between 0.5 and 2.8 million years.

Secondly, Samples of rock were also taken from solidified lava from Mt Ngauruhoe (New Zealand), known to have formed from eruptions in 1949,54 and 75. These samples were sent to a well-known and respected commercial laboratory (Geochron Laboratories in Cambridge, Massachusetts) and the 'age' of the rocks ranged from 0.27 to 3.5 million years old, (despite being less than 70 years old) showing that assumptions made in radioisotope dating are wrong. Radioisotope dating obviously cannot be trusted for rocks of unknown age..

In conclusion we recognise that many readers may want to reject the Biblical evidence of a worldwide flood as no more than a myth at best. However, in looking at sources outside of the Bible, and noting the issues mentioned above, we see that the story of a worldwide flood cannot be so easily dismissed. We also see that perhaps this world is not quite as old as it appears.