

the

GENESIS

FLOOD

REVISITED



ANDREW A. SNELLING

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Answers
IN GENESIS™

ANDREW A. SNELLING

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Andrew A. Snelling is a research geologist and technical editor who earned his Ph.D. from the University of Sydney, Australia, in 1982. After working with the Creation Science Foundation of Australia for 15 years, he joined the Institute for Creation Research in 1998 as Professor of Geology. He was a principal investigator in the 8-year, ICR-led RATE (Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth) research project, to which he made major contributions in rock dating studies using radioisotopes and in studies of radiation halos (radiohalos) and fission tracks in minerals. In 2007, he joined Answers in Genesis, where he is the Director of Research and Editor-in-Chief of the Answer of the Answers Research Journal and continues his research on the geology of the Flood and on radioisotope dating. He currently resides in the USA.

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FOREWORD

Three great worldwide events are mentioned in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, which contain the history of early earth. The first is the creation of all things, in a completed, fully-functioning, “very good” state, as related in Genesis chapter one. All of nature was in harmony, with no death, disease, or carnivorous activity among living things, and no tectonic or meteorological disturbances in the earth itself. This harmony was disrupted when creation rebelled against the Creator, disobeying His commands. The curse of Genesis three impacted every thing and every system in creation. Indeed, the entire creation groans under the penalty of this rebellion. Finally, the rebellion culminated in a great convulsion of nature in Genesis six through nine, a massive flood that judged the planet. Not only was this a watery cataclysm, but a tectonic wrenching of the once peaceful environment.

Where could one go and not see evidence of creation? If God created it all, all things would bear His fingerprints. If He created it all, every rock, every life form, every system we study must give evidence of this recent creation. We observe intricate details in living things and rightly give Him credit for His creative majesty. At every level we look, we see a transcendence of design, far beyond the reach of mere chance. We see the flagella of bacteria, we see the interdependence of organs, the balance of ecology, fine-tuned interaction between stellar bodies. “All things were created by him, and for him” (Colossians 1:16). Nothing we could ever observe could be fully and correctly explained without creation. Our object of study might be far removed from the original creation, but all things ultimately derive from what transpired in Genesis one and two.

Likewise, where could we go in this universe and not see evidence of His universal judgment of sin? We read in Genesis three that due to Adam’s rejection of God’s authority, the plants were cursed, and the animals also, the serpent more than the rest (Genesis 3:18, 14). Furthermore the physical realm was cursed, as we see in Genesis 3:17. All of this had been placed under Adam’s dominion, and his failure passed to all his domain. Finally, Adam and Eve tasted God’s justice, as pronounced in Genesis 3:15-19. Indeed, “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), death in every aspect of creation. All we observe participated in the curse, or descended from that which did so participate.

The final great worldwide cataclysm was the great Flood of Noah’s day. Described in no uncertain terms as global in extent, it covered the world. Certainly not a tranquil flood, it conquered the entire surface of the world, destroying all evidence of civilization, altering all ocean and atmospheric currents, eroding rock, depositing sediments, uplifting mountains, burying remains of plants and animals, etc. Nothing survived and nothing escaped its devastation, except those preserved on the Ark and some water-dwelling organisms. Where could we venture on planet earth and not encounter a flooded terrain? All things would bear the signature of death and destruction of this great Flood, whereby the world that then was, perished (2 Peter 3:6).

So now as we do our scientific study of earth’s history, we find three curtains drawn, hindering a clear view. We can see the faded remnant of a once-perfect creation, marred by sin. To be sure, many aspects are still quite stunning, but how much are we unable to see? When we gaze upon creation’s grandeur, we wonder how much more it must have been, for its ruination to look like this.

Our experience is only in the present; we cannot imagine a world where our bodies don’t wear out. We observe the effects of sin everywhere, as we see everything grow old and wear down. How tightly the universal “watch” must have been wound, for it to have run down for so long and still be working. How could a distorted cosmos run so smoothly?

The most recent “curtain” is that of the great Flood. Can our eyes or even our minds truly understand? The entire world has been so twisted. Can we put it back together even in thought experiments? The world before the one we experience must have been so different. Even with a great deal of care and knowledge, can it be reconstructed? Certainly “the present is not the key to the past.”

But still we must try, doing our best work. God is honored and pleased as we attempt to “think His thoughts after Him.” The Christian’s faith is strengthened as sight is clearer. God’s Word more fully unfolds as problems are solved. The skeptic is challenged to consider a better worldview as he sees it make sense.

Dr. Andrew Snelling has done his best work on this book elucidating the *Genesis Flood Revisited*. A man of deep scholarship and much faith, God prepared him for this job. He stands on the shoulders of giants, who stood

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against the tide in years past, and erects an even firmer structure. Modeled loosely after the groundbreaking and God-honoring book *The Genesis Flood*, it adds insights gained from decades of work by numerous individuals.

He starts from a position of biblical inerrancy, and delves deeply into geology. Early chapters weave a careful scriptural case for the Flood's catastrophic nature and global extent. He answers questions many people have about that Flood and the Ark of Noah. From that firm foundation, he ventures into the world of geology.

Intervening years have witnessed a revolution in geology, largely due to the impact of *The Genesis Flood*. After being stifled for two hundred years of staid uniformitarianism, many earth science professionals have turned to dynamic catastrophic processes to explain the earth, thus there are many new ideas and much new data to include. Our minds have been expanded by witnessing numerous local catastrophes, and they help us comprehend the unseen global cataclysm. We stand on the verge of an even greater restructuring of geologic thought, and this treatise will certainly play a part.

But there are more weighty things to consider than geology, things of even longer durations and more significance, and this book can help us comprehend them. The creation will be made new as the curse is repealed, and it will forever fulfill the Creator's intent. Best of all, we are offered a home in it. For too long, geologic interpretations have been used to doubt and disbelieve, and with treatment, we have a better understanding than ever. I pray God will honor this book in the way He did its forerunner, and that He will be pleased.

Dr. John D. Morris

PREFACE

Any project of this magnitude has to have had a history behind it. And this project certainly does! Many people have provided help and encouragement along the way.

As a young Christian, I became interested in geology at nine years of age. It wasn't long before I struggled with the issue of how to relate the geology I was reading in the textbooks with what I was reading about in God's Word concerning creation and the Flood. During my teenage years, my parents obtained for me and I read *The Genesis Flood* by Drs. John Whitcomb and Henry Morris. That book convinced me that God's Word provides the only reliable basis for understanding geology. This was the foundation for my calling into full-time creation ministry after I had completed my university training and gained professional experience working in the mining industry. I am indebted, like so many others, to Dr. Whitcomb and Dr. Morris for this landmark book that stood unashamedly on the authority of God's Word. Many lives have been changed for eternity as a result of that book. They need to be continually acknowledged for the foundation they laid for the modern creation science movement.

After I worked with Ken Ham in creation ministry in Australia for several years, Ken and his family were released by the Australian ministry to work with the Institute for Creation Research, founded by Dr. Henry Morris in 1970. As part of his duties at ICR, Ken participated in tours to the Grand Canyon, led by ICR's geologist Dr. Steve Austin. Ken realized that I might benefit from a visit to ICR and a trip to the Grand Canyon, at least if only to "broaden my horizons" and increase my geological knowledge. So he "twisted the arm" of Dr. Steve Austin.

Thus I first came to visit ICR in 1990, where I met all their scientists, and participated in a Grand Canyon tour. The following year I was invited back to their next Grand Canyon tour, "graduating" from the bus trip to one of the hiking groups. I was graciously received by ICR and its scientists, and greatly benefited from the interaction with them and with other scientists ICR had invited to be involved in their Grand Canyon tours. As a result, I was invited to join a research group looking into how a model of catastrophic plate tectonics could provide the framework for understanding geology within the context of the Genesis Flood. The insights provided by Drs. Steve Austin, John Baumgardner, Kurt Wise, Russ Humphreys, and Larry Vardiman were extremely stimulating and beneficial to my growing understanding of how the geological evidence can be fully reconciled with the clear teaching of God's Word. My friendship with them all, and with Dr. John Morris, grew.

For some years Dr. Henry Morris had evidently been keen for an updated and revised version of his landmark book with Dr. John Whitcomb, *The Genesis Flood*, to be written. However, he did not feel able to accomplish that task, preferring to see a younger person (or persons) with up-to-date geological knowledge tackle the project. To my surprise, during one of my visits to ICR en route to the Grand Canyon, Dr. Morris drew me aside and asked me if I would be willing to take up this needed assignment. Needless to say, I felt honored and overawed. I was also somewhat embarrassed, as I am to this day. After all, my good friend, colleague, and mentor, Dr. Steve Austin, should have been the one to write this book! I freely acknowledge that I have learnt so much from Steve, and this book has greatly benefited from his carefully researched work and publications.

Back in Australia, I tried to find the time to make a start on this daunting book project. However, it wasn't until God opened the door in 1998 for me to work for ICR that this task began in earnest. My good friend Dr. John Morris graciously invited me to join the staff at the Institute for Creation Research, with one of my main duties being to work on this book project. It also meant I could spend more time alongside Steve Austin, both on Grand Canyon trips and in teaching for ICR's Graduate School. In preparing to teach eager graduate students, I needed to review the latest geological textbooks on a number of subjects that were highly relevant to the task of writing about how geology, understood in the light of God's Word, fits the biblical framework of earth history.

By this time ICR had called together a group of scientists to research the issue of radioisotopes and the age of the earth. Headed by ICR's Dr. Larry Vardiman, this RATE research group consisted of Drs. Steve Austin, John Baumgardner, Russ Humphreys, Don DeYoung, and Gene Chaffin, and later included Dr. Steven Boyd. That eight-year research effort, of which I was privileged to be a part, yielded results that would become an important part of this book. I am indebted to these scientists for their friendship and their work. During this time, progress in writing the book was sporadic, but I was spurred on by my friends Dr. John Morris and Dr. Larry Vardiman, and by Dr. Henry Morris, of course.

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So this book has finally come to fruition, after more than a decade of effort interspersed with other duties. It was a great relief to finally submit the completed manuscript to Drs. John Morris and Henry Morris III for ICR to publish. Our only regret is that Dr. Henry Morris is not here to see the final product, the realization of his dream. It would nevertheless be my prayer that this book fulfills his wishes and successfully builds on the foundation he faithfully laid.

Many people have contributed to this book and they must be acknowledged. Indeed, this book would never have been written if I had not had the benefit of the encouragement and support of so many, as well as their prodigious, robust research. Thus I acknowledge the work of Drs. Steve Austin, John Baumgardner, Kurt Wise, Russ Humphreys, and Larry Vardiman, and that of Mike Oard and John Woodmorappe. Mark Armitage has been a tireless helper, supporting and collaborating with me in my own research effort. I would also acknowledge the careful work done by Adventist scientists and colleagues Drs. Ariel Roth, Art Chadwick, Leonard Brand, Elaine Kennedy, and Harold Coffin. Their outstanding research has proven very beneficial. Of course, I apologize if I have forgotten anyone else who should be given an honorable mention here, as there are many others whose work I have interacted with along the way.

There are also many who have encouraged, supported, and helped me with this project. In particular, Drs. John Morris, Larry Vardiman, John Baumgardner, and Kurt Wise have faithfully kept me on task and assisted in various ways. On practical matters, I would like to thank Lawrence Ford and his team at ICR for their work on turning my manuscript into this book. I know that Drs. John Morris and John Baumgardner very helpfully reviewed the manuscript. Dr. John Morris is thanked for writing the Foreword. However, any remaining blemishes in this book remain my responsibility. In terms of practical support, though, I must acknowledge my personal assistant of more than 20 years, Laurel Hemmings. As she has done with so many other projects, she typed the manuscript, corrected it many times, and drafted the diagrams. Without her faithful and tireless help, the final book would not have been possible.

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*Dr. Andrew A. Snelling
Director of Research, Answers in Genesis*

INTRODUCTION

WHY TAKE GENESIS SERIOUSLY?

The first eleven chapters of the Bible have been relegated by many professing Christians today to the category of myths or stories, not real history. These stories are said to *contain* spiritual truth, but they cannot be taken seriously as records of real people and real events.

The sad reality is that while many sincere Christians who thoroughly believe the Bible and attend conservative, evangelical churches would dismiss the above statements as false, they do not know what their pastors believe about the historicity of Genesis. And what about those seminary professors charged with training pastors-to-be? Is it safe to assume that these men believe in the following truths?

1. God created everything in six literal 24-hour days.
2. Adam and Eve were real people.
3. God cursed a perfect world as a judgment for Adam and Eve's sin.
4. Noah constructed an Ark by which two of every kind of air-breathing, land-dwelling animal were saved along with Noah's family from a global, mountain-covering flood.
5. The confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel produced the people and language groups that are found around the world today.

To the shock of Bible-believing churchgoers, an alarming number of Christian leaders and teachers instead believe that God "created" through evolutionary processes (with or without His direct input) over millions and even billions of years, that Adam and Eve are the names of a human pair who descended from a hominid population and into whom God placed the human spirit, and that there has never been a global flood in human history, suggesting that the account of Noah and the Ark is just a story adapted from a Babylonian myth about some terrifying local flood in the Mesopotamian region.

How did we arrive at such a sad state of affairs? While there have always been those who have held dissenting interpretations, mainstream Christian orthodoxy regarded the opening chapters of Genesis as just as real and reliable as the rest of the Bible until 150 to 200 years ago. Even during the early decades of the twentieth century, most devout churchgoers would have been labeled as Bible-believing and conservative, if not evangelical. So what has happened to bring about such a radical shift in Christian belief about the early history of the universe, the earth, and man?

Any analysis of intellectual movements within and without the church would quickly conclude that this downgrading of the early chapters of Genesis has coincided with the rise of uniformitarian philosophy as the cornerstone of modern geology and of the theory of evolution as the core of modern biology. Technological advances in the wake of spectacular scientific discoveries have brought about better living conditions and health standards, along with higher levels of education at all strata of society, not just in the Christianized West. In the last half of the twentieth century, the incredible development of television, computers, and satellites that orbit the earth has produced an explosion in mass communication of knowledge and technology, catapulting the world into a global society. There seems no end to what man can achieve!

In this apparent utopia, supposedly built because of man's knowledge and the technology that has been spawned by it, scientists and technologists became highly respected. Their views were popularized amongst the masses, so that millions of years of geological ages and the evolution of all life forms including man have been taught and accepted as established facts. The widespread availability of public and private education, staffed by several generations of teachers who in their youth imbibed uniformitarianism and evolution as scientific fact, has been the dominant force in this indoctrination.

Christians have not been immune from this almost universal indoctrination, and like the proverbial frog slowly boiling in the pot of water on a stove, most have been blithely ignorant of the process that has gradually changed their thinking and thus their whole approach to the Bible. Consequently, an increasing number of

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Christian churches throughout the world reject the early chapters of Genesis as reliable history, resulting in all manner of compromise intended to force geological ages and organic evolution into the Scriptures. While there are those who have resisted this trend, many Christians have shelved this apparent conflict between the Bible and science (so-called) as being divisive, too difficult to resolve, and/or totally irrelevant to the Gospel at the heart of the Christian faith.

GENESIS AS RELIABLE HISTORY

Yet the conflict over whether the early chapters of Genesis should be taken seriously as reliable history still rages in the church. There are those who have not capitulated to the teaching of a multi-billion-year-old earth and the evolution of all life, as facts. What makes this conflict sharper and more intense is that in the ranks of those Christians who have not compromised are many scientists with doctoral degrees. These scientists have been through the modern education system, sat under professors of the uniformitarian and evolutionary worldview, and yet remained unwavering in their commitment to Genesis as literal history. Some that began with a uniformitarian/evolutionary worldview later rejected it after being challenged by the scientific evidence supporting the Scriptures in opposition to a multi-billion-year earth and organic evolution, and/or by a spiritual conversion and personal transformation brought about by yielding to the Creator God of the Bible and the claims of Jesus Christ.

During the last 150 to 200 years, many have sought to remain faithful to the Bible as the Word of God, accepting Genesis as reliable history. There were even organizations and groups that formed as rallying points for the faithful few who wanted to take a public stand and try to stem the tide sweeping into the church and society as a whole. However, it was the publication of the book *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications* by theologian Dr. John C. Whitcomb and hydraulic engineer Dr. Henry M. Morris in 1961 that catalyzed the young-earth creationist cause in a major way.

The Evolution Protest Movement (now the Creation Science Movement) in Great Britain, with a long history already, received a boost from the widespread circulation of that book. It was also the impetus for the formation in 1963 of the Creation Research Society, which now boasts a membership of over 600 individuals with graduate degrees in science. The Bible-Science Association (now Creation Moments, Inc.) was formed soon afterwards in 1964.

The Institute for Creation Research began in 1970 as a division of Christian Heritage College in San Diego, but moved to its own facilities in April 1972. Unlike previously formed creationist groups and organizations, the Institute for Creation Research employed scientists with Ph.D.s to work full-time in creation research, writing, and teaching. This proved to be a catalyst for many new creationist books and publications covering the relevant issues in the full gamut of scientific disciplines. The circulation of these books and publications began to impact churches and Christians not only in North America, but around the world. Other creationist groups and organizations were subsequently formed in the following years so that today there are creationist groups and organizations in all corners of the globe.

So why would hundreds, indeed thousands, of highly-trained scientists not only believe Genesis to be reliable history, but base their scientific research on the details and implications of that history? Their acceptance of the Bible in its entirety as a record of the true history of the world stems first and foremost from their Christian convictions.

Of course, the Bible never claims to be a textbook on history or science, but it does claim more than 3,000 times to be a direct communication from the God who tells us that in the beginning He created the heaven and the earth, prepared a home for man, and then created man, all in six days. If God is who He claims to be, then He has always existed and has all knowledge and power. He is perfect, so He never makes mistakes. He is pure and honest, so He never tells lies. Therefore, if the Bible is the Word of God, then it must be truthful in its entirety, even when it touches upon matters of history and science. Otherwise, this Creator God is a liar and not who He claims to be. The very character of God requires the first eleven chapters of Genesis to be a trustworthy record of real history.

The essential elements of this framework for earth history recorded in the first eleven chapters of Genesis are:

1. God created the heaven and the earth and everything in them in six literal days of approximately 24 hours duration.

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2. There was a definite sequence of creative acts by God during those six days:
 - a. Day 1—the heaven and earth were created in darkness with the earth covered completely by water, and then light was created so that night was followed by daylight to complete the first cycle of a normal day.
 - b. Day 2—separation and elevation of some of the water on the earth's surface with an expanse placed between the waters.
 - c. Day 3—the formation of dry land as distinct from the ocean and the covering of the land with plants.
 - d. Day 4—the creation of the sun, moon, and stars.
 - e. Day 5—the creation of all sea creatures and flying animals, including whales and birds.
 - f. Day 6—the creation of land animals and “creeping things,” followed by the creation of Adam, his placement in the Garden of Eden and naming of the animals there, and finally the creation of Eve from Adam's side.
3. The temptation of Adam and Eve and their subsequent disobeying of God's instructions, resulting in God pronouncing the Curse of physical death and suffering upon man, the animals, and the earth, and the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.
4. The growth of the human population into a pre-Flood civilization with all manner of technology that included the building of cities, metal tools, and musical instruments.
5. Because of the increasing wickedness of the pre-Flood civilization, Noah was instructed by God to build the Ark (an ocean-going wooden ship). When it was ready, two of every kind of air-breathing, land-dwelling animal were sent to go onboard the Ark with Noah and his family to escape the global, mountain-covering Flood that God was about to unleash upon the earth.
6. The Flood was upon the earth for over a year, covering even the highest mountains and destroying all the air-breathing, land-dwelling life from the face of the earth.
7. The emergence of Noah, his family, and all the animals from the Ark, after which they rapidly increased in numbers, being commanded by God to spread out to inhabit the revegetated earth.
8. Instead of spreading out across the revegetated earth as they had been commanded, the growing post-Flood human family again rebelled against God by remaining in one place, the plain of Shinar. They built a city and a tower in defiance of God, which resulted in God's intervention to confuse the people's languages, after which they dispersed, forming the many different language and people groups. The city was therefore named Babel.
9. Since Genesis carefully records the genealogies and lifespans of Adam and his descendants, it can be calculated that human history covers a period of only 6,000 to 7,000 years. Yet, as already noted, the earth was made five days before Adam, at the beginning of Day 1, so the earth itself also can only be 6,000 to 7,000 years old.

The subsequent pages of Genesis recount the early history of the nation of Israel, beginning with God's selection of Abraham as the progenitor of this new nation. Few conservative Christian scholars would deny the historicity of these later chapters in Genesis. Yet many would regard the language used in the creation account as a form of ancient Hebrew poetry, even though in reality the genre throughout the first eleven chapters of Genesis is no different to that used in the remainder of the book.

So why are some scholars skeptical? Certainly not because of style and language, which are precisely the same as in other biblical accounts of historical events. No, the conflict occurs with supposedly established scientific facts that insist on a multi-billion-year-old earth and organic evolution. A choice has to be made between Scripture, which is authored by God, and modern science, which is authored by men.

Just how were these early chapters of Genesis recorded at the time they happened? Archaeologists tell us that writing was not invented until about the time of Abraham. Most liberal Christian scholars insist that the book of Genesis was written much later in Jewish history, perhaps as late as the post-Babylonian exile, derived from old traditions and stories distorted by the many years of oral transmission from generation to generation. But such claims overlook the testimony of the early chapters of Genesis, where we are told that in the pre-Flood world, people built cities, had tools of brass and iron, and made musical instruments. This denotes quite an advanced civilization.

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For instance, in order to have metal tools, there must have been mines and smelters. In Genesis 5, at the end of Adam's life, the record of his genealogy ends with the expression "this is the book of the generations of Adam." There is no reason to suppose that Adam and his descendants were not able to write and keep records, remembering that in the Garden of Eden, on the sixth day of creation, Adam had named all the animals before Eve was created from his side, thus demonstrating his intellectual capacity.

Moses, the traditionally recognized author of Genesis, simply had to compile the book of Genesis from the records kept by Adam and his descendants. Of course, Adam wasn't present when God created the world, but God was, and the text emphasizes a number of times that "God saw what He had made." Thus, Genesis reads as an eyewitness account, which is the hallmark of a reliable record of real history.

In any case, if the Creator God of the Bible is who He says He is, then not only is He capable of accurately telling us about the early history of the universe, the earth, and man, but He is capable of having the details truthfully recorded, faithfully copied, and transmitted down through successive generations.

JESUS REGARDED GENESIS AS REAL HISTORY

The eyewitness account of the life and deeds of Jesus Christ recorded by His disciple John begins by declaring of Jesus, "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). When the disciple Peter declared that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16), Jesus did not rebuke him for blasphemy or for being mistaken, but instead praised him for his confession and acknowledged that God ("my Father which is in Heaven") had revealed this truth to him. Furthermore, Jesus claimed, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). And Jesus also claimed, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). If Jesus was telling lies when He made these claims and approved of others for making incorrect claims about Him, then He is not "the truth."

That He was neither a liar nor a deceiver, but was in fact who He said He was, is substantiated by the undeniable fact of history that He rose from the dead as He said He would. As a resurrected man with flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), Jesus was seen many times by many witnesses, including 500 people on one occasion, and history records the resolute witness of millions of people who have been prepared to die if necessary for their Christian faith. Why would anyone die for a delusion or a lie? Those who have carefully examined and weighed the evidence have always come to the conclusion that Jesus did rise from the dead, and that therefore He was Who He claimed to be—Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Creator Himself.

So if Jesus was (and is) both the Creator God and a perfect man, then His pronouncements are always and absolutely trustworthy. Therefore, it is significant that Jesus confirmed that Moses was the author of the book of Genesis by endorsing the Jewish subdivision of the Old Testament Scriptures: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Furthermore, it is recorded in the Gospels that Jesus referred directly to details in each of the first seven chapters of Genesis a total of fifteen times, as well as making an allusion to a detail recorded in Genesis 9.

For example, Jesus referred to Genesis 1:26-27 when He said in Mark 10:6, "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female." In the very next verse, Jesus quoted directly from Genesis 2:24 when He said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh; so then they are no more twain, but one flesh." The same comments by Jesus are also recorded in Matthew 19:4-6. It should be noted that Jesus confirmed the details of Genesis 1 when He said that man was created male and female "from the beginning of the creation," not after millions of years of evolution. Five times Jesus refers to Noah and/or the destructive global Flood of Genesis 6-7 in Matthew 24:37-39 and Luke 17:26-27. One is forced to conclude that Jesus regarded Genesis as real history, and if He, as the Creator, was actually a witness to the events of Genesis 1-11, then we have absolutely no alternative but to likewise regard these opening chapters of the Bible as reliable literal history.

THE APOSTLE PETER'S PROPHECY

In the closing chapter of his final letter (2 Peter 3), the apostle Peter prophesied that there would be scoffers in the last days choosing to be willingly ignorant of the fact that by His command, God created the heaven and the

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earth, with dry land separated from water on the earth's surface, and that God later destroyed everything on the surface of the earth that He had made by a global watery cataclysm. Two things should be kept in mind here. First, Peter had, of course, spent three full years traveling in the company of Jesus Christ Himself, during which time He listened to all that He had to say and was able to ask questions for any clarification. Then Peter was a witness to Jesus' death and the physical bodily resurrection, which unmistakably confirmed Jesus' divine credentials. It is also recorded (Acts 2) that Peter and the other disciples of Jesus received extraordinary ability and authority when they received the gift of God's Holy Spirit with outward physical manifestations. Thus, the books of the New Testament that bear his name not only come from his pen, but have the stamp of the authority of God Himself upon them and upon what they tell us, including this prophecy.

Second, this prophecy of Peter was among the last words he wrote to all his fellow Christians before he died, and he emphasized the utmost importance of this prophecy in his preamble to it (2 Peter 3:1-3). He stated that he was writing this second letter in order to stir their minds to remember all that the prophets had spoken about, and all that the apostles had told them about the words and deeds of Jesus Christ. But then in verse 3, he used the words "knowing this first," or as sometimes translated, "first of all." This obviously denotes something of utmost importance that Peter wanted them to remember above everything else he had told them. In other words, Peter placed first priority on this prophecy, which is about those who would reject the account of creation and the global Flood in Genesis 1-11 as real history.

What is quite remarkable is the explanation Peter gave as to why these scoffers would choose to reject the clear testimony of God Himself, that He created the heavens and the earth and sent a global, mountain-covering Flood, and also reject the physical evidence that these events left behind. Peter told us (2 Peter 3:4) that the hallmark of these scoffers will be their philosophy that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." This expression that things continue as they always have from the beginning is an apt description of the philosophy of uniformitarianism, introduced first by James Hutton in 1795 and popularized by Charles Lyell in the 1830s. They argued that the "the present is the key to the past." Thus, we can study the geological processes shaping the earth today and then extrapolate those processes and their rates back in time to explain how the rock strata of the earth's crust, the continents, and mountains were formed and came to be the way they are.

It was on the basis of this philosophy and the principles embodied in it that the testimony of Genesis 1-11 came to be rejected, because the evidence for creation and the global Flood were seemingly explained in terms of millions and billions of years of slow and gradual geological processes. These ideas became the foundation for modern geology. The millions and billions of years provided the timescale necessary for the acceptance of the theory of organic evolution to explain the development of all life on the earth, instead of accepting that God had created it all.

While some aspects of uniformitarianism promoted by Lyell have been rejected or modified today, it is still true that modern geologists rely upon present-day processes, including gradual continental drift (or plate tectonics), to explain how the geological record and the continents themselves came to be as they are today. Because modern geology seemingly has an alternative explanation for the geological evidence, Lyell, his followers, and today's geologists have almost universally rejected the opening chapters of Genesis as reliable literal history, thereby influencing Christian scholars to explain Genesis 1-11 as myths or exaggerated stories based on oral traditions of a vague memory of a devastating local flood in Mesopotamia that came to the Jews from their Babylonian ancestors.

However, the fact that Peter wrote such an accurate description of these scoffers more than 1,700 years before this prophecy was fulfilled puts an unquestionable stamp of authority upon this prophecy. We therefore cannot ignore the testimony of the apostle Peter in this powerful fulfilled prophecy. Peter believed that the opening chapters of Genesis were real history, and he predicted what we see today—the rejection of special creation by God and the rejection of the global Flood as an explanation of the earth's geology, even with overwhelming scientific evidence. This rejection is not just by unbelievers, but also by those who claim to be Christians.

THE RELIABILITY OF THE WHOLE BIBLE DEPENDS ON GENESIS AS HISTORY

It almost seems self-evident that if the reliability of the first eleven chapters of Genesis as real history is rejected, then the trustworthiness of other parts of the Bible is called into question. Indeed, it is impossible to reject the historicity and divine authority of the book of Genesis without undermining and, in effect, repudiating the

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authority of the entire Bible. If Genesis is not true, then neither are the testimonies of those prophets and apostles who believed it was true. In the Old Testament, for example, Adam is mentioned by name in Deuteronomy, Job, and 1 Chronicles, while Noah is mentioned in 1 Chronicles, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. We have already noted in detail the apostle Peter's testimony to Genesis, but it is significant that the first eleven chapters of Genesis, which have been the object of the greatest attacks of skepticism and unbelief, have in fact had the greatest influence on the New Testament. There are at least 100 quotations or direct references to Genesis 1-11 in the New Testament. Furthermore, every one of those eleven chapters is alluded to somewhere in the New Testament, and every one of the New Testament authors refers somewhere in his writings to Genesis 1-11.

Finally, in not one of these many instances where the Old or New Testament refers to Genesis is there the slightest suggestion or evidence that the writers regarded the events or the people as myths or allegories. To the contrary, they viewed these first eleven chapters of Genesis as absolutely historical, true, and authoritative. To underscore this, on at least six different occasions Jesus Christ Himself, as we have already seen, quoted from or made specific reference to something or someone in each of the first seven chapters of Genesis.

It can be argued that the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis are probably the most important passages ever written. If these chapters were somehow totally expunged from the Bible, then the rest of the Bible would be incomprehensible. It would be like a building without any foundations. Genesis 1-11 gives vital information concerning the origin of so many things (and therefore their meaning) which otherwise we would never know about. The word *genesis* means "beginnings" or "origin," and so it is that Genesis 1-11 records for us God's provision of the only true and reliable account of origins, including the origin of the universe, the solar system, the earth, the atmosphere and the oceans, of order and complexity, life, man, marriage, evil, language, government, culture, nations, and religion, not to mention the origin of rocks and fossils. Thus, Genesis 1-11 is of such foundational importance to all history that without it there is no true meaning to, or understanding of, ourselves and all aspects of the world around us.

What we believe about our origin will inevitably determine our beliefs concerning our purpose and our destiny. Any naturalistic concept of our beginnings gives us no more meaning than any other form of life or object in the universe, and so provides only a naturalistic program for the future without hope of there being anything more than what we see around us. On the other hand, an origin at the hands of an all-powerful, pure, and loving God guarantees a divine purpose in history and meaning to our existence, a future in the hands of a caring God who made us and has made provision for us and our future. Since those details progressively unfold throughout the rest of the Bible, if Genesis 1-11 is not literal history, then the reliability of the whole Bible is undermined. By not taking Genesis seriously, many Christians have in fact undermined the rest of the Bible they claim to believe and follow. They are also in danger of unwittingly accusing Jesus Christ of being a false witness, deceived, or a deceiver, and making His claims about being the Son of God blasphemy.

THE PIVOTAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FLOOD

The creation account in Genesis 1 is undoubtedly the most profound chapter in Genesis, and indeed the whole Bible, with its description of the ultimate origin of all reality around us. However, the global Flood in Noah's day is of pivotal importance in understanding the present geology of the earth. This is mirrored by the fact that the account of the Flood and its aftermath are allocated almost four chapters (Genesis 6-9), compared to the two chapters for the creation account (Genesis 1-2). Furthermore, more than any other branch of science, geology has been most affected by the philosophy of uniformitarianism. This philosophy has provided the millions and billions of years timescale that is the underpinning for the theory of evolution in biology, so that together, uniformitarianism and evolution have brought about the rejection of Genesis 1-11 as reliable history, even by Christians. It is no wonder that the apostle Peter was led by the Holy Spirit to single out the scoffers who would come rejecting the Genesis account of creation and the Flood as real history. God has left in the rocks, fossils, and living world evidence that unmistakably testifies to the trustworthiness of the Genesis record.

Therefore, our purpose in this book is to focus on the global Flood as described in Genesis, and with the scientific evidence that has convinced many today, including Christian geologists, that Genesis must be taken seriously as literal history. It is quite logical to expect that if God is who He says He is and has told us the truth in Genesis 1-11 about the early history of the earth and man, then the evidence we can observe and study in the

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world today should be totally consistent with what we read in the opening chapters of God's Word. Again, this is not to suggest that the Bible is a textbook of science and history, but because it is God's Word, even details of science and history must be correct. Neither is it suggested that the Bible can be proved from scientific and other evidence. To the contrary, science cannot directly observe what happened in the past, so all we can do is infer from the evidence we observe in the present. Thus, we are only entitled to conclude that the evidence we observe today is consistent with what has been faithfully recorded for us by God in Genesis 1-11.

To achieve our stated objective, we first need to re-examine the biblical record and the details it gives that argue for the Flood being global and mountain-covering (Section I). Then we need to deal with the non-geological arguments that are often used to discount the Genesis account of the Flood as literal history (Section II), plus the arguments over Noah, the Ark, and the animals (Section III). It is important also to study the compromises with uniformitarian geology that have been made in attempted harmonizations with the Scriptures, and to discredit the feasibility of these. At the same time, it is both crucial and encouraging to know that there have always been scientifically well-qualified Christians—the equal of their peers—who have firmly stood their ground in defense of a literal Genesis. So often the appeal is made to the majority in determining whether a scientific matter has validity or not, but truth will always be truth, regardless of the majority vote, and a minority will always be significant when defending God's Word. With such matters dealt with, the next task is to build the framework for a biblical geology (Section IV).

In dealing with the scientific evidence, we first need to understand the essential “ingredients of the modern geological synthesis” (Section V). Then, the question to ask is this: If the biblical account of creation and the Flood is true, then what evidence should we look for? Asking the right question will mean that the evidence is seen from a new perspective. The description of the Flood in the biblical record implies catastrophism and utter devastation, and therefore we would expect the field data of the geological record to be in harmony with such an assessment, which is what we will examine in detail in Section VI.

Because Genesis 1-11 is a record of the true history of the earth, we also need to explore the framework it provides for understanding geology from a truly biblical perspective, as well as examining the supportive evidence (Section VII). However, the biggest obstacles to be dealt with are the perceived scientific problems with a biblical geology, including the radioactive dating methods (Section VIII) and other techniques in modern geochronology (Section IX), and geological puzzles engendered by the claimed evidence that certain types of rocks, geological processes, coal beds, oil, mineral deposits, and more can only be explained by uniformitarianism's gradualism (Section X). In all instances, the perceived problems are countered by scientific evidence itself.

Finally, the adequacy of the biblical framework of earth history is emphasized in the concluding challenges, making it relevant to Christians in our 21st-century world. It is sincerely hoped that by the end of this study, readers will have their faith restored in Genesis as real, literal history, and be convinced that the scientific evidence, correctly discerned and applied, is indeed consistent with God's record of our origins and history found in Genesis 1-11.

SECTION I

THE BIBLICAL RECORD OF THE GLOBAL GENESIS FLOOD

MOSES COMPILED GENESIS

The account of the Flood in Genesis 6–9 has been “one of the showpieces of literary criticism,”¹ that liberal scholarship claims is a composite of two or more traditions committed to writing more than a thousand years after the events occurred. That such views continued to be expounded even a century after they reached their zenith is preposterous, since these higher critical views were soundly refuted as early as 1895 by Princeton scholar William Henry Green.² More recent studies have independently argued for the literary integrity of Genesis 6–9,³ making continued assertions that these chapters can be dissected into two parallel accounts totally untenable.

The authorship of Genesis is, of course, closely tied to that of the rest of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament, and there is abundant support for it being authored and/or compiled by Moses. The Pentateuch itself claims that important parts were written by Moses (for example, Exodus 24:4, 7; Deuteronomy 31:9, 24–26). Internal evidence also shows that the Pentateuch was written by an eyewitness who, for example, was obviously familiar with Egypt and Egyptian customs, names, words, and geography, as evidenced in those parts of the Pentateuch that were set in Egypt or refer to it. Furthermore, the claims in the Pentateuch for authorship by Moses are supported in the rest of the Old Testament and by the statements by Jesus Christ in the Gospels.

As early as Joshua’s day, the law of Moses was in written form (Joshua 1:7–8; 8:32, 34; 22:8), and similar references are found in later books of the Old Testament (e.g., 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Chronicles 23:18; 34:14; Ezra 3:2; 6:18; Nehemiah 8:1–8; Daniel 9:11, 13). Jesus on numerous occasions spoke of the law of Moses, sometimes of the “book of Moses” (Mark 12:26), twice of “Moses and the prophets” (Luke 16:29, 31) or Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44), obviously ensuring it was understood that he regarded Moses as the author of the first part of the Old Testament on a par with its other major sections.

The early church, the church of later centuries, and the Jews almost unanimously accepted that Moses authored Genesis and the other books of the Pentateuch. It wasn’t until the rise of “higher criticism” at the end of the 19th century that this view was questioned. The position that Moses was the author and/or compiler of Genesis is too strongly supported to be dismissed by liberal rationalism.

Of course, the claim that Moses authored the book of Genesis in particular does not assume that Moses wrote without the use of sources. Abraham came from a very sophisticated background in Ur, where all sorts of records were meticulously kept. Joseph rose to a place of leadership in a very literate society. Noah and his sons obviously had the technological ability and background to be able to build the Ark in such enormous proportions under divine guidance that there can be little doubt Noah and his family were able to keep written records. As early as Genesis 4 in the record of Adam and his descendants, we read about Cain and others building a city (v. 17), musical instruments (v. 21), and craftsmen in brass and iron (v. 22), all of which imply a civilization able to quarry, mine, and smelt rock to acquire metals in order to make tools, musical instruments, and build cities. Such a civilization is more than able to keep written records.

Furthermore, the recurring phrase “these are the generations of . . .,” which occurs in eleven places through the book of Genesis, appears to give a clue that family records may have been kept by successive patriarchs. Wiseman⁴ has interpreted this recurring phrase or refrain as a colophon, an identifying phrase at the end of a cuneiform clay tablet, which could be translated “these are the historical origins of . . .” In other words, the phrase always

1. D. Kidner, 1967, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 97–100.
 2. W. H. Green, 1979, *The Unity of the Book of Genesis*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House (originally published by Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1895).
 3. A number of studies are listed by G. J. Wenham, 1987, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 1, Genesis 1–15*, Waco, TX: Word Books. They are: B. W. Anderson, 1978, From Analysis to Synthesis: The Interpretation of Genesis 1–11, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 97: 23–39; G. J. Wenham, 1978, The Coherence of the Flood Narrative, *Vetus Testamentum*, 28: 336–348; R. E. Longacre, 1979, The Discourse Structure of the Flood Narrative, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 47 (supplement): 89–133; I. M. Kikawada and A. Quinn, 1985, *Before Abraham Was: The Unity of Genesis 1–11*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press; G. Larsson, 1985, The Documentary Hypothesis and the Chronological Structure of the OT, *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 97: 316–333; and G. A. Rendsburg, 1986, *The Redaction of Genesis*, Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
 4. P. J. Wiseman, 1936, *New Discoveries in Babylonia About Genesis*, London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott.

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marks the conclusion of a section, rounding off the archives presumably written or kept through the years by the signatory, for example, Adam (Genesis 5:6) and Noah (Genesis 6:9), resulting in a growing series of clay tablets with the family history then entrusted to successive heads of the family.

However, occasionally this phrase, translated from the word *tôk dôt*, has been viewed as a heading of a section.⁵ Indeed, Leupold translated the *tôk dôt* as the phrase “this is the story of,” because as a heading it summarizes the ensuing discussion, combining narrative and genealogy to trace the development of the subject from a starting point to an end.

Alan Ross concluded that the colophon view of Wiseman cannot be accepted because the evidence from cuneiform is unconvincing.⁶ On the cuneiform tablets, the colophons are titles that are repetitions of the tablet’s first line and not a description of the contents. Ross argues that as a concluding statement for sections of the book of Genesis, the colophon interpretation is unworkable. Indeed, Ross points out that elsewhere in the Bible, outside of Genesis, the *tôk dôt* does not refer to what preceded it, but in every place it occurs it can and often must refer to what follows (e.g., Ruth 4:18; Numbers 3:1). Ross thus maintains that the *tôk dôt* heading announces the historical development from the ancestor (or beginning point) and could be paraphrased in translation as “this is what became of ...,” or “this is where it started from” (with reference to the following subject). Thus, Ross argues that each section is a narrative depicting what became of someone, the Flood account being in the *tôk dôt* of Noah (Genesis 6:9 – 9:29).

Nevertheless, the biblical evidence strongly favors the Wiseman interpretation of these colophons. The first such colophon in Genesis 2:4 clearly refers back to the Genesis 1 account of creation, and *not* the details in Genesis 2–4. Similarly, the Genesis 5:1 colophon refers back to the life of Adam. The view of Ross, on the other hand, negates the eyewitness nature of these clay tablet records, which in turn undermines them as literal, written historical accounts.

This *tôk dôt* structure, then, is the very fabric around which the whole of Genesis was constructed, confirming its unity under the authorship of Moses directed by the Holy Spirit. This understanding of the significance of the *tôk dôt* provides a hint that Moses may well have utilized previously existing written documents when compiling Genesis.

Thus, the conviction here is that the opening chapters of Genesis, including the Flood account, are an integral part of Genesis, which is equally the infallible Word of God, verbally inspired in the original autographs, that is, men of God such as Moses wrote under the direction of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). As a reliable record of the early history of the earth, the details provided in Genesis must be our starting point in investigating the geographical extent of the Flood.

Surprising as it may be to some, not all conservative Christian scholars, past and present, believe that Genesis teaches a universal or global flood.⁷ Baxter states:

Was the Flood in Noah’s day universal? As to the *fact* of the Flood, the testimony of universal tradition and of 20th-century archaeology have put that finally beyond doubt: but was the Flood *universal*? ... let us clearly understand that it is not vital to the inspiration of the Scriptures to maintain that the Noachian Flood was universal.

It is indeed vital, and all the biblical arguments in favor of the Flood’s universal extent should be carefully elaborated. Without exception, the commentators and scholars who maintain that the Flood was not global have drawn their arguments and evidence from science, particularly geology, forgetting that like any other human activity, science uses human wisdom to interpret the observational data and build models of, for example, what the earth was like in the past.

Rather than starting with fallible human opinion, it is crucial that we examine the question of the extent of the Flood from the wisdom and knowledge of God as provided by the Holy Spirit in the opening pages of Genesis.

5. H. C. Leupold, 1980, *Exposition of Genesis*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House (originally published by The Wartburg Press, 1942). See F. Kiel and F. Delitzsch, 1949, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch*, trans. James Martin, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

6. A. P. Ross, 1996, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

7. For example, J. S. Baxter, 1960, *Explore the Book: A Basic and Broadly Interpretive Course of Bible Study from Genesis to Revelation*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House; H. N. Ross, 1998, *The Genesis Question: Scientific Advances and the Accuracy of Genesis*, Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

THE DURATION OF THE FLOOD

One of the distinctive features of the Flood account in Genesis is the fullness and precision of the dates given—a precision described by Wenham as “astonishing.”¹ The only other place in Scripture with similar precision is in Ezekiel, where his prophecies are clearly dated. Thus, these dates in Genesis 6–9 should attract our immediate attention as being significant. Indeed, we are given the date when the Flood began (Genesis 7:11) and the date when the Flood ended and Noah disembarked from the Ark (Genesis 8:14), making the Flood exactly one year and eleven days in duration. This equates to 371 days, if it is assumed that the calendar being referred to functioned on the basis of twelve 30-day months in a 360-day year. That this is indeed the case can readily be established from a careful study of the chronological data in the biblical text (see Table 1). For the Flood to continue for more than a year is astounding, to say the least, but it is totally consistent with the Flood’s global extent. On the other hand, a year-long flood is hard to reconcile with the view widely held today that it was only local, confined to the Mesopotamian region. So while there may be differences of opinion as to other details concerning the Flood, there should be no dispute as to the Flood’s duration.

FORTY DAYS OF RAIN

The Flood began seven days after Noah, his family, and the animals entered the Ark, and we are told in Genesis 7:11–12 that as “the fountains of the great deep” were broken up, the “windows of heaven were opened” and it rained for forty days and nights continuously and torrentially. Devastating local floods are known from recorded history to have resulted from several days of intense rain that then tapers off. However, the biblical account clearly indicates that the intense rain cascaded down continuously for forty days and forty nights, two days short of six weeks. While we can only imagine the devastation resulting from the “floodgates of heaven” (literally) opening and the water pouring down upon the earth for that length of time, it is hard to conceive from this description that the Flood was only local. With that much water falling down upon the earth and spreading out, there is no doubt that Scripture is describing a global flood. Of course, we are told that water also came from within the earth—from

Table 1. The chronology of the Flood*.

Period	Days
There were forty days during which the rain fell	40
Throughout another 110 days the waters continued to rise, making 150 days in all for their “prevailing” (7:24)	110
The waters occupied 74 days in their “going and decreasing” (AV margin). This was from the 17th day of the seventh month to the 1st of the tenth month (8:5). There being 30 days to a month, the figures in days are 13 plus 30 plus 30 plus 1	74
Forty days elapsed before Noah sent out the raven (8:6–7)	40
Seven days elapsed before Noah sent out the dove for the first time (8:8). This period is necessary for reaching the total and is given by implication from the phrase “other seven days” (8:10)	7
Seven days passed before sending out the dove for the second time (8:10)	7
Seven days more passed before the third sending of the dove (8:12)	7
Up to this point 285 days are accounted for, but the next episode is dated the 1st of the first month in the 601st year. From the date in 7:11 to this point in 8:13 is a period of 314 days; therefore an interval of 29 days elapses	29
From the removal of the covering of the Ark to the very end of the experience was a further 57 days (8:14)	57
TOTAL	371

* This table appears in E. F. Kevan’s Commentary on Genesis in Davidson, 1953, 84–85. As is pointed out in the discussion here, the Flood probably reached its maximum depth after the first forty days, instead of rising throughout the 150 days as Kevan indicates.

1. Wenham, 1987, 179.

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“the fountains of the great deep”—so the amount of water involved is only compounded to the point where nothing short of a universal flood of global extent is consistent with the biblical description.

150 DAYS OF “PREVAILING”

The popular perception is that the Flood only lasted for forty days because that was the length of time it rained so intensely. However, the biblical account states three times that the waters “prevailed” (Genesis 7:18, 19, 24), the word “prevailed” in the original Hebrew conveying the meaning “were overwhelmingly mighty.”² We are also told that “the waters increased,” “the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly,” “the waters prevailed exceedingly,” and “the waters prevailed” (Genesis 7:17, 18, 19, 24) for 150 days. Thus, the forty days and forty nights of continual intense rain was only the beginning of this 150-day period. In fact, we are told in Genesis 8:1-2 that it was only after this 150-day period that the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped so that the rain was “restrained.” The fact that this prevailing is repeated four times in the space of eight verses is meant to emphasize what was happening. No local flood continues rising for 150 days. If this were a description of the rivers in the Mesopotamian valley region overflowing, then it is completely misleading and exaggerated, to say the least.

Leupold suggested that the Flood attained its maximum depth after the first forty days of intense rainfall and continued to maintain that level for the additional 110 days of this 150-day “prevailing” period.³ This conclusion was also favored by Whitcomb and Morris,⁴ who emphasized that in Genesis 7:4, 12 we are twice told that the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights, and then in Genesis 7:17 we are also told that “the Flood was [or better, ‘was coming’] forty days upon the earth.” They maintain that most of the water which came through the “windows of heaven” fell in the intense rainfall of that first period of forty days and that although the “windows of heaven” were not stopped for another 110 days, the rainfall during that period may have contributed only to the maintaining of the Flood waters at their maximum height.

However, it seems just as reasonable to regard the description in Genesis 7:17-20 as implying that the waters continued to rise continually during the entire “prevailing” period of 150 days. In sequence, the account records that “the waters increased” (v. 17), “and the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth” (v. 18), “and the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth” (v. 19) and “the mountains were covered” (v. 20). Leupold translates these expressions as “the waters grew mighty and mounted greatly over the earth” (v. 18), and “the waters grew extremely mighty upon the earth” (v. 19).⁶ Thus, the waters were still increasing on the earth’s surface and therefore rising.

It needs to be remembered that “the fountains of the great deep” were also open for this 150-day “prevailing” period, and that it is possible that just as much, if not more, water came out onto the earth’s surface through these fountains as the water that fell as rain through the “floodgates of heaven.” If this indeed was the case, then it is even harder to escape from the inevitable conclusion. If the Flood waters were rising continually over the space of five long months (five 30-day months = 150 days), then because water will always spread out and seek a uniform level, the Flood was of such magnitude with the quantities of water involved that the extent had to be universal and global.

221 DAYS OF “ASSUAGING” AND “ABATING”

The turning point during the Flood year occurred when “God remembered Noah” (Genesis 8:1), after which “God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged [literally, calmed or soothed].” This happened at the end of the 150 days of the waters “prevailing.” From this point, the record tells us it took 221 days for the Flood waters to completely abate [literally, diminish, become less in amount] and for the surface of the ground to dry out sufficiently for Noah, his family, and the animals to disembark the Ark.

In reality, these time periods need to be carefully understood, for it is all too easy to miss the implications. Indeed, it is staggering to envisage that the Flood was so overwhelming, far-reaching, and gigantic as to have

2. H. M. Morris, 1995, *The Defenders Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI: World Publishing, 23.

3. Leupold, 1942, 300, 306.

4. J. C. Whitcomb and H. M. Morris, 1961, *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications*, Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 4.

5. H. M. Morris, 1976, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 199.

6. Leupold, 1942, 300.

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covered all the high mountains of the earth's pre-Flood topography within a period of probably only six weeks, with the waters then continuing to increase and prevail over those mountains for an additional sixteen weeks, during which the face of the earth was a shoreless ocean! However, if the biblical description of a global flood which covered even the tops of the mountains for sixteen consecutive weeks (110 days) is hard to reconcile with the somewhat inadequate local flood concept, then how much harder to reconcile is the fact that an additional 31 weeks (221 days, or more than seven months) were required for the Flood waters to subside sufficiently for Noah to disembark safely in "the mountains of Ararat."

During this period of 221 days, when the Flood waters were abating and the new land surface was drying out, there are a number of stages elaborated in the biblical narrative that are sometimes easily confused.⁷ In addition to the Flood waters abating after 150 days (five months) when the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, we read in Genesis 8:4 that the Ark also came to rest "upon the mountains of Ararat." There is then a 74-day period (see Table 1) in which "the waters decreased continually" (Genesis 8:5), and at the end of that period we read that the tops of the mountains were visible. In other words, during that 74-day period, the continual rapid decrease in the water level exposed the tops of the mountains surrounding where the Ark had come to rest. But Noah waited another forty days before he opened the window of the Ark in order to send out the raven.

Custance misunderstands these details. He suggests that in the 74 days from the grounding of the Ark on the mountains of Ararat until the tops of the mountains were seen, the water level had only dropped between 25 and 30 feet (a little more than the presumed draught of 15 cubits for the Ark), so that dry land became visible only at the end of those 74 days.⁸ In support of this contention, he maintains that the raven was released during this 74-day period and wandered to and fro without finding a landing place because the dry land had not yet appeared. Custance then uses this misreading of the biblical text to arrive at a rate for the decreasing water level of 25 feet in 74 days, or about four inches per day, which of course is admirably consistent with his insistence that the Flood was only local.

However, Custance is wrong, because the chronology for this period of the abating waters, as outlined in Table 1, is very clear from the progression of verses in Genesis 8. In any case, it must be emphasized that at the end of the 74-day period, after the grounding of the Ark on the mountains of Ararat, we are specifically told that it was not merely the top of the high mountain on which the Ark rested that was seen, but "the tops of the mountains." In other words, the Flood waters must have subsided hundreds of feet in order for various mountain peaks of different altitudes to be seen by then. Nor are the Scriptures teaching that the tops of the mountains were still submerged on the last day of the ninth month (day 73 after the Ark came to rest), and then suddenly emerged on the first day of the tenth month (day 74).

Furthermore, Noah did not subsequently send out the raven to determine whether any mountain peaks had emerged, as Custance assumes, but to gain information about the nature of those exposed areas. The raven's failure to return to the Ark did not mean it hadn't achieved the purpose Noah had intended. On the contrary, it was a good sign, because being a hardy bird it would have survived on carrion even though the exposed ground of the mountain tops was still inhospitable to other creatures. The total impossibility of Custance's scenario is that if the raven was released forty days after the grounding of the Ark, within the 74-day period, then the dove would have been released three times in successive seven-day periods, and returned after having plucked the fresh olive leaf, more than two weeks before the tops of the mountains were exposed on day 74! We do well to follow the clear chronology outlined in the biblical narrative, allowing the Scriptures to speak for themselves, rather than force them to bolster a local flood interpretation.

The order in the stages for the abating of the Flood waters as given in Genesis 8, then, is as follows:

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7. H. N. Ross, 1998, 147, 148, is clearly confused or has deliberately ignored the clear chronological details in Genesis 7-8 when he refers to the Flood waters receding over an 11-month period. He has obviously arrived at this figure because he only regards the waters as rising during the 40 days of rainfall (p. 148), 11 months (330 days) being the balance of the duration of the Flood event after 40 days are subtracted from the total 371 days. However, as has already been emphasized, the scriptural record clearly states that the Flood waters prevailed [literally, were overwhelmingly mighty] upon the earth for 150 days (Genesis 7:24) before the waters "assuaged" (Genesis 8:1), the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven stopped, and the rain restrained (Genesis 8:2), and the waters returned from off the earth continually (Genesis 8:3). In fact, Genesis 8:3 specifically states that after the end of the 150 days, the waters were abated. There is really no excuse for misreading the biblical text and as a result publicly misleading his readers, but then his erroneous calculations from his incorrect reading of the Scriptures are seemingly more supportive of his local flood concept than the true biblical figures for the duration of the rising and prevailing of the Flood waters.
 8. A. C. Custance, 1979, The extent of the Flood, in *The Flood: Local or Global?*, vol. IX: The Doorway Papers, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 22-24.

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- After the waters had “prevailed upon the earth” for 150 days, the waters began to “assuage” [literally, calm].
- The Ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat the same day that the waters began to assuage, for the seventeenth day of the seventh month was exactly 150 days after the Flood began.
- The waters continued to abate and subside, so that by the first day of the tenth month (74 days later), the tops of various lower mountains could be seen. In this 74-day period after the Ark grounded on perhaps the highest peak of the mountains of Ararat, more and more of the lower peaks emerged, so that doubtless during much of the ninth month the tops of the various mountains were seen. Nevertheless, it is also true that on the first day of the tenth month “were the tops of the mountains seen,” Moses under the direction of the Holy Spirit choosing that particular date to mark the end of this stage in the abating of the waters. This whole process would suggest a drop in water levels of thousands of feet at a rate of perhaps 15 or 20 feet per day, at least during this initial 74-day stage of the assuaging period.
- The Flood level continued to fall for forty more days, so that Noah no longer feared the Flood would return and hence sent the raven out to investigate conditions outside the Ark on the exposed mountain tops.

As Whitcomb and Morris have already established,⁹ instead of constituting an objection to the global extent of the Flood, this rate of decline of the water level, in stark contrast to Custance’s spurious calculations, thus becomes a strong argument in its favor. If nothing else but the tops of the mountains could be seen after the waters had been subsiding for 74 days, then we are left with no other alternative than to conclude that the waters of the Flood must have covered the whole earth.

The details of the flights of the dove as recorded in Genesis 8:8-12 are also instructive. Noah first sent out the dove seven days after the raven had flown off and not returned, as suggested by the phrase “yet other seven days” (v. 10). Even though the mountainsides were now well and truly exposed, Noah again wanted to find out more about the ground conditions, so he sent out the dove, which as a cleaner bird would only be satisfied if it found a clean and dry resting place. The first time the dove was sent out, no such resting place was found and it returned. Seven days later when the dove was sent out a second time, it returned that evening with an olive leaf in its mouth. This was plucked from what was no doubt the budding of a piece of olive tree debris that had floated on the Flood waters, but now was partly buried in the newly exposed ground surface and had thus been regenerated during the seven days since the dove’s previous flight. When the dove did not return after being sent out again seven days later, Noah knew that the Flood waters had abated sufficiently for the dove to find a clean and dry resting place with food for its needs.

These details also add to the complete picture as recorded in the Scriptures of definite stages in this abating of the waters period, and in the drying out of the ground. The speed at which the ground became hospitable for the dove so soon after the raven had gone also adds to the picture of rapidly falling water levels and rapidly regenerating vegetation. Such revegetation would have been accomplished asexually from the sprigs, or from floating seeds, that had survived from what had been a flood of global extent. Even the progression in Genesis 8:11, 13, 14 in the descriptions from “the waters were abated from off the earth” to “the waters were dried up from off the earth,” “the face of the ground was dry” and “the earth dried,” signifies the final drying out stages of the Flood waters were in a progression, which included another 86 days after the dove failed to return. This period of almost three months again emphasizes that this was no ordinary local flood which, if the details of local floods in recorded history are anything to go by, would have taken a lot less time for the ground to have dried out and the vegetation to be re-established.

Thus, the duration of the Flood in its assuaging, abating, and drying out, as well as in its prevailing, compels us to think of this event as a global and universal cataclysm, and not merely some localized catastrophe.

9. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 7.

THE DEPTH OF THE FLOOD

One of the most important statements in the biblical narrative that argues for a universal flood is found in Genesis 7:19-20:

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

The extent of the actions of the rising Flood waters so forthrightly expressed makes the tremendous implications of the biblical narrative at this point readily evident to any reader. Even if only one high mountain had been covered with water, to say nothing of *all* the mountains, the Flood would have been absolutely universal, simply because water must seek its own level and it does so very quickly!

Leupold makes the following comments about these crucial statements in the biblical narrative:

A measure of the waters is now made by comparison with the only available standard for such waters—the mountains. They are said to have been “covered.” Not a few merely but “all the high mountains under all the heavens.” One of these expressions alone would almost necessitate the impression that the author intends to convey the idea of the absolute universality of the Flood, e.g., “all the high mountains.” Yet since “all” is sometimes used in a relative sense, the writer removed all possible ambiguity by adding the phrase “under all the heavens.” A double “all” (*kol*) cannot allow for so relative a sense. It almost constitutes a Hebrew superlative. So we believe that the text disposes of the question of the universality of the Flood.”¹

Leupold then deals with the potential objection of those who maintain the Flood was limited in extent, perhaps only as far as mankind may have populated the earth’s surface at that time, and who would thus insist that *kol* can be used in a relative sense, as it is in other passages such as Genesis 41:57; Exodus 9:25; 10:15; Deuteronomy 2:25; 1 Kings 10:24. However, he insists that such an argument is inadequate because these verses use a single *kol*, whereas here in Genesis 7:19 a double *kol* is used to give the double emphasis which cannot be interpreted as only relative.

The phrase “15 cubits upward did the waters prevail” does not mean that the Flood was only 15 cubits (22 feet) deep, for the phrase is qualified by the one which immediately follows: “And the mountains were covered.”² Nor does this phrase necessarily mean that the mountains were covered to a depth of only 15 cubits, because this would require that all the pre-Flood mountains had exactly the same altitude.

The true meaning of this depth of water is very clear when we refer back to Genesis 6:15, where we are told that the height of the Ark was 30 cubits. Most commentators agree that the “15 cubits” in Genesis 7:20 must therefore refer to the draft of the Ark, which must have sunk into the water to a depth of 15 cubits (just one-half of its total height) when fully laden. This information adds further support to the depth of water argument for a global flood because it tells us that the Flood waters “prevailed” over the tops of the highest mountains to a depth of *at least* 15 cubits (22 feet). Quite obviously, if the Flood had not covered the mountains by at least such a depth, then the Ark could not have floated over them during the five months (150 days) in which the waters “prevailed” across the face of the earth.

However, those who actively propound the local flood view do not take issue with this clear statement in the biblical narrative of the waters prevailing 15 cubits over the mountains. Rather, the “sticking point” for them is whether Genesis is here really suggesting that present-day Mt. Ararat, with an altitude of about 17,000 feet, and

1. Leupold, 1942, 301.

2. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 2.

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beyond that Mt. Everest in the Himalayas, with an altitude of over 29,000 feet, were covered by the Flood waters. Two difficulties raised are the tremendous mass and weight of water even three miles, let alone six miles, deep (Keil³, Baxter⁴) and the inability of our planet from internal and external sources to be able to supply the required quantity of water for such a global inundation (Ross⁵).

These objections are, of course, based on the assumption that both Mt. Ararat and Mt. Everest were in existence prior to the Flood, which in turn is based on the view that since the biblical Flood occurred approximately 4,500 years ago—in contrast to the 4.5-billion-year geological timescale for the earth—it was thus insignificant geologically. Ross, for example, follows in the footsteps of many other commentators by insisting that the Flood was limited to the Mesopotamian Valley, the presumed “world” of Noah’s day (more on this later). Thus, Ross insists that the Hebrew words used in Genesis 7:19 can be interpreted as the waters falling upon, or running over, hills or hill country, and that Noah on the upper deck of the Ark, floating on water 200 or 300 feet deep in the middle of the vast Mesopotamian Plain, would not have been able to see any hills or mountains due to his view being limited by the earth’s curvature “atmospheric conditions, and aging eyes, and other factors.”⁶ Such views and interpretations do “violence” both to the Hebrew text of the biblical narrative and to the obvious scientific implications of these early chapters of Genesis.

First, Wenham says of Genesis 7:18-19 that “the waters do not merely multiply greatly; they triumph,” as in the victory in a military battle.⁷ He further comments:

[N]ote the repetition of the key words, and the way the remark “the waters triumphed and multiplied greatly” in v. 18 is heightened here to “the waters triumphed exceedingly [greatly greatly].” Just how deep the water was is indicated by the high mountains being submerged.

Then Cassuto says of Genesis 7:24:

[T]he paragraph closes, with an awe-inspiring picture of the mighty waters covering the entire earth. We see water everywhere, as though the world had reverted to its primeval state at the dawn of Creation, when the waters of the deep submerged everything. Nothing remained of the teeming life that had burst forth upon the earth.⁸

Second, it is an inescapable conclusion that as a result of the Flood “all flesh died that moved upon the earth” (Genesis 7:21), “all in whose nostrils was the breath of life...died” (v. 22), and “every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground...and they were destroyed from the earth” so that “Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark” (v. 23). Echoing Cassuto’s comments, these statements imply destruction from off the face of the earth of all life that God had created in Genesis 1, so we need not be surprised at the scientific evidence for such destruction in the vast thicknesses of water-transported sediments now found as rock layers containing countless billions of fossils.

In this context, it is important to note that Mt. Ararat is a volcanic mountain whose lavas cover fossil-bearing sedimentary rocks. Obviously, if these fossil-bearing sedimentary rocks beneath Mt. Ararat are a product of the Genesis Flood, then Mt. Ararat was not there prior to the Flood. Similarly, marine-fossil-bearing layers near the summit of Mt. Everest would likewise have been a product of the Flood, so that Mt. Everest, and thus all the Himalayas which are also geologically “recent” mountains, would not have been there prior to the Flood. Thus, the Flood waters did not have to be 3-6 miles deep to carry the Ark over Mt. Ararat and Mt. Everest. This understanding negates the claimed problems of the weight of such a depth of water and the ability of sources in and around the earth to supply that quantity of water.

Furthermore, beneath the floor of the Mesopotamian Valley are fossil-bearing sedimentary rocks also, so that the Mesopotamian Valley also wasn’t there prior to the Flood. As will be demonstrated below, the picture the Scriptures give, both here in Genesis and elsewhere, is that the earth’s total surface was changed as a result of the

3. C. F. Keil, 1875, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Genesis)*, Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, cited in Leupold, 1942, 302-301.

4. Baxter, 1960, 41.

5. H. N. Ross, 1998, 147-148.

6. H. N. Ross, 1998, 145-146.

7. Wenham, 1987, 182-183.

8. U. Cassuto, 1964, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1-11*, vol. 2, trans. I. Abrahams, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 97.

THE DEPTH OF THE FLOOD

Flood, including its geology and geography. Thus, whatever the height of the pre-Flood mountains, the Genesis narrative insists that all the mountains were covered to a depth of at least 22 feet (15 cubits). Furthermore, from simple observation of the behavior of water, if the Flood waters were deep enough to cover the high mountains in one region to a depth of more than 22 feet for up to five months (150 days), then it is obvious that the waters must necessarily spread themselves out over the entire earth's surface. Thus, to maintain this depth for such a length of time, the Flood waters would have had to reach a similar depth everywhere else on the planet.⁹ Therefore, all of these arguments put together can only lead an honest reader of the Scriptures to the overwhelming conclusion that the depth of the Flood waters as described must imply that the Flood was of universal and global extent.

9. Leupold, 1942, 302, and J. C. Whitcomb, 1988, *The World That Perished*, revised ed., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 47.

GEOLOGICAL DETAILS OF THE FLOOD

Because of the apparent success of modern geology, with its uniformitarian–evolutionary synthesis based on the multi-million-year geological timescale, many Christians and Christian scholars have accepted that synthesis and timescale without objections. Attempts are made to reconcile the Scriptures with it, but as a result they usually compromise the Scriptures and argue for a local flood of minimal effect. Thus, so many arguments against the Flood being of global extent have been based upon supposed geological objections, and yet the scriptural narrative of the Flood does provide us with some very important geological details.

Indeed, the first recorded event of the Flood is that “the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up” (Genesis 7:11). According to Brown, Driver, and Briggs, the Hebrew word *ʾhôm* translated “deep” in this verse has the primary meanings of 1) “deep, of subterranean waters,” 2) “sea,” and 3) “primeval ocean, deep.”¹ Most other commentators agree.² Leupold refers to the “great deep” as being subterranean water,³ while Wenham suggests that there was “a great subterranean ocean.”⁴ Thus, there seems little doubt that the phrase *ʾhôm rabbâh* (“great deep”) refers back to the *ʾhôm* of Genesis 1:2 and to the oceanic depths and possible underground reservoirs of the pre-Flood world.

Whitcomb and Morris thus suggest that the ocean basins were presumably fractured and uplifted sufficiently to pour waters over the continents, in conjunction with the torrential rain which fell through the “windows of heaven.”⁵ Kidner suggests that there was a vast upheaval of the sea-bed,⁶ while Vos translates the expression as “the springs of the great deep were cleft asunder,” often interpreted as some convulsion of the earth’s crust releasing stores of subterranean waters.⁷ Wenham likewise notes that the expanded explicit description of the Flood’s arrival—“all the springs of the great deep burst open”—suggests “water gushing forth uncontrollably from wells and springs which draw from a great subterranean ocean.”⁸ However, Vos maintains that geologists have thus far been unable to find evidence of such subterranean reserves, or of any general and cataclysmic alteration of the earth’s crust that may have eliminated such reservoirs by the collapse of geological structures above them. But such a conclusion needs to be qualified because of the abundant evidence in the earth’s crust of upheavals that have distorted, folded, and heated the rocks.

So, it is conceivable that such a cataclysmic upheaval could indeed have eliminated pre-Flood reservoirs, which may have presumably collapsed once the waters they contained burst forth. This fits the description in the biblical narrative of being “broken up” (Genesis 7:11). In support of these pre-Flood subterranean reservoirs, Morris refers back to the description in Genesis 2:10-14 of the river system that flowed out of the Garden of Eden.⁹ We are told that this river system began as one stream that divided into four rivers. The implication is that they were fed from controlled fountains or springs in the Garden where water must have emerged from deep-seated sources in the earth’s crust. Morris suggests that such subterranean reservoirs may have been all interconnected, so that the entire complex constituted one “great deep.”

Whitcomb and Morris maintain that the close connection that exists between Genesis 7:11 and 1:2-10 should be evident to those who study the text with care. They cite Delitzsch, who comments:

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1. F. Brown, S. R. Driver and C. H. Briggs, 1906, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Boston, New York and Chicago: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1062.
 2. For example, L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, 1953, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, vol. II, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1019, give the first two meanings of *ʾhôm* as (1) the primeval ocean, and (2) the subterranean water.
 3. Leupold, 1942, 295.
 4. Wenham, 1987, 181.
 5. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 9.
 6. Kidner, 1967, 91.
 7. H. F. Vos, 1982, *Everyman’s Bible Commentary: Genesis*, Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 40.
 8. Wenham, 1987, 181.
 9. Morris, 1976, 194-195.

GEOLOGICAL DETAILS OF THE FLOOD

[I]t was by a co-operation of subterranean and celestial forces, which broke through the restraints placed upon the waters on the second and third days of creation, that the Deluge was brought to pass.¹⁰

So impressed by the geological implications of the description in the biblical narrative, Lange wrote this of the Flood:

[T]he earth-crisis, on which it was conditioned, must have been universal. With the opening of the fountains of the deep stands the opening of the windows of heaven in polar contrast...as an earth-crisis, the Flood was probably universal.¹¹

Leupold suggests that the chief source of the Flood waters was the rain from above, whereas the fountains of the great deep were only the auxiliary source, even though they are mentioned first in the narrative.¹² However, he concedes that tremendous geological possibilities lie behind the vast upheavals on every hand that would have been involved in the breaking open of the fountains of the great deep, the vastness of these eruptions being in proportion to the actual depth of the Flood.

On the other hand, Morris maintains that the breaking up (literally, “cleaving open”) of the fountains of the great deep being mentioned first was evidently the initial action that in turn triggered the opening of the “windows of heaven.”¹³ It is conceivable that as a result of the build-up of pressure in the subterranean reservoirs due to the earth’s internal heat, the conduits all developed uncontrollable fractures on the same day. Once the first “fountain” cracked open, the water surging through would immediately weaken adjacent conduits, resulting in a rapid worldwide chain reaction developing to cleave open all the fountains of the great deep right around the globe.

However, as noted by Whitcomb and Morris, it is a most significant fact that these geological upheavals were not confined to a single day. In fact, the scriptural record states that this breaking up of “the fountains of the great deep” continued for a period of *five months*, because it was not until after the 150 days had passed that “the fountains also of the deep...were stopped” (Genesis 8:2). Such vast geological upheavals on the ocean floor breaking up the earth’s crust and water flowing out from these underground reservoirs continuously for such a prolonged period simply cannot be reconciled with the view that the Flood was merely a local inundation in the Mesopotamian Valley. Instead, these geological details provided by the biblical narrative give overwhelming support to the concept of a geographically universal flood.

More recently, Baumgardner (references later) has suggested that the cleaving open of the fountains of the great deep is an amazingly accurate description of what must have occurred along narrow zones many tens of thousands of miles in length, where sections of the pre-Flood ocean floor were pulling apart rapidly during the Flood. These narrow V-shaped gashes in the ocean bottom would have been filled by spectacular supersonic steam jets that entrained vast amounts of ocean water and like fountains rose high into the stratosphere. The steam formed as water at the bottom of these channels came in contact with molten rock gushing from below to fill the gaps between the rapidly spreading slabs of ocean floor. These features of the Flood cataclysm will be discussed in more detail later.

10. F. Delitzsch, 1899, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. S. Taylor, New York: Scribner and Welford, 267.

11. J. P. Lange, ed., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Genesis*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 296.

12. Leupold, 1942, 295-296.

13. Morris, 1976, 196-197.

THE SIZE OF THE ARK

In Genesis 6:15, we are told that Noah was commanded to build the Ark according to the following specifications: “The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.” To understand these dimensions in terms of modern units, the first question to be considered is the length of a cubit as used here in the Scriptures. The cubit was, all are agreed, measured from a man’s elbow to the tip of his fingers, but there were some variations in the lengths of the standard cubits that were used by people in the early post-Flood world. For example, the Babylonians had a “royal” cubit of about 19.8 inches, the Egyptians had a longer and a shorter cubit of about 20.65 inches and 17.6 respectively, while the Hebrews apparently had a long cubit of 20.4 inches and a common cubit of about 17.5 inches.¹

Most commentators adopt without question the Hebrews’ common cubit, which is virtually identical to the Egyptian shorter cubit. This would logically make sense with Moses, a Hebrew with an Egyptian upbringing, writing in the first instance to Hebrews. However, most commentators simplify the calculations by adopting a rounded figure of 18 inches or 45 centimeters for the cubit. When all these considerations are taken into account, a conservative estimate for the dimensions of the Ark would be 450 feet (approximately 135 meters) long, 75 feet (22.5 meters) wide, and 45 feet (13.5 meters) high. Since the Ark had three decks (Genesis 6:16), it had a total deck area of approximately 98,800 square feet (approximately 9,100 square meters), which is equivalent to slightly more than the area of twenty standard basketball courts. The total volume of the Ark would also have been approximately 1.45 million cubic feet (approximately 41,000 cubic meters), which is approximately equal to the volumetric capacity of 540 standard livestock cars used on modern U.S. railroads.² The displacement tonnage of the Ark, defined as the weight of seawater displaced by the volume of the ship when submerged to its design draft, assumed to be 15 cubits (half its height) because Genesis 7:20 refers to the Flood waters prevailing higher than 15 cubits over the mountains so that the Ark cleared them, would have been almost 20,700 tons (more than 21,000 tonnes). The gross tonnage of the Ark, which is a measurement of cubic space rather than weight—one ton in this case being equivalent to 100 cubic feet of usable storage space—would have been about 14,500 tons (approximately 14,730 tonnes), which would place it well within the category of large metal oceangoing ships today.

Against the tide of scholarly opinion, Culance questioned whether the dimensions of the Ark could have been so huge and suggested, without evidence, that the cubit in Noah’s day may have been much shorter than 18 inches. He also questioned the magnitude of the building task:

I think anyone who tries to visualize the construction of a vessel 450 feet long by four men would realise that the size of the timbers alone for a “building” 45 feet high (analogous to a 4-storey apartment building) would seem by their sheer massiveness to be beyond the powers of four men to handle. With all the means later at their disposal, subsequent builders for 4,000 long years constructed seaworthy vessels that seldom seemed to have exceeded 150 to 200 feet at the most....it was not until 1884 apparently that a vessel, the *Eturia*, a Cunard liner, was built with a length exceeding that of the Ark. It would have to be a very solidly constructed ship for its decks to carry such a load as two elephants, for example, weighing four to five tons apiece.³

While silent on the subject, nothing in the Scriptures would suggest that Noah and his three sons had to construct the Ark on their own, so it is not unreasonable to expect that Noah could have had the help of hired men. Furthermore, the references in Genesis 4:17, 21, 22 to the technological abilities in the pre-Flood civilization

1. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 10.

2. Morris, 1976, 181 gave a similar estimate.

3. Culance, 1979, 37.

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to build cities, to make musical instruments, and to make metal tools, which therefore required the mining and smelting of metal ores, imply that Noah and his sons could have personally had the necessary technical skills to have directed the construction of the Ark with such huge dimensions. Of course, we need to also remember that the “blueprint” for the Ark was given to Noah by divine instruction (Genesis 6:14-16).

Confirmation of the God-given design of the Ark can be seen in its seaworthiness and tested ability to be able to withstand the rigors of stormy seas and raging Flood waters for the five months of the “prevailing” stage until the waters were calmed by the wind that God sent (Genesis 8:1). It must be remembered that the dimensions of the Ark were not necessarily that of a ship with a sleek hull designed for cruising at speed through the water, but were apparently the dimensions of a gigantic flat-bottom barge with maximum carrying capacity. It is reported that as early as 1609-1621, a Dutchman, Peter Janssen, built a two-fifths scale model of the Ark and experimented with it to demonstrate its seaworthiness and high storage capacity.⁴ In fact, Danish barges called *Fleuten* were evidently modeled after the Ark and proved to be very seaworthy and almost impossible to capsize.⁵ Indeed, the length to width ratio of 6:1 is very similar to that of modern oceangoing ships designed for speed, whereas the Ark was only meant to float, yet this ratio is important from the point of view of stability, of pitching and of rolling.⁶

Morris undertook a study of the stability of the Ark and found it could be shown hydrodynamically that a gigantic box of such dimensions would be exceedingly stable, almost impossible to capsize even in a sea of gigantic waves. In fact, the Ark could be tilted through any angle up to just short of 90° and it would immediately thereafter right itself again.⁷ So, it would have to be turned completely vertical before it could be tipped over. Furthermore, it would tend to align itself parallel with the direction of major wave advance, and thus be subject to minimum pitching most of the time.⁸ He concluded:

[I]ts relatively great length (six times its width) would tend to keep it from being subjected to wave forces of equal magnitude through its whole length, since wave fields tend to occur in broken and varying patterns, rather than in a series of long uniform crest-trough sequences, and this would be particularly true in the chaotic hydrodynamic phenomena of the Flood. Any vortex action to which it might occasionally be subjected would also tend to be resisted and broken up by its large length-width ratio. The ark would, in fact, tend to be lined up by the spectrum of hydrodynamic forces in currents in such direction that its long axis would be parallel to the predominate direction of wave and current movement. Thus it would act as a semi-streamlined body, and the net drag forces would usually be minimal. In every way, therefore, the ark as designed was highly stable, admirably suited for its purpose of riding out the storms of the year of the great Flood.⁹

In a more recent study, model tests were performed using one-fiftieth scaled models of three possible hull forms for the Ark in a large towing tank at the Korea Research Institute of Ships and Engineering, Taejon, South Korea, with a wave generating system in order to validate a theoretical analysis of the seaworthiness of the Ark.¹⁰ It was found that the center of gravity is the most important parameter that determines the safety of a ship, and that the behavior of a ship at sea depends mainly on the wave height, wave direction, and ship speed. However, because the Ark was designed to just drift, the effect of speed would be negligible. Twelve other hull forms were analyzed and tested along with the Ark’s hull form, and when the American Bureau of Shipping’s rule for safety classification was applied to all these hull forms, it was found that the Ark was thirteen times more stable than the standard for safety required by the ABS rule. According to all criteria, the net result was that the Ark had superior safety compared to the other hull forms tested. Furthermore, the study found that the Ark could have withstood waves more than 30 meters (approximately 100 feet) high, so it was concluded that the Ark as a drifting ship had a reasonable length-width-depth ratio for the safety of the hull, crew, and cargo in the high winds and waves imposed on it by the Genesis Flood.

4. Leupold, 1942, 272, and Wenham, 1987, 173.

5. B. Ramm, 1964, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, Exeter, U.K.: The Paternoster Press, 157.

6. F. A. Filby, 1970, *The Flood Reconsidered: A Review of Evidences of Geology, Archaeology, Ancient Literature and the Bible*, London: Pickering and Inglis Limited, 93.

7. H. M. Morris, 1971, The Ark of Noah, *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, 8(2): 142-144.

8. Morris, 1976, 181.

9. Morris, 1971, 143-144.

10. S. W. Hong et al, 1994, Safety investigation of Noah’s Ark in a seaway, *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, 8(1): 26-36.

THE GENESIS FLOOD REVISITED

The spatial dimensions of the Ark therefore constitute a remarkable testimony to the internal consistency and objective rationality of the biblical Flood account. The sheer massiveness of the Ark certainly staggers the imagination, but the evidence of its divine design is witnessed by its optimum dimensions for stability and safety to ride out the raging storms and massive waves that undoubtedly occurred during the Flood, according to the implications of the description given of the Flood in the Scriptures. Furthermore, the very point of the argument here is that for Noah to have built a vessel of such magnitude simply for the purpose of escaping a local flood is inconceivable. Indeed, the very size and credibility of the Ark should effectively eliminate the local flood view from serious consideration among those who take the book of Genesis at face value.

THE NEED FOR THE ARK

The incredible dimensions of the Ark, the enormous effort involved to build it, and the Ark's seaworthiness also provide another logical argument that has seemingly escaped the notice of those who maintain that the Flood was only local. Put simply, not only would an ark of such gigantic proportions have been unnecessary for a flood of only local extent, but there would have been no need for an ark at all!

The whole procedure of constructing such a vessel, involving over 100 years of planning and toiling, simply to escape a local flood, can hardly be described as anything but utter foolishness and unnecessary.¹ How much more sensible it would have been for God merely to have warned Noah of the coming destruction, and to have told him to move to an area that would not have been affected by the Flood, even as Lot was led out of Sodom before the fire fell from heaven. Furthermore, the great numbers of animals of all kinds, and certainly the birds, could easily have also moved away from the area to be flooded, rather than having to be stored and tended for a year in the Ark. The biblical account borders on the ridiculous if the Flood was only confined to some section of the Near East. It is simply not possible to harmonize the scriptural details with the concept of a local flood.

However, in spite of the irresistible force of this argument for a global flood, many conservative biblical scholars continue to promote the concept of a local flood, yet discuss the design, dimensions, capacity, and purpose of the Ark with little apparent appreciation of the obvious inconsistency of such a study. One would think that the biblical description of the dimensions of the Ark would be ignored by such scholars, whose view of the Flood would bring into serious question the need for an ark, to say nothing of an ark of such enormous dimensions.

One of the few to face the implications of this particular argument, by trying to present an alternative, is Culance, who has suggested that the Ark was simply an object lesson for the benefit of the pre-Flood people:

It would require real energy and faith to follow Noah's example and build other arks, but it would have required neither of these to pack up a few things and migrate. There is nothing that Noah could have done to stop them except by disappearing secretly. Such a departure could hardly act as a kind of warning that the deliberate construction of the Ark must have done. And the inspiration for this undertaking was given to Noah by leaving him in ignorance of the exact limits of the Flood. He was assured that all mankind would be destroyed, and he probably supposed that the Flood would therefore be universal. This supposition may have been essential for him.²

However, as Whitcomb and Morris have already pointed out,³ how can one read the Flood account of Genesis 6-9 with close attention and then arrive at the conclusion that the Ark was built merely to warn the ungodly, and not mainly to save the occupants of the Ark from death by drowning? And how can we exonerate God from the charge of deception if we say that He led Noah to believe that the Flood would be global, in order to encourage him to work on the Ark, when He knew all the time that it would not be global?

Similarly, Ross accepts the enormity of the Ark's dimensions and defends the ability of Noah to build the Ark, even accepting the likelihood that Noah may have employed many more people than just his family members to assist in the construction project. However, while he admits that God could have instructed Noah to pack up and depart to a region far away where Noah and those with him would be out of harm's way, Ross insists that the purpose for the Ark was so that Noah, as a prophet and God's spokesperson, could use the scaffolding around the Ark as his preaching platform:

1. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 11.
 2. Culance, 1979, 34.
 3. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 12.

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The efforts of a middle-aged (or slightly older) man, a distinguished patriarch, to build an enormous vessel in the middle of a desert plain that receives scant rainfall certainly would have commanded attention. Noah's persistent devotion to this immensely challenging project for 100 years would have heightened the drama. As crowds gathered to jeer, not cheer, Noah patiently preached. He warned his listeners of impending doom if they failed to repent. He freely offered passage to anyone who would heed his warning and call upon God for mercy. Perhaps one reason for the enormous size of the ship was to demonstrate the sincerity of this offer.

[H]e could have built the ark much faster if he had spent less time preaching, but the magnitude of the impending disaster compelled him to give more than ample warning to his contemporaries.⁴

Again, these statements distort what is specifically stated in the text of Genesis, that the Ark was built primarily to save Noah, his family, and the animals that went aboard it. Likewise, Ross promotes a geographically limited flood ("though universal with respect to people and their animals"), Noah and the world's people at that time supposedly being confined only to the desert plain of Mesopotamia, which of course wrongly assumes that pre-Flood geography was virtually identical to our own.

With respect to the animals in the Ark, Custance takes the view that they were only the domesticated varieties of use to man:

There is much evidence to show that the domestication of animals was first undertaken somewhere in this general area [Mesopotamia]. Assuming that such species as had been domesticated in the centuries between Adam and Noah were confined to the areas settled by man and had not spread beyond this, any flood which destroyed man would also wipe out these animals. The process of domestication would then have to be begun all over again and probably under far less ideal conditions....It is almost certain that such domesticated animals could not have migrated alone....For this reason, if for no other, some animals at least would have to be taken on board—but these were probably of the domesticated varieties.⁵

In his approach to the same issue, Ross examines the Hebrew words used for the animals to be taken on board the Ark and concludes:

All these words refer to birds and mammals, though some can be used a little more broadly. We see a high correlation between this list and the list of soulish animals God created on the fifth and sixth creation days, animals that held significance in the preparation of earth for humankind. Clearly, the survival of these creatures would be important to the restoration and survival of human society after the Flood. Nothing in the Genesis text compels us to conclude that Noah's passengers included anything other than birds and mammals.⁶

However, Ross subsequently narrows his guidelines even further to just "every bird and mammal species living in the region where human beings lived."⁷ But where does the Genesis record suggest that Noah was to take into the Ark only domesticated animals, or only birds and mammals, living in the region where man lived?

We are clearly and repeatedly told that the purpose of the Flood was to destroy "both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air" (Genesis 6:7), and "to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven" (Genesis 6:17, also Genesis 6:12-13, 19-21; 7:2-4, 8, 14-16; 8:1, 17-19; 9:8-17). Furthermore, this was accomplished when "all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth" (Genesis 7:21-23). These are exactly the same descriptive terms used in Genesis 1 to describe the various kinds of land animals which God created. If only domesticated animals or just birds and mammals from the Mesopotamian region were to be taken into the Ark, are we to assume that only domesticated animals or just

4. H.N. Ross, 1998, 160.

5. Custance, 1979, 35-36.

6. H. N. Ross, 1998, 163.

7. H. N. Ross, 1998, 164.

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birds and mammals in the Mesopotamian region were created by God back in Genesis 1? The fact is that no clearer terms could have been employed by Moses under the direction of the Holy Spirit than those which he did employ to express the idea of *the totality of air-breathing, land-dwelling animals in the world*.

Once this point is conceded, all controversy as to the geographical extent of the Flood ends, because no one could possibly maintain that all land animals were confined to the Mesopotamian region in the days of Noah!

The fact that every living creature was to be destroyed would indicate that the whole earth was subject to the Flood (Genesis 7:4). Probably the animals had scattered over much of the earth; a universal flood would have been needed to destroy them....Certainly all the main groups of animals were represented on the Ark.⁸

Francis Schaeffer adamantly maintained:

Another difficulty arises if the Flood is not universal, and I don't see how anyone can quite get around this factor. If a Flood occurs in a limited area, a lot of animals can be drowned but not all of them. There is no way you can eliminate them all unless they are all in a sealed canyon. When a forest fire or flood comes, the animals take off.⁹

Those biblical scholars who promote the view that the Flood was only local usually do so for scientific and archaeological reasons, trying to find the physical evidence in the vicinity of Mesopotamia in recent surficial geological deposits, because they accept without question the geological and archaeological dating that places the advent of man on the earth's surface hundreds of millions of years after the arrival of animals and billions of years after the formation of the earth itself. Thus, Kidner¹⁰ and Youngblood¹¹ believe the Flood was confined to the Mesopotamian region, and thus the inundation of the earth was complete in the relative sense of Mesopotamia, supposedly the confines of world of mankind. However, while Kidner ignores the question of why the Ark would be needed at all if the Flood were only local, Youngblood sees no problem with Noah building a huge ark to escape a local flood. He comments on the purpose of the Ark:

[The Ark was] more than simply a ship in which to ride out a flood. It was just as much a part of Noah's witness to his friends and neighbours as were his actual words. It served as a graphic warning to them that they could choose either to heed or ignore. Migration by Noah and his family [to escape the local flood] would not have had nearly the same powerful effect.¹²

However, if such an ark was really not needed, how can the reader of the Genesis account avoid the impression of unreality, absurdity, and even dishonesty in the whole Ark-building project? Significantly, however, some very recent biblical commentators such as Wenham,¹³ Hamilton,¹⁴ and Ross¹⁵ focus almost exclusively on the text, showing far more concern with questions of textual interpretation rather than dealing with questions raised by the scientific and archaeological considerations. But they consistently avoid discussing the need for the Ark, perhaps because the inescapable conclusion from the text is that the Flood had to be global and geographically universal. Their silence is indicative of their discomfort in promoting the local flood view, because they know the text doesn't support that position, yet they likewise know that to promote a geographically universal, global flood would place them embarrassingly out of step with their scientific colleagues.

On the other hand, philosophers of science such as Ratzsch,¹⁶ and scientists such as Johnson,¹⁷ likewise avoid the question of why an ark of such enormous dimensions needed to be built. They prefer instead to focus on the

8. J. P. Free, 1956, *Archaeology and Bible History*, fifth ed. revised, Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press, 42.

9. F. A. Schaeffer, 1972, *Genesis in Space and Time: The Flow of Biblical History*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 134.

10. Kidner, 1967, 94-96.

11. R. F. Youngblood, 1980, *How It All Began*, Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

12. Youngblood, 1980, 132.

13. Wenham, 1987.

14. V. P. Hamilton, 1990, *A New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company.

15. A. P. Ross, 1996.

16. D. Ratzsch, 1996, *The Battle of Beginnings: Why Neither Side is Winning the Creation-Evolution Debate*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

17. M. R. Johnson, 1988, *Genesis, Geology and Catastrophism: A Critique of Creationist Science and Biblical Literalism*, Exeter, UK: The Paternoster Press.

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apparent scientific difficulties of the biblical Flood account, thus relegating Genesis to “dramatized history” or a “theological drama” designed to teach us about the holiness of God, His judgment against sin as an inevitable consequence, and the grace of God who personally acts to rescue His people from a corrupt and sinful world.¹⁸

However, one who is prepared to discuss the need for an ark is Morton.¹⁹ He originally believed the Scriptures taught a global flood, but then growing doubts, due to the apparent conflict of the geological evidence with the biblical account of the Flood, resulted in a crisis of faith and a shift to promoting a local flood which occurred after billions of years of geological history. In answer to his own question, “But if there was a local flood, why wouldn’t God simply have Noah and his sons climb the hills surrounding the Mediterranean?” Morton suggests two possible reasons:

First, Noah and his sons could not preach to the people if they were gone. Presumably there was still enough room on his boat for a few late converts. Unfortunately there were none. After all, in a land such as the Mediterranean Basin, where rain had probably not been observed, who is going to believe a crazy old coot who claimed the land was going to be flooded? Secondly, as we will see, unless Noah was a long way from the basin (e.g., hundreds of kilometers), he would be just as likely to die as those who were at the bottom.²⁰

Furthermore, Morton quotes Custance in order to support the contention that the Ark was not really that large after all, perhaps being “significantly smaller than is assumed by Whitcomb and Morris.”²¹ Yet as we have already seen, the dimensions for the Ark suggested by Whitcomb and Morris from the description given in the biblical account is almost universally supported by all Bible commentators and scholars, even those such as Kidner who support the local flood view.

So, the necessity of an ark to save air-breathing, land-dwelling creatures through the Flood is devastating to any compromise position with regard to the extent of the Flood. Even if only a small portion of the earth escaped the Flood, there would have been no need for an ark at all. The fact that Noah was commanded to build an ark “to the saving of his house” (Hebrews 11:7), and was commanded to bring in two of every kind of air-breathing, land-dwelling animal “to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 7:3), proves conclusively that the Flood was geographically universal in scope. The only acceptable solution is to take the Scriptures for what they say—the Flood covered the entire globe.

18. Johnson, 1988, 134.

19. G. R. Morton, 1995, *Foundation, Fall and Flood: A Harmonization of Genesis and Science*, Dallas, TX: D.M.D. Publishing Company.

20. Morton, 1995, 135.

21. Morton, 1995, 136.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLE PETER

Outside of the book of Genesis itself, one of the most important biblical passages dealing with the magnitude of the Flood is 2 Peter 3:3-7.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

In this passage from his second and last letter to the church, the apostle Peter, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, writes of a day, yet future from his standpoint, when people would no longer think seriously of, or even believe in, Christ's Second Coming as a cataclysmic, universal intervention by God into the course of world affairs. The reason for this haughty skeptical attitude is a blind adherence to the doctrine of total uniformitarianism, a doctrine that maintains that natural laws and processes have in the past always continued as they do today, never having been interrupted by direct intervention of God in a total destruction of human civilization. We would thus be told by these skeptics that because such destruction by God's intervention has never been the case in past history, then there should be no cause to fear that it will ever occur in the future!

To answer these scoffers of the end-time, the apostle Peter pointed to two events in the past that cannot be explained on the basis of uniformitarianism, the belief that natural processes are all that have operated through time to produce all that is around us on the earth and in the heavens above us. The first of these two events was the creation of the world: "by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth"; and the second event was the Flood: "the world [*kosmos*] that then was, being overflowed with water, perished [*apoleto*]."

However, it is the second of these two events, the Flood, which served as the basis of Peter's comparison with the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the final destruction of the world (cf. 2 Peter 3:7, 10 with Revelation 20:11-21:8). Just as "the world that then was" was destroyed by *water*, so "the heavens and the earth, which are now," protected as they are by God's eternal promise from another watery cataclysm (Genesis 9:11-19), nevertheless "by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto *fire* against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The implications of this passage should be carefully examined with respect to the geographical extent of the Flood. In speaking of the events of the second and third days of creation (2 Peter 3:5), Peter used the terms "the heavens were of old, and the earth" in a sense that is obviously universal. By the same token, no one can deny that Peter also used terms "the heavens and the earth, which are now" (2 Peter 3:7) in the strictly universal sense. Otherwise, Peter would be speaking of the creation and final destruction of only a part of the earth!

The one event that the apostle Peter sets forth as having brought about a transformation, not only of the earth but also of the very *heavens*, was the Flood! It was the Flood that constituted the line of demarcation between "the heavens...of old" and "the heavens...which are now" in the Apostle Peter's thinking. It was the Flood that utilized the vast quantities of water out of which, and amidst which, the ancient earth had been "compacted" (the literal meaning of "the earth standing out of the water and in the water" in 2 Peter 3:5), to bring about the utter destruction of the *kosmos* "that then was." It was the Flood to which Peter also appealed as his final and incontrovertible answer to those who would choose to remain in willful ignorance of the fact that God had *at one time* in the past demonstrated His holy wrath and omnipotence by subjecting "all things" to an overwhelming,

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cosmic catastrophe that was on an absolute par with the final day of judgment, in which God will yet consume the earth with fire and will cause the very elements to dissolve with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:10).

If the Flood was limited to only the Mesopotamian region, it is difficult to see how Peter's appeal to the Flood would have any value as a contradiction to the doctrine of uniformitarianism, which assumes that "all things" have *never* yet been upset by a supernatural and universal cataclysm. Nor is it easy to excuse the apostle Peter of gross exaggeration and inaccuracy when he depicted the Flood in such cosmic terms and in such an absolutely universal context, if the Flood was in fact only a local inundation.

Unger emphasizes the crucial significance of Peter's statements in determining the magnitude and affects of the Flood:

That the antediluvian era, described by Peter as "the world that then was," was obviously different climatically and geologically from the "heavens" and "the earth...that are now" (2 Peter 3:7), is clearly implied in the Apostle's stern warning to naturalistic skeptics who mock at the idea of Christ's supernatural Second Advent on the ground that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:4). Against the false naturalistic theory of uniformity, the Apostle urges the truth of supernatural catastrophism as evidenced by the Noahic Flood.¹

It is instructive, therefore, that Kidner, a prominent advocate of the local flood theory, should comment:

[W]e should be careful to read the [Flood] account whole-heartedly in its own terms, which depict a *total* judgment on the ungodly world already set before us in Genesis—not an event of debatable dimensions in a world we may try to reconstruct. The whole living scene is blotted out, and the New Testament makes us learn from it the greater judgment that awaits not only our entire globe but the universe itself (2 Peter 3:5-7).²

If "the New Testament makes us learn" from the Genesis Flood account that the coming judgment will involve "not only our entire globe but the universe itself," one must ask how this lesson can be learned from a flood that was only local in extent?

Similarly, the well-respected conservative scholar Michael Green questions whether Peter means to suggest that the whole earth was destroyed by the Flood, but then comments:

The present heavens and earth would then be contrasted with the previous ones. It is just conceivable that our author believed that the whole universe had been renewed since the Flood...does Peter teach that the whole world will be destroyed by fire? There is no *a priori* reason why he should not.

[A]nd so here, while we may not exclude the possibility that Peter is envisaging fiery destruction of the whole universe (by no means incredible to a generation which lives after Hiroshima), all that he actually says is that the heavens and the earth are kept in store for fire in anticipation of the judgment of ungodly men.... The parallel between flood and fire is emphasized by the use of the same root in each case for "perished" (verse 6) and *perdition*.³

However, Lloyd-Jones did not hesitate to preach that, just as the coming destruction of the earth by fire would be global, the Flood was also global:

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1. M. F. Unger, 1956, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, third ed., Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 62. There are some writers who have applied 2 Peter 3:6 ("the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished") to Genesis 1:2 instead of to Genesis 6-9—for example, J. S. Baxter, 1960, *Explore the Book*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 42. However, such an application is impossible for three reasons: (1) Genesis 1:2 does not speak of a world perishing by being overflowed with water, whereas four entire chapters of Genesis are devoted to a description of the Flood which fits the apostle Peter's description perfectly; (2) 2 Peter 3:5 describes the earth's condition during the second and third days of the Creation Week (Genesis 1:6-10), and the catastrophe of 2 Peter 3:6 obviously follows this; and (3) Peter has already referred to the Flood twice before in his two letters (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5), and therefore the context would demand that 2 Peter 3:6 refer to the same Flood. Baxter does not offer any proof for his interpretation, and the vast majority of commentators agree that Peter is referring to the Flood.
 2. Kidner, 1967, 95.
 3. M. Green, 1968, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Testament Commentaries, London: InterVarsity Press, 131-133.

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Peter's argument on the facts is this. As God destroyed the old world, so God will destroy the present world...In exactly the same way the ancient world was there in apparent eternal stability, and God commanded the Flood. And the waters came down from the heavens and rose up out of the earth and the ancient world was destroyed...The world seems very stable, it seems fixed and immovable; but we must remember that the God who made and controls it and the entire cosmos is this Almighty God Who can bring things into being out of nothing, and destroy them in a moment, the God Who can handle the world and play with constellations as if they were but atoms. It is this Almighty God Who has reserved this world for punishment. As He has made it once and destroyed it, so with the same word He can destroy it again."⁴

After presenting support for the local flood interpretation of Genesis 6-9, Youngblood stated:

The Apostle Peter, however, seems to assume that the Flood and its devastation were universal and total, except for Noah and his family.⁵

One would think that the statements of the apostle Peter should settle the matter of how the Genesis account must be understood. Elsewhere, Youngblood argues that Peter's use of the term *kosmos* (2 Peter 3:6) allows for a local flood,⁶ but he admits that the immediate context (verses 5 and 7) "speak of the heavens and the earth in a clearly universal sense." This, it would surely seem, should indeed settle the matter.

Schaeffer also could not escape the clear implications from the testimony of the apostle Peter that the Flood was universal, that is, global in extent:

In 2 Peter 3:3-7 the Flood is again paralleled to the Second Coming of Christ. Prior to the time when Jesus is to come, there will be scoffers who will say, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." To paraphrase this in 20th-century language: "Where is the promise of His coming? There has been an absolute uniformity of natural causes in the closed system. Why are you talking about something catastrophic? It has always been like this, and we say it's going to keep on being like this." Peter explains this reaction: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Thus past historical events in the time of Noah are paralleled with coming historical events. But there is a further note here—a note of universality. If the judgement at the Second Coming of Christ is taken to be universal, isn't the judgement by water at the time of Noah also universal? Christians who love the Scripture have discussed at length whether the Flood was universal or not. I believe it was...rather, the argument for universality rests on other factors, including the parallel between the Second Coming of Christ and the Flood as it is given in the New Testament passages we have just considered. The tone of the language that is used in Genesis suggests this as well. It seems to have a totality about it, the same kind of thrust as Genesis 1—a thrust conveying universality. For instance, in Genesis 7:23 we read, "And every living thing was destroyed [blotted out] that was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and birds of the heavens; and they were destroyed [blotted out] from the earth: and Noah only was left, and they that were with him in the Ark." That sounds universal.⁷

Thus, in conclusion, the third chapter of 2 Peter provides powerful New Testament support for the geographical universality of the Flood. Anything less than a catastrophe of such proportions would upset the entire force of the apostle Peter's argument and would give much encouragement to those who teach what he so solemnly condemned.

4. D. M. Lloyd-Jones, 1983, *Expository Sermons on 2 Peter*, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 173-174.

5. R. F. Youngblood, 1985, *In the NIV Study Bible*, edited by K. Barker, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 15.

6. Youngblood, 1980, 133.

7. Schaeffer, 1972, 132-133.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

It would almost seem as though our Lord made a special point of choosing His illustrations and warnings from those portions of the Old Testament He knew would become objects of unbelieving scorn and ridicule by scoffers throughout future centuries. For example, in Matthew 19:4-6, He referred to the creation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; in Luke 17:29, to the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven; in Luke 17:32, to the transformation of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt; in Matthew 12:40, to the experience of Jonah in the whale's belly for three days and three nights; and in Luke 11:32, to the repentance of the Ninevites at the preaching of Jonah. Furthermore, in addition to all of these, the Lord Jesus Christ made special reference to Noah and the Flood in Luke 17:26-30, where we read in context:

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, unto the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. (cf. Matthew 24:39)

Of course, it is always very important to note the context of any statement in the Scriptures, and in this instance the context into which our Lord places the Flood destruction. It is placed alongside the destruction of Sodom and the destruction of the ungodly at the time of Christ's Second Coming, both events being compared with the Flood. Thus, first of all it is clear that our Lord regarded the Flood as just as much a literal and historical event as the destruction of Sodom in the days of Abraham and his nephew Lot in Genesis 19. Second, this context into which our Lord places the Flood destruction is of tremendous significance in helping us to determine what He was teaching with respect to the extent of the Flood, which is evident in the way He uses the word "all" in reference to those who were destroyed by the Flood.

The logic of the argument is as follows: the force of Christ's warning to the ungodly concerning the doom which awaits them at the time of His Second Coming, by reminding them of the destruction of the Sodomites, would be *immeasurably weakened* if we knew that *some* of the Sodomites had somehow escaped. This would offer hope to the ungodly that some of *them* might escape the wrath of God in that coming day of judgment when the Son of Man is revealed. However, we have absolutely no reason to think that any Sodomite escaped the destruction when the fire fell from heaven.

In exactly the same manner, Christ's warning to future generations, on the basis of what happened to the ungodly in the days of Noah, would have been pointless if part of the human race had somehow escaped the judgment of the Flood waters. In fact, the only characterization which our Lord made of those who perished in the Flood was that they ate, drank, married, and were given in marriage. Thus, those who argue that people living in other parts of the world in Noah's day may not have been as wicked as those who lived in the local area affected by the Flood should note well that our Lord's characterization did not involve degrees of ungodliness, but rather the utter absence of that positive godliness which was essential to salvation.

Therefore, Christ's use of the word "all" in Luke 17:27 must be understood in the absolute sense, for otherwise the analogies would collapse and the warnings would lose their force. A heavy burden of proof rests upon those, such as Ramm, who would maintain that only part of the human race was destroyed in the Flood,¹ in view of the clear statements of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Ramm, 1964, 162-164.

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Matthew 24:35-42 is a parallel passage in which the Lord Jesus Christ again compares His Second Coming with the destruction of the Flood. The emphasis and certainty that Jesus placed on the words of His own pronouncements should be noted in verse 35 (“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”), so we do well to heed how the Lord Jesus viewed the extent of the Flood. Schaeffer comments:

More striking yet is the parallel which Jesus drew between His own future space-time coming and the Flood in the past. Jesus emphasizes that His future Second Coming is a historic event, “but of the day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:36-37). The word translated *coming* used throughout the New Testament in relation to Christ’s Second Coming means *presence*. It is “a being alongside of,” that is, there is coming a future time when Jesus will be present on the earth—historically, space-time present in the same way as He was on earth when He spoke these words. Jesus continues, “For as in the days before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming [here again *presence*] of the Son of Man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (vv. 38-41). The parallel is interesting even in detail, for it takes up the normality of life on the earth before the Flood came and parallels it with the normality of life just before Jesus comes. Just as life was going along in an unbroken line and the Flood came, so life will be going on in an unbroken line and the first step in the Second Coming of Christ will occur.²

While Schaeffer is emphasizing that Noah’s Flood is a historic event, his quoting of Jesus’ words in this passage were to emphasize that Jesus was making a very specific comparison between the extent of the effect of His Second Coming with the extent of the effect of the Flood. That the Lord Jesus regarded the Flood as geographically global should be noted in verse 39, but also in the following verses where He warns that at the instant in time when He comes again it will be in the middle of the day in some places where men are working in the field, and early in the morning in other places where women will be grinding at the mill. In Luke 17:34, He adds that at the same moment in time when He comes there will be men in bed, it being night where they are living. It is only physically possible for it to be night, early morning, and the middle of day in different places all at the same moment in time if the Lord Jesus is referring to people living all around the globe. Thus, if the Flood came and took all people away in the same manner as His Second Coming will, when people are living, working, and sleeping all at the same moment but in different time zones all around the globe, then He was clearly teaching that the Flood was geographically universal and of global extent. We cannot escape the force of the absolutely reliable testimony of our Lord to the global extent of the Flood.

2. Schaeffer, 1972, 131.

THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF A WIDELY DISTRIBUTED HUMAN RACE

It should already be clear from the testimony of the Lord Jesus, which we have just noted, that the Flood was geographically global in extent, and therefore totally destroyed a widely-distributed human race, just as people involved in different pursuits around the globe will in the same instant at His Second Coming be likewise judged. This argument for a universal flood is thus based upon the biblical testimony of the total destruction of the human race outside of the Ark. Yet to be conclusive in demonstrating that the Flood was geographically global, this argument logically involves two sub-arguments:

1. That the Bible teaches all mankind perished in the Flood, and
2. That the human race had spread far beyond the area closest to where the Garden of Eden was, perhaps even all around the earth, by the time of the Flood.

There are four major reasons for believing that the Scriptures teach a total destruction of the pre-Flood human population, and three major reasons for believing that people had become widely distributed across the face of the earth by the time of the Flood.

ALL MANKIND PERISHED

Even though there has been controversy about the Flood over the last 200 years, there has usually been little question among conservative Christian scholars as to the total destruction of the human race by the Flood. In 1845, it could be said without fear of contradiction:

Among the Christian philosophers who dispute on this arena, there is a perfect agreement on the most important point, viz., that by the Flood, the *whole* population of the world was destroyed. With the Mosaic narrative before them, no other opinion could be entertained.¹

Sadly, the same situation does not prevail today. Although there is a general unanimity of opinion amongst most evangelical scholars, there are exceptions, and therefore it is necessary to give the four biblical reasons that allow us to be adamant that the Bible unequivocally teaches a total destruction of the human race by the Flood.

1. The moral purpose of the Flood.

The Flood must have destroyed the entire human population outside of the Ark because the Scriptures clearly state that the purpose of the Flood was to wipe out a sinful and degenerate humanity, and this purpose could not have been accomplished by destroying only those people living in a localized area, such as Mesopotamia. The most important relevant passages of Scripture are Genesis 6:5-7 and 11-13:

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. (6:5-7)

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said

1. C. Burton, 1845, *Lectures on the Deluge and the World After the Flood*, London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 21.

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unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (6:11-13)

The constant, almost monotonous repetition of phrases depicting the utter depravity of pre-Flood humanity can only make us astonished and dismayed. Every statement seems calculated to impress upon us the idea of *universal sin*; not just the exceptional sins of one group of people living in one region, nor even of specific times or occasions, but rather the sin of an entire age and an entire human population that had utterly corrupted its way upon the earth and was now ripe for the judgment of a Holy God:

The appalling condition of things is summed up in a few terrible words, words which bellow and burn: *wickedness, evil imagination, corruption, and violence*; and these things were *great, widespread, "in the earth," continuous, "only evil continually," open and daring, "before God," replete, "filled," and universal, "all flesh."*

[T]his is an astounding event! After over 1,600 years of human history the race was so utterly corrupt morally that it was not fit to live; and of all mankind only four men and four women were spared, because they did not go with the great sin drift."²

Hamilton comments:

What God saw was both the extensiveness of sin and the intensiveness of sin. Geographically, the problem is an infested earth. Note that in 6:5-13, the *earth (hâ'âres)* is mentioned eight times. The description has all the appearances of a universal condition rather than a local one...the situation is further aggravated because such depravity controls not only man's actions, but also his thoughts...finally, this verse informs that this kind of malaise is a chronic condition, not just a spasmodic lapse. It is important to observe that right at the beginning there is a clear-cut moral motivation behind sending the Flood.³

In the light of these facts, it is unmistakably self-evident that God's clearly stated purpose of destroying "man whom I have created," because of his hopeless depravity and therefore in order to start afresh with Noah, could not have been accomplished by destroying only part of the human population and allowing the rest of Adam's descendents to continue in their sinful ways.

2. The exceptional case of Noah.

The fact that all mankind, rather than just a part of the human population living at that time, was destroyed in the Flood is emphasized in the Scriptures by the repeated statements that Noah and his family were the *only* ones who escaped the judgment of the Flood waters. The relevant passages in Genesis read as follows:

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD....Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God (6:8-9).

[E]very thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee (6:17-18)...And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation (7:1).

[A]nd they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days. And God remembered Noah (7:23, 24; 8:1).

Furthermore, to remove any lingering doubt as to whether or not Noah's family constituted the *sole* survivors of the Flood, there are two emphatic statements by the apostle Peter on this matter:

2. W. G. Scroggie, 1953, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, vol. I, London: Pickering and Inglis, 74, 77.

3. Hamilton, 1990, 273.

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[T]he long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water(1 Peter 3:20).

And [God] spared not the old world [*kosmos*], but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world [*kosmos*] of the ungodly (2 Peter 2:5).

It is patently obvious from these passages that Noah was spared because of his righteous character, and that by the same reasoning, the Flood came to destroy others because they were unrighteous. If in fact only some of the people outside of the Ark were destroyed by the Flood, then we must conclude one of two things:

1. There were people outside of the Ark who were as righteous as Noah and thus were permitted by God to escape the Flood waters also; or
2. Having a righteous character was not the only factor that determined who was to escape the Flood.

Of these two alternatives, the first is quite inconceivable, because the exceptional and unique righteousness of Noah is emphasized repeatedly throughout the entire Bible (Genesis 5:29; 6:8, 9, 18; 7:1; 9:1; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5). The abysmal, universal wickedness of the pre-Flood people is attested to by an impressive array of scriptural testimony (Genesis 6:1-6, 11-13; Luke 17:26-27; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; Jude 14-15). To deny this is simply to deny the Word of God.

However, the second alternative is equally untenable, because the Scriptures give no hint anywhere that men were destroyed for any other reason than for their ungodliness. If any ungodly people actually did escape the Flood waters, then they must have done so by virtue of the fact that they did not happen to live in that particular area where the Flood came (assuming that the Flood was local), or else they were stronger or more ingenious than other sinners and thus, in one way or another, managed to escape the onrushing Flood waters. But if this were the case, then those who died in the waters did so only because they were unfortunate enough to be living in the wrong place or because they were not sufficiently strong or clever, and not simply because they were ungodly!

However, can such reasoning be tolerated by, and fitted into, a sane and sensible interpretation of the biblical doctrine of the Flood? Scholars may disagree on how the Scriptures should be interpreted, or even on whether the biblical record is to be accepted as authentic, trustworthy and credible. But if mature, trained scholars can examine the scriptural account of the Flood, in both the Old and New Testaments, and still conclude that the Bible *does not really intend to teach* that the Flood was sent to destroy *all ungodly men*, then the discipline of biblical interpretation degenerates into an unscientific, subjective game of words.

Consequently, both of the above-mentioned alternatives must be rejected without hesitation. The Scriptures *do* teach that the Flood destroyed all mankind outside of the Ark, because none outside of the Ark were godly and the Flood was sent by God to destroy the ungodly.

3. The testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ stated that the Flood destroyed *all* men except Noah's family, just as the fire destroyed *all* Sodomites except Lot's family (Luke 17:26-30). Similarly, in Matthew 24:35-42, the Lord Jesus Christ compares the extent of His Second Coming with the extent of the judgment on the total human population at the time of the Flood. As already noted earlier, there can be no escape from the thrust of the absolute sense in which Jesus Christ used the word "all." If the Flood did not destroy all people outside of the Ark, then the Lord Jesus Christ could be accused of misleading comments designed to deceive, and thus He could hardly claim to be "the truth" (John 14:6).

4. God's covenant with Noah after the Flood.

One of the most difficult problems to be faced by those who deny that the Flood was anthropologically universal is the covenant which God made with Noah after the Flood had ended. If the Flood had destroyed only a part of the human race, then those who had escaped the Flood waters would not have been included in the covenant of the rainbow. God three times repeated the promise never to wipe out "everything living" and "all flesh" again by a flood (Genesis 8:21; 9:11, 15). This makes it totally impossible to accept the view that only part of the human race was destroyed by the Flood. Otherwise, only toward the descendants of Noah would the birds, beasts, and fishes

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show fear and dread (Genesis 9:2); they only would be prohibited from eating flesh with blood (Genesis 9:3-4); and they only would have the authority to take life (Genesis 9:5-6).

If God's covenant with Noah means anything at all, then it must be a covenant with the entire human race. On the other hand, if it is insisted that the terms used here are to be understood in a limited sense, then we have to conclude that God has broken His promise repeatedly because millions have perished in vast, destructive local floods in many parts of the earth since God made this promise. The same argument is decisive against the view that the Flood was only geographically local though anthropologically universal, because God promised not only to spare all of mankind from another flood, but "everything living" and also *the earth itself* (Genesis 8:21; 9:11; Isaiah 54:9). The Scriptures repeatedly state that God made this covenant of the rainbow with Noah and his sons (Genesis 9:1-17), so therefore the whole of mankind has descended from Noah's family and the Flood destroyed the entire pre-Flood human population. Schultz concluded:

Had any part of the human race survived the Flood outside of Noah and his family they would not have been included in the covenant God made here. The implication seems to be that all mankind descended from Noah so that the covenant with its bow in the cloud as a reminder would be for all mankind.⁴

Similarly, Davis Young, Geology Professor at Calvin College and a vocal proponent of interpreting Scripture consistent with conventional long-ages geology, has had to admit:

The biblical data tend to support the idea that the flood was essentially global in nature, although it is worthy of consideration that the story was written from the point of view of an individual experiencing the flood. The arguments for a local flood seem to be rendered rather weak in the light of God's promise never again to cut off all flesh or destroy the earth with a flood (Genesis 9:11), a promise that seems to have universal implications.

...[T]he flood was a cataclysmic *judgment* upon a wicked human race whose every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually; moreover, the flood was a *means of gracious deliverance and salvation* for Noah and his family, who found grace in God's eyes.⁵

4. S. S. Schulz, 1955, The Unity of the Race: Genesis 1-11, *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* VII, 52.

5. D. A. Young, 1977, *Creation and the Flood: An Alternative to Flood Geology and Theistic Evolution*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 172-173.

THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF A WIDELY DISTRIBUTED HUMAN RACE — THE HUMAN RACE HAD SPREAD AROUND THE EARTH

Those who acknowledge the tremendous weight of biblical testimony concerning the total destruction of the human race outside of the Ark, and yet who are still unwilling to admit that the Flood was geographically universal, usually maintain that mankind had not spread beyond the limits of the Mesopotamian region during the period from Adam to Noah. However, such a position cannot be successfully defended for at least three reasons.

LONGEVITY AND POPULATION GROWTH

The remarkable longevity and fecundity of pre-Flood mankind strongly imply a rapid increase of population during the *minimum* of 1,656 years which elapsed between Adam and the Flood. Even a cursory examination of Genesis 5 reveals some rather startling statistics.

In that chapter, we read that Adam lived 930 years, Seth 912, Enosh 905, Kenan 910, Mahalalel 895, Jared 962, Enoch 365 (he did not die, being translated into God's presence), Methuselah 969, Lamech 777, and Noah 950. The average of these ages, omitting Enoch, is 912 years. In stark contrast, after the Flood we read in Genesis 11 that Shem lived for only 600 years, Arphaxad 438, Salah 433, Eber 464, Peleg 239, Reu 239, Serug 430, Nahor 148, and Terah (the father of Abraham) 205 years. Several generations later, we read in Genesis 50:26 that Joseph died at 110 years, the declining lifespans continuing with David living only 70 years (2 Samuel 5:4-5; 1 Kings 2:11).

These details are plotted on a graph in Figure 1 (page 641), along with the ages of the patriarchs at maturity, which in this instance has been defined as a patriarch's age when his first son was born. Adam, of course, is an exception, as is Enoch, who did not die. It is quite obvious upon viewing this graph that something extremely significant happened at the time of the Flood, because the lifespans of the patriarchs began immediately to decline drastically in what appears to be close to an exponential decay curve. Of course, this also assumes that Genesis 5 and 11 are complete genealogies with no generations missing, and that the ages given for the patriarchs are literal and not exaggerations. Sadly, there are some biblical scholars who insist that the numbers given in Genesis 5 and 11 are not literally true but instead follow some discernable pattern that has theological significance,¹ or represent folklore with parallels to the Sumerian king lists.²

However, Kidner admits that "reinterpretations of the longevity of these men are less than happy...as far as we can tell, then, the life-spans are intended literally."³ Furthermore, any supposed relationships with the Sumerian king lists have largely been abandoned, with the most complete refutation that of Hasel.⁴ Also, the best summary refuting all the arguments raised against these being literal long ages for the patriarchs is provided by Borland.⁵ Wenham has summed up the situation:

Much ingenuity has been devoted to these problems but without conspicuous success. It is often suggested that the years of Genesis 5 may have been much shorter than ours, perhaps equivalent to a month or two. But the Flood story makes it quite clear that the years of Genesis were about 360 days.

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1. D. L. Christensen, Did People Live to be Hundreds of Years Old before the Flood? No, in *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions about Noah and the Flood*, 1990, ed. R.F. Youngblood, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, chapter 8, 166-183.
 2. U. Cassuto, 1961, A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Jerusalem: Magnes Press; J. Walton, 1981, The Antediluvian Section of the Sumerian King List in Genesis 5, *Biblical Archaeologist*, 44: 207-208.
 3. Kidner, 1967, 83.
 4. G. F. Hasel, 1978, The Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and Their Alleged Babylonian Background, *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 16: 361-374.
 5. J. A. Borland, 1990, Did People Live to be Hundreds of Years Old Before the Flood? Yes, in *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions About Creation and the Flood*, ed. R.F. Youngblood, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, chapter 8, 166-183.

THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION ... THE HUMAN RACE HAD SPREAD AROUND THE EARTH

...Another suggestion (W. H. Green, *BSAC* [1890] 285-303) is that the genealogy is not intended to be complete, that generations have been omitted, and therefore it should not be used for chronological purposes. However, the Hebrew gives no hint that there were large gaps between father and son in this genealogy. 4:25 makes it clear that Seth was Adam and Eve's third son. At the other end of the genealogy, Lamek [i.e., Lamech] comments on Noah's birth, and Ham, Shem and Japet [Japheth] were contemporaries of their father. It therefore requires special pleading to postulate long gaps elsewhere in the genealogy. Attempts to explain the great ages of the patriarchs by reference to ancient Near Eastern parallels are also disappointing.⁶

There is thus no alternative but to take these genealogies and the long ages of the patriarchs as literal history.

The fact, then, is that something extremely significant happened to man at the time of the Flood to cause this drastic decline in the ages of the post-Flood patriarchs. Of course, the Flood was a global cataclysm which engulfed the whole earth, so it is possible that environmental factors which affect the aging process in man could have drastically changed as a consequence. Thus, it is unclear what the scientific explanation is, but we do know of some dozen major factors which affect human lifespans. These include:

1. radiation from radioisotopes (uranium, thorium, radium, potassium) in rocks and soils
2. cosmic radiation
3. biochemically "programmed" cell death (apoptosis)
4. accumulated genetic mutations (genetic load)
5. disease
6. inadequate nutrition
7. chemical carcinogens
8. ultraviolet radiation
9. solar x-ray radiation
10. inadequate exercise
11. metabolic rate
12. stress

Looking at this list, it is not hard to see that some of these factors could have been radically different prior to the Flood, thus enabling the patriarchs to live such long ages, whereas with the cataclysmic upheavals of the Flood there could have been sufficient changes which then had an increasing affect in the post-Flood world leading to the drastic decline in human lifespans. From a medical point of view, therefore, such long human lifespans are conceivable given our knowledge of the factors controlling the aging process. However, the fact that the death of our cells seems to be biochemically "programmed" does suggest that our Creator could have foreordained human lifespans pre-programmed, and then later could have readjusted that programming. In any case, it is clear that there are possible physical explanations for the pre-Flood human longevity and for its decline after the Flood, which will be discussed again later in the context of the possible scientific details of the Flood. However, it has been important thus far to recognize the reality of these literal human lifespans because significant consequences follow with respect to the world population before the Flood.

The details elaborated upon in Genesis 5 clearly imply that the pre-Flood patriarchs had large families. Although in most cases only one son is named in each family (which was obviously for the purpose of tracing the line of descent from Adam to Noah), we are also told that each "begat sons and daughters" in addition to the primary son, so each family must have thus had at *least* five children, and probably many more. Furthermore, the ages of the fathers at the births of each of the *named* sons ranged from 65 years (in the case of Mahalalel and Enoch) to 500 years (in the exceptional case of Noah). This observation also adds credence to the biblical record of the longevity of the patriarchs, because after the Flood when lifespans drastically declined, the ages of the patriarchs at the births of their named sons likewise declined proportionally, except for some notable exceptions (see Figure 1). Consequently, the Scriptures imply that before the Flood:

6. Wenham, 1987, 133.

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1. Men typically lived for hundreds of years.
2. Their procreative powers persisted over hundreds of years also.
3. Thus, through the combined affects of long lives and large families, mankind was rapidly “filling the earth” (Genesis 6:1, 11), just as God had commanded (Genesis 1:28).

Taking all factors into consideration, it is entirely reasonable to estimate that each family had six children and each new generation required ninety years on average. This assumes the first family (Adam and Eve) had six children, the three families that could be established from these had six children each, and the nine families resulting from these each had six children, and so on. In all probability, each family had far more than six children, but this figure will allow for those who did not marry, who died prematurely, etc. If we allow a generation span to be ninety years on average, which seems far higher than was probably the case, then there would have been eighteen generations in the 1,656 years from Adam to the Flood.

Whitcomb and Morris provide a simple calculation.⁷ The total number of people in the n^{th} generation can be calculated on this basis as equal to $2(3)^n$. Thus, at the end of the first generation ($n = 1$), the number in the family would have been $2(3)$, or 6. At the end of two generations, it would have been $2(3)^2$, or 18. Repeating the calculations through the sequence of generations, at the end of seventeen generations, the number would have been 258 million, and at the end of eighteen generations, it would have been 774 million! If at the time of the Flood only one previous generation was still living, then the total population of the earth would have then been over one billion! Of course, these calculations are extremely conservative and only assume the truth of the biblical record. Morris stated, “If we use rates appropriate in the present world...over 3 billion people could easily have been on the earth at the time of Noah.”⁸

Such rates of population increase are hardly unreasonable given the current world population “explosion.” The present world population is more than seven billion. The three billion mark was estimated to have been passed in 1962, and so at the present rate of growth of approximately two percent per year, the world population doubled in less than forty years. Of course, earlier population increases are believed to have been lower due to the effects of war, disease, and starvation, but on the other hand, without birth control measures families were often larger than they are today. Nevertheless, Morris has calculated, using standard population growth models, that the present world population could have been produced in the 4,300-4,500 years estimated since the Flood from Noah and his three sons at a growth rate of only 0.5 percent per year, which is a quarter of the present growth rate.⁹

All of these calculations, therefore, show that it is entirely feasible to suggest that by the time of the Flood there could have been a population between one and three billion people inhabiting the earth. The very fact that the pre-Flood patriarchs lived to such great ages would indicate that famine and disease were not serious problems that would have significantly restrained a rapid population increase in the pre-Flood period. In the early centuries especially, there would have been every reason to have as many children as possible, and thus multiplication would have been very rapid. In any case, the whole purpose of these calculations and this estimate is to show that a population of one to three billion people could hardly have been confined to one particular area, such as the Mesopotamian Valley suggested by local flood advocates. Instead, for all practical purposes, such a large number of people would have of necessity spread far and wide to have literally “filled the earth” as described in the Scriptures. Indeed, an estimated population of one billion people would be equivalent to the estimated population of the earth in 1850, the earliest date for which there is any really accurate estimate of world population, and the entire earth could certainly have been described at that time as having been “filled.” Such would have been the case even more so when the world population is estimated to have been three billion in about 1962. Thus, the extensive distribution of the pre-Flood population necessitated by the rapid population increase to one to three billion people by the time of the Flood would have required the Flood waters to be global in extent in order to destroy all of mankind not on the Ark.

7. Whitcomb and Morris, 1961, 26.

8. H. M. Morris, 1984, *The Biblical Basis of Modern Science*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 421.

9. Morris, 1984, 425-426.

THE PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE

Early in the controversy over the geographical extent of the Flood, the most common arguments for a limited pre-Flood population, as set forth by Smith,¹⁰ Hitchcock,¹¹ and Miller,¹² were that the extreme sinfulness of mankind then made rapid population growth impossible, and that the patriarchs did not beget children until late in life, with only a few children being mentioned even then.

However, the Scriptures clearly say that “the *earth*” itself was “*filled*” with “violence” (Genesis 6:11, 13). In other words, the very text that has been put forward in support of the population being limited because of rampant violence is actually upon closer examination even more effective in arguing for the universal distribution of the pre-Flood human population. Furthermore, if we were to make a valid analogy with post-Flood history, then we would prove beyond any doubt that extreme sinfulness, strife, and violence in human society are factors that force the scattering, rather than the centralizing, of groups of people. The history of the Indian tribes in the Americas and of the Gothic and Germanic tribes in Europe clearly illustrates this fact. Also, nations that today boast the world’s highest birth rates, such as India and Indonesia, are not necessarily the most righteous!

The related argument against a large pre-Flood population has been that children were not born until the patriarchs were well advanced in years, and that even then few children are named in the genealogies of Genesis. For example, Noah lived 500 years before his first son was born, and then only three sons are named. However, such an argument is refuted by the following considerations:

1. Noah must have been the exception to the rule, because with *every other patriarch* the phrase “begat sons and daughters” is used.
2. Noah did not have any children until he was 500 years old (which cannot be proved), then he was also the exception, because all the other patriarchs had children when they were less than 200 years old, and most of them (if we include Adam) when they were less than 130 years old.
3. The fact that Noah was 500 years old when his three sons were born is important, because it proves that the patriarchs were capable of begetting children for hundreds of years.
4. It is possible that the sons named in Genesis 5 were *not* the firstborn sons in each case, because we know that Adam had sons and daughters (Cain, Abel, and Cain’s wife, at the very least) long before we read in Genesis 5:3, “and Adam lived an hundred and thirty years and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth.”
5. God’s command to Adam and his descendants was to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [fill] the earth” (Genesis 1:28), and this command was obeyed “when men began to multiply on the face of the earth” (Genesis 6:1).

Sauer has commented:

Already in the time of Cain, apparently in his advanced age, a city could be built (probably at first simply an established colony), Genesis 4:17. This is the less astonishing, since the life-energy of the youthful race must at the beginning have been very powerful. Also, with the long lives of the parents, the number of children must have been much greater than later on; and, for the same reason, many generations must have lived alongside of each other at the same time. With an average of only six children per family, by the time Cain was only 400 years old he would have had far more than 100,000 descendants.¹³

Keil suggested that one explanation for the amazing longevity of the pre-Flood patriarchs was “that the after-effects of the condition of man in paradise would not be immediately exhausted,” and that “this longevity, moreover, necessarily contributed greatly to the increase of the human race.”¹⁴ To this may be added the comments by Sutcliffe:

10. J. P. Smith, 1854, *The Relation Between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science*, 5th ed., London: Henry G. Bohn, 269-270.

11. E. Hitchcock, 1852, *The Religion of Geology and its connected Sciences*, Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Co., 132.

12. H. Miller, 1875, *The Testimony of the Rocks*, New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 316-319.

13. E. Sauer, 1964, *The Dawn of World Redemption*, trans. G.H. Lang, Exeter, U.K.: Paternoster Press, 67.

14. C. F. Keil, 1951, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. I, trans. J. Martin, vol. I, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 123-124.

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In view of the insistence shown by the sacred writer on the multiplication of the race by the repeated declaration that each of the patriarchs begat “sons and daughters,” and that he allows so much time between Adam and the Flood (MT 1656 years, Samaritan text 1307, LXX 2256), it is hardly to be assumed that he thought all men could still be living in one region. In fact, the text indicates the contrary, for God not only gave the command to increase and multiply, but also to “fill the earth,” 1:28.¹⁵

Some have argued for a limited geographical distribution of only a relatively small pre-Flood human population, because the preaching of Noah had to be within the hearing of all people alive at that time. For example, Custance has commented that:

If people were living at that time in Europe and the Far East and, which is worse, in the New World, it is exceedingly doubtful whether they could ever have heard his [Noah's] message. The very method by which God forewarned men implies the situation in which the population of the world was still fairly well congregated.¹⁶

However, nowhere in Scripture are we told that the preaching of Noah was within the hearing of all the people living in his day. The apostle Peter says that Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), and the author of Hebrews tells us that Noah by faith “prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world” (Hebrews 11:7). But this is not equivalent to saying that Noah preached directly to all the people alive in his day.

While it is true that multitudes of people may have heard Noah's impassioned warnings directly, Noah's condemnation of the world undoubtedly was due to the stark contrast between his godly and believing life with the utterly corrupt lives of all others in his time, as Genesis 6:9 tells us that “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” Only to him could God say: “Come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation” (Genesis 7:1). The fact that no other person of that time had Noah's faith and righteousness brought condemnation upon the world. Faith that produced *obedience* (Genesis 6:22), even to the point of building the Ark, was the only kind of faith that could bring deliverance from the judgment of the Flood. No one else of Noah's day had that kind of faith which produced complete obedience, so therefore the world was condemned. Similarly, only relatively few people in the world ever saw the Lord Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry, but it is nevertheless true that “the world knew him not” (John 1:10), and “this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

However, even if the fact that Noah's Ark-building faith “condemned the world” is meant to imply that everyone in the world heard the warnings of Noah about the coming Flood judgment, it would by no means follow that all mankind at that time had to be confined to one small region of the earth. During the 120-year period of grace “when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing” (Genesis 6:3; 1 Peter 3:20), the news of Noah's remarkable activities and alarming warnings could easily have spread throughout the entire earth. After all, with a population of between one and three billion people in Noah's day all speaking the same language, and with the technology capable of building cities and an oceangoing boat like the Ark with metal tools, it is to be expected the news of Noah's words and his sensational Ark-building enterprise could easily have spread to a globally-scattered population in the time available.

Thus, in summary, it is easy to understand how the earth could have been filled with people by the time of the Flood when we realize the enormous extent of pre-Flood human longevity and fecundity, plus God's command to “fill the earth” (Genesis 1:28), *and* that by the time of Noah the earth is described as being “filled with violence” (Genesis 6:11). The characteristics of patriarchal family life and the wickedness of pre-Flood mankind are both recorded in the Scriptures as indicative of an enormous, widely-scattered, pre-Flood human population which was condemned because of Noah's righteousness, not because he preached to them all.

15. E. F. Sutcliffe, 1953, *Genesis, A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 190.

16. Custance, 1979, 34-35. Ramm, 1964, 163, attempts to use the same argument to prove that the Flood was anthropologically local, affecting only a small part of the human race.

HUMAN FOSSIL EVIDENCE

Because all local flood advocates accept the uniformitarian geological timescale for the earth's rocks, most of the earth's history had occurred by the time Noah and his contemporaries were living in what they regard as the Mesopotamian Valley. Depending then on when they date the Flood as occurring will determine how they accommodate the evidence of human fossil remains in widely scattered areas of the earth. There is, of course, considerable debate over the demarcation line between which ancient fossils are genuinely human and which are not, but it is nevertheless apparent that of those fossil remains which all agree are genuinely human, most are found hundreds, and even thousands, of kilometers from the Mesopotamian Valley.

This leaves local flood advocates with a number of dilemmas. If they insist the Flood was both geographically local and anthropologically universal, then they are forced to maintain one of two possibilities:

1. All these genuine human fossils have to be post-Flood, and thus the Flood pre-dates them.
2. Some of the genuine human fossils are pre-Flood and of people who died before the Flood, but when the Flood itself came, all existing humans for some reason had moved into the Mesopotamian Valley.

Local flood advocates largely base their stance on a conviction that radioisotope and radiocarbon dates are correct and that true humans have existed for 150,000 to 250,000 years. This implies that if all these genuine human remains are post-Flood, then the date for the Flood is so early that the advent of civilization after the Flood (generally understood to be only about 5,000-10,000 years ago according to radiocarbon dates) would be so far removed time-wise from the Flood itself that the resulting chronology could not be reconciled either with the scriptural record or with the secular view of history. On the other hand, if the Flood was more recent, after the dawn of civilization but still anthropologically universal, then those pre-Flood human populations logically could not have continued to live in those distant regions where more ancient human fossils are found, but must somehow have migrated back into Mesopotamian Valley so that all of them could then be drowned in a limited flood confined to the Mesopotamian Valley. Yet the fossil evidence does not allow this latter option. There were Indians, for example, living in North and South America across the interval that civilization arose in the Near East. There is no evidence whatever they migrated to the Mesopotamian Valley at any point during the past 10,000 years according to the radiocarbon timescale.

It would therefore seem that in this confusing maze of options, for local flood advocates to accept both the uniformitarian geological timescale and the secular interpretation of history, yet remain as faithful as possible to the Scriptures, they must date the Flood as fairly recent, not long before the dawn of civilization in the Mesopotamian Valley, but must logically conclude that those genuine human remains which are far older in secular terms and are found in regions far distant to the Mesopotamian Valley therefore must pre-date the Flood. That is, to be consistent they must conclude that the Flood was not only geographically local, but anthropologically local also, which is the view taken by both Ramm and Custance.

However, to maintain this view, advocates must reject the clear teaching of the Scriptures that God sent the Flood to destroy *all* of mankind, whose every intent of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually, resulting in the earth being overwhelmed with violence. Moreover, the evidence of genuine human fossil remains in widely scattered areas of the earth makes it even more difficult to maintain that men did not migrate beyond the Mesopotamian Valley before the time of the Flood. Once having done so, men would not have needed to spread very far before *some* would have occupied higher ground, which thus required a flood of considerable depth, and logically, of global extent to destroy them.

On the other hand, if the uniformitarian geological timescale is rejected, and the Flood was a global cataclysm that engulfed the whole earth and reshaped its surface, then the genuine human fossils found in widely scattered areas across the earth's surface logically must be the remains of post-Flood people who migrated from the Mesopotamian region after the Flood. Although the Mesopotamian Valley is the area Noah and his descendants settled after the Flood, it is important to realize that this geographic feature did not even exist in its present form prior to the Flood. The earth's surface was radically transformed during the Flood by large-scale tectonic processes that tore continents apart, covered continental surfaces with sediments eroded and transported by the Flood waters, and created new mountain ranges (more of this later). Thus, the paleontological evidence of human remains is consistent with a recent global Flood, once the uniformitarian geological timescale is abandoned.

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Obviously, the evidence from paleontology presents some extremely embarrassing problems for those who believe that the Flood was local and that all the pre-Flood people were destroyed by the Flood because they were confined to the region of Mesopotamia. People would have not needed to have spread very far from the Mesopotamian Valley before some at least would have occupied higher ground, which in turn requires a flood of considerable depth, which then also implies global extent. This has led many to conclude that the Flood must also have been anthropologically local. But as we have seen, this flies in the face of the repeated statements in Scripture that God intended to use the Flood as a judgment on a wicked human race that had filled the earth with violence. Of course, it would only take the finding of one genuine pre-Flood human fossil in some region remote from Mesopotamia to put beyond doubt the global extent of the Flood. Nevertheless, we ultimately do not need that evidence when the Scriptures are so clear and decisive in their description of a year-long, mountain-covering Flood, which we are told in Genesis 6:13 was designed not only to judge pre-Flood mankind, but to destroy the earth with them.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The geographical universality of the Flood as a mountain-covering, globe-engulfing event has been established from *eight major biblical arguments*:

1. The scriptural record of the Flood clearly states that the Flood waters rose and prevailed upon the earth, covering all the mountains under the whole heaven for a period of five months, and that an additional seven months were then required for the waters to subside sufficiently for Noah and his family to disembark from the Ark in the mountains of Ararat.
2. The Bible says that the waters of the Flood covered the highest mountains to a depth at least sufficient for the Ark to float over them.
3. The expression “fountains of the great deep were broken up” is clearly indicative of vast geological disturbances during the Flood, which are totally incompatible with the concept of a local flood, especially when these geological disturbances are said to have continued for five months.
4. The construction of the Ark with a capacity of at least 41,000 cubic meters just for the purpose of carrying eight people and a few animals through a local flood is utterly inconceivable.
5. If the Flood was only geographically limited, then there would have been no need for an ark at all, for there would have been plenty of time for Noah’s family to escape from the danger area, as would be the case also for the birds and animals.
6. The apostle Peter’s use of the Flood as a basis for refuting uniformitarian skeptics in the last days, as well as using the Flood as a forewarning of the judgment by fire to come at the “day of the Lord,” would have been absolutely pointless if the Flood had merely been of local extent, especially when the cosmic setting into which Peter placed the Flood cataclysm (2 Peter 3:3-7) is considered.
7. The Lord Jesus Christ unhesitatingly compared the human conditions and what happened at the Flood with human conditions and what will happen at the time of his Second Coming, which would mean that if the Flood was not global, then Jesus’ Second Coming will likewise not be global, and thus Jesus was misleading and/or not telling us the truth, which of course is absolutely inconceivable given who the Lord Jesus Christ is as the Creator Himself.
8. The human race had to have been widely distributed at the time of the Flood, and therefore could not have been destroyed by a local flood.

There are four biblical reasons for the necessity of the total destruction of pre-Flood humanity by the Flood:

1. Because the stated purpose of the Flood was the punishment of sinful mankind, such a purpose could not have been accomplished if only part of pre-Flood humanity had been so judged.
2. The purpose of the Flood to destroy all of mankind is conclusively underlined by the repeated statements in Genesis, 1 Peter, and 2 Peter that *only* Noah and his family were spared.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ clearly stated that all men were destroyed by the Flood (Luke 17:26-30).
4. God’s covenant with Noah after the Flood becomes totally meaningless if only part of the human population in Noah’s day had been destroyed by the Flood.

Additionally, three reasons were given for believing that the pre-Flood human population could not have been confined to today’s Mesopotamian Valley at the time of the Flood:

1. The longevity and fecundity of the pre-Flood patriarchs would have resulted in a very rapid population growth, so that even if there were only 1,656 years between Adam and the Flood, the population in Noah’s day could have been between one and three billion people.

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2. The Genesis account describes the earth as being “filled” with violence, an inevitable result due to the prevalence of strife and violence, encouraging the people to separate and thus become widely distributed rather than being confined to a single locality.
3. The evidence of genuine human fossils in widely scattered parts of the world makes it very difficult for local flood advocates to insist that men did not migrate beyond the Mesopotamian region before the time of the Flood and still be faithful to the details of the scriptural account.

If these basic arguments are carefully weighed by Bible-believing Christians, then they should prove to be sufficiently powerful and compelling to convincingly settle the long-debated question of the geographical extent of the Flood. Of course, this does not discount the perceived serious scientific difficulties that a universal flood entails, but such matters will be examined in the pages to follow. However, it is insisted that no problem, be it scientific or philosophical, can be of sufficient magnitude to offset the combined force of these eight biblical arguments for the Genesis Flood in the days of Noah being geographically universal.