

GENESIS

Lesson 6

The Lord was sorry he had made man ...

NOAH AND THE FLOOD

Genesis 6:9-7:24



The earth the days of Noah had become increasingly wicked. Genesis 6:5 says that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that “every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” We should not underestimate the corruption of the world prior to the flood. Since Creation, 1,656 years had passed. The world was filled with natural resources, a mild climate, and people lived 900 years or more. We should expect that millions or more likely billions of people filled the earth and that they had scattered across the globe.¹ Unrestrained by short life-spans the wicked had the ability and time to engage in almost imaginable vileness.

In the midst of such wickedness, Noah is described as “a righteous man, blameless in his generation” (Genesis 6:9). Furthermore, like Enoch, “Noah walked with God.” Because of the wickedness of that time, God determined that in 120 years, he would blot out man from the earth (Genesis 6:7). Though Noah preached faithfully until the flood came, he had no converts outside of his family. Apparently Noah’s wife, his three sons (Shem, Ham, and Japheth), and their wives were the only faithful people in all the earth.

Genesis 6:8-9 are in a chiasmic structure (a common literary tool in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament). Note the symmetry of what is written.

- A. Noah
- B. Found favor
- C. In the eyes of the Lord
- D. These are the generations of Noah
- E. Noah was a righteous man
- E. Blameless
- D. In His generation
- C. With God
- B. Walked
- A. Noah

¹ Thompson, Bert. *The Global Flood of Noah*. Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, 1986. p. 15-16.

1. Describe how people lived in the days of Noah. (Genesis 6:5, 11-13)

2. Describe the personal, public, spiritual, and family life of Noah (Genesis 6:9-10; 7:1).

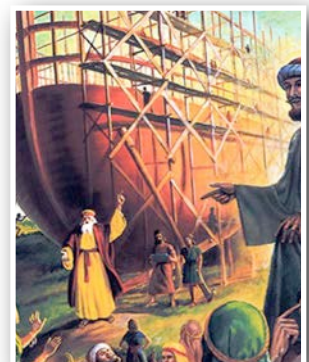
The term corrupt is used seven times in the flood narrative. The term means, “perverted in its proper function.”² Violence filled the earth. The word translated as violence means “criminal oppression, bloodshed, and use of brutality, false accusation, and unjust punishment.”³

The global flood is a vital teaching of Scripture and fills four chapters in Genesis receiving even more attention than the Creation. Between the Creation and the Second Coming of Jesus there is no more prominent physical event on the earth.⁴ In some ways this great flood is presented as a reversal of God’s work in Creation.⁵ At the Creation, God saw what he had created and “saw” that it was good. Now here in Genesis 6, God looked at the pre-flood world and “saw” that it was evil. Nothing is hidden from God’s sight.

3. What is the announcement that God makes to Noah in Genesis 6:13?

4. Describe the construction of the ark (Genesis 6:14-16).

We do not know every detail about the construction of the ark. We do not know what gopher wood was. Some believe that it was cypress, but this is not certain. We do not know the exact size of a cubit, but it is estimated to be about 18 inches or 46 centimeters, though some believe it is longer. Even at the shorter size this makes the ark about 450 feet or 137 metres long and 75 feet or 23 metres wide. This may be the largest vessel ever built until the late 1800’s.



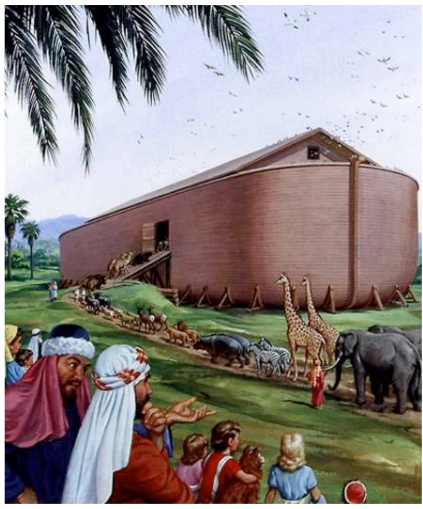
5. What was Noah to take inside the ark (Genesis 6:18-21)?

² Smith, James E. *Biblical Protology: Commentary on Genesis 1-11*. 2007. p. 363.

³ Ibid. p. 363.

⁴ Thompson, Bert. *Ibid.* p. 12-13.

⁵ Sailhamer, John H. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Vol. 1*. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland David E., Ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2008.



6. What does Genesis 6:22 tell us about Noah?

In chapter 7, God amplifies what he had said to Noah about the animals that were to be taken into the ark. God sends seven (or seven pairs) of all clean animals, one pair of unclean animals, and seven of each type of bird (perhaps only seven pairs of clean birds and one pair of unclean). The ark was more than adequate in size to fit in all the animals. It has been suggested that there are 3,700 mammals, 8,600 birds, 6,300 reptiles, and 2,500 amphibians. If the average animal was the size of a sheep, they would have taken 36% of the volume of the ark.⁶

We do not know every detail of how Noah cared for the animals. God caused the animals to come to Noah and apparently they did not reproduce during the time on the ark. Perhaps God caused them to go into hibernation.

The flood came, just as God promised. Noah was 600 years old when the flood arrived. In fact, the flood is precisely dated to the 2nd month and 17th day of Noah's 600th year. Though Noah took the animals as well as his family into the ark, it was God who shut them in (Genesis 7:16).

7. From what sources did the flood water come (Genesis 7:11-12)?

The fountains of the deep (Genesis 7:11) burst forth. Water trapped underground helped to flood the entire globe. Dr. James Smith quotes Carl Zimmer, "In recent years geologists have located subterranean oceans. Rough calculations suggest that a volume of water equal to that in the oceans on the earth's surface may be trapped in the subterranean reservoirs."⁷ The windows of heaven were also opened and rain fell for forty days and forty nights. This water covered the earth above the highest mountains to a depth of 15 cubits.

There are those who claim the flood was a local event and not universal. If we believe the Bible to be accurate we must conclude that it points to a worldwide flood. The following points to a worldwide flood:

1. The purpose of the flood was to destroy all people on the earth. Certainly people had traveled far from the site of the flood during the 1,656 years of human habitation on the earth.

⁶ Harrub, Brad and Thompson, Bert. *An Examination of Noah's Ark and the Global Flood*.
<http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/2655>

⁷ Smith, James E. Ibid. p. 385.

2. If the flood was not worldwide, there would have been no need for an ark. God could simply have told Noah to relocate to another place.
3. There would have been no need to take animals on the ark if it was simply a local flood.
4. The duration of the flood would have not been so long had it not been universal.
5. Peter attests to the universality of the flood (2 Peter 3:3-7).



The flood lasted approximately one year. Here is one chronology.

1. 40 days of rain (Genesis 7:4)
2. 110 additional days of water “prevailing on the earth,” for a total of 150 days (Genesis 7:24)
3. 74 days until mountains were viewed (from the 17th day of the seventh month to the 1st day of the tenth month: 13 + 30 + 30 + 1) [Genesis 8:5]
4. 40 days elapsed before Noah sent out the raven (Genesis 8:6-7)
5. 7 days elapsed before Noah sent out the dove for the first time (8:8)
6. 7 days elapsed before Noah sent out the dove for the second time (Genesis 8:10)
7. 7 days elapsed before Noah sent out the dove the final time (Genesis 8:12)
8. 29 days elapsed to correlate with the date of 601st year, 1st month, 1st day (Genesis 8:13)
9. 57 days elapsed before Noah and the animals disembarked (Genesis 8:14-16)
10. 371 days total⁸

The world prior to the flood must have been much different to the world following the flood. Consider the Garden of Eden which must have been a true paradise with abundant vegetation and a very moderate climate. Adam and Eve were naked in the Garden of Eden, but apparently were not harmed by heat or cold. It is quite possible the entire earth enjoyed this type of climate before the flood. We do know that the flood caused mountains to rise and valleys to sink (see Psalm 104:8). We can assume then that the mountains at the beginning of Creation were much smaller than they are today. The flood itself came from water stored in the earth as well as the heavens. There is considerable speculation from Creation Science that a canopy of water vapour surrounded the earth. In any event, the earth must have been wet and warm around the globe since fossils of both plants and animals are found at the Arctic and Antarctic. Fossils also show that the earth’s deserts were also at one time filled with lush vegetation.⁹

⁸ Harrub, Brad and Thompson, Bert. Ibid.

⁹ Thompson, Bert. Ibid.