

### The Extent and Results of the Flood

#### Genesis 7:17-24

Genesis 7:17-24 - "Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. <sup>19</sup> And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. <sup>20</sup> The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. <sup>21</sup> And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. <sup>22</sup> All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. <sup>23</sup> So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. <sup>24</sup> And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days."

#### Background Notes

Was the Flood of Noah's day a local flood or a worldwide Flood? What would you conclude after reading Genesis 7? A worldwide flood - of course! Verse 19: "*And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered*" [emphasis added]. And verse 21, "*And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man*" [emphasis added]. And verse 23, "*So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth*" [emphasis added]. Clearly a worldwide flood is indicated! And yet in spite of this clear teaching of Scripture, some Christians (including some evangelical Christians) believe the Flood was only a local flood that was confined to the Mesopotamian Valley. Can you believe it?

These people say that the "universal terms" used in Genesis 7 are only "from Noah's perspective" -- that is, all the high hills and mountains in the Mesopotamian Valley or in Noah's area were covered, but not all the high hills and mountains in the world. Well, wait a minute! What high hills and mountains in the Mesopotamian Valley, anyway? And if they were covered by more than 20 feet of water (v20) for five months (v24), this was more than a local flood! Remember, water seeks its own level!

Those who believe that the Genesis Flood was only a local flood say, yes, all life perished - that is, all life in the Mesopotamian Valley perished, but not all life worldwide, or every human worldwide. Again, wait a minute! What about verse 21? Also, if that were the case, why go to the trouble of building an ark? Certainly in 120 years Noah and the animals could have migrated beyond the Mesopotamian Valley for safety! There are a number of other arguments that

show that the local flood theory just doesn't hold water! (Sorry for the pun there!) [laughter]

Let me list a few of the arguments:

1. In Genesis 9:15, God promised that He would never again flood this earth with water. Now if the Flood of Noah's day was only a local flood, then God has broken his promise, because there have been *many* local floods since the days of Noah - some with significant loss of life. The simple answer here is that the Genesis Flood was worldwide, and God promised that He would never again flood the entire earth with water.
2. All the inspired writers of Scripture who mention the Flood speak of it in universal terms. For example, in 2 Peter 3 the apostle Peter wrote that *the world of Noah's day* perished, being flooded with water. Then he said that there is a present heavens and earth which exists now, which will be destroyed by fire. Then he went on to speak of a new heavens and a new earth. So Peter, the inspired writer, spoke of a "heavens and earth system" that existed before the Flood, and another "heavens and earth system" after the Flood that continues to the present time, and a new "heavens and an earth system" to come in the future.  
  
Peter certainly believed in a worldwide Flood, in which the original "heavens and earth system" perished. Did Peter, who was inspired by the Holy Spirit, know what he was talking about - or did he not know what he was talking about? The Bible clearly indicates a worldwide Flood. So, if you don't believe in a worldwide Flood at the time of Noah, you have a low view of the inspiration of the Word of God!
3. Scripture traces *all people* and all the nations on earth back to Noah and his three sons Shem, Ham, Japheth.
4. Besides the biblical arguments for the worldwide Flood, there are a number of other arguments as well. For example, there are the universal "Flood traditions" in cultures all over the world. In these traditions, the Flood is worldwide in scope, and only a few people escape.
5. Then, of course, there is the *geologic evidence* for the worldwide Flood. Do you know that most of the earth's surface is covered with sedimentary rock? Sedimentary rock is defined as "sediments that have been precipitated out of water and hardened into rock." You can easily recognize layers of sedimentary rock when you drive along a road that has been cut through a mountainside. The layers of rock you see (if they are not lava) are sedimentary rock layers, like sandstone, or shale, or limestone. The fact that there is sedimentary rock all over the world is overwhelming evidence of a catastrophic worldwide flood – a Flood that was tidal in nature (one reason for the sharp lines between the layers).
6. At least 90% of the fossils found on this earth today are found in sedimentary rock – rock that was formed by *sediments precipitating out of water!* So fossils are **not** evidence of millions and millions of years of slow evolution - fossils are evidence of millions of life forms that died and were rapidly buried in sediments during the Flood. Don't be

brainwashed by the supposed “fossil evidence” for the theory of evolution. Those fossils are actually clear and convincing evidence of the worldwide Flood! And there’s lots more we could say - but we need to move on!

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. God destroys the wicked with judgment.

Verses 21: *“And all flesh died that moved on the earth...”* Why did God do such a thing? The answer is found back in Genesis 6:5-7, *“Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth... for I am sorry that I have made them.”*

Notice, it was the wickedness of man that caused God to destroy the pre-Flood world. Unfortunately the animals suffered the consequence of man’s sin. When people sin, there is always bad fall-out.

As God destroyed the wicked people of Noah’s day with the judgment of the great Flood, so God will ultimately destroy all wicked people with judgment. Psalm 145:20: *“The LORD preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.”* The word “destroy” does not mean annihilation or extinction, but ruin and loss.

Hell is not a pleasant subject, but the Bible plainly speaks of the judgment of hell for the unbeliever. God gives plenty of opportunities for people to repent, just as he did in Noah’s day, but if people don’t repent, judgment will surely follow. Remember Hebrews 9:27, *“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”* God destroys the wicked with judgment.

### 2. God delivers the righteous from judgment.

Verse 23: *“Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive.”* 2 Peter 2:5 says that God *“did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.”* God destroys the wicked with judgment, but he delivers the righteous from judgment.

Jesus said, *“Most assuredly I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life” (John 5:24).* What a tremendous promise! Noah was not sinless, but God declared that he was righteous. In Genesis 7:1 God said, *“I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.”* Why did God declare Noah righteous? It is because Noah had **faith** in God – **he believed God.**

Because he believed God, Noah *“became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith”* (Hebrews 11:7). That’s the explanation! Like Abraham, Noah was declared righteous by God - because they believed God - because they had faith. If you’re trusting in the Lord by faith, you too are an “heir of righteousness.” Because of your faith in Jesus Christ, you will not experience the judgment of God. At the “Judgment Seat of Christ” our lives of service will be **reviewed** - but we will **never** face the judgment of God against sin. God delivers the righteous from judgment.

## Practical Application

### Let’s trust God in the storms of life!

Noah trusted God **before** the storm, while he was preaching and building the ark. And Noah trusted God **during** the storm, while he was in the ark. And Noah and his family were in the ark for 377 days! That’s over a year! There must have been some pretty rough days. The great Flood was not a tranquil affair - it was catastrophic. Although the ark was built for stability, there may have been some seasick days. And as far as the record goes, God did not speak with Noah throughout the storm! But Noah never doubted or wavered in faith.

Do we trust God in the storms of life, as Noah did? Do we trust God when it appears that things are out of control, or when tragedy strikes? Do we trust God when it seems like the Lord doesn’t remember our situation?

Maybe you’re going through a severe storm in life right now. Rough waters. It seems to you that God is silent. Listen! God knows, and He cares - and **He is in control**. Listen to the promise of Isaiah 43:2: “When you pass through the waters, I **will** be with you.” What a great promise! Let’s have a faith like Noah. Let’s trust God in the storms of life.