

HELL AND HIGH WATER

By

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“And as were the days of Noah...” (Matt. 24:37). Even without the Bible there is sufficient evidence to show that at one time in history a great flood covered the entire face of the earth.

For one thing the tertiary deposits of earth are uniform the world over, showing that they were formed under practically uniform conditions. The Tertiary deposits “are those that give the final contours to the landscape. They are usually more of less loose and not nearly so consolidated as those beneath them” (Prof. Harold Clark, Pacific Union College). These deposits were formed by extremely violent water action carrying great volumes of debris from the highlands into the basins between the mountains. Boulders and gravel lie in basins some hundred miles or more from their original source, indicating a terrific flood of water, and this in areas that are often far from any major rivers and thousands of feet above sea level. Such Tertiary deposits are about the same in Europe, Asia, India and the Americas.

Animal skeletons provide further evidence. On a high hill in Burgandy, France, near the top, one thousand feet above the plain, hundreds of animal skeletons were found, including skeletons of bears, horses, wolves, etc. in a cave in Sicily was discovered over twenty tons of animal bones. Agate Springs, Nebraska, was the site of a discovery of some nine thousand complete animal skeletons. What caused the animals to converge on high ground and then perish? Only one answer has been found: The Flood. And for water to have been so high in these places would require a universal flood.

Then there is the literary evidence. The folklore of ancient civilizations abounds in stories of a universal flood. About the best record, outside of the Bible, is the Gilgamesh Epic of Babylon which gives an amazingly Biblical Description of Noah as a man superior in character, wisdom and knowledge. The Celtic Druids, and Egyptians and other peoples had similar stories, all pointing to a great flood from which came one surviving family. These accounts became part of the folklore among widely scattered nations long before there was a Bible. Why would there be a reference to a great flood if something of this nature never happened?

The Bible describes a universal flood. “All the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered...and the mountains were covered” (Gen. 7:19–20). “All flesh died that moved upon the earth,” and “all that was in the dry land died” (Gen. 7:21–22).

In spite of the overwhelming evidence and plain Bible statements, there are many who profess faith in Christ but who claim that the flood was only a local affair. Why would anyone insist on a local flood? One reason is for the simple cause of disbelief. The evolutionists must reject a worldwide flood because of their idea of “uniformitarianism.” This is the hypothesis that all things have developed in a uniform way from the beginning of evolution, giving uninterrupted millions of years in which things are supposed to have “evolved” from nothing to something and from inorganic to organic life and then from simple to complex life. Peter describes these as “mockers” who were to come in the last

days saying, “Where is the promise of His coming for since the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished” (II Peter 3:4–6). It is the modern evolutionist who claims that things have continued (to evolve) from the beginning of creation. Peter goes to the heart of the problem when he writes that they willfully reject the truth about the flood. These same evolutionists are worried to death over such things as pollution, population and food failure. They seem to think that the “process of evolution” has worked fine up until now, but suddenly it is in danger of working in reverse. This alone should be sufficient cause to scrap the whole theory, if they were not WILLFULLY resistant to accepting God and truth.

Another reason for claiming that the flood was local is the attempt to establish the belief that the black people of the earth are not descendants of Adam, that they are a pre-Adamic race inhabiting the earth for thousands or millions of years before Adam. Some hold that the Jews also are pre-Adamic. Now, it is obvious that their teaching cannot stand if there was a universal flood, for had there been a race of people before Adam they would have been destroyed in the flood, since only Noah and his family survived it. Therefore, they must deny a universal flood in order to make possible the survival of the so-called pre-Adamic race.

But neither the Bible nor natural science will allow this understanding of the flood. Genesis says that all flesh perished save what was in the Ark. Besides, if it was only a local flood, why would Noah be commanded to labor 120 years on a huge boat and gather into it all these animals? God could have instructed Noah to move to higher ground. Also, if the flood was only local, how would the Ark have come to rest upon a 14,000 foot mountain? The local flood idea makes Noah an ignoramus and the writer of Genesis a simple liar.

According to Jesus, the book of Genesis was reliable. He gave His endorsement to the Genesis account, which was the only account known to His contemporaries, when He said, “And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man...” (Matt. 24:37–39).

Peter certainly understood the flood to be universal. Not only does he speak of the earth “compacted out of water and amidst water” but he speaks of the “heavens from of old” and says it all perished. This harmonizes with the Genesis description of the earth that watered, not with rain, but with dew, before the flood. After the flood the whole atmospheric heavens were different, so that we now receive water by rainfall from the heavens. Besides that, the composition of the earth was changed in the flood, according to Peter, which may account for the appearance of “shrinkage.” The first one was compacted out of water, but “the heavens that now are and the earth, by the same word, have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men” (II Peter 3:7). There can be no mistake, the whole earth was involved in the destruction of the flood, just as the whole earth will be involved in the destruction by fire when all the ungodly shall be destroyed.

Scientific evidence plainly supports the Bible record that the flood was universal. There is no room for the doctrine of any pre-Adamic race. The division of the races began at the destruction of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11), and not at any time before Noah.

Besides that, Revelation plainly says that the redeemed will consist of men from “every tribe, and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9). Significantly in the Bible account is the force by which the world is created and destroyed. Peter says, “By the word of God” the first earth perished and “by the same word” the present world will be destroyed. The Psalmist sang, “He spoke, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast” (Psa. 33:9). The Lord Jesus even at this moment is “upholding all things by the word of His power” (Heb. 1:3) so that He needs but speak the word, and judgment will come swift and certain.

The first judgment on the earth came by water; the next time it will be by fire. The first judgment was temporal; all those dead must still be resurrected to face God in the final judgment, The second time it will be eternal, that is, it will be final. The first time is was only partial; mortal man (Noah and his family) lived through it. The second time it will be complete; “he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire” (Matt. 3:12), no mortal men will survive. The saved will be made immortal.

In Noah’s day there was one way to escape; the Ark, “wherein eight souls were saved through water, which also after a true likeness does now save you, even baptism” (I Peter 3:20–21). There is one way for us to escape: Christ. He met the death penalty for all who are baptized into His death.

Will there be a warning before the final fire? People today are looking for “signs” of the end of the world. What for? Do they want to wait until the very last minute, enjoying the pleasure of sin as long as possible, then at the first sign of judgment try to get right with God? Noah preached and warned for 120 years. Yet everyone perished but his immediate family. The world has had the warning of Christ and the apostles for over 1900 years! How much warning does one need?

Jesus said that there will be no warning other than the common preaching of the gospel. As in Noah’s day, they were eating, drinking, and marrying, that is they were going right on with life as if they had hundreds of years to live. Noah’s warning did no good. It was business as usual right up until the flood came. He said it would be the same when Christ comes again. He will come suddenly, without notice, as a thief does. When He comes, he will gather all His saints, who have been ‘redeemed out of this present evil world’ (Gal. 1:4) and take us out of the world before it is destroyed by fire. After that there will be ‘a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness’ (II Peter 3:13).

In the light of these truths, what can we do except believe the Word of God and reject false doctrines which men invent for their own purposes. We can live in readiness for the great event. “Seeing that all these things thus are to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God...” (II Peter 3:11–12). We must not become attached to the things of the world since they will not survive the fire. Neither should we fear the threats of men, but rather “fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna” in the final destruction (Matt. 10:28).

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for these things, give diligence that you may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight” (II Peter 3:14).

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