

Questions for Lesson 27: The Flood of Noah: Fact and Myth

1. What are some of the mechanisms that could have produced a flood of the kind described in the Bible?

Answer: God's miraculous intervention, magnetic reversals allowing the Van Allen Belts to collapse, an asteroid hitting the earth, the Straits of Gibraltar opening up and letting the Atlantic flow in, underground springs opening up, glaciers melting, or a combination of any or all of these.

2. There are a number of evidences that the Flood did occur. List as many as you can.

Answer: Given in the Bible; recorded in all cultural records such as the Mayan, Eskimo and Polynesian; salinity changes in the Gulf of Mexico indicating massive additions of fresh water; known mechanisms do exist. I would not use sediment layers, since erosion and identification problems influence these. I also would not say the Ark has been found, because it has not.

3. What are the two main kinds of sedimentary rocks?

Answer: (1) Clastic rocks produced by running water including shale (mud turned into rock), sandstone (sand turned into rock), conglomerate (gravel turned into rock) etc.
(2) Chemical precipitates such as limestone, gypsum, halite, dolomite etc. produced by crystallization in quiet bodies of water over a long period of time.

4. Why can the Flood not be used to explain the formation of the Grand Canyon and the Niagra dolomite?

Answer: (1) The kind of rocks found in the Canyon are never produced by a flood. Chemical precipitates dominate the canyon rocks and these are never produced by a flood (people are not chiseling limestone off the piano when their homes are flooded).

(2) Fossils are sorted with one kind of animal being in one layer and another kind of the same, size, density, and shape being in a different layer. A flood would make sausage out of the whole thing.

5. Why does the existence of huge canyons on Mount St. Helens since 1980 not prove that the Grand Canyon could have been produced in a short time?

Answer: The rocks on Mount St. Helens are volcanic rocks--soft, light weight, and easily eroded. The Grand Canyon is made up of sedimentary rocks--dense, hard, and very difficult to erode. It is like comparing warm butter and steel.

6. What is the "canopy theory?"

Answer: The theory that before the Flood, there was a cloud of material that made the earth a paradise, and that the collapse of this canopy produced the Flood. There is no evidence to support his idea, and it would not produce the paradise attributed to it, if it were true.

7. Where did Noah's Ark end up?

Answer: According to the Bible, in the Ararats (not on Mount Ararat). Attempts to find the Ark on present-day Mount Ararat are probably misguided.

8. How big would the Ark of Noah have been if it held two of each “kind?”

Answer: Not very big. Read 1 Corinthians 15:39 and notice that “kind” is not the same as species. If he had two cow-like animals, they could have produced all kinds of cattle and even buffalo, moose, elk, deer, and the like. “Kind” is a broad term. There are some 26 million species of living things on Earth, so clearly that is not what the Bible is saying.

9. Was the flood a local flood or did it cover the whole Earth?

Answer: This is a controversial area. Sometimes global language is used for something that most of us feel was probably local. Colossians 1:23 would be the classic example, and Luke 2:1 would be another one. It doesn't seem to this writer that arguing whether or not a isolated land mass where no humans existed was flooded is worth the time. Generally when this question is raised it is because people have trouble believing the implications. How could water cover Mt. Everest and where did the water go? The water may not have been level, and Mt. Everest may not have been as high. The evidence in Gibraltar supports this point. How do you get isolated animal populations in places like Australia that are found no where else. The remains of Kangaroo skeletons have been found in South America, so land bridges may have existed. I try to avoid arguing this point, and the important point is the purpose of the Flood. See the next question.

10. What is the message of the Flood account?

Answer: Man disobeyed God resulting in a catastrophe that affected all men. Only those obedient to God survived. There will be a similar destruction in the future, but not by water.

11. What is the danger of telling kids things like “the Grand Canyon was produced by the flood of Noah?”

Answer: Junior-high level students can understand the evidence that shows this is not true. If the quote “preacher” is not right on this subject, how do they know he is right on any subject? If the student is convinced that the Bible does say that the flood produced the Grand Canyon, then he or she is likely to discard the whole Bible on the same basis.