



Genealogy and the Great Flood Genesis 5-7

Introduction

1. Unknown Time Periods

In studying the descendants from Adam to Noah (Chapter 5) and then Noah to Abraham (Chapter 11), it is helpful to consider ancient genealogical customs or methods. When we understand that the word "begat" can either mean "to become the father of" or "to become the ancestor of," it is easier to see why the time periods between the creation and the flood, and between the flood and Israel's descent into Egypt are not precisely known.

2. Representative, Not Complete

Genesis genealogies are not intended to construct an absolute chronology of time. Rather, the years and ages of the patriarchs provides a perspective on the longevity of mankind in pre-flood and pre-Tower of Babel days and unfolds God's moral story. In this case, ten men were listed from Adam to Noah, and ten from Noah to Abraham. Therefore, the pre-flood genealogy line is representative rather than complete.

3. Significant Gaps

Not all of the post-flood patriarchs are listed in Chapter 11. The name, "Cainan", which appears in the genealogy of Mary (Luke 3:36) is missing in Genesis 11:10. Also, if the genealogy of Genesis 11 is complete, the flood occurred only 292 years before the birth of Abraham. In that case, Noah's son Shem lived 502 years after the flood and would have outlived Abraham. Another important point about the primeval genealogies is that the term "begot" does not always denote immediate direct descent, father to son. It often refers to the great, great grandfather (or any number of greats) of the named individual.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion is that there are some genealogical gaps in both Chapters 5 and 11. While some believe in a "recent creation," some theorize that primitive cultures existed worldwide approximately 10,000 to 12,000 years before Christ. This would place the great flood of Noah's day at 15,000 to 18,000 years B.C. (Paradise to Prison, J. J. Davis).

OUTLINE of GENESIS 5-7

I. Genealogy of Adam to Noah - Genesis 5:1-32

II. God's Great Sorrow - Genesis 6:1-13

III. God's Divine Plan - Genesis 6:14-22

IV. The Great Flood - Genesis 7:1-24

I. Genealogy of Adam to Noah - Genesis 5:1-32

A. The Godly and Ungodly - Genesis 5:1-2

Chapter 5 describes the link and growth of both the godly and ungodly generations from Adam to Noah. It distinguishes the godly lineage of Seth from the ungodly line of Cain. The overall plan of God's blessing upon Adam and Eve (Genesis 5:2) carries through each father-son relationship in Seth's descendants. On the other hand, Cain's ungodly line culminated in God's total displeasure with the wickedness and folly of mankind (Genesis 6:5-6).

B. Longevity and Fertility - Genesis 5:3-17

Bridging the years between Adam and Noah, this section shows the longevity and fertility of mankind in the development of the human race. The long lives of these patriarchs are attributable to the pre-flood environment of the earth which was under a canopy of water-mist. Perhaps this canopy blocked out the sun's ultraviolet rays resulting in more moderate and healthful conditions than we experience today.

These verses also express the fulfillment of God's mandate to Adam and Eve to "*be fruitful and multiply*". Most of the patriarchs lived hundreds of years and during that time "*begot sons and daughters*". Creation's orderliness and God's mandate resulted in population growth and spiritual decline through the generations.

C. Enoch's Translation - Genesis 5:18-24

Enoch was supernaturally conveyed to heaven without a natural death because he "*walked with God*" (Hebrews 11:5). Elijah is the only other person in the Bible who was translated alive to heaven. "Walking with God" means that he lived in faithful obedience to God, having a continuous, habitual pattern of life characterized by love, commitment and devotion to God. Enoch and Noah are the only men said to have enjoyed this intimate communion with God.

The lesson of Enoch's translation is that the godly can experience victory in this life by maintaining an intimate, personal relationship with God.

D. Methuselah - Genesis 5:25-32

Methuselah holds the record for being the oldest living human being of all time. He must have fathered very many sons and daughters in those nine hundred and sixty-nine years. The lineage was sustained through Lamech to Noah. Some interpreters believe Methuselah died in the year of the flood (Genesis 7:11).

Note: Enoch and Lamech here are different men than those of Chapter 4.

II. God's Great Sorrow - Genesis 6:1-13

A. The Ungodly Multiply - Genesis 6:1-4

While a small number of Seth's descendants sustained the godly line, the massive number of ungodly in Cain's generations grew worse and worse. They multiplied and expanded exponentially as evil spiraled downward. Commentators do not agree on the identification of the "sons of God" but many believe they were fallen, angelic beings who cohabited with the "the daughters of men" from Cain's descendents (2 Peter 2:4-5; Jude 6).

The word for "*giants*" (nephilim) is from the root meaning "to fall". The nephilim existed before and after the marriages of the "sons of God" to "the daughters of men". They were not the offspring of these marriages but were "*mighty men*" of great strength who "fell" on and overpowered others with their abominable sinfulness.

B. God's Sorrow and Intervention - Genesis 6:5-13

Mankind's ever-increasing wickedness, evil thoughts and sinful ways grieved the heart of God. Men and women chose to be independent of Him and live self-indulgent, self-centered, sinful lives (Romans 1:18-32). "*The earth was filled with violence because of them.*" God was sorry He had created them. "*All flesh had corrupted their way on earth.*" Everyone had gone astray except Noah who had separated himself from the wickedness of his contemporaries and "*walked with God*". God's patience wore thin and He swore to annihilate from the face of the earth "*man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.*" Every living thing would be destroyed (Psalm 53:2-3). Only Noah "*found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*"

III. God's Divine Plan - Genesis 6:14-22

A. Construction of the Ark - Genesis 6:14-16

After disclosing His plan to destroy all flesh on the earth, God gave Noah specific instructions for building a stable, sea-worthy, wooden vessel. Converting cubits to feet, the ark was to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It was to have three decks (stories) providing a deck space of about 100,000 square feet plus a window at the top and a door in its side.

B. Noah's Deliverance - Genesis 6:17-18

God revealed that He would cause a continuous torrential rain upon the earth to destroy all flesh (Psalm 104:6-9; Luke 17:26-27; Hebrews 11:7). "*Everything that is on the earth shall die.*" But, He would establish a covenant with Noah to save his immediate family along with two of every kind of animal, bird and creeping thing. God instructed Noah to gather a year's supply of food for his family and for the living creatures who would inhabit the ark with them.

The enormity of the task did not overwhelm Noah. He executed God's plan precisely and completely.

IV. The Great Flood - Genesis 7:1-24

A. The Ark's Manifesto - Genesis 7:1-3

God was pleased with Noah's righteousness and graciously invited him to come into the ark with his wife, three sons and their wives. In Genesis 6:19, He had told Noah to take with him two of every living creature. Now God gave him additional details: "*You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female*" (Genesis 7:2). The reason for taking seven clean animals was for sacrificial worship after the Flood had receded (Genesis 8:20). It has been estimated that the ark could accommodate two of each of the 35,000 species, or 72,000 creatures in its area and volume of space (Genesis 6:15).

B. Final Preparations and Loading - Genesis 7:4-10

God told Noah that in one week He would cause it to rain for forty days and forty nights. So Noah and his family loaded the creatures, pair by pair, and stocked sufficient food for everyone and every thing on board the ark. Then Noah, his wife, three sons and their wives went into the ark. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood waters covered the earth. He had carried out God's commands to the letter.

C. The Flooding of the Earth - Genesis 7:11-20

The magnitude of the great Flood has been debated by scholars for years: was the Flood over the whole earth (universal) or just local. Some scientists and theologians assert that there is little geological data to support a universal flood. However, the Christian church believes that the Biblical terms and context require a universal Flood. It is well to remember that many scientists have difficulties with God's creation and miracles because their conclusions and results rely on empirical data (experience and observation alone).

D. Compelling Biblical Arguments

Whitcomb and Morris' The Genesis Flood provides a good summary of the Biblical arguments for a universal flood:

- Depth of Flood: covered "all the the high hills" and "mountains" "on the earth" by twenty-three feet;
- Duration of Flood: waters prevailed five months and took another seven months to recede;
- Purpose of Flood: judge the sinfulness of the entire earth;
- Size of the Ark: with nearly 100,000 square feet of deck space, the ark could hardly have been designed for a local flood;
- Covenant with Noah: God said "never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth" and "all flesh" (Genesis 9:11,15). This speaks undeniably to a universal flood since there have been many local floods.

E. Destruction of All Living Things - Genesis 7:21-24

The great Flood destroyed all living things on the earth except Noah and those with him in the ark. The waters prevailed over the land one hundred and fifty days. Noah was a spiritual giant in a world that was evil and violent. His remarkable faith and obedience established

him as the new head of the human race. Hebrews 11:7 states, *"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."*

Application

Many people watch the downward spiral of the world today and conclude that something must change. Deteriorating moral values, terrorism, violent crimes, corruptions, dishonesty, abortions, pornography, alcohol, drug addiction and disrespect of a Holy God are all rapidly increasing signs of the last days (2 Timothy 3:14). Are we nearing the end of the world? When the disciples asked Jesus, *"What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*, He answered: *"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until that day Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be"* (Matthew 24:37-39).

God's righteous judgment is surely drawing near. The only hope for each person is to turn to God as the one true, living, sovereign judge and power of the universe, to confess His Son, Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior, and *"to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"* (Titus 2:12-13).

The story of Noah and the great flood foretells God's invitation to all mankind to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for deliverance from judgment and spiritual death. Have you believed in Jesus Christ and confessed Him as your Lord and Savior? How does your obedience compare to that of Noah who *"did according to all that the Lord commanded him"* (Genesis 6:22 and 7:5)?

QUESTIONS

All questions are based on the New King James Version of the Bible.

DAY ONE: Read Notes and References.

1. Why are we not able to know precisely the time period between the creation and the flood?
2. What is the purpose of Chapter 5?
3. Why did God instruct Noah to take “*seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female?*”
4. List three arguments for the Great Flood being universal rather than local.

DAY TWO: Read Genesis 8:1-22 and Isaiah 54:9.

5. After the flood waters subsided, why did Noah send out a raven and then a dove from the ark?
6. How did Noah know that the flood waters had abated from the earth?
7. What was the first thing Noah did after he, his family and all living creatures left the ark?
8. When the Lord smelled a soothing aroma, what did the Lord say in His heart?

DAY THREE: Read Genesis 9:1-17; 1 Samuel 14:33-34; Ezekiel 1:28; and Romans 14:14.

9. After God blessed Noah and his sons, what was His first command to them? Quote the Scripture.
10. What was God’s instruction to Noah and his sons concerning food?
11. What is the meaning of God’s words, “*Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed?*”
12. a. What is the sign of God’s covenant with Noah?
b. What does the sign mean?

DAY FOUR: Read Genesis 9:18-29, 10:1-32, 9:1; Leviticus 19:3; and Deuteronomy 7:1-2, 27:16.

13. What was Ham's disgraceful, shameful act?
14.
 - a. Who was Canaan?
 - b. Why did Noah curse Canaan instead of Ham? See Genesis 9:1 and Deuteronomy 27:16.
 - c. Could God have given Noah insight into Canaan's future family? See Deuteronomy 7:1-2.
15.
 - a. What occurred during Peleg's life?
 - b. What is the possible meaning of this phrase?

DAY FIVE: Read Genesis 11:1-9.

16. What was common about all of the earth's population at this time?
17. What was the goal and reason for the peoples' construction projects? Quote the Scripture.
18. What two actions did the Lord take?
19. What was the extent of the dispersion?

DAY SIX: Read Genesis 11:10-32.

20. Does it appear that the faithful line of Shem and Peleg is being contrasted with the unfaithful line of Joktan (10:25-32)? Explain.
21.
 - a. Where did Abram live when he married Sarai?
 - b. To what city and nation did Terah take his family?