

The Flood (Part I) – Evidence for the flood

We have looked at the events leading up to the flood – the departure from God and abandoning what is right in exchange for the lust of the world. The result was children that were tyrants, filled with violence, whose thoughts were evil continually. There was no justice because the tyrants were mighty men of renown. Because they had the power base, justice was perverted (Genesis 6:4). Because evil men were the lords of the land, the land quickly became filled with evil and only one man continued to follow the Lord. God condemned man to the same destruction that they had already chosen for their souls. As God watched man race toward complete moral bankruptcy, He executed His judgment. God has never let the world go without a witness and He will always have a witness. We do know that the sign of His immanent return is that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of Man (Jesus Christ) returns. Godless men will be strong and will pollute justice; the world will race towards moral bankruptcy while the godly abandon God for the lust of the world. In spite of the continual warnings, the world will be blind-sided by God's judgment.

This study is broken into two parts, the evidence (or defense) for the flood followed by a biblical study of the flood account. In our skeptical culture, I believe it is necessary to understand what you believe and why you believe it. Evidence does not produce faith, but it does support faith. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear". In obedience to the scripture's command, we will first examine the defense of our reasonable faith so that we can 'sanctify our hearts in the Lord' by studying His word.

Defending the biblical account

The evidence for the flood is so overwhelming that I can't possibly scratch the surface in this study. Instead of going through a long explanation of the flood, I am going to address 5 commonly asked skeptical questions and then conclude with what we observe scientifically and follow up with a possible scenario. We can never go back and see what actually happened, we can only piece together bits of this puzzle and conclude what we believe is the most plausible explanation. Both the biblical account and the evolutionary account take faith to believe. My hope is that when you look at the obvious evidence, you will conclude that it takes more faith to hold on to skeptical beliefs than it does to believe the Bible. With this in mind, let's look at 5 common flood questions.

1. Where did all the water come from?

Genesis 7 says,

18 The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water.

19 The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered.

20 The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered.

21 All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind;

When we look at great mountains like Mt Everest, which is over 29,000 feet, or some of the other natural heights, it seems preposterous to think that there could be enough water to cover these mountains. As it is today, that would be true. But look at Psalm 104:

NASB Psalm 104

6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters were standing above the mountains.

7 At Your rebuke they fled, At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away.

8 The mountains rose; the valleys sank down To the place which You established for them.

9 You set a boundary that they may not pass over, So that they will not return to cover the earth.

The Bible says that the mountains rose and the valleys sank. The water ran to the place God founded for it and He set a boundary that they would not return again to cover the earth. As we will examine later, there was much more going on here than just rain. The earth's landscape was catastrophically changing. Even today we observe this in many ways. We see the mountains rising today. Even Mt Everest is still moving. This mountain moves northeast an average of 6 centimeters a year and increases in height 7.5 to 10 centimeters per year. If this happens during relative calm, what could have happened when the whole earth was violently moving? It is also interesting to note that the top 3,000 feet of Mt Everest is covered with clam fossils and other ocean living fossils. This would clearly indicate that either clams migrated upwards 26,000+ feet above sea level, or Mt Everest was once at or below sea level.

Both observable science and the biblical account agree that the waters were higher than the mountains. Otherwise, fossils could not have been covered with sediment and turned into fossils on top of the mountains. The only real question is, where did the water come from? Here is the Bible's claim:

Psalm 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

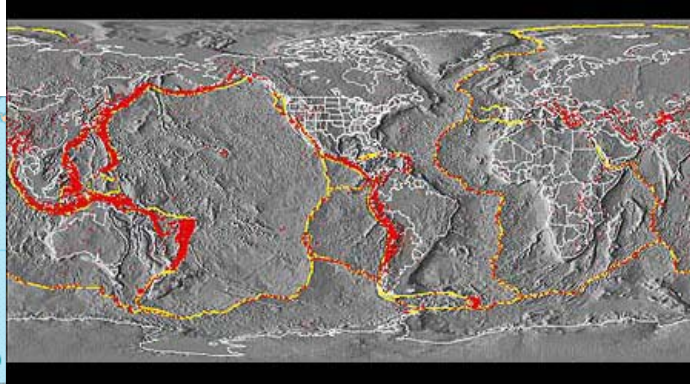
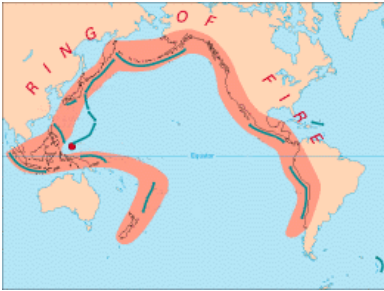
2 For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters.

The Bible claims that the earth was founded upon the seas and established on top of the waters. Compare that to the Genesis account of the waters being released:

Genesis 7: 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened.

12 The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

The Bible says that the water spewed from below and rained from above. The majority of the water did not come from above, but below. The waters of the deep are still observable today. Just watch the news during a prolonged draught. As the water tables below the surface drain huge sinkholes often appear. Consider also that major fault lines circle the earth and still actively move today. A catastrophic event would have easily caused water below the crust of the earth to spew out violently and the land to sink. Look at this map of the earth's fault lines.



In these maps, you will notice that almost every major fault is right on the ocean coastline or under the ocean. The west coastline of the US follows the ring of fire that begins south of South America, goes up to the Arctic and circles down the coastline of China heading back to the South Pole region. To the east of the US you will see that the Atlantic Ocean has its fault line running through the center of the ocean. Every continent is outlined or surrounded by these major fault lines. Every major fault as we see in this photo is on the coast of the ocean or under the ocean. The few exceptions that cross landmasses have created major waterways. If you look at the fault that crosses east of Africa, you see a connection from the Gulf of Aden, to the Red Sea, to the Mediterranean Sea, to the North Atlantic Ocean northwest of Africa. If the water burst out from below as the Bible claims, the areas surrounded by the fault lines would most likely sink and the areas remaining above would be pushed upwards. The result would be water running off into the newly formed oceans and mountains beginning to rise as the ocean floor pushes against the coastlines. This is, in fact, what we observe in science.

There is more evidence supporting this idea. Millions of fossilized sea creatures are found along fault lines. Consider for example the mining fields of diatomaceous earth in California. Diatomaceous earth is used for products that use absorbent material. It is formed by microscopic organisms called diatoms (hence the name diatomaceous earth). Evolutionists tell us that diatomaceous earth takes approximately 1,000 years to form 1 inch thick. In Lampoke California, these fields can be up to 1500 feet thick. Doing the math, that would take around 18 million years to form. Interestingly enough, this field resides right on one of the largest fault lines in the world. Consider this theory. Suppose the fountains of the deep burst open as the Bible states, and steaming hot water and lava or ash spewed out and killed all of the diatoms in this area of the world along with any sea creature close enough to be scalded. This would easily account for such a mass quantity of deceased diatoms that are not found in other areas that should also have built up this repository as well according to the evolutionary model.

In 1970, an 80-foot long baleen whale skeleton was found standing on its tail in the middle of this diatomaceous earth quarry. Did this 80-foot whale carcass stand in place for millions of years while the diatoms died and settled around it? Or is it more plausible that a sudden catastrophic event killed trillions of these microbes causing them to settle around a whale that was also killed in the same event? Christian scientists have long lauded this as evidence for the flood. To be fair to this topic, I read a rebuttal from an atheist resource. Darby South wrote an article called ‘A Whale of a Tale’ which refuted

the conclusion of the skeleton found in this quarry. In this article, Darby claims that the whale was not found standing upright, but was more horizontal, at an angle between 40 and 50 degrees (right between upright and horizontal). He goes on to argue by saying:

These sediments lack any sedimentary structures that would indicate catastrophic deposition. Rather, the strata exhibit laminations indicative of slow accumulation on an anoxic bay bottom. Within the adjacent strata, several hardgrounds occurs. A hardground is a distinctive cemented layer of sedimentary rock that forms when the lack of sediments being deposited over a very long period of time on the sea bottom allows the surface sediments to become cemented.

In layman's terms, the layers around the whale have several hard, cement-like layers that indicates that the diatoms were not suddenly deposited, but were slowly accumulated over time. If there are fewer diatoms dying, there will be thinner layers and these layers will also be harder and more cemented. His conclusion, because the sedimentary layers show slow development according to the evolutionary model, this accumulation must have been gradual over millions of years.

Is he saying that it is more believable that the whale carcass survived millions of years while the diatoms slowly formed, than it is to believe their dating methods might be wrong? That is blind faith in the truest sense. To think the whale skeleton could have survived so long is absurd, but then to claim that it also remained at a 40-50 degree angle for millions of years defies any sense of reason whatsoever. This is one of those decisions where you are the judge. Which takes the most faith – clinging blindly to skepticism of the flood, or acknowledging the biblical account fits what is observed in science?

2. Where did all the water go?

This question was answered with question one. As we read earlier in Psalm 104; The mountains rose, the valleys sank and the waters ran to the place You prepared for it and You have established the boundary so the waters would not return to cover the earth. The average depth of the ocean is around 12,000 ft and the average height of land is 2,600 ft above sea level. If the earth were rounded off, with the water present today, the sea would cover the earth by over 8,000 feet.

Let's look at some of the other evidence that the water receded into its place as the Bible claims. As an illustration I am going to use the Grand Canyon. It is the perfect case study because evolutionists claim that the Colorado River formed it over millions of years while the creationist claim it was formed by the flood. As we examine some of the facts, I think it will be clear which explanation is more plausible.

The evolutionary account is that over millions of years the Colorado river cut through solid rock to form this massive gorge that is over a mile wide in some places. Below are two pictures to get this perspective. The picture on the left is the main section of the Grand Canyon and the right is one of the side canyons.



One thing that puts the evolution model into doubt is the height of the Grand Canyon. The top of the Grand Canyon is considerably higher than the beginning of the canyon where the Colorado River enters into it. This would mean that the river would have to flow uphill for thousands or even millions of years before it could cut a groove below the mouth of the canyon so the water could begin to flow downward. This ‘mystery’ can’t be explained by anything except the fact that the water had to be higher than the canyon when it was formed. It would either have had to be higher than the canyon for millions of years, or it would have to be flowing over a land that is not yet hardened into rock.

This leads us into the creation / flood argument. It is an undisputed fact that sedimentary rock was once mud. Remember, the issue between creation science and evolution science is not the observable facts, but the interpretation of the facts. There is nothing observed by science that Christian scientists or any Christian with any real understanding of science disagrees with. We can’t dispute what is plainly observed. The dispute is on how scientists interpret those facts and how they piece together the facts.

Creation science asserts that there was a great flood as the Bible claims and that as the waters receded, it flowed over sediment that was deposited from the floodwaters. While this sediment was still soft, the waters receded and quickly eroded the canyon. Because it was mud and had not yet hardened into rock, this occurred in days or weeks, not years or millions of years. I also believe that God, in His sovereignty, has given us an insight into this event through a modern day catastrophe. In 1980, Mt Saint Helens erupted and exploded into a landslide of scorching ash that raced down the mountainside and consumed everything in its path. This event forever altered the landscape around St Helens. The wall of ash spilled into the valleys below and completely blocked off the Toutle River for nearly a week. This dam of ash backed up the river until it rose high enough to cap over the top of the ash. When it began to flow over the ash, there was rapid erosion and the river cut a mini-canyon into the ash that was 1000 feet wide and 2000 feet long. Below is a picture of that canyon.



Did the small winding river at the bottom of this canyon form it? This photo was taken in 1984. Today, the walls of this canyon are solid rock. They have layers of sediment and if the origin was unknown, it would be assumed to have formed in millions of years as well. As one geologist put it, “We saw Mt Saint Helens do in one day what normally takes tens of millions of years to occur”. Perhaps, like the whale fossil, maybe the assumption is wrong.

Another interesting point to note is the after effect of this blast of ash. Spirit Lake was covered with the trees swept from the mountainside. Shortly after the eruption, the lake was so covered with trees that you could almost walk from one side of the lake to the other without touching the water. A year later, most of these trees were stripped of their bark due to the motion of the water causing them to rub together. How is coal formed? By large quantities of organic plant matter accumulating and being covered with sediment. This is exactly what we observe when the stripped bark became waterlogged and sank. Even more interesting is what happened to the trees themselves. As the trees became waterlogged they began to sink as well. Most of these sank root first and would float upright for a time until they slowly sank. Hundreds of these trees are partially buried in the sediment washed into the lake as rain continued to bring in the ash. We have layered sediment up to 30 feet thick around many of these trees as the heavier sediment settles first. Compare this to other observations of science. Here is a photo of a fossilized tree standing upright through multiple layers of the geological column that supposedly represents millions of years worth of accumulation.



This is not a rare find, but this phenomenon is found all over the world. These trees are commonly known as polystrate tree fossils because they stand through many layers of strata. The possible scenarios are that either these trees, like the baleen whale skeleton,

stood erect through millions of years while sediment settled around them, or they were covered quickly by sediment, before they could rot or fall down. Both evolutionary science and creation science agrees that fossils are caused by sediment deposited by flooding. The disagreement is the concept of a catastrophic event such as the great flood in the Bible. However, the argument that a localized flood caused these trees is a poor explanation because the layers they protrude through represent millions of years of accumulation according to the evolutionary model. Each layer has different index fossils, which date each layer as a different time period. Also, as we have seen from St Helens, a few layers would be feasible with a local catastrophe, but even a mass of ash could not fully cover many of these trees. 30 feet is a lot of silt, but many polystrate trees are found in layers are much taller than 30 feet. The overarching them is, "Which worldview takes more faith?"

3. Why do the geological layers appear to show life progressing instead of showing all types of fossils in the same layers?

If you put muddy water into a jar, you will see that denser matter settles first and layers begin to form until all the mud has been settled. The same holds true for materials that float in the water. It would seem reasonable that water animals would be the first to settle because they are already on the bottom of the ocean and they also have shells and denser body masses. Do we observe a progression of complexity in the fossil record, or do we observe natural settling? What could we expect if we saw millions of animals die and be swept away by water? You would expect to see the more dense matter settle first and as the less dense matter, as it became waterlogged, would also sink. Isn't this what we see in the fossil record? The fossil record is not a straight line from simple to complex as evolutionist lead us to believe. Some of the evolutionary chains have are found in layers of strata that are earlier than they are expected to evolve. Some of the fossils are found later than they are expected to evolve. Some are found across multiple layers instead of being confined to the time period in which they are supposed to exist. In fact, many fossils are found buried in layers below the fossils that they supposedly descended from. The strata accumulation is often (but not always) reversed from order it should appear on record if evolution were true.

In a flood, you would expect this. Some corpses would sink earlier than their peers. Some, trapped in debris would be buried earlier than they should. Some would not sink until they decayed and fell apart which would also explain why many of the larger animals are not found intact or and incomplete. The fossil record fits the flood model much better than it does the evolution model.

4. How could Noah get tens of thousands of species on the ark?

Let's first look at what Noah brought on the ark. Look at Genesis 6:

17 "And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die.

18 "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark -- you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

19 "And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.

20 "Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.

Land dwelling creatures and what has breath are the only creatures taken on the ark. The ark was 3 floors deep and almost two football fields long. Estimations are that there was enough room on the ark for 125,000 sheep. In our present world there are 18,000 species known that would qualify for a trip on the ark. Even if we doubled that to make room for extinct species that may have been around in Noah's day, we would still only have 36,000 species. If we double that to take two of each kind, that would be 72,000 animals. The average size would have been much smaller than a sheep. However, it would be unnecessary to take 2 of each species, you would only need 2 of each kind. But even if each species were represented, there would be ample room to spare. However, the Bible calls for 2 of each kind, not each species. But whether God chose each species or each kind and the species are variants of each kind, the ark still accommodates the numbers.

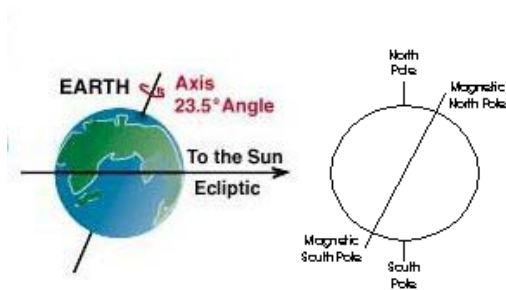
On a passing note, I have heard it asked how Noah was able to round up all those animals. He didn't have to round up any. The Bible says they came to the ark and Noah put them into the ark. It is also a known fact that when stormy weather hits, animals will hibernate or sleep it out. Almost all animals are inactive when threatened by stormy conditions. Inactivity would limit the amount of food needed, though the room was available for food as well.

5. How did animals get from across oceans to the ark?

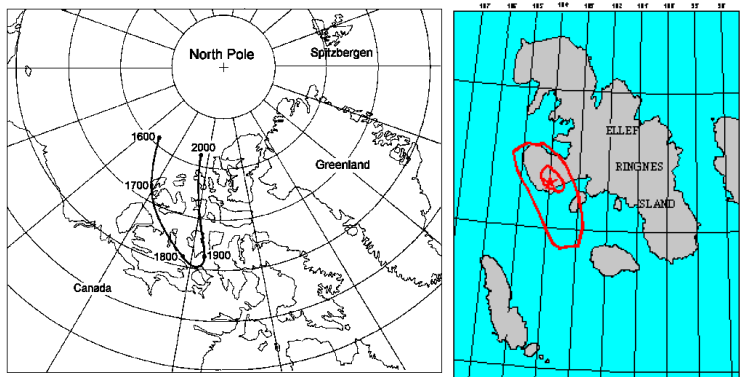
This is the easiest one of all to answer. Look at Genesis 10:25a, "To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg (which means division), for in his days the earth was divided", Eber named his son after an event witnessed at the time of his son's birth – the earth dividing. This event occurred on the fourth generation after the flood. There is a lot of dispute over how the earth was divided, but both creation and evolutionary scientists agree that the earth was one landmass in the past. The dispute is how this division occurred. One theory is that the land split apart and the continents divided. This is theorized because the pieces can almost fit together if you match them up. Some continents have to be rotated almost 180 degrees which is very improbable. This theory is what we commonly see in textbooks. The other scenario I believe is more probable. If you drained the ocean just a little, the similarity to a landmass puzzle would disappear. The shape of the earth under the surface of the water does not look like a puzzle that fits together. Instead it looks like the land collapsed and the water covered it. It is plausible scenario is that as earth continued to shift, and polar caps began to melt and caused the waters to cover the valleys between the continents while the earth continued to settle. If you drain the oceans a few thousand feet, you could walk between continents. In each of area, we see that the biblical account fits perfectly with what is clearly observed in science. Individually it might be arguable that it is a coincidence, but when you look at the chain of events that clearly support the Bible, it takes much more faith to be skeptical of the Bible than it does to believe the Bible.

A Plausible Theory?

Let's look at the facts as they are clearly observed. The earth has a magnetic North Pole that is different from true north. The northern pole sits at a 23.5-degree angle from true north.



We also know that the earth wobbles. Magnetic north moves slowly in an elliptical pattern.



These two pictures came from two separate studies of the North Pole. One comes from a modern observation, the other from the early 1900s. Both clearly show that the earth has a wobbling center of rotation. One theory I read was described as a spinning top. If a round top were to be hit with an object that remained attached, it would alter its angle, wobble and begin to adjust to its new center of gravity. The wobbling would decrease as the top adjusted to the new angle. This fits what is observed by science on the earth.

In review:

The earth is at a 23.5-degree angle.

Magnetic north does not line up with true north.

Magnetic north moves elliptical with the irregular pattern of the earth's rotation.

The fault lines follow the ocean coastlines or go under the ocean with few exceptions.

Fossils show mass extinction.

The polar caps once teemed with life.

Evidence shows that large animals such as the woolly mammoth froze quickly.

It has been theorized that a comet could have possibly become the catalyst for the catastrophic flood event. A comet hit Saturn a few years back. As it entered the gravity of Saturn, it gained so much speed that it began to break apart. By the time it impacted, it was in 7 pieces, which hit in a central region. If we could add the same scenario to the earth, it would provide a plausible explanation of the flood. The moon has large craters

on only one side, which would indicate that all these craters occurred in one event. If the craters built up over time, they should be evenly distributed. If perhaps a similar comet hit the moon and earth in pieces, it would fit. Frozen debris at -300 degrees would create a sudden cold air burst that would trigger violent storms as cold air met the warm climate. The impact would do two things, add a sudden weight to the earth causing it to adjust like the spinning top with a new center of gravity and would trigger massive earthquakes that could easily fracture the earth's plates. The water beneath would spew out in great eruptions and the flood would begin.

We can only speculate as to what happened. What is important is that all observable facts support the flood account but they do not support the evolution model. This case will be tried in each of our hearts and minds. Until we all stand before God, we must decide which we believe. I believe that it clearly takes more faith to believe in a godless worldview than it does to believe the biblical account. My hope is that this glimpse at the flood account will either compel you to the truth, or strengthen the foundation of your faith. We can have confidence that the Bible is the revealed word of God and this should also give us confidence that God is in total control and capable to direct our lives.

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