

Text: Genesis 7:1-24

Title: "Remembering the Flood"

Time: March 9, 2008 am

Place: NBBC

Intro: As a newcomer to New Boston, I have discovered that this is the time of year that we like to remember the flood around here. I was admonished by a sister last week for commenting that it was great to have rain rather than snow. She remembers the flooding of the past two years and rightly objects that it would be better to have neither rain nor snow.

The Bible reminds us of a flood that modern man has tried to forget. It happened right here in New Boston, and everywhere else on the surface of our planet. There are at least two reasons, I believe, why modern man has finds it necessary to forget the Genesis flood.

First, evolution's religious conviction that life forms originated through random mutation and natural selection requires huge segments of uninterrupted time up to the present in order to account for the living things we observe today without the Creator. A life-ending and world-altering catastrophe only a few thousand years ago, as the one described by Genesis, suggests that the earth's history has been interrupted by catastrophes so that the segments of time required for evolution through random mutation and natural selection are simply not available.

The second reason man wants to forget about the Genesis flood is captured well by a commentator on our passage (Henry Morris): "In our modern age of scientific skepticism, the enormity of this great event of the past has been all but forgotten. Its testimony of the awfulness of sin and the reality of divine retribution is so disturbingly unwelcome that men have tried for ages somehow to explain it away and forget it" (*The Genesis Record*, 199).

It is impossible to believe what you read in the Bible, to maintain the Christian faith of Christ and the apostles, and forget the Genesis flood (Job 12:15, Ps. 29:10, 104:8, Isa. 55:9, Matt. 24:37, 39, Luke 17:27, Heb. 11:7, 1 Pet. 3:20, 2 Pet. 2:5, 3:6 all remember the Genesis flood). I believe that Genesis 7 emphasizes four specific things that God wants us to remember this morning about the Genesis flood:

I. The Flood we must remember was historical, not legendary (vv. 6-13).

Illustration: We read about this global catastrophe in our passage this morning, but it is also a scientific fact that we can read about the Genesis flood in the extant evidence of history and geology. Geologist professor, Dr. Henry Morris, wrote a commentary on Genesis that includes an appendix that lists 36 extra-Biblical evidences that the flood described for us in the Bible is something that the evidence of history and geology remembers. Here are 11 of these:

- (1) History has recorded a world-wide distribution of traditions of a great flood.
- (2) The origin of human civilization is known to be in the region of Ararat and Babylon at the biblical post-Flood timeframe.
- (3) Population statistics converge upon the biblical post-Flood era as the timeframe for the inception of the human race.
- (4) Water-laid sediments and sedimentary rocks exist all over the world.
- (5) Worldwide carbon deposits in the form of coal testify to the global burial of living things.
- (6) Fossils exist all over the globe whose formation necessitated catastrophic burial and rapid lithification of fossil deposits at some point in world history.
- (7) Wide distribution of recent volcanic rocks suggests the results of a disruption of the earth's surface at some point in world history.

- (8) Evidence of recent water bodies and water life exists in what are presently vast desert areas.
- (9) The rapid onset of the glacial period.
- (10) Evidence of the mass extinction of animal species such as the dinosaurs.
- (11) The universal occurrence of rivers in valleys or canyons too large for the present stream and explicable only as massive instances of sudden erosion.

Our text places great emphasis on telling us that the Genesis flood is a historical fact, not a fictitious fable. We are given the exact dating and time duration of the catastrophe (v. 6, 11-13). We are also told technologically how the flood occurred (v. 11, the great deep burst open; the windows of the sky were opened).

Evidently, when God separated the waters above and below with the heavens in Gen. 1:6-8, He provided water for the earth's lakes, rivers, and streams through a complex hydraulic and thermodynamic system of underground aqueducts that exploded with tremendous upheaval at the inception of the flood. These disturbances evidently caused condensation of the vaporous water covering above the earth's atmosphere so as to produce torrential downpours that are no longer a part of our planet's hydrologic cycle.

Application: Our faith in the truth of Scripture is not a nice feeling that we get about some fictional stories invented by imaginative people long ago. Bible faith is faith that accepts as true Scripture's declaration of historical fact. If the Genesis Flood never happened, the book we base everything on here at New Boston Baptist Church is a lie, and we should all go home now and do something else (remember the many other biblical passages that refer to the Flood as history).

When we are willing, for whatever reason — whether the acceptance of scientific theories or the praise of man or both, to

separate the words of Scripture from historical fact, our faith becomes a deluded religious exercise in make-believe and imagination. We become not recipients of God's revelation, but rather idolatrous inventors of our own view of God.

II. The Flood we must remember was global, not local (vv. 17-22).

Illustration: Have you ever met someone who has trouble listening? We can all be like that from time to time. A listening problem is different than a hearing problem, isn't it? Sometimes when talking to my kids it can seem like what I have just said bounced right off of them. I can shout out an instruction such that everyone else within a mile of my voice heard me, but the sound wave seemed to go right past the kid somehow. They probably experience the same thing when they talk to Dad from time to time.

Well, the problem there is not really related to sound waves or ear drums, is it? It is related to attention spans and whether or not the recipient is going to like what is being said. It is not a failure to hear; it is a failure to listen with acceptance of what is being said.

Application: Many professing Christians have simply failed to listen to what the Bible says about the geographic impact of the Flood. They try to make the Bible say that the Flood was only local or anthropologically universal (i.e., extending as far as man's civilization at that time). But this is a listening problem, not a hearing problem. The problem is not with the clarity of the text, is it?

The Bible uses a different Hebrew word for *flood* here than it does in other passages for local floods. We are told that it down-poured for forty days and nights (v. 17), that the water involved lifted the ark off of dry land to an elevation at least as high as Mount Ararat 17,000 ft above sea level (v. 17, note that

the ark was necessary – migration to higher ground was not an option), that all flesh on the earth (not just mankind) perished, and that all the high mountains under all the heavens were covered (v. 19).

Simply put, this is an event that destroyed the entire world (2 Pet. 3:5-6, “For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”) Peter understood the global emphasis of Genesis 7, the earth that God created is the geography that God destroyed in the flood, and the geography God destroyed in the flood is the place that will be destroyed in the coming judgment of fire beginning with the Great Tribulation.

So why do so many Christians fail to hear what the text says? It is because there is then no room to compromise with those who refuse to believe the Bible, and they desire the respect and prestige that comes from the acceptance of these. We need to be willing to be laughed at by a world of lies if we are going to be a people of truth. Those who failed to respond to Noah’s warnings for 120 years must have laughed as they saw him build this huge ship. But all the laughing stopped shortly after the Lord closed the door. If we are to be truly wise, we must never fear the mocking of fools. The Flood was global, not local, the laughs of modern man notwithstanding.

III. The Flood we must remember was an act of God, not a random catastrophe (vv. 4, 23-24).

Illustration: “Mt. St. Helens: Key to Rapid Coal Formation?” by John MacKay. “The time was 8.31 Sunday morning May 18th, 1980. One minute later, a gaping hole appeared in the face of the earth as an estimated 10 megaton explosion blasted

over a cubic mile of material out of Mt. St. Helens, U.S.A. The top 400m (1,300 feet) of the mountain was blown away and the blast disintegrated trees and flattened forests for a radius of 11 km (7 miles). A wall of ash, mud, and broken trees roared across nearby Spirit Lake (right) and swept down Toutle River Canyon. . . .

“Most people are still unaware that much of the water for Noah’s flood came from inside the earth. Genesis records that the fountains of the deep broke open.

“The earth opened! This probably involved much volcanic activity as well. Even today up to 90% of what comes out of volcanoes is water. At the end of the flood, mountain building occurred. The earth was lifted up and valleys sank down. The upheaval would have been catastrophic. The erosion and debris produced would have been phenomenal. But of even more significance is the fact that Noah’s flood was a unique catastrophe which would have devastated the forests of the entire world. This would have produced huge log rafts which were later buried in the associated volcanic activity, mountain building and erosion that occurred during and at the end of the flood. All of which makes the flood of Noah a primary contender when it comes to the origin of many coal deposits.” [First published: *Creation* 6(1):6–8 July 1983; cited from <http://www.answersingenesis.org/creation/v6/i1/mtsthelens.asp> on March 6.]

Application: The recent eruption of Mt. St. Helens gave us a little taste of the enormous devastation described by the words of Moses here: “all the fountains of the great deep burst open” (v. 11). The text repeatedly speaks of the massive power of this universal catastrophe. It is repeatedly described as “strong” or “strengthening itself” (7:18, 7:19 [מַאֲדָה מְאֲדָה], 7:20). The text also tells us that this was a work of the personal God who made us and who gave us His law and who will judge us one day (vv. 4, 23-24).

Today, the world does not mind running around fearful of a global crisis, but no one wants to understand the importance of the fear of the Lord. We need to fear the Lord, not global crises. No United Nations commission on global flooding could have stopped God's judgment through the Genesis Flood. And when God decides it is time to destroy the world once again with fire, the United Nations is not going to be able to stop Him.

Genesis 7 teaches the most important strategy for avoiding global crisis, and that is to recognize that man is called to live in fear of offending a holy God, not in fear of pending natural disasters. He is in control of these.

God made living things, and so He has the right to blot them out (v. 4). Did you know that the breath you just took was a gracious gift from your Creator? Did you also know that He does not have to give you another one should He decide not to? Because life is a provision of God, God and only God has the right to take it away. We have no right to call some human life more worthy than other human life. We do not even have any rights to take animal life unless they are given to us by God, something that we shall see was done shortly after the Flood in chapter 9. Our life is God's gift to us, and we need to use it as He pleases.

IV. The Flood we must remember was survived by only one man's family, not everyone (vv. 1-5, 13-16).

Application: Many religions today teach that everyone is going to be accepted by a loving God. This is universalism, and it is a false gospel. We talked about this on Tuesday night not long ago, but Genesis 7 makes the point as clear as any passage of Scripture – broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

Conclusion: So how can we be like Noah and his family, one of the few who find the narrow way (Heb. 11:7)? Faith – trust Christ as your Savior today. God saw Noah as righteousness because of the saving covenant God had made with him in chapter 6. The shed blood of Jesus Christ is the ratification of the saving covenant of God. Have you simply asked Him to save you on this basis alone?

If not, He's given you breath and life and all good things this morning so that you can have another chance to do that today. Ultimately, remembering the Flood the way we must should bring us to Christ for salvation.

“A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction – the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

Preachers and Preaching