

Genesis Seven

The Entrance into the Ark

1 And Yahweh said to Noah, Go into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen you righteous¹ before my face² in this generation. ²Take with you from every kind of clean animal seven,³ seven males and its females, and from the animals that are not clean two males and its females. ³Also of the fowl of the heavens take seven, seven males and females, to keep alive seed on all the face of the earth. ⁴For in seven days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will wipe away every living being which I have made from the face of the land⁴.

5 And Noah did according to all that Yahweh had commanded him. ⁶And Noah was six hundred years old⁵ when the flood of waters was on the earth. ⁷And Noah, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives entered into the ark with him from the presence⁶ of the waters of the flood. ⁸From the clean beasts, and from the beast that are unclean, and from the fowl, and from everything that crawls on the ground,⁹ came two and two to Noah⁷ into the ark, male and female, as Elohim had commanded Noah. ¹⁰And it occurred after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.

The Flooding of the Earth

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month⁸, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that same day all the springs of the great deep were broken, and the windows of heaven were opened.⁹ ¹²And rain was on the earth forty days¹⁰ and forty nights.¹¹ ¹³And on that same day¹² Noah, and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them had come¹³ into the ark, ¹⁴they and every beast after its kind, and all the livestock after their kind, and every crawling thing that crawls on the earth after its kind, and all fowl after its kind, every bird of every wing¹⁴. ¹⁵And they came¹⁵ to Noah, into the ark, two and two of all flesh, in which was the breath of life. ¹⁶And they that came, came male and female of

all flesh, as Elohim had commanded him. And Yahweh shut him in.¹⁶

The Nature of the Flood

17 And the flood was on the earth forty days. And the waters increased, and lifted up the ark, and it rose above the earth. ¹⁸And the waters were strong and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark moved on the face¹⁷ of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters were exceedingly strong on the earth, and all the high mountains that are under all the heavens were covered. ²⁰The waters rose fifteen cubits¹⁸, and the high mountains were covered. ²¹And all flesh moving about on the earth perished, fowl, and livestock, and beasts, and all crawling things which crawl on the earth, and all mankind; ²²everything which had in its nostrils the breath of life, all that was on the dry land, died. ²³And He wiped out every living being that was on the face of the earth, from man, to livestock, and creeping things, and birds of heaven. And they were wiped from the earth. And only Noah remained, and the ones who were with him in the ark. ²⁴And the water prevailed on the earth a hundred and fifty days.

End Notes

- 1 Yahweh is not saying that Noah is righteous, and therefore worthy to enter the ark. Such would have required perfect righteousness before God, which can be said of no man. Some have suggested the word *righteous* here refers to positional justification, the application of righteousness by God based on the faith of the individual. This seems more likely than the idea that righteousness is practical rather than positional in this instance.
- 2 *Before my face* (לפני) is idiomatic Hebrew that means *in my presence*.
- 3 The concept of clean and not clean (לֹא טָהוֹרָה, the Hebrew word for *unclean*, טָמֵא, is not used here) animals is an ancient idea, and evidently God revealed to Noah which was which. Later, this distinction was codified in the Mosaic Law, where unclean animals were forbidden for food. The importance of clean animals over not clean in this instance has to do with the value of the animals and probably the need to repopulate the clean animals more quickly than the unclean. In an agrarian society, wealth was measured in terms of livestock, (especially the clean, though not clean animals were also valuable, [beasts of burden, for example]) so God provided more clean.
- 4 The statement is not *from the earth*, as it is sometimes translated, but *from the ground* (אֲדָמָה). There is an evident distinction between animal and human life dependent on dry land, and the creatures in the oceans.
- 5 Literally, Moses used the idiomatic expression, *And Noah was a son of six hundred years* (וַיֹּנֶחַ בְּרֵשֶׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה).
- 6 Literally, *from the face of* (מִפְּנֵי).
- 7 This includes seven sets of clean animals, which came in pairs.
- 8 According to Keil and Delitzsch, “The months must be reckoned, not according to the Mosaic ecclesiastical year, which commenced in the spring, but according to the natural of civil year, which commenced in the autumn at the beginning of sowing time, or the autumnal equinox; so that the flood would be pouring upon the earth in October and November.” Keil and Delitzsch under the verse.
- 9 This important sentence provides not only the time of Noah’s life in which the flood occurred, but the two distinct sources of the water which covered the earth.

The first source is indicated by the statement, “all the springs of the great deep were broken” (מִכָּל הַמַּעֲיִנות הַגְּדוֹלִים רָבָה) (וַיִּבְקְעוּ כָּל הַמַּעֲיִן). The use of the word *springs* (מַעֲיִן) indicates water under the ground, but these were located in the areas called the *deep* (תְּהוֹמוֹת). This is the same word that refers to the oceans on the earth in Genesis 1. Today it is well known that much water is trapped within the crust of the earth, including beneath the oceans. So the flood did not come solely from rain, but also from a fracturing of the water sources associated with the ocean basins.

The second source of the flood waters is indicated by the words “the windows of heaven were opened” (וַיִּפְתְּחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם נִפְתָּחוּ). The peculiar wording is usually taken to be metaphorical for rain, but it seems to go beyond that. It is likely that this refers to the waters above the firmament, that is, the canopy that was in place over the earth before the Noaic flood.

The total amount of water was stupendous, and went well beyond a simple clouding up and rain falling in the hydro-logic cycle.
- 10 The Hebrew language generally uses the plural for nouns being counted between 2 and 10. Larger numbers retain the singular noun after counting numbers. Hence the Hebrew says literally “forty day and forty night,” which nouns must be translated as plurals for the English reader.
- 11 This sentence indicates the duration of production of the second source of the flood waters. Dr. Bernard Northrup held that Pangea, the single large continent of creation, was still in existence at this time. His view, which is based on sound exegesis in the Hebrew text, is that the division of Pangea into various continents took place soon after the flood. See his technical work “Continental Drift & the Fossil Record” on garlandshinn.com under Genesis.
- 12 On the day recorded in verse 11.
- 13 Concerning this verb, Keil and Delitzsch state, “בָּא, pluperfect ‘had come,’ not *came*, which would require יָבֵא, that is, the qal imperfect. [See note on vs. 15 below.] The idea is not that Noah, with his family and all the animals, entered the ark on the very day on which the rain began, but that on that day he had entered, had completed the entering, which occupied the seven days between the giving of the command (Gen 7:4) and the commencement of the flood (Gen 7:10).”

End Notes

- 14 It appears that during this time birds were categorized by the shape and size of their wings.
- 15 “In this expression ‘they came’ [בָּאוּ, qal imperfect] it is clearly intimated, that the animals collected about Noah and were taken into the ark, without his having to exert himself to collect them...” Keil and Delitzsch under the verse.
- 16 Note the juxtaposition between *Elohim* and *Yahweh* throughout this passage. Clearly the same individual is in view. As a result of this, Keil and Delitzsch state, “That the variations in the names of God furnish no criterion by which to detect different documents, is evident enough from the fact, that in Gen 7:1 it is *Jehovah* [*Yahweh*] who commands Noah to enter the ark, and in Gen 7:4 Noah does as *Elohim* had commanded, whilst in Gen 7:16, in two successive clauses, *Elohim* alternates with *Jehovah*-the animals entering the ark at the command of *Elohim*, and *Jehovah* shutting Noah in.”

When God is conversing with Noah, or having interaction with him so as to make Noah the focus, *Yahweh* occurs. When God is acting independently and is the focus of the statement, *Elohim* occurs.

- 17 *On the face* (עַל־פָּנֵי) = *on the surface*.
- 18 Fifteen cubits is about 20 feet. The statement is that the high mountains were covered with twenty feet of water. Only a universal flood can be in view. How high were the mountains in Pangea? Probably not nearly as high as when the continents began to divide, which promoted mountain growth. No complete discussion of the extent of the flood can be considered that does not take into account the nature of the pre-continental condition of the earth. Questions about the height of the Himalayas, for instance, are not relevant, as those peaks rose after the flood as a result of continental drift.

All flesh on the ground died (vs. 22), and the waters on the earth lasted 150 days before they began to recede (vs. 24).