

A Worldwide Flood?

(This Article was written by a 12th Grader and is posted as a sample for the TCCSA Writing Contest)

The whole world was very sinful. To wipe out mankind, God was going to destroy the whole world with a great flood. He found one righteous man, Noah, and He warned Noah of the flood. Noah was to build an ark and to take two of every animal on board along with his wife, three sons, and their wives. Noah did so. It rained for forty days, and water covered the entire earth for one year. The ark landed on Mount Ararat. Noah sent out three birds at different times to see if the waters had abated. First he sent a raven, which came back. Then he sent out a dove, which came back with a freshly picked olive branch in its beak. The third one he sent out, another dove, never came back. God then spoke to Noah and told him to leave the ark. Noah and his sons departed and repopulated the world (New American 13-17).

Most people have heard of the "Noah's Ark Story," but did a worldwide flood actually occur? Is this just a Bible story, or did a global flood really happen? It is interesting to note that there are stories around the world that are similar to the "Noah's Ark Story." These legends all describe a great flood that destroyed the world. As Mark Isaak says in his article "Flood Legends Around the World," 360 cultures around the world have a flood legend. Isaak notes that they range from Europe to Africa to Asia to Australia to the Pacific Islands to the Americas. There are some differences in the stories, but the common essence is true. Here are some of the similarities John Morris, Ph.D., President of Institute for Creation Research, found:

- 95% of the legends are worldwide floods
- 88% of the flood legends favor one family
- 66% of the legends say that the family was forewarned
- 66% of the legends say the flood was a result of the sinfulness of man
- 70% of the legends say that survival was on a boat
- 67% of the legends have animals saved
- 57% of the legends have survivors landing on a mountain
- 35% of the flood legends also say that birds were sent out

Putting all the legends together, it would read like this:

God sent a worldwide flood to judge the sinfulness of man. One righteous family, who was forewarned, was saved. They built a boat and took animals on board and survived the flood. At the end of the flood, their boat came to rest on a high mountain. They came down and "repopulated the whole earth" (Morris).

Some anthropologists say that a myth is often the "faded memory" of a true incident. In the retelling of these stories, details may have been lost, added, or muddled, but the essence of truth remains the same. When the same "myth" occurs in two separate cultures, they must have both descended from a person who experienced the event, or both cultures experience the same event (Morris).

Other anthropologists would disagree. As Terry Reuther, professor of anthropology at Anoka Ramsey Community College says, "A myth is unprovable." It is a story and just that. Because many cultures have the same myth does not mean it was a true event. Morris says that these anthropologists claim each culture created a flood legend with no basis of truth. However, the people today who tell these legends are separated "geographically, linguistically and culturally," and yet they have similar flood legends (Morris). How could this be?

Others would argue that Christian missionaries brought these flood legends to the different peoples around the world. If this were true, according to Byron Nelson, author of *The Deluge Story in Stone*, there should be other miraculous Bible stories that are recorded around the world. Why are only stories about flood legends found all around the world? Why not legends about the crossing of the Red Sea? But none of these other supernatural stories are found in other parts of the world. Secondly, he argues that if these legends came from missionaries, why do they all have different details and different emphasis (167)? Thirdly, according to Whitcomb and Morris, missionaries could not have visited all of the remote tribes in the world. And if they had, they would have concentrated on telling the Gospel, not on the Genesis flood (54). Because these flood legends occur all around the world, it seems to suggest that a worldwide flood did occur.

Strata are possibly another reason to support that a worldwide flood did occur. Stratum according to the *American Heritage Dictionary* is "a bed or layer of sedimentary rock having approximately the same composition throughout." Strata are the plural of stratum (1712). The strata we find are almost horizontal and have definite edges (Brown 143). There are no washouts or roots found between the layers. Think of the Badlands of South Dakota—straight strata going on for miles. A worldwide flood could lay down these straight strata. Whitcomb and Morris say that the flood would erode the sediments from the land and would then deposit them in sorted layers (123).

Some people would disagree with this and say it took millions of years to lay down the strata. They think that one layer was laid down, and then a million years elapsed before the next layer was laid down. According to Russ McGlenn, President of Adventure Safaris, if this were true, the strata would not be straight. There would be erosion horizons, such as valleys or washouts, between the strata. But these erosion horizons are not found between strata. As McGlenn said, "When you stand on the overlook at Roosevelt National Park in South Dakota, you see straight strata going on for miles. There are no erosion horizons, only straight, colored strata." This means the strata had to be formed quickly, not over millions of years. If it took millions of years to lie down, there should also be impurities in the strata. Instead, only large beds of strata are found with little impurities. For example, the Red Wall Sandstone in the Grand Canyon is 1000 feet thick and covers 65,000 square miles. It is perfectly pure from top to bottom. Only a huge flood could make each stratum so pure. Whitcomb and Morris say that a flood would sort the layers as it laid down the strata (123). To have such a large area that is so pure could only be a result of a huge flood.

Many organisms leave burrowing trails in sediment, disrupting the layering. They function as "biological bulldozers," and churn up the soil so that layers are completely mixed. If it took years to lay down strata, these "biological bulldozers" would have completely mixed the strata. Therefore, definite strata would not be seen (Austin 39). Because we find straight strata with no erosion horizons and no impurities, strata must have been laid down quickly with water. A worldwide flood could cause this.

Fossil evidence is another possible reason to support that a worldwide flood did occur. To make a fossil the following must be included:

1. Hard Bodies (bones, trees, shells)
2. Water (lots of it)
3. Fast, deep coverage
4. No air (so the animal cannot rot)

A worldwide flood would meet all these requirements. The sediments dispersed in the water would rapidly cover the dead animals very deep. This fast, deep coverage would eliminate the air next to the animals. Because there is no air, the animal would not rot. The water would cause a mineral exchange to happen, and

the animal would fossilize. If the animal died and was not covered rapidly, but laid on the surface for years, it would rot and would not become a fossil (McGlenn). The interesting thing to note is that marine fossils are found on every major mountain range on earth (Brown 35). To have a fossilized sea shell get on top of almost every mountain would take a huge flood—a worldwide flood.

So perhaps a worldwide flood did occur. When looking at the evidence that flood legends occur around the world, that strata are in straight layers, and that marine fossils are found on every major mountain range, it all seems to support that a worldwide flood did occur.

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