
Creation Answers

Creation Education Materials, P.O. Box 153402, Irving, TX 75015-3402

Who does this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creation research within the reach of Christians and provide up-to-date reliable information on creation issues. Wayne Spencer is a creation author and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and has published in various creation publications, such as the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Creation magazine, the Journal of Creation (TJ), and Origins (from the Biblical Creation Society, UK).

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More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the creationanswers.net web site. You'll also find many other resources. <http://creationanswers.net>

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A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

Greetings,

This issue continues a series on the Flood, focusing on the Genesis account about Noah and the Ark. I'm fascinated with the life of Noah and so this article considers some details on Noah and his sons that Christians do not often think about.

This issue is a bit longer than usual. A reader pointed out that there was a mistake in the article I wrote in September 2009 called "The Eye Really Has It!" I made an incorrect statement that bats are blind, which is incorrect. I'm sorry for the mistake. I have corrected the webpage version of the article, so please see that to get the correction if you're interested. I certainly can make mistakes. [Click here](#) to go to the corrected article on the eye.

January 28, 2010 I spoke at an evening meeting of the Greater Houston Creation Association (GHCA). The GHCA is a very active group and there was perhaps 35-40 people present for my talk on "A Creation View of Planetary Science." It was a very good evening. A man named John Snavelly in Houston is a videographer and does a great service of videotaping the GHCA meetings on a regular basis. He does a good job. If you would like to get a copy of the video DVD of this talk, you can get one from John for only \$7.00 including shipping. John Snavelly, 13715 Fieldstone Drive, Houston, TX 77041, email: johnsnav@yahoo.com

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

God's Flood, Part 2

In God's Flood, Part 1 we looked at why the Flood took place, that Christians need to know more about the Flood, and how we know from Scripture that the Flood was truly global in scale. In this installment we will consider more about Noah, his sons, and life on the Ark during the Flood. Some of my thoughts on Noah and his sons to follow here are not certain. There may be other possibilities on some details. But this is my attempt to put puzzle pieces together regarding Noah and his sons. I think this will suggest some possibilities that are not often considered. The important thing is that building the Ark, and living in the Ark for a year, were possible. Noah and his family really lived this. Genesis 6-9 is not a mythological story, but a narrative of a real family living through a world-wide catastrophe.

Regarding Noah and his Family

II Peter 2:5 describes Noah as a "preacher of righteousness." Could it be that when God spoke to Noah telling him the Flood would occur, this prompted Noah to preach to people? Did God's message to Noah motivate Noah to preach righteousness to try and persuade people to repent and be saved from judgement by coming on the Ark with him? I used to believe this and this has been believed by many Christians. But after considering Genesis more carefully, I no longer believe this is possible. First, Genesis 6:18 is very specific about who was supposed to be on the Ark, from the time God first told Noah about the Flood. Then in Genesis 7:1 God says Noah's "whole family" were to get on the Ark. If Noah would have brought in someone else outside his family how would that have been permitted when God had already told him exactly who was going to be saved on it? While it is tempting to draw a parallel with the New Testament and say that Noah's preaching was an attempt to

persuade others to get on the Ark and be saved, this does not seem to be the picture. There is a common idea Christians and many creationists use saying that just as Jesus Christ is the only way to be saved today, and Jesus described himself as "the gate" (John 10:7), Noah's Ark also had one door, thus one way to be saved. So a parallel is made between Jesus as "the door" and the one door of the Ark. I do not think this analogy is valid, though it may seem reasonable. Of course Jesus is the one way to be saved and there was one Noah's Ark, but the Flood account is about God's judgement on the world. It is not impossible that other people may have tried to save themselves on other boats. But I suspect they would not have been prepared for such a powerful long event as Noah had worked hard to prepare for. In addition, other people did not have God's providential protection.

It is true that there would have been room for some people on the Ark other than Noah's family. There would definitely have been some extra space on the Ark not needed by Noah's family or the animals or for storing food. When God spoke to Noah telling him the Flood was coming, God had decided exactly who would be saved on the Ark. So, though Noah may have preached to people after learning about the Flood, I do not think he was persuading them to get on the Ark, since that would have been contrary to God's clear directions. It could have been *before* God spoke to Noah about the Flood that Noah was preaching. Perhaps Noah had spoke out against sin all his life. Perhaps Noah told the people to ask God for forgiveness. It is possible Noah preached to people before he knew the Flood would happen! If Noah did preach to people after God spoke to him, his message may have changed, in the light of the coming judgement.

There is an interesting issue related to Noah's three sons that may provide insights into Noah and into how the events of the Flood relate in time. Genesis 5:32 states

in the NIV, "After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth." There is some question on which way to take this verse. Does this mean that by the time Noah was 500 he had borne three sons? Or does it mean that at age 500 he began having sons, which were eventually three. This line at the end of this genealogical list is different from the others in the series. For the other fathers in the series of names some of them had other sons and daughters yet it does not list three sons together like this. Genesis 7:6 indicates Noah was 600 years old when the Flood began. Genesis 11:10 gives the clue that Shem was 100 years old two years after the Flood. So Shem must have been 97 or nearly so at the time the Flood began. Genesis 10:21 mentions Shem and Japheth but English translations vary on which son was the older. The Hebrew is apparently difficult to translate on which was older.

Why does the age of Noah and his sons matter? It may shed light on the question of when he was preaching to people. Consider that Noah lived in a world more lush and green than ours, where food was likely healthier and people lived to over 900 years in age. In such an almost ideal environment, why would Noah have only three children after all those years? Remember Genesis 7:1 indicates his whole family was to be saved on the Ark. By the time Noah began having children, and by the time the Flood took place, all three of his sons were grown and had wives of their own. The events of the Flood are laid out chronologically in Genesis in relation to Noah's age.

Scripture does not answer all the interesting questions about Noah and his family. Some have suggested Noah had children other than Shem, Ham, and Japheth who died in the Flood, but Scripture does not say so. In fact, Genesis 7:1 implies these three sons were all the children Noah had. Why is it Noah had only three children when he was 500 years of

age, if he was married through most of those years? It is interesting to imagine what life would have been like for Noah's family in the pre-flood world, in the Ark, and in the post-flood world. In order to reconcile all the facts we have in the Bible about Noah and the events leading up to the Flood, some speculation is necessary. My speculation is following. Noah may have actually been unmarried until he was close to 500 years old. It seems unlikely to me that Noah would have been married for 500 years and yet had no children, when humans were healthier and the environment was healthier as well. I suspect it was primarily during Noah's early years, before age 500, that he was preaching. This would mean that the people had plenty of warning to repent. Noah may have preached repentance for many years. Then when God spoke to Noah, there was no longer any opportunity for people to be saved from the judgement. At least they could not have been saved on Noah's Ark. Theoretically, others could have built additional Arks if they would have believed Noah. Noah may not have married during those years, perhaps because of the difficulty in finding a righteous wife. Then, after the people of the time had ample opportunity to hear Noah, God appoints a time for the judgement of mankind.

Genesis 6:3 has an interesting statement that has sparked much debate among Christians. In it God says, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years." Many Christians have taken this to mean that from the time of the Flood on, the maximum lifetime of men would be no more than 120 years. This just can't be correct. Genesis indicates that both Abraham's father Terah (Gen. 11:32) and Abraham's son Isaac (Gen. 35:28) lived more than 120 years. I do not believe there is any reason to suppose that these men were made to live longer because of God's purpose in their life. Rather, it's just that lifespans of everyone apparently dropped off after the Flood. The

Earth was no longer as healthy an environment after the Flood as it had been before the Flood. There are a number of possible scientific reasons for this.

I suspect the statement by God in Genesis 6:3 may be God speaking “to himself” (or possibly to angels) in a manner similar to Genesis 1:26. Thus, Genesis 6:3 could represent the moment of God’s decision to send the Flood and set a time limit for mankind. It was then 120 years from the time of God’s decision to send the Flood to the time when it took place. Some time no later than 20 years after God makes this decision, Noah gets married. We can safely infer that Noah must have been married by age 500 at the latest. Sometime between when Noah was ages 500 and 600, after Shem was born, God spoke to Noah. Apparently, judging from Genesis 6:18, Noah already had all three sons and they may have already been married when God told Noah about the Flood. Or, it could be possible God spoke to Noah when his sons were young and not yet married. It is not clear how long was needed for building the Ark, other than that apparently it was less than 100 years. Noah’s sons apparently did not have children of their own when the Flood began, since Genesis 7:1 says that Noah’s whole family was to get on the Ark and yet no grandchildren of Noah were mentioned.

Life on the Ark

Many have challenged the historicity of the Flood saying it would be impossible for eight people to live on the Ark so long or to take care of all the animals. This does raise many questions. Complete answers on these issues may not be possible, but creationists have published much material answering these type of questions. Even the construction and design of the Ark has been challenged. Some have challenged creationists saying that it would be impossible for a boat as large as the Ark to be built out of wood so that it could survive

the event. It would be a very challenging engineering task to build a vessel like the Ark out of wood that would be strong enough to survive the physical stresses it would be put under. If you can believe in the God of the Bible, you can believe God provided Noah some means of constructing the Ark that was adequate for its purpose. Here I only intend to address some of these issues about the Ark very briefly.

The Ark needed to be able to stay afloat and be the home of Noah and his family, and the animals, for a little over one year. The Ark also needed to be able to withstand the stresses placed on it by the waves of the Flood. Today, even with modern engineering and shipbuilding techniques it would be very challenging to build a boat out of wood as large as the Ark. Noah’s Ark did not need to move fast, it only had to keep afloat. So, the Ark did not need to be constructed in a streamlined shape, like large vessels of modern times. This is important because it is much easier to build in the trusses and necessary structural bracing if it is built in a box-like shape than if it were a streamlined shape.

From Genesis, we cannot tell exactly what type of wood was used in its construction. There are varieties of wood that are especially dense and strong that may have been used. It is also possible that “Gopher wood” is an extinct variety of tree we no longer have. There is also some fossil evidence that there were once extremely large trees, larger than any in the world today. Some sort of lamination process could have been used to increase the strength of the planking. It is not impossible Noah may have found trees as tall as the Ark was long, to build from. Constructing the Ark would have required some very ingenious engineering skill, but it would not be outside of the realm of possibility for Noah. It is also logical to suppose that there was a high degree of skill in the pre-flood world with metalworking and carpentry, since the beginnings of these skills are hinted at in

Genesis chapter 4, many years before the time of Noah. Special means of joining planking and trusses together would have had to have been devised to make the Ark strong enough to bear up under the forces put on it by the catastrophe. But, I suspect it could be shown that all this is possible with engineering and construction techniques known and used throughout history.

A group of ship engineers once did a study of the Ark to evaluate its stability. They found that the unique Ark dimensions optimize the various factors that determine its stability against large waves. The late Henry M. Morris, of the Institute for Creation Research showed in hydrostatic calculations that the Ark could be tilted close to 90 degrees in angle side-to-side and it would still right itself, due to its unique proportions. When the Ark encountered a large wave, it would have turned lengthwise into the wave and then it would ride over the wave. Thus, the people and animals in the Ark would experience the Ark turning left or right frequently perhaps but they probably would not experience too much tilting from side-to-side. This is easy to see for yourself by making a scale model of Noah's Ark according to the Biblical proportions and placing it in water. Thus, the Ark was very capable of surviving the Flood and protecting those aboard it.

Another frequent challenge to the Genesis account from sceptics is how could Noah and 7 other individuals care for all the animals? The Ark was an extremely large vessel. It's volumetric capacity was nearly 1.4 million cubic feet. If you were filling the Ark with sheep, it would likely hold on the order of 125,000. The Ark was large enough that at least 24 standard sized mobile homes could have fit inside it, on each deck! It could have been even a little larger, depending on what value for the cubit Moses may have referred to. Not all species of animals would have had to be saved on the Ark, only those that could not have survived in the Flood waters. This

would have included land mammals, birds, reptiles, dinosaurs, and probably a number of smaller creatures. Many insects would have survived in the waters of the Flood, as would some fish and other marine creatures. The Flood waters would not be safe, however, even for ocean creatures, because the violence of the Flood would have buried many marine organisms. Also, all the material washed into the Flood waters as well as all the dying organisms may have altered the water pH, or concentrations of various substances may have made some of the waters temporarily uninhabitable to some fish species. But, marine organisms, and many plants would survive in representative numbers in the Flood waters.

Another point that is important is regarding the Biblical "kinds". There was no need for Noah to save 150 varieties of dogs, for instance, on the Ark. All the varieties of dogs on the Earth today could have descended from only 1, 2, or maybe 3 pairs of dogs. Dogs, as well as most other living things today, have become more specialized genetically with time. So, at the time of Noah the dogs that were on the Ark had built into their chromosomes all the information necessary to give rise to all the varieties of dogs, wolves, coyotes, foxes, etc., that we see today. This would very drastically reduce the number of animals that would have to be saved on Noah's Ark.

John Woodmorappe, a creationist geologist and biologist, has done some very thorough research on many issues about the Ark and the care of the animals on the Ark. He estimates that the number of animals that would have had to be on the Ark would be somewhere in the range of 2,000 to 16,000. Arriving at this figure is a long technical process that will not be addressed here. Even if the number of animals on the Ark were more than this, there would be plenty of room. There would have been large amounts of space for storing all kinds of food and other provisions. In fact, I think Noah

would have had room for a jogging track if he would have wanted one.

The questions on feeding the animals and dealing with their waste is also a question Woodmorappe addresses in detail. This would boil down to clever management and construction techniques. Woodmorappe shows that with known techniques used by experienced people in agriculture today, the problems of feeding and caring for the animals could be very manageable. It is possible a number of animals slept or hibernated or were in a state of torpor for part of the time, though this would not eliminate the need for some care. Even if this were not the case, wise animal care techniques could make the job workable for eight people. We should give Noah and his family credit for being clever, skilled, hard working, and creative.

They must have come up with some unique solutions to all sorts of problems and needs, to allow them to survive for over a year in the Ark. Woodmorappe, for example, shows that even assuming Noah did not collect any water from rain, storing enough water for his family and the animals would only take up about 9 percent of the volume of the Ark. Woodmorappe also estimates that approximately 11 to 15 percent of the Ark would have been used for storing food for animals, including hay and hay substitutes. Many animals could have been fed special diets while on the Ark, for reducing the amount of hay that would have to be stored or for other practical reasons. Even animals that are normally meat eaters today, can survive for a time as vegetarians, when necessary. Though we do not know everything about how the Ark and how Noah's family managed to live on it for so long, the problems are not insurmountable. God was able to prepare Noah for a job such as this and to bring him and his family through the catastrophe.

What would the Flood have been like? The first 40 days I suspect was especially intense and widespread rain.

Also during this time it seems likely there were many geological catastrophic events taking place. During the 40 days and continuing for some weeks after probably, there were severe storms, volcanic eruptions, impacts from space, large hurricanes, tsunamis from earthquakes and tectonic events in the ocean, the continent (or continents) may have been breaking up, and the sky would have become dark. Impacts would have put large quantities of material into the stratosphere, blocking some of the light to the Earth's surface and causing temperatures to drop, possibly for a few months. Over half of the time Noah's family were in the Ark, they were sitting on top of the mountain waiting for the water level to go down. I suspect it was not very comfortable in the Ark for a number of weeks at least early in the event. It would have been impossible for people to survive for long outside the Ark. If you imagine all the various types of natural disasters we have heard of throughout history, all happening at the same time throughout the world, that is probably what the Flood was like. It is a frightening thing to consider. God did not promise Noah that he would be comfortable, but God did give Noah a way to survive.

The post-Flood period would have been difficult as well for Noah and his family. The Earth was no longer always such a pleasant environment, there were wild changes in climate and now they had to experience harsh weather. There were occasional volcanic eruptions, sometimes enormous ones that would partially block sunlight over large regions. There may have been occasional impacts from space as well during this period, though probably in decreasing frequency. It would probably not be unusual for Noah to see meteors streaking across the night sky, or even to see bright flashes on the Moon as impacts took place on the Moon. The warm ocean waters, due to the Flood's tectonics and Earth movements, caused much evaporation of water into the atmosphere in the post-Flood

period. This and climate conditions caused by volcanoes combined to cause an “ice age” period that began a few hundred years after the Flood ended and continued for a number of years. This ice age did not make it impossible for people to survive, but it made it more difficult. The harsh and changing conditions of the post-flood period made it difficult for many living things to survive. As a result, dinosaurs and many species went extinct during the post-flood period. All this is the picture that is emerging from creationist research on the Flood as a global catastrophe. This is what I believe Noah and his family lived through, by God’s grace and mercy.

God’s Antifreeze

It’s always nice to come out of winter. Being in Texas, winters are mild for me, though I remember very cold winters in Kansas. There are a number of plants, insects, and animals that have amazing abilities to survive in the cold. These are amazing examples of intelligent design. But they are also adaptations to the post-Flood world. I suspect that temperatures were not as extreme in winters and summers in the pre-flood world. But there could have been polar caps. It is also not certain if there was land near the poles in the pre-flood world. But clearly God built into some creatures the ability to survive cold.

Some creatures survive by being able to resist being frozen. They have chemicals in their blood such as sugars or proteins that lower the temperature that would make them freeze. Some mammals hibernate and are able to survive through the winter with little activity. The arctic ground squirrel for example can survive in hibernation even below the freezing point of water. In hibernation its body temperature drops from 98.6 °F to 26.4 °F. This is colder than any other mammal is able to manage. But if it were too cold all these could still freeze and die.

Then there are a few unusual creatures that can survive even if they are frozen! Freezing normally destroys cells because either the water crystals puncture cell walls or damage cells in other ways.

Recently I was surprised to discover several creatures that can survive being frozen. 1) The Alaskan Wood Frog survives freezing. A creation article on this can be found [here](#). In this frog the liver produces large amounts of the sugar glucose that protects its cells through freezing. 2) The common garter snake is unusual because it is a cold-blooded reptile and it can survive temperatures down to -5 °C (water freezes at 0° Celcius) or where up to about 40% of its body fluids are frozen. 3) There is a fly known as Belgica whose larvae can survive freezing. It has chemicals in its fluids that help prevent freezing but it can also dehydrate itself to survive. Becoming dehydrated means there is so little water in its body that there’s no water to freeze! 4) The one that may be the champion of cold is a beetle called *Upis ceramoides*. It lives in Alaska. It freezes at -18.5 °F and survives down to -104 °F ! That’s pretty cold to thaw out and survive. It is able to do it because of a unique antifreeze in its body. This chemical is called xylomannan. It is said to be a molecule made up from a sugar and a fatty acid. It is a substance similar to materials that make up the beetle’s cell walls. [Click here](#) to read an article about this beetle from the [sciencedaily.com](#) website.

Though there are many creatures that have adapted to cold on Earth, every living thing is still the same Biblical Kind it was created to be. Living things can change to adapt to a changing environment, but only within limits. These are lessons to us of God’s creativity. They sometimes also give people ideas for medical or engineering applications that imitate what God put in the natural world.

Eye Article Correction

In my September 2009 article, "The Eye Really Has it!" I made a mistake regarding bats. I stated that bats are blind, which is incorrect. This was a careless statement and I regret this mistake. I have updated the article on my website and added a little more explanation regarding the vision of bats. There was also a problem with this webpage article that it did not display some of the graphics in Mozilla Firefox. That has also been corrected. To go to this web article, [click here](#).

Review of Darwin's Dilemma

DVD by Illustra Media

Illustra Media has produced some excellent video programs on intelligent design. The program "Darwin's Dilemma" is the third in a trilogy of videos on design. The others in this trilogy are "Unlocking the Mystery of Life" and "The Privileged Planet." The "Mystery of Life" program addressed molecular biology and the origin of the first life. "Privileged Planet" addressed astronomy. Now "Darwin's Dilemma" addresses geology as well as the complexity of life. Geology was something Charles Darwin spent a lot of time investigating and in his day some fossil evidence had not yet been discovered. But, Darwin had learned of what came to be known as the "Cambrian explosion" apparently from geologist of the time, Adam Sedgewick. Sedgewick coined the terms "Cambrian" and "Devonian" for two periods of Earth history. The "Darwin's Dilemma" program explains why the many Cambrian fossils were a problem for Darwin's theories. Many fossils of a wide variety of strange and complex creatures of the ocean are found "all at once" in the rock record. They were not led up to by simpler fossils and they represent types that do not change into each other. It was a problem that caused Darwin concern and additional

fossil discoveries over the years have only deepened the dilemma. Evolutionists continue to struggle with the question, "How could so many organisms evolve so quickly?"

Darwin's Dilemma is not a young age creationist program. But it is an excellent presentation of the problem for evolution in the Cambrian fossils. It gives some history of the discoveries on the problem, especially on the famous Burgess Shale fossils. It has an excellent segment on Cambrian fossils of embryos found in China. These fossils from China are amazing because they are of soft-bodied delicate tiny embryos and they are making Chinese scientists question some Darwinist ideas. I really enjoyed the way this program shows what the weird creatures of the Cambrian were like, with animations showing what they would have looked like swimming in the ocean. Many of these creatures are extinct and thus many people may not have seen these depicted before.

Young age creationists have had a very logical explanation of the Cambrian fossils for a long time, that they are creatures buried in Noah's Flood. It is interesting that geologist Adam Sedgewick, mentioned in the video from Darwin's day, actually disagreed with Darwin about his origin of life ideas. Darwin's Dilemma does not mention Noah's Flood or support a global Flood, though several points made in the program could be related to it and to a creationist view of biology. To young age creationists, the Cambrian fossil "explosion" is not about the origin of life really, but about the burial of life in a global catastrophe. But "Darwin's Dilemma" addresses the subject in relation to design. Some of the Cambrian creatures were similar to creatures that still exist today, while others were unlike anything living today. They show God's unlimited creativity.

I would recommend the "Darwin's Dilemma" program for Christians. But I feel Christians should watch it with an awareness of the limits of what it addresses, understanding it is not a young-age creation viewpoint. For a young-age creation

viewpoint on the Cambrian fossils, I would recommend this web article by geologist Dr. Kurt Wise ([Click Here](#)). "Darwin's Dilemma" also includes some extra features that have video questions and answers by some scientists who are in the program. These scientists will be familiar to viewers who have seen the Expelled movie, and other intelligent design videos. If you would like to purchase a copy of this video or other Illustr Media programs on intelligent design, you can contact Randolph Productions, an arm of Campus Crusade for Christ. You can go to their website at <http://www.go2rpi.com> or call them at 800-266-7741 Monday through Friday.