

Introduction

Many of the amillennial and premillennial camps take passages that elude to or concern the Genesis flood as evidence that the whole physical world will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ at the end of history. Luke 17: 26-27 & 30 is one of those passages. It says:

"26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

Because many believe that the Genesis flood (Genesis 5-9) was a global one, and since Jesus equated it with the second coming of the Lord, in the Gospel account according to Luke, the second coming must also be of a global nature—the end of the physical earth. A problem arises. By just reading this passage alone, one can see that there is a contradiction in the examples given concerning the idea of a global destruction. Many seem to not even notice verses 28-29:

"26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29 but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— 30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

In Genesis 19, Lot and his two daughters leave Sodom. *"24 Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. 25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground"* (Genesis 19:24-25). This destruction was of a local nature, just as Jesus indicates in Luke 17:28-29. Many, such as those in the post-millennial camp, have seen this problem—Jesus uses two examples, one local destruction (Sodom and Gomorrah) and one global destruction (the Genesis flood), to describe the coming of the Son of Man.

Many have seen this problem and realize that what Jesus said in Luke 17:26-30 must concern Christ's coming in judgment upon Jerusalem that occurred in A.D. 70. So in order to hold on to the belief that Jesus is coming back again to destroy the physical earth, those of the post-millennial camp, turn to Peter. Peter said in 2 Peter 3:5-7:

"5 For they [the scoffers] deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6 and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. 7 But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly."

Since those of the post-millennial camp believe that the Genesis flood was of a global nature, they believe that when Peter said, *"the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished,"* that the physical world would also perish globally. They believe that is exactly what Peter had in mind when he said *"by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly"* (2 Peter 3:5-7) and when he said in 2 Peter 3:10-12:

"10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. 11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!"

In Luke 17 and 2 Peter 3, the Genesis flood is referenced as being equal to the coming of the Son of Man in Judgment. So, if the Genesis flood can be proven to not have been global but local, then the coming of the Son of Man in judgment, that it is compared to in Luke 17 and 2 Peter 3, would have to be of the same nature.

It is very vital to the New Testament scriptures to discover the correct interpretation of the Genesis flood so that the correct interpretation of the second coming may be parallel to the things that Jesus and Peter said concerning the Genesis flood and the judgment. This will be seen later in the study, but first, three categories of evidence will be explored that point to and indicate that the Genesis flood was of a local nature and not a global one: (1) external evidence, (2) internal evidence of the Genesis flood account, and (3) internal evidence of the connection between the Genesis flood account and the tower of Babel.

External Evidence

There is a vast amount of external evidence that indicates that the Genesis flood was of a local nature and not a global one, including different writers throughout the centuries and science itself. Since external evidence is not the strongest evidence, this category will be fairly brief, even though a whole book could be devoted to this subject alone. Only one writer will be looked at and a few things that science says concerning the Genesis flood.

Josephus

Most people today who believe that a “global” flood view is correct are more than shocked to hear or even believe that anyone else thinks otherwise. It probably hits them even harder when they hear that a “global” view is more than likely a modern one and that a “local” view is an ancient one.

Josephus is well known for his writings, such as “Antiquities of the Jews” and “Wars of the Jews.” His writings have been extremely helpful concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, just as Jesus said would occur. His writings have even been considered “the most significant extra-biblical writings of the first century” (*The Complete works of Josephus*, trsl. William Whiston, pg. ix). In his writings “Antiquities of the Jews,” here is something that Josephus had written almost 2000 years ago, concerning the Genesis flood:

“Now all the writers of Barbarian [Greek] histories make mention of this flood and of this ark: among whom is Berosus the Chaldean... Hieronymous the Egyptian... Nicolaus of Damascus, in his ninety-sixth book, hath a particular relation about them, where he speaks thus: ‘There is a great mountain in Armenia, over Minyas, called Baris, upon which it is reported that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved; and that one who was carried in an ark came on shore upon top of it; and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses, the legislator of the Jews wrote’” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*: Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 6).

Now if Josephus, a Jew during the writings of the New Testament, believed in a global flood that destroyed everyone and everything on the planet, he would not have quoted Nicolaus of Damascus. He would most likely consider this writing incorrect, yet he quotes him. In this quote, it says that on this mountain in Armenia “many” had fled and that the ark came upon top of it. Now, Nicolaus does say things like “this might be the man,” so there seems to be some speculation. But Josephus does go on to say a couple more things that affirm a belief in a local flood. He says:

“Now the sons of Noah were three—Shem, Japheth, and Ham, born one hundred years before the Deluge. These first of all descended from the mountains into the plains, and fixed their habitation there; and persuaded others who were greatly afraid of the lower grounds on account of the flood, and so were very loath to come down from the higher places, to venture to follow their examples” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*: Book 1, Chapter 4, Section 1).

Josephus seemed to believe that other people were alive after the flood, because Noah's sons had to persuade others to go back down to the "lower grounds." But they were afraid because of what they had just witnessed. Let's look at one other excerpt from Josephus:

"Hereby Noah learned that the earth was become clear of the flood. So after he had stayed seven more days he sent the living creatures out of the ark; and both he and his family went out, when he also sacrificed to God, and feasted with his companions. However the Armenians call this place The Place Of Descent; for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shewn there by the inhabitants to this day" (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*: Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 5).

This is a very interesting point. Here is what Martin and Vaughn had to say concerning Josephus and his writings of the flood:

"Josephus...explains that the resting place [of the ark] was easily accessible—the locals show off the remnants. A few sentences down in his text..., Josephus quotes the Chaldean historian Berosus who writes "some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs" [(Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*: Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 6)]. This is quite a different view than global flood advocates present. Josephus' conception of the flood is important because he is a first century Jew who lived contemporary to the time of the writing of the New Testament. He gives us a glimpse into the accepted view of the flood in his day. Josephus' understanding of the flood is likely the common understanding among many if not all of the early Jewish Christians. The early church fathers relied heavily upon Josephus' history. Though they did not concern themselves with the issue of the scope of the flood, nothing they said about it contradicts Josephus' account" (Martin & Vaughn, *Beyond Creation Science*, pg 114).

Not only is his conception of the flood important because he was a first century Jew, it is important because of who he was.

"Josephus, born the son of a priest, was named Joseph ben Matthias.... Being of a priestly family and a descendant of the Hasmoneans, he was well educated and rose to a respected position in the Jewish community. After a short association with the Essenes..., he decided at the age of nineteen to join the Pharisees" (*The Complete works of Josephus*, trsl. William Whiston, pg. ix).

This is reminiscent of what Paul said to the Philippians concerning himself, "**5** *circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee*" (3:5). This is why Josephus' writings may be very valuable concerning the nature of the Genesis flood. He was well-educated Pharisee and was respected in the Jewish community. If he believed that the Genesis flood was of a local nature, it is more likely than not that the rest of the Jews contemporary to Josephus believed the same thing.

This is all not to show that this is what the Bible truly teaches, for we will get into what the Bible teaches in the section entitled "Internal Evidence." This is to merely show that the view of a "local" flood is not a modern one and could be the likely view of that time. Josephus, who was a Jew during the writings of the New Testament, seemed to hold this very view by what he had written.

Science

Besides writings such as Josephus, Science also shows that it had to have been of a local nature. Many people like to use science to prove a global flood. They like to use examples like climate change and the Grand Canyon being made from a huge amount of erosion. Although these ideas might seem plausible, science sheds light on much evidence that speaks to the contrary. A global view just has too many problems.

Before one delves into this though, what must be kept in mind is that no one must read or assume miracles into the text where it is not stated. Those who hold a “global” view have done this more than others. Here is something James Jordan wrote that gives a good example of this:

“A few moments’ meditation will show just how extraordinary it was. First, it involved a miracle for all the animals to come to Noah and enter the ark... Second, it involved a miracle for these animals to be at peace with one another... Third, feeding and caring for these animals involved some kind of miracle. It would not have been possible to carry on the Ark enough food to feed all these animals for a whole year... Thus, the exodus transition was accomplished by a whole series of miracles. While Noah and his family were sustained on the Ark, the angels were busy remaking the world. They were burying animals to make oil, and plants to make coal, and in many other ways preparing a new world for humanity” (Through New Eyes: Developing a Biblical View of the World, p. 173).

What Jordan has stated is exactly the thinking that most global-flood advocates possess. They have assumed miracles into the text that have not been stated. The Genesis flood event as a whole was a miracle. It can be seen in the text itself where miracles happened and where God had everything else happen through natural, logical causes. The text does not say a million miracles occurred. It seemed that many assume that to fit the beliefs that they already hold. The Bible student must not fit what the scriptures say to match his belief. It should be the other way around. Here is something Bernard Ramm had to say:

“The flood is recorded as a natural-supernatural occurrence. It does not appear as a pure and stupendous miracle. The natural and the supernatural work side by side and hand in hand. If one wishes to retain a universal flood, it must be understood that a series of stupendous miracles is required. Further, one cannot [play it] off with pious statements that God can do anything. We concur enthusiastically with Smith when he wrote: ‘That the Omnipotent could affect such a work [a universal flood], none can doubt; but we are not at liberty thus to invent miracles, and the narrative in the Book of Genesis plainly assigns two natural causes for the production of the diluvial waters.’ [Smith J.P., “On the Relation Between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science,” Appleton: New York, 1840, p.132]” (“The Christian View of Science and Scripture,” pp.165-166).

The Lord is capable of anything and can do anything He wishes. There is no questioning that. That is not the issue. What has been provided is what the issue is. There is no liberty given to invent miracles to make a certain idea fit. The scriptures are to be taken for what it says. When it states that a miracle has happened, then it did. Man cannot supply miracles to fit certain beliefs. It should be the other way around. Those who hold the local view are...

“Far more consistent and far more conservative in handling the physical events recorded in the flood account. They don’t engage in wild speculation about worldwide geophysical events. The local-flood view is actually conservative in handling the biblical text. It implies that, when the text says a miracle happened (e.g., God’s warning to Noah), a miracle happened. But where the text does not indicate a miracle, local-flood advocates do not assume a miracle” (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 127).

According to the global view, the entirety of planet earth was covered with water. By how much water this planet currently has, it would take about eight times that amount to cover the earth. This would be a miracle by act of another creation for this to occur, which the scriptures do not indicate. If this was the case though, water at its deepest would have to be around six miles high to cover all the mountains.

If this is true, think about the amount of pressure there would be. According to Bernard Ramm, ninety percent of marine life is within the first fifty fathoms. With this amount of pressure, they would have been smashed. If they hadn’t been killed by the pressure, the different fish would have died from the mixing of waters. The salt-water fish would have died from all the fresh-water, and all the fresh-water fish would have died from the salt-water being mixed in. Concerning pressure, think about what would

have happened to plant life as well, being more delicate than marine life. Here is what Ramm had to say concerning this issue:

"The result on plant life would have been equally devastating. Practically the entire world of plants would have perished under enormous pressure, the presence of salt water, and a year's soaking. Innumerable life cycles of plants and insects would have been interrupted and would have required a creative work almost as extensive as the original creation to restore the earth. No such destruction and no such re-creation is hinted at in the Scriptures. ... Getting rid of such a vast amount of water would have been as miraculous as providing it. If the entire world were under six miles of water, there would be no place for the water to drain off. Yet the record states that the water drained off with the help of the wind (Gen. 8:1). A local flood would readily account for this, but there is no answer if the entire world were under water" ("The Christian View of Science and Scripture," pp.165-166).

If one holds to a global view of the Genesis flood, many miracles must be assumed and inserted into the text, because the Genesis flood account does not provide any of these miracles. These examples given are very difficult to explain away. There are logical problems that arise as well that are fairly obvious but may never enter one's mind. Here are some examples that Martin and Vaughn gave:

"If the Genesis flood created the geologic column and radically reshaped the topography of the earth, why do we still have the same rivers in Mesopotamia that Genesis references? The Tigris and Euphrates have been known by those names since millennia before Christ. Would not a global flood, which lays down thousands of feet of strata around the world, obliterate those rivers we see referenced earlier in Genesis?

"How could one flood even sort out unique fossils to specific layers of strata? A worldwide flood which created the fossil record all at once would leave a chaotic mix of fossils throughout the entire geological column. Outside a few geological "hotspots," geologists find specific fossils in each layer of strata. Would one chaotic flood even place fossils neatly in order?

"If the fossil record is a result of the flood, then it means that the number of animals alive in Noah's day were vastly more than today. Noah was commanded to take a pair of every animal on board, which means a pair of all the animals documented in the fossil record (which are now extinct) on top of all the animals we are familiar with today! They would need food and water for these as well, dinosaurs and all."

And here are some other thoughts:

"Why would the ark land in the same part of the world after drifting on a worldwide ocean for many months? Noah appeared to find his world familiar after he landed. He certainly knew how to grow grapes after the flood [Genesis 9:20]. A local flood explains why the ark landed in the same part of the world Noah originally lived, i.e., somewhere in the Middle East.

"How could Noah fit all the species of animals from around the world into such a limited ark? Realize that he would also have to take the specific foods unique to each animal in amount that would have had to last the entire voyage. The hay required to feed one pair of elephants would have filled the entire ark. [Noah would have had to take enough food to last the entire voyage and also to last after the flood until re-vegetation had occurred.] Noah would also have to take water for after the rained stopped, at least. He could not have used the waters of the flood for drinking because it would be contaminated and briny. Consider what the water would be like with all of the violent churning/eroding action and death flood geologists maintain took place during the flood" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, 123-124).

As some believe that the "global" view has the most problems, like we have just seen, Stephen E. Jones, BSc believes that the "local" view has the least amount of problems:

"A local flood would avoid all the difficulties of a global...flood. For example, the water could drain away from a high local area like the plateau at the foothills of the...range, and there would be no reason why there would be a lot of sediment (since sediments accumulate downstream on the flats where water slows" ("CreationEvolutionDesign." http://creationevolutiondesign.blogspot.com/2006/04/re-what-is-your-view-of-noahacian_15.html).

There is a lot more evidence than what has just been seen that prove that the nature of the Genesis flood had to have been local and seems to contradict support for a global view. With a local view, the Genesis flood account is in harmony with the super-natural and the natural. Logic and science dictate that a local flood fits the context. It also shows that science and a local view of the flood go hand-in-hand. Since God is the creator of all things and God Himself saw everything that He made was good (Genesis 1:31) and science is the study of all things created, they should always go hand-in-hand. Where they do not seem to go hand-in-hand in the scriptures, the scripture say or indicate the occurrence of a miracle. There is not a reason for the invention or the assuming of miracles that were never stated or given.

Throughout the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, many examples are given of God carrying out His will through natural causes or using nature or people as His tool in executing His purpose. He can do this, because all things are His creation. There is no reason to believe that the Genesis flood account is any different.

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In the first study of the Genesis flood, the focus was on external evidence such as the writings of Josephus and some examples why science and a local view of the Genesis flood go hand-in-hand. In this study, the focus shall be on internal evidence. As we read through different passages in Genesis we will see many evidences that seem to indicate a "local" view, which have been dubbed "local indicators" by men like Martin and Vaughn. These indicators give rise to many problems to the global view of the Genesis flood

The Nephilim

One of these indicators can be seen in Genesis 6:1-4:

*"When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, **2** the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. **3** Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.' **4** The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown."*

Here is the first "local indicator"—the Nephilim. This name is also translated as "the Giants" in other translations like the KJV. In this passage "the sons of God" get mixed up with the daughters of a people called the "Nephilim." If the Genesis flood was of a global nature, no one except Noah and his family should have escaped. Yet, Joshua, Caleb, and the men with them saw a people called the "Nephilim" in the land of Canaan:

"And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who came from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them" (Numbers 13:33).

These Israelites saw the "Nephilim" or "the Giants." This is the same Hebrew word that is used in Genesis 6:4 for a certain "people." Numbers 13 indicates that the Nephilim must have been around for some time to be spread about as well, because they saw just one specific sect or group of the Nephilim—the sons of Anak. If all of the Nephilim happened to be in Canaan, then they would all be the sons of Anak, but Numbers 13:33 says, *"And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who came from the Nephilim)."* If all of the Nephilim came from Anak, why would Numbers 13:33 say that Anak came from the Nephilim? Anak came from the Nephilim, so the Israelites saw a sect or a group of the Nephilim—the offspring of Anak.

How could Anak have come from the Nephilim if the flood was of a global nature? Either Anak or his ancestors made it through or the Genesis flood was not global. Anak is never even mentioned until after the Exodus out of Egypt.

"If the Nephilim refer to some specific group of people separate from Noah's family, who lived both before and after the flood, then we have a real problem for a global flood at the outset. ...If the descendants of Anak came from the Nephilim and the Nephilim were distinct from Noah's family at the time of the flood, then the flood could not have been a global event that wiped out all human beings on planet Earth except Noah and his family" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 120).

For there to be a specific group of people before and after the flood is a serious problem for those who adamantly hold to a global flood view. Just as the scriptures suggest that a group of people existed on both sides of the flood, the scriptures also indicate that specific instruments and technologies existed on both sides of the flood.

Instruments & Technologies

Beginning in Genesis 4, specialization, different kinds of instruments, and technologies can already be seen. Specialization begins with Abel and Cain. Inventions and technologies are seen in Cain's descendants. Genesis 4:17-22 says:

17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. **18** To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. **19** And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. **20** Adah bore Jubal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. **21** His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. **22** Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah."

Genesis 4 says that Cain's descendants were fathers of many different instruments and contraptions years before the Genesis flood occurs. In the span of these genealogies, it took years in specialization and innovation to get to this point. There could have been so many inventions by this time that are not even given in the scriptures.

With this in mind, here is the problem: it does not seem possible for eight people (Noah and his family) to have carried all this information, skill, and knowledge of all the years of specialization and innovation before the Genesis flood to the generations after them. They would have had to have written everything down, like instruction manuals, learned every skill, and taken every invention up to that time onto the ark with them for themselves and their descendants after them, but the scriptures never indicate that this happened. In fact, one of the only specializations that is even mentioned after the flood, concerning the eight people of the ark, is Noah's knowledge and talent in planting. Genesis 9:20 says, "**20** Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard."

Unless miracles are invented and inserted into the text, logic dictates and basic economics suggest that the Genesis flood was of a local nature:

"With only eight people, these specialties would have been lost at the time of the flood. They would have then needed to be re-invented when the population recovered if that had been what happened, then the re-inventors would have been remembered as the fathers of these technologies and Cain's descendants would have been forgotten. The author of Genesis works from the assumption that musical instruments, metallurgy, etc. existed continuously from before the flood to his present day. ...This explains why there is no break in previously developed civilized technology at the time of the flood event. Basic economics points to a local flood" (Martin & Vaughn, *Beyond Creation Science*, pg. 121).

Genesis 7:20

Another "local indicator" that is found in Genesis 7:20, where it says, "**20** The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep." The first thing that must be considered was the measurement of cubits. There is much debate as to what the measurement of a cubit truly was, so it is very difficult to compare it to any modern measurements. Some believe that a cubit could have been the length of the average forearm, but that is too ambiguous. No matter how long some people may think the Biblical cubit may have been, no one seems to believe that a cubit is more than two feet in length. So no one seems to believe that fifteen cubits could be any higher than 30 feet. Now if the waters were no higher than 30 feet, how could it have covered the mountains?

In this verse, the word "mountains" is the Hebrew word "har." This word can also be translated as simply "hills." Because of what has been stated in this passage, there is no reason to believe that tall snow-covered peak mountains should be the correct translation for this verse. Verse 19 says, "And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered." The word for "mountains" in this verse is "har," the same Hebraic word found in the next verse—verse 20. Some versions have even translated "har" in verse 19 as "hills." The KJV version is one of them. Why call them "hills" in one verse, then, in the very next verse, call them "mountains"? Another commentator has noticed this case:

"The Hebrew word 'har,' translated 'mountains,' occurs 649 times in the Old Testament. In 212 instances, the word is translated 'hill' or 'hills' or 'hill country.' In Genesis, it is translated 'hill' in 10 out of 19 occurrences. Of course, 4 out of 9 times that it is translated as 'mountain'

is in the flood passage (the translators were wearing their global glasses when they did that translation!). In every instance in Genesis, the text could be translated 'hill.' Since no specific mountain range is mentioned in this verse, it is likely that the word refers to the hills that Noah could see" (Deem, "The Genesis Flood: Why The Bible Says It Must Be Local").

This is the problem with verse 20: since many have preconceived ideas of a global flood view, they believe that the waters had to have been about six miles deep. Because of this, verse 20 is sometimes altered to say "*The water rose more than twenty (or thirty) feet higher than the highest mountain.*" When one looks back at verse 20, it does not say that. Genesis 7:20 says, "*The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, **and** the mountains were covered.*" What has happened is that idea has been read into the text. Author David Snoke sees this problem as well:

"The passage says that the water rose only twenty feet, not six miles. For no reason other than to make sure there would be enough water for a global flood, this verse is frequently altered to 'the water rose to twenty feet higher than the highest mountains.' This latter reading is not the 'literal' reading; it is interpolated, that is, read in to the text" ([A Biblical Case for an Old Earth](#), pg. 165).

This is a serious problem, because this means that some translations render these passages to reflect a view that does not seem parallel with the rest of scripture. Others have noticed this problem as well.

"Starting in 1969, several new English translations mark a shift in translation of this passage which brings Genesis 7:20 in line with global-flood doctrine. For example, the NIV says, '*The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet*' (Genesis 7:20). Which it follows with the note: 'Or rose more than twenty feet, and the mountains were covered (NIV note on Gen. 7:20). Could it be that the meteoric rise of...global-flood doctrine since the 1961 publication of Whitcomb and Morris' *The Genesis Flood* altered modern Bible translation? This example raises the question as to what else in modern translations might be biased as a natural result of the prevalence of global-flood beliefs" (Martin & Vaughn, [Beyond Christian Science](#), pg. 122).

The correct translation of Genes 7:20 should most likely be "*The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, **and** the **hills** were covered.*" In this way, nothing bias has changed the intended message of the passage, and the Hebraic word "har" is still translated correctly and fits the context properly. If this idea and interpretation of the Genesis flood is kept in mind, it explains several things that the account says. Genesis 8:1 says:

"1 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. **2** The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, **3** and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, **4** and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. **5** And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen."

It takes time for water to recede during regular flood events. Think about the amount of time it would take for 30 feet of water to recede. It would take more than a year for more than six miles of water to subside. If the waters were more than six miles deep and the entire earth was covered, what good would it do for God to cause a wind to blow over the earth (Genesis 8:1)? Where would the water go? If it was only 30 feet deep, as Genesis 7:20 seems to indicate, God causing a wind to blow over the earth makes sense. The water would then have somewhere to go and would be gone in a year. Genesis 8:11 enforces this idea.

Genesis 8:4 & 11

Genesis 8:11 says, "*Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth.*" If one holds a global view, this verse can cause many problems. If the flood

waters were more than six miles deep, any existing olive tree would be crushed from the pressure of the deep waters. Others of a global view insist that an olive tree grew from a seed in just a few days. As we have seen before, unless miracles are assumed into the text, science says that this cannot be true:

“Olive trees are slow growing trees and do not grow from seed in a few days time. They are also notoriously sensitive to wet environments and only grow in arid climates. A seed would be destroyed by a year’s soaking in brine. A tree would have drowned or suffocated in a few days” (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Creation Science, 122).

For a seed or a tree to survive, it would take another miracle that is not stated in scripture. Again, this is assuming miracles into the text. Also, according to some, Genesis 8:4 teaches that the ark rested somewhere around the top of Mount Ararat. If this is true, there is another problem with this concerning olive trees. Deem said:

“If the ark had come to rest on the *top* of Mount Ararat, this would be at 17,000 foot elevation. Olive trees (and every other tree) do not grow at 17,000 feet. In fact, you will not find olive trees growing much above 5,000 feet. Therefore, we know from the Bible that the ark did not come to rest on or near the top of Mount Ararat, but probably somewhere on the foothills of the mountain” (“The Genesis Flood: Why The Bible Says It Must Be Local”).

The scriptures do not say where the olive leaf came from. It was just used as a sign, but if what Deem says is correct, the dove would have had to fly a very long ways away to find that olive leaf. Would there not have been something else it could have grabbed in the span of that distance? On top of that, do doves even normally fly that high? Overall, this points to the ark being closer to the ground, not six miles high. This is not to say that this proves a local-flood view, but with this view, the existence of an olive tree is far more likely. If the nature of the Genesis flood was local, it makes perfect sense how an olive tree survived in order to provide a sign for Noah and where the ark most likely had landed—the foothills of Ararat opposed to the top of Mount Ararat.

The Hebrew Term “Erets”

If one reads the account of the Genesis Flood with how it has been translated for us in English, it looks like the Bible does teach that the flood was of a global nature. On the surface, any proof of a local flood seems puny, but one thing a Bible student must always do is compare scripture with scripture. This is vital to Scripture interpretation.

Various times in the Genesis Flood account, the word “earth” can be seen. Many assume that the word “earth” means literally that. In many passages, the word “earth” is the Hebrew word “erets” (eh’-rets), which is usually translated as “land.” This is very important:

“This word carries no inherent global or spherical connotation in Hebrew. ‘Erets’ is translated as ‘land’ in the Old Testament over a thousand times. It is also repeatedly translated as ‘country’ or ‘ground.’ The major usage of ‘erets’ in the Old Testament refers to a local region of land” (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, 130).

Hebrew scholar Gleason Archer had this to say concerning the term “erets:”

“In explanation of this assertion [that the flood was local, not global] it needs to be pointed out that the Hebrew ‘eres,’ translated consistently as “earth” in our English Bibles is also the word for ‘land’ (e.g. the ‘land’ of Israel, the ‘land’ of Egypt). There is another term, ‘tebel,’ which means the whole expanse of the earth, or the earth as a whole. Nowhere does ‘tebel’ occur in this account, but only ‘eres,’ in all the statements which sound quite universal in the English Bible (A Survey Of Old Testament Introduction p. 210). [Archer’s quote references the same “erets” even though there is a slight variation in English spelling.]

“Tebel” (tay-bale’) refers to “the earth; by extension the globe; by implication its inhabitants.” This word is found about 36 times in the Old Testament scriptures. For Example:

2 Samuel 22:16 says, *"Then the channels of the sea were seen; the foundations of the world [tebel] were laid bare, at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils."*

There are other passages that use both "erets" and "tebel," indicating different ideas or things:

1 Chronicles 16:30 says, *"Tremble before him, all the earth [erets]; yes, the world [tebel] is established; it shall never be moved."*

Job 34:13 says, *"Who gave him charge over the earth [erets], and who laid on him the whole world [tebel]?"*

There are many other passages that indicate these same ideas, and other writers and scholars have noticed this as well:

"There is a Hebrew word that *always* refers to the entire earth or the entire inhabited earth. The word is *tebel* (Strong's H8398). Curiously, this word is *never* used to describe the flood" (Deem, "The Genesis Flood: Why The Bible Says It Must Be Local").

Just as Rich Deem has pointed out, the Hebrew word "tebel" never appears in the Genesis Flood account. In fact, it never appears until 1 Samuel. If the nature of the Genesis Flood was global, it would have been more likely that the writer of the account would have used "tebel" to describe how the whole expanse of the whole world was deluged with water, but he does not. Instead, the word "erets" is used throughout the Genesis Flood account, which, as has been stated before, refers to "land" or a more specific region of land.

It is true that "erets" has been translated as "earth" many times in the Old Testament Scriptures, even though it is usually translated as "land." In any case, it all depends on the immediate context. As has been established through this study so far, whether this Hebrew word "erets" should be translated as "earth," there are many indications and evidences that the nature of the Genesis Flood does not seem to be a global one. It all seems to indicate a local nature, even more so as this study continues.

Contextually, for "erets" to be translated as the whole earth does have its problems. Being another local indicator, one problem is found in Genesis 8:6-7 & 13-14. Those passages say:

"6 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made 7 and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. 8 Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. 13 In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. 14 In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out."

In verse 7 & 13, it says that *"the waters were dried up from the earth [erets]."* In verse 14, it says that *"the earth [erets] had dried out."* If these verses are understood by what they say, the whole world seemed to have become a desert after the flood. This cannot be true, because life would not have gone on after the flood. Therefore, since that interpretation is obviously incorrect, the translation is incorrect. These passages clearly indicate a certain region of land. With "erets" translated as "land" in these passages, the meaning is clear and logical. It's all about the immediate context and Scripture interpreting Scripture.

This can be seen by looking at other passages in the Old Testament Scriptures. Genesis 12:1 says:

"Now the Lord said to Abram 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.'"

The words translated "country" and "land" in this passage are both the Hebrew word "erets." *"Get out of your country [erets], to a land [erets] that I will show you."* This verse from the ESV makes sense

and seems to be translated correctly. Now, if this Hebrew word "erets" had been translated to "earth," it would just get ridiculous. Abram would not have been expected to leave the Earth to go to another Earth. This verse is just to show how translations such as "land," "country," and "earth" are interchangeable.

There are many passages in the scriptures that speak on a global scale (mostly because of the translation) but were not of a global nature. Ezra 1:1-2 says:

"1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 2 'Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth [erets], and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.'"

The kingdom of Cyrus was not a global one. Concerning this verse, most agree that "erets" is used locally. Habakkuk 1:6 is another example:

"6 For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth [erets], to seize dwellings not their own."

"Consistent literalists" have a problem when it comes to passages such as Habakkuk 1:6. It does not seem possible that the Chaldeans could have marched over the "earth." The Chaldeans were not the only nation spoken about in this nature:

"Archaeology also teaches Babylon was a regional power. Babylon's conquest did not cover the entire globe, even though the Bible speaks 'globally' of the empire" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 132).

Jeremiah 47:2 says:

"Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, waters rise out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood; they shall overflow the land [erets] and all that is in it, the city and those who dwell within; then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land [erets] shall wail.'"

This is a very interesting passage. There are many passages in the scriptures that call non-covenant people the "sea." The "waters," indicating a specific part or group of the "sea," that were coming from the north are called "they." "They" were the armies coming against the Philistines. These "waters," or people, are being used as a tool of God for the destruction of the Philistines.

"Erets" has been translated as "land" both times that it appears in this passage. Even though the translators have translated "erets" as "earth" in other passages, they see that translating it as "earth" does not make any sense in this passage. They see that, contextually, the passage is speaking in a local nature. By translating "erets" as "land" both times in this passage, a clear parallel can be seen between Jeremiah 47 and the Genesis Flood account.

"The prophet is referring to the regional destruction of the philistines using flood imagery. It has nothing to do with the earth as a globe. Likewise, the term "earth" in Genesis 7 should not be read automatically as planet earth" (Martin & Vaughn 132).

Concerning the usage of "erets" in Old Testament prophecy, Isaiah 24:1-3 says:

"1 Behold, the Lord will empty the earth [erets] and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. 2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. 3 The earth [erets] shall be utterly empty and utterly plundered; for the Lord has spoken this word."

With the NKJ, verse one starts with "earth" and ends up with "land" in verse three. Other versions like the NIV have both words translated as "earth." As can be seen by the text, it refers to a certain locale, a city, actually. Verses 9-12 say:

"9 No more do they drink wine with singing; strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. 10 The wasted city is broken down; every house is shut up so that none can enter. 11 There is an outcry in the streets for lack of wine; all joy has grown dark; the gladness of the earth [erets] is banished. 12 Desolation is left in the city; the gates are battered into ruins."

The text speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. It has nothing to do with global events. It is of a local nature. If it concerned a global event, a different Hebrew word would most likely be used, such as "tebel." What is interesting about this passage is the "flood language" that is used to describe what is about to happen to Jerusalem. The very same language seen in the flood account is the same language used to describe the coming destruction on Jerusalem. Look at the connection between Genesis 7:11 and Isaiah 24:18:

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

"The windows from on high [or as the NIV states floodgates of the heavens] are opened, the foundations of the earth [erets] shake."

Face Of The Erets

All of this also applies to "erets" being used in other forms, such as "on the face of the earth [erets]." Genesis 41:56 says:

"The famine was over all the face of the earth [erets] and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians" (NKJV).

Most all agree that the famine spoken about in this account was not global. It was a local famine that affected Egypt and the region; yet it says, "The famine was over all the face of the earth [erets]." The context teaches otherwise.

Another interesting example is found in Numbers 22:5. It says:

"Then he [Balak] sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the river in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying: 'Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth [erets], and are settling next to me.'"

Were the children of Israel really covering the whole earth? No, they were limited to a particular region. This is another good example of how this kind of language was used in a limited context.

The most explicit use of flood language and imagery in a geographically limited context occurs in the book of Zephaniah. 1:2-3 says:

"I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth," declares the Lord. 3 'I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,' declares the Lord."

The context of Zephaniah makes it clear that the prophet is not referring to a global judgment. Like Isaiah, he uses global language identical to Genesis 7 in reference to the coming regional destruction of Judah in 586 B.C. This is yet another link between the flood and the 6th-century B.C. destruction of Jerusalem.

Conclusion

“Erets” can be translated as “earth,” but as has been seen in all these examples, its general usage is in relation to a specific region, e.g. “land” or “country.” Just as these passages indicate a certain region by its context, the Genesis flood account seems to indicate the same thing with its usage of “erets” and local indicators. With the continuing study of local indicators, Part III of this study will show how other accounts, such as the Babel account, indicate a flood of a local nature.

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The Connection Between The Genesis Flood & The Babel Account

In the last study, Part II, internal evidence in light of the Genesis Flood account was considered. In this study, more internal evidence will be considered but will be focused on the connection between the Genesis Flood account and the Babel account.

As will be seen, there is a very interesting connection between the Genesis Flood and Babel. These events are right next to each other. In chapters nine and ten, the descendants from Noah are given and how “the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood” (Genesis 10:32). Then, the text delves right into chapter 11 concerning Babel. Genesis 11:1-9 says:

"1 Now the whole earth [erets] had one language and the same words. 2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land [erets] of Shinar and settled there. 3 And they said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth [erets].' 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. 6 And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.' 8 So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth [erets], and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth [erets]. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth [erets]."

Now, there are a couple things that must be kept in mind as this study progresses and ideas are presented:

- (1) The same language that is used in the Genesis Flood account is the same language found in the Babel account. Phrases such as “the whole earth” and “over the face of the earth” are found in both accounts. As was shown above in Genesis 11:1-9, every time that the word “earth” is used, it is the Hebraic word “erets,” which, as was seen in the last study, usually refers to land or to a local region. This is also determined by the text, which the Genesis Flood account seems to indicate.
- (2) If this is the case, then the Babel account is also on a regional scale and only deals with a certain people. This will be seen later in this study. Just as the Genesis Flood account seems to indicate that Babel account is on a local scale, the Babel account does the very same thing for the Genesis Flood account. This will be seen as this study continues.

A Waterproofed Tower

Now, consider again Genesis 11. Verse 3 says:

"They said to each other, 'Come, let's make bricks and bake [fire] them thoroughly.' They used brick instead of stone, and tar instead of mortar" (NIV).

Think about what they were using to build this structure. Instead of using stone and mortar to build, they used supplies that were supposedly more expensive and difficult to acquire because of the area that they were in, according to some scholars. They were even baking the bricks. These things make for a structure that would be waterproof. Could there be another motive behind building this tower?

“These details indicate the builders of Babel tried to waterproof their structure. Unlike irregular stone, bricks fit closely. Unlike typical mud bricks, fired bricks are waterproof and maintain their integrity when wet. The builders used tar to waterproof their structure just as Noah used tar to waterproof the ark. The same ‘tar’ is used to waterproof the ark/basket used for Moses (Ex. 2:3). This suggests the city and Tower of Babel were constructed for the practical

purposes of creating immunity from God's judgment. They wanted protection from any future flood as they settled in the plain of Shinar" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 173).

Surprisingly enough, the idea that the builders of the Tower of Babel built the tower also in case of another flood is not a new idea.

"Somewhere in Babylonia the people built a great tower call the Tower of Babel, which you have probably heard about. It was more like a mountain than a tower... Some say the Tower of Babel and others like it were built so that the people might have a high place to which they could climb in case of another flood" (Hillyer, A Child's History Of The World, pg. 49).

Another external source that was considered in Part I of this study was the writings of Josephus. He said:

"Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God... He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower... It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water" (Josephus, Antiquities Of The Jews, Book 1, Chapter 4, Section 2-3).

Josephus gives some information that is not given in Genesis, but it is still very parallel with the account. Genesis 10:8-10 says that Nimrod began to be a mighty man on the earth [erets] and that he built Babel, and Genesis 11:3 says that the tower was built with brick instead of stone. It is very likely that Nimrod had this attitude towards God and got the people with him in his city to build this tower in case God had the land flooded again.

That Nimrod could be this kind of person seems fairly likely. Every time that a man was considered a "man of God" or that a man "walked with God," it is usually stated. This is not stated concerning Nimrod. Also, God did not seem concerned with Ham's line anyway. The line of Shem is the genealogy that Scriptures follow. This is the line that Abram came from. This might be so because the other two lines were not following the ways of God. God also did not seem to approve of the city of Babel that Nimrod and his people were building. Genesis 11:5-9 says:

*"5 And the Lord came down to see the **city and the tower**, which the children of man had built. 6 And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.' 8 So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth [erets], and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth [erets]. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth [erets]."*

The tower that was being built seemed to be the last straw, so God confused the language and dispersed the people of that city over the face of the land. So who were the people of this city exactly? Genesis 11:2 says that a people migrated eastward and came to the land of Shinar. Genesis 10:8-10 says that Nimrod built the city of Babel in the land of Shinar. Thus, the Scriptures indicate that the people's language that God confused was the language of Nimrod and those of his city, those who migrated to the east. This does not seem to be all the descendants of Noah, just a part or a sect.

If the tower was also being built in the event of another flood, this is another reason why God did what he did to the people of the city. These people could have possibly thought that they could escape God's wrath if it ever came in that fashion again. This alone would be enough for God to punish this people in this way.

This is another example that gives some credibility to the information that Josephus gave concerning the attitude of Nimrod—he thought that he could escape God’s wrath if it ever came in the fashion of a great flood again. If Nimrod was ever concerned with God’s will, he would have known that God would not have punished His people in that way again. Genesis 9:11-17 says:

"11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth [erets]. 12 And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13 I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth [erets]. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth [erets] and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth [erets]. 17 God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth [erets].'"

And God said in Genesis 8:21:

"21 I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done."

If one of the reasons to build the tower was to evade another possible flood like the Genesis flood, as Hillyer and Josephus have stated, the people of Babel would have had to build a tower more than 6 miles tall, according to global flood advocates. None of the scriptures indicate this nor is it possible that the people of Babel could have built a tower this high.

If the Genesis Flood was of a local nature, it then seems reasonable and plausible for the people of Babel to build a tower large and tall enough that everyone in the whole city could be inside and saved if another flood did happen to occur. If the flood waters of the Genesis account were no higher than three stories, then the people of Babel would have only had to build a large tower taller than three stories for there to be enough room for everyone plus storage for necessities above the waters. This alone would be a very large task and would take a long time, but this could very well have been their intent.

If Nimrod and the people of Babel knew that the flood waters were so high that the entire globe was engulfed by them, then they would know how high their tower would have had to be. Global-flood advocates estimate that the flood waters were about six miles high for the highest mountains to have been covered, as was seen in Part II of this study. If the tower had to be about six miles high, it does not seem possible that the tower would have even begun to be built, because this would have been an impossible task for them. The text says otherwise. God said in Genesis 11:6:

"6 And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.'

Even God seemed to think it was possible for them to complete this task and that nothing else would be impossible for them to a human extent. It seems much more reasonable and plausible that they could build a tower to save themselves from a local flood around the height of three stories than a tower taller than six miles high.

The Genealogy Of Genesis 11

Genesis 11 also indicates that the Genesis Flood was of a local nature. The Genealogy found in this account gives global-flood advocates a serious problem. Many assume that there had to be a huge gap of time between the flood and the Babel account, but this is simply not true. Most agree that the Tower of Babel event occurred between the flood and the birth of Abram. In Genesis 11, the genealogy from Noah’s son Shem to Abram is given:

"10 These are the generations of Shem. When Shem was 100 years old, he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. **12** When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. **14** When Shelah had lived 30 years, he fathered Eber. **16** When Eber had lived 34 years, he fathered Peleg. **18** When Peleg had lived 30 years, he fathered Reu. **20** When Reu had lived 32 years, he fathered Serug. **22** When Serug had lived 30 years, he fathered Nahor. **24** When Nahor had lived 29 years, he fathered Terah. **26** When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran" (vv. 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, & 26).

From these verses, the approximate span of time from the time of the Genesis Flood to the birth of Abram is given. It comes to a span of about 292 years. That does not seem like a long enough span of time for there to be a great number of people on the earth and a huge civilization of any kind by the time of Abram, but the Old Testament Scriptures indicate that there were a great number of peoples:

"When Abraham left Haran, about 367 years after the flood, according to a plain-literal reading of the genealogies, there were already numerous peoples with numerous national identities, some of whom had sold thousands of their own countrymen to Terah and Abram. Some of these servants in Abraham's household were brought from as far as 1000 miles away. Hagar came from Egypt (Gen. 16:1). Eliezer came from Damascus (Gen. 15:2)" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 178).

In Genesis 9:1, "God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth [erets].'" If God had told eight people to just physically reproduce, having destroyed all mankind, how were there that many people just 292 years later? From eight people to thousands of people, with national identities no less, in the time frame that has been given, seems to be stretching it a little, to say the least.

If there was 292 years between the Flood and Abram, where in this span of time did the Tower of Babel event occur? Many suggest that it occurred around the birth of Peleg because of a "division" on the earth that is spoken of in Genesis 10:25. It says:

"To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth [erets] was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan."

If this is the case and the Tower of Babel event occurred around the birth of Peleg, then the tower was being built roughly 101 years after the flood. If it was thought impossible for there to be so many people during the time of Abraham, it is definitely so concerning the Tower of Babel. The chronologies that are given in chapter 11 are clear and exact. Even one global-flood advocate said exactly that:

"The Language is clear that they are strict chronologies, especially because they give the age of the father at the birth of the next name in line" (Ham, answersingenesis.org).

In saying this, with the view that this commentator holds, the problem he has is "time:"

"If the flood destroyed absolutely all human life on planet Earth except the eight people of Noah's family, then how is it possible that there can be another huge civilization on earth within three generations of the flood? The common perception of Babel as a great civilization or repopulation of planet Earth to pre-flood levels is impossible, given human reproductive limits within that period of time. (This is roughly 100 years if Babel occurred at the birth of Peleg). Genesis lists sixty men in the generations before Peleg. Even if Shem, Japheth, and Ham had more sons than are listed, at most, only about a hundred men were possible by the birth of Peleg. The common explanation of Babel as a colossal event involving a massive civilization after the flood does not fit with a global flood. There were not enough people on planet Earth" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 176).

Another interesting point is Nimrod himself. Nimrod creates more problems for those of the global-flood view. Genesis 10:1, 6-8, & 10-12 says:

"1 These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. 6 The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. 8 Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. 10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and 12 Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city."

With a literal reading of this passage, Noah fathered Ham, Ham fathered Cush, and Cush fathered Nimrod. This makes Nimrod Noah's great-grandson. Not only was he involved in the construction of the city of Babel and its tower, but, according to Genesis 10:8-11, he also built seven other cities. With the amount of time between the time when there were only eight people left on the earth and Nimrod, where did all the people come from to build eight complete cities in the lifetime of Nimrod? Where did all those people come from? And what would have been the point to build that many cities if there were not enough people to even inhabit them? The global-flood advocate has a huge problem on his hands with this passage.

Another interesting point is what the Septuagint says concerning these chronologies. Some, in search of a way to explain the gap between the flood and tower, may see what the Septuagint has to say. The interesting thing about what the Septuagint says is this—the flood is placed some years before Methuselah dies. Global-flood advocates even acknowledge this:

"The Septuagint chronologies are demonstrably inflated, and contain the (obvious) error that Methuselah lived 17 years after the flood. The Masoretic Text preserves the correct chronology" (answersingenesis.org).

But in either text, global flood advocates have a problem. Could it be that the Septuagint is correct and supplies information that the Masoretic Text does not? In doing this, it only provides further proof that the Genesis Flood seems to be more likely of a local nature.

"Could it be that the Septuagint translators accepted a local flood that did not affect Methuselah? Those who believe in a global flood automatically assume the Septuagint should be dismissed rather than their global-flood doctrine. The irony is that the apostles used the Septuagint!" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 180).

In the Masoretic Text, the genealogies in Genesis 10 & 11 give global-flood advocates a problem, because it does not provide the time needed for the population at that time of Nimrod, the cities he built, and even the time of Abram. The Septuagint provides information that Methuselah lived beyond the Genesis flood event. In either text, problems are provided for the global-flood view.

The Babel account provides too many problems for the global view of the Genesis Flood—the possible reasons for creating the tower, those who went to the land of Shinar, the genealogies of Genesis 10 & 11, and the existences of nations and thousands of people in the time of Nimrod and the time of Abram.

Nations

During the time of Nimrod and the beginning of his kingdom, some nations were just beginning. Genesis 10: 1, 6, & 13-20 says:

"1 These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. 6 The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. 13 Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14 Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim. 15 Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, 16 and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, 17 the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, 18 the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites

dispersed. 19 And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20 These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations."

The Philistines came from Casluhim who was Noah's great-grandson. Nimrod was Noah's great-grandson as well. Clans like the Amorites and the Jebusites came from Canaan who was Noah's grandson. All these different clans and nations were just beginning around the time of Nimrod and the building of his cities. Around this time, there might have been around 100 male family members, and this is certainly not enough people to build eight cities and a huge tower. Where did all the other people come from, especially the nationalities that are found in the Scriptures not long after Nimrod that are not even mentioned in the genealogy in Genesis 10. The Scriptures indicate that there were other people not of Noah's lineage after the time of the flood.

The Judgment On The City Of Babel

A question now arises. Since the Scriptures seem to indicate that there were other people on the earth that were not of Noah's lineage, why did God punish just the city of Babel? As has been seen through this study, the Scriptures do not indicate that all the people on the Earth were in Babel. This is assumed into the text. This means that it is very likely that there were other people throughout the land and that just those that were a part of the city were punished.

As was said earlier in this study, it is very probable that the mindset and intent of the people of Babel around the time of the building of the tower caused the judgment that befell them. This could be one probable cause, since the reason is not given. Genesis 11:5-6 says:

"5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. 6 And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.'"

Whoever or whatever kind of people were represented, the people of this city could speak the same language. Combined, they were a people that could do anything. Because of what they were doing and capable of doing, God decided to confuse their language and disperse them. Now if they were doing something good in the eyes of God, why would He prevent them from further good? This was a punishment for something that He didn't approve of. So what was the reason? As was said, it could be because of their mindset and intent around the time of the building of the tower.

Another view (and probably the most common) of this judgment on Babel was because they did not spread out over the earth after the flood. Genesis 9:1 says:

"And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth [erets].'"

As was stated earlier, the mainstream idea is that the Tower of Babel probably occurred about 101 years after the Genesis Flood, around the birth of Peleg because of a "division" on the earth that is spoken of in Genesis 10:25. If this is the case, there might have only been around 100 males at the most. Was God angry because various family members stayed together? Did God want every couple to move off? Or maybe every five people? These are very puzzling questions with no answers from the text. There is not a reason to believe that this is why God punished Babel. This just seems to be the only answer Global-Flood advocates have.

If this is the case, the Genesis 11:4-9 provides some other puzzling questions:

"4 Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth [erets].' 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. 6 And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language,

and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." 8 So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth [erets], and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth [erets]. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth [erets]."

This seems to be the common understanding: (1) all of Noah's descendants did not "fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1) but built Babel, (2) God came down in judgment against them by confusing their language and dispersing "them from there over the face of all the earth [erets]," and (3) by this being done by God, it affected the entire world, making it a global judgment. This would mean that Noah was also punished, for he would have still been alive around this time according to Genesis 9:28. This ideology provides many problems and odd questions.

If God punished the people of Babel because they did not fill the earth, why did God wait until they had already built the city and the tower? Genesis 11:5 says:

*"5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man **had built.**"*

The passage said that they had already built the city and the tower or maybe so much so that it was near completion. This is why God "came down" and said in verse 6:

"6 This is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them."

It is likely that they had built the city and the tower. Then, God "came down" to see and said that nothing would now be impossible for them, for what they had already accomplished. After God punished them, they left the city to no longer build on to it (v. 8). To build the city and the tower would have taken some time for all of this to have taken place. How long had they been a city before God punished them? If God had punished them for not filling the land, wouldn't God have done it when they had made the decision and began to build a city and a tower? If it had taken some years for the progress that the city of Babel had made, what all could have been occurring at the time of God's "visitation"?

The same question arises—since the Scriptures seem to indicate that there were other people on the earth that were not of Noah's lineage, why did God punish **just** the city of Babel? Some have brought up the idea that the understanding of the command "fill the earth [erets]" (Genesis 9:1) has been misinterpreted, thus veiling the probable answer to the question:

"Perhaps a better understanding is that God's command to Noah and his sons to 'fill the earth [erets]' (Genesis 9:1) involved, not mere biological reproduction and dispersion, but an evangelistic imperative as well. If that religious dimension exists in God's command to Noah and his sons after the flood, then we can see a spiritual reason for God's anger and judgment upon Babel. The family of Noah failed in their mission to spread the covenant faith and true worship of God to the peoples and culture around them much as Israel later failed in her evangelistic mission to the nations and peoples around her (Deuteronomy 4:6). The story of Babel is better understood within a covenant context. Rather than Noah's posterity (the people of God) promoting the true worship of God in the culture around them as God commanded them, to 'fill the earth [erets]' (Genesis 9:1), we now find them in the story of Babel engaging in the pagan religion common to ancient Mesopotamia" (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 177).

This could very well be the case. Wherever God's people were, they were to teach others of the one true God and what kind of people He wanted them to be. They also did this by example in leading the life of a child of God. Deuteronomy 4:5-8 says, Moses said:

"5 See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 6 Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? 8 And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?"

God's covenant people were to always spread word of the one true God and the covenant faith. Even Noah seemed to have done this. In the entire flood account, there does not seem to be any evidence given that he warned the other people around him of the imminent judgment about to befall them, but Peter does shed some light on this. 2 Peter 2:5 says:

"5 If He did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald [or preacher] of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly."

Noah was a preacher of righteousness, even though the Genesis account does not record this. This is most likely the same case with God's people that lived in Babel. God's people that lived in the city of Babel may have failed in their evangelistic mission and duty. Like most of the accounts of Israel failing in this way, it went hand-in-hand with their adultery in worshipping false idols or gods. When this happened, because of their apostasy, they were judged and punished. This means that Genesis 11 is very likely an account about apostasy. The reason that God always punished His covenant people, just like those of Babel, was because of their turning away from the one true God. This ideology is very parallel to the idea that Nimrod had turned against God, as was seen earlier. This is the same case for the Genesis Flood account. Genesis 6:1-5 says:

"1 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.' 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. 5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

God's people became involved with other people and cultures and became wicked. They became wicked because they turned from God. God punished those who apostatized. Just as God punished His covenant people that were in Babel, God punished His covenant people with a flood in the Genesis Flood account.

Conclusion

With all that has been presented and studied, the Scriptures seem to indicate that the flood written about in the Genesis account must be of a local nature. With this view, many problems that are presented for global-flood advocates have been eliminated. Many logical and scientific problems that have been presented over time are answered by a flood of a local/regional nature. The question of where all the people and the nationalities indicated in the Babel account came from is answered by a local flood view. It explains how and why Abraham's world looked the way it did.

With the knowledge that the flood was of a local nature, the genealogies presented in Genesis are no longer a problem. There is no reason to say that genealogies are incorrect or that not all of the genealogy is presented, even though most scholars and some global-flood advocates have even stated that they are true and precise. This view is also in tune with both the Masoretic text and the Septuagint anomaly concerning Methuselah living sometime after the time of the Genesis flood. It is also parallel with God's other judgments on His covenant people for their apostasy.

A couple of the epistles and gospel accounts mention the Genesis Flood and make connections between it and the Parousia of Christ. These are things that will be considered and studied in the next and final study of the Genesis Flood.

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The Genesis Flood & The Connection To The New Testament

In Part I, some external evidence was considered in light of the Genesis Flood. The writings of Josephus were considered. Modern science was also considered, even though an entire book could most likely be dedicated to this subject alone. In Part II, some internal evidence in the Genesis Flood account itself was considered. In Part III, the Genesis Flood account was considered in connection to the account of Babel. In all three studies, the evidence seems to indicate that the nature of the Genesis Flood was on a local/regional scale. If this is the case, what would this mean and how would this affect the New Testament Scriptures?

The Genesis Flood In The Gospel According To Matthew

In the Olivet Discourse, as it is called, Jesus said in Matthew 24:36-39:

"36 But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. 37 For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, 39 and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

Jesus is making a direct relation to the events leading up to the Genesis Flood and the event itself with the coming of the Son of Man. Before the flood came, people were carrying on like nothing was going to occur. They were unaware until the event actually occurred. It would be the very same way with that generation at the coming of the Son of Man, and Jesus said precisely which generation would see Him return. In Matthew 24:34, Jesus said:

*"34 Truly, I say to you, **this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.**"*

And in Matthew 16:27-28, Jesus said:

*"27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then He will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, **there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.**"*

The generation that existed at the time that Jesus spoke these words were to see the coming of the Son of Man; but as Jesus said in Matthew 24, they would not know when it would happen. Isolated, verses 36-39 only speak of the uncertainty of the "day and hour." As a whole, the context explains who in that generation would see the coming of the Son of Man. They did not have the "day and hour," but they had an approximate time span—one generation's time. The entire context must be considered for the proper interpretation and understanding. One must go back to Matthew 23:29-39, which says:

*"29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, 30 saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' 31 Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. 33 You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? 34 Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, 35 so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Truly, I say to you, **all these things will come upon this generation. 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!** How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would*

*not! **38** See, your house is left to you desolate. **39** For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'"*

When Jesus said, "For I tell you, you will not see Me again, until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'" (v. 39), whom was He addressing? He was addressing Jerusalem (v. 37). Jerusalem would say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" (v. 39), when they saw Him again. Jesus just stated who would see Him when He returned.

As Jesus was leaving the temple, His disciples:

*"Came to point out to Him the buildings of the temple. **2** But He answered them, 'You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down'" (Matthew 24:1b-2).*

As Jesus was leaving the temple, His disciples began to show Him the beauty of the temple, but Jesus was not finished. He was still thinking about Jerusalem and what would happen to her. Jesus tells them that it would all be thrown down. As they go to the Mount of Olives, the disciples must know when this would all happen, so in Matthew 24:3, the disciples asked:

"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?"

They asked for "the sign" for two things: (1) the coming of the Son of Man and (2) the close of the age. They asked for "the sign," implying one definite sign, because they knew that these two things would occur simultaneously. But why would they ask this question after Jesus had just lamented over Jerusalem and told of the destruction of the temple? Because the destruction of Jerusalem would occur at the coming of the Son of Man and would be the close of that age. This is exactly what the disciples had in mind when they asked Jesus for "the sign" when this would happen. Jesus gives them various signs of when the end of the age would be near—wars, tribulation, the abomination of desolation, etc. After all these things occurred:

*"The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **30** Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29b-30).*

Jesus gives them the signs to look for, but He could not give them to exact day or hour. Only the Father knew. Matthew 24:36-44 says:

*"**36** But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. **37** For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. **38** For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, **39** and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. **40** Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. **41** Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. **42** Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. **43** But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. **44** Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

Because they did not know the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44), the coming of the Son of Man would be just like the days of the Genesis Flood. Jesus gave His disciples everything they needed to know. Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed at the return of the Son of Man. This would be the close of the age. It would happen to that generation, and they had signs to realize when the end was near. This would make the nature of the Judgment local/regional. This is exactly why Jesus used Noah and the events of the Genesis Flood as an example. The Genesis Flood and the events that led up to it were parallel to what would happen concerning Christ's return in judgment.

“Erets” Greek Equivalent

Another parallel between the Genesis Flood account of the New Testament Scriptures is the language. In Part II of this study, the Hebraic word “erets” was presented as a Hebraic term usually used to refer to “land” or a “region” of land. In most cases, it is translated as “land” except in the Genesis Flood account, where the context alone seems to straighten out the problems that arise from “erets” being translated as “earth.” This is interesting, because it provides a different perspective on the fulfilled prophecy in the Old Testament Scriptures and has a profound impact on prophecy in the New Testament Scriptures. This is why:

“The Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word ‘erets’ is ‘ge.’ In fact, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX), uses ‘ge’ throughout the flood account, as well as all of the other instances of ‘erets’ in the Hebrew text. That means the same meaning of ‘erets’ applies also to the Greek word ‘ge’ throughout the entire New Testament” (Martin & Vaughn, Beyond Christian Science, pg. 132).

As was mentioned before, this is very interesting and profound, because the first century Christians used the Septuagint. If “ge” is the Greek equivalent to the Hebraic term “erets,” then “ge” was also used to refer to “land,” “country,” or a “region,” not only in the Old Testament Scriptures but also in the New Testament Scriptures. This is most likely the way the disciples/apostles thought of and used the term “ge” in the New Testament Scriptures. Scholars and authors are also recognizing this parallel. Author Samuel Frost said, concerning the Greek term “ge”:

“We maintain that the apostles’ understanding of ‘earth’ meant ‘the Land,’ more specifically, covenant Israel” (Misplaced Hope, pg. 209).

If this is truly the case, how does this affect the New Testament Scriptures? The connection between the Genesis Flood account and Matthew 23-24 has already been presented and has shown who would see the return of the Son of Man—those within the generation’s time span of Christ’s words. How does the local term “ge” affect what has already been presented in the Gospel account according to Matthew? Matthew 23:34-26 says:

***34** Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, **35** so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth [ge], from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. **36** Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.”*

Jesus said that all the righteous blood shed on the “earth,” from Abel to Zechariah would come upon that generation. If “earth,” the Greek term “ge,” meant “the land” and concerned God’s covenant people, then what Jesus said to the Jews of that generation becomes clearer. The first person within God’s covenant people to be murdered was Abel. He was murdered by his brother Cain, who was another person within God’s covenant people. Zechariah was also murdered by those within God’s covenant people. This does not mean that Zechariah was the last person to be killed within God’s covenant people. His was just the last of the righteous blood shed on the land.

God’s covenant people had not gone over the whole expanse of the earth. They had remained around one region of the earth. Within that region, God’s covenant people had murdered others within God’s covenant people—the prophets. The Jews of Christ’s generation were going to murder more of God’s covenant people. More righteous blood would be shed. They would do exactly as their fathers had done. This is exactly why Jesus told the Jews to fill up the measure of their fathers (v. 32). This is why all the righteous blood, from Abel to Zechariah, that had been shed on the land or within God’s covenant people would come upon the Jews of that generation that Christ was speaking to. This was the end of the line for physical covenant Israel. Christ would return in judgment upon that generation for filling up the measure of their fathers. Matthew 24:30 says:

"30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth [ge] will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

What must be remembered is that the apostles' understanding of the word "ge" was most likely "the land," more specifically God's covenant people. The word for "earth" in verse 30 is "ge," so it should most likely be translated as "land." In doing so, the passage is much clearer. Who were the tribes of the land? This is directly referring to the twelve tribes of Israel—God's covenant people. They were a wicked and perverse generation (Matthew 17:17) that would fill up the measure of their fathers (Matthew 23:32). They would be judged, and their inheritance would be taken away (Matthew 21:43). It would then be given to another "nation"—God's new covenant people, spiritual Israel, where there is neither Jew nor Greek (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).

In the days of Noah, when God's covenant people had become so wicked, He had to cleanse the land of them. In the first century, when God's covenant people had become so perverse and wicked (Matthew 17:17), so much so that everything that their fathers had done and that they would do could come upon them (Matthew 23:36), God had to cleanse the land of them and give their inheritance to another nation (Matthew 21:43).

All of these things are not only found in the Gospel according to Matthew, but also in the Gospel according to Luke.

The Genesis Flood In The Gospel According To Luke

In Luke 17:22-27, it says:

"22 And He [Jesus] said to the disciples, 'The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. **23** And they will say to you, "Look, there!" or "Look, here!" Do not go out or follow them. **24** For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. **25** But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. **26** Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. **27** They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.'"

The same concept found in Matthew 24 is found here in Luke 17. The coming of the Son of Man is parallel to the events of Noah and the Genesis Flood (vv. 26-27). But, Luke 17 gives an additional example of what the days of the Son of Man would be like. Verses 28-37 say:

"28 'Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, **29** but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— **30** so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. **31** On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. **32** Remember Lot's wife. **33** Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. **34** I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left. **35** There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.' **37** And they said to him, 'Where, Lord?' He said to them, 'Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.'"

The destruction of Sodom is recorded in Genesis 19. Everyone agrees that this judgment was of a local nature, so why does Jesus say that the destruction of Sodom is like "the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (v. 30)? Just as the Genesis Flood account (which the Scriptures seem to indicate was of a local nature) is parallel to the coming of the Son of Man, the destruction of Sodom (also being of a local nature) is parallel to "the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (v. 30). Thus, the coming of the Son of Man must be of a local nature.

In the Genesis Flood account, God's covenant people became wicked and were destroyed by an inescapable flood of judgment. When Jesus returned, God's covenant people, who became very wicked and perverse (Matthew 17:17), were destroyed by an inescapable flood of judgment. In Genesis 19, the city of Sodom was destroyed, not by water but by fire. When Jesus returned, the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, not by water but by fire. The immediate context demands a judgment of a local/regional nature. Verses 31-32 say:

*"31 On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back.
32 Remember Lot's wife."*

As Sodom was being destroyed, Lot and his family were fleeing, as they were instructed to do. They were commanded to escape for their lives and not turn back, but Lot's wife did not obey. Genesis 19:24-26 say:

*"24 Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven.
25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt."*

This is the same instruction that Jesus gave. On the day that the Son of Man was revealed, no one was to worry about things or possessions. They were to escape for their lives and to not turn back (vv. 31-32). If the day of the Son of Man was of a global nature, why would Jesus give them this instruction? Would it not be worthless? But, if the day of the Son of Man was of a local nature, Christ's instruction would be very important. Those who were righteous, the Christians, would then be able to flee and not turn back, just like Lot in Genesis 19. Jesus repeats this instruction to flee from the coming destruction on Jerusalem in the day that the son of Man is revealed in Luke 21:21-28:

"21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, 22 for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. 23 Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth [ge] and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 25 And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth [ge] distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Matthew 24:16-22 & 27 echoes exactly what is said in Luke 17 & 21 about fleeing the coming destruction at the coming of the Son of Man and ties it all together:

"16 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, 18 and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. 19 And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! 20 Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth [ge] [God's covenant people] will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and

they will gather his elect [God's new covenant people—spiritual Israel] from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

In the Genesis Flood account, God judged His covenant people but made a way of escape for the righteous—Noah and his family. In Genesis 19, God judged a wicked city but made a way of escape for the righteous—Lot and his family. During the destruction of Jerusalem on the day that the son of Man was revealed (Luke 17:30), God judged His covenant people and destroyed a wicked city but made a way of escape for the righteous—the Christians, the Bride of Christ, spiritual Israel. Thus, if the Genesis Flood account and Genesis 19 are both of a local/regional nature, as the Scriptures seem to indicate, then the coming of the Son of Man was also of a local/regional nature. This same picture is echoed by Peter.

The Genesis Flood Account In 2 Peter

At the beginning of 2 Peter 2, the stage is set for the false prophets and teachers and scoffers. Peter is warning and preparing the first century Christians for what they will have to endure during the last days (2 Peter 2:1 & 3:2-3). 2 Peter 2:1-3, 9-10, & 12-22 say:

*"1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will be false teachers among you**, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. 9 ...The Lord knows how...to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, 12 ...These, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, 13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. 14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! 15 Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, 16 but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. 17 These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. 18 For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. 20 For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. 21 For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 What the true proverb says has happened to them: 'The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.'"*

As one can see, this whole passage concerns the false prophets and teachers that would be among them and those who followed the false ones, and Peter said that there "will" be false prophets and teachers among them—the first century Christians (v. 1). In 2 Peter 3:1-7, Peter speaks of the scoffers that would also be among them in the last days:

*"1 This is now the second letter that **I am writing to you, beloved**. In both of them **I am stirring up your sincere mind** by way of reminder, 2 that **you should remember** the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, 3 knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. 4 They will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of*

creation.' **5** For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, **6** and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. **7** But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly."

Peter told the first century Christians that scoffers would also be among them. He tells them to remember that scoffers would come in the last days. When they saw the scoffers, it would be a sign for them; for it was a prediction (v. 2). Peter told the first century Christians these things, because they would be in the last days. They would see the coming of the Son of Man, and they needed to be prepared:

"14 Therefore, beloved, since **you are waiting for these**, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. **17** **You** therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability" (2 Peter 3:14 & 17).

With all of this in mind, it can be seen that Matthew, Luke, and Peter concur that the last days, the judgment, and the coming of the Son of Man would all occur in the first century; so how does Peter echo what Luke says concerning the Genesis Flood, Lot and Sodom, and the coming of the Son of Man? In 2 Peter 2:5-10a, within the passage concerning the false prophets and teachers that would be among the first century Christians, it says:

"5 If he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; **6** if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; **7** and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked **8** (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); **9** then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, **10** and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority."

In this passage, Peter explains that God saved Noah and his family's physical lives from the judgment upon the wicked in the land. He also explains how God saved Lot's physical life from the judgment on the wicked in Sodom. In both of these examples, the judgment on the wicked was physical and so was the rescuing of the righteous and godly. Peter is telling the first century Christians that if God physically passed judgment on a wicked people and physically saved His righteous, then, as Peter is indicating by the examples he used, then He will also rescue the righteous "from trials" (2 Peter 2:9). The godly or righteous that God would rescue from trials were the ones that were the recipients of this letter—the first century Christians that would see and live through the last days.

These were the true recipients of this letter and his first letter. Peter makes this clear. In 2 Peter 3:1-3, Peter says:

"1 **This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved.** In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, **2** that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, **3** knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires."

In Peter's second letter, he is reminding the recipients of the predictions of false prophets and teachers and scoffers. In his first letter, he blatantly states the recipients. In 1 Peter 1:1, he says:

"1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.**"

Peter also states that these “exiles of the dispersion” were going through trials. In 1 Peter 1:6-7, he says:

*“6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, **you have been grieved by various trials**, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

In this, they were being tested in the genuineness of their faith that they “may be found to result in praise and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,” which would happen at the last days.

The recipients have been identified, but what were the “trials”? Peter states that they had already been through various trials that tested the “genuineness” of their faith (1 Peter 1:6). Peter also stated that God then knows how to rescue the godly from their trials, just as He had for Lot and Noah (2 Peter 2:9). Where is this statement made? Right among the passages concerning the false prophets and teachers that would be among them, and after this—the scoffers. The exiles of the dispersion already had and were going to go through a lot of tests and trials, but Peter is encouraging them here. Just as God delivered Noah and Lot from wicked people and physically saved them from punishment, God would do the same for His people during the first century (2 Peter 2:5-10a).

What Peter said to the exiles of the dispersion is a confirmation of what Paul had already said to the Thessalonians. 2 Thessalonians 1:4-7a says:

*“4 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all **your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring**. 5 This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, **for which you are also suffering**— 6 since indeed God considers it just to **repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to grant relief to you who are afflicted** as well as to us.”*

Paul said that they would receive relief from their persecution and trials. Peter confirms that by saying that God would deliver them from their trials and punish the unrighteous. He would physically rescue them from judgment as He did Noah and Lot and punish the ungodly and unrighteous. The first-century Christians’ relief came at the destruction of Jerusalem when all those who afflicted and persecuted God’s people from Abel to the ones that Christ sent to them were destroyed and their house was left to them desolate (Matthew 23:29-39).

Through all of this, what is the result? Peter wrote two letters to the same people—the exiles of the dispersion, the first century Christians (1 Peter 1:1). In these letters, Peter is reminding these “exiles” of the false prophets and teachers and scoffers that would be among them as predicted (2 Peter 2:1; 2 Peter 3:1-3). They would come in the last days (2 Peter 3:3). Therefore, the first century Christians would see the last days. They were a part of that generation that Jesus spoke to that would not pass until all things were fulfilled (Matthew 24:34).

What 2 Peter 2-3 teaches is the very same thing that Jesus taught in Matthew 23-24 and Luke 17. The coming of the Son of Man in judgment would occur in that very generation that Jesus spoke to (Matthew 24:34 & 16:27-28). This was the same generation that would become exiles of the dispersion (1 Peter 1:1). They would have to go through various persecutions and trials (2 Thessalonians 1:4-7a & 1 Peter 1:6-7). Those that persecuted them and afflicted them would be punished physically just as the wicked that died in the judgment of the Genesis Flood and the wicked in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Peter 2:5-10a & 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7a). The wicked of that generation was that of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:36-37). They would fill up the measure of their fathers’ (Matthew 23:32). Everything that their fathers had done, including the killing of God’s people from Abel to the killing of the ones that Christ would send them would come upon that generation, and it did at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70—the end of a generation’s time from the words that Christ spoke of the city’s very demise (Matthew 23:34-39).

This is exactly why Jesus and Peter used the example of Lot and Sodom. Sodom was full of wickedness that tormented Lot's righteous soul (2 Peter 2:8). God destroyed ungodly Sodom but made a way of escape for the godly—Lot. Messengers told Lot and his family to leave. Thereafter, the city was turned to ashes. This city was made an example, as Peter says, for what would happen to the ungodly (2 Peter 2:6). This was a shadow of what would happen to the unrighteous city of Jerusalem. It was torn down and burned to ashes, and its inhabitants were destroyed. But God's righteous were physically delivered.

This is also why Jesus and Peter used the example of Noah and the flood. As seen through this study, the Scriptures indicate that the Genesis Flood was of a local nature. The land was filled with violence and wickedness. God destroyed the land's inhabitants but made a way of escape for the godly—Noah and his family. This was a shadow of what would happen in the land of Judea.

With the Genesis Flood account having a local nature, it affects the second coming of Christ in judgment as Jesus and Peter use it as a parallel to the judgment on Sodom and the second coming of Christ. Even though Scripture written in the first century gives enough evidence to provide a local, first-century coming of the son of Man in judgment (not including a good amount of external evidence), the Genesis Flood account used as a parallel only gives further proof of that paradigm.

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