

THE STORY OF THE DELUGE.

– GEN. 8:1-22. – JULY 21. –

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." – Gen. 6:8.

"HIGHER CRITICS" pick at and find fault with the record of the deluge given in Genesis, yet they are unable to gainsay the fact that there was a great deluge. They find its record written in all parts of the world, in some places indicated by the erosion of the rocks and the deposit of shells and gravel in high altitudes, and in other parts by immense alluvial deposits. Moreover, every nation and people throughout the world (the black race alone excepted) has its traditions and records of the great deluge and of Noah. The fact being so well authenticated, the critics have been obliged to content themselves with minor objections – finding fault with the Scriptural account of the Ark – considering it impossible that the flood should have been throughout the whole world, and probable that it was merely upon some portion of it.

"Higher critics," amongst theologians and schoolmen, are disposed to criticise the text and to claim that the Bible narrative gives evidence, as do other parts of Genesis, of the consolidation of two originally separate accounts, combining the features of both. Many of them are disposed to consider that the book of Genesis was written by Ezra only a few centuries before Christ, and claim that Ezra got his account from the Babylonians during the captivity, and that he merely attributed it to Moses to give it the greater force and reverence before the people. Other critics, however, are forced to admit that the Genesis accounts of the creation and of the flood are immensely superior, in order and in every detail, to any and all accounts ever found elsewhere; and that the reasonable theory would be that the ampler and clearer accounts of Genesis were the first written, and that the accounts of surrounding nations were written subsequently, – legends and

traditions. Prof. G. F. Wright says respecting the Babylonian records of the flood, which are meager indeed as compared to the Bible record: –

"It is proper to observe that the cuneiform tablets (in their account of the deluge, copied from Babylonian records of 1800 to 2000 years before Christ) combine in one account, and in substantially the same order as that of Genesis, both the elohistic and Jehovistic documents, supposed by many critics to have been united into one only after the exile. In this comparison, therefore, we have well-nigh scientific demonstration that these critics are wrong in their inferences from literary analysis. And," he adds, "the attempt to make out that there are two combined accounts of Genesis containing irreconcilable chronologies is little more than a gratuitous supposition, for they can readily enough be arranged in one continuous chronological scheme. While we need not **[R2842 : page 221]** maintain that science demonstrates the truth of the Biblical account, we can say that it presents no insuperable obstacle to the account when properly interpreted, while it does add plausibility to the study by bringing clearly before our minds a period of geological history since man came into the world, during which there was great instability of the continents and a succession of catastrophes, startling in their magnitude and short in their duration, which may well have culminated in the Noachian deluge."

One of the pronounced higher critics, President Harper, of the Chicago University, admits the general correctness of the Scriptural account of the deluge, viewed even from the hypercritical standpoint, saying: "We may regard the deluge as a historical fact, preserved in a multitude of forms; 'an actual and terrible event which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it. This cataclysm took place near the cradle of mankind, and previous to the separation of the

families from whom the principal races were to descend.' The deluge was a fact; it was a part of a great plan; its record, as handed down to us in the Hebrew Scriptures, is the one clear, distinct account, and when compared with the other accounts bears on its face indications of its divine origin."

To the Christian mind it is quite sufficient attestation to the truthfulness of the account of the deluge, as given in Genesis, that our Lord, the great Teacher, made no criticism of it, but by referring to it clearly implied its truthfulness and general correctness. And the evidence is still further strengthened by the fact that the Apostle Peter refers to it, and under the guidance of the holy spirit shows that it marked the close of the first dispensation, – as a great cataclysm of trouble, anarchy, symbolically called "fire," will mark the termination of the present dispensation, and prepare the way for the new era, called the new heavens and **[R2843 : page 221]** the new earth. – Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6,7.

Considering then that the truthfulness of the narrative is abundantly established, a first foundation for those who have the eye of faith and the ear of faith, we proceed to the examination of the lesson. Altho there are evidences that the whole world was at one time under water, pebbles and shells being found in the tops of the highest mountains in all parts of the world, nevertheless it would not be essential to the truth of the narrative that we should assume that the entire earth was covered with water in Noah's day; it may have been, or it may not have been. Apparently western Asia was the cradle of our race, and the whole world at that time was of very limited dimensions. That part of the world could very easily have been submerged, and again elevated, by forces not fully comprehended as yet by anyone, – for this is admitted to have occurred in various parts.

The Ark, according to the measurements given, was an immense structure, with a storage capacity probably at least treble that of any vessel afloat today. Its length, three hundred cubits, would be about five hundred feet; its width, fifty cubits, about eighty feet; its height, thirty cubits, about fifty feet. Let us compare these dimensions with those of a great vessel of today, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*. Its length is 648 feet; its breadth 65 feet; its depth 43 feet. We are to remember, however, that the Ark was not built for navigation, but merely as a float, like a covered raft; hence it needed not to be pointed at either end, and toward the bottom, as are modern ships. We are told that it had three floors; and when we estimate the difference as respects the width at bow and stern, its capacity would be at least twice as large as the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*; and when we omit the motive power and steering apparatus it would practically give it at least three or four times the storage capacity of the latter vessel.

This peculiar and enormous vessel had an immense cargo of animals, and food for their sustenance during the long period of confinement. Nor need we suppose that all the wild animals of today were wild and troublesome in the Ark; many may have become wild since then. The mention of animals taken into the Ark as being "clean" and "unclean" would rather seem to refer specially to the useful animals, as for instance, the cow and the sheep are clean – proper for human food, as provided by Jewish law, while the horse and the dog would be amongst the unclean, unsuitable for food, but nevertheless useful servants of mankind.

Scientists have indulged in amusement as respects the poor ventilation, claiming that the Ark had only one little window, one cubit, twenty inches square; but rather we should understand that this window, twenty inches high, extended around the Ark on all sides under the eaves. The particulars are not given us, but from our standpoint Noah and his sons, the contractors for the building of the Ark, were not stupid men, only one degree above the

monkey, but men of good mind, only a few degrees below the perfect man, as they had maintained to a considerable degree the original image of God, conferred upon Adam and transmitted by him. It was not many centuries after the construction of the Ark that the great Pyramid of Egypt was built, which likewise gives abundant evidence of skill. We can reasonably suppose that the architects and builders of these were sufficiently skillful to know how to provide for the necessary ventilation. Indeed, the Great Pyramid was for a long time a marvel in respect to its ventilation, which later was found fully provided for.

Those who claim that evolution has been the process of mankind's development, find a serious obstacle to their theory in this record of the flood; – not only those who attempt to ignore the divine Creator, but those as well, who recognize Jehovah, and who claim, contrary to the Bible, that he has been developing mankind out of a brute stock. It goes against all evolution theories to claim that the race of Adam became so grossly corrupt that it was just and proper that it should be blotted out of existence, only a remnant being carried over for a new start. If Adam in Eden was but one remove above a monkey, what shall we say of the condition of the world of mankind after [R2843 : page 222] 1656 years, and the Lord's declaration respecting them, that instead of evolving into greatness and dignity, they had corrupted their way and were not fit to live?

SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MEN.

The Scriptural account of the condition of mankind previous to the flood, is that the earth was full of giants and full of violence, and the explanation of this condition of things is that the giants had been born as a result of marital union between a class called "sons of God" and certain "daughters of men." Commentators in general have, we believe, fallen into grievous error as respects the meaning of this statement, supposing it to signify that the

expression "daughters of men" refers to Cain's daughters, and that the so-called sons of God were the children of Seth. According to this claim, the wickedness of Cain descended to all of his daughters, and the supposed righteousness of Seth descended to all of his sons, for a certain time, and that the blending of these two families opened the flood-gates of wickedness. This supposition seems to us very untenable, for several reasons. First, there is nothing in the Scriptures respecting the posterity of Cain to imply that they were under any curse, because of their father's sin. To suppose such a law would be to suppose that it prevails still, and that heredity would entail upon the children of all murderers the guilt of their parents, and upon the children of all thieves, marauders and evil-doers the direct guilt of their parents. We admit that evil disposition is transmissible, and that to a certain extent it follows to the third and fourth generation, but we deny that there is any special curse of God after the fashion that is here claimed. Furthermore, according to this very theory, the sons of Seth retained his righteousness and favor with God for a time, and then suddenly lost it all – except Noah, – an unreasonable assumption. Furthermore, it would be difficult for those who take this position to explain to us why the evil seed of Cain intermarrying with themselves would not produce giants, and men of renown, and how a blending of these two families would produce that which neither of them could or did produce alone. The theory is lame and inconsistent in every particular.

The Apostle Peter gives the key to the real solution of the matter when, in reciting the events connected with the flood, he tells us of the fall of the angels at that time, who "in the days of Noah" "kept not their first estate." (1 Pet. 3:19,20.) Those angels who were permitted to have a measure of control of the fallen race, with a view to helping them as much as they might be able, and who, for the purpose of rendering such assistance to mankind, were permitted to appear in human form, became enamored of the human female, and preferred the human or animal form to

their own state as spirit beings. They thus left their original estate, as Jude also explains. (Jude 6.) These angels are the ones denominated "the sons of God," none of the human family being given that name after the fall. Adam, we are told, was originally a son of God (Luke 3:38), but none were so called subsequently until the Gospel age. We are told that at our Lord's first advent those who received him received privilege or liberty *to become the sons of God*. (John 1:12.) And so the Apostle declares respecting the Gospel Church, "Now are we the sons of God [prospectively], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," when perfected as sons, when our adoption shall be completed, as members of the body of Christ. (1 John 3:2; Rom. 8:17.) On the contrary, the term "sons of God" is a general name applied to the angels. – Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7.

From this standpoint the whole matter is clear – every feature of it. Mankind, impoverished in vitality by fifteen hundred years of toil in the condemned earth, battling for his bread with thorns and thistles, was considerably weaker than in his perfection, the image of God, before the dying process began; while the angels, assuming human bodies, would possess completeness of vitality and virility, and in consequence of this, the children born to them by the daughters of men would not only be physically giants in strength, but also mentally – as declared in the record, "men of renown" – superior to other men in qualities of cunning, skill and ingenuity. Thus the agencies which God had permitted for the benefit of mankind became a snare to his spiritual governors, and a test of their loyalty to righteousness, to purity, to fidelity to God. And to our understanding God foreknew, foresaw, this fall of "those angels which kept not their first estate," even as he foreknew the fall of our first parents in their trial in Eden. And from our standpoint both of these falls were permitted to give instructive lessons, useful not only to those more particularly involved, but to all of God's human creatures who should afterward be born, and ultimately be

brought to a knowledge of the truth, and additionally instructive to the holy angels who maintained their loyalty to God, to righteousness, to purity, to their first estate.

The Apostles Peter and Jude clearly mark out the punishment visited upon those "sons of God" who thus betrayed their trust and fell into sin, "leaving their own habitation," their own nature, and affiliating with the human nature. Their punishment has been their deprivation of all such liberties, and their separation from God and from the holy angels: and this restraint is called, by the Apostle, "chains of darkness," while the restrained ones themselves, instead of being recognized as "sons of God," or angels of light, were thenceforth known as "angels of darkness," "demons," "wicked spirits." Incidentally we [R2844 : page 222] remark that these are the "spirits in prison" mentioned by Peter (1 Pet. 3:19), and that altho restricted as respects their powers of fellowship with the holy angels, and with mankind, being no longer privileged to appear as men, they still seek human fellowship, endeavoring to gain possession of human beings who yield up their wills, and who are then said to be possessed of devils or "obsessed." It is but a preliminary step toward thus getting possession of the individual that these wicked spirits appeal to humanity to become their mediums (spirit mediums), through whom they to some extent communicate. And they personate dead human beings, because they know well that humanity would shun them and fear them if their real identity were discovered.*

*See *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism? Proofs that it is Demonism.* 10 cents, this office.

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"NOAH WAS PERFECT IN HIS GENERATION."

From this standpoint, which we hold is the only reasonable, consistent and Scriptural one, the reason and necessity for the

deluge is quite apparent. The reason is Scripturally given, that the whole world had become corrupt – the original Adamic stock had become confused and intermixed with another life. The divine purpose of redemption, blessing and *restitution* was confined to Adam and his family; that as by one man's disobedience sin came into the world, even so through the obedience of one many may be justified to life. Altho foreknowing the condition of things God made no provision for the mixed progeny of the angels – that was out of his order, out of harmony with his arrangement, and hence as soon as it had demonstrated itself and taught its lesson the flood swept all away, except the one family of Noah, of whom it is declared, "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation." (Gen. 6:9.) Not a perfect man, for he was a fallen man, as were all of Adam's children, but he was perfect in his *generation* – he was not of the mixed seed, he was pure Adamic stock. The Hebrew word here rendered *generation* is *toledaw* and signifies *descent, family*.

The lesson taught by this failure of the angels and its result to mankind was that any deviation from the divine plan and arrangement would work injury instead of good to those participating in, as well as to those affected by it. The angels who fell from their noble work and condition, and became groveling and sensual, manifested clearly in their own course the downward tendency of all transgressions of the divine law. Then their children, who might have been expected to be brilliant, talented, able, and who were all these in many respects ("men of renown") possessed their abilities in connection with a sinful and alienated condition; and it was proper that both angels and men should see that the greater the ability possessed, out of harmony with the divine arrangement, the greater would be the injury instead of blessing which would result. Thus we see that these renowned men, with their great abilities, physical and mental, tended not to the promotion of godliness, peace, joy, happiness in the world; but to strife, to oppression, to violence.

It may be thought by some that we are straining the illustration, when we affirm that we see today in the world something that is in many respects analogous to this evil condition which led to the dissolution of the first world or dispensation; that we see that somewhat similar conditions producing somewhat similar evils are leading on rapidly to the great catastrophe with which "this present evil world" shall pass away, in a great commotion, symbolically called "fire" of anarchy, – giving place to the new order, the Millennial Kingdom. The analogy is as between humanity and the new creatures in Christ, who are Scripturally called "the sons of God." The influence of these sons of God upon the world of mankind should be instructive, elevating, helpful, showing forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, – transformed by the renewing of their minds, etc., they should be letting their light so shine before men that men would see their good works and glorify the Father in heaven. But the influence of mankind upon the Church seems to have been stronger than the influence of the new creatures upon mankind – not in all cases, but in some cases, just as it was with the angels. The sons of God (the Church), enlightened beyond their fallen and unregenerate neighbors, are men of renown, and the civilized world of today, Christendom, represents the influence of this combination of the spiritual with the natural in Babylon – Confusion. It has lifted up humanity wherever it has gone; it has sharpened, it has broadened, it has civilized; but instead of this combination working for the highest benefit of mankind in all cases, we find, rather, that the tendency is to combine the higher intelligence with human selfishness, and the result of this union is the bringing forth of giants in the earth, – corporative giants – which very shortly will give mankind a great deal of trouble and fill the earth with violence.

Are not the trusts and combines, now rapidly developing throughout the world, the offspring of this union of heavenly light

and intelligence with the selfish depravity of the fallen race? and what hope can mankind have when once these giants have reached their growth and strength, and when their necessities combined with their selfishness, shall influence them to exert their power in the world? Will it not lead to violence? Will it not bring about the time of trouble which Scripturally is described as being a period when "every man's hand will be against his neighbor" – when selfishness will be in control in every direction and amongst all classes except those who, like Noah and his family, are in the Ark of safety – under the Lord's special and protecting care? We would not press the figure too far, but we do see some analogy as between the end of the first world or dispensation and the end of the present dispensation, the second world.

The printed lesson deals particularly with the going forth of Noah, his thankfulness to God, his worship, as expressed in the building of the altar, and the offering of the sacrifice, typifying man's reliance upon God and the great sacrifice for sin securing the return of divine favor which would be accomplished in due time by Messiah. The offering was accepted by the Lord, who declared that the earth should nevermore be visited by such a catastrophe, and that nevermore should every living thing be smitten; and in this we see another evidence that the coming trouble will not destroy all human life, altho it is represented symbolically as fire: the fire of that day will burn against all wickedness, against all sin, to destroy it root and branch, yet the Lord, through the Prophet, declares that after the fire of his anger shall have burned in fierceness against the world of mankind, he will subsequently turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent – thus indicating that while the symbolical fire of that day will destroy the institutions, arrangements, peculiar to this time, it will not destroy all the people, but prepare them for the reception of the Lord's message of favor and blessing, for it is

written, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth
the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." – Zeph.
3:8,9; Isa. 26:9.
