

**Scripture Reading: Genesis 7:11 – 8:3**

**“In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark-- 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. 16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in. 17 Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.”18 The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. 23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.**

**Genesis 8:1 “1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. 2 The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. 3 And the waters receded continually from the earth.”**

## **"The Waters Prevailed Upon the Earth"**

**This morning I read some extra verses to remind us of the context, but our focus today will be on the waters that prevailed upon the earth and what this means for us today.**

**When last we visited the Book of Beginnings we saw the many details, given over and over, about how Noah and his family, along with the animals and birds and creeping things entered the Ark.**

- **Now our account draws back to show us the bigger picture of how God was going to judge man and the rest of His creation with water!**

**I don't think it would be much of a surprise to hear me say that water is a BIG subject in the Bible: You can find over 500 passages that speak of water or waters.... Can you think of some examples?**

**So this morning I want us to see how our text takes us back to the creation itself and also forward to our salvation as we consider these prevailing waters!**

**We have already seen the sinfulness of sin in these early chapters of Genesis and now God has decided it is time to judge man and the world he had been given dominion over...**

- **Not a final judgment as we will see again next week when Jehovah remembers Noah and all the living things with him on the Ark!**

**Verse seventeen of our text gives us a quick summary and then the details are fleshed out in the next few verses:**

**17 “Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.”**

**We see the flood coming upon the earth, the Ark being lifted up and then the waters covering the whole earth.**

- **We should note that this was the state of the earth before God put the seas in their place and brought forth the dry land and filled it with life: In a sense, the Creation is undone!**

**We see here the third reference to the forty days of rain and I want to take a moment to consider the significance of that number... This is the first time it appears in the Scriptures and it will certainly not be the last and as we do a very quick summary, I think you can see that it usually refers to a time of judgment or testing... It is certainly a time of judgment here in our text and we will see another 40 days of waiting by Noah and his family on the other end of the flood.**

**In Genesis chapter fifty we will learn that the Egyptians used a forty day process to embalm the dead which Joseph had done with his father Jacob upon his death in Egypt. After the Exodus Moses goes up on the mountain with God for forty days of fasting and does so again after he pleads with God to spare the people who partied around the golden calf.**

**In Numbers chapter 13 we see the Jewish spies spending 40 days in the promised land and then in the next chapter God sentences that Generation to 40 years of wandering in the wilderness: One year for each day of their unfaithfulness. In I Samuel chapter 17 we see Goliath challenging the men of Israel for forty days and in I Kings Elijah spends forty days fleeing from Jezebel.**

**It is also interesting that we see 40 years of peace or rest in the Book of Judges FOUR different times and that the reigns of both King David and King Solomon were forty years.**

- **Of course with all of these events involving forty days or years it should not surprise us to see the same in the life of Jesus and in fact we do!**

**Jesus is baptized by John and immediately the Spirit drives Him into the wilderness for forty days!**

**After His resurrection we see Jesus spend 40 days with His disciples before His ascension into heaven.**

**The final occurrence of 40 years involves the judgment of the nation of Israel...**

**A time of judgment which I believe was prophesized by one of those 'strange' illustrated sermons that God had Ezekiel perform.**

**In Ezekiel chapter 4 we read this: 1 "You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. 2 Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. 3 Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel. 4 "Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. 5 For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. 6 And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year. 7 Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm shall be uncovered, and you shall prophesy against it."**

**Just as the spies were shown the Promised Land for 40 days and yet refused to believe and trust God, the nation of Israel had Jesus and those who came forth from the graves at His resurrection witnessing to them about their risen Messiah for 40 days.**

**What followed was the prophesied 40 years of continued rebellion, until the City of Jerusalem & the Temple were destroyed in AD 70 by a great Roman siege!**

- So God brought rain night and day for forty days to judge the earth!

We must also remember that the fountains of the deep were opened as well and thus it should not surprise us in verse 18 to see the waters prevailing...

18 “The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered.”

Three times, in very strong language we are told that the waters prevailed!

They prevailed greatly and increased.

They prevailed exceedingly on the earth covering all the high hills, and

They prevailed until they were 15 cubits, or almost 25 feet above the mountains!

- This was God’s judgment which He had promised and it did wipe out all things living on the earth save those on the Ark that moved about on the waters!

We see in the next two verses that the destruction was complete:

21 “And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died.”

This was the judgment upon man’s sin and it should remind us of what we meditated on at our Good Friday Service: The suffering of Jesus! As dramatic and chilling as this account of destruction is, we must remember that the sin of man against our Holy God could not be atoned for or satisfied even with the death of all things living in creation! As we will consider more at the Table this morning, it is only through the sacrifice of the Son of God, Jesus, that we can be truly washed clean!

- Well, this was obviously a major event in the history of the world!

Thus it should not surprise us to see evidence of this flood recorded in the various histories that we see around the world and in the geological record that comes down to us today.

- And this is exactly what we do see, if we are honest!

Now of course the skeptics will say that we have neither, but the reality is that such evidence is abundant and of course it is quite an embarrassment for them!

Dr. John Morris relates that he found some 200 accounts in various writings and reports from around the world about a great flood and all of them had some or all of the major elements of the Genesis account.

Now of course if you go to secular sources like today’s Wikipedia they will say all of these are just myths...

- But even the most hardened anthropologists know that cultural myths almost always have their basis in some true historic event.
- In this case, we don’t have to guess what that event was because we have the eye witness account given by the God Who was there: An account of just what happened and why!

The strength of the language used here to describe the prevailing waters and the scope of the great flood would also require that we see much evidence of the flood around the world today...

- And again that is just what honest observation reveals.

I am not going to spend time this morning going over all of the various evidences that we have today, which grow with each passing year *[though I would talk at great length with anyone who is interested!]*

But I do want to again address the basic question of how our presuppositions impact our use of facts or evidences! *[Explain presuppositions to the younger children]*

On the one hand I accept the Bible as the Word of God and thus I accept this account of a worldwide flood about 4,500 years ago as true history. On the other hand a person who rejects God and His Word might take something like what is described in the National Geographic series on how the earth was formed as real history believing that chance and natural forces gave us what we see today over billions of years.

- Now it is important to see that NEITHER of us got up one morning and went out to look at the world and said WOW, this is what has to be true!

Each of us makes a moral decision to believe or not believe that God exists and has spoken to man...

- And that moral choice will impact what we see in the world!

If you go to a secular geology book they will present lots of ‘evidence’ for an old earth, from dating methods to fossil deposits and geological deposits. They will largely overlook or explain away any observations that do not fit their world view.

If on the other hand you go to work done by Christian scientists you will see lots of ‘evidence’ for a young earth from dating methods to fossil deposits and geological deposits. They also have the temptation to largely overlook any observations that do not fit their world view!

Both groups have to evaluate the same geological strata and both have to explain the same fossils that are discovered. Their explanations are radically different NOT because they are looking at different facts, but because they are looking at them in different ways.*[example of Jeep tour in Sedona]*

Now of course we know who is going to win out in the end because only one of these views can be true, but it is important to remember how all this works so we don’t come to think that Christians must just believe and ignore the scientific evidences, which sadly has been what was often done in the past few hundred years.

- In that sense, we live in exciting times where the boldness of Christians has grown, which is a very good thing!

This has put the materialists on the defensive and brought exciting discoveries to the forefront.

The material that is available today to show evidence of the global flood described here in Genesis is almost overwhelming, as it should be.

This was a major event in the history of the world and as such we have a detailed account of it in the Word of God and should not be surprised to see a great deal of evidence of this event down to our very day!

And of course as we consider this event we know that it carries a great deal of spiritual significance as well.

- In fact it can be a bit surprising to see the significance placed on this judgment by water!

For example in the midst of what has become one of our favorite Psalms to sing, Psalm 104, which focuses on creation we see a reference to the great flood:

**Psalm 104: “5 You who laid the foundations of the earth, So that it should not be moved forever, 6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters stood above the mountains. 7 At Your rebuke they fled; At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. 8 They went up over the mountains; They went down into the valleys, To the place which You founded for them. 9 You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, that they may not return to cover the earth.”**

- **The Psalmist calls to remembrance this great judgment in the middle of a Psalm declaring the glories of God's creation and His care for His people!**

Perhaps the most surprising reference should be where the Apostle Peter uses these waters prevailing over the earth in judgment while lifting up the Ark in salvation as a glorious picture of our own baptism as he discusses our Christian walk. After giving practical instructions to masters, servants, husband & wives, Peter draws upon this account and brings it all together around a declaration of who we are as Christians...

- **And so in closing, I want us to see his mention of the Great Flood in the full context of what he is saying:**

**I Peter 3:8 "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." 13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him."**

**We see in the waters that prevailed upon the earth the judgment of God on the world of that day and Peter clearly teaches that it foreshadows the judgment of our sin that fell on Jesus.**

**And just as the Ark was carried above the waters saving those on board, so the resurrection of Jesus, into whom we were all baptized with water, now saves us: Completely and eternally!**

- **That is why we should heed Peter's call for right living!**

**Communion Meditation: Hebrews 10:**

**"15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. 19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."**