

Lesson 7

HOW MANY YEARS OF PREACHING - Gen. 6:3; 1 Pet. 3:20

On the first recorded occasion when God spoke to Noah with instructions for building the Ark, He referred to Noah's sons and their wives (Gen. 6:18). Yet his eldest son was only 100 years old when the flood came (Gen. 5:32; 7:6, 11). (Shem appears to have been the second son and was 2 years younger).

This does not allow for anything like the traditional 120 years of preaching and some other explanation must be sought for that period (Gen. 6:3). It may mean that God determined that at an appointed time He would destroy this world which rejected His way. It would be in 120 years time, allowing them to fill up the measure of their iniquity (compare Gen. 15:16).

The verses which follow show the development of their wickedness and God's choice of Noah. 20 years later the 3 sons are born – they grow up and marry. Finally the revelation is given to Noah and the preparation of the ark began in earnest.

SACRIFICIAL CODE

The Building of an Altar and the offering of burnt offerings (Gen. 8:20) indicate a sacrificial code. Design of the Altar, distinction between clean and unclean, the method of offering and the meaning of "burnt" offering are all implied long before the time of Moses (e.g. in the case of Cain and Abel, Noah and Abraham). Refer to "The Law of Moses" chapter 2.

EXTENT OF THE FLOOD

There are two views with regard to the extent of the Flood,

- (1) That it was confined to the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates.
- (2) That it was world-wide (based on Geological evidence and Fossil remains).

The Bible narrative requires that the flood should extend as far as man and animals had populated the earth. Everywhere there is much evidence that it could have been universal, and faith in the flood in no way conflicts with the existing evidence. "All flesh died in whose nostrils was the breath of life".

Peter in his second epistle (3:5-6) says; "By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. As the preceding verses refer to the creation in the beginning, it would seem that the "world that then was" was the created globe.

Reference could be made to various writings dealing with the flood:-

Whitcombe and Morris	"Genesis Flood"
Alfred Rehwinkel	" The Flood: In the Light of the Bible, Geology, and Archaeology"
Frederick Filby	" The Flood Reconsidered: A Review of the Evidences of Geology, Archaeology, Ancient Literature and the Bible"

TEACHING NOTES

1. Promote interest in the story of the Ark by referring to copious archaeological comments on the extent of the Flood, etc..
2. Master as many facts and figures as possible and check up on time periods, duration of the Flood, etc.
3. Turn to the N.T. references to drive home the important lessons of the Flood.
4. Highlight the character of Noah, his "favoured" treatment by the Lord because of his faith.