

THE BIBLICAL FLOOD

We are still in the book ^{of} Genesis and we ^{are} confronted by the narration in chapter 6, verses 1 to 4 that when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born unto them, the sons of God saw these daughters were fair and married as many as they chose.

Verse 3 states that the Lord said His spirit "shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Verse 4 states there were giants on earth in those days and mighty men of old and renown as result of children from the marriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men.

Despite the foregoing, verse 5 starts with displeasure of God with the wickedness of man on earth and his decision to destroy the world with flood. He ~~only~~ found Noah to be the only righteous man to be saved with his family.

The generations of Noah start with himself and his three sons before the flood. According to Genesis, chapter 6, verse 10, the sons were Shem,

Ham and Japheth. Chapter 7, verse 7 states that Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives were in the ark God asked him to build until the end of the flood which verse 24 states "prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."

Chapter 10 contains the generations of Noah after the flood detailing the generations of each of the three sons and how they were dispersed "in the days the earth was divided."

The last verse of this paragraph reads: "These are the family of sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood."

Before and after the flood there is no mention of any land by name Sumer in the Bible. Even Mesopotamia, which is Iraq, is not given the pride of place which it deserves as the fertile area between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, the area so germane to the bounding and development of Sumer in one of earliest known ^{ancient} colonial civilisations dating to about 4000 years before Christ took root - SUMERIAN EMPIRE - of which UR of the Chaldees, Abraham's birthplace -

was the richest city state and the capital.

Chapter 11, of Genesis, in verse 10 is the "fact" that the generations of Shem, Noah's first son, produced Abraham's grandfather, Nahor, who at the age of 29 ("nine and twenty") years gave birth to Terah, Abraham's father.

One has to be very painstaking to connect what we read in the Bible with historical records. For instance in the lineage of the generations of Noah in Genesis chapter 10, verse 8, Cush begat Nimrod, said to be a mighty one "in the earth". Verse 9 described him as "a mighty hunter before the Lord." And in verse 10 it is written that ~~at~~ "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Of the lands mentioned in verses 11 and 12 connected with Nimrod are Asshur, Nineveh, Rehoboth and Calah, ~~were connected.~~

The popular Tower of Babel was a real structure built by King Ur-Nammu who was the founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur. He also built the structure called Ziggurat which was compared to the Egyptian pyramids with a base 210 feet long and 138 feet wide. It was both a temple and fortress.

Erech also known as Uruk was an ancient Sumerian city, home of goddess Inanna and god Enki. Asshur was name of greatest Assyrian ancient god, self created father, and king of all other gods. Nineveh was an important ^{city} in Assyria.

The countries in existence ~~fertile area~~ in the fertile area then were: Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, Assyria, Akkad and Sumer. Sumer developed and prospered into many units in a period of about three thousand years. The principal seats of kings were Kish, Erech, Babylon, Lagash, Ur and Nippur. The most developed was Ur. The sacred city was Nippur, the centre of the revered god, Enlil, the god of air where all Sumerians regularly ~~went~~ to worship.

Among the many ^{myths} gods and goddesses of the Sumerians were, Kur, Ereshkigal, Enki, Ninurta, Inanna, Abzu, Utu, Anunnaki, Enkidu, Enkimdu, Lohar, Emesh and Enten.

There is no doubt that there was flood in that area, one time in history. Mount Ararat is existing testimony. But it was ^{NOT} a world wide occurrence. I went to see the mountain in 1964. It is located in

North east of Turkey, close to border with Iran and Armenia. There are many myths connected with the flood. The Babylonian version is based on the story of Utnapishtim in the EPIC OF GILGAMESH, one of the oldest epic in literature discovered first in the library of the King of Assyria, Assur-bani-pal (ASHURBANIPAL) on clay tablets (668-626 BC).

Gilgamesh was part-immortal King of Erech. When he was in difficulty when his tyrannical rule was challenged by the goddess Aruru. He went with determination to seek the secret of eternal life and found Utnapishtim, the only mortal that had ever escaped death. This old man told him (Gilgamesh) about a great flood that ~~he~~ destroyed his fellow. What saved him was a warning by the Babylonia god of wisdom EA who asked him to build an ark which floated for the period of the flood. But this was for seven days and seven nights.

Utnapishtim, ^{said} how the god, EA, helped him and his family to live on the island he met them and they were immortal. He learnt from the old man that only the gods could grant immortality which was their special gift. He told him that there was a special herb at the bottom of ^{the} sea that would restore his

youth. Gilgamesh went for the herb, got it, and on his way back to Erech, he stopped to rest and bathe in a spring. A snake saw the herb, where it was left and took it. After tasting it, the old skin went off and ^{he} became young again. Gilgamesh wept bitterly. But he learnt the lesson of the reality of human existence that no one could escape old age and death. He went to his Erech homeland where ^{he} died.

The Sumerians had their own legend of the flood in which Ziusudra was their Noah. There appears to be similarity with the Babylonian story. Though in their own (Sumerian) Utnapishtim was the builder of the ark.

In Hindu mythology, Manu was in the class of progenitors of mankind. All human beings living now descended from ^{the} seventh Manu who was saved by the Hindu supreme spirit (Brahman) went to him in form of a fish to warn him about the coming flood, and led him in his ship to a safe mooring in the mountains.

In Greek legend there is the DEUCALION'S FLOOD. Deucalion (Deukalion) was King of Phthia. When Zeus sent the flood,

Deucalion built a ship in which he and his wife were saved, and they were the only mortals left on earth.

There are other flood myths and legends from other parts of the world. They ^{are} all connected with some gods. But how it is Noah's flood that is recorded in the Bible is what will take us further in our search for who wrote the Bible. And why is it that the survivors of the flood and their generations are from one race of Hebrews, Jews and Israel?

At this stage it is pertinent to look beyond the myths, legends and the Bible for information about the flood. I bought a book fiftyfive years ago with the title THE MIRACLE OF MAN, described as "A Survey of humanity's upward March Throughout The Ages." It was written by Harold Wheeler, Hon. D. LITT., F.R.HIST.S reprinted in 1946 by ODHAMS PRESS LIMITED, LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C. 2.

I am not an academician or a person with any degree in any subject. As I mentioned earlier

my ^{deep} interest in reading started after I had finished reading the Bible in English and Yoruba at the age of fifteen and misgivings arose within me as to how the Old Testament thirty-nine books contents fit into what I read about Jesus Christ.

In the first place it was what I heard about Jesus Christ in my pre-school years when my elder sister used to take me to Sunday school that led to my precocious entry into reading the Bible because I decided to be like Jesus which got into my young ^{head} through the song starting with "MOFE KIN DABI JESU" in Yoruba. "I want to be like Jesus"

The flood, according to a historian, William Whiston, occurred on November 18, 2349 B.C. when the tail of a comet passed over the equator and caused a deluge of rain."

For all we have known about our planet earth, it has been established that the flood could never have, and can never cover or destroy ^{it} as stated in the Bible. The rainbow which is stated to be a reminder of a covenant with Noah and

The earth that God will not destroy the world with flood again. Floods still occur in many parts of the world till now.

It is popularly known that if you turn your back to the sun facing rain shower, you will see the rainbow. It is caused by the refraction and reflection of sunlight in minute water droplets. But those who still believe that rain comes from heaven, they accept the Bible story. Beyond the cloud there is no rain and there is no rainbow.

At the age of twelve or thirteen I had mastered the "art" of creating a small rainbow in the room or parlour. When the sun comes in through the window, a full glass of water placed on a white piece ^{of paper} will produce a strip of the rainbow on the paper behind the glass of water.

Genesis, chapter 9, verse 13 reads: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." Ezekiel, chapter 1, verse 28 reads: "As the appearance of bow that is in the cloud in the day of the rain, so was the appearance of

the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."

Revelation, the last book of the New Testament, Chapter 4, verse 3 reads: "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." In the same Revelation, Chapter 10, verse 1, there is this beautiful construction: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire!"

Beautiful construction I say, but it is ~~from~~ beauty from a heart that is in mental and spiritual wilderness.

The Genesis record refers to period after the flood, about 3000 years before Christ. Ezekiel lived during 6th century B.C. The Revelation was ascribed to John, a disciple of Christ in the 1st century after Christ was born. But some records say it was written by a prisoner of Rome on the Island of Patmos either as vision or dreams.