Biblical View of Postdiluvian World: Facts From History and Archaeology

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Abstract

Bible History makes provision for 6000 years of human history. It states that the first humans on earth were created by God in His image. They sinned by disobeying God's instruction and death which already had been pronouced as a the result of disobedience came into effect. Rebellion against God resulted in unimaginable evil and violence. Consequently, about 1500 years later, in the days of Noah, God sent a flood which engulfed the whole world; only Noah and his family survived including other creatures that entered the ark in pairs. It is the intention of this paper to present some facts from history and archaeology that lend credence to the biblical view of what transpired in antiquity especially after the deluge Herodotus, a Greek historian, visited Egypt some 2,500 years ago. He recorded some mind-boggling inventions he encountered. The children of Ham, Egypt, and the Mesopotamians had developed some technologies which modern scientific minds have not yet deciphered. The Carthaginians transversed the coasts of West Africa hunting for gold. From the records preserved by these men, there were humans living along the Atlantic Ocean coast in West Africa. About this period (500 BC) Greek philosophy emerged. Five centuries later, it would challenge some teachings of Christianity. It is the intention of this article to show that the rejection of God in antiquity led to the global deluge. The Bible unequivocally states that the world will fially be destroyed by fire.

Key words: Deluge, Antidiluvians, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Carthaginians of North Africa

Introduction

Quite a lot have happened in human history. It is difficult to record day by day events of the past 6000 years of world history. Generally, it is accepted that documented history has lasted only 6000 years (Hoeh: How Old is Man?) both the sacred writings (Scriptures) and some secular records reveal that there had been a period when some catastrophic event changed history. Survivors of the event were humbled by the experience but as time elapsed, succeeding generations assigned the catastrophe to myths and legend.

> *One of the most bizarre theories about this discrepancy between recorded history and mankind's real age is that the Earth suffers purposeful periodical devastations by a mysterious, irresistible force. Supposedly, after each catastrophic division of the World Ages, remnants of the human species slowly begin the long, laborious process of repopulating the world. After several generations of survivors have scratched out a bare existence, all memory of the catastrophic events sink to the level of mythology and Legend that will persist for the next few thousand years.(Goodasave 1978:57)*

Some historians of antiquity perceive of a period when some global catastrophes wiped out advanced civilizations. Such civilizations were credited to the lost world of the antediluvians. They assume that that era of world history was destroyed by some awful calamities elicited by volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and flood, the magnitude of which cannot be described.

The Scriptures state that the Flood was real; and that it covered the whole world. Only Noah and his three sons and wives survived. Various animals and birds were mysteriously directed into the ark (male and female). The preservation of the ark during that global storm (the force of the storm was so violent that the earth's surface was altered) was under the control of the mighty hand of God. Goodasave calls it, "mysterious, irresistible force" (ibid).

What today is known as hurricane, cannot be compared to the super storm that drowned the world in the days of Noah. After the flood, God used the sign of the rainbow to declare that the earth will no longer be submerged (**Gen.** 9:11). Noah and his family, including animals, birds and other creatures that sought refuge in the ark, spent one year floating on a boundless sea (**Gen. 8:13).**

The antediluvians were wicked. The wickedness spread throughout that world. Sometimes modern man may be tempted to conclude they were timid and uneducated. Both the sacred scriptures and archaeological discoveries disprove this illusion. The Scripture declares that the antediluvians were physically mighty, and in intellect, non-surpassing:

> The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown **Gen. 6:4.**

It would be unfair to assume that Adam and his generations spent all their life roaming the valleys of Tigris and Euphrates in the Middle East. God gave him and his descendants the whole world to "multiply and replenish".

This divine injunction did not restrict them to the Middle East. Moreover, Adam lived 930 years (Gen. 5:5) before he died. During this period, he must have visited the remotest part of the earth. Their means of transportation, in that world possibly could have been by great flying birds or giant animals such as the dinosaurs. Thousands of mighty men and their families, probably existed all over the world before Adam died. White observes that: "Notwithstanding the wickedness of the antediluvian world, that age was not, as has often been supposed, an era of ignorance and barbarism... They possessed great physical and mental strength, and their advantages for acquiring, both religious and scientific knowledge were unrivaled" (1952:82-3).

The Postdiluvian World

The Bible states that God intervened in history by calling Abraham out of his father's kindred in Ur of the Chaldees. Archaeological discoveries in Mesopotamia have lent credence to the historical records of the sacred Scriptures. The earliest known settlements of man go back to the valleys of Euphrates and Tigris rivers, Nile river and Indus. Of those three, (Euphrates and Tigris valleys) appear the oldest known settlement and the cradle of civilization.

Ur of the Chaldeans, Abraham's birth place, was discovered by archaeologist Charles Leonard Wooley and his team between 1922 and 1934 (Nichol 1976:103). Wooley and his team discovered that "the Ur of Abraham's time possessed a surprisingly high degree of civilization, and that its schools must have turned out first-class scholars. Further investigations revealed royal tombs - tombs laden with precious stones that dwarfed the riches excavated in the tomb of the great Egyptian king, Tutankhamen. "Kings and queens had been buried with all their attendants, bodyguards, singers, their chariots and animals, their furniture and jewelry. Also there came to light some of the most beautiful musical instruments, metalwork of superb craftsmanship, and inlaid work of high quality (Editors: Enclopedia Britannica).

The understanding by the early post diluvians that the dead were alive is attested to by the discovery that kings and queens were buried with their "bodyguards, singers, their chariots and animals" (McClung:1999). It is a shocking revelation, especially bearing in mind the fact that Noah and Shem were alive this period. The courts or palace attendants were buried alive with the deceased king or royal ones so that their services would continue in the supposed next world.

Gen. 2:16.

It is pertinent to note that the postdiluvians were aware of the flood story. Excavations made by Assyriologist George Smith in 1872 demonstrates this fact. Among the thousands of clay tables (Sumerian writings) unearthed and deciphered, came the exciting revelation of the deluge. The flood event had been assigned to legends. The flood story itself is part of an epic that depicted Gilgamesh as a great warrior who ventured out on a mission to discover the secret of eternal life. It was in the course of this adventure, that he met with the hero of the flood - Utnapishtim. It was Utnapishtim who narrated his encounter with the deluge (Hubber: 2022):

> Utnapishtim had been king of Shuruppak on the Euphrates when the gods decided to destroy all people as a punishment for their sins. Utnapishtim was advised to breakdown his house and build a ship, whose measurements were given to him, and to take all living creatures with him into it. He was, however, commanded to deceive his fellowmen by telling them that the god Marduk had cursed him, and that he could live no

> longer in Marduk's territory, but must sail away from it. After Utnapishtim had built the ship and loaded it with provisions, animals, and his family, he handed its navigation over to the skipper Puzur-Amurri. Immediately the flood began.
> The storm and flood were so tremendous that the god themselves were alarmed by the catastrophe that they had brought on the world... The great storm lasted for six days and six nights, and blotted out all living beings, who "returned to clay. " When Utnapishtim saw the immense destruction he knelt down and wept. After another day an island came into view, and the ship touched the peak of Mt. Nisir. Utnapishtim waited a week, and sent a dove out on the seventh day. The dove returned to him, since there was no resting place for it. Then he sent a swallow out with the same results. The third bird, a raven, did not return; then Utnapishtim, recognizing that the earth had dried up, left the ark and offered a sacrifice. The gods smelled the savor of the sacrifice with delight. Later they rewarded him with immortality and placed him among the gods.

Carefully studying and reviewing the flood story above as recorded by ancient Mesopotamians, the role played by Gilgamesh, the great hunter and inquirer, is similar to that of the Biblical Nimrod, who was a mighty hunter. Scripture declares Nimrod to be the first mighty man on earth after the flood **Gen. 10:8,9.** The beginning of his empire was in Mesopotamia.

Being the first mighty man on earth may not necessarily mean that he was a great warrior (he might have been), but that Nimrod or probably Gilgamesh, greatly influenced the political and economic life of post-flood Mesopotamians. He founded and sustained many cities. Archaeological discoveries from Tell al Mugayyar in Mesopotamia, according to Goodasave, (1978:53-4), reveal quite a lot:

> The Biblical Deluge seems to have affected
> every known culture on Earth.
> It took six years of intensive digging at Tell al Mugayyar
> to unearth some of these magnificent Sumerian temples.
> When the work was expanded,
> discoveries included ancient warehouses,

> workshops, courts of law and villas that actually
> compared favorably with some of the finest modern structures.
> They found evidence of the clockmaker's and lens maker's art,
> a good indication that the Sumerians had mastered a sophisticated system of optics and may have had astronomical telescopes.
> Completely intact vessels "of a marvelous design " were dug up.
> Golden goblets, mother- of-pearl mosaic tile
> flooring, precious gems and lapis lazuli were discovered within those gold, silver, bronze and ebony handcraft-laden ruins. Not even the fabulous tombs of Tutankhamen or Nefertiti in Egypt held such splendor and riches.

Charles Wooley and his team believed that the finds listed above dated back 2800 (ibid) According to Osgood (1981), the Biblical Deluge should be dated somewhere around 2304 BC. Mighty hunters like Nimrod would be exciting instruments in the hand of demons. Unless under the influence of the Holy Spirit, great men and women are in the danger of being enslaved by evil. Nimrod's greatness led him to rebel against God. He led the people to serve other gods. Utnapishtim, most probably, was Noah. The corrupt system of worship, most likely championed by Nimrod (Babylonian Gilgamesh), which had been in existence for centuries, led to the assigning of the flood events to the activities of gods.

Egypt - Inhabitants of the Nile Valley The Scripture avers that one of the sons of Noah, precisely Ham, gave birth to Cush and Nizraim (Egypt) Gen. 10:6. Between the flood and the development of the hieroglyphics style of writing and documentation in Egypt, an era of unwritten history had elapsed. Writing wasnot deemed necessary as the greatness of man in that period included exceptional retentive memory. Nimrod, who founded the cities of Mesopotamia, was himself a Hamite.

The ancient infrastructures that are still in display in the upper Nile valley are not just dumbfounding but intimidating to modem science and technology. It is believed that one king Menes (ascribed as the first king of Egypt) founded the city

of Memphis (Boddy-Evans 2020). King Menes created an artificial lake (ibid).

Could this Menes have been Nimrod himself? Or could this great king be one of his descendants? Archaeological finds have revealed that Egypt and Mesopotamia had the same scientific and technological knowledge. Early in history, there was an understanding and cooperation common to both regions (Finley 2023). Egypt, before the dynasties, was practically littered with temples, palaces, tombs, huge obelisks and pyramids.

Herodotus, a Greek historian of the 5th century BC, visited Egypt and commnted on what he observed, especially as it related to the ruins of Labyrinth. There were 3,000 spacious chambers, about 1,500 above the ground and the other 1,500 below the ground (Gillan:2020). The temple of karnak measured over 100 hectare. There were lakes and mountains inside the Karnak temple (Jarus: Karnak Temple). The intricacy and dexterity exhibited in the construction of the pyramids that still stand in awe of modem man, is a clear demonstration of the strength and wisdom that were at the disposal of humanity in antiquity.

When God created Adam and Eve, He did not leave them to roam about in ignorance. Both were acquainted with the operations of nature. The intellectual capacity that Adam possessed was akin to the angels (White 50-1).

Other Nations

The repopulation of the world after the flood was a divine act. Sometimes because of the humiliating extensiveness of the oceans, modern thinking finds it difficult to appreciate the fact that the ancient people had the strength and capacity to transverse the oceans. The Scripture makes it clear that, "the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city" **Gen. 11:8.** It was God who sustained and created the interest in Noah's descendants to spread to all the continents. It was a strategy adopted by God to discourage unity in sin.

Five hundred years before Christ, the Carthaginians of North Africa had ventured on the Atlantic Ocean as far as the coast of West Africa. A bronze tablet describing the voyage of Hanno, in the 5th century BC, was kept for posterity (Africa 265).

Hanno was a magistrate at Carthage when he set out on an expedition to locate an easy route to Africa. His chief objective was African gold. It had been rumoured that down the coast of West Africa, the precious stone could be obtained bybarter. Those Africans were rated as savages (ibid)

When Hanno and his team reached Bissagos Bay, they saw "nothing but forest and many fires kindled at night; and they heard the noise of cymbals, and drums, and the shouts of a great crowd' (Hanno: Periplus). The team's interpreter advised Hanno to move away from that part of the African coast. They arrived at a spot acknowledged today as Sierra Leone and explored an island full of savages; "most of them were women with hairy bodies (ibid). Hanno's expedition successfully returned to Carthage.

Africa insists that there must have been some contacts between the America and great thinkers in antiquity. Some of the voyages that bridged the old world and the new were not recorded. But the possibility remained unchallenged:

> The possibility of sailing across the Atlantic Ocean to Indiafascinated many ancient thinkers. In the age of Augustus, the Greek historian, Strabo suggested that a "new world", inhabited by men unlike the Mediterranean peoples, lay in the sea between Europe and India. The Roman philosopher, Seneca anticipated a time when the ocean would reveal the secrets and "new worlds" would replace Thule as the limit of the known world. The recurrence of such speculations suggests that some ancients may have caught a glimpse of the inhabitants of the new world.
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> In 62 BC, a Celtic chief handed over to the Romans some savages who had been cast ashore, presumably after crossing the Atlantic in a small craft. Learned men identified the dark strangers as "Indians" and suggested that they had come by a North-East Passage (in antiquity many thought the Caspian Sea was part of a North-East Passage to India). It is quite possible that the castaways were North American Indians (Africa 1969: 266).

Information documented in the sacred Scriptures and secular history consistently portrays man as heathenish. The devotion to idols dates back to the days of Noah. The more humans rejected the truth as revealed in the God of heaven, the more barbaric they became. They became violent and frustrated wherever they moved

to on the planet. Hanno spotted savages along the coast of West Africa five hundred years before Christ. Even among the learned of the Mediterranean region, basking in the presence of gods pervaded the daily life.

During this period of world history (about 500 BC), the Israelites were well acquainted with the greatness and the everlasting love of Jehovah. Unfortunately for the Israelite nation and the world in general, it failed woefully in its duty to enlighten the world.

God had planted Israel in the fertile crescent of the Middle East (a trade route that affected most of the world) so that the true knowledge of Jehovah could be made available to the gentiles (non-Israelites). Israel hoarded the knowledge and, by so doing, desecrated the rare privilege and brought disasters upon their nation. Israel has not, and may never recover from the effect of this failed mission.

The gentiles groped in the darkness of weird philosophies that chained them to evil spirits. Some of those philosophies have persisted till today. At the dawn of Christianity those philosophies eagerly waited to challenge and pollute the clear teachings of the scriptures. The philosophies were championed by the Greeks. Hellenistic civilization and culture were so strong that although the Romans politically defeated the Greeks, culturally the Greeks remained their superiors. Beginning from the fifth century BC, some Greek thinkers came up with some challenging ideas and explanations about the physical universe.

Hieraclitus of Ephesus believed the universe was put in place by a fiery element. According to him human souls were part of this development. This fiery, creative element, he argued, was "the all penetrating reason" (Walker 1970:4-5). Pythagoreans believed and propagated that human souls were fallen spirits chained in material bodies. Socrates taught that human actions were the most important things to deliberate upon. Those actions he called "natural virtues". They included, self-control, justice, prudence and courage (ibid).

Plato, a disciple of Socrates, believed that the soul existed before the body and therefore, was not affected by its decay since it did not need the body to exist (Newman 1958).

Epicurus believed that "mental bliss is the highest aim of man (Ajuazi: Epicurus). He condemned the fears of death and of gods. He insisted that such fears were baseless. Stoicism in its doctrine insisted on the brotherhood of all men no matter each person's status in life. The doctrines of Epicureanism and Stoicism influenced Roman thoughts so much so that many Roman emperors and officials of the state became adherents (Walker ibid).

Satan worked hard to lay siege for the advent of Christianity in the first century AD. The existence of the "soul" independent of the body is antibiblical. It is a doctrine that struggles to instill in man the idea that there is no dying; he passes on to bliss. This teaching posits that what perishes at death is the material body but the superior "soul" is indestructible. Satan presented this argument to Adam and Eve in Eden. Jesus responded to that assertion:

> You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies **(John 8:44).**

Apostle Paul in the first century AD, challenged some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens. He was shocked as he perceived that the city was practically littered with idols. Moved by the spirit, he presented Jesus and the resurrection. This teaching elicited some scornful statements from the philosophers: "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities - because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection" **Acts 17:16-18.**

Paul's encounter with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers could be the first recorded classic challenge against heathen philosophies before and during the era of Roman domination of the world.

Ancient people had been acquainted with the presence of the Almighty God. The physical universe impressed the Greeks so much that their philosophers spent so much time debating and writing on the all-pervading influence of the logos (the fiery element that played a great role in the fashioning of the cosmos). John in the gospel refers to the logos as the Word of God that finally was made flesh in the

person of Jesus (1:1,2,14). Instead of assigning the operations of the Logos to the One Eternal God, ancient philosophers conferred the greatness on their gods. This is why Paul declares thus:

> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse... Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles" Rom. 1:18-23.

Conclusion

The rejection of God in antiquity led to the destruction of the antediluvians. The same attitude led the postdiluvians in constructing the tower of Babel in Mesopotamia. The result was the subsequent confusion in languages and dispersion "over the face of all the earth" **Gen. 11:1-9.** As they scattered abroad, Satan used the opportunity to turn them into wild and brutal races. It was and has been the studied strategy of the Satan to influence mankind to reject the grace of God freely given in Jesus. Human beings sacrificed their children to pagan deities in a desperate effort to appease those lifeless gods. The price they paid for choosing to listen to the evil spirits.

It is easy to condemn men and women of antiquity for being so blind to reality, but the truth is that ungodliness is an element that quickly adjusts to the sophistication of every emerging generation. The present generation is under lock and key of falsehood. True science agrees with the Bible. Some archaeological discoveries have testified to the truth of the Holy Scriptures as the word of God.

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