

# Smoky Mountain Bible Institute

## History 104, 3000 to 2350BC

Breakout your maps and histories as we travel in a time machine of sorts to examine History & Geography through a biblical world view. Let's wrap up the antediluvian time frame from where we left off last month: 3000 BC to circa 2350 BC—the 650 years leading up to the worldwide Flood.

Let me first mention one of the books I plan on using to highlight some of the events in history: "The Timetables of History." Interestingly, this book has over 700 pages and covers the first 3000 years of history on 2 pages (it starts in 5000BC). It gets through the next 2000 years in 25 pages; the first 1000 years AD are covered in 16 pages; the remainder of the book (over 80%) is spent on the most recent 1000 years. I think this is an excellent representation of the amount of information that exists at different points in history—the further back you go, the sparser the information becomes.

However, we have some good information in Scripture covering this period of time. The world we observe today can provide clues about the pre-flood earth, but we must keep in mind that geographically speaking, the world was probably very different. In lesson 34 we discussed plate tectonics which can help us to understand how the pre and post flood earth would be geographically different.

So let's take a look at this 650 year period and see what Scripture tells us. Chapter 5 of Genesis starts with Adam's death (as I mentioned last month) at the ripe old age of 930. In the following centuries this line of patriarchs passes away at the rate of one about every 50 years. They all did live for a very long time—by our standards, a miraculous amount of time: Seth 912, Enos 905, Cainan 910, Mahalaleel 895, Jared 962, Methuselah 969, and Lamech (Noah's father) 777. The chapter ends with Noah fathering three sons at the age of 500. These ages and this sequence of events can produce a number of valid questions from post-flood people who rarely make it to 100 years old. Did they really live so long? Were Shem, Ham and Japheth triplets born to a man five centuries old?

These questions have some good answers but they are speculative. The truth is we know Scripture plainly claims these ages in chapter 5 of Genesis, and we cannot know for sure the answers to the above questions. But we can come up with some good theories that coincide nicely with the biblical narrative.

First let's discuss Noah's three sons. It is possible but unlikely that He had triplets, because Genesis 5:32 says "**After Noah was 500 years old.**" So these three sons were born to him after his 500<sup>th</sup> birthday. Noah probably had other sons and daughters but these were the three who helped him build the ark.

Next, this question of long ages—there are a number of good possibilities to help explain this, and we can draw on some clear biblical truths to put them together. If we keep in mind that Adam and Eve were created to live eternally, 930 years in comparison is a relatively short life span. Before sin came into the world, Adam and Eve were genetically perfect. It took centuries of sin, death, disease, and the accumulative effect of the loss of genetic information and mutations to shorten the human lifespan. This is all due to the harsh nature of life following the curse due to sin. It has been further theorized that the world had a vapor canopy like many planets in our solar system, and ours was made of water filtering out harmful rays from the sun that cause and accelerate aging. This could further explain longer life spans that preceded the flood. It is finally helpful to look at Genesis 6:3 which says **Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."** This could mean that the flood will be in 120 years or it could mean that God intentionally limits man's lifespan to 120 years to limit the affects of our sinful nature. Whatever the cause, life spans gradually decrease in 15 generations from Noah to Moses. Human life spans are reduced to an average of 120 years.

Now that we have covered the first 1656 years of world history, I think the Flood account in Genesis 6-9 will be helpful in understanding all the history and geography that follows. So we will start an in-depth study at the worldwide flood of 2344BC (approximately) and consider some of the things we can learn from this historic event.

Till next month, blessings. Pastor Portier